

4/30/09

Hello out there!

What happened at the meeting?

A public meeting was held on April 23 at the Hillsborough County Extension office to relay the results of the fact finding discussions of county departments regarding a potential fertilizer ordinance for Hillsborough County.

Overall it was a good exchange. The EPC group which is holding these meetings is very willing to listen to comments. The atmosphere of the meeting was great. People were respectful and I did not see the sort of underlying tension that has been a part of many of these types of meetings I have attended- though people still voiced their opinion openly and did not always agree.

Decals and golf courses get people fired up

Industry had strong feelings about the subject of decals (cost and potential number needed over a fleet and # of different ones if each county has its own decal) and there was a significant amount of time spent on why golf courses were not covered by a potential ordinance.

This was unusual in the meetings I have been a part of so far. A lot of time was spent here, but I'm not sure what will come of that. Industry felt it was unfair to assume that golf courses are following their BMPs while it seems that it is assumed that the Green Industries BMPs are not being followed voluntarily or they are not enough as they stand and need additional "tinkering" (word was used often), like restricted period of N application, etc.

What about the big issues?

A short discussion took place on the methods of testing for deficiency, part of which I missed. We basically ran out of time before a blackout period or enforcement were thoroughly discussed.

It was basically noted that enforcement would be very difficult and that there is not a consensus on having a restricted period, but the EPC is open to the one time application of N in summer if a deficiency can be diagnosed and will be exploring how that might be tested for with Dr. George Hochmuth from the University of Florida who also attended the meeting.

What was accomplished?

The idea of the meeting was to get feedback from those affected and so that was accomplished, even if in the end there was no decision on some of the more contentious items. The EPC will take the feedback and results of meetings back to be presented to the EPC board and I believe eventually to the BOCC.

Let's hear it for level heads!

Again I have to say that throughout the process there seems to be an openness to listening to all sides. Maps of impaired waters were presented, but a few people pointed out that although we may have a problem, no information has been presented that shows that an ordinance would solve the problem, because it has not been shown that fertilizer is in fact the problem. It may well be the problem, but so far nobody has brought data that shows that directly. It may be that we just need to find that data, but at this point it has not been presented.

Representatives from cities within the county were there and they reiterated that they have to do something about nutrient levels in impaired waters.

This is the gist of what happened. It was a fair sized group of about 36 participants other than the panel of 14. An audio tape was recorded and will be given to EPC, which I think will be available on their website at some point definitely at least after this week.

I am waiting on more info about deficiency tests mentioned...

Other than that...

Here are some interesting trainings coming up in May.

2009 Aquatic Weed Control Short Course

May 4-7, Coral Springs

<http://www.conference.ifas.ufl.edu/aw/agenda09.html>

LOTS of AQUATIC and other CEUS!!

Calibration demonstrations... Yahoo!

See You There!

Irrigation Workshop
Wednesday, May 6
Brooker Creek Preserve
\$20 including lunch
Landscape Architect CEUs
See <http://buildgreen.ufl.edu/cecampus/> for details

BMP Training May 18 at Brooker Creek Preserve
8:45 am - 3:45 pm
Brooker Creek Preserve Environmental Education Center
3940 Keystone Rd, Tarpon Springs, FL 34688

Call 727-453-6800 to register
Cost: \$15 advance registration, \$20 registration at the door.

North Central Florida Turfgrass Field Day
May 20th (I think Gainesvilleish)
<http://www.srgcsa.com/id5.html>
(Link is being blocked for me right now; see if it works for you.)

See other events at <http://prohort.ifas.ufl.edu/events/index.shtml>

On another note
About 3/4 done with report..... But
Insect Physiology is now conquered! Yahoo!!

Also if you were remotely considering running around after bugs in
Venezuela- it is definitely happening. Yahoo!!

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