



Extension Education in Fort Bend County

*Making a Difference
in 2013*

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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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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

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE *Providing Solutions*

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 – 643,408(2013)
College Educated: 40.40%



Fort Bend County 2013 Summary of AgriLife Educational Contacts

Total Educational Program Conducted - 1,212
 Total Participants - 515,414
 Contact Hours via Educational Programs - 496,310
 4-H Club Members - 547; 4-H Adult Leaders - 102; Youth Leaders - 86
 Youth Curriculum Enrichment Participants - 4,542
 4-H Special Interest/Short Term - 67,754
 Master Volunteers - 302
 Texas Extension Education Club Members - 38
 Total of Volunteers - 1,025
 Total Volunteers Hours in Support of AgriLife in Fort Bend - 54,935
 Value of Volunteer Hours to Fort Bend Citizens - \$1,187,665.50
 Office Contacts - 4,196
 Site Visits - 6,045
 Phone Calls - 12,487
 Newsletter/Mail/E-Mail Contacts - 75,571
 Web Contacts - 61,920
 Radio/Television Segments - 39

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~ Information Fair/Senior Fraud Expo							

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Agriculture and Natural Resources

2013 Fort Bend County – Urban X7 Texas Water Star

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

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** and is projected to top **1,000,000** by 2020;
- Because Fort Bend had **208,444** single family housing units in 2012 and is projected to have **225,584** units by 2015
- 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 2013 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 Katy focusing on methods to conserve water in the landscape;
- We teamed with agents in Harris County to implement a Texas Water Star Conference, teaching local water specialists with municipalities, water districts, and licensed irrigators.

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 2013 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 Katy in November that focused on methods to conserve water in the landscape had 31 Fort Bend County Citizens in attendance;
- The Texas Water Star Conference in partnership with Harris County Texas A&M AgriLife Extension educated 60 water purveyors, licensed irrigators, and homeowners on water wise evaluation and management of landscapes.

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.

Evaluation results from Sugar Land Water Conservation Workshop, October 26th, 2013

Anticipated Changes & Economic Impact:

- **88%** of respondents anticipate benefiting economically as a direct result of what they learned from this Extension activity.

Value of Activity:

- **100%** of respondents would recommend this activity to others.
- **100%** of respondents would attend another subject offered by Extension if it addressed a specific need or interest of theirs.
- **100%** of respondents said that the information and programs provided by Extension were quite or extremely valuable to them.

FUTURE PLANS

With the ongoing implementation of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension’s Urban X7 Initiative, we will continue to build upon the *Texas Water Star* program. 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.

VALUE

Water Conservation Education



Texas A&M AgriLife Extension programs that teach farmers, homeowners, and business administrators to conserve water are helping reduce demand on the state's limited water resources. Texans benefit from a safer, more reliable water supply at no additional cost.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

2013 Fort Bend County – Small Acreage Horticultural Crops

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

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.

RESPONSE

Goal 6 of the Agriculture Food, Fiber and Green Industries, as part of the 2012 Agency Strategic Plan, states Small scale agricultural operators and commercial producers in rural and suburban areas will become more knowledgeable in effectively identifying and evaluating diversification strategies (using horticultural crops) for risk mitigation and improved economic sustainability based on total management goals and optimal resource base use.

Texas AgriLife Extension Service has developed the Small Acreage Horticultural Crops Program to assist in identifying and evaluating diversification strategies for risk mitigation and improved economic sustainability using a variety of small acreage horticultural crops.

For 2013, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension specialist has offered 2 web seminars and Fort Bend County has piloted the program for the first time, acting as a host county. Typically, these programs were hosted in an average of 4 counties. Topics included for 2013 were: Starting a farm and Organic Pest Control Options.

RESULTS

Eight guests attended an online webinar on organic pest control options will be presented by Dr. Joe Masabni on March 15, 2013. The total time for this online webinar is about 2 hours. the presentation is about 1.5 hrs, with 5 minutes each for a pre and post test, and 20 minutes for Q/A session. This webinar will cover insecticides, fungicides, and herbicides, in addition to mechanical, cultural, or biological control methods.

Twelve guests attended a LYNC webinar to discuss the basics of starting your own small scale agriculture operation. Dr. Joe Masabni and guest led the discussion.

Both of these programs were offered as a pilot to gauge local interest. Based off verbal feedback, the programs were well received and participants stated that they would be interesting in attending additional topics in the future.

FUTURE PROGRAM PLANS

The horticulture unit in Fort Bend County will continue its efforts in Small Acreage Horticultural Crops web programming for 2014. We have worked hand and hand with State specialists to develop a line-up of topics that were felt needs, expressed by feedback from participants across the State.

The 2014 schedule is as follows: (date – topic)

- February 20 – Aquaponics
- April 24 – Composting
- June 19 – Grafting vegetable crops
- August 21 – Practical weed control
- October 16 – Food safety
- December 11 – Business planning.

For 2014, a structured evaluation will be administered for each of the above programs to allow for more precise interpretation of program quality and relevance going in to the future.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

2013 Fort Bend County – Master Gardener Training Program

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

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 lend 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 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-six individuals enrolled in the Fort Bend County Fall 2012 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 Master Gardener.

RESULTS

The Twenty individuals enrolled in the Fort Bend County Fall 2013 Master Gardener class will contribute in minimum of 1000 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 2013, if all remain active, would contribute an additional minimum of 720 hours of volunteer service. The knowledge they each gain will help them serve as localized stewards in their neighborhoods and other ranges of influence. This exponentially 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 receives a good understanding of the information.

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. Further emphasis will be taken to offer more specialized training to those volunteers who wish to attain higher certifications. Fort Bend County Texas A&M AgriLife Extension will utilize these volunteers to assist in the planning and implementation of additional educational programs within our community.

V A L U E

Earth-Kind® Landscaping



The Earth-Kind® program teaches participants how to care for gardens and landscapes with environmentally friendly, research-proven techniques. Instructional topics include water conservation, responsible fertilizer application, and non-chemical options for controlling pests. Use of Earth-Kind® practices benefits Texas by saving water and protecting surface and groundwater resources from potential contaminants.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

2013 Fort Bend County Crop Production

Summary Compiled by: Ricky Thompson- Fort Bend Co. Extension Agent – Agriculture & Natural Resources

RELEVANCE

Row crops and Rice production Continues to play a vital role in the county economy. With 13,679 acres of corn, 29,506 acres of grain sorghum, 30,951 of upland cotton, 2,438 acres of soybeans, and 5,060 acres of rice. The large majority of the crop production is conducted as a dry-land enterprise, thus, more susceptible to drought and climatic irregularities. Profitability is affected directly for all producers by market/price changes. The strategic planning efforts continue to reinforce crop production programs as a high priority promoting the use of new technology, improved varieties, use of best management practices and environmentally sound options allowing enterprises to be economically sustainable.



These plans have to be up-held and implemented for producers in Fort Bend County to be competitive in a world market. Fort Bend County continue to be diversified with agriculture and a strong developing urban population, it is imperative for Texas AgriLife Extension Service to take an active role in providing quality educational programs to producers that will allow them to maximize profitability on agriculture land.

RESPONSE

Texas AgriLife Extension Service in Fort Bend County developed and implemented the following programs with the help of the Fort Bend Row Crop Committee, The Ag/Hort committee and RiceTech Services to address the relevant issues in crop production. Each year the Extension service works in conjunction with Stasney Farms in Beasley, Texas establish a Result Demonstration plot to explore varietal improvements in Corn, Cotton and Grain Sorghum. This in conjunction with several educational events seeks to provide local producers with the most recent production information.

Educational Programs:

- Ag/Hort Committee meeting, April 3 - 10 attended
- Fort Bend Row Crop meeting, June 17 - 6 attended
- Fort Bend Row Crop Tour, July 2 - 60 attended
- Fort Bend Row Crop meeting, July 23 - 7 attended
- Rice Tech field day George Ranch, August 21 - 14 attended
- TV interview with Channel 26 Houston (drought effects on Rice production) August 21
- TV interview with Channel 26 Houston network (Discussion on GMOs) August 21
- Fort Bend Row Crop Production Planning Conference August 22 - 7 attended

- Rice Tech program and dinner, November 14 - 12 attended
- Fall Row Crop Conference November 19 - 35 attended

RESULTS

A survey instrument was used to determine the clientele's knowledge gained on a specific topic as well as their ranking of the overall effectiveness of the speakers on the program. All evaluations were conducted post program.

Fort Bend Row Crop Tour (number of participants responded=60)

Client Change: Level of Understanding Summary				
Program content	% of Good or Excellent Before	% of Good or Excellent After	% Difference (before & after)	% With any increase in Understanding
Knowledge of effective insecticide for chinch bug control on corn increase	54.8	92.9	38.1	61.9
Did your understanding of the treatment of thresholds for sorghum head worm improve	52.	92.9	40.5	69.0
Do you have a better understanding of when to spray for southern rust of corn	35.7	92.9	57.2	78.6
Understanding factors involved in making Atoxigenic strains work for control of Afllatoxin on corn	33.3	88.1	54.8	73.8
Why variety selection is important	78.0	95.1	17.1	63.4
Do you have a better understanding of legalities of moving farm equipment on public highways	50.0	97.6	47.6	85.7
Have a better understanding of Ag policies concerning the status of the Farm Bill	16.3	93.0	76.7	86.0

Do you estimate an economic impact benefit from your participation in this Extension program?

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean
Total anticipated economic benefit for the operation (using acres)	21	\$0	\$34,000	\$165,169	\$7,865.19
Valid N (listwise)	21				

FUTURE PROGRAM PLAN:

In the coming year we plan to gain new knowledge through variety RACE trials to help producers make informed farming decisions. With the increasing urbanization in Fort Bend County it is imperative that farmers make choices that yield them more profit on less acreage. We plan to keep doing corn, cotton and sorghum variety trials with the Stasney's Corporation. We will continue to work with Rice Tech services to help rice producers to sustain in a declining industry for Fort Bend County and transition to other farming opportunities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Texas AgriLife Extension service in Fort Bend County would like to recognize the Fort Bend Row Crop committee, Ag/Hort Committee and County Commissioners for working with us this past year.

V A L U E

Safety Education



Youth who participate in Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service safety education programs learn to avoid risks associated with rural and farm life. More than half of the deaths of young Americans between the ages of 15 and 24 are due to accidents. Reducing accidents saves lives and also reduces long-term health care and insurance costs for taxpayers.

Agriculture and Natural Resources



2013 Fort Bend County Livestock and Forage- Outcome

Ricky Thompson, Fort Bend Co. Ext. Agent – Agriculture & Natural Resources

RELEVANCE

Beef production is a billion dollar industry in the Southeast Region per data in the past production years. The pre-dominate but not limited to, beef producer in the southeast region is a cow/calf producer with less than 100 head of cattle. All beef enterprises are also affected by climate status as well as market variability. The Texas Community Future Forum/Data Summits along with county-based Program Area Committees firmly establish the need for educational programs targeted for beef producers enabling them to increase knowledge as well as adopt best management practices and new technologies improving product quality and producer sustainability.

Fort Bend County is a diversified agricultural county with beef cattle one of the leading Agricultural commodity with cotton production being first. Agricultural production in Fort Bend County, continue to struggle with repercussion from the drought of 2011. Gross sales of beef cattle have increased over the last several years, but production cost has increased as well, causing profit margins to decline. This has caused beef producers the need to make the best management decisions about available forages, supplementation and winter feeding to lower cost during the most expensive time for owning cattle. If the problem is not addressed, agricultural producers will continue to struggle with low or inefficient management practices. Cost will continue to rise making it harder to achieve a profit or break-even and many beef producers will quit their operations.

A multiple of educational programs was planned to address this problem. This idea came from the discussion of the Fort Bend County Ag/Hort Committee wanting to improve the quality of the cow/calf industry in Fort Bend County. This program is directed towards 150 beef cattle owners in Fort Bend County that manage cow/calf herds in Fort Bend County.

RESPONSE

The following Ag programs were coordinated and conducted to increase producer's level of knowledge for Best Management Practices, Pasture & Forage Management, and Agriculture awareness. The following educational programs were implemented for the Beef and Forage Program:

- A conference call was set to coordinate the Upper Gulf Coast Ranch Expo- Jan. 15
- A layout on location meeting was planned for the UGC Ranch Expo March 28

- The Upper Gulf Coast Ranch Expo was planned and implemented May 10, 91 attended
- Ag/Hort committee meeting July 3, 12 attended
- Planning Meeting for Fort Bend County Hay Testing Campaign
- Collected and Processed Hay Samples to be analyzed for hay show Sept. 30, 10 samples
- Fort Bend County Beef and Forage Conference October 17, 33 attended

RESULTS

A survey instrument was used to determine the clientele's knowledge gained on a specific topic as well as their ranking of the overall effectiveness of the speakers on the program. All evaluations were conducted post program.

Upper Gulf Coast Ranch Expo (number of participants responded=91)

(Understanding After) – Drought-Affected forage requires protection from weeds, insects & grazing livestock				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid %	Cumulative%
Excellent	52	57.1	62.7	62.7
Good	29	31.9	34.9	97.6
Fair	1	1.1	1.2	98.8
Poor	1	1.1	1.2	100.0
Total	83	91.2	100.0	
Missing	8	8.8		
Total	91	100.0		

Do you estimate an economic impact benefit from your participation in this Extension program?				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid %	Cumulative%
Yes	66	72.5	91.7	91.7
No	6	6.6	8.3	100.0
Total	72	79.1	100.0	
Missing	19	20.9		
Total	91	100.0		

Fort Bend County Beef & Forage Conference (no. of participants responded=33)

Do you estimate an economic impact benefit from your participation in this Extension program?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes ***	14	58.3	82.4	82.4
	No	3	12.5	17.6	100.0
	Total	17	70.8	100.0	
Missing	System	7	29.2		
Total		24	100.0		

PROGRAM SUMMARY


The Beef and Forage program has documented a successful overall satisfaction from the producers who attend throughout the year. The educational programs conducted have grown from broad knowledge programs to very specific educational aids for producers wanting to improve their production rates during stressful years.

