TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN SCIENCES
Cooperative Extension Program

Extension Education in
Fort Bend County

Making a difference in 2015

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The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating

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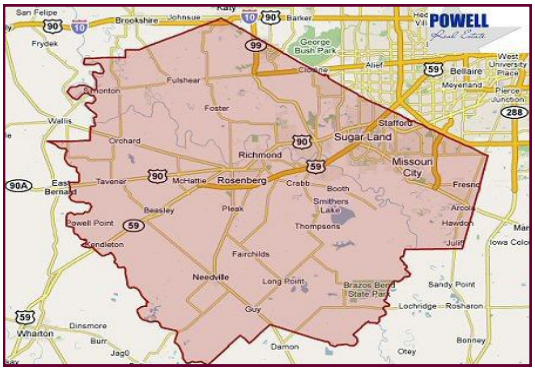
Extending Knowledge
Providing Solutions

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and its partners have long been dedicated to educating Texans. Extension education evolved nationwide under the 1914 federal Smith-Lever Act, which sought to extend university knowledge and agricultural research findings directly to the people. Ever since, Extension programs have addressed the emerging issues of the day, reaching diverse rural and urban populations.

In Texas, all 254 counties are served by a well-organized network of professional Extension educators and some 100,000 trained volunteers. Extension expertise and educational outreach pertain to the food and fiber industry, natural resources, family and consumer sciences, nutrition and health, and community economic development. Among those served across the state are hundreds of thousands of young people who benefit annually from Extension's 4-H and youth development programs.

Texans turn to Extension education for solutions. Extension agents and specialists respond not only with answers, but also with resources and services that result in significant returns on the public's investment. Extension programs are custom designed for each region of the state, with residents providing input and help with program delivery. Here are just a few highlights of Extension impacts as they relate to outcome and output program plans designed for Fort Bend County and its very diverse population.

Fort Bend County, TX
Founded – 1837
County Seat – Richmond
Total Area – 875 sq. mi.
Population – 685,345 (2015)
College Educated: 40.40%
Mean Household Income:
$112,893



Fort Bend County 2015Summary of AgriLife Educational Contacts

Educational Sessions Conducted - 1,333 (334 for youth)
Educational Session Contacts - 79,499 (29,733 for youth)
Contact Hours via Educational Sessions - 89,363.50
4-H Clubs - 29; 4-H Club Members - 585; 4-H Adult Leaders –110; Youth Leaders - 94
Youth Curriculum Enrichment Participants - 1,376
4-H Special Interest/Short Term - 39,137
Master Volunteers - 293
Texas Extension Education Club Members - 41
Total of Volunteers - 1,219
Total Volunteers Hours in Support of AgriLife in Fort Bend - 77,194
Value of Volunteer Hours to Fort Bend Citizens - $1,780,865.00
Direct Contacts (office/site visits & phone calls) - 6,702
Indirect Contacts (mass media—television, radio, newspaper) - 35,647
Newsletter/Mail/E-Mail Contacts - 95,052
Social Media Posts—4,151
Social Media Followers—31,808
eXtension ('*Ask the Experts*') - 468

Making a difference in2016

Table of Contents

2015 Fort Bend County Beef and Forage In-Depth Summary

Developed by John Gordy – Fort Bend County Extension Agent - Agriculture & Natural Resources
Supported by: Derrick Banks, Extension Agent-CEP-Agriculture & Natural Resources

RELEVANCE

Beef and forage production are vital to the agricultural industry in Fort Bend County. Beef and Forage producers make up a significant portion of the agriculture audience in Fort Bend County. Opportunities are needed for producers to come for education on current events and the latest in research and industry advancements. To meet the educational needs of Fort Bend County's beef and forage producers, the Ag-Hort Advisory Committee provides support and guidance for the development of livestock and forage related programs.

RESPONSE

To meet the needs of Fort Bend County Beef and Forage Producers, we hosted The South Texas Agricultural Symposium via technology. It covered topics including cattle genetics, factors affecting calf prices, the cow's digestive system, and Old World bluestem management options. Other educational events included the Beef Cattle Seminar in conjunction with the commercial heifer sale at the Fort Bend County Fair, and the Fort Bend County forage testing campaign, Hay Show, and Fall Forage Seminar. To address local pasture weed management needs, we initiated two pasture weed management result demonstrations – one targeting prairie indigo, and one targeting green flat sedge.

RESULTS

- The Fall Forage Seminar and Hay Show was held at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds on October 27. Fifty (50) forage producers and other members of the public attended. Several weeks prior to the Hay Show, producers submitted a total of 26 (26) hay samples to be subjected to a chemical analysis was performed by the Soil Testing Lab in College Station. At the Hay Show, entries were then evaluated by the audience, following a briefing on how to identify high quality forage. Awards were given to top three samples in two categories – bermudagrass and non-bermudagreass, based on the chemical analyses. Additionally, one sample in each category was awarded "People's Choice" as determined by participant judging.. The educational portion of the program included a presentation by County Extension Agents Derrick Banks and John Gordy covering pre- and post-harvest factors that affect the quality and interpreting the results of a forage analysis and, respectively.

Evaluation results from the Fort Bend County Hay Show are summarized in the table below:

Evaluation Responses	Percentage
Respondents that anticipated benefiting economically as a direct result of what they learned from the Fort Bend County Hay Show	86 %
Respondents that said the information and programs provided by Extension were quite or extremely valuable to them.	89 %
Respondents that probably or definitely intend to adopt forage testing to determine the quality of their hay	63 %
Participants that increased knowledge in at least one subject area	84 %

- The South Texas Agricultural Symposium was hosted at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds on April 14, with sixteen (16) participants in attendance. There was a 67% increase in knowledge of the management options for Old World bluestems and 68% of participants intend to change the way they manage invasive Old World bluestem grasses based on information learned at the symposium. The Beef Cattle Seminar was held on September 25, in conjunction with the commercial heifer sale at the Fort Bend County Fair. Dr. Tom Hairgrove provided an update on new regulations regarding the Veterinary Feed Directives and how that could affect livestock producers and individuals showing animals.

- The pasture weed management result demonstrations were conducted to help producers select herbicides for two potentially troublesome weeds – prairie indigo and green flat sedge. For the prairie indigo study, four herbicide-rate combinations, Cimarron Max, Milestone, GrazonNext HL, and Chaparral were applied in June. The plots were arranged in a randomized complete block design measuring 10 feet by 30 feet. The Prairie Indigo plots were rated for percent of control on July 8 (32days after treatment, DAT) and October 20 (135 DAT). GrazonNext HL and Cimarron Max provided the best control of prairie indigo at 32 DAT. For the green flat sedge study, three herbicide-rate combinations, Cimarron Max, GrazonNext HL, and 2,4-D were applied on October 28. The green flat sedge plot was evaluated on November 23 (26 DAT) with no difference in treatments detected. Both of these projects were designed to measure control over a period of one year and will be continued in 2016.

- In addition to the above mentioned programs, I include forage and livestock specific articles covering timely topics for our area, written by specialists, in my quarterly agriculture newsletter. Some of the articles covered bermudagrass stem maggot, establishing warm- and cool-season forages, and program announcements. The newsletter is distributed via Facebook, the county webpage, and hard copies and electronic copies are mailed to approximately 450 and 650 recipients, respectively.

FUTURE PLANS

We will continue to expand the livestock and forage program, adding additional applied research and result demonstration projects and adding programs.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
Special thanks to the following AgriLife Extension personnel for their time and expertise: Dr. Tom Hairgrove, Dr. Megan Clayton, Dr. Joe Pascha, and Dr. Tony Provin. In addition, appreciation is expressed to Ag-Hort Advisory Committee of Fort Bend County for their guidance and support of Extension programming conducted within the county.

2015 Fort Bend County Pesticide Safety Education

Developed by John Gordy – Fort Bend County Extension Agent - Agriculture & Natural Resources

RELEVANCE

Fort Bend County has 628 pesticide applicators licensed with the Texas Department of Agriculture. Private Pesticide Applicators are required to acquire fifteen (15) CEUs (continuing education units) every five years. Commercial and Non-Commercial Applicators are required to acquire 5 CEUs every year in order to renew their licenses. There is a substantial audience and need for Extension to provide the educational opportunities for these applicators to obtain their CEU credits. In addition, new applicators seek opportunities to take the certification course and test to obtain their license. Another important consideration is educating pesticide users to increase user safety and reduce environmental impacts.

RESPONSE

The Fort Bend County Office of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service offers two recertification courses that provide five (5) CEUs each with one 5-CEU program designed for Mosquito Control Professionals and several other CEU opportunities at field days and turn-row meetings. One of the 5-CEU events is in conjunction with the Fort Bend Regional Vegetable Conference. CEUs are also offered throughout the year at various seminars. Topics covered at events included sprayer calibration, drift management, pesticides and the environment, Integrated Pest Management of various weeds and insects, managing to reduce resistance development, and tactics for controlling feral hogs.

Additionally, five (5) private applicator trainings were provided periodically throughout the year. Information regarding pesticide labels and use – products, rates, pests, etc. – were included in the quarterly newsletter distributed to more than 460 clients via mail and more than 340 clients via e-mail for a total of more than 800 recipients.

RESULTS

Twenty-nine (29) individuals utilized the Fort Bend County Extension Office to attend the five (5) Private Pesticide Applicator training sessions with the goal of obtaining a Private Applicator License through the Texas Department of Agriculture. More than 130 Texas Department of Agriculture Pesticide License holders attended both the Vegetable Conference and December CEU events, each.

Retrospective post evaluations were used at the Fort Bend Row Crops Tour, Cotton Defoliation turn-row meeting, and December CEU Recertification program. Considering the training and continuing education required for licensed applicators, the increases in understanding for selected programs below are very good:

- 93% of Cotton Defoliation turn-row meeting attendees increased understanding of at least one topic area related to pesticide use and safety
- 89% of December Recertification attendees increased understanding of at least one topic area
- 81% of Fort Bend Row Crops Tour attendees increased understanding of at least one topic area related to pesticide use and safety
- 82% Increase in understanding of the importance of proper scouting methods as part of an IPM approach to managing sugarcane aphid in grain sorghum was reported by Sugarcane Aphid turn-row meeting attendees
- 72% Increase in understanding of the importance of using multiple modes of action to manage pesticide resistance reported by Fort Bend Row Crops Tour attendees

FUTURE PLANS

We will continue to offer relevant, up-to-date educational opportunities for pesticide license holders in 2016. I am considering offering CEU opportunities, either early in the morning or at lunch, periodically throughout the year to increase the availability of CEUs to clients in Fort Bend County.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to the following AgriLife Extension personnel for their presentations and expertise: Dr. Mark Matocha, Dr. Robert Bowling, Dr. Tom Isakeit, Dr. Josh McGinty, Dr. Gaylon Morgan, Phoenix Rogers, Erfan Vafaie, Tyler Fitzgerald, and Christian Malstzki. In addition, appreciation is expressed to the Row Crops and Ag-Hort Advisory Committees of Fort Bend County for their guidance and support of Pesticide-related Extension programming conducted within the county.

2015 Fort Bend County Row Crop In-Depth Summary

Developed by John Gordy – Fort Bend County Extension Agent - Agriculture & Natural Resources

RELEVANCE

Row Crop production is approximately an $80 million dollar industry in Fort Bend County, accounting for about 78% of agriculture-related sales in 2012 (NASS Agriculture Census). The large majority of the field crop production is conducted as a dryland enterprise, thus, more susceptible to drought and climatic irregularities. Profitability is affected directly for all producers by market/price changes. Specific local needs include selection of varieties, use of best management practices for fertility and disease and insect management, especially including sugarcane aphid, a new pest of grain sorghum.

RESPONSE

The Fort Bend County Office of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, working with the Fort Bend Row Crop Committee and other cooperators and partners, provides educational programming, result demonstrations, and applied research results to help producers make the best decisions regarding row crop management. With sugarcane aphid being a new pest in grain sorghum, which became the most planted crop in Fort Bend County in 2015, we initiated applied research plots with Extension Entomologist Robert Bowling to evaluate insecticide efficacy, use of adjuvants to increase efficacy, and economic thresholds as a means to establish best management practices for sugarcane aphid in sorghum. To further reinforce proper management, we held an aphid scouting turn-row meeting in May to show producers what to look for and how to scout for sugarcane aphid.

Other result demonstrations include the use of dicyandiamide, a denitrification inhibitor, for nitrogen loss management in grain sorghum, the economics of treating for cotton root rot in cotton, and aflatoxin in corn. Additionally, we continued the annual corn, cotton, and sorghum variety trials organized by Dr. Ronnie Schnell and Dr. Gaylon Morgan. All of these were highlighted at the Fort Bend Row Crops tour which was held in June. We planned on hosting the crops tour at Alan and Lisa Stasney's, but because of Tropical Storm Bill, we had to host the entire meeting at the Rosenberg Civic Center and have "virtual tours" of the field locations.

Because of the challenging challenge conditions experienced in 2015, a replicated cotton defoliation research plot was established with help from Dr. Gaylon Morgan and Dale Mott, to provide producers

with an idea of what to expect regarding leaf drop and opening of bolls. We also hosted a meeting to discuss expected results and address any questions producers might have regarding products and rates.
I have also begun putting out a newsletter. I have circulated three newsletters – in March, June, and October – using articles written by specialists as well as including material that I have written covering timely topics for our area including crop insect updates and program announcements. The newsletter is distributed via Facebook, and the county webpage, and hard copies and electronic copies are mailed to approximately 450 and 650 recipients, respectively.

