

Special Topics for Fall 2014

- AgriLife Extension is Unique
- One-Day 4-H
- Backyard Basics
- AG'tivity Barn Ag-Awareness Event
- Farm Bill Training - (Agri. Act of 2014)
- National 4-H Week
- 4-H Veterinary Science Certification Program
- Better Living for Texas Update
- StepUp & ScaleDown
- Cupcake Fun
- 2014 Pecan Show
- Richmond City Bark Goes EarthKind
- Snapshot of Upcoming Events
- Contact Information

Sept. - Dec., 2014 TOTAL CONTACTS

206 educational sessions
165,881 attendees
572 site visits
481 office visits
1,667 phone calls
12,987 emails
10,415 website contacts
1,112 mail-outs
1,007 volunteers assisted

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service is a unique education agency with a statewide network of professional educators, trained volunteers, and county offices. It reaches into every Texas county to address local priority needs. Some of our major efforts are in mitigating drought impacts; conserving water use in homes, landscapes, and production agriculture; improving emergency management; enhancing food security; and protecting human health through education about diet, exercise, and disease prevention and management.

AgriLife Extension demonstrates the latest technology and best practices to improve the state's food and fiber system, which serves all Texas consumers and contributes nine percent of the gross domestic product. Texas 4-H, our primary youth program, engages some 600,000 youth every year in learning projects, leadership development, and community service.

Collaborative programs enable extension educators and their partners to extend resources and prevent duplication of services. In 2012, planned extension programs involved a total of 208 collaborators—diverse private sector and nonprofit entities—and hundreds of school districts. Quick facts:

- Established: 1915
- Number of direct teaching contacts: 25 million in FY 2013
- Number of volunteers supporting extension programs: 96,794
- Number of counties with an Extension office: 250
- FY 2014 operating budget: \$110 million (excludes \$33 million in local operating funds from county commissioners courts)

One-Day 4-H!



ONE-DAY 4-H started in 2009 as a nation-wide awareness event to allow all 4-H as well as those in Texas to thank their communities, counties, and state for more than 100 years of support. Conducted by Texas 4-H, this event has become the largest organized day of community service by 4-H in the nation. In Fort Bend County for the fifth year One Day 4-H was held. Our FBC Council and members sponsored a Highway Cleanup and a Food

Drive on October 13, 2014. We had help from Fort Bend Road and Bridges and the Needville Police Department with the safety measures that were needed. The event started at 4pm and ended when the sun started to go down around 7:00 pm. We were able to clean about 5 miles of road with one group on each side. The event was a great success, and a lot of cool items were found during the clean-up.

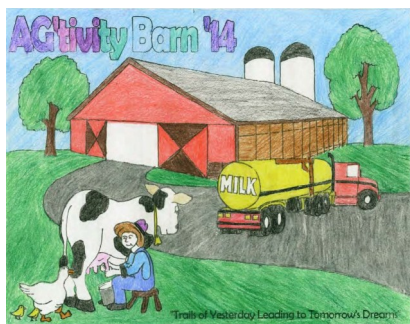


Backyard Basics!



The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the Fort Bend County Master Gardeners are pleased to present Backyard Basics, a year-long series of programs and workshops designed to help us all get back to the basics of healthy living through home—grown, home—based production, preparation and preservation of nutritious food. Presenters for the series include Fort Bend Master Gardener specialists, AgriLife Extension Service staff and entrepreneurs experienced in areas such as poultry and food preservation. The workshops often feature demonstrations and visits to the Master Gardener demonstration gardens. The series continued on September 20 with **“Freezing/Dehydration”** (4 participants), October 11 with **“Canning”** (13 participants), November 1 with **“Backyard Grilling”** (26 participants), and ended on November 8 with **“Jams & Jellies”** (15 participants). Each educational event was 4 hours long and included plenty of hands-on opportunities.

AG'tivity Barn—Ag-Awareness Event!