FUTURE PLANS

We plan to continue addressing the need for best management practices in Fort Bend County. We will implement more Beef and Forage programs, study the customer satisfaction survey and plan accordingly the following year.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Texas AgriLife Extension service in Fort Bend County would like to recognize the partnership of the Ag/Hort Committee and County Commissioners for working with us this past year.

V A L U E	
Livestock Production	
	Texas A&M AgriLife Extension programs targeted to large- and small-scale livestock producers help generate safer food and fiber products with maximum efficiency. The result is quality, consistent, affordable products and industries that support the state's rural economies.

2013 Sustainable Agriculture for Fort Bend County Cooperative Extension Program

Plan developed by Major W. Stevenson, Jr., Extension Agent, Prairie View A&M University

RELEVANCE

The sustainability of the small farmer and ranchers in Fort Bend County as well as other counties in Texas is a major concern of the Cooperative Extension Program at Prairie View A&M University. Limited resource producers are faced with many challenges producing and marketing their products. Through several educational programs, producers will gain knowledge, adopt management practices and skills that will help them to gain a greater return on their investments which in turn, supports their operations.

RESPONSE

Goals of the Sustainable Agriculture Series in Fort Bend County facilitated by the Cooperative Extension Program, was to develop a series of programs in an effort to help local producers gain knowledge, as well as allow an opportunity to adopt management practices. Throughout this program series, the audiences were introduced to new and diverse methods of making the small farm more profitable. Program series topics included: Managing Feral Hogs in Fort Bend County, Nuisance Wildlife Pest Management, and Texas Young Farmer Grant Workshop.

Programs for 2013

Managing Feral Hogs in Fort Bend County - Fort Bend County AG/NR Agents collaborated with USDA Wildlife Services, Vertex Tactical Aviation, Texas Parks and Wildlife, Texas Department of Agriculture, Texas Animal Health Commission, AgriLife Extension Wildlife and Fisheries and Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Service to educate Texas residents about learning the legalities of feral hog eradication through methods of trapping and aerial hunting of feral hogs. Topics of discussion: Basic Biology of Feral Swine and Feral Hogs Implications to the Watershed, Population and Dynamics of Feral Hogs, Laws and Regulations for Hunting Feral Hogs, Water Quality in Southeast Texas, Agriculture Regulations Regarding Feral Hogs, Feral Hog Control, Feral Hog Safety and Disease Concerns and Movement of Feral Hogs of Texas Roads. Additionally, basics on aerial hog hunting and its laws and regulations. There were a total of five hours of Continuing Educational Units offered at the program. Two hours General two hours Integrated Pest Management, one hour Laws and Regulations were offered for the clients of Fort Bend County. On November 9, 2013, a feral hog program was conducted in Fort Bend County. There were seventy

surveys submitted from the eighty three in attendance. Results from the surveys were amazing. Surveys indicated there were 25,798 acres impacted. Last year, landowners indicated losing \$167,200 due to feral hog damage. As a result of this program participant's stated future adoption of learned management practices will save/earn them \$100,690. This is due to respondents indicating loses to feral hog damage of \$67,100. As a result of implementing what they learned during the program, they hope to have a greater profit margin. Ten program survey participants indicated that they would have 50% less damage due to feral hogs after attending the program.

Nuisance Wildlife Pest Management- With the rise in urban population in Fort Bend County and less farm acreage wildlife has lost thousands of acres for subdivisions and retails shopping centers. Fort Bend County AG/NR Agents collaborated with USDA Wildlife Services and AgriLife Extension in putting together this program Controlling Nuisance Wildlife in Urban Areas. The topics of discussion were Controlling Skunk Damage, Managing Gopher Damage, Controlling Mole Damage, Controlling Ground Squirrel Damage, Snake Control, Trapping Coyotes, Managing Armadillo Damage, Managing Opossum Damage and Controlling Raccoon Damage. For this program we offered the residents of Fort Bend County two hours of Continuing Educational Units *one hour* General and *one hour* Integrated Pest Management. . There were 40 surveys submitted from the 48 in attendance. Surveys showed that management practices would be adopted in controlling the Nuisance Wildlife Pest in Urban Areas of Fort Bend County. . Of the surveys submitted, the knowledge level gained due to this program was ninety percent of the participants who also indicated they would incorporate the practices learned. Twenty Seven of forty program survey participants indicated that they would have 85% less damage due to Wildlife in and subdivided area of County after attending the program.

Texas Young Farmer Grant Workshop- Prairie View A&M University Cooperative Extension Program Fort Bend County Extension Ag/NR Agent hosted a series of Texas Young Farmer Grant Program Workshops. Collaborating program efforts with PVAMU CEP Agriculture Specialist Dr. Nelson Daniels in delivering the program information. After hosting a general program overview there were several one on one sessions for producers who wanted to apply for both rounds of the TDA Young Farmer Grant. Through working closely with producers, one of the seventeen recipients awarded for the 2013 Grant attended the general session and several one on one meeting to have a completed application for livestock production grant amount ten thousand dollars match amount ten thousand dollars.

Source: [Texas Department of Agriculture](#)

In an ongoing effort to promote and sustain Texas as a powerhouse of agricultural productivity, Agriculture Commissioner Todd Staples announced grant awards to 17 young farmers and ranchers on Nov. 20 totaling \$150,000. The program is entirely funded by farmers and involves no state tax revenue. "Texas farmers and ranchers continue to lead with common sense solutions," Staples said. "The Young Farmer Grant Program, which is funded entirely by Texas farmers and

ranchers, offers user-friendly, effective financing options that can help establish new young farmers and ranchers.”

Grant funds are available through the Young Farmer Grant Program to agricultural producers between the ages of 18 and 45 who will create or expand agricultural businesses in Texas. Eligible applicants must be able to make dollar-for-dollar matching expenditures to sustain, create or enhance agricultural operations. Awards range from \$5,000 to \$10,000 and are funded by agricultural vehicle registration fees paid for by farmers and ranchers.

“As today’s farmers and ranchers near retirement, we must find ways to support a younger generation that will be tasked with feeding a growing population,” Staples said. “According to the USDA, the average age of Texas farmers and ranchers is 59, with only six percent of them under the age of 35.”

In 2009, the 81st Texas Legislature approved the Texas Department of Agriculture’s proposal to establish the first-of-its-kind Young Farmer Grant Program. Each year, there are two rounds of awards. Applications will be accepted in April 2014 for the next round of Young Farmer Grants.

RESULTS

Evaluations were distributed at three of the major programs and gathered at the end. One hundred percent gained more knowledge from being able to ask questions in a comfortable environment and work hands-on with demonstrations offered at the program. Also from these evaluations, they were able to take this information back to their farm or ranch to implement the practices learned. Based on the evaluations that were received from the programs we were very pleased how the audience responded. They enjoyed the programs and interactions, and they are eager to learn more, according to the surveys.

The results indicates requests for more in-depth subjects and to up-date the participants on new agriculture medical advancements and technology. Eighty-five percent of the producers were able to take the information learned at these programs and use them on their farms to make it less laborious and more profitable. One hundred percent felt these programs were hands-on and most all would like to see more programs of this nature.

FUTURE PROGRAM PLANS

Based on the findings of the surveys, offering more hands-on educational programs and open discussions in comfortable settings is a huge need in this community. Therefore, in 2014 we will establish a firm foundation in which we can further our educational efforts in all programming areas.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

2013 General ANR Contacts for Fort Bend County- Output

Ricky Thompson- Fort Bend County Extension Agent- Agriculture & Natural Resources

RELEVANCE

As a Agriculture Agent in a diversified Urban County, some programs don't always come under a banner program. These program needs still have to be met to answer the need of Stakeholders and Clientele. This plan was developed to be used to capture general Agriculture and Natural Resources contacts not associated with any other plan that I currently have in AgriLife TExAS system.

RESPONSE

Several programs opportunities were designed to help homeowners, Ag producers and landowners increase their knowledge and skills about Life Skills, Education for Youth, Emerging Hobbies. Consumers, homeowners, agricultural producers and communities would have the opportunities to gain skills and knowledge about special interest activities.

RESULTS

A survey instrument was used at each event to determine the clientele's knowledge gained on a specific topic as well as their ranking of the overall effectiveness of the program. All evaluations were conducted post program.

- Young Farmers Meeting Conferences, January 12, 61 attended
- San Antonio Livestock Show, February 11
- Houston Livestock Show, March 11
- Ag Presentation to George Ranch School 9th graders, February 26
- BLT program for Navarro Middle School, March 7
- Back Yard Basics Program "Composting" August 17, 14 attended
- Ft Bend Horse Task Force Barrel Racing Clinic, July 5-6, 16 attended
- Back Yard Basics Program "Selecting Meat & Grilling" September 21, 25 attended
- Ft Bend Horse Task Force SHOT Clinic, October 24-26, 85 attended
- The A.R.T of Horsemanship Clinic Ft Bend Horse Task Force, November 22-23, 9 attended

FUTURE PLANS

Continue to meet the needs and educate homeowners, agricultural producers, communities, and people with special interest by providing these programs. Fort Bend County is a very diverse county and there will always be a need for special program outside the box of regular programs.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

2013 Fort Bend County Pesticide Education (Output)

Ricky Thompson- Fort Bend County Extension Agent- Agriculture & Natural Resources

RELEVANCE

Field crop production is a significant part of the agricultural industry in Fort Bend County. Grain sorghum is the primary crop grown in this county along with cotton, corn and rice also contribute to the economic viability of the agricultural industry and to Fort Bend County. New technology, Weed management, nutrient management, irrigation efficiency, pest management, and marketing strategies are some of the programming needs in field crop production.

There is a continuing need for certification opportunities for those needing to acquire a TDA Private Applicator license. Also a need for an annual Non Commercial/Commercial pesticide training to help applicants prepare for the General, Laws and Regulations, and category exams. This includes the need for existing license holders to obtain their necessary TDA CEUs.

RESPONSE

Several training opportunities were designed to help applicants increase their knowledge and skills in the areas of General categories, Laws and Regulations, Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and Drift minimization. Texas AgriLife Extension Service in Fort Bend County developed and implemented Pesticide Re-Certification programs to provide a training that will serve to increase the knowledge, skills and awareness of the participants.

RESULTS

A survey instrument was used at each event to determine the clientele's knowledge gained on a specific topic as well as their ranking of the overall effectiveness of the program. All evaluations were conducted post program.

- 5 hour CEU Agricultural Re-Certification Program, January 12, 5 attended
- 2013 Private Pesticide Applicator Trainings & Testing, April 22,
- 3 hours of CEUs offered during Upper Gulf Coast Ranch Expo, May 10, 91 attended
- 2013 Private Pesticide Applicator Trainings & Testing, June 18
- 3 hours of CEUs offered during Fort Bend Row Crop Tour, July 2, 60 attended
- 2013 Private Pesticide Applicator Trainings & Testing, September 17
- 2 hours of CEUs offered during the Upper Gulf Coast Wildlife Expo, Nov. 6, 35 attended

- 5 hours of CEUs offered during the CEP Feral Hog Program, Nov 9, 65 attended
- 2013 Private Pesticide Applicator Trainings & Testing, December 11
- 5 hr Commercial/Non-Commercial CEU Training for Municipalities Dec. 12, 80 attended

FUTURE PLANS

Each year we will strive to gain new knowledge through training programs to help producers make informed decisions and minimize the damage or impact to the environment. Our goal is to sustain a healthy positive farming environment the Texas AgriLife Extension Service in Fort Bend County will continue to provide relevant, timely and research based information to the pesticide applicators in Fort Bend County.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

2013 Fort Bend Co. Water Education and Nature Conservation (Output)

Summary by: Ricky Thompson- Fort Bend Co. Extension Agent- Agriculture & Natural Resources

RELEVANCE

Water quality and quantity have emerged as the preeminent issue across the state including the South Region, as indicated through local input, legislative efforts, and numerous other indicators. Agriculture is the largest water user in the state, and agriculture is under close scrutiny because of the potential for negative environmental (water quality) impacts.

As Fort Bend County moves to a more Urban County it has come evident that we concentrate more time to the Natural Resources. This plan will also include pond issues, wildlife issues and nature conservation. Input by the Coastal Prairie Texas Master Naturalist will be inducted for emerging needs by volunteers. Fort Bend County has a growing population for nature tourism and conservation for wildlife.

Water use in the municipal environment including irrigation of athletic fields, in parks, and home landscapes, as well as, in the home proper constitutes a major portion of water used in Texas. Programs designed to educate all water adult and youth water users on water conservation and nature conservation will help reduce overall water use and increase water use efficiency. Care must also be taken to reduce the risk of water quality contamination from production agriculture areas as well as urban/suburban settings.

RESPONSE

Several training opportunities were designed to help homeowners, Ag producers and landowners increase their knowledge and skills about Nature tourism and water conservation. Consumers, homeowners, agricultural producers, communities, and irrigation districts would understand and adopt best management practices to protect water quality and enhance conservation so water supplies will meet future water needs in Texas as well as wildlife and nature conservation.

RESULTS

A survey instrument was used at each event to determine the clientele knowledge gained on a specific topic as well as their ranking of the overall effectiveness of the program. All evaluations were conducted post program.