RESULTS

There were thirty-eight producers in attendance for the sugarcane aphid scouting meeting in May. Participants were evaluated using a retrospective post evaluation and selected results of included below:

- 46% Increase in understanding and comfort level with scouting method for sugarcane aphid
- 51% Increase in knowledge of threshold level for sugarcane aphid management
- 45% Increase in knowledge of product rates and expected results for management of sugarcane aphid

There were thirty-six producers in attendance at the Fort Bend Row Crops Tour. Participants were evaluated using a retrospective post evaluation. 81% of respondents indicated that they had increased knowledge in at least one are and 65% of respondents indicated that they planned on adopting one or more practice or technology that was discussed at the meeting. Below is a summary of evaluation results regarding intention to adopt specific practices:

- 71% intend to use recommended corn management practices for aflatoxin and foliar diseases.
- 82% intend to use extension variety information and recommendations when selecting varieties.
- 72% intend to use multiple modes of action to manage pesticide resistance
- 82% intend to use scouting to manage sugarcane aphid in grain sorghum

Respondents at the Row Crops Tour indicated an expected economic impact of $299,001 across cotton, corn, sorghum, and soybean acres. Following the program, publications and links relating to topics that were discussed were shared on Facebook, posted on the county website, and sent via e-mail to row crop subscribers of our e-mail database, to reach those producers that missed the meeting due to the unexpected weather events that took place.

There were thirty-six producers in attendance at the cotton defoliation meeting and participants were evaluated using a retrospective post evaluation. 93% of respondents increased knowledge in at least one subject area. Results for adoption of practices are below:

- 80.0% Intend to use harvest aid products based on the cotton harvest aid guide & local AgriLife Extension trials
- 87.5% Intend to time harvest aid applications based on crop maturity criteria as defined by AgriLife Extension guidelines

With the results from the applied research and result demonstrations, we plan to put together a booklet and provide it to producers at the winter crops meeting scheduled in January.

FUTURE PLANS

We will continue to expand the row crop program adding additional applied research and result demonstration projects and adding programs, including a winter crops meeting in January.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to the following AgriLife Extension and Research personnel for their time and expertise: Dr. Gaylon Morgan, Dale Mott, Dr. Tom Isakeit, Dr. Josh McGinty, Dr. Robert Bowling, Dr. Ronnie Schnell, and Dr. Mike Brewer. In addition, appreciation is expressed to the Fort Bend Row Crop Committee for their guidance and support of Extension programming conducted within the county.

2015 Coastal Prairie Master Naturalist Outreach Summary

Developed by John Gordy, County Extension Agent - Agriculture & Natural Resources, Fort Bend
Supported by: Derrick Banks, Extension Agent-CEP-Agriculture & Natural Resources

RELEVANCE

Fort Bend County has a population of more than 650,000 with an increasing percentage of those residents living in residential areas and many moving into semirural areas for the first time. Many of these individuals have interests in wildlife and nature. Texas Master Naturalists are a group of volunteers that are interested in natural aspect s of the local geography including prairies, wildlife, fish, and other things. Our local chapter, the Coastal Prairie Master Naturalists, is a group of volunteers that work to educate themselves and the general public about such topics.

SUMMARY

Master Naturalists are local volunteers in the community who work with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Texas Parks and Wildlife to increase the availability of nature- and wildlife-related information and improve quality of life through various volunteer service projects. Each year, new volunteers complete 40+ hours of classroom instruction over several months in order to become certified as a Texas Master Naturalist. Existing volunteers complete advanced training and volunteer service every year to maintain their status as Master Naturalist Volunteers.

Coastal Prairie Master Naturalists are involved in regular public outreach programs at Seabourne Creek Park in Rosenberg, where they host bird hikes and other events such as their Annual Prairie Heritage Festival. At the Prairie Heritage Festival, they have educational experiences and programs addressing wildlife including birds, mammals, fish, and reptiles, as well as native plants and prairie restoration. This year the festival was hosted on November 7 and there were 241 members of the general public that attended.

Including the Prairie Heritage Festival, Coastal Prairie Master Naturalists participated in more than 30 public events with more than 1,100 people attending. Additionally, Master Naturalists set up a booth and participate in AG'tivity Barn, our county agriculture awareness event in conjunction with the Fort Bend County Fair. This year, more than 1,100 elementary age students from school districts across the county attended the week long AG'tivity Barn.

In 2015, 18 new members completed the training class and will be working toward earning full membership in order to continue providing nature-related programming for the citizens of Fort Bend County. The Coastal Prairie Master Naturalist chapter has more than 100 volunteers that contributed over 7,250 volunteer hours which have economic benefit of more than $178,000 to Fort Bend County.

VALUE

Wildlife Management

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service programs about fish and wildlife teach participants how to effectively manage these valuable resources. Hunting, fishing, and wildlife watching contribute approximately $8 billion to the state's economy annually, supporting 139,000 jobs in Texas and enhancing the quality of life of all residents.

2015 Horse Task Force Outreach Summary

Developed by John Gordy, County Extension Agent - Agriculture & Natural Resources, Fort Bend
Supported by: Derrick Banks, Extension Agent-CEP-Agriculture & Natural Resources

RELEVANCE

Fort Bend County is among the top counties considering horse ownership. With the increase in horse ownership, the need for equine education has grown. New horse owners need guidance on health and nutrition, basic horsemanship and general care, while more experienced horse owners are interested in working horses, pleasure riding, barrel racing, jumping, and other disciplines. The Fort Bend Horse Task Force is an all-volunteer organization that works in cooperation with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension to bring equine educational opportunities to both youth and adults of Fort bend and surrounding counties. Throughout the years, the task force has provided seminars and clinics that addressed nutrition, proper utilization of tack, basic equine medical care, saddle fitting, equine massage, theft prevention, basic and advanced horsemanship, barrel racing, sorting, dressage, jumping, working cow, reigning, pleasure, trail and an annual two-day summer horsemanship clinic for youth. Our knowledge base consists of local clinicians and equine specialists, as well as clinicians from all over Texas and other states.

SUMMARY

The Horse Task Force in Fort Bend County provides assistance and expertise in planning and implementing educational efforts to meet the needs of county horse owners. In 2015, the Horse Task Force held five horse-related programs including Working Cow, Hunter/Jumper, Barrel Racing, GymKhana, and Reigning and Fundamentals clinics. Our goal in the county is to provide professional knowledge and assistance to help enhance the knowledge of inexperienced and experienced horse owners across the area. The Hunter/Jumper clinic, held in December was the largest program, which encompassed three days of training providing 26 experienced riders from the area, across the state and out of state with a high quality educational experience.

In 2015, the 12 Fort Bend Horse Task Force members volunteered more than 400 hours providing five educational opportunities to 66 youth and adults. In 2016, we will continue to provide educational opportunities, with an attempt to expand opportunities for new and inexperienced horse owners.

2015 Fort Bend County – Backyard Basics Programming

Developed by James Boone Holladay, County Extension Agent – Horticulture, Fort Bend

RELEVANCE

There is a growing statewide and national interest from consumers to learn more about where their food comes from and how it is prepared and preserved. Consumers are also showing greater interest in returning to some of those basics more often associated with rural living – many of which have been forgotten or overlooked in the hustle and bustle of today's world. Also, in response to major issues of diabetes and weight gain in both adults and youth, families are looking outside for activities to keep them engaged and offer easy forms of exercise.

RESPONSE

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Fort Bend County, along with the Fort Bend County Master Gardeners, have developed opportunities for the people of our region to learn more about getting back to homegrown and homemade basics. The Backyard Basics programs and workshops, conducted throughout the year, support healthy living through home-based food production, preparation, and preservation. The programs are offered at a nominal cost and are also a great way for people to reconnect with nature and to save money by recycling or conserving resources, including the water they use for their gardens and landscapes. By growing their own vegetables, people not only get enjoyment from the healthful outdoor activity of gardening, they also know where their food came from and how it was produced.

The calendar series of programs offered in Fort Bend County included: The Spring Food Garden, Preserving Tomatoes, Pickling & Canning, Freezing & Drying, Salsa & Relish, Gardening for the Wild, Earth-Kind Landscapes, The Fall Food Garden, Composting Made Easy, Jams & Jellies, Grilling, and Fruit & Nut Production. The scheduling for each of these programs varied as to the nature of the event. Some were simply instructor-led learning, while others were hands-on workshops. The time length of each event ranged from 2 hours to 4 hours, based on program format, as well.

RESULTS

Two-hundred forty-five (245) registered guests participated in the 2015 series of Backyard Basics programs. This represents a 33% increase in attendance from 2014. Results gained through formal evaluations and verbal feedback confirm that this series was well received and that people are eager to

see continued efforts and new offerings in the future. The below evaluation results from a first type program shows the need for and success of these courses.

Activity Title: Backyard Basics Fall Food Garden
Activity Date: August 15, 2015
Number of Participants: 37

Overall:

- 96% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the activity.

Content:

- 97% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the information being what they expected.
- 100% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the information being accurate.
- 100% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the information being easy to understand.
- 97% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the timeliness of information given on each topic.
- 97% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the helpfulness of the information in decisions about your own situation.
- 97% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the relevance of the examples used.

Instructor(s):

- 100% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the instructor's knowledge level on the subject.
- 100% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the instructor's responses to questions.

FUTURE PLANS

Despite continued success with the Backyard Basics program in 2015, the horticulture program in Fort Bend County, with support of the Fort Bend County Master Gardeners, is moving away from this program theme. We are in active plans to create a new plan of work entitled *Earth-Kind Home Landscapes*. This program will include some of the topics under the umbrella of Backyard Basics, but will move away from food preservation and food preparation components, focusing mainly on home landscape horticulture guidance.

2015 Fort Bend County – Sustainable Agriculture

Developed by James Boone Holladay, County Extension Agent – Horticulture, Fort Bend

RELEVANCE

In general, revenues from traditional agricultural enterprises have declined steadily over the past 5 years. This has forced many producers to diversify their operations to maintain profitability. During this time several horticultural crops have played a significant role in the diversification process. As crop land in Fort Bend County becomes transferred to residential use and increases in large acreage land prices continue, small acreage operators may find their niche in the region.

In years 2013 and 2014, the horticulture unit in Fort Bend County adopted a series in Small Acreage Horticultural Crops web programs. Participant turnout was lower than expected. A short grower survey noted a lack in relevance and the regular time commitment to attend. Despite this outcome, producers are still asking for guidance from Texas A&M AgriLife Extension in areas of education and training.

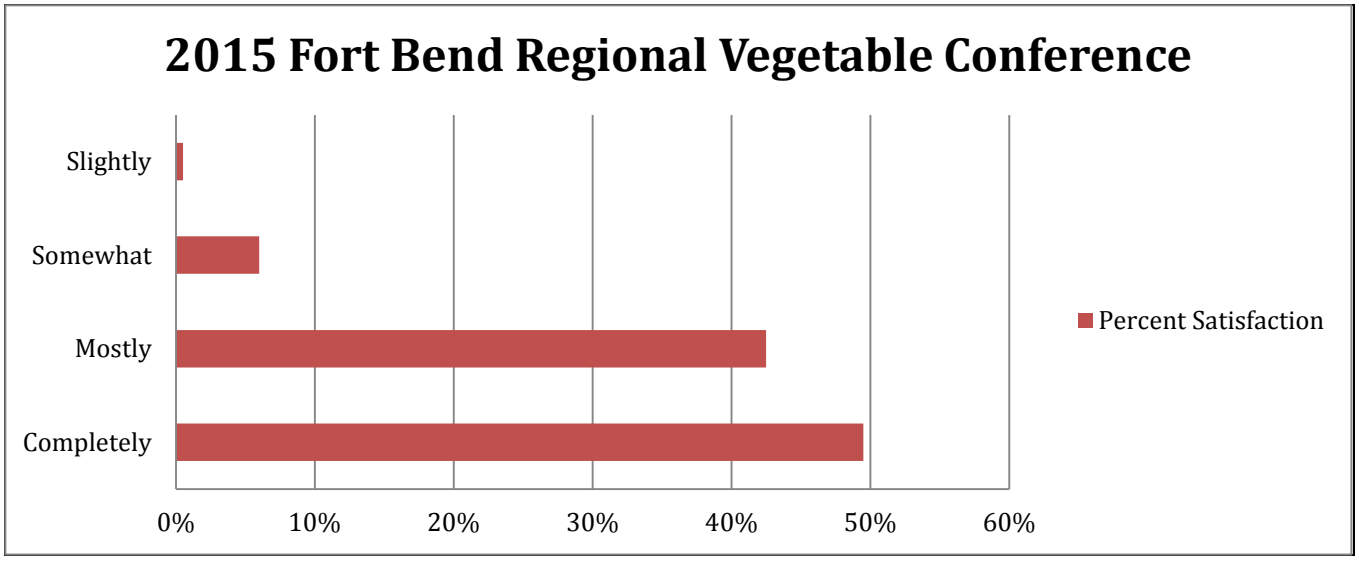
RESPONSE

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, working in coordination with the Texas division of Southern SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research & Extension), has brought forth efforts to assist in identifying and evaluating diversification strategies for risk mitigation and improved economic sustainability using a variety of small acreage horticultural crops.

In response to survey results, we have discontinued the web series in Fort Bend County and put greater emphasis on our annual vegetable production conference. In addition to this, we have implemented a diversified sustainable agriculture field day in partnership with the Houston Food Policy Workgroup. This traditional style field day is an event where, beyond our education and training, participant producers can share tips and timely information to help guide economic decisions.

RESULTS

The Fort Bend Regional Vegetable Conference is by far the most notable event within this plan of work. Participants ranged from homeowner gardeners up to commercial vegetable producers. Though the audience was quite diverse, the overall program satisfaction was quite high. See below as over 93 percent of participants were either mostly or completely satisfied with the program.



