



Making a Difference

In Fort Bend County

Summer 2015



Special Topics for Spring 2015

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- ◆ Texas Lifetime Leadership Program
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- ◆ Texas Learn, Go, Eat, Grow!
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July—Sept., 2015

TOTAL CONTACTS

349 educational sessions
70,272 attendees
533 Social Media posts
7,641 Social Media followers
24 Newsletter Editions
50,353 Newsletter contacts
574 Volunteers assisted
2,179 Volunteer hours
3,650 Edu. Resources Used

Message from the Co. Extension Director - A typical Texas Extension office has one or more agents, depending on local circumstances and programmatic needs. Agents are employed to work within a particular program area such as agriculture & natural resources, family & consumer sciences, and 4-H & youth development. Agents are expected to work together on issues that cut across these program areas. Depending on the situation in specific counties, Extension agents may serve in specialized agent positions in areas such as integrated pest management, horticulture, marine sciences, or marketing & communications. Let us take some time to review the type of agents in Fort Bend County

✓ Agents assigned to agriculture/natural resource have expertise in production, processing & distribution of agricultural products; conservation & environmental concerns; and marketing & economics. They work primarily with farmers, ranchers, agribusinesses, commodity groups, homeowners and regulatory agencies. Fort Bend has one Agrilife ANR agent, one Cooperative Ext. Program (CEP) ANR agent and one home/commercial Horticulturist.

✓ Family & Consumer Sciences agents are experts in family & child development, nutrition & food science, family economics, and health & wellness. Their audiences include individuals, families, child-care providers, school personnel, and nutrition & health professionals among others. Fort Bend has two AgriLife FCS agents and one CEP FCS agent.

✓ 4-H youth development agents work with youngsters ages 9-19 through 4-H clubs, special projects and school enrichment programs. Our 4-H agents also recruit and train adult volunteers and parents to serve as volunteer leaders and project managers. Fort Bend has one traditional AgriLife 4H agent, one Urban Youth Development Agent and one traditional CEP 4H/Youth Development agent.

✓ Expanded Nutrition Program agents and *Better Living for Texans* agents provide basic nutrition education to limited-income families with young children and to youths through this special federally-funded program. Fort Bend has one CEP EFNEP paraprofessional and one AgriLife BLT paraprofessional.

In addition we have over 1000 volunteers that work to AgriLife Extension and the Cooperative Extension Program to plan, organize, conduct, evaluate and interpret educational programs. These volunteers make up over 20 committees, taskforces and coalitions within our Extension family. In addition, agents may partner or collaborate with an additional twenty external groups including schools & PTAs, Farm Bureau, service organizations, fair boards, churches, landscape professionals, municipal groups and many more.

And just a reminder, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the Cooperative Extension Program of PVAMU are part of the Texas A&M System. The Texas A&M System, U.S.D.A., and the Fort Bend County Commissioners' Court cooperate as a team to provide support for Extension educational programming in an effort to reach all Fort Bend citizens. Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status.

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New Employee!

We would like to happily introduce Ms. Courtney Bryant, our new Extension Agent for Family & Consumer Sciences with the Cooperative Extension Program of Prairie View A&M University. Courtney holds a Master of Science in Juvenile Forensic Psychology from PVAMU and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology with a minor in Mathematics from Spelman College in Atlanta, GA. In Courtney's words—"My intention is to share helpful tips to make our lives and families better!" Welcome Courtney!



Fort Bend County AG'tivity Barn!



Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and the Cooperative Extension Program of PVAMU partner each year with Fort Bend Farm Bureau, North FB Water Authority, and a host of volunteers to actively promote agriculture and create an awareness of the importance of agriculture in the lives of every person. AG'tivity Barn, our major Ag-Literacy event, is held during the FB County Fair and involves 23 collaborators to reach over 1,400 elementary school students and 115 teachers, parents and chaperones. In addition, 550 youth entered the coloring contest to compete for ribbons and prize money. A total of 20 educational exhibits were utilized to promote the ag industry in Fort Bend with 89 volunteers & 11 agencies and organizations assisting. In addition, it was estimated that 60% of the 100,000+ fair visitors attended AG'tivity Barn during the 10-day run. Wow!