- Wildlife & Quail School curriculum, May 7, 200 students attended
- 8 Coastal Prairie Texas Master Naturalist Board Meetings
- The Upper Gulf Coast Wildlife Expo, Nov. 6, 35 attended

- CEP Feral Hog Program, Nov 9, 65 attended
- Turf Grass presentation CEU for Municipalities Dec. 12, 80 attended

FUTURE PLANS

Continue to educate homeowners, agricultural producers, communities, and irrigation districts understand and adopt best management practices to enhance conservation so water supplies will meet future water needs in Texas as well as wildlife and nature conservation.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

2013 Fort Bend County – Backyard Basics Series

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

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, are offering 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 through the summer months, 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 summer series of programs offered in Fort Bend County included: Vegetable Production, Composting, Water Conservation, Food Dehydration and Freezing, Orchard Fruit Production, and Selecting Meats and Grilling. Each Saturday program began at 8:30 a.m. and concludes around 11 a.m., this half day training is attractive to residents that are regularly “on the go!”

RESULTS

One-hundred ten registered guests participated in the 2013 series of Backyard Basics programs. 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.

Evaluation Results from Backyard Fruit Production Program

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 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.

Evaluation Results from Landscape Water Conservation Program**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 what they expected.
- 88% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the information being accurate.
- 88% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the information being easy to understand.

FUTURE PROGRAM PLANS

Future programs being planned for 2014 include small flock poultry production, small herd goat and lamb production, hydro and aquaponic production systems, cut flower and herb gardening, beekeeping and honey production, and canning of jams and jellies. Updates on these future programs will be included upcoming issues of the *Fort Bend Gardener*. This as well as other new forms of external marketing will help increase community exposure to these quality programs. We aim to spread the word and get our communities back to the basics.

Family and Consumer Sciences

2013 Fort Bend County Food Protection Management

*Developed by Sandra Fry, Fort Bend County Extension Agent-FCS;
Diane Gertson, Fort Bend County Extension Agent-FCS*

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 two-day certified food manager program prepares food service workers to sit for the state Certified Food Manager 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 2013, 16 people in Ft. Bend County participated in the FPM program and completed the food handler and food manager certification programs. Change in knowledge (pre vs post) was used to evaluate the food handler program. In addition, client (customer) satisfaction surveys were collected from participants.

The food manager program requires passing a standardized test to receive a five year certification. Four of the five participants passed with the required 75% rate. Classes were taught at Catholic Charities and at the Extension office.

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.

Family and Consumer Sciences

2013 Child Care Provider Conferences

Developed by Sandra Fry, Fort Bend County Extension Agent-Family and Consumer Sciences

RELEVANCE

Over 60 percent of children from birth through age 6 (not yet in kindergarten) receive some form of child care on a regular basis from persons other than their parents. The Texas Workforce Commission estimates that there are over 100,000 child care providers caring for more than 760,000 children under the age of 13 in licensed or regulated child care facilities in the state of Texas. Additionally, child care is the 16th largest industry in the state, generating over 145,000 jobs and \$2.3 billion in wages for Texans.

Findings from longitudinal research have clearly established the fact that quality does matter when it comes to child care. Children who receive high-quality care (e.g., warm sensitive caregiving, well educated child care staff, low child-to-adult ratios, small group size) develop better language, math, and social skills; exhibit fewer behavior problems; and tend to be better prepared for entrance into school. Having a well-trained child care workforce is essential to providing the high quality child care that children need to develop physically, socially, emotionally, and cognitively.

RESPONSE

Two parenting/child care conferences were held in Fort Bend County in 2013. On January 26th, 51 parents and child care workers registered for four hours of training – 46 actually attended the training. Topics for the training included growth and development; communication; stress; and discipline. Child care workers received four clock hours toward their required annual training.

On April 13, 35 parents and child care workers registered for four hours of training – 34 attended the training. Topics for the training included emergency preparedness; food safety; children's nutrition; and time management. Child care workers received four clock hours toward their required annual training.

Texas AgriLife Extension Service provides a series of child care provider trainings for the Texas Department of Agriculture **Child and Adult Care Food Program** that were conducted in Galveston County for child care businesses participating in the reimbursement food program. Nutrition training was conducted for **30** child care providers who are responsible for the business food service.

Each year, the ABC Child Care Conference is held in Wharton County at the Wharton County Junior College. The child care conference is a collaborative effort between Fort Bend, Wharton, Brazoria, and Matagorda Counties and Wharton County Junior College. Approximately 200 child care providers attend

each year and receive 7 clock hours towards their required annual training.

RESULTS

Child Care and Parenting education in Fort Bend County resulted in 71 child care workers receiving a total of 284 clock hours towards their annual requirement. Nine parents received a certificate of completion require by various entities enabling them to retain or regain custody of their children.

ABC Child Care Conference - 198 participants completed a written evaluation of the conference. A total of **1386** clock hours of training were provided to child care professionals seeking to meet state mandated training requirements established by the state of Texas.

FUTURE PROGRAM PLANS

Planning for the child care trainings for 2014 have already begun and it is anticipated that child care providers will benefit from the trainings acquiring clock hours for continued employment.

Family and Consumer Sciences

2013 Fort Bend County Fathers Reading Every Day

Developed by Sandra Fry, Fort Bend County Extension Agent-Family and Consumer Sciences

RELEVANCE

Research shows that reading aloud to children on a frequent basis is one of the most effective ways to promote early literacy among young children and that strong relationships exist between children's literacy skills, academic performance, and future income potential. Children who are read to at least three times a week by a family member are almost twice as likely to score in the top 25% on tests of reading ability than children who are read to less frequently. Children who read well in the early grades are far more successful in later years and those who fall behind often stay behind when it comes to academic achievement. Finally, when parents are actively involved in their children's education, children are more likely to receive A's, enjoy school, and are less likely to repeat a grade.

RESPONSE

Fort Bend ISD Title I schools initiated a program to encourage families (particularly Dads) to become more involved in their students educational process. ***Fathers Reading Every Day (FRED)*** has been included in the Dad's Initiative and is promoted throughout the school year to twenty-one schools and is managed by the parent resource coordinators in each school. ***FRED*** is a literacy program designed to increase parental involvement in children's literacy development, with a specific focus on fathers. Since its inception in 2002, over 20,000 parents and children have participated in ***FRED***. Fort Bend ISD has been incorporating ***FRED*** in their fathering initiative for the past four years.

RESULTS

Three thousand three hundred fifty-one parents and children completed some aspect of the ***FRED*** program from Fort Bend ISD. A Fort Bend ISD social worker was assigned as the site coordinator. This resulted in an increase in participation well over 100%. Statements made by parents included:

"got me reading to my child everyday; increased the time I spent with my child"

"improved the quality of the time I spent with my child"

"helped me get to know my child better"

"helped me become more involved in my child's education; led to improvements in my child's vocabulary"

"led to improvements in my child's vocabulary"

"led to improvements in my child's ability to count"

"helped my child learn to read"

“increased my satisfaction level as a parent” and
“improved my relationship with my child.”

FUTURE PROGRAM PLANS

Fathers Reading Every Day will continue to be an essential part of the fathering initiative with Fort Bend ISD Title I schools. The social worker will continue as the site coordinator for this program.

VALUE

Parenting Education



Parenting programs from the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service increase participants' knowledge, skills, and abilities, which are essential to a child's development. Parents who are consistent, respectful, involved, and serve as positive role models increase their children's potential for success and help prevent delinquent behavior during the adolescent and teen years.

Family and Consumer Sciences

2013 Fort Bend County Health Literacy

Summary developed by Dianne Gertson, CEA-FCS, Fort Bend County

RELEVANCE

Healthy People 2010 defines health literacy as the ability to “obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions” (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2000). Health literacy and literacy are closely related yet different in that health literacy depends on one’s ability in reading, writing, speech and comprehension skills combined with the expectations that the health system has of one’s interest in and understanding of health information and services. Health information and services are often unfamiliar, complicated and technical, even for people with higher levels of education. In fact, the U.S. Department of Education estimates only 12 percent of English-speaking adults in the United States have proficient health literacy skills (Kutner, Greenberg, Jin and Paulsen, 2006). Although limited health literacy affects most adults at some point in their lives, some groups are more likely than others to have limited health literacy (Kutner, Greenberg, Jin and Paulsen, 2006):

- Adults over age of 65 years
- Racial and ethnic minorities
- Recent refugees and immigrants
- People with less than a high school degree or GED
- People with incomes at or below the poverty level
- Non-native speakers of English

Persons with limited health literacy are less likely to use preventive services, such as vaccinations and cancer screenings; less likely to successfully control chronic conditions, such as hypertension and diabetes and more likely to self-report poor health (Berkman, DeWalt, Pignone, et al., 2004).

RESPONSE

To address the issue of health literacy, a task force comprised of Missouri City First United Methodist Church, Gulf Coast Medical Foundation and Fort Bend County Extension Office representatives came together to offer the Health Literacy program. The program was offered in collaboration with Missouri City First United Methodist Church. This is a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension program which provides information to be able to make informed decisions regarding health care. Topics included in the series:

- Lifestyle Choices and Your Health
- The ABCDs of Medicare
- Talking With Your Doctor
- Medication Management

The series was open to all persons within the Missouri City community.

RESULTS

A total of 12 people completed the pre and post surveys for the series. The questionnaire included questions knowledge and anticipated behavior changes as a result of attending the series and becoming empowered in making health care decisions.

Lifestyle Choices and Your Health

- 83% understand the impact of lifestyle choices and health status
- 92% were able to name two lifestyle changes to improve health

The ABCDs of Medicare

- 100% can name one local resource to obtain Medicare information
- 92% will schedule an appointment for a wellness visit

Talking With Your Doctor

- 100% understand how to prepare for an appointment with doctor
- 100% understand importance of being honest with doctor

Medication Management

- 83% understand that medications may work differently as we grow older
- 73% will talk to doctor and pharmacist about medications

Things learned from the series that made attendance worthwhile:

- Receiving personal healthcare journal
- Getting information on being more organized before doctor visit
- Better understanding of medicare
- List of medications carried in vehicle
- All the common sense things we tend to not think about as much as we should.

FUTURE PROGRAM PLANS

The Health Literacy Series is not planned for 2014.

The series may be offered in part or whole as program requests occur.

V A L U E

Elder Care



Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service elder care programs focus on "aging in place," an approach to using resources that allow the elderly who need assistance to continue living in their homes. Aging in place keeps elders engaged in their local community and supports property values and local tax bases.

Family and Consumer Sciences

2013 - 2014 Maintain No Gain

(A community & worksite 'holiday' wellness program in Fort Bend County)

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

RELEVANCE

In Southeast Texas (Texas Department of State Health Services Public Region 6/5S), an estimated 66.6% of residents are at risk for being overweight or obese¹. With the issue of excess weight already a concern for many residents, preventing additional weight gain during the holidays is an important educational topic for our clientele. During the holiday season, it is critical to remind Fort Bend County employees and residents of the health risks associated with obesity. Excess weight has been identified as a risk factor for several chronic diseases including heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, and some forms of cancer.

RESPONSE

'Maintain No Gain' is a community and worksite wellness program created by the Cardiovascular Health and Wellness Program of the Texas Department of State Health Services. The program is designed to encourage participants to gain no more than two pounds during the holiday season. With the support of Fort Bend County Employee Health and Wellness, the Maintain No Gain program was offered to Fort Bend County employees.

The goal of the 'Maintain No Gain' program was for participants to maintain their weight within two pounds of initial weigh-in throughout the holiday season, beginning the week of Thanksgiving and continuing through New Year's. During the seven week program, participants weighed-in weekly and turned in a weekly log documenting weekly exercise and consumption of fruits and vegetables. Exercise and healthy eating are key educational messages aimed at helping people avoid excess weight. In South Texas, an estimated 77.7% of residents are eating less than the recommended number of servings of fruits and vegetables and 56.3% are not meeting the recommendations for moderate or vigorous physical activity¹. In addition to weighing in, the participants were given educational material on preventing or delaying the onset of type 2 diabetes through nutrition and physical activity, or education on managing their diabetes if they have been diagnosed as having type 2 diabetes.

RESULTS

A total of 19 participants registered for the 'Maintain No Gain' program. The program began on November 26 and will continue to January 7. Initial weigh in and program instructions were given on November 26. "Tiny Tastes" was presented as the lunch and learn. Participants will keep records of fruits and vegetable consumption and physical activity. Record sheets will be turned in each week. A

weekly prize drawing will be held for participants weighing in and completing record sheets. Weight evaluation results and program evaluation results will be available after the January 7 completion of the program.

FUTURE PROGRAM PLANS

The 'Maintain No Gain' will be offered again in 2014 because of the level of interest and that obesity levels across the state continue to rise.

For more information on the 'Maintain No Gain' program in Fort Bend County:

Dianne Gertson dlgertson@ag.tamu.edu.

V A L U E

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.

Family and Consumer Sciences

2013 Cooperative Extension Program-Fort Bend Count Childhood Obesity and Family Wellness

Developed By Fralonda W. Anderson, Fort Bend County Family and Consumer Sciences Extension Agent
Meeting Needs, Changing Lives

RELEVANCE

Obesity is a medical condition in which excess body fat has accumulated and may have an adverse effect on health. Obesity can shorten life expectancy and increase health problems. Consequently, individuals diagnosed as obese or morbidly obese will have an increased risk of developing heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, sleep apnea, certain cancers, and respiratory complications. Among adults in Texas, 31.0% are obese, with a Body Mass Index of 30 or greater. Among adolescences grades 9 through 12, 13.6% are obese (\geq 95th percentile for BMI by age and sex). 15.3% of Texas's children age 2 years to less than 5 years are obese (\geq 95th percentile BMI-for-age). According to the 2010 Fitnessgram results, 24.9% of Fort Bend County students were classified obese. There is not one single cause for the rapid rise in children's weight gain. Many factors that cause obesity include genetics, sedentary lifestyles, large food/beverage portions, marketing of sweetened and processed foods and beverages, as well as convenient access to unhealthy snacks.

