



NORTH SOUTH INSTITUTE

SYMPOSIUM 2019 SPECIAL OUTCOME REPORT



Mrs. Marcia Scott (NSI Chief Program Manager) Discusses Agricultural Programs with Attendees



Mrs. Janet Wright (FSA State Outreach Specialist), Mrs. Sherry McCorkle (FSA State Executive Director), and Dr. Samuel Scott (NSI CEO/ED)



USDA/FSA, FL Dept. of Agriculture, and UF Panel Discussion: David Sweany, Janet Wright, Sherry McCorkle, Beth Spratt, and Edward Skvarch

As the CEO and Executive Director of the North South Institute, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all who attended our 15th Symposium, Business & Food Resilience Summit. The theme this year was “Building Resilience for Sustainable Farm and Rural Small Business Profitability by using Own and Federal Resources.” This 2-day event was a huge success with speaking sessions and workshops held by industry leaders, tours of several agricultural facilities and businesses, as well as the introduction of our new Business and Farm Presentation Series with participants from our AgVet Program and Urban Garden Program.

Special thanks to:

Host – University of Florida (Indian River Research and Education Center) - Dr. Ronald Cave, Edward Skvarch, and Carol Alberts.

Speakers/Presenters: USDA Representatives – [FSA] Sherry McCorkle (State Executive Director), Janet Wright, Amy Roller, Jennifer Brown, Maria Santos, David Sweany; and **[RMA]** Travis Roberts; **Florida Department of Agriculture/Fresh from Florida –** Beth Spratt; **Private Sector - Glade & Grove Supply Co. –** Ken Holowecky; and **Mr. B Service Center.**

Moderators – Dr. Magid Dagher, Dr. Barry Colley, Dr. George Fitzpatrick, Dr. Mary Lamberts, Dr. Elizabeth Myles, and Ms. Virginia Guzman.

Study Tour Providers - Fellsmere Farm Lychees, Ecotone Farm, Big C’s Produce, and Fort Pierce Sunshine Kitchen.

TWO DAY OVERVIEW

The Symposium started with the Welcome and Opening presentation, where Dr. Scott provided a review of the past year’s experiences, covering issues critical to our clients, and detailing the training, technical assistance and resource mobilization support offered through the Institute and its Partners. He then reviewed the training topics, guest speakers, and experiences scheduled for this event and set the tone for the next 2 days.

The morning continued with two in depth Panel Discussions with representatives from several Federal and Local agencies. After introductions, each panel group answered various questions from the audience with topics ranging from the farm to school program, helpful business certifications, frustrations over the delays with Emergency Conservation Program (ECP), and how to navigate other available USDA programs.

The energy remained high in day 2, which was consisted of several training workshops and clinics with attendees breaking out into smaller groups. Topics included Rural Development Programs (Businesses & Housing), Agribusiness and Risk Management Planning, Loan Programs, Farm Records and Tax preparation, and USDA Equip Program (irrigation, hoop houses, and cross fencing). Students in our AgVet Program also attended an Apprenticeship & Internship Panel Discussion with breakout sessions to speak directly with companies/organizations, review material and select a practicum to complete their program.

