Local residents may be interested to know how a decision made 150 years ago by U.S. President Abraham Lincoln continues to impact their lives. Lincoln is celebrated as one of the most prominent leaders in world history. He abolished slavery, ended the American Civil War, and during his tenure, signed the Morrill Act that continues to have a vital impact on our local agricultural and natural resources industries.

Lincoln signed the Morrill Act in 1862, known today as the Land-Grant Act; it provided 30,000 acres of land in each state that could be sold and the proceeds used to establish and support agricultural and mechanical colleges to serve the interests of agriculture. Florida’s land-grant institutions are UF and Florida A&M (Agricultural and Mechanical) University.

The Morrill Act positioned America for prosperity during the late 1800s, an era in which most families’ livelihoods involved growing food.

Local residents who garden, produce food and nursery products, and strive to protect natural resources, interface regularly with UF/IFAS, the university’s continued mission to serve the state with agricultural and natural resources with education, research and extension services. Extension services are located in every one of Florida’s 67 counties. Local extension services offer citizens programs for gardening, environmental horticulture preservation, food production, natural resources protection and land management. 4-H services provide our youth with meaningful programs.

Serving agricultural and natural resources research and education needs is IRREC. The center is one of 13 research and education stations situated throughout Florida, positioned in the state’s most important agricultural regions. At IRREC, scientists conduct research that finds solutions to today’s issues in agricultural production and the industry’s efforts to protect natural resources. The center also serves more than 200 students who pursue single courses, attend laboratories, or pursue graduate and undergraduate degrees on location. An increasing number of students located in Miami, Gainesville, and even other states attend courses online (distance education) taught by faculty at UF/IRREC. Local residents who graduated from IRREC are employed by prominent public and private companies, or are continuing studies as graduate students.

In celebration of the nation’s 150th Anniversary of the Morrill Act, and in honor of U.S. President Abraham Lincoln, land-grant universities and everyone along the Treasure Coast who has benefited by the Morrill Act, the UF/IFAS St. Lucie Cooperative Extension Service and the UF/IRREC offered free events for the public to enjoy on Saturday, Oct. 13, 2012.

IRREC offered an Open House to showcase its higher educational offerings. Please read inside this edition about IRREC’s Morrill Act Celebration event.

Pete Stoffella
Among the earliest state adopters of the legislation in 1862 were: Rutgers, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Iowa State universities. While the University of Florida traces its roots to 1853 as part of the state-funded East Florida Seminary, its relationship to the Morrill Act is rooted in the establishment of Florida Agricultural College at Lake City in 1884," said Dan. “The University moved to Gainesville in 1905.”

In 1890 a second Morrill Act was approved to support African-American Land-Grant institutions. Florida A&M is an “1890 Institution.” A third Land Grant Act was passed in 1994 to serve Native American Tribal colleges.

“So that is a total of 108 Land Grant Colleges and University’s in the U.S. and its territories today,” he said.

Dan described the Land-Grant system as a “three-legged-stool,” comprising research, education and extension functions.

The 1887 Hatch Act appropriated funds to establish Agricultural Experiment Stations in each state. As an example, IRREC began as an experiment station in 1947.

The Smith Lever Act in 1914 established funding for the Cooperative Extension Service, which transfers research findings directly to the American public through county extension agents.

“When we say that the UF campus is statewide, we refer to the 67 county Extension Services and 13 research and education centers working for Floridians and serving audiences worldwide,” Dan said.

The Land-Grant College System is uniquely American, and it is an institution for which we may all be proud, Dan said.
IRREC Students Led 150th Morrill Act Signing Celebration

Angie Niño, Thank you!

The UF/IFAS 150th Anniversary Morrill Act Signing and Land-Grant Celebration event, held Saturday, Oct. 13, featured four IFAS locations, one of which was IRREC. Other public celebration attractions included the UF/IFAS St. Lucie County Cooperative Extension Service, the UF/IFAS 4-H Farm, and the UF/IFAS Windstorm Training Center. The event was spearheaded by Anita Neal, St. Lucie County Cooperative Extension Director.

Angie Niño, IRREC graduate student of entomology and nematology, coordinated efforts to arrange student presentations at the celebration. Academic coordinator Jackie White assisted Angie with administrative support. Greeting attendees was IRREC Director and Professor Dr. Peter Stoffella. Dr. Sandra Wilson, Professor of Environmental Horticulture, escorted visitors through the IRREC Teaching Garden; and five IRREC students made presentations to those who attended the event. Those students were: Christy Richardson, Kimmy Jones, Simon Sokolof-Kemp, Hayley Alber, Emily Westermeier, and Chloë Hawkings. IRREC doctoral candidate Sulley Ben Mahmoud served as event volunteer-at-large.
IRREC Students

Christy Richardson and Angie Niño Presented “Meeting Your Allies” Table

Christy and Angie presented beneficial insects such as ladybird beetles, green lacewings, and spine soldier insects. Christy said visitors who had made purchases at the Extension Plant Sale were particularly interested in biological control methods as an alternative to chemical applications. Many were interested in learning about the use of entomopathogenic fungus as a pest control method.