RESPONSE

Several Fort Bend County schools took the initiative to promote nutrition, health, and wellness activities. Activities included partnering with Cooperative Extension Program to provide students and parents a single session to raise awareness on the importance of making health food choices.

"Eat Smart" Nutrition presentations were presented at:

- **Missouri City Middle School**- 202 Martin Rd. Missouri City, TX 77489
- **Heritage Rose Elementary School**- 636 Glendale Lakes Drive, Rosharon, TX 77583
- **Arizona Fleming Elementary School**- 14850 Bissonnet Street, Houston, TX 77083
- **Pink Elementary School**- 1001 Collins Rd, Richmond, TX 77469
- **Rosa Parks Elementary School**-19101 Chimney Rock Road, Fresno, TX 77545
- **Mission Glen Elementary School**- 16053 Mission Glen Houston, TX 77083
- **StepUp&ScaleDown** conducted during the month of August and September 2013. Collaborators included Missouri City Parks & Recreation and Sugar Land Cowboys Little League Football Parents. Participants met at Missouri City Community Park Tuesday and Thursday for two months and Sugar Land Cowboys parents met at Sugar Land City Park every Monday and Wednesday. Both groups were provided lessons on setting goals, nutrition facts, menu planning, social eating,



and engaged in low to high intensity workouts and were provided monthly meal plans to follow.

- Sessions consisted of workout activities designed to encourage commitment to exercise routines. Exercises included cardio circuit training, trail walks, and jogging challenges.
- **Back to Basics-** Back to Basics Series was conducted to with Mission Bend Elementary School parents and Knight of St. Peter Claver, Junior Daughter Group to assist participants with making healthy food choices consistent with the most recent dietary advice as reflected in the **Dietary Guidelines for Americans**. Participants engaged in lecture and activities to increase their understanding of the importance of choosing foods that are inexpensive yet still good and healthy to eat, food safety practices, stretching food dollars while shopping, making sure the family get sufficient portions to eat, using food labels to make healthier selections, cooking techniques to prepare favorite foods with less fat and sugar, helping children learn to eat healthy snacks, and sharing useful information with family and friends.
- **Live It: Real Life Nutrition** is an activity based program that motivates and teaches youth to make nutrient-rich food choices. Live It, incorporates MyPlate and the Dietary Guidelines 2010 to address nutritional topics of interest and relevance to youth. This program consisted of five sessions: N-Rich Your Plate, Building Your Plate, Label Lingo, Making Healthy Eating a Habit, and Quick and Easy Healthy Eating. This program was conducted with the Missouri City Parks & Recreation and Macario Garcia Middle School.



RESULTS



StepUp&ScaleDown

Step Up and Scale Down (Total Surveyed-16 participants)

After this program...	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
How many days a week are you physically active for at least 30 minutes?	0%	0%	0%	26.3%	36.8%	34.2%	2.6%	0%

After this program...	0	1-2 days per week	3-5 days per week	5-7 days per week
How many days per week do you eat breakfast?	0%	7.9%	5.3%	86.8%

After this Program...	Always	Most of the time	About half the time	Sometimes	Never
Think about times that you eat out at fast food and chain restaurants. When calorie information is available in the restaurant, how often does this information help you decide what to order?	26.5%	42.3%	25.9%	5.3%	0%

Back to Basics (Total surveyed- 26 participants)

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Now that we are done, based on what you have learned in the Better Living for Texan program...	Always	Sometimes	Never	Not Sure
How often will you plan your meals in advance?	32.3%	40.9%	8.6%	0%
How often will you list shopping for food?	39.8%	48.2%	6.7%	5.3%
How often will you compare prices when shopping for food?	50.0%	44.7%	0%	5.3%
How often will you sanitize cutting boards after cutting raw meat or poultry?	98.1%	1.9%	0%	0%
How often will you thaw frozen meat at room temperature?	5.3%	31.4%	45%	23.3%
How often do you think you will be able to stretch your food resources to last the entire month?	66%	33.6%	0%	0%

Live it: Real Life Nutrition *(Total Surveyed 14 participants)*


What is the most significant thing you have learned because of this Nutrition Series? (Participant Comments)

- “Peanut Oil can’t be digested; saturated fat is in McDonald’s French fries” (Female, 13, African American)
- “I learned at restaurants to eat good, the class was good” (Female, 11, African American)
- “To live healthier” (Female, 13, African American)
- “Eat good it will help you in the future” (Female, 12, Hispanic)

REFERENCE

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/adults.html

Children at Risk: childrenatrisk.org/event/childhood-obesity-breakfast

V A L U E	
Obesity Prevention and Reduction	
	<p>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.</p>

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Family and Consumer Sciences

2013 Fort Bend County Dinner Tonight!

Summary developed by Dianne Gertson, CEA-FCS, Fort Bend County

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 to 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 distribution list. The Dinner Tonight Healthy Cooking School provides an opportunity to bring people together in a fun environment to further the mission of teaching families about healthy meal planning and food preparation.

RESULTS

Weekly video demonstrations are sent via e-mail to approximately 3500 people in Fort Bend County via distribution list. The list includes 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.

Five Dinner Tonight Healthy Cooking Schools were conducted reaching 209 individuals. This number includes 95 persons that attended a Dinner Tonight Healthy Cooking School coordinated by Fralonda Anderson, FCS-CEP.

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:

- 54% have an understanding of the role of meal planning in preparing healthy meals
- 64% have an understanding of how the foods you eat impact our health
- 73% have an understanding of how meal planning can help save time and reduce stress
- 65% have an understanding of how to modify recipes to reduce calorie content
- 68% have an understanding of how to modify recipes to reduce sodium content
- 67% have an understanding of how to modify recipes to change or reduce the fat content

Participant Comments

- “You can make taste meals that are quick and easy.”
- “That healthy meals food can be quickly prepared and still taste good.”
- “I am going to start roasting my vegetables in the oven instead of cooking on the stove.”
- “Take time to plan, shop and prepare nutritious meals.”

FUTURE PROGRAM PLANS

Planning for the Dinner Tonight! programs for 2014 have already begun and it is anticipated that clientele will benefit from the method demonstrations as we expand our outreach efforts to new audiences.

Family and Consumer Sciences

2013 Cooperative Extension Program, Fort Bend Co. UX7 Dinner Tonight

Developed By, Fralonda W. Anderson, Fort Bend County Family & Consumer Sciences Extension Agent

Meeting Needs, Changing Lives

RELEVANCE

Urban residents can face several obstacles such as traffic, child or children involvement in extracurricular activities, multiple jobs, and limited childcare that could decrease in meal preparation and family mealtime. These obstacles may increase chances for choosing convenient processed foods high in fats and sugar which consequently could lead to diet-related diseases. Among adults in Texas, 31.0% are obese, with a Body Mass Index of 30 or greater. Among adolescences grades 9 through 12, 13.6% are obese (\geq 95th percentile for BMI by age and sex). 15.3% of Texas's children age 2 years to less than 5 years are obese (\geq 95th percentile BMI-for-age). Individuals diagnosed as obese or morbidly obese will have an increased risk of developing heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, sleep apnea, certain cancers, and respiratory complications.

RESPONSE

The Dinner Tonight weekly video demonstration program was created by a team of agents interested in expanding outreach opportunities through technology. Each Monday, a video demonstration, featuring a quick and healthy recipe was released for the public to view.

Fort Bend County Family and Consumer Sciences Department hosted several “Dinner Tonight Healthy Cooking Schools” to provide participants face to face educational recipe demonstrations to teach about meal planning and healthy food preparation. The demonstration recipes were cost effective, easy to prepare, quick, and fit into a healthy meal plan. The goals of the cooking school were to promote family mealtime while teaching families healthy meal planning and food preparation techniques. In conjunction with the Missouri City Middle School Health and Fitness Night, the Dinner Tonight Cooking School was conducted as the premiere activity of the evening. Participants were provided cooking demonstrations on Skillet Barbeque Chicken, Broccoli Slaw, and a Berry Cheesecake Parfait. Recipe card were also provided.



RESULTS

(Total Surveyed 95 participants) (Change in Understanding)

After this program my understanding of ...	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
The role of meal planning in preparing healthy meals.	17.9%	43.2%	27.4%	11.6%
How the foods you eat impact your health.	20.2%	40.4%	34.0%	5.3%
How meal planning can help save time and reduce stress.	24.7%	41.9%	28.0%	5.4%
How to modify recipes to reduce calorie count.	13.7%	42.1%	32.6%	11.6%
How to modify recipes sodium content.	11.6%	50.5%	26.3%	11.6%
How to modify recipes to change or reduce the fat content.	18.1%	40.4%	33.0%	8.5%

(Change in Behavior)

After this program, I will...	Always	Almost Always	Sometimes	Almost Never	Never
Plan meals in advance.	18.9%	28.9%	33.3%	13.3%	5.6%
Think about the sodium content of the foods you prepare.	16.5%	30.8%	37.4%	8.8%	6.6%
Think about the fat content of the foods you prepare.	16.7%	31.1%	34.4%	11.1%	6.7%
Think about the calorie content of the foods you prepare.	16.5%	26.4%	35.2%	12.1%	9.9%

Satisfaction	Completely	Mostly	Somewhat	Slightly	Not at All
Overall, how satisfied were you with this program?	28.9%	45.6%	15.6%	7.8%	2.2%

COLLABORATORS

Karen Crittenden, Missouri City Middle School Nurse Jamesie Williams, Missouri City Middle School Home Economics Teacher Stephanie Kellam, Fort Bend County, United Healthcare School Wellness Coordinator



Family and Consumer Sciences

2013 Step Up and Scale Down (A community and worksite wellness program in Fort Bend)

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

RELEVANCE

In Texas, an estimated 66.6% of residents are at risk for being overweight or obese according to 2010 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS). In Public Health Region 6/5S (Texas Department of State Health Services) 65.8% of residents are at risk for being overweight or obese according to 2010 BRFSS. With the issue of excess weight already a concern for many residents, it is critical to remind Fort Bend County employees and residents of the health risks associated with obesity. Excess weight has been identified as a risk factor for several chronic diseases including heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, and some forms of cancer.

RESPONSE

Step Up & Scale Down is an 8 week program designed to support people who want to live healthier lifestyles. The program uses weekly motivation, support, and accountability to assist people in meeting their goals. The program is based on the 2010 USDA Dietary Guidelines. With the support of Fort Bend County Employee Health and Wellness, the Step Up and Scale Down program was offered to Fort Bend County employees.

The ultimate goal of the program was for participants to decrease body weight and move to a healthier BMI. Goals also included increased physical activity, increased fruit and vegetable consumption and perceived improvement in health. During the eight week program, participants weighed-in weekly and attended weekly educational sessions. Exercise and healthy eating are key educational messages aimed at helping people avoid excess weight. In PHR 6/5S, an estimated 77.1% of residents are eating less than the recommended number of servings of fruits and vegetables and 53.7% are not meeting the recommendations for moderate or vigorous physical activity according to 2009 BRFSS. In addition to weighing in, the participants were sent weekly email reminders and recipes.

RESULTS

A total of 55 participants registered for the Step Up and Scale Down program with 24 completing the program. A total of 185.6 pounds were lost by the participants completing the program for an average of 7.7 pounds lost per participant. The recommended weight loss is 1 – 2 pounds per week or 8 – 16 pounds for the 8 week program.

Pre and post survey results are pending completion by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Program Specialist.

Participant comments regarding the program:

- “I’m more inclined to actively diet when held accountable.”
- “To be consistent in food choices and exercising.”
- “How to be mindful of my day to day thoughts and choices relative to my weight and health.”
- “Becoming aware of my calorie intake. On a normal day, I was eating 3-4000 calories. Didn’t even realize it. Now I’m staying within allocated daily amount. Sometimes I exercise to work off extra calories I ate. I’ve downsized my cups, plates, eating more veggies, working towards more physical activity. Very happy, oh, and I pass some foods to ‘save up’ for eating better later.

FUTURE PROGRAM PLANS

Step Up and Scale Down will be offered in 2014 to Fort Bend County Employees as part of worksite wellness.

For more information on the ‘Step Up and Scale Down’ program in Fort Bend County: contact Dianne Gertson at dlgertson@ag.tamu.edu .

V A L U E

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.

Family and Consumer Sciences

Ft. Bend County *Better Living for Texans – Back to Basics*

Developed by: Dianne Gertson, County Extension Agent – Family and Consumer Sciences - Fort Bend
Gladys Maradiaga, BLT Program Assistant, Fort Bend County

RELEVANCE

In Ft. Bend County, an estimated 41,956 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 2013, 77 Ft. 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 77 participants, 33 completed the 30-day follow-up survey which allows us to assess the extent that targeted behaviors were adopted. This report reflects the 77 participants who completed the pre and post survey (which measures intent to change behavior) and the 33 participants who also completed the follow-up survey.

RESULTS

Participants were primarily female (91%) and Hispanic (65%). More than 59% of the participants (n=45) had a high school degree or less; nearly 37%, however (n=29) had completed some college or a college degree. Average household size of the participants was 2.9 and the average age of participants was 30. Almost 17% (n=13) of participants received SNAP benefits; 27% (n=21) had children who received free or reduced-price school meals.

VALUE	
Better Living for Texans	
	These nutrition programs teach low-income audiences to prepare nutritious meals, stretch their food resources, improve their food-safety practices, and participate in regular physical activity. This not only improves the quality of life and reduces the risk of chronic disease for participants, but also lowers public health care costs.