Beyond very high satisfaction ratings, evaluation results show the true nature of this being a regional program. Participants represented **19** counties along the Upper Gulf Coast region!

Which county do you represent?

- 117- Fort Bend
- 9- Waller
- 23- Harris
- 5- Austin
- 16- Wharton
- 21- Brazoria
- 1- Galveston
- 13- Colorado
- 13- Other Counties: 1-Angelina; 1-Gonzales; 1-Jackson; 1-Liberty; 2-Burleson; 2-Grimes; 1-Jefferson; 1-McLennan; 1-Fayette; 1-Houston; and 1-Lee

FUTURE PROGRAM EFFORTS

Interest in new and expanding opportunities in sustainable agriculture continues to rise in Fort Bend County. With this rise, we should see an even greater interest in expanded programs concerning sustainable agriculture. Regionally, we have plans in 2016 to create a dynamic program area committee for sustainable agriculture that will create more partnerships, assist with program marketing, and develop a more robust offering of activities for these new and expanding audiences.

2015 Fort Bend County – Urban X7 Texas Water Star

Developed by James Boone Holladay, County Extension Agent – Horticulture, Fort Bend

RELEVANCE:

In Fort Bend County the need to conserve water is a "must." Why?

- Because for more than 15 years, Fort Bend has been ranked in the top **3%** of the nation's fastest growing counties – in economic excellence, in population, and in highest quality of life;
- Because Fort Bend is the number one fastest growing county of the ten largest counties in Texas;
- Because the current population of 643,408 is projected to top 1,000,000 by 2020, representing an annual 5% growth rate;
- Because Fort Bend had 208,444 single family housing units in 2012 and is estimated to currently have 225,584 units; and
- Because all have landscapes that require water – a lot of water!

Fort Bend County's yearly rainfall is 48 inches, but we received only 20.4 inches in 2011. Needless to say as a result, water conservation is no longer an option, it is now a requirement. With water being a diminishing natural resource, it is important that we not only conserve water, but collect and use rainwater when and where possible. So, the challenge in Fort Bend County is to have a low input landscape that adds natural beauty to our local environment while conserving water, regardless of the amount of rainfall we may receive.

RESPONSE

The Horticulture unit in Fort Bend continued to put forth emphasis on water education this year. Local homeowners learned how to adopt new technology and recommended management practices to improve water conservation in landscapes. Homeowners will also improve water quality by using recommended fertilizer and pesticides application practices. What was done?

- Advanced training of Master Gardener volunteers (2) in Irrigation Efficiencies. These have in turn given several presentations on water conservation to the public;
- We further developed our water conservation topic given during our 2015 Master Gardener training;
- We continued the Home Water Conservation workshop in Sugar Land that focused on methods to conserve water in the landscape;

- We implemented a new Home Water Conservation workshop teaming with the City of Missouri City and Missouri City Green focusing on methods to conserve water in the landscape;
- We worked in collaboration with the City of Richmond and Keep Richmond Beautiful on several new demonstration garden sites; and
- We teamed with the City of Sugar Land, the North Fort Bend Water Authority, the Houston Gulf Coast Irrigators Association, and the Texas Nursery & Landscape Association to develop a committee to help develop programming aimed at teaching local landscape professionals, water districts, and licensed irrigators about issues around water.

RESULTS

- Water conservation, low water-use landscaping, rainwater harvesting and similar topics were added to a range of educational programs, agent or volunteer driven;
- Continuation of 3-hour class on "Water Conservation" within the 2015 Master Gardener Short Course;
- The Home Water Conservation Workshop held in Sugar Land in October that focused on methods to conserve water in the landscape had **41** Fort Bend County Citizens in attendance;
- The Home Water Conservation Workshop held in Missouri City in October that focused on methods to conserve water in the landscape had **22** Fort Bend citizens in attendance; and
- Though a great partnership was established by the creation of our local Texas Water Star committee, low registration turnout was the deciding factor to postpone efforts of moving forward with a green industry conference for 2015.

Clientele feedback indicated overall satisfaction was good, and that individuals in Fort Bend are concerned about water issues and continue to look for information on how to conserve water. Feedback indicated that most people who attended programs considered water issues to be one of the most important. Individuals were pleased with Extension's educational efforts but also would like for that education to extend to homeowners' associations and other regulatory groups. It is quite evident in Fort Bend County that many homeowners' associations are still requiring more turf, over-sized trees, and seasonal color that require more water and general maintenance than slow-growing, native plant materials.

Activity Title: Home Landscape Workshop – Sugar Land

Activity Date: October 17, 2015

Number of Participants: 41

Percentages based on 25 respondents to the survey (Response rate = 61%).

Overall:

- 100% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the activity.

Content:

- 100% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the information being accurate.
- 100% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the information being easy to understand.
- 100% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the timeliness of information given on each topic.

- 100% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the helpfulness of the information in decisions about your own situation.
- 100% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the relevance of the examples used.

Instructor(s):

- 100% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the instructor's knowledge level on the subject.

Anticipated Changes & Economic Impact:

- 81% of respondents anticipate benefiting economically as a direct result of what they learned from this Extension activity.

FUTURE PLANS

With the ongoing implementation of the Texas A&M Agrilife Extension's Urban X7 Initiative, we will continue our efforts in water focused programming. This program includes a range of educational events that aim to drastically change the attitudes and behaviors of local citizens on the impact of water use in our community and water quality on our environment. Educational methods within Texas Water Star include irrigation system evaluations, a number of site demonstrations throughout the community, several homeowner water conservation workshops, and conference programs targeting licensed landscape irrigators and landscape grounds managers examining a multitude of issues pertaining to water quantity and quality. Plans are underway to team up with several local municipalities (Cities of Sugar Land, Katy, Meadows Place, Missouri City) to partner in hosting these events.

2015 Fort Bend County – Master Gardener Programming

Developed by James Boone Holladay, County Extension Agent – Horticulture, Fort Bend

RELEVANCE

Fort Bend County's population is one of the fastest growing in the nation. Increased population gives rise to urbanization. Fort Bend County faces a dilemma in creating a definition as either an urban or rural county. In actuality it is both. Fort Bend County encompasses over 560,000 acres. More than 100,000 acres are in agricultural production while the rest is considered urban. Urban homeowners make up over 85% of the population, making home landscapes an important part of the horticultural makeup.

Many of these homeowners are unaware of the consequences of improperly using lawn and garden products, such as fertilizers, pesticides and other treatments. Many also are unaware of Statewide issues concerning water availability and how traditional landscape practices lead to the waste of this precious resource. Therefore, it is important for Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service to conduct educational programming to inform the community about acceptable horticultural practices and consequences of the use of improper practices.

RESPONSE

The Master Gardener program educates participants on sound horticultural practices with the intent of creating good environmental stewards. This program requires participants to attend fifty hours of classroom instruction. Classroom instruction introduces the participants to the basics of horticulture including trees, perennials, landscape design, propagation, turf, entomology and pathology, and the Earth-Kind® approach. The Master Gardener training course is an intense one-month course with classes held two days each week. Twenty-eight (28) individuals enrolled in the Fort Bend County Fall 2015 Master Gardener class. Class members receive a tremendous amount of education and in return are expected to give fifty hours of volunteer service to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service to become a certified Texas Master Gardener.

Beyond the annual training of new master volunteers, we build better value into keeping Master Gardeners as active volunteers within the program. With an ongoing attrition rate of 88%, we continue to hold a complete active membership of **210** Fort Bend Master Gardeners. To continue this level, we have also developed 6 Advanced Training programs specifically for active members to help

expand their knowledge and confidence and to encourage them to contribute in more meaningful ways.

RESULTS

The 28 individuals enrolled in the Fort Bend County Fall 2015 Master Gardener class will contribute a minimum of 830 cumulative hours of volunteer service in the coming year. For each consecutive year they remain certified, they also contribute a minimum of 36 hours of additional education and support.

The associate class of 2015, if all remain active, would contribute an additional minimum of 821 hours of volunteer service, though in reality they contribute exponentially more. The knowledge they each gain will help them serve as localized stewards in their neighborhoods and other ranges of influence. This greatly helps Texas A&M AgriLife Extension in fulfilling its goal of reaching and educating the diverse population of Fort Bend County.

FUTURE PLANS

Previously reported data shows that our Master Gardener Training class is increasing the participants' knowledge on most topics presented. However, it is duly noted that we must be continually vigilant in improving our sessions, especially on certain topics to keep up with the knowledge of those participating in the class. Measures will be taken to ensure that our classes reach a greater depth and clarity of topic to ensure our participants receive a good understanding of the information. This includes development of a structured complete program evaluation instrument.

The Master Gardener program is a huge success in Fort Bend County. The class will continue to be offered in the Fall of the year. Continued emphasis will be made to offer more specialized training to those volunteers who wish to attain higher specialist certifications. Fort Bend County Texas A&M AgriLife Extension will utilize these specialist volunteers to assist in the planning and implementation of additional educational programs within our community.

2015 Fort Bend County – General Horticulture Programming

Developed by James Boone Holladay, County Extension Agent – Horticulture, Fort Bend

KEY EDUCATIONAL METHODS:

- ***Fort Bend Gardener* Quarterly Horticulture Newsletter.**
  - Writer and editor of seasonal horticulture newsletters. Distribution estimated at **2500** users.

- **Fort Bend Beekeepers Association.**
  - Serve as association advisor, host monthly meetings, and distribute monthly newsletters.

- **Fort Bend Orchard Production Committee.**
  - Serve as committee advisor and assist to implement annual programming efforts.

- **Fort Bend Demonstration Gardens.**
  - Serve as advisor and guide for ongoing and newly applied result demonstrations.

- **Coastal Prairie Master Naturalists.**
  - Recruit member content for horticulture newsletter and assist in educational programming.

- **Fort Bend Ag/Hort Advisory Committee.**
  - Host and facilitate meetings, agenda content, and engage in regular activities.

- **Fort Bend AG'Tivity Barn Planning Committee.**
  - Lead for horticulture-related youth activities, garden demonstrations, and water education.

- **Texas SARE Advisory Committee.**
  - Serve as active member and provide input for future State-wide programming efforts.

- **Houston Food Policy Workgroup.**

- Serve as active co-chair of workgroup and plan calendar of ongoing programming efforts.

- **Partnerships with Local Municipalities.**
  - Develop and maintain ongoing partnerships with the Cities of Sugar Land, Missouri City, Katy, Meadows Place, Richmond, and Fulshear.

- **Assist and Support Neighboring County Offices.**
  - Provided horticultural support to Brazoria, Harris, Waller, Austin, Grimes, Galveston, Colorado, Jackson, and Wharton Counties.

- **Horticulture Industry Partnerships.**
  - Develop and maintain ongoing partnerships with the Texas Nursery & Landscape Association, Houston Gulf Coast Irrigators Association, Organic Horticulture Business Alliance, Texas Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association, and local nurseries including Caldwell's Nursery, Enchanted Nurseries, The Color Spot Nursery, and Greenleaf Nursery.

- **Regular Site Visits.**
  - Conduct an average of 15 site visits (homeowner & commercial) per month throughout the year.

- **Regular Office Visits.**
  - Respond to an average of 15 office visits per month throughout the year.

- ***eXtension Ask the Expert* online questions.**
  - Respond to an average of 20 Ask the Expert questions per month throughout the year.

2015 Fort Bend County Do Well, Be Well with Diabetes

Developed by Dianne Gertson, Fort Bend County Extension Agent-FCS

RELEVANCE

Do Well, Be Well with Diabetes is a program with curriculum covering four nutrition and five self-care management topics. The program helps people with diabetes learn the skills needed to manage their disease successfully.

The Issue

- 9.7 percent (1.7 million) of Texans 18 years and older have a diagnosis of diabetes; another 425,157 are believed to have undiagnosed diabetes. In Fort Bend County, 8.8 percent of the population has been diagnosed with diabetes.
- In 2008, the number of people diagnosed with type 2 diabetes rose sharply.
- The number of Americans with diabetes is projected to increase 43 percent, growing to 17.4 million by 2020.
- Health care costs now average $11,744 per person with diabetes, for an annual total cost of $174 billion in the U.S. - $116 billion for health care and $58 billion in lost productivity.
- Men with diabetes miss an average of 11 work days each year; women miss about 9 work days.
- Almost $1 of every $5 spent on health care is for people with diabetes.
- Currently, only 7 percent of people with diabetes are at recommended levels for blood glucose, blood pressure, and blood cholesterol.
- Poor diabetes management increases health care costs.
- People with diabetes who maintain their blood glucose, blood pressure, and cholesterol numbers within recommended ranges can keep their costs, health risks, quality of life, and productivity very close to those without the disease.

Background:

- Diabetes occurs when the body does not make enough insulin, or the insulin it makes does not work properly.
- While diabetes is not curable, it is manageable.
- Skills needed to effectively manage diabetes are well documented.
- Diabetes education is not readily available.
- Burdens of diabetes mismanagement are disproportionately borne by those with little or no

- insurance coverage, lower literacy, poor or no English skills, lower educational and income levels, and poor access to transportation.

Severity of the Problem:

- The annual cost of diabetes in Texas is estimated at over $12.5 billion.
- An estimated 1.7 million adult Texans have been diagnosed with diabetes.
- Texas is projected to have a greater incidence rate and increased costs in the future due to the growing population of Hispanics/Latinos, who are at greater risk for the disease.

