

GROWING TOGETHER FROM A DISTANCE: CENTRAL FLORIDA LIVESTOCK AGENTS SEIZE ON OPPORTUNITIES TO VIRTUALLY PROGRAM TOGETHER DURING ERA OF PHYSICAL SEPARATION

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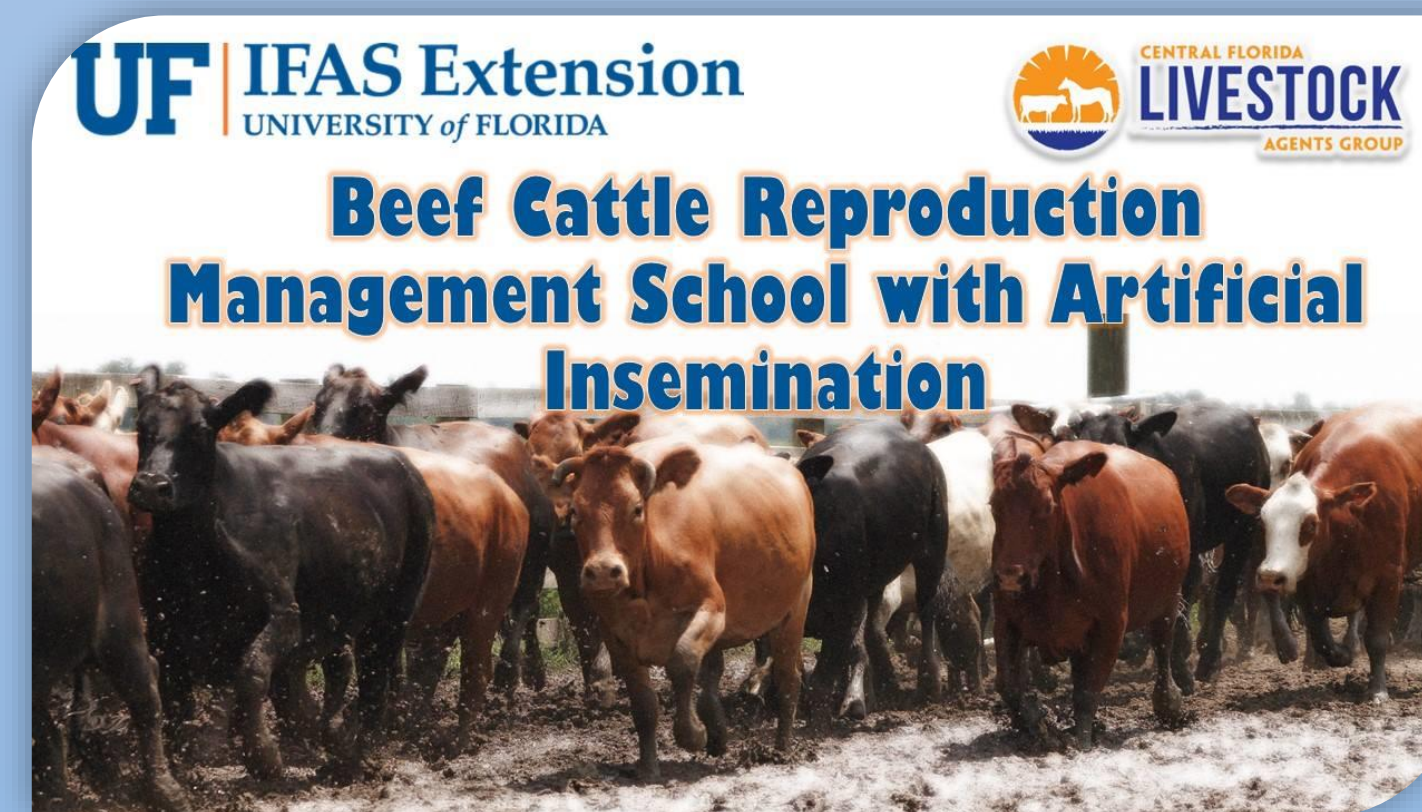
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CENTRAL FLORIDA
LIVESTOCK
AGENTS GROUP

The Central Florida Livestock Agent's Group (CFLAG) is a professional organization of Extension Agents who work in Central Florida and frequently collaborate to provide cross-county programming to shared clientele. In "normal" times they met quarterly to program plan in person and put on several hallmark programs each year including the Spring Ranchers Forum, the Equine Institute, the Small Ruminant Production Conference, and the Beef Cattle Reproduction Management School.



