

Public Service Announcement - for release the week of May 7, 2006
Dan Culbert - Extension Horticulture Agent

OKEECHOBEE STUDENTS SEEK BRAIN-BOWL TITLE

FORT PIERCE, Fla. – Cockroach races, insect hunts, a mini-Melapaleuza, and an art contest will be among the activities attendees may participate in at the first University of Florida Biological Control Brain Bowl and Bash. The event will be held Saturday, May 20, 1 p.m. until 3 p.m., with the official Biological Control Brain Bowl to follow at 3:30 until 5:00 p.m.



The event will be held at the UF Indian River Research and Education Center in Fort Pierce, located at 2199 South Rock Road. Hosting the event will be 20 bright high and middle school students representing Okeechobee, St. Lucie, and Indian River counties, three research scientists, four extension agents and other organizers.

Eight students from Okeechobee were selected to participate in this year's event. Team members include Brittany Carrier, Brittney Cutler, Septemberlyn Davis, Victor Gandarilla, Jessica Joles, Vick Patel, Corey White and Joy Burnham. Two of these team members will be interviewed by WOKC radio DJ Billy Dean on Monday May 15th – catch his show from 8-9 AM that day to hear more about their efforts to win the Brain Bowl trophy.

The public is invited to attend the Biological Control Brain Bowl and Bash on May 20 – admission is free. The purpose of the event is to share with the public information about biological control research being carried out at the \$3.8 million UF Biological Control Research and Containment Laboratory, situated on the UF Fort Pierce location.

The event culminates a 2-month-long program for the 20 students who have been trained to be spokespeople for the menace of invasive species and for biological control, believed to be the most efficient method for the control of invasive species.

The Biological Control Brain Bowl is a “quiz bowl,” in which the three teams’ knowledge of biological control and invasive species will be challenged by the game hosts, Ron Cave, Ph.D., and Bill Overholt, Ph.D., and Roxanne Rutledge-Connelly, Ph.D. The three professors perform biological control research.

At the May 20th event, local residents may meet the research scientists and the student members of the three Brain Teams. In addition to the activities stated above, other activities will include face painting for young children, a maggot display, owl pellet dissections, a crafts table, ladybug carry-out containers and a “Caterpillar Canter” relay race. Three \$50 “Bug Master Art Awards” prizes will be provided for art contest winners. The “Bug Master Buggy Hunt Award” recipient will also receive an award courtesy of Bug Master, a local pest management organization that practices Integrated Pest Management, or environmentally-friendly pest control methods.

The Biological Control Brain Bowl and Bash program was funded with a grant from IPM (Integrated Pest Management) Florida, the state’s leader in IPM. Program sponsors include The University of Florida; Bug Master, a pest management organization that serves Indian River and St. Lucie counties; St. Lucie, Indian River and Okeechobee 4-H Foundations; TAME, the statewide Melaleuca management program; Pelican Island and St. Lucie Audubon Societies; the Florida Mosquito Control Association; The Florida Research Center for Agricultural Sustainability, and Papa John’s Pizza.

More details can be found on the event’s web page:

<http://okeechobee.ifas.ufl.edu/BioControl.BrainBowl.2006.htm> . If you need additional information, please email us at okeechobee@ifas.ufl.edu or call us at 863-763-6469.

Local residents can stop by our office at 458 Hwy 98 North in Okeechobee.



Aspiring Okeechobee Aspirators: Learning how to use an aspirator (“a bug sucker”) to collect predatory psyllids from Melaleuca trees are (L to R): Brittany Carrier, Okeechobee Freshman Learning Center Honors Biology Instructor Richonda Winner-Manson, and Brittny (yes, this is the correct spelling of Brittny’s name) Cutler. They are preparing for the UF BioControl Brain Bowl on May 20th in Fort Pierce.

Trade names, where used, are given for the purpose of providing specific information. They do not constitute an endorsement or guarantee of products named, nor does it imply criticism of products not named. The **Florida Cooperative Extension Service** - Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer authorized to provide research, educational information, and other services to individuals and institutions that function without regard to race, color, sex, age, handicap, or national origin. **Florida Cooperative Extension Service / IFAS / University of Florida.** Larry A. Arrington, Dean