



### Special Topics for Winter 2016

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### Jan.—March, 2016 TOTAL CONTACTS

317 Educational sessions  
53,369 attendees  
879 Social Media posts  
30,994 Social Media followers  
43 Newsletter Editions  
13,727 Newsletter contacts  
901 Volunteers assisted  
33,238 Volunteer hours  
2,821 Edu. Resources Used

**Message from the Co. Extension Director** - We in Extension often frown when our clientele go to various obscure web sites to seek information instead of coming to us. So... I went to Wikipedia to find their definition of cooperative extension agent and this is what is said: In the US, an extension agent is a university employee who develops and delivers educational programs to assist people in economic and community development, leadership, family issues, agriculture and environment. Another program area provided by extension agents is 4-H and youth activities. Many extension agents work for cooperative extension service programs at land-grant universities. They are sometimes referred to as county agents, extension specialists or extension educators. Wow, not bad! I may have found a great "elevator-speech."

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's 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.

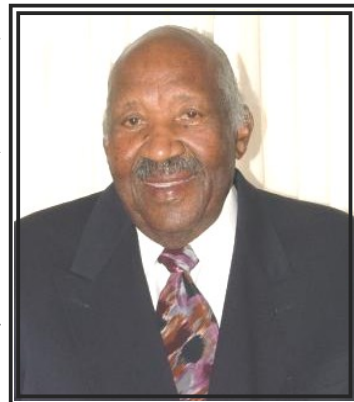
### Dr. Poindexter Honored at PVAMU



A legend at Prairie View A&M University, Dr. Alfred N. Poindexter joined the University family in 1945 and retired in 2004 after 59 years of dedicated service. Known affectionately as "Doc" by clients, students, colleagues and friends, Dr. Poindexter taught anatomy and physiology, diseases and sanitation, animal health, animal breeding and reproductive physiology. "During his illustrious career at the university, Dr. Poindexter taught Anatomy and Physiology, Diseases and Sanitation, Animal Health, Animal Breeding and Reproductive Physiology," said Dr. Linda Williams-Willis, Former Dean, College of Agriculture and Human Sciences. "He did this while teaching students to care for horses, dogs, cats, goats, and all other types of small and large animals at the University Veterinary Clinic."

Over the years Dr. Poindexter received numerous teaching, outstanding citizen and service honors, including induction into the Texas Heritage Hall of Honor and Gold Card Membership in the American Veterinary Medical Association. Prior to his retirement, he was one of the oldest practicing African-American veterinarians in the United States, and was one of the first two Black members of the Texas Veterinary Medical Association.

On Friday, Mar. 4, 2016, 11:00 AM over 150 guests joined our colleagues at PVAMU for the formal dedication of the **Alfred N. Poindexter Veterinary Hospital** located at intersection of 4th & E. Norris St. on the beautiful Prairie View A&M campus.



## Our FCS Unit Looses Jacque Gerke to Retirement!

After nearly 15 years of working with the Fort Bend County Extension Office, Jacque Gerke officially retired as of January 29, 2016 at 5 p.m. Throughout her tenure with Extension, she did it all and has worked with 4-H and agriculture departments as Administrative Assistant and served as the Program Coordinator for the Family & Consumer Sciences department. Jacque was an asset to the agents administrative support staff and will be greatly missed by the volunteers she's worked closely with. Her retirement celebration was hosted by the Fort Bend County Extension staff and the Texas Extension Education Association of Fort Bend. Here's to a well deserved and HAPPY RETIREMENT!



