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August 25, 2017 Air Potato Challenge: Leaf Beetles Available for the Public

The UF/IFAS Indian River County Extension and the UF/IFAS Indian River Research and Education Center will be conducting an Air Potato Challenge event on August 25, 2017 between the hours of 1 – 4 p.m. Residents, and non-residents, are invited to come to the Extension office to learn more about invasive air potato and the air potato leaf beetle and pick up a supply of beetles for use on their properties. Preregistration is not required.

Air potato, a perennial twining vine that can smother desirable vegetation, is one of Florida's most problematic invasive plants. The air potato leaf beetle is a small but formidable enemy of this invasive plant. This beetle is bright red and black, about 1/3" long and has a big appetite for the air potato plant. The air potato leaf beetles are host-specific to air potato, which means they are not interested in feeding on other plants. The beetles chew through air potatoes leaves, leaving them riddled with holes, making it difficult for the plant to continue growing.

During this event, residents struggling with invasive air potato can come to the UF/IFAS Indian River County Extension office to learn more about this invasive pest plant and receive a supply of air potato leaf beetles for use on their properties. There is no charge for this program. The insects will only be available for pick up during this event. Residents are encouraged to bring a cutting of air potato for proper identification and confirmation.

What: Air Potato Challenge
Where: UF/IFAS Extension Indian River County
Address: IRC Administration Complex, 1800 27th St, (Bldg. B, 2nd Floor)
Date: August 25, 2017
Time: 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.
Costs: Free of charge
Registration: Not required.
Information: Call 772-226-4330