



UF | IFAS
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

FORUM SET MONDAY FOR FLORIDA FARMERS, CONGRESSWOMAN TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CRISIS

GAINESVILLE, FL (Aug. 6, 2019) – A [forum](#) that will highlight climate challenges to Florida's farms, ranches, and forests and steps that the state's producers are taking in response is set for Monday, Aug. 12, at the Hilton University of Florida Conference Center in Gainesville. *Agriculture and Forestry in a Changing Climate: What the Future Holds for Florida* is also expected to highlight what farmers, ranchers, and foresters can deliver in support of a healthier global climate, among other [sustainable development goals](#).

The 2½-hour forum begins at 2 p.m. and will feature remarks from Rep. Kathy Castor, who chairs the House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis, and will discuss the ramifications of a changing climate predicted by scientists. Castor will arrive at the event after touring local cattle and timber operations and holding a kitchen-table discussion with dairy, peanut, cattle, and timber producers.

"The nation needs the participation of everyone to address the greatest challenge of our time," Castor said. "I am encouraged that Florida agricultural leaders are stepping up to play a leading role in strategizing how Florida responds to the climate crisis. I'm also eager to hear what they are already doing."

Opening the forum will be Lynetta Usher Griner, who co-owns and operates Usher Land and Timber, based in Chiefland; and Jim Strickland, the owner of Strickland Ranch and managing partner of Big Red Cattle Company and Blackbeard's Ranch in Manatee County.

Griner and Strickland are the co-chairs of the [Florida Climate-Smart Agriculture Work Group](#), a panel of agricultural and forestry leaders who are calling for deeper exploration of farmers, ranchers, and forest land owners as suppliers of environmental protection as well as of food and fiber.

The work group has declared its ambitions to craft a plan for how the state's 26 million acres of agricultural lands can adapt to changing conditions and produce more clean water and air and other societal benefits.

Others speaking include Jack Payne, senior vice president for agriculture and natural resources at the University of Florida and head of UF's [Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences](#) (UF/IFAS), Lisa Conti, director of Strategic Initiatives and Chief Science Officer at the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services; Senthold Asseng, director of the Florida Climate Institute; Carolyn Mutter, International Program Manager of the Agricultural Model Intercomparison and Improvement Project (Ag MIP) at Columbia University's Earth Institute

Center for Climate Systems Research; and Bill Hohenstein, Director, Office of Energy and Environmental Policy, Office of the Chief Economist, United States Department of Agriculture

The forum will feature a panel of Florida producers moderated by Dr. Wendy-Lin Bartels of the UF/IFAS School of Forest Resources and Conservation. Panel members include Gary Wishnatzki, owner of Wish Farms, a Plant City-based supplier of strawberries, blueberries, raspberries and blackberries; Randall Dasher, a Suwannee County grower of peanuts and seed crop; Larry Black, a Ft. Meade-based grower of oranges, grapefruits and tangerines; and Mike Adams, a third-generation Ft. Pierce rancher whose operation is verified by the National Wildlife Refuge for its environmental stewardship.

Closing remarks will come from Ohio grain producer Fred Yoder, co-chair of [Solutions from the Land](#) (SfL), a non-profit that promotes farmer-inspired solutions to global challenges, and chairman of the [North America Climate Smart Agriculture Alliance](#) (NACSAA).

SfL and UF/IFAS are sponsoring the forum.

To register, contact Shannon Mott at SMott@SfLDialogue.org.

A **live feed** to the forum can be accessed [HERE](#). Anyone interested in viewing the stream just has to click on the link on the date and time of the forum and will be taken to the event via their computer browser. Firefox or Chrome browsers are recommended.

For additional information, contact Ernie Shea, President, Solutions from the Land, at EShea@SfLdialogue.net, (410-952-0123) or Chris Moran, University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, at ChrisMoran@ufl.edu, (352-226-5879).

-30-

***Solutions from the Land (SfL)** is a not-for-profit corporation focused on land-based solutions to global challenges. SfL's mission is to identify and facilitate the implementation of policies, practices and projects at a landscape scale that will result in land being sustainably managed to produce food, feed, fiber and energy while protecting and improving critical environmental resources and delivering high value solutions to combat climate change. For more on **Solutions from the Land**, click [HERE](#).*

*The mission of the **University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences** is to develop knowledge relevant to agricultural, human and natural resources and to make that knowledge available to sustain and enhance the quality of human life. With more than a dozen research facilities, 67 county Extension offices, and award-winning students and faculty in the UF College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, UF/IFAS works to bring science-based solutions to the state's agricultural and natural resources industries, and all Florida residents. Visit the UF/IFAS web site at ifas.ufl.edu and follow us on social media at @UF_IFAS.*