Family and Consumer Sciences

~ *Three Easy Bites* ~

Evaluation of a Curriculum Promoting Healthy Weight Behaviors

Developed by: Dianne Gertson, County Extension Agent – Family and Consumer Sciences - Fort Bend
Gladys Maradiaga, BLT Program Assistant, Fort Bend County

RELEVANCE

Two-thirds of the adult population is either overweight or obese. Certain breakfast, snacking and dinner behaviors are associated with achieving and maintaining a healthful weight. Research supports eating breakfast, planning snacks and dinner, as well as having enough fruits and/or vegetables to cover half of a dinner plate are associated with healthy weight.


RESPONSE

A three lesson series, *Three Easy Bites*, was developed by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service nutrition specialists. The curriculum promoted positive lifestyle behaviors related to breakfast, snacking and dinner. *Three Easy Bites* session goals were -- families would:

- Plan to eat breakfast, include foods from at least two MyPlate food groups, and include breakfast items on their weekly grocery list;
- Plan which snack foods they will eat, eat their snacks away from the television, and compare their snack portion relative to the Nutrition Facts serving size; and
- Plan their dinner meal, include fruits and/or vegetables with every dinner, and include fruit and/or vegetables on their weekly grocery list.

Participants could opt out of the survey evaluation process if desired. Nonetheless, 21 pre/post/follow-up survey sets were received from Fort Bend County, Texas. The results were:

- Many participants (63%) reported that Better Living for Texans (BLT) was the first AgriLife program they had attended.
- The typical *Three Easy Bites* participant was female (81%), described herself as Hispanic or Latino (71%) and was 56 years of age.
- Participants identified themselves as white (56%) or black (31%).
- The highest level of educational attainment for most participants (85%) was 12 years or less.
- Many participants (52%) had been advised by a health professional they weigh too much.

V A L U E	
Better Living for Texans	
	<p>These nutrition programs teach low-income audiences to prepare nutritious meals, stretch their food resources, improve their food-safety practices, and participate in regular physical activity. This not only improves the quality of life and reduces the risk of chronic disease for participants, but also lowers public health care costs.</p>

Family and Consumer Sciences

2013 Fort Bend County Better Living for Texans

Developed by Gladys Maradiaga, Better Living for Texans Program Assistant

RELEVANCE

An estimated 1 in 6 households in Texas experience food insecurity. In Ft. Bend County, an estimated 41,956 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). The diets of low-income households, including those with children, often lack variety and are typically inadequate in fruits, vegetables, whole-grains, dairy products, and lean meat. Consequently, the diets of low-income households tend to be low in fiber, vitamins A and E, folic acid, zinc, calcium, and iron. These diets also tend to be higher in total fat, saturated fat, and sodium than current USDA recommendations. This is a concern since dietary quality has been linked to 4 of 10 leading causes of death including heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes.

Background

- In eight years, according to the Fort Bend SNAP benefits report, the number of recipients increases 50% between 2005 and 2013.
- Most SNAP recipients are children and elderly.
 - 55% of recipients (7,115 + 16,877 = 22,568/43829) were children
 - 11% of recipients (980 + 3940 = 4920/43829) were age 60 or older.
- The average SNAP household receives a monthly benefit of \$ 274.

Fort Bend October SNAP Benefits Cases and Recipients

Year	Number of		Recipients Ages:					Total FB Payments	Avg Payment/Case
	Cases	Recipients	< 5	5 - 17	18 - 59	60 - 64	65 +		
2013	18,079	43,829	7,115	16,877	14,917	980	3,940	\$4,959,989	\$274
2005	8,980	23,632	3,733	8,442	8,997	421	2,039	\$2,441,103	\$272
	9,099	20,197	3,382	8,435	5,920	559	1901		2
%	50	46	48	50	40	57	48		
http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us/research/TANF_FS.asp									

The Educational Program

BLT is a component of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP-Ed) and provides educational programs to SNAP-Ed recipients, applicants, and other approved audiences to help improve their ability to plan and prepare nutritious meals, stretch food dollars, and prepare and store food safely. BLT also provides educational programs that help the target audience improve their overall diet quality and increase their level of physical activity. By participating in BLT/SNAP-Ed (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program):

- Clients will improve dietary quality and engage more often in physical activity.
- Clients will adopt one or more food resource management skills such as meal planning, comparison shopping, or shopping from a list.
- Clients will improve in one or more food safety practice, such as proper hand washing, proper storage and thawing of food.
- Clients will indicate a reduction in out-of-pocket food expenses.

Lessons:

Series 1: Back to Basics (Lessons: Reducing Your Stress Through Meal Planning and Physical Activity, Spending Less and Getting More at the Grocery Store, and Keeping Your Food Safe)

Series 2: Get the Facts (Lessons: Serving Sizes, Fat, and Sodium)

Series 3: Three Easy Bites That Won't Weigh You Down (Lessons: Start with Breakfast, Snack Right, and Enjoy a Healthy Plate)

Single Education Events: Watching the Waistline, Choosing Lean Meats, Dinner Time Dilemma, Fish Advisory, Packing a Safe & Healthy Lunch for School, and Pantry-Pests


RESULTS

All BLT lessons for 2013 were taught to the FBISD, LCISD, Head Start, Parent Resource Centers, Catholic Charities, Senior Centers, community centers, and low-income apartment complexes. 56 classes were conducted by 461 participants. Participants of these service providers show some difficulty in completing the program process of 3 consecutive lessons for the BLT program. In addition, Extension agents participated in several different activities:

- WATCH Your Wellness Health Fair- March-750 participants
- Four Corners Health Fair- May- 150 participants
- Missouri City Health Fair (Access Health)- August – 1,000 participants
- Fort Bend County Fair AGtivity Barn- September- 550 participants

FUTURE PROGRAM PLANS

This program will continue educating low-income families in Nutrition and Health.

V A L U E	
Better Living for Texans	
	These nutrition programs teach low-income audiences to prepare nutritious meals, stretch their food resources, improve their food-safety practices, and participate in regular physical activity. This not only improves the quality of life and reduces the risk of chronic disease for participants, but also lowers public health care costs.

Family and Consumer Sciences

2013 Fort Bend County Walk Across Texas

Developed by Sandra Fry, Fort Bend County Extension Agent-FCS

RELEVANCE

Walk Across Texas! is an eight week program to help people of all ages support one another to establish the habit of regular physical activity. *Walk Across Texas!* is recognized as a Best Practice Physical Activity program by the Texas Department of State Health Services.

The Issue

- Over thirty percent of Texas adults are obese.
- Nineteen percent of Texas children are obese.
- Only twenty-five percent of adults and twenty-seven percent of high school students get regular, moderate exercise.
- Twenty-nine percent of American adults are not physically active at all.

Background

Points of interest:

- Regular physical activity is associated with a longer, healthier life.
- Regular physical activity and controlling weight can significantly reduce the incidence and impact of chronic diseases like heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer, high blood pressure and depression.
- Chronic diseases account for seventy percent of deaths and seventy-five percent of U.S. health-care costs each year.
- Estimated direct costs of obesity and inactivity together account for approximately 9.4% of U.S. health expenditures.
- With regular physical activity, fifty-eight percent of all people with pre-diabetes were able to temporarily or permanently delay the onset of type 2 diabetes.
- Community-wide programs like *Walk Across Texas!* have been strongly associated with significant increases in physical activity.

Severity of the Problem

Statistics:

- Texas ranks 8th in the nation as the most physically inactive state.
- Texas ranks 12th as the state with the highest obesity rates.
- Texas ranks 6th as the state with the highest childhood overweight rates.

THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Teams of eight people, school classes or individuals walk 830 miles across a map of Texas during the

eight-week period. The program begins by an Extension agent forming a community task force with members from targeted groups such as schools, worksites, churches, etc. Program activities included:

- Plan Kick-Off, Half-Way and Recognition activities.
- Train site managers, captains, teachers and other volunteer helpers.
- Register participants.
- Walk for eight weeks.
- Enter mileage on the website.
- Provide recognition for the team walking the most miles and the team reaching the destination (830) miles first.

For more information visit <http://walkacrosstexas.tamu.edu>

RESPONSE

The departments of Fort Bend County government comprise the teams. A planning meeting is scheduled with the site coordinator who Fort Bend Employee Health and Wellness Center. A starting and ending point is determined. The site coordinator publicizes the program through the county newsletter. A total of 23 teams registered for the event. The site manager held a Kick Off meeting at the Wellness Center. The website was explained to the team captains with the understanding that the Extension office would be inputting all information. Forms were distributed to captains. Captains were encouraged to turn in all forms at the end of the event. Teams who turned in the wrap up forms and the mileage logs were entered into a special drawing at the Celebration Event. Of the 23 teams registering, ten teams returned all of their forms. A weekly report was submitted to the county newsletter and distributed to employees via e-mail.


RESULTS

A total of 184 people in Fort Bend County registered to participate in the *Walk Across Texas!* activity. Potential Economic Impact for 2013 is based upon the activity of 167 participants. The average age for males and females was 43 and 41 respectively. It is estimated that 28 females and 7 males could delay the onset of diabetes if they continue their physical activity routine.

The Net Present Value for health care costs savings for females is estimated to \$1,734,384 and for males, \$371,857. The total savings for Net Present Values including calculating savings for lost wages is greater than \$2,000,000.

FUTURE PROGRAM PLANS

Walk Across Texas! will continue its relationship with Fort Bend County Departments and will encourage community groups to join in the activity planning as well as the Walk. It is planned for March.

V A L U E	
Walk Across Texas	
	<p>This eight-week fitness and health program challenges participants to adopt a habit of regular exercise. Research indicates that a walking routine of this duration is more likely to lead to continued moderate exercise, which improves quality of life and reduces the risk of chronic disease (including type 2 diabetes). This program yields public value in the forms of reduced public health care costs and a healthier, more productive workforce.</p>

Family and Consumer Sciences

2013 Fort Bend County Master Wellness Volunteers

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

This is a plan for the recruitment, training and management of Master Wellness Volunteers. The Master Wellness Volunteer Program provides volunteers with 40 hours of health and nutrition education. In return, the volunteers give back 40 hours of volunteer service. Volunteers can contribute greatly to the FCS program and can extend education further in the community.

RESPONSE

Master Wellness Volunteers were involved in Do Well Be Well with Diabetes classes, Pantry to Plate and Teen Chef Camps, Dinner Tonight Healthy Cooking School, Preserving the Bounty and Giving the Bounty programs.

RESULTS

Nine volunteers were trained in 2013 making the total of trained volunteers in Fort Bend County 22. Volunteers planned and marketed DWBW as well as taught selected lessons of the series. Volunteers served as group leaders and facilitated group activities and educational components of Teen Chef and Pantry to Plate camps. Volunteers with Dinner Tonight assisted with food preparation, assisted participants in completing the pre and post surveys and served food to attendees. Volunteers were involved in the water bath and pressure canning of products for the Preserving the Bounty and Giving the Bounty workshops.

FUTURE PROGRAM PLANS

In 2014 Master Wellness Volunteers will be trained. Volunteers will continue to assist with FCS related programs.

Family and Consumer Sciences

2013 Fort Bend County Pantry to Plate

Summary developed by Dianne Gertson, CEA-FCS, Fort Bend County

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 17.0% in 2006. The rate among adolescents aged 12 to 19 more than tripled, increasing from 5% to 17.6%. 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 in HSR 6/5S are at risk or are overweight.

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. This year a self-paced learning environment was implemented. Attendees visited learning stations and completed a worksheet based on the stations. Station topics included hand washing, food safety, physical activity, MyPlate, sugar in foods and measuring ingredients. 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. The day began with self-paced learning via stations for the entire group. Adult helpers then 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 nonnutritive

foods and snacks with less than optimal nutrition. Each day recipes around a different theme were prepared by the campers. Themes were Pizza Day, Veggie Day and Crescent Roll Day.

RESULTS

A pre and post test was given to Pantry to Plate participants. Overall test score increased by 33%. The pre and post test included questions regarding nutrition, hand washing, food safety, and physical activity. Most questions showed an increase in knowledge. All questions were multiple choice. The question regarding the amount of whole grains which should be included in diet showed an increase in knowledge of 25% to 75%. The question regarding the amount of physical activity needed daily showed an increase in knowledge of 30% to 70%. The question regarding refrigerator temperature showed an increase in knowledge of 25% to 80%. Participant comments

“What I liked best about Pantry 2 Plate.”

- Cooking.
- I liked cooking the best.
- Hands on training.

“What I liked least.”

- Veggie Day
- Nothing.

FUTURE PROGRAM PLANS

Pantry to Plate will be offered again in 2014. The station concept will again be utilized for education in a relaxed learning atmosphere. Education topics and recipes change from year to year.

Family and Consumer Sciences

2013 CEP-Fort Bend County Sustaining Families and Economic Vitality

Developed By Fralonda W. Anderson, Fort Bend County Family and Consumer Sciences Extension Agent

RELEVANCE

Families may face critical challenges and issues related to socioeconomic forces in their environment such as, two-career households, teenage pregnancies, increasing violence amongst youth, increased single-parent families, and educational and societal influences. Regardless of resources, families will need skills to guide children to be productive citizens and demonstrate positive family foundations and community structures. According to County Health and Rankings & Roadmaps, 22% of Fort Bend County youth live in single-parent households. Fort Bend County Independent School District parent participants of the 2012 Anti-Bullying Programs expressed desires for intervention in the subject areas of foods and nutrition, bully prevention, communication with children, and quality education. Parenting education is an important aspect of child rearing. Youth across the nation are faced with challenges related to obesity, bullying, alcohol, drugs, sex, and teen pregnancy. Lack of knowledge, lack of communication skills, and non-involvement, can decrease parental ability to assist children with positive youth development.

