

ATTENDEE INFORMATION



PARTNERED WITH

UF|IFAS
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA



Annual Florida **TURFGRASS CONFERENCE**

OCTOBER 6–8, 2026

WORLD EQUESTRIAN CENTER • OCALA

Cultivate. Connect. Sustain:
Growing Toward Tomorrow

2026 CONFERENCE SPONSORS

PRESENTING



PRESENTING



PLATINUM



GOLD



SILVER



BRONZE



SPECIAL





CONFERENCE CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE



DEAR TURFGRASS PROFESSIONALS,

On behalf of the Florida Turfgrass Association Board of Directors, our conference partners and the University of Florida, I am excited to invite you to the 2026 Annual Florida Turfgrass Conference and Show, taking place October 6–8, 2026, at the World Equestrian Center in Ocala, Florida.

This year's conference theme, "Cultivate. Connect. Sustain: Growing Toward Tomorrow," reflects the continued progress and collaboration within Florida's turfgrass industry. As our industry grows, it is more important than ever that we continue cultivating knowledge, connecting with one another and sustaining the research, relationships and resources that will guide us into the future. As our industry continues to evolve, collaboration and innovation remain essential to meeting the environmental, economic and operational challenges ahead.

Our program reflects that commitment with the conference, beginning Tuesday in Citra and with a strong educational lineup featuring pest management workshops focused on disease, nematode, insect and weed management, along with general sessions covering water management. These sessions are designed to provide practical, science-based information that attendees can immediately apply within their operations and organizations. This will be our first year to host a Student Competition at Candler Hills.

On Wednesday, attendees will participate in the UF/IFAS North Central Florida Turfgrass Field Day, including the PSREU Turfgrass Unit field tours, afternoon student forum and then a turf breeder tour. This partnership with the University of Florida continues to be one of the most valuable aspects of our conference, giving attendees firsthand exposure to the latest turfgrass research, innovation and field applications being developed by UF faculty, researchers, students and staff.

We are also proud to continue supporting the next generation of turfgrass professionals through the Student

Forum, which provides high school and college students with opportunities to connect with industry leaders and explore future careers within turfgrass management, research and allied industries. Investing in young professionals remains essential to sustaining and strengthening our industry for years to come.

Wednesday evening, we will gather at the World Equestrian Center for the Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony, Opening Session and Opening Reception. These events provide an opportunity to recognize the accomplishments and contributions of individuals who continue to move our industry forward while also allowing attendees time to reconnect with colleagues and friends from across the state.

Thursday's activities offer additional opportunities for networking, fellowship and industry engagement, including the Golf Tournament at Juliette Falls and the Sports Field Tour. The Vendor Trade Show Grand Opening and the always-popular Corn Boil and FTRF Fundraisers will close out the conference with an evening dedicated to supporting turfgrass research, education and collaboration throughout Florida's turfgrass community.

As always, this conference would not be possible without the support of our sponsors, exhibitors, speakers, volunteers and attendees. Your commitment to the Florida turfgrass industry continues to make this event one of the premier educational and networking opportunities in our profession.

We look forward to welcoming you to Ocala this October for an outstanding conference filled with education, innovation, fellowship and opportunities to grow together as an industry. Whether you are joining us to learn, network, reconnect with colleagues or explore new opportunities, we hope you leave inspired and energized for the year ahead. Thank you for being part of the 2026 Annual Florida Turfgrass Conference and Show. We look forward to an outstanding week together.

Sincerely,
Peyton Edwards
FTGA Conference Chairperson



WORLD EQUESTRIAN CENTER®

THE RIDING ACADEMY HOTEL

1615 NW 81st Terrace Rd,
Ocala, FL 34482

Welcome to the newest, 390-room addition to the impressive campus of World Equestrian Center, the largest equestrian competition venue in the United States.



CONTRACTED ROOM RATE

\$189 until 9/4/2026
\$239 from
9/5/2026 – 10/6/2026

HOTEL RESERVATIONS

(352) 325-9935
<https://ridingacademyhotel.com>

GOLF TOURNAMENT

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8 10:00 A.M. SHOTGUN

Juliette Falls Golf Club
6933 SW 179th Ave Rd,
Dunnellon, FL 34432

Juliette Falls, a great place to live,
a better place to play golf!

