

March 14, 2008

Governor proclaims March Florida-friendly Landscaping Month

Florida-friendly landscaping can withstand drought, winds and floods. Now it has its own official month. Governor Charlie Crist has proclaimed March, 2008 as Florida-friendly landscaping month.

Florida-friendly landscaping is part of the Florida Yards and Neighborhoods (FYN) program developed at the University of Florida/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences. Based on environmental landscape management best practices, the program was developed in 1992 in the Sarasota and Tampa areas by UF working with federal, state and local governments, the Sarasota and Tampa Bay National Estuary programs and the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD.)

The FYN program demonstrates how to develop and maintain sustainable landscapes that have minimal impact on the environment. The program focuses on alternative design and maintenance practices that sustain a landscape that is ecologically in step with the surrounding environment.

FYN's core actions show how to create a sustainable landscape that reduces pollution from stormwater and irrigation runoff. The actions include:

- Right plant/right place
- Water efficiently
- Fertilize appropriately
- Mulch
- Control yard pests responsibly
- Recycle
- Reduce stormwater runoff
- Attract wildlife
- Protect the waterfront.

Sarasota County sponsored FYN programs at the UF/IFAS Sarasota County Extension Service consist of the FYN Community Associations program and the FYN residential program. In addition, the Southwest Florida Water Management District sponsors the FYN Builder/Developer program, a multi-county program that serves Charlotte, Manatee and Sarasota counties.

For more information about the Florida Yards and Neighborhoods program contact the Sarasota County Call Center at 941-861-5000 or visit <http://sarasota.extension.ufl.edu>.