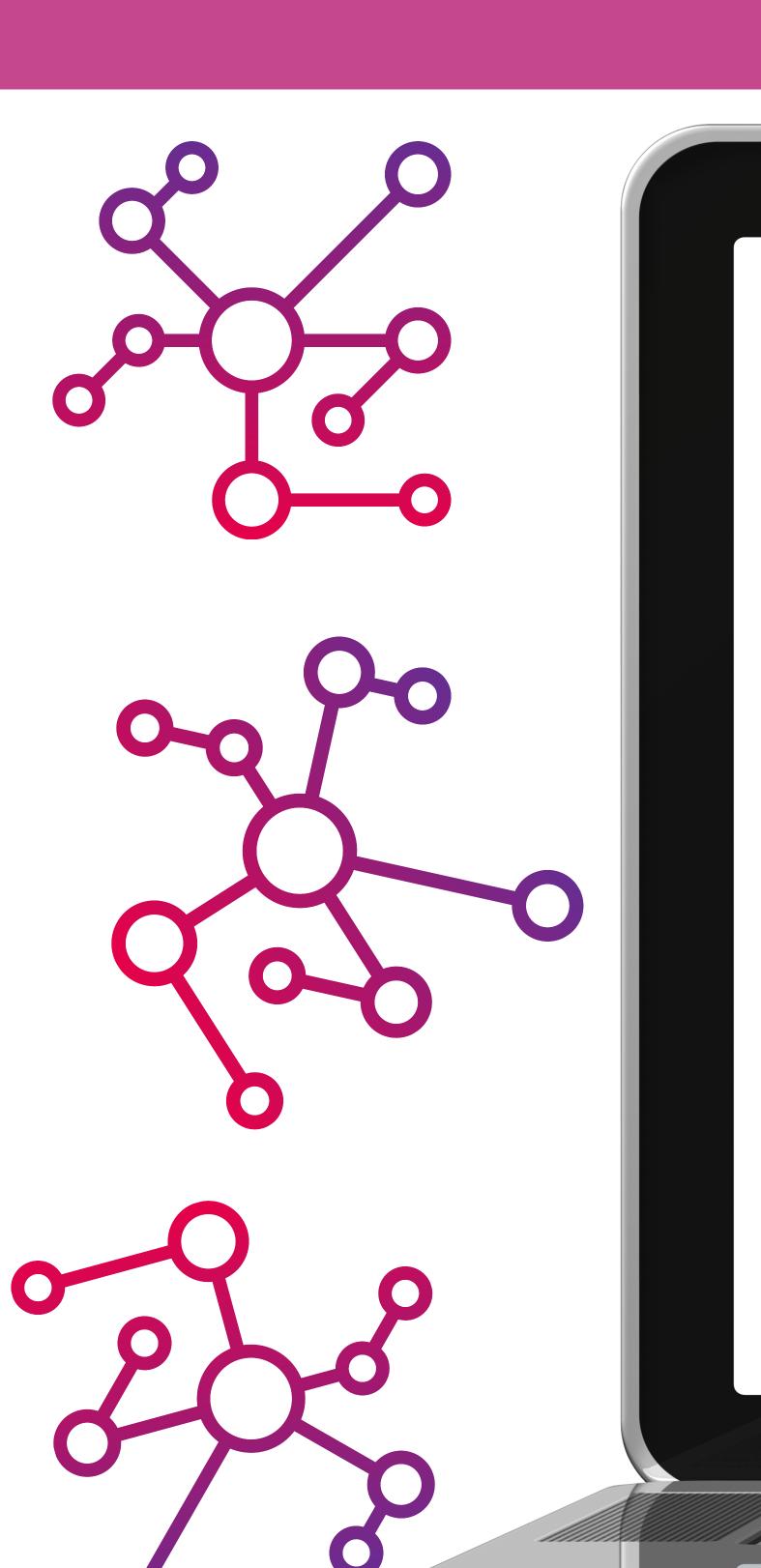
PESTICIDE APPLICATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS: PIVOTING DURING A PANDEMIC

