

Making a Difference

In Fort Bend County

First Quarter Newsletter—2018

Special Topics for Winter 2018

- ◆ REBUILD TEXAS Message
- ◆ What do we offer?
- ◆ Ask the Experts
- ◆ 33rd FB Regional Vegetable Conference
- ◆ Long Acres Ranch—a new venue!
- ◆ Come In & Join 4-H
- ◆ 2018 Grow Your Own Series
- ◆ REBUILD TEXAS—FBC Infographic for 3/30/18
- ◆ Snap-Shot of Upcoming Events
- ◆ Glimpse of Fort Bend County
- ◆ Contact Information



Jan.—March, 2017 TOTAL CONTACTS

384 educational sessions
67,564 contacts
567 Social Media posts
45,112 Soc. Media followers
20 Newsletter Editions
25,592 Newsletter contacts
578 Volunteers assisted
1,934 Volunteer hours
3,300 Edu. Resources Used

Audience:
41.9% Adult
58.1% Youth

Message from Gov. Abbott and Chan. Sharp—REBUILD TEXAS

“We are here for you As recovery continues in communities across the Gulf Coast Region and beyond, the State of Texas continues to work with our federal partners to cut red tape and secure more and faster funding. We are committed to working by your side for as long as it takes to help you rebuild critical public infrastructure in your community — roads, bridges, schools and other public facilities — damaged or destroyed by Hurricane Harvey or the flooding that followed.”

“Through this site for officials from the impacted communities, we will continue to provide you with current, reliable information, to help you navigate state and federal resources and to celebrate milestones achieved. We encourage you to share information with your community about housing options through TexasRebuilds.com. We are grateful to serve the people of this state. Together, we will rebuild Texas—even stronger than before.”

“God bless you all!”

Gov. Greg Abbott Commissioner John Sharp



What do we offer?

Extension’s greatest asset is our people. We have a statewide network of professional educators, County Extension Agents, and support staff serving every county in Texas. They live and work alongside the people they serve, offering unparalleled local knowledge, leadership, and connections in every community. Our county faculty are supported by subject-matter specialists, located at our state headquarters in College Station and at district & regional centers across the state. They hold advanced degrees and have research expertise in a variety of disciplines encompassing agriculture and natural resources, community development, family and consumer sciences, and youth development.

Across the state, more than 100,000 people volunteer in Extension programs. They extend Extension’s educational opportunities throughout their neighborhoods, helping their friends and neighbors improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of their community.

The educational programs Extension offers help people and communities solve problems, build local capacity, and make things better. These opportunities include classes, workshops, presentations, and one-on-one consulting, or instruction in subjects related to agriculture and natural resources, community development, family and consumer sciences, and 4-H and youth development.

If you or your organization would like to partner with Extension in your community, contact the [Extension office in your county](#). If you would like to be a partner at the state level, [contact our headquarters office](#) at <https://agrilifeextension.tamu.edu/about/>.

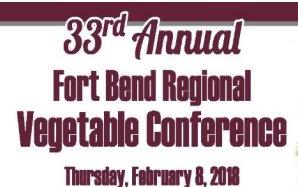


Ask the Experts !

Ask an Expert has always offered one-to-one expert answers from the USDA's Cooperative Extension/University staff and volunteers from across the United

States. The latest version expands that one-to-one relationship via the ability to make questions and answers publicly available, on an opt-in basis. To check out *Ask the Expert!* go to any AgriLife Extension website in the state and click on *Ask the Expert*. <https://ask.extension.org/groups/1278/ask>

33rd Annual Fort Bend Regional Vegetable Conf.



This informative conference was held this year on February 8, 2018 at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds. It was deemed another huge success because of partnerships, diversity, and technology. Participants included over 223 paid participants, 16 commercial exhibitors, 9 speakers and 45 guests and volunteers. This program was a 7-county partnership.

Topics included: Vegetable Breeding Update; Managing Soil Nutrients; FSMA Update; Scouting for Insects; Introduction to the PACE Program; Go Texan—Big Mac Award; CEU track; Implementing Basic Organic Practices; Weed Management; and Vegetable Production. We again included a program segment from our FCS 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. 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!



