



Leodrey Williams

CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

Presented to:

Board of Supervisors

Southern University and A & M College System

"Linking Citizens of Louisiana with Opportunities for Success"

SU Ag Center Holds Training for Small Business across Louisiana

Southern University Ag Center

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The Center for Rural and Small Business Development (CRSBD) in the Southern University Ag Center held a business development training, “Starting and Maximizing Your Business,” at St. John Baptist Church in Mansfield, De Soto Parish on August 7.

Approximately 20 current and potential small business owners attended the training that focused on starting and/or expanding an existing business, business etiquette and marketing techniques.

During the training, participants received the forms and applications needed to legally apply for and start a business in the state of Louisiana, information on business plan development, the U. S. Small Business Administration’s Small Business Resource Magazine, information on how to create and read both cash flow and profit and loss statements and marketing information.

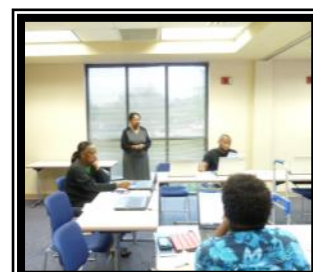
On Thursday, August 28 the CRSBD held ‘Excel for Small Business’ training for current and potential small business owners in room 138 of the Southern University Ag Center. Workbook, cell, row, column and sheet were some of the terms used during the interactive training.

The CRSBD staff taught participants how to input data and equations to enable them to track their business’ monthly expenses and income, develop cash flow and profit and loss statements.

The training was held to teach current and potential small business owners the importance of record-keeping. The lack of record-keeping puts many small business owners at risk of operating their businesses for 12 to 13 months without knowing whether or not they made a profit sustained a loss.

These training sessions are being held to ensure that small business owners efficiently operate and grow their businesses.

To receive additional information about the Center for Rural and Small Business Development, contact Gloria London, Eual Hall or LaKeeshia Giddens at 225.771.3785.



Above: Gloria London and Eual Hall address Baton Rouge participants.

Below: Mansfield training session



Ag Center Assists Small Farmers with Hibiscus Production

Assistant area agent Ahmad Robertson is out in the field helping local farmers like Mr. Charles Berry, a local vegetable producer, in trial-testing a variety of tropical plant, Roselle Hibiscus from Malaysia in his home garden. Roselle tolerates a warm and humid tropical and subtropical climate, and is susceptible to damage from frost. It normally grows best in field conditions under the full sunlight.

The farmer planted his crop between May and June from seeds, and transplanted in his vegetable garden. He applied a pre-plant complete fertilizer of 8-8-8 to his soil a month prior to planting. Hibiscus prefers a well-drained fertile soil with a PH level of 6-7.

Irrigation is not required for mature plants as they are highly drought resistant, except during dry periods when soil moisture is depleted to the point where wilting occurs. The inflated and ripened outer fleshy casings (calyces) should be ready for harvest 20 days after flowering.

The inside seedpod should be still green when fruit is picked, although fruit can remain on the plant until the pods mature. Common Problems include Root-knot nematodes, caterpillars, leaf spot and black spot.

Hibiscus has several food values. Many parts of Roselle including seeds, leaves, fruits and roots are used in various foods. They are used fresh for making wine, juice, jam, jelly, syrup, gelatin, pudding, cakes, ice cream and flavors. They can also be dried and brewed into tea, spice, and used for butter, pies, sauces, tarts, and other desserts. The seeds are high in protein and can be roasted and ground into a powder, then used in coffee, soups and sauces.

Medical values of hibiscus are derived from its content of citric acid, which can be used as a cooling herb, providing relief during hot weather by increasing the flow of blood to the skin's surface and dilating the pores to cool the skin. The leaves and flowers are used as a tonic tea for digestive and kidney functions. The heated leaves are applied to cracks in the feet and on boils and ulcers to speed maturation. Mr. Berry should be harvesting hibiscus late this fall until the first frost arrives in Southeast Louisiana in Mid-November.

Ahmad R. Robertson serves as Assistant Area Agent in St. Helena and Tangipahoa Parishes, and can be reached at (985)748-462 or (225) 222-4136; ahmad_robertson@suagcenter.com



Robertson inspects hibiscus plot



Producer Charles Berry working to maintain his hibiscus plot

SU Ag Center Teaches Importance of Technology in Agricultural Production

Advances in crop protection have been a powerful tool in combating pests, diseases, and weeds that can be devastating to crop yields. Beyond improved seeds and crop protection tools, other technologies enable farmers to increase their productivity, such as modern irrigation practices, mobile technology, fertilizer, and mechanization.