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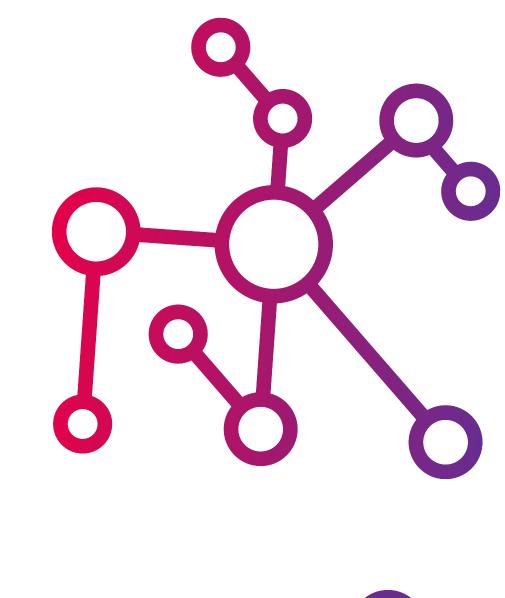
@BrevardPlantDr

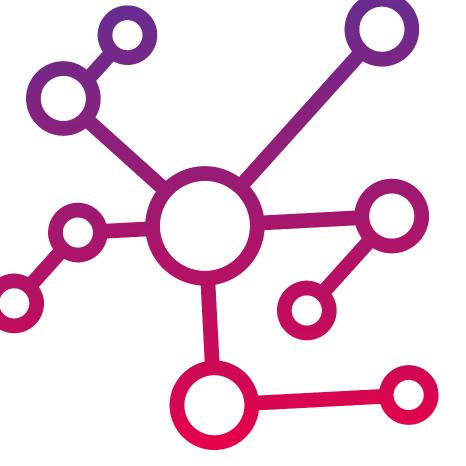


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Commercial landscape professionals, farmers, nursery growers and their employees who apply pesticides as part of their pest management programs are often legally required to have a pesticide license issued by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS). Failure to be licensed can result in fines from \$5,000 to \$25,000 per individual. To secure a license, a certification exam administered by a UF/IFAS Extension office must be passed and re-certified periodically with continuing education units (CEUS) provided through FDACS-approved educational programs.

Despite a setback from COVID-19 limiting in-person gatherings, applicators licensing exams, training and CEU opportunities, Brevard County Extension was able to continue providing pesticide education and certification testing to these essential workers.