When Covid-19 brought in-person meetings and programs to a halt, the members of CFLAG transitioned to weekly online meetings using the MS Teams platform. They used this time to strategize ways to meet their clients ongoing using new methods, to develop online programs, to shore up their online presence, and to brainstorm as a team.

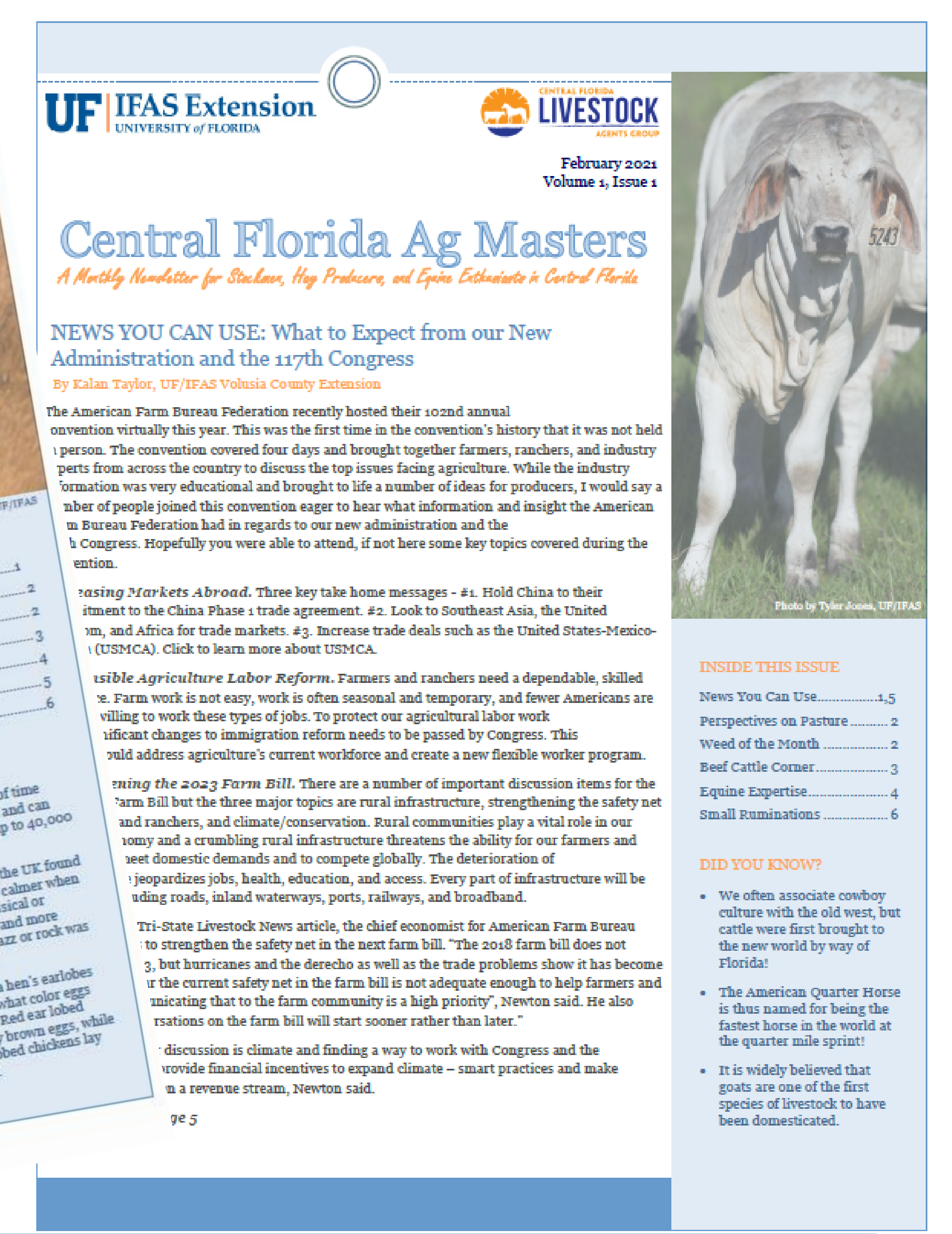
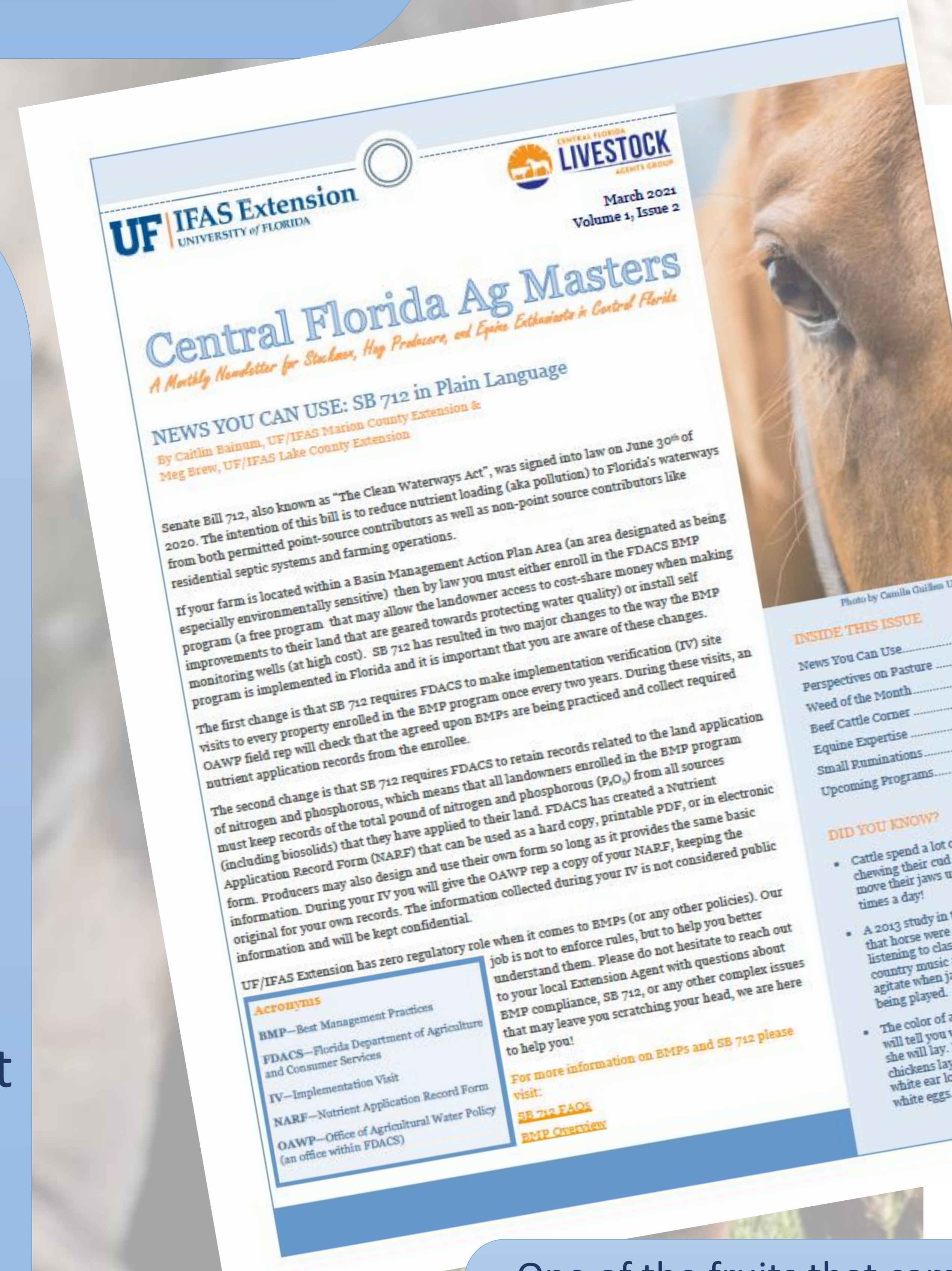
A survey of CFLAG members who attended weekly meetings (n=8) reported that as a result of their attendance they...

75% Were collaborating more with their colleagues

87% Felt more comfortable asking a colleague for assistance

87% Felt their professional development had been enhanced

75% Felt better equipped to serve their clients



One of the fruits that came out of the weekly CFLAG meetings was a new team newsletter, the Central Florida Ag Masters, which allows agents to increase the quality and depth of their writing by having each agent take turns authoring articles in their area of expertise.