

## Administration

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Extension Office reports L&M Farms providing 200 tons weekly to food banks

**May 20, 2020** – Under a new federal Coronavirus Farm Assistance program, L&M Farms Inc. – growing on 2,000 acres across Flagler, St. Johns, and Putnam counties – will provide 432,000 pounds of assorted produce weekly to local food banks.

“The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced plans for the new ‘Farmers to Families Food Box’ program on April 17,” said Melanie Thomas, Flagler County Extension Director. “Just a week later, the USDA invited proposals from those able to supply commodity boxes to non-profit organizations. We began pushing that information out to our agricultural community just as quickly as possible so that those interested could apply, and an award was made by May 8.”

L&M Farms did apply and is now one of forty awardees in the USDA Southeast Region, which encompasses eight states. L&M Farms will provide 12 truckloads per week, each consisting of 2,400 boxes.

The recipients of the 28,800 weekly boxes are three local agencies: Bread of Mighty in Gainesville, Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida in Daytona, and Feeding Northeast Florida in Jacksonville. These locations distribute the boxes to smaller food banks, who in turn get them into the hands of local Florida families.

L&M Farms was approved by the USDA to provide produce May 15 through June 30. The L&M headquarters in East Palatka is the primary packing and distribution point, and the produce is grown both locally and at other L&M locations throughout the Southeast. L&M has also submitted a proposal to continue this delivery route until the end of the year as long as the produce remains available.

“This is a *very* beneficial program. It matches suppliers – who have been significantly impacted by the closure of many restaurants, hotels and other food service entities – and connects them directly to a need in the community,” said Wendy Mussoline, Flagler County Extension Agent. “It will ensure that all of their produce will be sold, growers will remain economically viable, and those in need during this unique season will have food on the table.”

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David Sullivan  
District 3

Joe Mullins  
District 4

Donald O’Brien, Jr.  
District 5

UF/IFAS Extension Flagler County is a partnership between State, Federal, and Flagler County governments for the purpose of providing scientific knowledge and expertise to the public. The Extension Office is located at 150 Sawgrass Road, Bunnell.

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All residents and businesses are reminded to abide by Executive and Emergency Orders, and follow Florida Department of Health and CDC guidance.

Additionally, those who are sick and/or told to self-isolate are to: remain at home unless seeking medical care, cover coughs and sneezes, wear a facemask around others, and disinfect touched surfaces daily.

COVID-19 testing is available for Flagler County residents at a variety of locations, please visit [www.FlaglerCounty.org](http://www.FlaglerCounty.org), and following the links for COVID-19 and then select Screening & Testing for the latest options.

COVID-19 health related questions or concerns should be directed to your regular healthcare provider or the Florida Health hotline at 866-779-6121.

COVID-19 business concerns should be directed to the Florida Department of Business & Professional Regulation at 866-532-1440.

All other COVID-19 government services questions or concerns may be directed your municipality or the Emergency Operations Center at 386-313-4200.

Check for current information on Flagler County's website [www.flaglercounty.org](http://www.flaglercounty.org), and follow "Flagler County Government" or "Flagler County Emergency Management" on Social Media. The county's social media team will provide updates through these official accounts:

#### Flagler County Government

- [Facebook.com/FlaglerCountyGovernment](https://www.facebook.com/FlaglerCountyGovernment)

#### Flagler County Emergency Management

- [Facebook.com/FlaglerEOC](https://www.facebook.com/FlaglerEOC)
- [Twitter.com/FlaglerEOC](https://twitter.com/FlaglerEOC)
- [Instagram.com/FlaglerEOC](https://www.instagram.com/FlaglerEOC)

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