



## IRB Informed Consent

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### TEMPLATE: COMPACT CONSENT FORM – English

Version Date: 7-16-2021

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### Consent to Participate in Research

#### Basic Study Information

Title of the Project: Socially Disadvantaged/Underserved, Minority, and Veterans Farmers and Ranchers Master Farmer Educational Training Series

Principal Investigator: Angela McKenzie-Jakes, Ph.D., Florida A&M University  
Co PI: Gilbert Queeley, Ph. D., Florida A&M University

#### Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to be part of a research study through the Cooperative Extension Program at Florida A&M University (FAMU). This consent form will help you in choosing whether or not to participate in the study. Feel free to ask if anything is not clear in this consent document.

#### What is the study about and why are we doing it?

The purpose of the study is to allow researchers and extension personnel at FAMU to gain an in-depth understanding of the barriers or risks minorities or veteran farmers may encounter in farming. The results from this inquiry will enable extension personnel to develop the appropriate training programs to help minority and veteran farmers in Florida improve the profitability and sustainability of their small farm enterprises. The data from this study will also be used to develop publications to further assist farmers and extension educators in Florida and from other states.

#### What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to participate for *15-20 days during a 12-month period*.

#### Expectations from Research Participation:

The research participants in this study must be willing to:

- 1.) Participate in one focus group interview session (*60 - 90 minutes [1 day]. Activity will take place at one of the research sites.*)
- 2.) Verify the accuracy of their comments in the interview transcripts and the PI's interpretation of their data, (*1 hour*). *Activity will take place over the phone.*



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- 3.) Allow FAMU extension personnel to make two visits to their farms to identify the barriers and risks the SUMVFRs encounter before and after the training program  
*Activity - one hour per visit*
- 4.) Be willing to participate in the study and attend training classes (11-15 days).  
*Activities will take place either online or in-person at the FAMU research and extension center in Quincy, FL at the producer's discretion.*

The activities mentioned above will allow the researcher to do the following:

- 1.) Validate the findings from the study.
- 2.) Assist farmers in reducing the barriers and risks they encounter in farming.
- 3.) Determine if the participants still require further assistance.
- 4.) Identify if the program requires adjustment or refining to meet the needs of future class participants.

### **Step1 (Start):**

#### Interviewing Process:

To participate in this study, you must sign the Informed Consent form and send it back to the Angela McKenzie-Jakes (PI) five days before their scheduled interview. One focus group interview (5-8 participants) will be scheduled in the extension office located at one of the research sites (extension office in Jackson, Suwannee or Marion counties). You will report to the office closest to your residence. Each focus group interview will be held for 60 - 90 minutes, and the PI will ask each group *ten interview questions*. The questions will be semi-structured, open-ended, and non-leading but focused on addressing the phenomena (Creswell, 2013).

The PI and graduate student will also use *observation records* during the interviewing session. The records will include a space to record the atmosphere of the interview room and the extension building. The document will also have an area to record the participant's body language, mood, voice inflections, and other noteworthy observations. The PI will record the interview sessions on her cell phone. She will also bring another recorder as a backup audio device. The interviews will be recorded on an audio device to accomplish the following:

1. Check for accuracy and clarity in the transcripts from the interviews.
2. Allow the PI to focus more on listening to the information revealed during the interviews.
3. End the interviews at the agreed-upon time by minimizing disruptions by asking the participants to repeat what they said.



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4. Review the recordings and correlate the observation notes with the voice pitch and tone used by the participant during the interviews.
5. Record any relevant quotes accurately.
6. Reduce the time required to verify the content of the transcripts from the interview.

*Activity Hosted Where:* Extension Service Office at the selected research site

*Perform Activity:* PI and graduate student

*Time required:*

- 60-90 minutes for the interview on the scheduled date

### Step 2 (1 month after interview session):

#### Farm Visits:

The PI, Co-PIs, and the extension agent will conduct two farm visits on each participant's farm (must be participants from the study). The first visit will occur before any *formal training* to assess which agricultural practices the research participants are currently implementing on their farm, assess what risks they may be encountering, and provide consultation if needed. Six months to 12 months after the training classes, a second farm visit will be scheduled at the farmer's discretion to assess the overall impact of the training program on the farmer and assess which agricultural practices were adopted on their farm and which were not and why? The investigators will also identify any new barriers the research participants face from adopting new agricultural practices on their farms and identify which barriers remain an issue and why. The observations will be recorded in field notes (notebook) and the *risk assessment form* will be used at this time. This information will be vital in designing future training initiatives for farmers at FAMU and other 1890 Cooperative Extension Programs.

*Activity Hosted Where:* Each participant's farm

*Perform Activity:* Extension Agent, PI, and Co-PIs

*Time required:*

- 60-90 minutes (2 days) for farm visit and consultation before the training classes begin and after the training has ended.

*Instrument:* The Risk Assessment Instrument

### Step 3 (late summer):



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### Extension Training Classes (Master Farmer Educational Training Series)

1. Based on the findings from the *Needs Assessment Instrument* the results from the study will help to develop the appropriate education information to include in the training program.
2. Research participants and non-research participants will be invited to participate in the *11-day* training course that will take place over a two-three month period.  
*Activity Hosted Where:* The farmer will have an option to take the class online, in-person at the FAMU Research and Extension Center in Quincy, FL or through a hybrid venue. The hybrid venue will consist of taking the classes online and participating in hands-on activities at the Quincy facility.

