

SASES Tours for Tampa, Florida – October 21, 2017

Tour 1: Florida Heritage Tour

Florida's past has been about more than citrus and theme parks. A rich history of agricultural pioneering and adaptation has shaped the state we see today. This tour will focus on the heart of north central Florida and the itinerary will showcase the state's unique geology and water systems, the story of how early and contemporary Florida agriculture developed, and producers who are growing traditional and newer alternative Florida crops. Stops will include: natural springs, commercial, research, and small-scale farms, and a historical museum and pioneer village.

Tour 2: Country to City: Urban Turfgrass and Agriculture

A tour of agronomy in Florida wouldn't be complete without including turfgrass and production in urban environments. Increasingly, formerly rural plant production systems are competing with urban growth for land use and often must coexist in the same physical locations. This tour will show management of turfgrass systems in recreational and production settings, and the ways in which turfgrass and vegetable crop producers adapt to operating in urban environments with ever-increasing competition for resources. Stops will include: two sports fields, two recreational turf sites, a small-scale urban and alternative vegetable crop producer, and if time and traffic allow an example of a historical site renovated as a modern tourist destination.

Tour 3: Florida Fresh 1 - Vegetables and Citrus

This tour will showcase the University of Florida/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Gulf Coast and Citrus Research and Education centers. Tours of field- and lab-based research programs will focus on small fruit and vegetable production, all things citrus, and alternative crops. These offerings will provide a sampling of the work being done with agronomy and soils in central Florida and will include issues related to soil, nutrient, and pest management. The tour will also include at least one stop at a traditional Florida tourist attraction.

Tour 4: Florida Fresh 2 – Citrus and Cattle

This tour will showcase the University of Florida/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Range Cattle and Citrus Research and Education centers. These will offer a sampling of the work being done with agronomy and soils in central Florida and include field- and lab-based research programs in citrus production – including citrus greening disease, and forage and range cattle production. Alternative crops will also be discussed along with water, soil, nutrient, and pest management for crop production in south central Florida. The tour will also include at least one stop at a traditional Florida tourist attraction.

Tour 5: Myakka Soils: “Big Waters” in Florida

Florida's unique geological history dictates how the state's resources are used today. From our Myakka soil to the long-term impacts of agricultural production practices on our water quality, it's all tied to what lies beneath our feet. This tour will show how Florida phosphate is used for crop production, the way that geology and water flow affects agriculture and our natural resources, and will include a historic heritage farm museum, a state park with a canopy tour and alligator viewing, and a restoration project that has evolved from farm to floodplain to stormwater management and wildlife refuge.