RESPONSE

- Extension health professionals developed *Do Well, Be Well with Diabetes*, a low-cost class series covering nine self-care and nutrition topics delivered in five sessions.
- Class materials include a curriculum consistent with the American Diabetes Association Standards of Care along with overheads, videos, a complete marketing package, and an evaluation program.
- Volunteer local health professionals, with leadership by county Extension agents, use *Do Well, Be Well with Diabetes* to teach the classes.
- The primary goal of the program is to improve blood glucose management.
- A *Do Well, Be Well with Diabetes* series was taught twice at the Oak Bend Medical Center in Richmond and once at Mamie George Community Center in Richmond. Each of the series consisted of five meetings covering 9 lessons.

RESULTS

Outcome results are based on participants who have diabetes, attend the five lessons and submit all forms for documentation. For 2015, Si Yo Puedo and Wisdom Power and Control were also offered in Fort Bend County as a result of Dr. Ninfa Pena-Purcell receiving a DSHS grant. A total of 29 participants attended the classes; some attended to support family members with type 2 diabetes and some attended for the information for personal reasons. There were 10 participants (9 female, 1 male) who met the criteria for *Do Well, Be Well with Diabetes*. Forty percent were Hispanic; 10% were African American; 50% were white. Fifty percent had diabetes for less than five years. Thirty percent had never received any previous diabetes education. Ninety percent were on some type of diabetes medication. After the classes, ninety percent considered their ability to control their diabetes to be good to excellent. The Total Net Present Value for health care cost savings for females is $671,899 and for males the savings is $40,114. Including Total Net Present Value for Lost Wages for males and females, the total economic is $712,013.

FUTURE PLANS

Educational programming for diabetes and cooking for people with diabetes will continue to be offered in Fort Bend County. Dianne Gertson has received a grant from the Gulf Coast Medical Foundation to support this diabetes education.

Food Protection Management - Ft. Bend County

Developed by Dianne Gertson, Fort Bend County Extension Agent - Family & Consumer Sciences

RELEVANCE

Each year, nearly 1 in 6 people become ill from the food they eat. Symptoms of foodborne disease include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal cramping, fever, and headache. While some people may view this as a mere case of "food poisoning" foodborne illness has serious health and economic consequences. In fact, foodborne illnesses from five pathogens alone (Campylobacter, Salmonella, Listeria monocytogenes, E. coli O157:H7, and E. coli non-O157:H7 STEC) cost more than $6.9 billion in medical expenses, lost productivity, and even death. All of us are at risk for foodborne illness, but older adults, pregnant women, young children, individuals with chronic disease, and those with a compromised immune system are at an increased risk. Since half of our food dollars are spent on foods eaten away from home, it is imperative that employees who work in retail food service handle food safely.

RESPONSE

To meet the need for quality food safety education in Texas retail food establishments, the Food Protection Management (FPM) program was developed. Our two-day certified food manager program prepares food service workers to sit for the state Certified Food Manager (CFM) exam. Our 2-hour food handler program, which is accredited by the Department of State Health Services, trains front-line food service workers on the basic principles of food safety. Both programs are conducted at the county level by Extension agents.

RESULTS

During 2015, 36 people in Ft. Bend County participated in the FPM program and completed the certified food manager program. Passage of the CFM exam as well as customer satisfaction with the CFM program is presented in this report.

Certified Food Manager Participant characteristics (n=36)

Participants who completed the surveys were equally male and female and from a variety of ethnic and racial backgrounds. All age groups were represented. Participants identified themselves as managers or owners most often. More than 41% (n=15) of the participants had a high school degree or less; the remaining participants had completed some college or had a college degree. Almost one in five participants had less than 1 year of food service experience; 25%* had 16 years of experience or more. Nearly 83% (n=29) of the participants had not received any food safety training within the previous 12 months; however, 12 of the 36 participants had previously completed a CFM course.

Half (n=18) of the 36 participants identified the FPM program as their first exposure to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension.

* Percentages are rounded up to the nearest tenth and based on participant surveys received and entered as of 10/1/2015.

Client satisfaction with Certified Food Manager instruction

Scope of Satisfaction	Average score (n=34)
Client satisfaction with instructor's knowledge of the subject	1.0*± .21
Client satisfaction with instructor's speaking/presentation abilities	1.0 ± .21
Client satisfaction with instructor's organization and preparedness	1.0 ± .00
Client satisfaction with instructor's response to questions	1.2 ± .39
Overall client satisfaction with instructor's performance	1.1 ± .29

The client satisfaction survey was given at the end of the training while the survey that assessed client characteristics was given separately (at the beginning). Therefore, it is possible that not everyone completed both surveys.

Instructor satisfaction scores are based on a 5-point Likert Scale (1 = very satisfied to 5 = very dissatisfied). In other words the lower the number, the more satisfied the participant. Scores of 0 (not applicable) or 6 (no response) were not included in the analysis.

Pass rate for Certified Food Manager Exam: 58%

2015 Fort Bend County Dinner Tonight!

Developed by Dianne Gertson, County Extension Agent-Family & Consumer Sciences, Fort Bend

RELEVANCE:

The percentage of the food budget spent on away-from-home food has increased steadily since the 1970s. Consequently, the proportion of calories provided by away-from-home food has also increased. When dining out, there is a tendency to choose foods higher in calories, and large portions are increasingly common. Research shows daily calorie intake from foods eaten away from home increased 18% to 32% in the last 25 years. Many people become overwhelmed when they think of menu planning and trying to prepare healthy, cost-effective meals for their families. Providing families with healthy recipes and menu planning tips through the multi faceted Dinner Tonight! program is intended to encourage families to eat at home more often and hopefully make healthier food choices.

RESPONSE

The goal for cooking healthy programs is to help families learn how to cook quick, nutritious meals for their families in an attempt to achieve good health and cut down on diet-related illnesses. The Dinner Tonight! Program encourages family mealtime by providing quick, nutritious, cost-effective recipes to consumers through weekly video webcasts. Every Monday, a new video demonstration link is emailed to a distribution list. The Dinner Tonight Healthy Cooking School provides an opportunity to further the mission of teaching families about healthy meal planning and food preparation.

RESULTS

Weekly video demonstrations are sent via email to approximately 3500 people in Fort Bend County via distribution lists. The lists include persons who have attended AgriLife Extension programs and expressed an interest in receiving the weekly emails and all Fort Bend County employees. Some who receive the weekly email forward to their own distribution lists.

Two Dinner Tonight Healthy Cooking Schools were conducted reaching 288 individuals. One cooking school was held at the Fort Bend Vegetable Conference and one at Mamie George Community Center. Two hundred seventy returned the completed pre and post evaluations.

Evaluations indicate the events were highly successful in impacting family nutrition. Some of the event outcomes are noted below:

Things learned from the series that made attendance worthwhile:

- 75% have an understanding of the role of meal planning in preparing healthy meals
- 85% have an understanding of how the foods you eat impact your health
- 82% have an understanding of how meal planning can help save time and reduce stress

- 75% have an understanding of how to modify recipes to reduce calorie content
- 77% have an understanding of how to modify recipes to reduce sodium content
- 77% have an understanding of how to modify recipes to change or reduce the fat content

Participant Comments

- "Enjoyed the demonstration of food. Good info about what is good source of vitamins, etc."
- "Try to eat well and plan your meals."
- "I love the chicken recipe. The tip about cooking spray to crisp it up was great."
- "How simple it is to prepare a meal."
- "How to destem a strawberry."

FUTURE PLANS

Dinner Tonight! will continue to evolve through development of partnerships. In 2016, Fort Bend County will continue to send the weekly video demonstration links and offer a Dinner Tonight Healthy Cooking School at the Fort Bend County Vegetable Conference and quarterly cooking schools at the Mamie George Community Center.

Fort Bend County

Better Living for Texans – Back to Basics

Developed by Dianne Gertson, County Extension Agent – Family Consumer Sciences

RELEVANCE

More than 3.7 million individuals receive benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), historically known as food stamps. Studies have shown individuals who live in poverty (including SNAP recipients) have dietary intakes that are not in agreement with current recommendations (i.e. Dietary Guidelines or MyPlate). This audience, like many, may not recognize their risk for foodborne illness. Having enough food to eat is also a challenge; an estimated 1 in 6 households in Texas experience food insecurity.

RESPONSE

The BLT Program is a cooperative endeavor among Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), and the Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) of USDA. A component of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), BLT offers food and nutrition education to SNAP recipients, applicants, and other low-income audiences to help improve their ability to plan and prepare nutritious meals, stretch food dollars, and prepare and store food safely. BLT also incorporates the *Walk Across Texas* program to promote physical activity.

During 2015, 40 Fort Bend County adults completed the BLT *Back to Basics* series. This program focuses on meal planning, stretching food dollars, and adopting selected behaviors that can reduce the risk of foodborne illness. Of those participants, 40 completed the 30-day follow-up survey which allows us to assess the extent that targeted behaviors were adopted.

RESULTS

Evaluation results - Intent to change behaviors was examined by evaluating the pre and post surveys of those individuals who completed the program series.

Meal Planning and Food Resource Management- intent to change behavior

Behavior	Current behavior		Intent to change	
	N	%	N	%
Plan meals in advance				
Always	12	30	25	64.1
Sometimes	24	60	13	33.3
Never	4	10	0	0
Not Sure	0	0	1	2.6
No response	0	0	1	2.6

Shop for food with a list				
Always	16	41	27	67.5
Sometimes	20	51.3	12	30
Never	3	7.7	1	2.6
Not Sure	0	0	0	0
No response	1	2.6	0	0
Compare prices when shopping				
Always	26	66.7	33	84.6
Sometimes	10	25.6	6	1534
Never	2	5.1	0	0
Not Sure	1	2.6	0	0
No response	1	2.6	1	2.6
Use unit pricing when shopping				
Always	13	32.5	23	57.5
Sometimes	17	42.5	16	40
Never	8	20	0	0
Not Sure	2	5	1	2.5
No response	0	0	0	
Run out of food before the end of the month?				
Always	8	20	-	-
Sometimes	19	47.5	-	-
Never	12	30	-	-
Not Sure	1	2.5	-	-
No response	0	0	-	-

Food Safety – intent to change behavior

Behavior	Current behavior		Intent to change	
	N	%	N	%
How often do you sanitize cutting boards after cutting up raw meat or poultry?				
Always	36	90	33	91.7
Sometimes	4	10	3	8.3
Never	0	0	0	0
Not Sure	0	0	0	0
No response	0	0	4	10
How often do you thaw frozen meat at room temperature?				
Always	13	32.5	25	62.5
Sometimes	22	55	4	10
Never	5	12.5	11	27.5
Not sure	0	0	0	0
No response	0	0	0	0
How long did you leave your last meal out after it was prepared?				
Eaten/stored immediately	11	28.2	10	25.6
< 1 hour	18	46.2	14	35.9
1 – 2 hours	6	15.4	13	33.3
> 2 hours	2	5.1	2	5.1
Not Sure	2	5.1	0	1
No response	1	2.5	1	2.5

Adoption of Behavior: The adoption of actual behaviors was assessed analyzing the data from 40 of the 40 participants who completed the pre-, post-, and 30-day follow-up surveys.

Meal Planning and Food Resource Management – adoption of behaviors

Behavior	Beginning (pre)		Intent to change (post)		30-day Follow-Up	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Plan meals in advance						
Always	12	30	25	64.1	21	52.5
Sometimes	24	60	13	33.3	18	45
Never	4	10	0	0	1	2.5
Not Sure	0	0	1	2.6	0	
No response	0	0	1	2.6	0	
Shop for food with a list						
Always	16	41	27	67.5	29	76.3
Sometimes	20	51.3	12	30	9	23.7
Never	3	7.7	1	2.5	0	0
Not Sure	0	0	0	0	0	0
No response	1	2.5	0	0	2	5
Compare prices when shopping						
Always	26	66.7	33	84.6	33	84.6
Sometimes	10	25.6	6	15.4	6	15.4
Never	2	5.1	0	0	0	0
Not Sure	1	2.6	0	0	0	0
No response	1	2.6	1	2.5	1	2.5
Use unit pricing when shopping						
Always	13	32.5	23	57.5	24	63.2
Sometimes	17	42.5	16	40	14	36.8
Never	8	20	0	0	0	0
Not sure	2	5	1	2.5	0	0
No response	0	0	0	0	2	5
Run out of food before the end of the month?						
Always	8	20	-	-	3	7.5
Sometimes	19	47.5	-	-	21	52.5
Never	12	30	-	-	16	40
Not Sure	1	2.5	-	-	0	0
No response	0	0	-	-	0	0

Food Safety- adoption of behaviors

Behavior	Beginning (pre)		Intent to change (post)		30-day Follow-Up	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
How often do you sanitize cutting boards after cutting up raw meat or poultry?						
Always	36	90	33	91.7	37	92.5
Sometimes	4	10	3	8.3	3	7.5
Never	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not sure	0	0	0	0	0	0
No response	0	0	4	10	0	0
How often do you thaw frozen food at						

room temperature?						
Always	13	32.5	25	62.5	19	47.5
Sometimes	22	55	4	10	7	17.5
Never	5	12.5	11	27.5	14	35
Not sure	0	0	0	0	0	0
No response	0	0	0	0	0	0
How long did you leave your last meal out after it was prepared?						
Eaten/stored immediately	11	28.2	10	25.6	14	35
< 1 hour	18	46.2	14	35.9	14	35
1 – 2 hours	6	15.4	13	33.3	12	30
> 2 hours	2	5.1	2	5.1	0	0
Not Sure	2	5.1	0	0	0	0
No response	1	2.5	1	2.5	0	0

Other findings:

63% of the participants identified BLT as their first exposure to AgriLife Extension. This suggests that the program is reaching new audiences who otherwise might not have the opportunity to benefit from Extension programs.