*Perform Activity:* Extension Agent, PI, key personnel and Co-PIs

*Time required:*

- 60 minutes/class for training. The training will include field day, and farm tours. Based on previous extension training initiatives, it is estimated that there will be appropriately 11-15 for all the exercises planned.

*Instrument:* The pre/posttests and evaluation instrument will not be developed until the results of the *Needs Assessment Survey* has been analyzed.

### **How long will this study take and how many people will be in the study?**

Participation in this study will take over 15-20 days over a 12-month period and include 15-24 participants in the study.

### **What risks and discomforts might you experience from being in this study?**

There are some risks you might experience from being in this study. They are [describe specific risks and indicate what the study team will do to minimize those risks].

#### Research Activities:

The risk to the participants in this study is minimal. However, since you know or may not know the other farmers contributing to this focus group interviewing session, the PI will still take every precaution to protect the participants identity.

#### Extension Activities:

During farm visits and training classes data will be collected from participants for (contact information) for reporting purposes, to add to the extension listserv, to contact you for future



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training so, this information will still be collected, but will not be shared with non-extension personnel. For reporting purposes, pseudonyms will be used instead of the participants actual name which is also mandated by the extension system of Florida.

### How could you benefit from this study?

You will receive a direct benefit from participating in this study. You will be able to attend free training classes from the Cooperative Extension Program at Florida A&M University. As a participant in this, you will receive free training classes from the Cooperative Extension Program at Florida A&M University. The benefits to society include the following:

1. Help develop the classes for the Master Farmer Educational Training Series to benefit SUMVFRs throughout the state of Florida
2. Serve as a model for other 1890 Cooperative Extension Programs in developing relevant training activities for SUMVFRs in their respective states.
3. Develop publications to further assist farmers and extension educators throughout the U.S. by filling in the gaps in the literature on SUMVFRs.

### What data will we collect from you?

As part of this study, we will collect [describe data being collected].

We will collect demographic information about you such as your race, age, gender and county that you reside in Florida. Furthermore, we will collect information from the questions we asked during the focus group interview (interview with 4-7 other farmers), and pre/posttests results after the training classes. During the farm visits will also collect data regarding your farm operation and the risk you may face when operating your farm business. We also want you to evaluate our training program to help us develop the best training program for farmers.

### How will we protect your information?

We will protect your information by assigning you a unique pseudonym (a fictitious name) which will also be used to identify their farm. During the interview sessions, the farmer's will wear a name tag with their unique pseudonym to allow the PI to identify the individual who made the response on the interview transcript. Thus, the farmer's actual name or farm will never be linked to any of their information from the interview or farm visits. The PI will also use their pseudonym to identify their farm in reports and other publications. The data will be stored on an internal drive on my computer, and an external drive will serve as a backup storage device. The PI will also keep the farmer's actual name and contact information in a separate file from your pseudonym on her computer and external drive to prevent any farmer from being identified. Therefore, your name and any other information that can directly identify you will be stored separately from the data collected as part of the project.

During farm visits and training classes data will be collected from the participants for the normal (contact information) reporting purposes required by the Cooperative Extension Program and to add to the extension listserv so, this information will still be collected, but will not be shared with



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non-extension personnel. For reporting purposes, pseudonyms will be used instead of the participants actual name which is also mandated by the extension system in Florida.

Information about you may be given to the following organizations, but never your personal information (i.e., name, address, contact information):

- The study sponsor and/or representative of the sponsor (i.e., grant agency)
- Representatives of FAMU Institutional Review Board

We will share your data with other researchers for future research studies that may be similar to this study or may be very different. The data shared with other researchers will not include information that can directly identify you. We also plan to publish the results of this study. To protect your privacy, we will not include any information that could directly identify you.

### **What will happen to the information we collect about you after the study is over?**

We will keep your research data to use for future research purposes. Your name and other information that can directly identify you will be destroyed at the end of this project.

### **How will we compensate you for being part of the study?**

We will compensate you by providing you free training from the Cooperative Extension Program at Florida A&M University. If you decide to withdraw from the research study before the or at end of the study, you will still be able to attend the training classes at no cost to you.

### **Your Participation in this Study is Voluntary**

It is totally up to you to decide to be in this research study. Participating in this study is voluntary. Your decision to participate will not affect your relationship with Florida A&M Cooperative Extension Program. You will not lose any benefits or rights you already had if you decide not to participate. Even if you decide to be part of the study now, you may change your mind and stop at any time. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer.

If you decide to withdraw before this study is completed. We would appreciate it if you could contact the PI of this study Angela McKenzie-Jakes by phone, text message, or email as soon as you have reached your decision.

### **Contact Information for the Study Team and Questions about the Research**



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By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. We will give you a copy of this document for your records. We will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

*I understand what the study is about and my questions so far have been answered. I agree to take part in this study.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Subject Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date

**Legally Authorized Representative Permission**

By signing this document, you are agreeing to the person's named below participation in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. We will give you a copy of this document for your records. We will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

*I understand what the study is about and my questions so far have been answered. I agree for [the person named below] to take part in this study.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Subject Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Legally Authorized Representative Name and Relationship to Subject

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date



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If you have any questions about this research, you may contact:

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### **Contact Information for Questions about Your Rights as a Research Participant**

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or wish to obtain information, ask questions, or discuss any concerns about this study with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact the following:

IRB Chairperson  
Dr. Angela Thornton  
Florida A&M University  
Institutional Review Board  
Room 308H SRC  
Tallahassee, FL 32307-3800  
850-412-5246

Please reference the protocol number found at the top of this document.