

A Safety Education Program Developed to Meet the Needs of the Alabama Green Industry

A media article by Jesse LaPrade

Just as agriculture in Alabama has shifted toward the “green industry,” the Alabama Cooperative Extension System’s safety education program was developed to meet those needs that comply with Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations. This agricultural segment is composed of nursery, greenhouse, turfgrass and sod, lawn and landscaping operations and retail businesses that sell plant materials and related products. It has been reported that there are 31,000 workers in these businesses and approximately 57,000 workers employed by “traditional” farming operations, which include production of cattle, poultry, and swine as well as row crop producers growing peanuts, soybeans, and cotton. With more than half of all agricultural workers in Alabama employed in the green industry and with OSHA regulating all of these businesses, it was natural to include a safety training program to address these needs, said Dr. Jesse LaPrade, the farm safety education coordinator for Extension. All horticultural business owners, managers and workers are invited to access Extension’s farm safety Web site for farm safety training that now includes a section just for the green industry. The Web site is found at <http://www.aces.edu/farmsafety>. All horticultural businesses and business organizations are invited to call their local Extension office for training assistance or call LaPrade at (334) 844-5533 or e-mail him at laprajc@auburn.edu.