TALL—TX Agriculture Lifetime Leadership Prgm.

Since 1987, Texas Agricultural Lifetime Leadership (TALL), administered by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, has provided a foundation for future leaders in Texas agriculture. Established on the ideals of leadership, issue & policy awareness, and basic agricultural principles; the program strives to prepare men and women for the challenges faced by agriculture now and in the future. This process has been most instrumental in identifying and recruiting quality applicants from throughout the state. Anyone can be nominated for the next TALL cohort. AgriLife highly encourage candidates from every geographic region of the state and every sector of the agriculture industry. Our goal is for the TALL cohort to mirror the Texas Agriculture industry as this diversity is the strength of the program. Currently, a research dissertation was completed evaluating the TALL program and the results were very positive in making an impact in participants lives and businesses. Political systems, federal policy, global impacts, US markets, environmental issues and population demographics ranked among the areas of educational impact on individual participants. In addition, the TALL experience was ranked above a college education, but statistically equal in value. Applications for the next cohort are due March 15, 2016 in the TALL office and all the information is located on the TALL website: <http://tall.tamu.edu/application/>. If you or someone you know is interested in TALL please contact the Fort Bend County Extension Office at 281-342-3034 to speak to an agent for nomination into this fabulous leadership program.

Agriculture Education Programs in Fort Bend

The Agriculture Program emphasizes system approaches that maintain and enhance agricultural profitability through the application of sound crop and animal production practices. AgriLife Extension in Fort Bend County is addressing issues associated with the social & environmental impacts of food safety & quality, surface & ground water contamination, biotechnology, and natural resources management.

The natural resources and environmental management program addresses educational needs related to the management, use and sustainability of renewable and nonrenewable natural resources. Drawing on a variety of disciplines, these programs typically focus on such topics as soil, water, air, plant and animal life, forests, rangelands and aquatic and other ecosystems. Call us for more information.



Learn Go Eat Grow!



Arrived this fall! The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Texas A&M University, in collaboration with the University of Texas School of Public Health have received funding to implement and evaluate the impact of two intervention programs designed to improve physical activity and eating behaviors of children at Coordinated Approach to Child Health (CATCH) elementary schools across Texas that include: (a) Junior Master Gardener Program (JMG); and (b) Walk Across Texas Program (WAT). Thirty-two (32) Title I schools in four counties in Texas with three to five third-grade classes will be invited to participate in the three-year project.

>>>> Stay tuned for results & contact our FBC 4-H unit for more information.

Pantry 2 Plate Cooking Camp—YUM!

Pantry-2-Plate is a 3-day camp offered to kids 8 - 12 years old. Registration is limited to only 15 due to restrictions relating to physical space and hands-on activities. Goals were to increase knowledge of general nutrition, decrease consumption of sugar foods & sugar-sweetened beverages, increase physical activity, and increase knowledge of food safety, cooking safety & food preparation techniques. Activities included a fruit and vegetable lesson on veggie fear factor, proper ingredient measuring techniques, kitchen safety, and kitchen chemistry (puff painting, fizzing rocks, color changing milk & dancing spaghetti). All kitchen activities were facilitated by well-trained adult helpers. The concepts taught in the camp can be used by the children to make healthier eating choices throughout their lives. Adult helpers worked with small groups on food and kitchen safety and food preparation. Each group prepared a recipe. Prior to eating the large group participated in physical activity. By learning about nutrition and being able to prepare healthy foods kids can make better choices and avoid high calorie non-nutritive foods and snacks with less than optimal nutrition. Each day recipes centered around a different theme—Meatball, Italian, and Breakfast days.



Fort Bend County's First ever Theatre Camp!



