

THE GREAT FLORIDA CATTLE DRIVE www.greatfloridacattledrive.org

PRESENTED BY THE FLORIDA AGRICULTURAL MUSEUM

Dear Parent or Educator,

December 4th through 10th 2022 this organization will drive 1000 head of cattle through some of the last of our state's historic cow country. The reason for this effort is to celebrate Florida's 500-year contribution to the cattle industry and vice versa. The first cattle and horses to set foot on this continent did so in the area of Ft. Myers in the year 1521. From that day to this, Florida has been a leader in America's cattle production.

Floridians can take pride in the fact that cowboy'n began in our state. We are the inheritors of a rich tradition and a "cow culture" which has given much to our state. Floridians are known as Crackers because of the sound of the whips of the cowmen. Florida cattle fed the starving sons of Dixie during the Civil War. Florida cattle traded for Spanish Doubloons allowed our economy to expand faster than most of the southern states during and after the reconstruction period.

Our Drive and the "Trails End Celebration" will highlight the history of the Sunshine state from pre-Columbian times to the present. We will have historic encampments each night upon the trail, including Spanish Colonial, 1880 cow camp, Civil war, and Timucuan. We will feature historians and storytellers, artists, authors, and interpreters of Florida history. The Seminole Tribe of Florida will have a large contingent of their members demonstrating native arts, cooking, dancing, and sharing their history which dovetails very closely with the cattle culture. It is recommended that school-age youngsters keep a journal and report back to fellow students and teachers, on their adventures during this wonderful reenactment. Camping will be primitive; transportation will be horse, wagon, or walking. Clothing will be period to the 1880s. The skills, arts, and crafts of the pioneers will be taught and explored.

Please consider excusing the absence of these students so they may avail themselves of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

From the Kingdom of the Cracker, I remain, Your Obedient Servant,

Doyle Conner Jr

Chairman, The Florida Cow Culture Preservation Committee