Spined soldier bug (Podisus maculiventris)

Simon Sokolof-Kemp presented soils common to Florida and their qualities

Simon and Master Gardener Alfred Ortiz talk soils

Christy’s three young sons assisted with the event
They call it MRSA!

Don’t know if you’ve been told, bacteria don’t cause your cold
I don’t know if you knew, bacteria don’t cause your flu
Some bacteria do only good for ya, we call those your normal flora

But now you may wanna start a ruckus over a certain staphylococcus
Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus

They call it MRSA yeah!
Don’t wanna disperse it, no!
Now we know just what to do
Help the fight and spread the news!

Environmental Management student Kimmie Jones explained source-point pollution to members of the McKenzie and Shestak families from Vero Beach. Here she asked the young Shestak family member to use a spray bottle of “rain” for a demonstration of how rain gathers pollution from multiple points in a landscape. And then, she said, the rain and all the inputs from yards, gardens and agricultural production areas flows into the watershed.

Microbiology and Cell Science undergraduate students Emily Westermeier and Haley Alber composed and performed a song, “They Call it MRSA,” to raise awareness about Staphylococcus Aureus, its symptoms and recommended treatment. Following are three stanzas from the song:

They call it MRSA!

Don’t know if you’ve been told, bacteria don’t cause your cold
I don’t know if you knew, bacteria don’t cause your flu
Some bacteria do only good for ya, we call those your normal flora

But now you may wanna start a ruckus over a certain staphylococcus
Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus

They call it MRSA yeah!
Don’t wanna disperse it, no!
Now we know just what to do
Help the fight and spread the news!
TREASURE COAST RARE FRUIT CLUB AND FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
LAKELA’S MINT CHAPTER HOSTED IRREC TEACHING GARDEN TOURS

**Dragonfruit**

Treasure Coast Rare Fruit Club President Michael Johnston said the club’s mission is to: “Educate and inform about rare tropical fruit trees.” On display were a banana tree, jackfruit and dragonfruit. Members of the club distributed literature about Neem fruit, a fruit that holds multiple medicinal qualities. Club members would like to invite the public to meetings held the 3rd Thursday of each month, 7:30 p.m., at IRREC, in room 129. During meetings attendees taste samples of fresh fruit grown in local gardens and exchange knowledge about cultivating rare fruits along the Treasure Coast.

**IRREC student of Environmental Management Chris Waltz, and Florida Native Plant Society Lakela’s Mint Chapter member Kathy Adams, at the booth. Society members led tours of the IRREC Teaching Garden and distributed information about Florida Native Plants to those who attended the event.**

**White City residents Lee and Lucas Barron examined mango trees in the IRREC Fruit Grove. Lee said it is important for consumers to know how and where food and fiber grow.**
IRREC Teaching Garden Tours

Port St. Lucie residents Fernando and Emily Oliveira toured the IRREC Teaching Garden to garner ideas for their garden at home.

Left to right are: Kelly Nosler and Holly O’Brien. IRREC Professor of Environmental Horticulture Dr. Sandy Wilson hosts the tour and responds to questions.

Port St. Lucie residents Diane Bergman and Roberta Budd, attended to gain ideas for Diane’s student garden at Parkway Elementary School.

Mr. and Mrs. Mann, residents of Jensen Beach.

IRREC student Chris Waltz (center in green) leads attendees on a garden tour.
Degree and certificates programs at the University of Florida/IFAS Indian River Research and Education Center in Fort Pierce

UF/IRREC Degree and Certificate Program Offerings:

Bachelor Degrees:
- Environmental Management
- Microbiology and Cell Science
- Plant Science
- Geomatics

Master Degrees:
- Ecological Restoration
- Environmental Sciences
- Environmental Horticulture
- Entomology and Nematology
- Agricultural Education and Communication
- Agroecology
- Geomatics
- Family Youth and Community Sciences

Certificates:
- Undergraduate
  - Geomatics
  - Urban Pest Management
  - Landscape Pest Management
  - Pest Control Management
- Graduate
  - Ecological Restoration
  - Non Profit Management
  - Sustainable Land Resource and Nutrient Management
  - Soil Ecology Services
  - Wetland and Water Resource Management

Chloë Hawkings (right) examines an insect while IRREC’s Dr. Ron Cave stands by. Chloë is pursuing a Master of Science degree in Entomology and Nematology while employed at the U.S. Department of Agriculture Horticultural Research Laboratory. She is studying the citrus psyllid, the insect responsible for citrus greening, which is detrimental to the region’s renowned citrus industry.

Kylee Wilson, and IRREC’s Dr. Chris Wilson, examine a lizard at the UF/IFAS 150th Morrill Act Celebration Event inside the Windstorm Training Center. The exhibit was offered at one of 4 locations open to the public to honor the Land-Grant College System and the 150th Anniversary Celebration for the signing of the Morrill Act.

The Indian River Research and Education Center News is published quarterly. To submit material or story ideas, please forward information to newsletter editor, Robin Koestoyo, (772) 468-3922, Ext. 103, koestoyo@ufl.edu