In a state with over 2,000 golf courses, Juliette Falls ranks among the very finest! In fact, we've been named year after year as one of the best courses you can play in Florida, and we rank among the top 10 courses in the nation. When you start with a great piece of rolling land, a world-class course architect and a nothing less than perfection mentality, you can expect exceptional results.



TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6**UF/IFAS PLANT SCIENCE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION UNIT****2556 County Highway 318, Citra, FL 32113**

8:00 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.	Attendee Check-In at UF/IFAS PSREU
9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Student Competition at Candler Hills Golf Course
9:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.	Pest Management Workshops • Disease Management • Nematode Management • Insect Management • Weed Management
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:15 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.	Water Management Session
5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.	Cross Industry Meeting (WEC, Expo Center 1 Lobby)

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7
UF/IFAS TURFGRASS FIELD DAY****UF/IFAS PLANT SCIENCE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION UNIT****2556 County Highway 318, Citra, FL 32113**

7:30 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.	Check-in at UF/IFAS PSREU, Breakfast and Vendor Time
8:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	PSREU Turfgrass Unit Field Tours
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Lunch and Vendor Time
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Afternoon Walking Breeding Tour
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Student Forum

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7**WORLD EQUESTRIAN CENTER****Expo Center #1 | 1284 NW 87th Ct Rd, Ocala, FL 34482**

2:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.	Attendee and Vendor Check-In at WEC
2:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Vendor Trade Show Setup
5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.	Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony
6:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.	Opening Session w/ Keynote Speaker
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Opening Reception

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8**WORLD EQUESTRIAN CENTER****Expo Center #1 | 1284 NW 87th Ct Rd, Ocala, FL 34482**

9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Attendee and Vendor Check-In at WEC
9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Sports Field Tour
10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Vendor Trade Show Setup
10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Golf Tournament @ Juliette Falls
5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Vendor Trade Show Grand Opening
6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Corn Boil and FTRF Fundraisers (Door prize, cash prize – must be present to win)

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9**WORLD EQUESTRIAN CENTER****Expo Center #1 | 1284 NW 87th Ct Rd, Ocala, FL 34482**

7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Vendor Trade Show Dismantle
8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	FTGA Past Presidents' Breakfast at Stirrups, located in the Equestrian Hotel

Transportation is not provided to UF/IFAS PSREU or Golf Tournament.**KEYNOTE SPEAKER****DR. NICHOLE HARKEN***Associate Professor
of Instruction**Internship Director and
Co-Director of Cornerstone***University of
Northern Iowa**

Dr. Harken is a podcaster, published author, researcher and has been an Associate Professor Instructor in the area of communication for over 20 years at the University of Northern Iowa. She currently serves as the Department of Communication and Media's internship director where she works at the intersection of education, business and community. This intersection provides her a unique vantage point of what students are like, what the world of full-time work is like, and how best to help students and existing workers co-mingle to co-exist.

Nikki has a penchant for rural life. She grew up in a fourth-generation farm family in East-Central Iowa, went to a small, rural K-12 school and graduated with 52 of the finest humans. This background still grounds her and she is careful to never lose touch with her roots of working hard, being pragmatic in approaches to knowledge and learning, recognizing the value of public education and caring deeply for students.

In her free time, she reads, gardens, bakes (currently attempting to master sourdough), crochets with needles passed down from her Oma, walks and swims. She and her husband, Matt, live outside of Shell Rock, Iowa (population 1,200-also full of the finest humans) and enjoy shenanigans and adventures.

https://www.ftga.org/events/event_list.asp**Early-Bird Registration until 9/18/2026****Late Registration from
9/19/2026 – 9/24/2026****Registration closes on 9/25/2026**



