

## **Initiative 2: Enhancing and protecting water quality, quantity and supply.**

Water plays a critical role in sustaining Florida's environment and economic vitality, which are keys to a high quality of life. Florida must enhance and protect its domestic water supply while also meeting the water requirements of agriculture, horticulture, tourism, and industry, as well as the state's 19 million inhabitants and its natural systems, all without placing undue pressure on a finite resource.

Water-quality problems have been associated with highly urbanized areas and with intense agricultural, horticultural, and industrial land uses. Florida's approach to water resource protection is centered on voluntary Best Management Practice (BMP) programs developed to meet water-quality standards. Florida Extension educates producers, urban landscape managers, homeowners, county and city government officials, and others about the science that supports BMPs, how they enhance and protect water quality, and how to implement and maintain them. To enhance and protect water quality, Florida Extension programming will continue to focus on creating behavior changes, such as installing improved management systems, using new procedures, and implementing innovative techniques that reduce pollution and ultimately result in more water bodies meeting their designated uses.

Water shortages are not uncommon in Florida. Compounding this problem is the state's projected population growth, which will demand an extra 150 gal of water per day for each additional resident. In the long term, Florida will rely greatly on water use efficiency, conservation, desalination, and reclaimed water to assure a sufficient future water supply. Through current Florida Extension efforts, major water users, including agricultural and horticultural irrigators, urban landscape managers, and homeowners learn how to use water efficiently through improved understanding of irrigation scheduling, low-volume irrigation systems, Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ (FFL) principles, and domestic water-saving techniques. To achieve the outcome of maintaining plentiful water for all, Florida Extension programming must continue to provide educational programs that result in behavior change, including improved management and use of the latest technology to increase water conservation and decrease pressure on our resources.

### P1 – Water Conservation

Conserve Florida's finite freshwater resources by teaching rural, suburban and urban audiences how to use less water.

### P2 – Water Quality

Improve the quality of Florida's water resources by teaching target audiences how to implement agricultural Best Management Practices, Green Industries Best Management Practices, Florida-Friendly Landscaping principles, and low impact development standards.

2.1 – Urban

2.2 - Agriculture

### P3 – Public Awareness of Water Issues

Improve Floridians' knowledge about water allocation, use, quality, and conservation through public education.