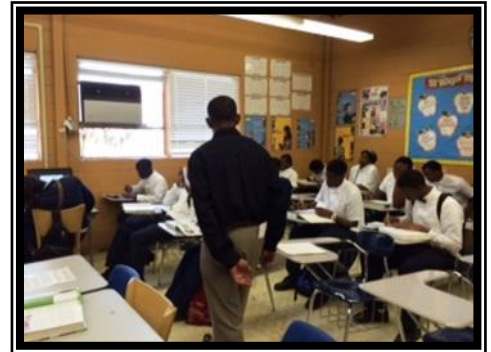
Engaging youth in agriculture has been a prominent topic recently and has risen in popularity. In the developmental agenda, there is growing concern worldwide that young people have become disenchanted with agriculture. Hopefully this can be resolved by exposing them early in life to the role of technology in agriculture.

Extension agent, Ahmad Robertson in St. Helena is sharing skills and knowledge with students at St. Helena College & Academy (Horticulture Academy) through hands-on activities and presentations on the science of living things and technology in agriculture production.

The students practiced how to distinguish between agriscience and agriculture. Each youth in Mr. Guy's class designed a world of agriscience components diagram and listed topics on Agronomy, Horticulture, and Ornamentals. All students were encouraged to research opportunities in the agriculture industry and the leading careers in corporate America in the next 10 years.

"Mr. Alcee Muse, Terry Guy, Linda Chaney and Garland Robertson mentored me as a youth and planned out my agriculture foundation," said Ahmad Robertson, SU Extension agent. "Corey Wyre, a senior at St. Helena College and Academy, has a goal to study computer engineering at Southern University after graduation. He and I did a career comparison between agriculture engineering and computer engineering. After the analysis, there is a possibility he may choose agricultural engineering as his career."

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Students in Agricultural Science class listen to guest speaker on technology application

SU Ag Center Introduces Local Growers to New Crop Variety

With the help of Ahmad Robertson, area producers, Warner Hall, Charles Henry, Emmitt Perry, Charles Berry, Johnny McClendon, and L.S. Spears trial-tested summer varieties of okra. The okra grown in St. Helena Parish this summer were open-pollinated varieties, Clemson Spineless, Louisiana Green Velvet, Cow horn, and Perkins. Currently, a bushel of Okra sells for \$25-\$30 depending on the variety and availability of the produce. Mr. Alcee Hurst introduced Perkins okra, a high yielding cultivar, which produces abundant crops of large delicious okra in St. Helena Parish 40 years ago.

This summer, the 1941 Green Velvet okra was introduced to vegetable producers in St. Helena, St. Landry, West Baton Rouge Parishes in Louisiana, and Atlanta Georgia. Robertson suggested that area farmers add 1941 green velvet okra to their farm operation, and they are reaping the fruits in abundance.

Okra is one of the main vegetables grown in home gardens in Southeast Louisiana. It is very tolerant to the heat and one of the few vegetables that will set a good crop in Louisiana's hot summer weather from July to September. The pods are harvested at about 3 to 4 inches long for best flavor. They will reach 9 inches or so, but tend to be tough if left too long. By picking the fruits almost daily during the height of the season, plants will keep producing new pods. Okra is a warm-weather crop, needing both the soil and the nights to be warm before beginning its vigorous growth.

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Robertson, left, joins producers Warner Hall and Emmitt Perry for okra harvest

Faculty and staff activities and accomplishments



Dr. Kamran Abdollahi, professor and director of Urban Forestry Program at Southern University was invited to give a talk at an international conference. Abdollahi gave a presentation entitled “Trees and Environmental Remediation” at the 2014 International Society of Arboriculture in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, August 2-6.



Presentation session

The presentation highlighted the importance of tree species in remediating soil, water, and air pollution. Tree species are capable of containing, degrading, or eliminating metals, pesticides, solvents, explosives, crude oil and its derivatives and other various contaminants from the media that contain them.

The session also discussed arboricultural and urban forestry practices that increase remediation and mitigation capacities of tree species.

The conference attracted more than 3,000 to Milwaukee. Additional information is available at [ISA website](http://isa-arbor.org).

Dr. Abdollahi can be reached at 2 2 5 - 7 7 1 - 6 2 9 1 ; kamrana664@cs.com

Carol Sensley, Calcasieu Asst. Extension Agent held the 2nd Annual CHEF Camp July 7th – 11. The 16 youth participants, ages 9 – 14 gained knowledge in cooking healthy enjoyable foods. They were engaged in fun, hands-on cooking experiences, and learned how to prepare quick and easy, healthy meals.



Young chefs testing kitchen appliances



Youth practice healthy meal preparation

CHEF: Cooking Healthy Enjoyable Food.

Upcoming Events



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

September 11: Annual Back to School Summit, the Blackham Coliseum, Lafayette, LA.
Contact the Southwest Center for Rural Initiatives at (337) 943-2410 for additional information.