2026 WREATH OF GRASS RECIPIENT



Congratulations to
ERIN WILDER
Sod Solutions



2026 PRESIDENT'S AWARD RECIPIENT



Congratulations to
TIM CANN, CGCS
Environmental Stewardship

WORKSHOP	FDACS									GCSAA	FNGLA
	CORE	PRIVATE APPLICATOR AG	DEMO AND RESEARCH	ORNAMENTAL AND TURF	LIMITED URBAN FERTILIZER	LIMITED LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE	LIMITED LAWN AND ORNAMENTAL	COMMERCIAL LAWN AND ORNAMENTAL	MAX CEUS EARNED PER SESSION		
DISEASE MANAGEMENT	0	2.5	2.5	2.5	0	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	.30	2.5
NEMATODE MANAGEMENT	0	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	.30	2.5
PEST MANAGEMENT	0	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	.30	2.5
WEED MANAGEMENT	0	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	.30	2.5
GENERAL SESSION: WATER	N/A	N/A	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	.20	2
SPORTS TURF TOUR	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2
STUDENT COMPETITION	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	NA	8
STUDENT FORUM	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1



TUESDAY EVENTS | OCTOBER 6

UF/IFAS PLANT SCIENCE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION UNIT

2556 County Highway 318, Citra, FL 32113

ATTENDEE CHECK-IN AT UF/IFAS PSREU**8:00 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.****STUDENT COMPETITION AT CANDLER HILLS GOLF COURSE****9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.**

Get ready to support the future of turf management as we host the 2027 Student Competition at Candler Hills Golf Course during the FTGA Conference! Showcasing top Florida FFA students, this premier event is backed by a powerful cross-industry coalition including the Florida Turfgrass Association; Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association; Florida Nursery Growers and Landscape Association; Golf Course Superintendents Association of America and Sports Field Management Association. Come cheer on these talented young competitors in hands-on practicums, team case studies and exams as we unite to inspire the next generation of turf leaders!

PEST MANAGEMENT WORKSHOPS**9:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.****Hands on Turfgrass Disease Training | Dr. Phil Harmon, University of Florida**

The training will cover how to recognize common diseases of turfgrasses in Florida. We will discuss how to scout for and take a good sample to submit to a diagnostic lab and what diagnostic resources are available. Research-based options for disease management will be discussed for specific diseases that are commonly observed in Florida.

Diagnosing Nematode Problems on Turfgrass | Dr. Billy Crow, University of Florida

Learn how to recognize common symptoms of nematode problems on turfgrasses, collect and submit nematode samples for submission to a lab, understand and interpret lab results.

Diagnosing and Management of Key Turfgrass Insect Pests | Dr. Adam Dale, University of Florida

During this session, attendees will learn about the detection, diagnosis and year-long management of key insect pests of turfgrasses in Florida. Specific pests of focus will include the southern chinch bug, bermudagrass mite and mole crickets. Recent research focused on the management of the southern chinch bug will be a primary focus, including aspects of insecticide resistance, alternative insecticide products and programs, and ongoing efforts to get control of challenging chinch bug populations. Attendees will have opportunities for hands-on learning and in-depth discussions.

Spraying With Confidence | Dr. Pawel Petelewicz, University of Florida

This workshop will cover the fundamentals of proper herbicide delivery and practical tips for effective turfgrass weed control. Topics include best practices for spraying and calibration, as well as common reasons herbicide applications may fail due to plant biology or application technique. The session will also feature recent University of Florida research on managing priority weed species identified by the Florida turfgrass industry. The workshop will emphasize integrated pest management (IPM) principles and herbicide resistance management.

LUNCH**12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.****GENERAL SESSION****1:15 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.****Practical Water Management for Florida's Green Industries | Don Rainey, UF/IFAS**

Water availability, regulatory requirements and efficiency expectations continue to influence how Florida's turfgrass and landscape industries manage irrigation. This interactive workshop provides practical guidance on current water issues affecting commercial and residential landscapes, golf courses and sports turf systems. Participants will hear directly from Florida Water Management District representatives on current conditions, regulations and statewide priorities, while also exploring emerging research on drought-tolerant plants and advanced irrigation technologies. Hands-on activities will demonstrate irrigation Best Management Practices (BMPs), including irrigation scheduling, hydrozoning, system evaluation and water-saving strategies. Attendees will leave with actionable tools and techniques to improve irrigation performance, conserve water resources and maintain compliance with evolving regulatory expectations.