*Welcome Mrs. Joydella Davis! Our new Admin. Assistant and Program Coordinator for the Family & Consumer Sciences Department. Joydella retired from the Fort Bend ISD in 2015 after 30+ years. For the first 15 or so years she taught Home Economics and the remainder of her employment served as a counselor and advisor. Interestingly enough, she served as an intern with AgriLife Extension well over thirty years ago in Brazoria County through the Cooperative Extension Program of PVAMU. Welcome back to Extension!*

## 31st Annual Vegetable Conference...a real success!



This year's program held on February 4, 2016 at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds was another huge success because of partnerships, diversity, and technology. Participants included over 210 paid guests, 12 commercial exhibitors, 6 speakers and over 25 volunteers. This program was a 7-county partnership. We again added a program segment from our Food & Consumer Sciences division. Local FCS agent Dianne Gertson gave a real time Dinner Tonight! cooking demonstration during the lunch hour of the program. Guests learned how to take their home-grown produce and prepare something tasty and healthy out of it. Moving ahead further in responding to the needs of our diverse audience, we developed break-out sessions where guests could choose the topics that best suited their needs. Even more impressive, as freezing weather limited speakers from traveling to the event, we were able to utilize our web conferencing software and internet capabilities to stream those presenters in real-time. As evaluation results are returned, we'll move forward with our final interpretation, but verbal comments from guests say that they all look forward to coming back next year!

## Supporting Adolescent Parenting

The Texas Extension Education Association (TEEA) ladies of Fort Bend County have once again made baby blankets and/or collected items for the Activities Supporting Adolescent Parenting (ASAP) babies. LCISD has a program called ASAP that is designed to help encourage teen parents and their families and to help support and motivate them to graduate from high school and pursue further education. The items are so very appreciated. The items are so special because of the time, talent and love put into making these baby blankets and caps. Kelle Kipping is the LCISD ASAP Coordinator. Pictured are Cherie Heimann and Pat May of Countryside Club.



## New!... 2016 Gardening with Confidence

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 creating and maintaining beautiful low maintenance landscapes through a six-class program in 2016. Classes will combine indoor and outdoor lessons that will prepare participants to garden more successfully and sustainably. For information on each class and registration forms, please visit [fortbend.agrilife.org](http://fortbend.agrilife.org) or contact Brandy Rader at (281) 342-3034 or email Brandy at [brandy.rader@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:brandy.rader@ag.tamu.edu). The class lineup include:



- The Kitchen Garden held Saturday, February 13 provided planning, design and instruction on building a raised bed for growing herbs and vegetables, and selection of varieties based on season of the year was covered.
- Landscape Plants for Fort Bend held on Saturday, March 19 talked about site selection, choosing native and/or well-adapted varieties for our area, and trouble-shooting the 'whys' behind stunted plant growth.
- All About Soil will be held on Saturday, April 16. Healthy soil is the foundation of beautiful gardens. Soil management is the natural way to prevent garden diseases and pest issues. The biology of soil will be covered in detail.
- Insects in the Garden—Friend or Foe! This class is set for Saturday May 14 and will help gardeners identify beneficial insects. Problem pests will be addressed using integrated pest management practices—a safer way to garden.
- Irrigation System Efficiency to be held on Saturday, June 25 will focus on landscape irrigation systems and how to evaluate, update and modify your existing system to improve plant performance, save money and conserve water.
- The Healthy Lawn will be held Saturday, July 16 and will teach how to maintain a healthy & attractive lawn. Turf maintenance (mowing, irrigation, fertilization, and pest management) will be covered in detail.

## MG's Vegetable & Herb Sale a Big Success

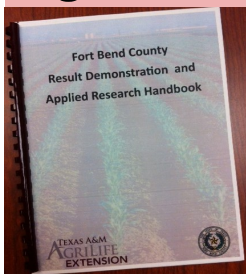
Saturday, Feb 27 was a picture perfect day for our FB Master Gardeners' plant sale, and gardeners came out by the hundreds to choose plants from among the recommended varieties offered for sale. It's truly gratifying that we routinely draw residents to our sales where they may feel confident in the selections offered and perhaps feel good about supporting our organization. Our January & February sales fund our operations for the year. In a typical year, about one-half of our net income from fundraising is spent on landscape expenses, including the greenhouse and demonstration gardens. Add to that the non-financial input to the landscape which is our volunteer work, and it's easy to see that we've got much invested in the gardens. We can maximize the return on those investments by continually improving the gardens' educational value. There are projects underway and on the horizon that will do just that and I hope you'll turn out to help us complete them when calls go out for volunteers. Our sale days are phenomenal demonstrations of leadership, teamwork, and collegiality. "Thank You" to everyone who volunteered, from the time the first seed was planted to the last of the clean-up efforts. Meanwhile, we have the continual, day-by-day challenge of making a difference in the community by delivering high quality educational outreach programs, including enhancing the educational value of the gardens where learning can be hands-on and sensory - what Master Gardeners do, and nobody can do it better than FBMG! Let's grow! Article supplied by Peggy d'Hemecourt, FBMG President.