Average monthly out-of-pocket food expenses reported by participants:**

- Before BLT: $174.59
- After BLT: $167.29

*** Based on those participants who reported monthly out-of-pocket food expenses at the beginning of BLT and 30-days after the program ended.*

For participants who completed the pre, post, and follow-up surveys, the percentage who rated their perceived ability to prepare nutritious meals as either "good" or "very good" was 60% before BLT (pre-survey) and 100% after BLT (30-day post survey). Thirty-seven of the participants rated the BLT program as "excellent" while 2 rated the program as "good."

2015 Food Protection Management – Food Handler Program

Developed by Dianne Gertson, Fort Bend County Extension Agent - Family & Consumer Sciences

RELEVANCE

Each year, an estimated 1 in 6 people become ill from the food they eat. Common symptoms of foodborne disease include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal cramping, fever, and headache. While some people may view this as a mere case of "food poisoning" foodborne illness has serious health and economic consequences. In fact, foodborne illnesses from five pathogens alone (Campylobacter, Salmonella, Listeria monocytogenes, E. coli O157:H7, and E. coli non-O157:H7 STEC) cost more than $6.9 billion in medical expenses, lost productivity, and even death.

All of us are at risk for foodborne illness, but older adults, pregnant women, young children, individuals with chronic disease, and those with a compromised immune system are at an increased risk. Because nearly half of our food dollars are spent on foods eaten away from home, it is imperative that employees who work in retail food service handle food safely.

RESPONSE

To meet the need for quality food safety education in Texas retail food establishments, the Food Protection Management (FPM) program was developed. Our 2-hour food handler program, which is accredited by the Department of State Health Services, trains front-line food service workers on the basic principles of food safety. The cottage food handler program is a 2-hour program which teaches basic principles of food safety for those in the cottage food industry as defined by Texas Cottage Food Laws.

RESULTS

During 2015, 40 people in Ft. Bend County completed the food handler program. Change in knowledge (pre vs post) was used to evaluate the food handler program. In addition, client (customer) satisfaction surveys were collected from participants.

Food Handler Course – participant characteristics

Most (73%; n=29) of the participants were female and 60% were white. All of the participants identified English as their preferred language and level of education ranged from high school or less (28%) to a college degree (35%). More than 35% reported having food service experience and a similar percentage acknowledged they had received training over food safety in the past.

There was a statistically significant increase in test scores (comparing pre vs post) suggesting an increase in food safety knowledge.

- ✓ Mean score pre: 70
- ✓ Mean score post: 90

Mean score and % score were both rounded to the nearest whole number.

Percentage of respondents who answered survey questions correctly, pre and post

Question	% correct pretest*	% correct Post-test
Which of the following statements about serving food is true?	81	93
Which of the following best describes proper hand and arm washing?	100	100
The removal of dirt, soil, food or grease is known as:	63	88
Which of the following statements about hand washing is true?	67	100
Which of the following is an example of a ready-to-eat (RTE) food?	96	100
Which of the following foods would not be considered potentially hazardous?	74	96
Cross contamination happens when safe food comes into contact with:	76	96
Which of the following statements best describes the temperature danger zone?	55	87
Which of the following is an example of cross contamination?	83	87
All of the following are acceptable tools for handling ready-to-eat foods except:	74	93
Which of the following food service employees must wear a hair net/restraint?	60	87
Which of the following is the best example of maintaining personal hygiene?	52	80
A food service employee should immediately tell his/her supervisor if he/she has:	53	68
Generally speaking a foodborne outbreak involves how many people?	35	80
Food can be contaminated by…..:	73	96

**Percent rounded to the nearest whole number*

Client satisfaction with Food Handler course instruction

Scope of Satisfaction	AverageScore (n=35)**
Client satisfaction with instructor's knowledge of the subject.	1.14 ± 0.25
Client satisfaction with instructor's presentation of course material.	1.13 ± 0.24
Client satisfaction with instructor's response to questions.	1.11 ± 0.18
Client satisfaction with instructor's involvement in discussion and questions regarding course material.	1.09 ± 0.17
Overall client satisfaction with instructor performance.	1.11 ± 0.23
Overall client satisfaction with the program.	1.16 ± 0.31

*** Based on participant surveys received and entered as of 11/1/2015.*

The client satisfaction survey was given at the end of the training while the survey that assessed client characteristics was given separately (at the beginning).

Instructor satisfaction scores are based on a 5-point Likert Scale (1 = very satisfied to 5 = very dissatisfied). **In other words the lower the number, the more satisfied the participant.** Scores of 0 (not applicable) or 6 (no response) were not included in the analysis.

SUMMARY

The food handlers program was successful in helping participants (food service employees) increase their knowledge about food safety as it pertains to the retail and cottage food setting.

FUTURE PLANS

The Texas Food Establishment Rules will be changing in 2016 and all food service employees will be required to have a food handler's card. Food Handlers and Cottage Food Handlers classes will be taught in 2016.

VALUE

Food Safety Education

Both those who work in food-service establishments and those who simply cook in their own kitchens benefit from Texas A&M AgriLife Extension's food-safety education programs. The resulting improvement in safe food handling benefits consumers by helping prevent food-borne illnesses and the public health care costs they cause.

2015 Fort Bend County Pantry to Plate

Developed by Dianne Gertson, County Extension Agent – Family & Consumer Sciences – Fort Bend

RELEVANCE

"Obesity is a major risk factor for many chronic diseases such as heart disease and diabetes. As obesity increases among all age groups, we are seeing chronic diseases in much younger adults compared to a few decades ago", said Dr. William Dietz, Director, CDC's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity. The prevalence of obesity among children aged 6 to 11 more than doubled in the past 20 years, going from 6.5% in 1980 to 18.0% in 2012. The rate among adolescents aged 12 to 19 more than tripled, increasing from 5% to 21%. Obesity is the result of caloric imbalance (too few calories expended for the amount of calories consumed) and is mediated by genetics and health. Obese youth are more likely to have risk factors for cardiovascular disease (CVD), such as high cholesterol or high blood pressure. In a population-based sample of 5- to 17-year-olds, 70% of obese children had at least one CVD risk factor. In addition, children who are obese are at greater risk for bone and joint problems, sleep apnea, and social and psychological problems such as stigmatization and poor self-esteem. Obese young people are more likely than children of normal weight to become overweight or obese adults and therefore more at risk for associated adult health problems including heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke, several types of cancer, and osteoarthritis. Healthy lifestyle habits, including healthy eating and physical activity, can lower the risk of becoming obese and developing related diseases. According to DSHS, 43% of 4th graders, 44% of 8th graders and 37% of 11th graders in HSR 6/5S are at risk or are overweight (SPAN 2009-2011).

RESPONSE

Pantry to Plate is a 3 day camp offered to kids 8 to 12 years old. Registration is limited to 15 due to space and the hands on activities. Goals of Pantry to Plate include increased knowledge of general nutrition, decreased consumption of sugar foods and sugar sweetened beverages, increased physical activity and increased knowledge of food safety, cooking safety and food preparation techniques. Activities this year included a fruit and vegetable lesson including veggie fear factor, proper ingredient measuring techniques, kitchen safety and kitchen chemistry including puff painting, fizzing rocks, color changing milk and dancing spaghetti. The kitchen activities were facilitated by adult helpers. The concepts taught in the camp can be used by the children to make healthier eating choices. Adult helpers worked with small groups on food and kitchen safety and food preparation. Each small group prepared a recipe. Prior to eating the large group participated in physical activity. By learning about nutrition and being able to prepare healthy foods kids can make better choices and avoid high calorie non-nutritive foods and snacks with less than optimal

nutrition. Each day recipes centered on a different theme were prepared by the campers. Themes were Meatball, Italian, and Breakfast days.

RESULTS

A pre and post-test was given to Pantry to Plate participants. Overall test scores increased by 20%. The pre- and post-test included questions regarding nutrition, handwashing, food safety, and physical activity. Most questions showed an increase in knowledge. All questions were multiple choice. The question regarding using a spatula or knife to level dry ingredients when measuring showed an increase in knowledge from 31% to 85%. The question regarding the number of minutes needed per day for exercise showed an increase in knowledge from 38% to 92%. The question regarding why one shouldn't eat raw cookie dough showed an increase in knowledge from 62% to 92%.

Participant comments "What I liked best about Pantry 2 Plate."

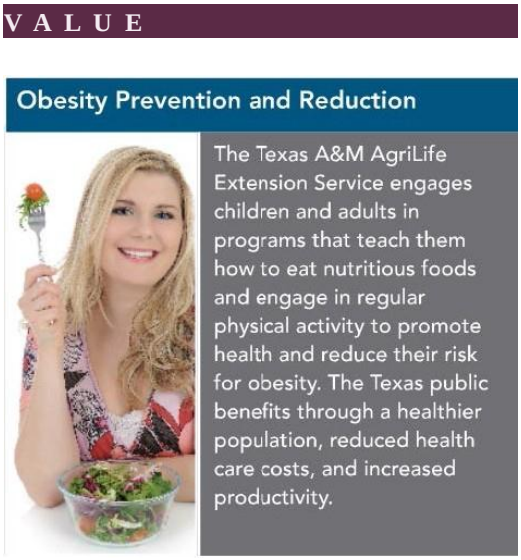
- I liked cooking.
- I worked with others.
- We get to cook.
- I had fun while I was cooking.
- The dessert.
- I loved cooking.

"What I liked least."

- The taco meatballs.
- That we have to learn.
- Waiting for the food.
- All the papers.

FUTURE PLANS

Pantry to Plate will be offered again in 2016. Learning activities and recipes will be identified to challenge campers. Education topics and recipes change from year to year.



2015 Fort Bend County Texas Extension Education Association of Fort Bend

Developed by Dianne Gertson, Fort Bend County Extension Agent - Family & Consumer Sciences

MISSION

The mission of the Texas Extension Education Association is to work with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service to strengthen and enrich families through educational programs, leadership development and community service.

SCOPE

Texas Extension Education Association of Fort Bend is comprised of 4 clubs with a total of 41 members. The four clubs meet on a regular basis to conduct business and have educational programs.

PROGRAMS

Educational programs hosted by TEEA included: “Gifts in Jars”, “Landscaping Topics”, and "Emergency Services". An educational tour to the Victoria Zoo and a tour to the W. A Parish Plant were organized. At their annual meeting, they were trained to teach the lessons: “Eating What You Grow,” “Don’t Let Blue Get to You,” “Emergency Evacuation,” and “P to the Power of 4.”

In addition to the educational programming, they provide community service throughout the county. They provided a 4-H Leadership Lab scholarship. In addition to the monetary donations, members donate materials to Activities Supporting Adolescent Parents (ASAP) at Lamar CISD and the Ronald McDonald House. Members also make baby blankets to be given away at LBJ Hospital.

They contributed over 1000 hours of volunteer service valued at $21.79 per hour ($21,790.00) to educational programming and community service. Members are big supporters of the 4-H program and several volunteer throughout the year to help with projects.

TEEA is able to support their educational and community service programming through an annual Garage Sale held in August. Members donate to the Garage Sale that has become a notable event for the Rosenberg area.

TEEA officers and council delegates attend seven council meetings each year, a fall District Officer Training and a District Spring Conference that was held in Montgomery County this year. Additionally, one member attended the annual state meeting held in Waco this year. TEEA members participate in the county fair by entering exhibits and volunteering in the Exhibit Hall. They have numerous committees that meet as needed to conduct the business of the Texas Extension Education Association of Fort Bend.

2015 Fort Bend County Child Passenger Safety/Booster Seat Campaign

Developed by Leticia Rolland-Hardy, County Extension Agent- Family & Consumer Sciences

RELEVANCE

Motor vehicle crashes are the number one cause of death among children ages 1 to 19. Children ages 2 to 5 who use safety belts prematurely are four times more likely to suffer a serious head injury in a crash than those in child safety seats or booster seats. Statistics show that less than half of Texas children are using booster seats.

RESPONSE

One of the greatest achievements in child injury prevention has been in child passenger safety. The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Fort Bend County, in conjunction with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Passenger Safety in cooperation with Safe Riders, operated a child restraint fitting/inspection station at the Fort Bend County Extension Office. During this event, child passenger safety technicians and volunteers taught families how to transport children safely and correctly. They also helped to make sure everyone in the vehicles were buckled up properly. The Booster Seat Campaign was also conducted as a culminating activity.

RESULTS

Listed below are the results of the 2015 Fort Bend County Child Passenger Safety Program/ Booster Seat Campaign.

- ✓ 49 child safety seat inspections
- ✓ 2 older children arrived correctly restrained in a seat belt
- ✓ 46 new seats issued
- ✓ 6 old/unsafe seats collected
- ✓ 28 children arrived unrestrained or incorrectly riding in a seat belt

VALUE STATEMENT

Medical costs, avoidance of lost future earnings, and improved quality of life continue to be of concern. These economic benefits are an estimated $1,988 per child age 0 to 4 and $2,347 per child age 4 to 7 for new seats distributed, and $558 per child for seat misuse corrected with an assumed 75% continued use. Based on this formula, the total economic impact for the 49 inspections conducted during the 2015 program year is $56,812.

FUNDING SOURCES Safe Riders, TXDOT

2015 Financial Literacy Program

Developed by Leticia Rolland-Hardy, Fort Bend County Extension Agent- FCS

RELEVANCE

Unfortunately, many Americans are unfamiliar with even the most basic economic concepts needed to make saving and investment decisions. In fact, research shows that more than half would fail a basic finance quiz. This lack of financial knowledge presents serious barriers in home purchases, retirement planning, and other financial choices. Financial literacy is something we can benefit from at all stages of life. From saving for a college education to getting by in retirement, many people today are feeling extreme financial anxiety and are looking for answers. Financial exclusion affects some of the most vulnerable members of society. Extensive research has shown that those living on low incomes and experiencing multiple forms of disadvantage are more likely to be affected by financial exclusion.