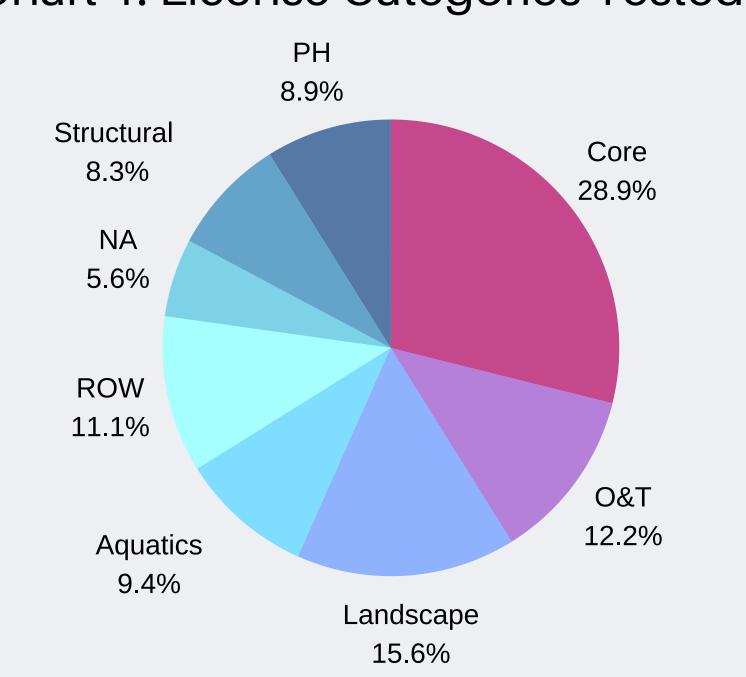






Exam Administration

Chart 1. License Categories Tested*

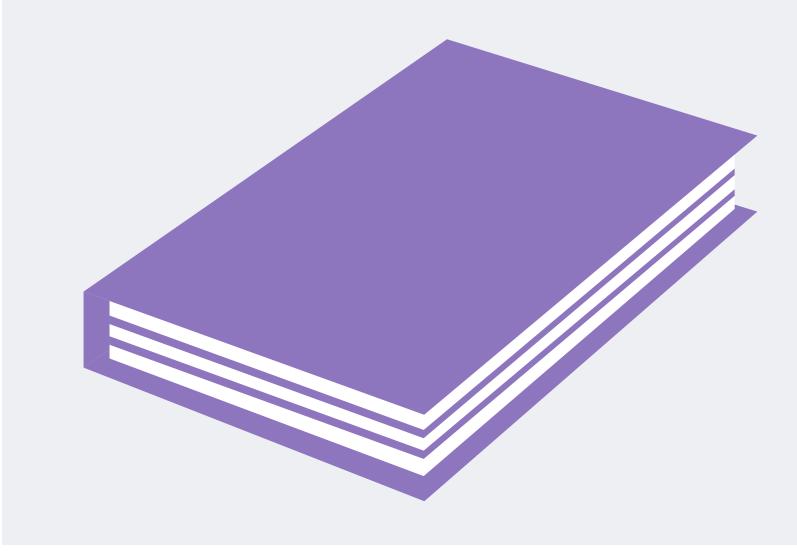


*General Standards Core (Core), Ornamental and Turf Pest Control (O&T), Landscape (LCLM/LLO), Aquatics Pest Control, Right of Way (ROW), Natural Areas Weed Management (NA), Structural Pest Control, Public Health (PH)

- Proctored 178, web-based exams during the pandemic
- Followed CDC Guidelines
- Enhanced equipment sanitation

Education

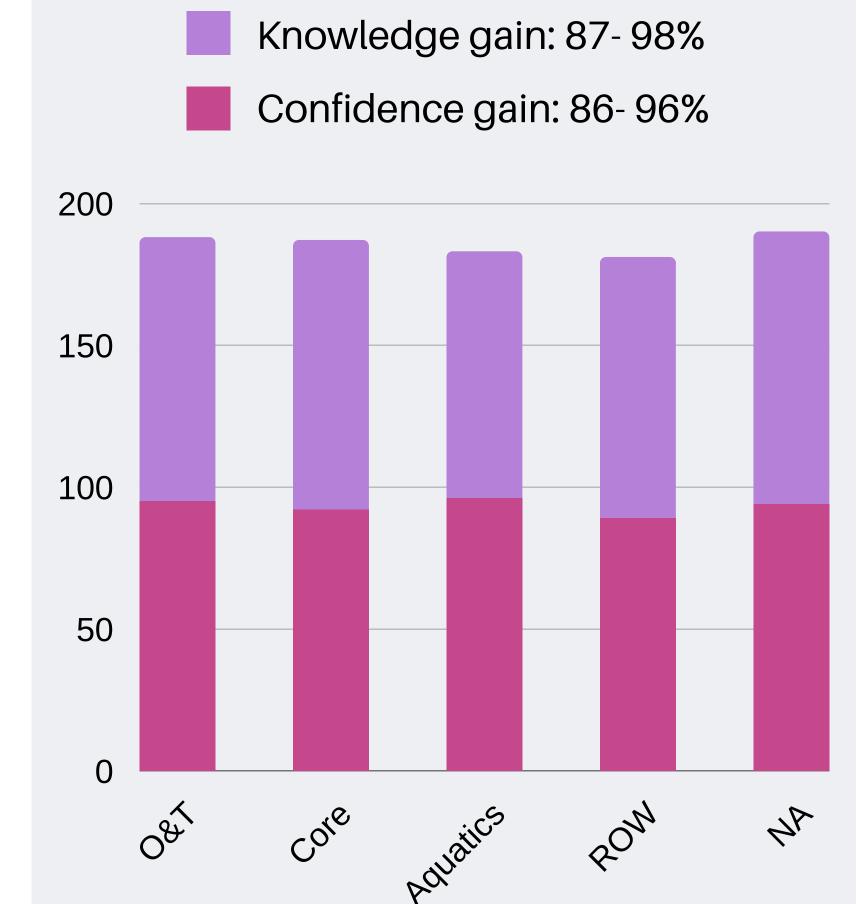
- Taught in-person and virtual classes across all license categories (21 total classes)
- Provided exam prep review courses via Zoom
- Created a Virtual Lunch and Learn CEU Series (Zoom)
- Reached 393 individuals
- Provided 56 CEUs



Outcomes

 Surveyed attendees via qualtrics using self-reflective
 7-point Likert scale to measure knowledge and confidence gain

Chart 2. Knowledge and Confidence
Gain from Test Prep Classes



Moving Forward



- Provide in-person/virtual hybrid classes
- Offer web-based certification exams weekly
- Continue making impacts:
 - 108 new certified
 applicators in Florida =
 \$540,000 to \$2.7 million
 saved from potential fines!
 - Certified applicators often get higher salaries!
 - Certified applicators increase safety and environmental stewardship!