CROSS INDUSTRY MEETING | WEC, Expo Center 1 Lobby**5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.**

WEDNESDAY EVENTS | OCTOBER 7

UF/IFAS North Central FL Turfgrass Field Day

UF/IFAS PLANT SCIENCE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION UNIT

2556 County Highway 318, Citra, FL 32113

Transportation is not provided.

CHECK-IN AT UF/IFAS PSREU, BREAKFAST AND VENDOR TIME

7:30 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.

PSREU TURFGRASS UNIT FIELD TOURS

8:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

LUNCH AND VENDOR TIME

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

AFTERNOON WALKING BREEDING TOUR

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

STUDENT FORUM

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.



WORLD EQUESTRIAN CENTER

Expo Center #1 | 1284 NW 87th Ct Rd, Ocala, FL 34482

ATTENDEE AND VENDOR CHECK-IN AT WEC

2:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

VENDOR TRADE SHOW SETUP

2:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

ANNUAL MEETING AND AWARDS CEREMONY

5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

During the Annual Meeting there will be a review of the association's finances and the election of new directors and officers. The Awards Ceremony will recognize this year's Wreath of Grass, President's Award and student scholarship recipients.

OPENING SESSION W/ KEYNOTE SPEAKER

6:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

OPENING RECEPTION

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

End the evening mingling with colleagues while enjoying light hors d'oeuvres and beverages.



THURSDAY EVENTS | OCTOBER 8

WORLD EQUESTRIAN CENTER**Expo Center #1 | 1284 NW 87th Ct Rd, Ocala, FL 34482****ATTENDEE AND VENDOR CHECK-IN AT WEC****9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.****SPORTS FIELD TOUR****9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

Join us for the 2026 Sports Turf Tour, featuring stops at the University of Florida's UAA athletic complex (baseball, lacrosse, and a look at recent soccer practice field renovations). Attendees will also see on-field demonstrations of the latest turf technology and equipment.

VENDOR TRADE SHOW SETUP**10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.****GOLF TOURNAMENT AT JULIETTE FALLS****10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

The foursome scramble shotgun tournament will begin at 10:00 a.m. Golfers will enjoy the beautiful scenery and a difficult course with a delicious lunch. *Transportation is not provided.*

VENDOR TRADE SHOW GRAND OPENING**5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.**

The vendors will display their company's newest and latest products and services.

CORN BOIL AND FTRF FUNDRAISERS**6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.**

(Door prize, cash prize – must be present to win)

The Corn Boil has been the Conference's premier social event for decades. Bring your appetite for the heartiest meal of the day!

CORNHOLE 50/50 CHALLENGE

The cornhole has been an event staple for the last few years, and we are continuing the tradition. Be the first person to reach 21 points to win the game. The winners of each game will be entered into a bracket, and the two finalists will play for half of the ticket sales. First place winners also take home a set of cornhole boards. Tickets are \$20 each and players can purchased multiple tickets.

CORNHOLE GOLF CHALLENGE

Test your cornhole skills. Make a hole-in-one and be entered into a cash drawing. Three shots for \$10.

50/50 CASH RAFFLE

Who doesn't love extra cash? Fifteen finalists will be drawn from tickets sold and systematically whittled down to a final few. Those who remain will decide how to split the pot.

FRIDAY EVENTS | OCTOBER 9

WORLD EQUESTRIAN CENTER**Expo Center #1 | 1284 NW 87th Ct Rd, Ocala, FL 34482****7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.****VENDOR TRADE SHOW DISMANTLE****8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.****FTGA PAST PRESIDENTS' BREAKFAST**

at Stirrups, located in the Equestrian Hotel

**ONLINE REGISTRATION**

https://www.ftga.org/events/event_list.asp

Early-Bird Registration until 9/18/2026

Late Registration from 9/19/2026 – 9/24/2026

Registration closes on 9/25/2026

**CONTACT INFO**

Heather Russo
863.688.9413

Florida Turfgrass Association
PO Box 612, Highland City, FL 33846
www.FTGA.org

CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancellations made on or before 9/1/2026 will be granted and will incur a 25% cancellation fee.

Cancellations made on or after 9/2/2026 will not be provided a refund; only employee substitutions will be granted.