RESPONSE

In order to tackle this issue partnerships were established with Marshall High School, Elkins High School, Pregnancy Resource Center, and the Fort Bend County 4-H program. The Money Smart and Be a Saver Financial Literacy program were conducted as a 1-3 session series. The Financial Literacy programs helped parenting teens, low income families, and graduating seniors build their money management skills through interactive activities, games, and tools (such as a savings and financial aid calculator to help them plan for college or their future in general). Participants in this program learned how to create a spending plan and track their daily spending. They also learned how to find extra income in their budget, cut back on excess spending, and bargain shop for deals. The participants learned how to be able to buy the things they want without going into debt, help their parents pay for college, save for major purchases and expenses, build a rainy day fund, and how to develop a personal financial/investment plan. As a result of this program 100 contacts were reached through educational workshops.

RESULTS

The program was deemed to be valuable to the participants as their pre workshop survey showed their knowledge gaps about financial literacy.

Participants completed a pre survey, and the following results were demonstrated:

- Only 30% used a budget prior to the workshop
- 49% said they tried to save money often prior to the workshop
- 59% try to pay their bills on time

2015 Pregnancy & Parenting Program

Developed by Leticia Rolland-Hardy, Fort Bend County Extension Agent- FCS

RELEVANCE

In 2013, there were 26.5 births for every 1,000 adolescent females ageds 15-19, or 273,105 babies born to females in this age group. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention teen birth rates have been falling for the last two decades. In 1991, the U.S. teen birth rate was 61.8 births for every 1,000 adolescent females, compared with 26.5 births for every 1,000 adolescent females in 2013. Still, the U.S. teen birth rate is higher than that of many other developed countries.

Teen pregnancy and childbearing can carry high health, emotional, social, and financial costs for both teen mothers and their children. Teen mothers can become overwhelmed by life as a parent and trying to do their best for their own health and their child. Having more than one child as a teen can limit the teen mother's ability to finish her education or get a job. Infants born from a repeat teen birth are often born too small or too soon, which can lead to more health problems for the baby.

Teen pregnancy and its related effects cost the U.S. more than 7 billion dollars per year. Research has shown that the risk factors associated with teen pregnancy falls in the categories of medical, nutritional, social, and economical factors. In many cases the teens do not eat healthy, well balanced meals. Often times they skip meals or eat numerous amounts of empty calories. In an alarming number of cases, the childbearing teens have little or no control over the foods purchased for their household. Pregnant teenagers need to be especially careful to eat nutrient-rich foods because they are not only supplying the needs for the growing fetus, but also continuing to supply their own growth needs.

RESPONSE

The Fort Bend County Pregnancy and Parenting Program was implemented throughout the county. Partnerships were established with Lamar Consolidated Independent School District, Fort Bend Independent School District, and the Pregnancy Resource Center.

Although nutrition is a major focal point for the program, the focus is on pre and post self and infant care. More often, the pregnant teens are not prepared for motherhood in any facet. They are not abreast of proper infant care or self-care pre- and post-delivery. The objective of the Pregnancy and Parenting Program is to provide support to teens during and after pregnancy. This program educates pregnant teens and young mothers about nutrition and health as well as to care for themselves and their babies pre- and post-delivery.

The program creates awareness of the importance of good prenatal care, demonstrates the physical changes that take place in the body during pregnancy, emphasizes the importance of child passenger safety seats and how to properly install a safety seat, emphasizes the importance of self-care after delivery, and encourages breastfeeding for all mothers.

The program is divided into six to eight 30-45 minute sessions. The participants learned about prenatal care, eating healthy, exercise during pregnancy, premature labor, keeping the baby healthy, saving money for baby, and breast & bottle feeding. The cost analysis for each participant is $3,706.78.

EVALUATION

As a result of this event 638 contacts were reached through parenting and teen pregnancy educational programing. Teens and young mothers that have graduated through the Pregnancy and Parenting Program have shown an increase in knowledge through reviews and pre and post evaluations.

Participants completed a retrospective post survey and stated the following:

- 87% had an excellent understanding about nutrition during pregnancy
- 95% had an excellent understanding about the importance of prenatal care and checkups
- 92% now know how to properly install a car seat
- 95% of the participants plan to breast feed as a result of the program
- 93% percent said there is a good chance they would receive prenatal care

Through an oral review many of the participants were able to provide feedback and information regarding food, growth, weight gain for infants, childbearing teens, the fetus, and the importance of self-care after delivery.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Prairie View A&M University
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Cooperative Extension Program

Making a Difference

2015 Fort Bend County Texercise Program

Developed by Leticia Rolland-Hardy, Fort Bend County Extension Agent-Family & Consumer Sciences

RELEVANCE

As senior citizens age, balance, strength, stamina and overall health can diminish. However, exercise can be a safeguard, keeping the body strong, reducing hypertension, keeping off dangerous midsection weight and even protecting the brain by improving memory and clarity.

Preventable illnesses make up approximately 80 percent of the burden of illness and 90 percent of all U.S. health care costs. Cardiovascular diseases are among the 10 most frequent causes of hospitalization of people 45 years and older in Texas. More than 1 million Texans have been diagnosed with diabetes and another 0.5 million are believed to have undiagnosed diabetes.

RESPONSE

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service collaborated with the Bud O'Shieles Community Outreach Coordinator in Fort Bend County in conducting the *Texercise* Program at the Bud O'Shieles Community Senior Center. The Texercise program is an 8-12 week fitness and educational program. This program provides regular physical activity and helps to reduce the risk and minimize the impact of disease. The Texercise program helps participants get on track to a fit and healthier life by sharing nutrition information and sponsoring health and fitness activities throughout the county. The program promotes healthy muscles, bones and joints; improves flexibility, improves balance and coordination, increases stamina, and reduces the cost of medical care.

The goals of this program were to provide adults with relevant nutrition education and access to available food resources, increase consumption of vegetables and fruits, and engage in regular physical fitness activities. This program helped enhance fitness by making it fun and competitive at the same time. Additionally, participants became aware of diet related diseases.

RESULTS

As a result of this event 438 contacts were reached through educational workshops, brochures, flyers, and volunteers. This evaluation analysis captured the participants' knowledge of nutrition portion size management, food label reading, food groups, and application of physical activity for healthier lifestyles.

Participants completed a self-assessed pre-test prior to the first class and a post-test after the last session.

The evaluation summary is as follows:

- self-assessed sample pre-test taken indicating 81% were overweight
- post-tests results indicated 50% participated in some form of physical activity daily

The post-tests revealed:

- 37.3% improved flexibility
- 98% were able to identify food groups
- > 75% reported they were more mobile as a result of the class
- 81.25% reported they would continue exercising after the program
- 43.75% reported they would make an effort to eat healthy and exercise daily

The estimated cost analysis and public value for the Texercise program is $19,710.

FUTURE PLANS

Previous program implementation results have shown that the length of time the program is implemented effects the program evaluation results tremendously. Therefore, in the future the program time will be extended from the 8-week cycle to the 12-week cycle. This should show a dramatic improvement in the participant results.

2015 Weight Management

Developed by Leticia Rolland-Hardy, Fort Bend County Extension Agent – Family & Consumer Sciences

RELEVANCE

Preventable illnesses make up approximately 80 percent of the burden of illness and 90 percent of all U.S. health care costs. Over the past three decades, childhood obesity rates in America have tripled, and today, nearly one in three children in America are overweight or obese.

The numbers are even higher in African American and Hispanic communities, where nearly 40% of the children are overweight or obese. Only 16.6 percent of residents living in Fort Bend County are reported to be within normal weight for their height, the lowest proportion of residents at a normal weight in the Brazos Valley region. Alarmingly, 81.7 percent of the Fort Bend County Population is overweight. Of the population, 42.7% are overweight, 24.9% are obese, and 24.9% are morbidly obese.

According to the data and conditions associated with obesity, these statistics are cause for great concern in the Fort Bend County community and the African American and Latino population. If the problem is not addressed, one third of all children born in 2000 or later will suffer from diabetes at some point in their lives. Whereas others will face chronic obesity-related health problems like heart disease, high blood pressure, cancer, and asthma.

RESPONSE

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service collaborated with the Cooperative Extension Program Expanded Food and Nutrition Program, Community Health Choice, and Attack Poverty Organization in conducting the Healthy Kids Rock Program.

The goal of the Healthy Kids Rock Program was to provide nutrition, health, and wellness information to youth between the ages of 5-12. The participants were engaged in 8 weeks of nutrition and nutrition as it relates to health lessons. The participants were educated over the benefits of consuming carbohydrates and the adverse effects of too many carbohydrates in their diets. They learned about choosing healthy drinks and being cautious about sugary high calorie drinks. The participants were also educated over the benefits of fiber and whole grains. The topics covered during the sessions were as follows: Sweetened Drinks, Veggies and Fruits, Nutrition Fact Labels, Whole

Grains, Fast Foods, and Eating Breakfast. Each presentation concluded with a cooking food demonstration.

RESULTS

As a result of this event more than 90 contacts were reached through educational presentations, brochures, flyers, and volunteers. This retrospective post evaluation analysis captured the participants' knowledge of nutrition education, management of portion sizes, knowledge of reading food labels, food groups, and application of physical activity for healthier lifestyles.

The evaluation summary is as follows:

- 90.3% increased physical activity
- 79.3% increased water consumption
- 76.8% added more fruits and vegetables to their diet
- 69.9% engaged in exercise outside of school

FUTURES PLANS

Agent plans to continue to collaborate with Community Health Choice, Attack Poverty, and Cooperative Extension Program-EFNEP in implementing the Healthy Kids Rock Program in the future.

2015 Fort Bend County Master Wellness Volunteer Program

Developed by Leticia Rolland-Hardy, County Extension Agent – Family & Consumer Sciences
Sonja Davis, CEA-FCS, Harris Co. & Jymann Davis, CEA-FCS, Galveston Co.

RELEVANCE

There are numerous opportunities to implement health and nutrition programs throughout Fort Bend County; however, there is a limit to the programming agents can implement. Volunteers contribute greatly to Family & Consumer Sciences programs and can extend health and wellness education further into communities. A group of trained volunteers who also serve as advocates for Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the Cooperative Extension Program-Prairie View A&M University can substantially increase the scope and impact of the Family and Consumer Sciences program.

RESPONSE

The Master Wellness Volunteer Program was developed to extend the outreach efforts of county agents. Agent Hardy marketed the program throughout Fort Bend County, secured resources, recruited participants, provided 40 hours of training and assisted with program management. Management of the program includes providing opportunities for volunteers to gain their 40 volunteer service hours and ensuring they are trained and have resources to conduct educational programs. To remain certified, volunteers must complete 5 hours of continuing education and a minimum of 10 service hours annually.

RESULTS

Fort Bend County has an estimated 16 Master Wellness Volunteers. In 2015, Harris, Waller, Galveston, and Fort Bend counties collaborated and provided training for 8 new volunteers. Six successfully completed the course work and passed the certification exam. All of the participants were very satisfied with the training, accuracy of the information, timeliness of the information, and they would recommend the program to others. Volunteers' outreach efforts contributed are estimated at an average rate of $22.55 per hour.

Master Wellness Volunteer Outreach Efforts included:

- ✓ Marketing Extension educational programs
- ✓ Assisting with planning and implementing 35 educational activities inclusive of presentations, food demonstrations, and health fair exhibits
- ✓ Assisting with Wisdom, Power Control and Si, Yo Puedo Diabetes Series

- ✓ Organizing and managing 49 Walk across Texas Teams
- ✓ Organizing worksite health fairs to promote health and wellness
- ✓ Planning and presenting during the Child Care Conference

COLLABORATIONS

Agents from Harris and Fort Bend County will collaborate to conduct the program in 2016.

FUTURE PLANS

This program will continue implementation in 2016. Agents and volunteers will market the program to individuals, churches, community centers, Human Resource officers, organizations and students on college campuses.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Prairie View A&M University
College of Agriculture and Human Sciences
Cooperative Extension Program

Making a Difference

2015 Fort Bend County Food Safety

Developed by Leticia Rolland-Hardy, Fort Bend County Extension Agent- FCS

RELEVANCE

Food safety is an important public health priority. Foodborne illness or food poisoning is a common, costly—yet preventable—public health problem. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimate that foodborne diseases cause roughly 1 in 6 Americans (or 48 million people) to get sick; 128,000 are hospitalized and 3,000 die. Populations most vulnerable to foodborne disease include pregnant women, the elderly, the very young, and individuals with a chronic disease as well as those with weakened immune systems.

The United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service estimated that the medical, productivity loss, and premature death costs related to five foodborne pathogens totaled $6.9 billion annually. The specific foodborne pathogens used in this estimation included Campylobacter, Salmonella, E. coli O157, E. coli non-O157 STEC, and Listeria monocytogenes. Foodborne disease is a costly problem; therefore food safety education is a critical prevention component for reducing the risk for foodborne diseases.

RESPONSE

Family and Consumer Sciences Extension Agent Leticia Hardy, in conjunction with the Agriculture and Natural Resources program area teamed up to conduct the 2015 Backyard Basic Grilling Conference. During this conference attendees participated in the Outdoor Cooking Food Safety Program held at the Fort County Extension Education Center. A total of 16 participants enrolled into the program.

RESULTS

Participants were educated over foodborne illness, how to protect their families from foodborne illness, prevention strategies for foodborne illness, and other illnesses related to high temperature cooking. This program was used to equip participants with knowledge on how to use temperature control measures, to practice proper hygiene, to avoid cross contamination, and reduce bacteria growth. Participants completed a post evaluation survey and stated the following:

- 83.4% understand how to properly grill foods safely outdoors as a result of the class
- 75% had a good understanding of how to properly transport foods to outdoor locations
- 91.6% understand how to properly check food for doneness

FUTURE PLANS

The Outdoor Food Safety workshop will continue to be offered in the 2016 program year.

