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REDLAND

Guided tour offers a taste of farm life

The AGRI-Council Farm Tour will bring attendees to two fish farms, two ornamental nurseries and on a tomato-picking. A luncheon will honor the Finocchiaro and Talarico families

By Jessica Kirschner

Special to The Miami Herald

Each year, the AGRI-Council Farm Tour highlights different aspects of the agricultural community and its leaders.

This year, the guided tour on Feb. 27 will take participants to two fish farms and two ornamental nurseries. The day will end with a tomato-picking.

"It's an educational tour, not just a fundraiser," said Diane Massucci, secretary for AGRI-Council.

The tour will kick off at 8 a.m. at the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agriculture Cooperative Extension, at 18710 SW 288th St. in the Redland.

It will run until 3 p.m.

The tour will also include the 12:30 p.m. Pioneer Agriculturist luncheon at the Redland Golf and Country Club. It will honor pioneers, directors, board members, scholarship recipients and science fair winners.

The Finocchiaro and Talarico families will be the honored pioneers for this year's luncheon.

"We look for pioneers, people who have been farming for a long time," Massucci said.

She said the Finocchiaro and Talarico families operate the F and T farms together.

They have been farming together since the 1920s.

The families have been lucky with children wanting to carry on the farming tradition, Massucci said.

"It's unusual for kids to want to farm because normally they want to do other things, but they are just a farming family," she said.

The families are involved in the farming community, donating time, money and produce to different programs, Massucci said.

"They are a very giving family," she said.

They are part of a farm community who work together, she added.

They need to: farmers face many challenges, including water restrictions, encroaching development and climate changes, according to the Dade County Farm Bureau.

"Farming is a temperamental career," Massucci said.

- **What:** The annual Farm Tour of the Dade County AGRI-Council
- **Where:** The tour starts at the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agriculture Cooperative Extension, 18710 SW 288 St., the Redland
- **When:** 8 a.m. Feb. 27
- **Cost:** Reserved tickets for the tour and luncheon cost \$30 per person; luncheon only tickets cost \$20. Attendees without reservations, \$40
- **Information:** Registration forms are available at the Dade County Farm Bureau, 1850 Old Dixie Hwy., Homestead, or at the UF Cooperative Extension office. It also can be requested by e-mailing dcfb6@bellsouth.net, or calling 305-248-1624.