2014 Agricultural Literacy - It is essential that AgriLife Extension take an active role in educating youth about the importance of agriculture in their daily lives. Fort Bend is unique in its demographic makeup with the north & east portions of the county being urban, while the south & west half remain rural. AgriLife Extension developed and implemented educational programming for youth (as well as adults)

to address the relevant issue of Ag Literacy. AG'tivity Barn our main event was conducted during the 10-day run of the FB County Fair and involved 23 collaborators to reach over 990 elementary school students and 178 teachers & parent/chaperones during the week-days. An additional 573 youth entered the coloring contest. A total of 20 exhibits were utilized to promote the ag industry in Fort Bend with 83 volunteers & 11 agencies and organizations assisting. In addition, it was estimated that 60% of the 200,000 fair visitors visited AG'tivity Barn during the 10-day run.



Farm Bill Training! (Agricultural Act of 2014)



Farm bill training held on 10-30-14 with 60 attending was hosted by AgriLife Extension with input from our local FSA. The new Farm Bill builds on historic economic gains in rural America over the past five years, while achieving meaningful reform and billions of dollars in savings for the taxpayer. Those in attendance indicated a 75% increase in understanding and a 63% possibility that this training will assist them in making positive decisions, while 78% indicated that they were still a bit confused.



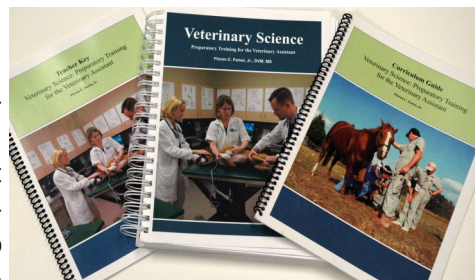
National 4-H Week!

A fundamental purpose of the 4-H Program is to highlight our county's success and especially the youth that are involved. Each year, during National 4-H Week, our 4-H clubs, along with all adult leaders have the opportunity to showcase what they have gained from their membership in 4-H through activities and events at the local and county level, including the signing of a proclamation. The Texas 4-H Youth Development Program develops a National 4-H Week Kit to help County Extension Offices, 4-H members, and volunteers design a National 4-H Week plan that works for them. National 4-H Week will be October 5th through the 11th, 2014. Coupled with One-Day 4-H, our 4-H members, adult leaders and county council sponsored a food drive to benefit to assist Helping Hands and Catholic Charities in providing food for families in need during the holidays.



4-H Veterinary Science Certification Program

Probably our fastest-growing 4-H project area! Kids who love animals and science can start preparing for their animal health career as early as 8 years old via a veterinary science curriculum that is going online nationwide. This project deals with techniques and procedures involved in caring for animals. The program consists of 100 lessons and 50 activities with 500 hours of on-the-job training in which participants have five years to complete. Three clubs were established and chartered in 2012, four in 2013 and another in 2014 bringing our total number of Vet Science project clubs to eight with a total active membership of over 100. Members within each club are in some phase of the 5-year curriculum. Club names include: Animaniacs; Blue Jay Vet Science; Katy Tigers Vet Science; Paws for a Purpose; Animal Doctors; Ready-Set-Vet; 4-H Home-School Vet Assistants; and Hearts to Tails.



Better Living for Texans Update!

Better Living for Texans (BLT) - An estimated 1 in 14 households in Fort Bend lives in poverty resulting in diets that are low in fiber, vitamins A and E, folic acid, zinc, calcium, and iron; and higher in total fat, saturated fat, and sodium – ultimately leading to heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes. BLT lessons utilized included the Back to Basics series with 37 participants and the 3-Easy Bites series with 124 participants. In addition, over 4,200 Fort Bend citizens attended various health fairs to gain an awareness of BLT programming efforts. Those surveyed indicated: a >92% knowledge

StepUp & ScaleDown!