2015 Let's Go/Let's Grow - Hatching in the Classroom

Developed by Angela Bosier, County Extension Agent – Urban Youth Development – Fort Bend

RELEVANCE

Most elementary schools use textbooks to teach science in the classroom; however, the hands-on science curricula has become very popular over the last decade. It has been a major focus of the National Science Education Standards. Hands-on learning has been proven to decrease behavioral issues as well as help students begin to develop critical thinking skills. The students not only learn about science but also gain reasoning and research skills.

RESPONSE

*Embryology: Hatching Classroom Project*s is designed to provide the background information and exciting experiential activities dealing with life science for use in your classroom. With this curriculum your students will have the opportunity to develop life skills related to science processes, managing, thinking, working, relating and living a healthy lifestyle. Quail Valley Elementary School located in Sugar Land, TX started their school year off with Hatching in the Classroom. Pre-K through 5th grade teachers used the *Embryology: Hatching Classroom Project* curriculum as a guide and a resource for the project in their respective classes.

An incubator was setup in the 5th grade science lab and each grade was rotated through the science lab. The lessons and materials used from the curriculum were incubator setup, life cycle, candling, and creating a "tweet house". Seven Lakes Jr. High School located in Katy, TX also implemented the program through their in–school 4-H club during the Spring of 2015.

RESULTS

Seven Lakes Jr. High School has an active in-school 4-H club with over 60 members. In the spring of 2015, the Hatching in the Classroom project was the focus of the 4-H club. Ms. Suhrer, club manager and 7th grade science teacher, setup incubators in three of the 7th grade science classes. The project was incorporated into the existing science curriculum using the project to illustrate natural selection, genetic breeding, and the life cycle. A total of 675 students were able to observe the Hatching in the Classroom project at Seven Lakes Jr. High School.

Hatching in the Classroom was also conducted at Quail Valley Elementary School, which is located in Sugar Land, TX, in grades Pre-K – 5th grade. A total of 93 students were able to experience the project,

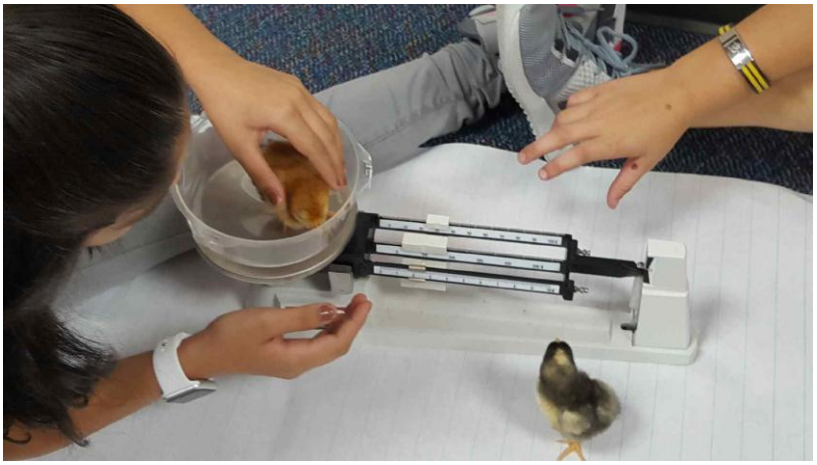
having multiple observation hours per week for three weeks. The school, having done our Hatching in the Classroom Project the previous year, was awarded a grant for 6 brooders. With their purchase they were able to place a brooder in every grade level for observations by the students. The incubators were placed in the school science lab, and all grade levels would observe the fertilized eggs through the incubation period. Once they were hatched, chicks were assigned to each grade level to be observed in their hatched state being housed in the brooders.

The growth rates were observed by the 5th grade by daily measurements and weighing of the chicks. The data was recorded in their Chick journals. Other lower grade levels observed the quality differences in the chicks instead of the quantitative differences. Pre-K – 2nd grade observed the colors of the chicks and the differences in their physical features.

Teachers were given an evaluation to determine if the project was successful with teaching their students about life sciences and other subject areas. Through the data collected by the evaluations there was a significance increase in students' interest in subject matter of science, understanding of the food and fiber system, and accurate embryonic development of chicks.

- Ms. Martinez, 4th grade teacher, stated "*I noticed my students were paying attention to detail and being more patient*."
- Mrs. Velasquez, Kindergarten teacher, stated "My *students' interest in science in general has sky-rocketed due to the experiences they had with the program*."

The Quail Valley Elementary cycle was such a success the chicks were able to be featured in the AG'tivity Barn during the Fort Bend County Fair.



2015 Fort Bend County CEP Farm to Plate

Developed by Courtney Bryant, Extension Agent - CEP- Family & Consumer Sciences

RELEVANCE

Obesity continues to be a rising concern for society. Since 31 percent of children and 68% of adults reported they were either obese or overweight, society has made nutrition a primary focus for children. Obesity has been known to lead to many other major health concerns been such as heart disease, diabetes, cancers, gall bladder disease, and many other health-related issues. Overweight and obese children are more likely to become obese in childhood. One study found that 25% of obese adults were obese or overweight as children. Still the highest rates of obesity continue to exist among those from low income families, low education, minority status, and poverty.

Research revealed obesity to be highest among Mexican-American children with a rate of 28 percent and second highest among African American girls at 24% (Centers for Disease & Control, 2009). Children from limited resource families are particularly vulnerable due to inadequate access to physical activities and adequate knowledge on how to maintain a healthy diet with their resources. According to Lobstein and his colleagues one of the best ways to target obesity is through prevention methods/techniques such as childhood obesity programs and intensive education on alternative ways to maintain a healthy diet (Lobstein, Baur, & Uauy, 2004). Research also suggests that introducing appropriate portion sizes, decreasing the consumption of sodas and unhealthy foods, and increasing exposure to healthier foods can lead to improvements in the health status of our youth (Samuels, S. G., 2010).

RESPONSE:

Farm to Plate was a health and nutrition presentation developed to expose children to research based knowledge on how their food is transferred to their plates and where it comes from. The goals of the Farm to Plate demonstration included increased knowledge of nutrition, decreased consumption of sugary foods and beverages, and increased physical activity.

Children ranging from 6-18 years rotated throughout several learning stations in areas of archery, a live cattle exhibit, and a food demonstration. Stations consisted of information on how to care for cattle to allow for transferring to the dinner table, storing meat, how to hunt cattle through archery (bow and arrow) method, and incorporating fruit water into their diets for health benefits. Volunteers assisted with kitchen activities, food giving, and enforced the safety values such as hand washing. The concepts covered in this Farm to Plate demonstration provided awareness to limited resource families on the

idea of knowing what enters their body and connecting them more to healthier foods.

The activity began with the setup of the three stations which was carried out by Bethel's Heavenly Hands Church. Children were escorted to the archery station where they learned all about cattle and then transitioned to the archery station where they learned to shoot bow and arrow for purposes of hunting their food and as a form of physical activity. The children then finished their presentation by visiting the food demonstration table where they received education on beef, vegetable intake, and health benefits of infused water and safety values. Learning about how and where food comes from allows families to make healthier eating choices and essentially creates room to have an increase in family meal time.

Many of the participants were attendees of the Bethel's Family Church and also the surrounding community. Bethel's Family Church sponsored the advertisement of the event and targeted many families through regular flyer handouts at local restaurants, clinics, community centers, and weekly church announcements.

RESULTS

The stations received over a total of 76 parents and children who signed up to experience the *Farm 2 Plate* demonstration. Fifteen percent (15%) of the participants reported they had never experienced a presentation within their community before. Five percent reported they would like this program to be introduced into their nearby communities and schools. Questions were multiple choice and open-ended. Ten percent (10%) of parents showed an increase in knowledge on how to get their kids involved in activities related to agriculture. Overall, the presentation brought great awareness about nutrition education to the community and developed healthier eating initiatives for participants and their children.

FUTURE PLANS

Farm to Plate will be offered again in the Fall of 2016. Stations will be utilized again; however more stations are intended to be added to incorporate more physical activity. In addition the time of day in which the activity takes place will be revisited.

VALUE

Obesity Prevention and Reduction

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service engages children and adults in programs that teach them how to eat nutritious foods and engage in regular physical activity to promote health and reduce their risk for obesity. The Texas public benefits through a healthier population, reduced health care costs, and increased productivity.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Prairie View A&M University
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Making a Difference

2015 *Fort Bend* County Learn, Grow, Eat & GO!

Angela Bosier-Romans, CEA-Urban Youth Development, Fort Bend County

An interdisciplinary approach to reducing child obesity through the Learn, Grow, Eat & GO! *Curriculum (a modification/revision of the Junior Master Gardener "Nutrition in the Garden"), and the Coordinated Approach to Child Health program.*

RELEVANCE

The high prevalence of childhood obesity in Texas is cause for concern because it is linked to negative health consequences for children and their families. Schools are uniquely positioned to have a positive impact on children's knowledge and behaviors associated with obesity. For example, vegetable exposure plus school gardening has been shown to improve consumption of fruits and vegetables.

Adding more frequent and more vigorous physical activities during school has been shown to improve student fitness and weight. The home environment is also an important influence on a child's eating and activity behaviors. The greater the frequency of vegetable consumption and physical activity by parents, the greater the consumption of these foods and exercise by their children. With childhood obesity rates among low-income children in Texas ranging from 10% to over 20%, engaging schools and families in prevention efforts is critical.

RESPONSE

The Learn, Grow, Eat & GO! (LGEG) curriculum emphasizes science, math, language arts/reading, social studies and health through effective learning activities with the LGEG program.

The LGEG curriculum was designed to engage children and their families in school gardens, vegetable recipe tastings, classroom activities and take home family stories; therefore, the curriculum includes:

- ✓ Classroom raised bed or container garden
- ✓ Classroom vegetable tastings and food demonstrations
- ✓ Family stories for students to take home
- ✓ Option for the students to become LGEG certified through the JMG program
- ✓ Opportunities for "Growing Strong" section
- ✓ Classroom "physical activity breaks" related to school subjects

Our Fort Bend County Master Gardener volunteers were recruited and utilized to help implement the program by helping with the educational aspect of gardening. They conducted educational lessons on how to plant seeds, transplants, plant spacing, and harvesting produce.

RESULTS

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in *Fort Bend* County partnered with *Lamar Consolidated* Independent School District to implement the Learn, Grow, Eat & GO!

Curriculum in 4 classes - grades 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 6th at Jane Long Elementary and Polly Ryon Middle school, totaling 111 students where:

- **64%** of student participants were female and **35%** were male.
- **51%** were Hispanic, **26%** were Caucasian, **20%** were African-American, and **3%** Asian.

Of the 111 students that participated in the *Learn, Grow, Eat, Go!* curriculum I received 47 evaluations back from schools that participated.

Nutrition: Extension personnel and teachers led 9 raw vegetable tastings and food demonstrations to increase child preference. Child preference for vegetables is a high indicator for consumption of vegetables. The on activity evaluation students reported liking an average of 6 out of 9 vegetables sampled.

Physical Activity: Physical activity programs are implemented by Extension personnel and school staff to increase student involvement in physical activities and decrease sedentary behaviors.

- The number of students getting at least 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity increased to **41** out of the **47** surveys received.
- Students also indicated they were spending less time being sedentary (watching TV, playing computers or video games) away from school. The number of students that reported spending 2 or more hours doing those sedentary activities was **12** out of the **47** surveys received.

Garden: Students participated in building, planting, maintaining, and harvesting classroom garden beds. The LGEG program invites parents to participate in the gardening project and encourages students to share their experiences at home with their families.

- On the activity evaluation, the average number of students who had participated in gardening activities with their families was **36** students out of the **47** surveys received

Knowledge Gain: Knowledge gain related to nutrition indicates self-efficacy to choose the healthiest drink choices. Below are students responses to, *"If I could choose, I would rather drink…"*

Choice	Selection	
Fruit Juice or Water	***23*** chose Fruit Juice	***24*** chose Water
Soda or Fruit Juice	***24*** chose Soda	***23*** chose Fruit Juice
Water or Sports Drink	***31*** chose Water	***16*** chose Sports Drink

2015 Let's Go - Let's Grow 4-H in Fort Bend County

Developed by: Justin R. Saenz, Count Extension Agent 4-H & Youth Development
Supported by: Angela Romans, County Extension Agent 4-H & Youth Development

RELEVANCE
4-H is a youth development program that began over 100 years ago. The goal of 4-H is to "grow" and promote confident, capable, and caring kids with the life skills to thrive in today's world and succeed in their boldest dreams for tomorrow. 4-H programs are research-backed and offer life-changing experiences to youth in Fort Bend, in Texas, and around the world. 4-H is the youth development program of our nation's Cooperative Extension System and USDA.

4-H is the youth development program of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service that focuses on the needs, concerns & interests of youth. Its aim is to help youth gain a positive self-concept, rational social behavior, knowledge, and problem-solving capabilities through planned individual projects, meetings, group activities and participation in different events. Members develop new skills, learn cooperation, develop leadership abilities, improve their citizenship, and have fun.

RESPONSE Fort Bend County agents work diligently to oversee the 4-H and youth development program including management of 4-H clubs/groups as a whole, 4-H members, club managers, volunteer leaders, coordination of Youth Board/Council, and work with partners & collaborators to ensure effective functioning of the 4-H and youth development program.