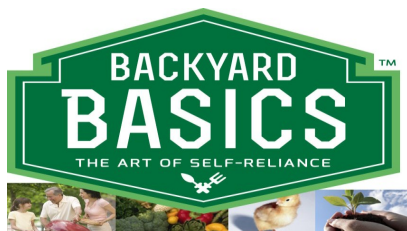
July 27-31 Fort Bend County Extension hosted its first ever Theatre Camp, and did the eleven youth ranging from 8 to 13 years of age have fun learning about theater and performance arts. The camp helped build self-esteem, confidence, discipline, poise, teamwork, collaboration and fellowship. The students practiced communication skills, speech, public speaking, and much more. The week-long camp culminated with a skit for our neighbors—the Fort Bend Seniors. *Bravo, Bravo!*



Backyard Ba-

Upcoming Topics:

8/15 - The Fall Food Garden
9/12 - Composting Made Easy
10/23 - Jams & Jellies
11/14 - Grilling
12/5 - Fruits & Nuts



Supporting healthy living through home-based food production, preparation, and preservation.

Backyard Basics will provide consumers, backyard gardeners, homemakers, educators and farmers many “do-it-yourself” learning opportunities such as home canning, soil & gardening essentials, rainwater harvesting, raising chickens for home egg production, and cooking basics.

- Start your own garden!
- Create family time & togetherness
- Eat more fresh fruits and vegetables!
- Promote health & wellness
- Practice water conservation!
- Practice organic gardening
- Practice food safety!
- Save money on your food budget

Visit fortbend.agrilife.org for more information and to download the registration form. Or ...contact our Horticulture unit.



Nature Watch Kids' Kamp!

Thirty-five enthusiastic youth had a GREAT Nature Watch Day Camp on July 22 at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds. The kids were in-tune with nature and had a blast making shark tooth necklaces, dissecting owl pellets to determine



feeding habits, and making hanging gardens using recycled products. Youth were educated about endangered species, attracting wildlife, created useful hummingbird feeders and designed tee shirt bags. Our older 4-H youth volunteers were trained to assist for the entire day with every event and then measured the participants' knowledge gain by having everyone take part in a fun-filled quiz bowl that covered many of the elements learned. And, as a great community service project the Kampers made beautiful puffy paint cards for local nursing home residents! Wow!

Snap-Shot of Upcoming Events:

- Sept. 12 - 'Composting Made Easy'
- Sept. 17 - Master Gardener Advanced Training
- Sept. 19 - Wildscapes Workshop (AT)
- Sept. 19-20 - Texas Pollinator PowWow (Kerrville) (AT)
- Sept. 21-22 - Landscape Design Course (TAMU)
- Sept. 22-23 - First Detector Specialist Training (Belton)
- Sept. 22-25 - International Master Gardener Conference (Iowa)
- Sept. 25 - Fort Bend County Fair Day
- Sept. 28 – Oct. 2 - Fort Bend County Fair School Days
- Oct. 3 - 1st Saturday Gardens Workday
- Oct. 3 - Vegetable/Herb Sale (for Master Gardeners Only)
- Oct. 8 - 2016 Master Gardener Class Begins
- Oct. 10 - Childcare Providers Education
- Oct. 15 - Master Gardener Advanced Training – GMOs
- Oct. 17 - Residential Landscape Water Conservation Wksp. – Sugar Land
- Oct. 17 - Scout Badge Day in Extension
- Oct. 20-22 - Rainwater Harvesting Specialist Training (Austin)
- Oct. 23 - Backyard Basics – Jams and Jellies
- Oct. 23 - Backyard Basics "Jams & Marmalades" - Oct. 23
- Oct. 24 - Residential Landscape Water Conservation Wksp. – Missouri City
- Oct. 23-24 - George Ranch Texan Market Days
- Oct. 25 - Fall Master Gardener Homes Tour
- November 7 - 1st Saturday Gardens Workday
- November 14 - Backyard Basics – Grilling



A Glimpse of Fort Bend County:

2015 Population: 685,345

College Educated: 40.40%

Mean Household Income:
\$112,893

Percent of Families: 83%

For over 20 years, Fort Bend has been in the top 20 counties in the U.S. for economic excellence and population growth - and that is by design and not by accident.

Excellent schools, affordable housing, and extensive recreational facilities have attracted families with impressive demographic profiles to Fort Bend. These attributes result in a local employment base that provides companies with a diverse mix of professional, technical, skilled, and unskilled labor with the highest educational levels in the region. To learn more go to www.fortbendcountytexas.gov/.

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<http://fortbend.agrilife.org/>

www.facebook.com/FortBendCountyExtension

Our Vision

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