Combating obesity in Texas is of paramount importance. It is estimated 66.6% of residents are at risk for being overweight or obese according to the 2010 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS). Excess weight has been identified as a risk factor for several chronic diseases including heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, and some forms of cancer. Highlights of a very special event held prior to the holiday season is appropriately titled *Step-Up & Scale-down*. Results were 32 of 33 participants completed the 12-week educational program that included lectures, food recipes and exercise incentives; and recorded a loss of 89.6 pounds, an average of 2.8 lbs/participant. The recommended weight loss was 1–2 lbs/week or 8–16 pounds for the 12-week program. Get Going Fort Bend!



Cupcake Fun!



Wow! What Fun! On December 30, 2014 fourteen Fort Bend County young people took part in a very special event entitled “More Cupcake Fun.” This dessert-focused program included a bit of food safety and a lot of creativity. The timing was strategically planned between Christmas and the New Year holiday at a time when boredom might set in. This hands-on activity utilized a large variety of ingredients that help participants create cupcakes for all seasonal themes that depicted a chicken, dog, fish, panda, pig, Santa, sun and flowers. The idea was to build an interest in baking for fun, food, and gifts to family members and friends. A life-long experience!



2014 Pecan Show!



Fort Bend County pecan growers show up big time! We need to spend a minute to congratulate local producers for their county and regional award winning pecans! The 2014 Fort Bend County pecan show was held December 6th in Rosenberg. The Fort Bend County Orchard Production Committee held the event in conjunction with the Texas East Region Pecan Show. Award winners from this show will move up to the state competition to be held in July. Great work folks and good luck at state! We'd also like to recognize the support of Fort Bend County Farm Bureau, the Fort Bend County Master Gardeners, and the numerous local businesses that contributed to the event. Their generous support helped to make the pecan show a huge success in 2014.

Richmond City Park Goes EarthKind!

Community volunteers and Fort Bend Master Gardeners created an Earth-Kind landscape at the park adjacent to Richmond City Hall on November 15th. The installation occurred on Keep Richmond Beautiful National Planting Day and celebrated the value of restoring ecological balance, creating greener, and more beautiful communities.

Earth-Kind landscaping, developed by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, uses research-proven techniques to create a horticultural system based on real-world effectiveness and environmental responsibility. Earth-Kind landscaping encourages water conservation, energy conservation, reduction of fertilizer and pesticide use, and reduction of yard waste entering landfills. Community volunteers and Fort Bend County Master Gardeners transformed the gardens in the park by first removing all of the plant material, adding compost, converting the standard irrigation system to drip, adding drought-tolerant plants and applying organic mulch.

Richmond Mayor Evalyn Moore said, "One of the biggest challenges in a growing community is to learn how to leverage limited resources. The Historic Richmond Association, coupled with its Keep Richmond Beautiful affiliate, has really contributed to bringing many of our community groups together to focus our efforts on beautifying one of our City's landmarks, the City Hall Park. This collaboration between the City, HRA, KRB, Fort Bend County Master Gardeners, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, and our many private partners was a wondrous sight.

Earth-Kind landscaping principles are easy to adopt in any landscape. To learn more visit: <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/earthkind>.



Snap-Shot of Upcoming Events:

- January 24, Child Care Providers Education
- January 24, MG Fruit Tree Sale
- February 5, 30th Annual Vegetable Conference
- February 26, Veg & Herb Lecture/Sale Preview
- March 6, Feral Hog Management Presentation
- March 7, Organic Gardening & Landscaping
- March 14, Preserving Thy Bounty—Tomatoes
- March 17,18—Food Mgmt. Certification
- March 21, Child Care Providers Education
- March 26, Backyard Basics— Pickling
- April 11, Backyard Basics—Freezing/Dehydration
- April 11, Pecan & Citrus Grafting Clinic
- April 14, Agricultural Symposium
- May 12, Do Well w/ Diabetes
- May 19, Do Well w/ Diabetes



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Our AgriLife Vision:

To be the premier 21st Century outreach & continuing education organization in Texas responding to the needs of the people.

Educational programs of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status. Persons with disabilities who plan to attend an educational event hosted by AgriLife Extension and who may need auxiliary aids or services are required to contact this office at 281-342-3034 seven days prior to the scheduled event.