RESPONSE

In collaboration with Fort Bend County Sheriff's Department, Jail Chaplaincy Ministry; an Active Parenting Series was provided to inmate mothers. Session 1 provided lecture on the role and responsibility of being an active parent. Session 2 provided lecture on communication skills and mutual respect. Session 3 provided lecture on effective discipline, logical consequences, courage, and confidence. Throughout each session mothers engaged in open discussion on their experiences, strengthens, weaknesses, and future goals for areas of improvement.

Fort Bend County Family & Consumer Sciences and 4-H units teamed with Harris County Family & Consumer Sciences and 4-H units to conduct an interdisciplinary program entitled, Wearing Our Crowns Proudly Empowerment Series (WOC). The Wearing Our Crowns Proudly Empowerment Series (Fort Bend) was implemented with the Mission Bend Elementary School, WINGS Girl Club; ending the semester with a joint educational overnight camping trip with Harris Co. WOC participants. Throughout the 2013 spring semester, five workshops: communication and building healthy relationships, health & wellness, alcohol & drugs, hygiene for girls, and self-empowerment, were conducted with the WINGS participants and their mothers. Educational workshops conducted during the overnight night included Food & Nutrition-Food Challenge, Clothing and Textiles, and Self-Empowerment. During the camp mothers attended an adult-only workshop to assist mothers with understanding different styles of communications, ways to initiate conversation, define characteristics of an "approachable" parent.

Wearing Our Crowns Proudly Collaborator and Contributing Extension Staff

- Alice Coleman- Mission Bend Elementary School, 5th Grade Teacher, WINGS Advisor
- Sonja Davis- Family & Consumer Sciences, County Extension Agent, Harris County
- Sheryl Nolen- Urban Youth Development, County Extension Agent, Harris County
- Ashley Moore- Family & Consumer Sciences Extension Agent, Cooperative Extension Program, Harris County
- Danielle Hairston-Green- Family & Consumer Sciences Specialist, Cooperative Extension Program
- Timothy Sandles- 4-H & Youth Development Extension Agent, Cooperative Extension Program, Fort Bend County

RESULTS

Active Parenting in 3

(Cooperative Extension Program- Customer Satisfaction Survey, Total surveyed 8 participants)

<i>How satisfied are you with the following aspects of the activity?</i>	<i>Answered:</i>
Information being what you expected to receive	100% answered completely
Information being easy to understand	100% answered completely
Helpfulness of the information in decisions about your own situations	100% answered completely
Relevance of the examples used	100% answered completely
Do you plan to take any actions or make any changes based on the information from this activity	100% answered "Yes"

What did you like most about this activity? (Participant Comments)

- "Learning how to discipline" (Female, 25-29, Hispanic)
- "The instructor & the way she taught" (Female, 30-34, White)
- "Learning the right ways on how to discipline children and how it was on video and the group talk" (Female, 18-24, White)
- "The instructor was very understanding and not judgmental of the way you parent, instead she found more helpful ways to help" (Female, 18-24, African American)

Wearing Our Crowns Proudly Empowerment Series

(Change in understanding) (Total surveyed 38 participants)

After this program.....	<i>Excel't</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>
I understand how the choices I make now will affect my future.	92.1%	7.9%	0%	0%
I understand the importance of personal hygiene.	89.2%	10.8%	0%	0%
I understand the requirements for obtaining and maintaining healthy weight.	92.1%	7.9%	0%	0%
I understand ways to build my self-image.	83.8%	16.2%	0%	0%
I understand the damaging effects that drugs and alcohol have on the body.	97.4%	2.6%	0%	0%
I understand how to build a healthy plate based on the MyPlate guidelines.	83.8%	8.1%	5.4%	2.7%
I understand the importance of communicating effectively within the family.	92.1%	7.9%	0%	0%

Wearing Our Crowns Proudly Empowerment Series

(Change in behavior) (Total surveyed 38 participants)

<i>After this program.....</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Unsure</i>
I will make better choices related to my food selections.	97.4%	5.3%	0%
I will exercise a minimum of 30 minutes a day.	76.3%	5.3%	0%
I will make better choices about my wardrobe selection.	86.8%	5.3%	0%
I will make healthier meal selections when eating out.	86.8%	5.3%	0%
I will use the Nutrition Facts Labels when selecting meals and snacks.	81.6%	5.3%	13.2%
I will use serving sizes when building my plate.	84.2%	2.6%	13.2%
I will initiate conversations with my mother or daughter	92.1%	7.9%	0%

<i>Impact Measures.....</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
Do you believe the information presented during the Wearing Our Crowns Proudly Empowerment Series will help you make healthier lifestyle choices?	93.7%	2.7%
Do you believe that your participation in this program has enhanced your relationship with your mother/daughter?	100%	0%
Would you recommend this program to someone else?	97.1%	2.9%



VALUE

Parenting Education



Parenting programs from the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service increase participants' knowledge, skills, and abilities, which are essential to a child's development. Parents who are consistent, respectful, involved, and serve as positive role models increase their children's potential for success and help prevent delinquent behavior during the adolescent and teen years.

Family and Consumer Sciences

2013 Cooperative Extension Program Fort Bend Outcome Programs

Developed By, Fralonda W. Anderson, Fort Bend County Family and Consumer Sciences Extension Agent

Meeting Needs, Changing Lives

2013 Cooperative Extension Program Fort Bend County Food Safety

RELEVANCE

Food quality and safety involves purchasing, preparing, and storing food using procedures to prevent the spread of bacteria and reduce the risk of food borne illness. Every year more than 76 million people in the United States become ill from food poisoning. Providing citizens with proper food handling procedures, teaching the importance of personal hygiene, preparing food properly, and storing food properly will allow clientele reduce causes of food borne illnesses. Currently there are more than 250 known food borne diseases.

RESPONSE

Set-up a Heat Exhaustion and Food Safety Exhibit for Grimes County, National Oilwell Varco, Employee Health Fair to provide tips for proper food safety practices to decrease risk of food borne illnesses in hot climate areas and ways to avoid heat exhaustion.

Back to Basics Series with Mission Bend Elementary School parents and Knight of St. Peter Claver, Junior Daughter Group included lecture and activities to increase their understanding of the importance of choosing foods that are inexpensive yet still good and healthy to eat as well as food safety practices. Participants engaged in question and answer session on safe food temperature, proper ways to thaw frozen foods, proper storage of foods, and danger zones to caution when preparing foods.

2013 CEP Fort Bend County UX7 Master Wellness Volunteer Program

RELEVANCE

Volunteers can contribute greatly to the Family and Consumer Science programs and can extend education further into the community. A group of trained volunteers who also serve as advocates for Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Services and the Cooperative Extension Program can substantially increase the scope and impact of the Family and Consumer Sciences program. The Master Wellness Volunteer Program provides volunteers with 40 hours of health and nutrition education. In return, the

volunteers give back 40 hours of volunteer service. This is a plan for the recruitment, training, and management of Master Wellness Volunteers.

RESPONSE

Fort Bend County Family and Consumer Sciences Dept. provided a 5 day training for the Master Wellness Program. Day 1- Extension Overview and Orientation, Day 2- Nutrition, Day 3- Food Safety, Day 4- Health, Day 5, Child Health & Certification. Cooperative Extension Program recruited two nurses to participate in Master Wellness Volunteer Program. Both nurse successful completed the program to with the goal to provide more Diabetes Education Programs to diabetic participants at Christ Clinic of Katy. The Cooperative Extension Program and Texas AgriLife Extension Program's 4-H & Youth Development Program places great value on the 4-H Family & Consumer Sciences projects. These projects expose 4-H members to the academic disciplines of family and consumer science and help them gain valuable skills and knowledge that can be applied to daily life. These projects also teach leadership skills.

2013 Cooperative Extension Program, Fort Bend County 4-H/FCS

RELEVANCE

Today's economic situation has increased the need to raise financially literacy in young people. A 2007 back to school survey of teens revealed that 52 percent of teens are eager to learn more about money management. Only 35 percent of teens have learned about money management from their parents while even less (14 %) of teens report that they have taken a course on money management. In Fort Bend County, Children at Risk reports the percentage of children living in poverty is significantly lower than both the national rate of 20.7% and the statewide rate for Texas of 25.6% with 10.4 of children under the age of 18 living in poverty in 2009. Fort Bend County has the highest median income of \$80,548 among all of counties in the state of Texas. However this high medial income is attributable to a concentration of healthy households and one in ten children live in poverty in Fort Bend. These children have less access to necessary resources that will allow them to develop into successful adults.

RESPONSE

Fort Bend County 4-Her's participating in the county 4-H Consumer Decision Making Contest were provided an educational session on improving consumer decision making skills and understanding the 4-H Consumer Decision Making Contest. 4-Her's engaged in interactive activities and a mock contest to enhance the learning process of this subject area. Some programs included:

- Facilitated District 9 Consumer Decision Making Workshop during 2013 District 9, 4-H Round-Up. 4-Her's and parents were provided information on the basic purpose, rules, and operations of the Consumer Decision Making Contest.

- Facilitated District 9 Meet the Food Challenge Workshop during 2013 District 9, 4-H Round-Up. Four 4-Her's and parents were provided information on the basic purpose, rules, and operations of the 4-H Food Challenge.
- Co-Facilitated "Eat Breakfast" workshop with Ashley Moore, (Family and Consumer Sciences Extension Agent, Harris County) during the 2013 Cooperative Extension Program, 4-H Youth Laboratory. 12 Texas counties invited teens to Prairie View A&M University to become County Healthy Living Ambassadors. The Healthy Living Ambassadors were provided facilitation strategies, tips, and ways to promote health and wellness to peers, families, and their communities.
- Fort Bend County Family and Consumer Sciences Department contributed to the 4-H Etiquette Day at T.L. Pink Elementary School and Velasquez Elementary School. Female 5th graders at Pink Elementary School were provided a presentation on Hygiene and Wardrobe. 5th graders at Velasquez Elementary School were provided a presentation on the importance of building a healthy plate. Students engaged in open discussion about food choices and proper manners they use at breakfast, lunch, and dinner time.

Family and Consumer Sciences

2013 Texas Extension Education Association of Fort Bend

Developed by Sandra Fry, Fort Bend County Extension Agent-Family and Consumer Sciences

MISSION

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

ASSOCIATION

Texas Extension Education Association of Fort Bend is comprised of 4 clubs with a total of 36 members. Since the beginning of the year, two new members have joined the association for a total of 38 members. Educational programs hosted by TEEA included: "Grandma's Home Remedies", "No Cook Cooking", and "Cooking with Pastry and Pie Crusts". An educational tour to the Czech Heritage Museum in LaGrange was organized in February. At their annual meeting, they were trained to teach the lessons: "Eat Healthy Texas Style", "Saving from a Rainy Day", "How Does Your Garden Grow", "Re-Dress for Success", and "Living Well on Less". Besides these lessons, each club may offer other types of educational programming. The Textile Study Group lessons included a community service project of baby blankets for a hospital and an annual quilt shop hop.

In addition to the educational programming, TEEA provide community service throughout the county. They provided one scholarship to 4-H totaling \$300 and donated dollars to Helping Hands, Fort Bend County Libraries 300.00. In addition to the monetary donations, members donate materials to Activities Supporting Adolescent Parents (ASAP) at Lamar CISD and Ronald McDonald House. 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 clothing and textile 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 members attend seven council meetings a year, a fall District Officer Training and a District Spring Conference that was held in Lee County this year. Additionally, members attended the annual state meeting held in San Marcos this year. As one of three districts co-hosting the state meeting this year, the members were very busy throughout the year preparing for fundraisers during the meeting, preparing

items for the country store and overall planning of the event. 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.

FUTURE PROGRAM PLANS

Continue support TEEA in 2014 by providing worthy educational programs and meaningful volunteer opportunities.

Family and Consumer Sciences

2013 Fort Bend County Other Significant Programs

Developed by Sandra Fry, Fort Bend County Extension Agent-Family and Consumer Sciences

4-H Sew & So Camp

RESPONSE

The 4-H Sew & So Camp was developed to provide an opportunity for youth to learn how to sew. Besides the “sewing” opportunity, participants learn about equipment used in clothing construction, safety in using the equipment, fabric types and properties, and different techniques used in clothing/accessory construction. The camp was five days and was offered once in Fort Bend County with 8 youth enrolled. In addition, there were five participants from previous years who could not attend the five day camp. A special one day project was offered for them. Participants used a sewing machine, a serger machine and learned how to use an iron. The sewing camp is a team activity. I work with Galveston County for one week with their camp and the agent in Galveston County comes to Fort Bend County to work with our camp. I had two volunteers assist with the teaching of the activities which involved a minimum of 90 hours of volunteer time.

RESULTS

One hundred per cent of the youth have attended at least one previous camp. On the last day of the camp, an open house was held for the parents to view the display of their projects for the week. Favorite things about camp included making a sewing organizer, a Victorian needle keeper and re-purposing old blue jeans into a pillow and bin containers.

Adult Sewing Classes

Adult sewing classes continued throughout 2013 with several projects. Volunteers from the American Sewing Guild and Texas Extension Education Association assisted with the classes. Projects included appliqué pillow, sewing organizer and a table runner for the home dec classes. Garment classes included two jackets and a pants fitting class. A special class teaching participants how to use a serger and techniques that can be done on the serger resulted in a tote bag as the finished project.

Preserving the Bounty

One home food preservation workshop was held with a total of 8 participants. Water bath canning and pressure canner canning techniques were demonstrated. Each participant received a jar of jelly, bread and butter pickles, green beans and salsa.