## With the new year comes New Year's Resolutions.

What better 4-H resolution is there than to be healthier this year! Let's start with: 1. Start one new physical activity ; 2. Adopt one dietary guideline and stick with it (ex: eat more fruits & vegetables) ; 3. Kick one bad habit (ex: skipping breakfast, watching too much TV) ; 4. Make one new friend ; 5. Do something special for or help your parents everyday; 6) Have a local dietician, nurse or FCS agent come speak to the group about healthy habits (exercise, nutrition, etc.). 7) Invite FCS agent to bring ideas for nutritious snacks or "fun" fruits and vegetables that 4-H'ers can make and taste during the meeting; and 8) Team-up to do a health-related presentation for others—to spread the word. Taken from Texas 4-H "Club Ed", a resource for meeting inspiration. Available at <http://texas4-h.tamu.edu/volunteer/>

## Agriculture Result Demonstrations—new at our website!



2015 Result Demonstrations and Applied Research Plot Results: If you were at the Winter Row Crops meeting in January, we had hard copies of the *Fort Bend County Result Demonstration and Applied Research Handbook*—they are now available on-line. We have information on yield data from the county Corn, Sorghum, and Cotton plots, fertility results, corn-aflatoxin results, sugar-cane aphid management in sorghum, cotton defoliation, and pasture weed management. To find electronic copies of these reports, please go to: <http://fortbend.agrilife.org/agriculture-natural-resources>. For a printed copy call us at 281-342-3034 X 7029.

## Snap-Shot of Upcoming Events:

- Cottage Food Handlers Course—March 31, 2016 @ 9:00 am - 11:00 am
- Pecan and Citrus Grafting Clinic—April 2, 2016 @ 9:00 am - 11:00 am
- Do Well Be Well w/ Diabetes—March 21, @ 8:00 am - 5:00 pm
- Food Manager's Certification—March 22, @ 8:00 am—5:00 pm
- Child Care Providers Education—March 25 @ 8:00 am to 5:00 pm
- Pecan & Citrus Grafting Clinic—April 1, @ 9:00—11:00 am
- Gardening w/ Confidence: Warm Season Veggies—April 8, @ 8:30—11:00am
- Home Food Preservation—April 19 @ 9:00 am - 12:00 pm
- Food Handlers Course—April 21 @ 9:00 am - 11:00 am
- Home Food Preservation: Freezing/Dehydration—May 10, @ 9:00—12 noon
- Private Pesticide Applicator Training—May 19, @8:30 am—12:30 pm
- Gardening w/ Confidence: Gardening w/Children—May 20, @ 8:30—11:00
- Food Handlers Course—May 22 @ 9:00-11:00

For all of the above programs visit [fort-bend-tx@tamu.edu](mailto:fort-bend-tx@tamu.edu) or call us at 281-342-3034



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

[www.facebook.com/FortBendCountyExtension](http://www.facebook.com/FortBendCountyExtension)



## A Glimpse of Fort Bend County:

The 2015 Population has reached 716,087 of which 40.4% are college educated and earn a mean household income of \$112,893. 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.

"Among the largest counties (those with populations of 250,000 or more in 2015), Fort Bend, Texas, was the fastest growing, as its population climbed 4.3 percent between 2014 and 2015, to 716,087".

Excellent schools, affordable housing, planned communities and extensive recreational facilities have attracted families with impressive demographic profiles. These actions results 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/](http://www.fortbendcountytexas.gov/).