The many facets of the Fort Bend County 4-H program include:

County contests – Roundup with 147 entries		
Fashion Show – 5	Photography – 26	Consumer Decision Making – 11
Fashion Story Board – 2	Share-The-Fun – 8	Duds to Dazzle – 6
Food Show – 12	Educational Presentation – 14	Recordbooks – 50
Food Challenge – 13		

District contests - Roundup with 147 entries		
Fashion Show – 4	Wildlife Challenge – 7	Rifle & Air Rifle – 3
Fashion Story Board – 3	Educational Presentation – 8	Horse Show – 1
Food Show – 5	Swine Quiz Bowl – 12	Duds to Dazzle – 6
Food Challenge – 11	Horse Judging -3	Recordbooks - 30
Photography – 9	Livestock Judging - 11	Share-The-Fun – 8
Research Poster Contest – 3	Consumer Decision Making – 5	Indoor Archery Contest – 18
State contests – Texas 4-H Round up 44 entries		
4-H Has Talent – 1	Educational Presentation – 1	Vet Science Skill-a-thon – 2
Swine Quiz Bowl – 12	4-H Scholarship Winner – 1	Wild Life Challenge – 2
Livestock Judging – 4	Vet Science Camp – 10	Swine Skill-a-thon – 11
County Project Validations - 183		
Dogs – 6	Horses – 1	Goats – 41
Lambs – 38	Heifers – 32	Steers – 45
Major Shows – 150 entries		
Fort Worth – 6	San Antonio – 45	San Angelo – 5
Houston – 78	Austin – 16	
Camps – 117 Attendees		
Basic Angler Program – 35	Nature Watch Day Camp – 30	Theater Camp – 11
Special Interest/Enrichment – 39,137		
Hatching in the Classroom – 720	Take A Stand bullying – 1,210	Workforce Prep. & Careers – 687
Science, Engineering, & Technology – 400	Health/Healthy Lifestyles – 477	Science of Agriculture – 35,643

As a result of the diligent efforts to meet the needs of our youth in Fort Bend County the club statistics in Fort Bend are as follows:

- 29 4-H clubs
- 550 club members
- 112 adult volunteers
- 30 Member of the FBC Parents Leaders Assoc.
- School enrichment participants – 1,376
- Special Interest/Short Term Participants – 38, 507

FUTURE PLANS

In 2016 the 4-H Team in Fort Bend will strive to increase overall membership and to promote non-traditional projects, particularly in the more urbanized sectors of this county.

Making a Difference

2015 Fort Bend County Fair AG'tivity Barn

Developed by: Justin R. Saenz, Count Extension Agent - 4-H & Youth Development
Supported by: Angela Romans, County Extension Agent – 4-H & Youth Development

RELEVANCE

Fort Bend County Texas is unique in its demographic makeup with the eastern half of the county being urban while the western half remains mostly rural. This provides an opportunity for Texas A&M AgriLife Extension to take an active role in educating youth about the importance of agriculture in their daily lives. Agriculture contributes significantly to the economy of Fort Bend County with significant production in Corn, Cotton, Rice, Beef Cattle, and Nursery Production and Sales.

RESPONSE

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Fort Bend County developed and implemented educational programming for youth to address the relevant issue of Agriculture Literacy. AG'tivity Barn was implemented this past October. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service collaborates with several local partners to provide this educational opportunity. In 2015 the following partners provided sponsorships and donations: Fort Bend County Master Gardeners, Texas Master Naturalist, Fort Bend County Farm Bureau, Fort Bend County Fair Association, Texas Beef Council, Texas Parks and Wildlife, Southwest Mobile Dairy, Fort Bend Beekeepers, Kim Dzierzanowski, Southern Cotton Oil Company, HEB, Color Spot Nurseries, The Ground Up, Double T Farms, Life is Enchanted, King Ranch Turfgrass, North Fort Bend Water Authority, Mark Weido, Needville Feed, and Damon Farm & Ranch.

RESULTS

AG'tivity Barn – Local youth were exposed to various agriculturally oriented educational activities during the annual Fort Bend County Fair. Approximately 1,140 students and 125 teacher and chaperons participated in hands on activities during guided school tours such as Crop Production (Corn, Cotton, Soybeans, and Rice), live animal exhibits (Beef Cattle, Chickens, Sheep, Goats, and Swine), Natural Resources (Rainwater Harvesting), Horticultural Production (Earth Kind Gardening), Bees and Fish and Much more. Also during the ten day event the

AG'tivity barn is opened to the general public that comes through the gates. We estimate that sixty percent of the total people that came to the fair actually visited the tent and in 2015 that equated to 60,000 visitors came and learned something in the AG'tivity Barn. To get more youth involved in Agriculture during the County fair we also offered a coloring contest to youth in grades K-5th. We design an Agricultural theme coloring sheet and this year we distributed them in all Fort Bend County Libraries as well as all Fort Bend County Tax office locations. All entries are submitted to the Extension office for judging and in 2015 we had 522 sheets turned in with 341 girls and 181 boys participating in the contest. Winners are selected in each grade level with 1st and 2nd receiving prizes.

FUTURE PLANS

Agricultural Literacy programs are an important component of the educational programs provided in Fort Bend County. With the increase in urbanization, it is relevant to continue to offer educational activities such as AG'tivity Barn to young people who are becoming several generations removed from production agriculture and the importance of agriculture in their daily lives. AgriLife Expo – We also plan to re-implement a youth education event in the next few years. Participants will spend a day learning about beef cattle, dairy, grain, fruit, and vegetable production.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Prairie View A&M University College of Agriculture and Human Sciences
Cooperative Extension Program

Making a Difference

2015 4-H Veterinary Science Certificate Program

Developed by: Justin R. Saenz, Count Extension Agent 4-H & Youth Development
Supported by: Angela Romans, County Extension Agent 4-H & Youth Development

RELEVANCE

The 4-H Veterinary Science Certificate Program is a 5-year curriculum-based program that includes 100 lessons and 50 activities that give young people interested in veterinary medicine the opportunity to learn and work with professionals in the field. The program is career-oriented and provides on-the-job training for students to prepare them for a career in veterinary medicine. Students who participate in this program work closely with licensed veterinarians or registered veterinary technicians in their veterinary practices for a minimum of 500 clinical skills hours. This hands-on training provides them with an opportunity to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to become a veterinary assistant. This training and experience is a valuable addition to a student's resume and will help them prepare for a professional degree program at an accredited university. The program follows an established curriculum that allows students and adults to work together to achieve success.

RESPONSE

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Fort Bend County maintains active clubs intended to teach the curriculum. There are also county activities to help support and enhance the program. Each year we are seeing significant growth.

Since the establishment of the Veterinary Science Certificate Program in Fort Bend in 2012 we can created nine 4-H clubs that specialize in the vet science project. Each August a Vet Science Certificate Program Informational meeting is held, this year we had 45 attendees, resulting in the formation of a new club-Paws to Claws 4-H Club

RESULTS

- In 2015, we had two youth who completed the five-year curriculum and received a Texas 4-H Veterinary Project Completion Certificate and a recognition plaque from Fort Bend County, during our annual awards banquet.

- We had three Vet Science 4-H members take part in the Vet Science Skillathon at State 4-H Roundup. The Veterinary Science Skillathon is a competitive event designed to test the knowledge and skills that a 4-H member can gain through his or her involvement in the Veterinary Science project.

- During 2015 we had 11 youth participate in the Veterinary Science Career Day hosted by Texas A&M University. Youth had the opportunity to tour the College of Veterinary Medicine as well as hear from faculty and current students on the application process for vet school.

- Texas 4-H held their first Veterinary Science Camp in 2015 during their Texas 4-H Roundup. Of the 30 youth participating, 10 where from Fort Bend County. During the four day camp, youth completed 33 out of the 78 required Certified Veterinary Assistant Level 1 Skills.

FUTURE PLANS

Fort Bend County is committed to grow the Vet Science Program in the coming years. Fort Bend County will host their first County Roundup Vet Science Skillathon in March along with the first District Roundup Vet Science Skillathon in April. The foundation of positive youth experience in 4-H begins at the club level; we are committed to being a stronger resource for our club mangers. In 2016 we will begin our Vet Science Manger Mentor program, where seasoned club mangers will be paired with new mangers as a mentor for their first year in the program.

4-H & Youth Development – Other Significant Programs Fort Bend County

Developed by: Justin R. Saenz, Count Extension Agent 4-H & Youth Development
Supported by: Angela Romans, County Extension Agent 4-H & Youth Development

ONE DAY 4-H!

Throughout the Months of September through October, Fort Bend 4-H collected over 300 gift items, to be given to the 127 underprivileged children of the Fort Bend Family Promise Center. The Family Promise Center is the only Family homeless center in the Houston Area. Toys were organized into age groups: infant, toddler, 5-7 yrs, 8-13 yrs, & Teen 14+. Once the families arrived at the center they were greeted by our 4-H elves who helped them pick out their toys. The children got their picture with Santa and enjoyed Milk and Cookies, fully embracing our "Christmas in October." We had 356 youth involved and 100 adult volunteers with a total of 35 hours invested in planning.

Fort Bend County 4-H Annual Awards Banquet - This very important "4-H year-end" event was held on Sunday, August 8 at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds. This year's Master of Ceremony was 4-H member Austin Oney. The event opened with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by the 4-H motto, then the "Welcome" and invocation. Everyone then enjoyed a catered meal and afterwards the fun began. The special recognitions included the Clover Kids Recognition for participation followed by the Veterinary Science recognition. The awards included: District/State Awards; County Awards; District Awards; State Awards; Rising Star Awards; Bronze Star Awards; Silver Star Awards; I Dare You Awards; Gold Star Awards; Hall of Fame Award; and the A. P. George Scholarship. The current Volunteer Youth Leadership Council was recognized followed by the installation of new Council officers. The banquet concluded with a performance from 4-H Has Talent,

followed by closing remarks and the 4-H Prayer. This year the County Council officers host a Dance that followed the banquet.

National 4-H Week in Fort Bend County - A presentation of the National 4-H Week proclamation was held on October 6, 2015 at a regular FBC Commissioner's Court meeting. We are very grateful for the support of our county commissioners Richard Morrison (Prec. 1), Grady Prestage (Prec. 2), Andy Meyers (Prec. 3), and James Patterson, (Prec. 4), and particularly County Judge Robert Hebert. The relationship Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service has with our Commissioners Court is essential for the growth of Fort Bend County's 4-H program. Many thanks to Sheridan Reid, Hunter Bean, Katie Hyde, Maci Rubesh and Kayle Kaeser who represented Fort Bend 4-H at the Commissioner's Court to express our gratitude this year.

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

Making a Difference

2015 Summer Youth Programs

Developed by Angela Bosier, County Extension Agent – Urban Youth Development, Fort Bend
Justin Saenz, County Extension Agent - 4-H & Youth Development, Fort Bend

RELEVANCE

One of the goals of Fort Bend 4-H was to introduce non-traditional 4-H projects to communities as well as our 4-Hers. Wildlife and Fisheries, natural resources, and creative arts were areas we focused on during the Summer of 2015. Natural resources education is limited in urban areas of Fort Bend County. It's not because of lack of nature areas but more of lack of educators knowing how to use the nature areas as educational resources. Also there is an assumption that urban area kids may not be interested in learning more about nature such as wildlife/fisheries and other natural resources that help sustain our environment.

The Creative Arts program has been an area that 4-H offers for participation, but we wanted to explore the project in greater detail. We focus on expanding the project to expose Fort Bend County youth to public speaking, communication, and expressing themselves through improv exercises. Creative arts is a great way for young people to overcome their fear of speaking in front of crowds and improve their presentation skills which will be used continuously throughout their years of education.

RESPONSE

Basic Angler Program - Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Services partnered with Texas Parks and Wildlife to offer a free Basic Angler program for the youth of Fort Bend County at Seabourne Creek Park. The Basic Angler program offered 7 sessions:

- Fishing
- Basic Tackle & Knot Tying
- Fish 'N' Bait
- Regulations, Ethics, and Safety
- Gyotaku
- Ecology
- Learn to Cast

All sessions were led by volunteers from our Master Naturalist program as well as volunteers provided by Texas Parks and Wildlife.

Nature Watch Camp – The Fort Bend 4-H department organized a camp focused on Natural Resources along with Wildlife and Fishery.

The one day camp held sessions discussing endangered species, predators, recycling, and container gardening. The camp provided leadership to our senior 4-Hers by having them serve as educators for the sessions to the youth ranging from ages 6 - 10.

4-H Theater Camp – Fort Bend 4-H held their first week-long theater camp. The camp was led by a parent volunteer, Ms. Jennifer Triplett, who is former drama teacher. She taught the campers about public speaking, improving body language and expression, and improving communication skills.

RESULTS

Our Summer programming consisted of 88 youth participating in various camps ranging from ages 6 to 18 with 12 participants being 4-H youth mentors.

- **Basic Angler Program** – We had 35 participants for the program. The evaluations that were given showed an increase ranging from 84% to 96% of knowledge gained about fishing and other wildlife areas that were covered at the program.

- **Nature Watch Camp** - We had 30 participants attend the Nature Watch Camp. We had 10 4-H youth mentors serve as educators for the sessions. The kids really enjoyed the day and were able to take home a recycled t-shirt bag full of arts and craft projects they completed throughout the day.

- **4-H Theater Camp** – We had 11 campers attend the week long camp as well as 2 senior 4-Hers serve as mentors for the week. At the conclusion of the camp, the campers performed a short skit for the senior citizens at the Bud O'Shieles Community Center as well as for their parents and families. The campers completed a survey evaluating the camp which showed growth in communication and public speaking.

FUTURE PLANS

We intend to continue providing quality, creative summer programs for the youth of Fort Bend County.

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