Information Fair/Senior Fraud Expo

RESPONSE

The Information Fair/Senior Fraud Expo is an event planned by the Family and Consumer Sciences Program Area Committee. The objective of the event is to provide opportunity for government and non-profit agencies to network and learn what services they provide that will help each other best serve their clientele. 2013 was the sixth year for the Information Fair and the fourth year for the Senior Fraud Expo. The two were combined in 2011 to make better use of the Information Fair exhibitors.

RESULTS

Twenty-four exhibitors participated in the 2013 Information Fair that was held at the Rosenberg Civic Center. The event lasted for four hours with inclusion of speakers for the Senior Fraud Expo. Topics included “Neighborhood Fraud” presented by Rosenberg Police Department, “Health and Wellness for the Elderly” presented by Dianne Gertson, FCS Fort Bend County and “Medicare Fraud” presented by Better Business Bureau Education Foundation. Continuation of the event will be dependent upon the Family and Consumer Sciences Committee planning. More than 100 volunteers hours were expended to plan and implement the Information Fair/Senior Fraud Expo.

Making a Difference

2013 Take A Stand Urban X 7

*Developed by Joe W. Mask County Extension Agent – 4-H & Youth Development – Fort Bend
W/ support from Timothy Sandles Extension Agent – Cooperative Extension Program – Fort Bend*

RELEVANCE

Conflicts among youth and bullying have been increasing. School districts have been mandated by the Texas Legislature through two bills (House Bill 212 and 283) to adopt and implement a dating violence policy and a discipline management policy. Both bills require training for teachers/staff as well as training/curriculum for youth to address these issues. Currently, there is no standard curriculum being utilized by school districts. Texas 4-H has developed, in partnership with the Texas Rural Mediation Services, a curriculum called Take A Stand! This curriculum addresses both of these issues.

RESPONSE

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Fort Bend County developed and implemented educational programming for youth to address Bullying to satisfy the expectations of the Urban X 7 initiative.

Lessons from the curriculum were taught at five locations around Fort Bend County. They included the following:

- Creek Side Church
- YMCA – Missouri City
- A Day to Take A Stand camp
- **Wessendorff Middle School** – Lamar CISD
- Burton Elementary – Fort Bend ISD

We had a total of 973 students go through the lessons that were taught. Fort Bend County had 827 respondents to the post survey; a total 85% of the participants concluded the program with completed evaluations.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Fort Bend County collaborated with the Sugar Land Skeeters Minor League baseball team to enhance the excitement about the lesson on Team Work.

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RESULTS

Creek Side Church held a day long camp to educate youth on Bullying. There were seven young people that participated in the program with seven completing the evaluation instrument. Due to the program 81.6 % of the respondents had a behavior change with 91% positive feedback of the overall program.

YMCA – Missouri City allowed us to come in and teach the five lessons of the Take A Stand curriculum during their summer programming. Because of the lessons taught 98.3 % of the participants completing a survey indicated that 76.4 % had a change in behavior when it came to bullying. Of the respondents completing the survey 68.3 % were satisfied in the overall program offered.


A Day to Take A Stand was a collaborated effort with the 4-H unit in Fort Bend County to implement a youth day camp planned around the Take A Stand Curriculum. Participants were engaged all day with lessons and activities and were treated to snacks and a hot dog lunch. Twenty five of the twenty six participants completed the post survey. 76 % of the respondents had a change in behavior due to their participation in the camp. At the conclusion of the program we had 90.4 % of the participants were satisfied with the program.

Wessendorff Middle School offered us an opportunity to come in every Monday morning for five weeks to teach the Take A Stand lessons to the student body. The lessons were held in the gym with teachers and staff to help with control of the 457 students. All lessons were taught by Extension staff with Moe the Sugar Land Skeeters mascot helping with lesson 4 Team Work. We had a 79.5 % respondent rate on the post survey given at the conclusion of all five lessons. 76 % of the respondents indicated they had a change in behavior due to the program, with 74% giving positive feedback on the overall program.

Burton Elementary in Fort Bend ISD allowed us to come for two days of instruction on December 10 and 11, 2013 to teach grades 3rd through 5th. There were a total of 421 students with 371 returning the post surveys. We had a 88% respondent rate on the post survey that was given to the students. 71.2% of the respondents indicated they had a change in behavior due to the Take A Stand program, with 79.5% giving positive feedback on the overall program.

FUTURE PROGRAM PLANS

The 4-H Unit in Fort Bend County will once again in 2014 participate in the Urban X7 programming by implementing Take A Stand. At date of summary we have commitment from Wessendorff and Burton to be sites in the Fall of 2014. We are working diligently to secure more sites for the betterment of the program.

VALUE	
Character and Leadership Development	
	Texas A&M AgriLife Extension's 4-H Youth Development Program teaches participants leadership skills and character traits. Participating youth become mentors, role models, and leaders in their schools and communities.

Making a Difference

2013 4-H Veterinary Science Certificate Program

Developed by Joe W. Mask County Extension Agent – 4-H and Youth Development – Fort Bend County

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 work with professionals in the fields. 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.

Four clubs were established in 2013 for the implementation of the Vet Science Certificate Program.

1. Animaniacs
2. Blue Jay Vet Science Club
3. Katy Tigers Vet Science
4. Paws for a Purpose

1st Annual Fort Bend County Vet Science Day at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo was held.

RESULTS

Start of 2013 Club enrollment numbers:

4-H Vet Assistant Home School Group	21
Rising Stars 4-H	8
Hearts to Tails 4-H Vet Science	7
Ready Set Vet	9
<u>Vet Smart</u>	<u>6</u>
Total	51

End of 2013 Club enrollment numbers:

4-H Vet Assistant Home School Group	10
Animaniacs	7
Blue Jay Vet Science Club	8
Ready Set Vet	8
Hearts to Tails 4-H Vet Science	11
Katy Tigers Vet Science	15
Paws for a Purpose	8
<u>Rising Stars 4-H</u>	<u>5</u>
Total	72

During 2013 there were two Vet Science Certificate Program informational meetings held in Fort Bend County, one being conducted by Dr. Buddy Faries and Agent Joe W. Mask and the other by Joe W. Mask. There were a total of 87 members and parents in attendance at the two meetings with 41 youth committing to join the five year program.

Fort Bend County Vet Science Certificate Program had an honor to conduct a Vet Science Day at the 2013 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. The program consisted of two lessons taught by Dr. Buddy Fairies and Joe W. Mask with tours that went along with lesson. Dr. Leslie Easterwood show vet also visited with students about vet school and she conducted the urine collection observation that went with the Drug Residue Avoidance Program. At the conclusion of the program an online survey was sent to the 52 member participants with 83% respondents that indicated that they were 98% satisfied with the overall program. When it came to the selected lessons and activities 94% gave positive feedback when answering the survey.

FUTURE PROGRAM PLANS

Fort Bend County is committed to grow the Vet Science Program in the coming years. There are plans in place to have the second Vet Science Day at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. We also have a running list of calls with new students that want to start the program in September 2014.

4-H and Youth Development

2013 Fort Bend County Winning with Nutrition (CEP)

Developed By: Timothy Sandles, Fort Bend County Extension Agent- CEP (4-H)

RELEVANCE

Texas is ranked seventh in the nation and has a child obesity rate of 20.4 percent. According to the 2011 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Texas youth continue to engage in behaviors that do not contribute to a healthy lifestyle and can have a negative impact on their athletic performance, such as alcohol, tobacco and drug use, engaging in unhealthy dietary behaviors, such as lack of fruit, vegetable and dairy consumption, as well as poor methods in an attempt to lose weight (not eating, use of laxatives, etc.). The University Interscholastic League (UIL) offers 23 athletic activities in which more than one million student athletes participate. Within these competitive sports, youth are always trying to get an edge to win, whether through weight monitoring or performance enhancers.

RESPONSE

Winning with Nutrition, a program to engage youth athletes in learning the importance of proper nutrition and hydration for maximum athletic performance and for general health and well-being, was implemented by the T.W. YMCA and was facilitated to youth at one of their summer programs, Camp Cloud.

During Camp Cloud the Winning w/ Nutrition curriculum was taught weekly for ten weeks to a different group of campers. While being engaged in the program the curriculums consisting of lessons: Eating for Excellence; Hydration Station; Game Day Dining; Performance Robbers; and Fads & Facts, campers enjoyed fun filled interactive activities.

RESULTS

Through program efforts, 7 volunteers were trained and 450 youth were educated with 125 completing evaluations. As a result of evaluated participants, 85% of participants reported that they would do things differently because of what they learned.


The retrospective post evaluation also gauged the level of understanding on the following questions (approximately 83% of respondents reported to be 12 to 10 years old:

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Level of Understand	% increase of those at Good or Excellent
Understanding of “My Pyramid”	56%
Knowledge of the functions of carbohydrates	48%
Understanding of the functions of proteins	47%
Understanding of the functions of fats	51%
Understanding of why water is important	39%
Knowledge of the function of water	36%
Knowledge of level of how to create a menu appropriate for pre-game dinning	52%
Knowledge of the effects of sleep on athletic performance	47%
Knowledge of the effect of smoking and alcohol on athletic performance	39%
Understanding of how to recognize fad diets	50%

When asked “what behaviors you plan to change”, students reported:

- “Look at the things that in the item you are eating”
- “Eat better and exercise”
- “I will eat more vegetables and eat healthier”
- “My times of sleep”
- “Drinking more water”

V A L U E	
Character and Leadership Development	
	<p>Texas A&M AgriLife Extension's 4-H Youth Development Program teaches participants leadership skills and character traits. Participating youth become mentors, role models, and leaders in their schools and communities.</p>

4-H and Youth Development

2013 Fort Bend County 4-H and Youth Development

Plan developed by Major W. Stevenson, Jr., Extension Agent, PVAMU

RELEVANCE

Youth need a variety of projects and activities to help them develop into contributing members of society. 4-H volunteers provided leadership for projects and activities.

RESPONSE

Through a variety of projects and activities, youth will learn and practice developmentally appropriate life skills that will contribute in forming productive citizens.

RESULTS

4-H Calf Scramble Projects for 2013 Major Shows- Four All American 4-H Club Youth participated in 2013 Major Show Calf Scrambles San Antonio Livestock Exposition and Rodeo Houston. Two of the youth participated in both San Antonio Livestock Exposition and Rodeo Houston completions. S.A.L.E awarded eight hundred dollars for each of the twelve calves that were caught for all performances during the 2013 San Antonio Livestock Exposition Season. H.L.S.R awards the youth one thousand two hundred fifty dollars for the purchase of a registered breeding heifer. Upon returning to the 2014 season each of the youth will receive an additional two hundred fifty dollars.

The 2014 S.A.L.E. and H.L.S.R. will offer many awards and prizes offer for the youth from across the State. All American 4-H youth all selected different breeds of cattle, the breeds that were selected were Brahman, Chianina, Simbrah, and Shorthorn. Working with these youth we have been able to teach the basic fundamentals of selecting different breeds of cattle. All breeds of cattle have different traits so the selection process will depend on the breed. After the selection process was complete the youth were taught about grooming, fitting, feeding, nutritional maintenance and showmanship. Daily exercise and practicing show ring fundamentals. The project feeding season is one year which allows the 4-H'er to care for the animal and go to vast amounts of jack pot shows across the State of Texas. Urban youth have many challenges when raising large animal projects. The All- American 4-H youth and their families found that the project becomes a project of the family. Each of the family members has a role in raising the heifer project and returning to one or both of the Major Shows. After teaching and assisting the youth for a ten month period I have found that the entire family bonds with the beef project.

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One hundred percent of the All-American families who entered this large animal project season learned money management practices.



Gardening in the Classroom Raised Bed Vegetable Garden- Fort Bend County Extension Ag/NR Gardening in the Classroom Program, was hosted at Sugar Land Middle School, Kids R Kids Katy, Texas and Good News Christian Academy, Stafford, Texas this program was for the Youth of Fort Bend County. Throughout this program the students were able to learn about Raised Bed Gardening, for fall and spring planting seasons. The landscaping and design was created by the Students, Volunteers, and Extension Staff, teaching landscape design and construction of raised bed gardening. The students were able to use Mathematics and Science in creating the layout of their garden. The students started seeds in the classroom and at the time of mature transplants the youth planted a variety of vegetables and herbs, in the raised beds. Also transplants were purchased at local feed stores and planted in the beds at the same time. The students were able to measure the yield on the purchased transplants versus the seed to transplant process at harvest. The 4-H Youth donated the vegetables to the local food bank in Sugar Land, and Stafford, Texas. This program promoted Healthy Living in local Texas Youth.

FUTURE PLANS

Continue to conduct educational programs throughout Fort Bend County, specifically in areas of the county populated by limited resource individuals, via presenting 4-H related activities to facilitate personal growth and development while striving to build strong community relationships in support of county youth.

Making a Difference

2013 Fort Bend County's Other Significant 4-H Programs

4-H Day Camp

RESPONSE

The 4-H Day Camp was developed to give non-4-H members a chance to experience a day full of 4-H activities. This camp was started as a recruitment event to expose youth from 6-10 years of age to 4-H. Each summer the event is held in July at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds with participants doing a wide range of hands on activities and enjoying a hot dog lunch, snacks, and door prizes for all participants. This event is also a great time for our volunteers to conduct the learning sessions. We utilize Master Gardeners, Parents and 4-H Leaders as well as County Council Officers and Teen Leaders.

RESULTS

The 2013 camp was attended by 51 participants with the average age of 7.8 with three joining a 4-H club in September. We do not do a formal evaluation due to the age of the participants; however, we do ask questions about what they liked about the camp. One hundred percent of the participants enjoyed the day and were excited about what they were able to learned and accomplished.

Seven Lakes Junior High 4-H Club

RESPONSE

The Seven Lakes Junior High 4-H Club is an in-school club that will meet during the day, during the advised period once a month. There will be outside activities planned to enhance what the students are doing during their meeting. The principal is backing the program that will focus on five key areas. These areas are horticulture, robotics, environment/wildlife, photography, and egg to chick.

An informational meeting was held in September with 50 students and the two club managers in attendance. 4-H Agents visited with students about 4-H and the many opportunities that were available. Door prizes were given and each participant received a 4-H bracelet for their attendance.

RESULTS

The club has 23 members that have joined in 4-H Connect and are attending monthly meetings. As a part of the club the students have planted a garden and are harvesting the vegetables of their labors. The students also set 48 eggs for the egg to chick program and have hatched 22 chicks.

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4-H Dog Club

RESPONSE

Pawsability 4-H SPIN Club is a new addition to Fort Bend County 4-H project clubs. Pawsability 4-H is a part of Texas 4-H new initiative "Let's Go, Let's Grow." The 4-H dog care and training project teaches participants the care, training and production of dogs.

RESULTS

The Pawsability 4-H SPIN Club has a total of 7 members and is off to a great start. They meet every other Monday and ended their successful year with Pawsability 4-H Christmas Party where they held a Secret Santa for their furry friends.

Fort Bend County Contest Expo

RESPONSE

The Fort Bend County Contest Expo was the county first contest expo. It was the perfect event that offered all the contests that are held in Fort Bend county for our 4-Hers. The Expo included presentations as well as demonstrations of the contests which included Food Challenge, Fashion Show, Fashion Storyboard, Livestock Judging, Skillathon, and Consumer Decision Making.

RESULTS

The Fort Bend County Expo was attended by 16 participants, several of them being new to 4-H. Our very own 4-Hers that competed in these contests at the district and state level were chosen as speakers for the event. The speakers range from Juniors to Seniors 4-Hers. From the event, we were able to form a Consumer Decision Making team and formed two new Food Challenge teams that competed in the 2013 Food Challenge.

Junior Master Gardener

RESPONSE

Junior Master Gardening program is an international youth gardening program of the University Cooperative Extension network. It is currently used through community clubs, after school and school based program. The goal of the JMG program is to grow good kids through igniting a passion for learning, success, and service through unique gardening experience.

RESULTS

The JMG curriculum has been exposed to two summer programs this year. Science and Technology Camp sponsored by Operation Military Kids was held in Conroe, TX. The JMG "Hamburger Plant" was taught and used as Ag Awareness during the camp. The camp was attended by 20 participants. Also at the Boys and Girls Club of Fort Bend County, the JMG "Hamburger Plant" was taught as part of a jump start to the planting of a garden at the center. There were 34 boys and girls in attendance.

Mission West Elementary started the renovations to their school garden. The Mission West Green Club along with a Girl Scout Troop, made a total of 20 students, cleaned out the grub and weeds of their overgrown school garden. They plan to restore the garden and make it an educational outlet for their students K-5th grade in 2014 .

Two water programs were conducted for 27 kids at the JMG Earth Kind Kids Kamp. The first lesson activity was over the water cycle with an activity that demonstrated where water is located on the planet and how it flows to and from each location. The second lesson and activity covered water conservation and the effects of water usage and pollution on water sources.

Operation Military Kids

RESPONSE

Fort Bend County has established a great partnership with Operation Military Kids. We have had great success while using their resources for community service projects, technology training, and STEM related activities for our 4-Hers. Operation Military Kids is the U.S. Army's collaborative effort with America's communities to support children and youth impacted by deployment. OMK's goal is to connect military children and youth with local resources in order to achieve a sense of community support and enhance their well-being.

RESULTS

A Day of Service (9/11) event was a community service event attended by 17 youth of Fort Bend County 4-Hers and non-4-Hers. A total of 10 quilts were made and given to wounded soldiers and veterans.

Robotics Training

RESPONSE

Robotics Training was given at Fort Bend County Extension Office with 10 participants in attendance. The training consisted of general knowledge of NXT Lego Mindstorms robotic kits. The participants were taught how assembly of a robot as well as shown how to program the robot for competition purposes. Robotics is going to be a major project in 2014 with all the potential it offers.

National 4-H Science Day

RESPONSE

National 4-H Science Day project was completed by 5 participants. An imaginary park was created using the GIS system. Each participant was given a layer to design to make a functional park. Pizza and cupcakes were served at this event. The kids were excited to learn new advanced aspect of science while having a hands on experience.

Community Economic Development

2013 Fort Bend County Emergency Management Plan

Developed by Vincent J. Mannino, CED-FBC

RELEVANCE

Texas is subject to numerous disasters, whether they are natural, accidental or intentional. These hazards are somewhat unpredictable. During 2005, Texas experienced the effects of two hurricanes, drought, and numerous wildfires. During 2006 wildfires were the main threat, while in 2007 flooding was widespread and in the news, and in 2008 Hurricane Ike devastated the upper Gulf Coast. In 2009 and 2010 we experienced relatively calm conditions. While in 2011 the effects of heat and drought took its toll on Texas resulting massive wildfires and property losses, 2012 was relatively uneventful with minor flooding during infrequent storms. This past year (2013) we had minor bouts with heat, drought and flooding, but nothing more severe than that. What will 2014 bring?

Emergency Management is an organized analysis, planning, decision making, and assignment of available resources to prepare for, mitigate, respond to and recover from the effects of all hazards.

The Fort Bend Emergency Management Output Plan will support the State of Texas Emergency Management Plan and local cities surrounding counties. Local emergency management plans provide guidance for the employment of emergency resources under a local incident commander. While local emergency management plans include specific provisions for requesting and employing state resources to aid in managing and resolving situations for which local resources are inadequate, AgriLife Extension excels in providing outreach education to families, communities, businesses, and producers that will help them reduce their risk as they prepare for, mitigate for, and recover from disasters.

RESPONSE

In 2013 the major avenues of providing outreach information to our citizens were:

- **7th Annual Emergency Preparedness Workshop** held on May, 17 2013 attracted 117 participants and 14 agencies that represented first-responders and 12 businesses that service clientele with emergency -related products. The scope of this year's event was to share information and concerns relating to emergency preparedness. AgriLife's role was the utilization of the EDEN exhibit and to promote/distribute the *Preparing for the Unexpected* and *After a Disaster* publications with nearly 200 copies distributed. In addition, AgriLife Agents gave a 45-minute presentation on "Pruning Storm Damaged Trees."

- **2013 Fort Bend County Fair** – The EDEN exhibit was on display for the full 11 days of the fair within the commercial building. Both, the *Preparing for the Unexpected* and *After a Disaster* publications were utilized for a total of 1,250 contacts.

Monthly Summaries Included:

- January 2013 – 1) Updated the 2013 FBC Office Emergency Preparedness Plan; 2) Attended a meeting hosted by FBC OEM to discuss the May 17th Annual Emergency Preparedness Workshop.
- February 2013 - 1) Participated in an Family & Consumer Science-related information fair by utilizing the exhibit on *Preparing for the Unexpected*; 2) Took part in Office of Emerg. Mgmt. meetings on animal issues and planning for the 7th Annual Emergency Prep. Workshop
- March 2013 - Attended one Emerg Prep. Workshop planning meeting hosted by Fort Bend's office of emergency management.
- April 2013 - The following reports were submitted in April 2013; a) An EDEN exhibit & presentation was given to 46 wives of engineers working at Schlumberger in Sugar Land. Utilized both "Preparing for the Unexpected" and "After A Storm publications.
- May 2013 - During the month of May: 1) Prepared for the 2013 Emergency Preparedness Workshop by creating a PPT on "Storm Damaged Trees" 2) Gave a program entitled "Living w/o Electricity" to 114 parents attending the ABC Multi-County Child Care Conference in Wharton.
- June 2013 - Reviewed and help finalize the FBC Office of Emergency Preparedness Plan as it relates to animal rescues, presented Living w/o Electricity to 45 attendees of the ABC Child Care Conf.
- July 2013 - Distributed Quarterly publications via email to all elected officials, department heads, and LAB members. Work with OEM to update the Animal Issues Plan.
- August 2013 - Ordered and delivered a total of 4000 *After a Disaster* publications in both English and in Spanish to the Fort Bend Office of Emergency Mgmt. for use during the Fort Bend County Fair.
- September 2013 - For the Month of September: - OEM utilized the Disaster Preparedness Exhibit at the Fort Bend County Fair - National Disaster Preparedness Week - Media Campaign was kicked by OEM
- October 2013 - A total of 2000 *After a Storm* publications to OEM for use at the Emergency Prep. educational exhibit at the 2013 FBC Fair.
- November 2013 - Visited with OEM via phone to set potential dates for the Emerg. Prep Workshop

RESULTS

Impact was determined by the use of a customer satisfaction report. Fifty-seven evaluations were secured and tallied from the 173 people who attended.

- 87% 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.
- 88% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the completeness of information given on each topic.
- 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.
- 85% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the quality of course materials.
- 100% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the relevance of the examples used.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Fort Bend County Office of Emergency Management provides leadership and direction for all emergency preparedness programming efforts. Local jurisdictions and the Texas AgriLife Extension Service in Fort Bend offer support in this unified effort.

FUTURE PROGRAM PLANS

Plans are underway to host the 2014 Preparedness Workshop on May 17th, at the Rosenberg Civic Center in Rosenberg. In addition, the EDEN exhibit and its accompanying publications will again be utilized at each of the 10 Fort Bend public libraries.

Community Economic Development

2013 Fort Bend County Community Development Plan

Developed by Vincent J. Mannino, CED-FBC

RELEVANCE

Fort Bend County, Texas boasts excellent schools, affordable housing, and extensive recreational facilities have attracted families with impressive demographic profiles. This results in a local employment base that provides relocating companies with a diverse mix of professional, technical, skilled, and unskilled labor with the highest educational attainment levels in the region.

A glimpse of Fort Bend County include:

- 2013 Population: 643,408
- College Educated: 40.40%
- Mean Household Income: \$108,994
- Percent of Families: 83%

While quality of life in Fort Bend County is high, with an ever-increasing population, parks and green-spaces are becoming more of concern as time moves forward.

Texas A & M AgriLife Extension Service is strategically placed to provide educational programs in community resources and economic development to enhance the quality of life for the residents in Texas and in Fort Bend County. Community development programming efforts will include the creation of a task force to address CRED interests which includes creating and growing businesses, jobs, wealth, and quality of life for all in Fort Bend County as it related to ag & nature tourism.

RESPONSE

Educational programs included the following in support of Ag Tourism:

- Wildlife & Quail School curriculum, May 7, 200 students attended
- 8 Coastal Prairie Texas Master Naturalist Board Meetings
- The Upper Gulf Coast Wildlife Expo, Nov. 6, 35 attended

A survey instrument was used at each event to determine the clientele's knowledge gained on a specific topic as well as their ranking of the overall effectiveness of the program. All evaluations were conducted post program and are included in ANR Output & Outcome plan results based on subject matter.

Monthly Summaries Included:

- January 2013 - Joined the United Way (Alliance) Ag Advisory Council for the 2013-2016 years; 2) Worked to help advertise and arrange for food and transportation for the 150-200 expected attendees on...
- February 2013 - Worked with Extension Ag Economist toward long-term planning of Ag-Venture events in western Fort Bend County. These visits included pecan grove visits, vegetable plot visits, fruit demonstrations.
- March 2013 - Attended the opening of the Richmond Farmers Market.
- April 2013 - Assisted United Way's Multi-Cultural Alliance with plan to include a set of bee hives for teaching purposes.
- May 2013 - Assisted in hosting and served to welcome the 146 attendees of the Gulf Coast Ranch Expo at Twinwood.
- June 2013 - Sent matrix to review and document support of the Twinwood US Inc. joint venture with AgriLife Extension to Extension Associate Director for State Programs.
- July 2013 - Worked with Extension Ag Economist and Vice-President of Twinwood US Inc. along with Extension Pecan Program Specialist to identify new varieties of pecans.
- August 2013 - Worked with Twinwood US Inc. on pecan issues. Worked with Extension Specialist w/ Parks and Tourism to promote ecotourism in Fort Bend County
- September 2013 - Supported Ag Venture at Twinwood US Inc. with Extension Ag Economist and agent ANR Agents from Fort Bend by planning the 1st Annual Gulf Coast Wildlife Expo. for Nov 6, 2013.
- October 2013 - Finalized plans for the Gulf Coast Wildlife Expo to be held on Nov. 6, 2013.
- November 2013 - Welcome 39 attendees and introduce Co. Commissioner James Patterson, Prec. 4 at the Gulf Coast Wildlife Expo - Worked with Extension Specialist w/ Parks and Tourism on a proposal to gain funding for 5 years.
- December 2013 - Planned for 2014 with Extension Ag Economist. Planned with Vice-President of Twinwood US Inc. and Mr. Joffe, Owner of Farmer D in Atlanta, GA.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Fort Bend County works closely with Twinwood US. Inc. , Texas AgriLife Extension Service State Headquarters, AgriLife Extension Parks & Tourism and Fort Bend County Commissioners' Court to provide educational opportunities that leads to increase awareness of varied agriculture and nature-related tourism possibilities.

FUTURE PLANS

Plans are underway to host additional workshop on the grounds of Twinwood US. Inc. as well as expand agriculture-related attractions to educate the citizens of the Houston metropolitan area. Plans are to move forward in search of external funding sources to provide 5 years of personal support and program support here in Fort Bend County, TX.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service - FORT BEND

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