Long Acres Ranch—Natural Resource Programming in FBC

Long Acres Ranch near Richmond recently hosted four groups of 4th & 5th grade students from Lamar Consolidated ISD, providing first hand instruction on soil erosion and its effect on the environment. "We were not even officially open before these final groups of 2017 came and to date we've already had more than 2,000 elementary school students participate in educational programs at the ranch," said Jim Kidda, program coordinator.

What was once a working cattle ranch since the mid 1800s, Long Acres Ranch is now a 768-acre facility that includes 3 miles of frontage on the Brazos River. It is owned by a local foundation that has partnered with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service to provide an opportunity for children and adults to experience the benefits of nature through outdoor education and recreation.

Kidda said more than 320 Lamar Consolidated ISD students visited the facility over a four-day period in late December to participate in educational programming related to the impact of erosion. For more information contact AgriLife Extension at 281-342-3034.



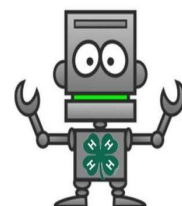
Come In & Join Texas 4-H! It's fun!

Texas 4-H is a club for kids in 3rd–12th grade, with programs for K-2nd as well. Project opportunities range from food science and robotics to fashion design and photography. There's a 4-H activity for everyone. Join for \$25 or less! Texas 4-H is for kids of almost any age – grades K-2 can be in Clover Kids. From 3rd-12th grades, you can be a regular 4-H member. Contact us at <http://agrilife.org/ftbend4h/> or complete the contact request form at <https://texas4-h.tamu.edu/register/> to find out what is available where you live. All 4-H members must be enrolled in at least one project. When you choose a project, you will learn everything there is to know about that topic. You will participate in various hands-on activities, learn new skills, do community service, or even make speeches about your project.

How to choose your 4-H project: 1) Select a project you like; 2) Consider the money and time it will take and check to see if parents, guardians, and/or grandparents can help; 3) Consider the space and equipment that you have at home in support of large animal projects; 4) A 4-H project should be fun, serve a purpose, and be worth the effort; 5) Select only the number of projects you can realistically complete.

Then locate a 4-H Club near you and contact the club manager. Club meeting locations & times are noted on the following website: <http://agrilife.org/ftbend4h/clubs/>. Choose which would be more convenient for your family and contact the manager to confirm their next meeting date. Attend a meeting to see if it's right for you. If not, check around, find one that fits. Once you find your club, you will then need to Enroll via 4-H Connect.

Last step is to enroll online in 4-H Connect: <https://texas.4honline.com/Login.aspx?4079444C6D387A6E595A2F6F3D>. 4-H Connect was introduced in 2005 and was uniquely designed to allow 4-H members and adults to register online while maintaining contact with the county, district, and state offices through the certification process.



Livestock



2018 Grow Your Own Series

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Fort Bend County, along with the Fort Bend County Master Gardeners are presenting a 6-class program series on creating a productive edible garden in the home landscape—edible landscape. Classes will combine indoor instructions with outdoor method demonstrations for a fun-filled learning experience like no other. Participants will learn how to start a garden, the keys to success, what to plant and when and how to reap the benefits of year-round food production in their own front or back yards. Topics include:

- Edible Garden Planning—February 17, - learn about soil, water, space and light requirements of the many varieties recommended by Aggie Horticulture.
- Soil, Composting, & Fertilizing—March 24 - learn about soil quality and drainage; how to construct a working compost heap and adding proper amount of fertilizer—the when, how and how much!
- Spring & Summer Vegetables—April 21 - the best vegetables that produce in our Southeast Texas summer heat, when to plant them and how to care for them, including pest management.
- Fruit Trees—June 16 - teaches about the fruiting trees that are recommended for Fort Bend County and how to maintain them.
- Fall Vegetables—September 15 - learn about cool season vegetable that can keep producing all winter long with proper care.
- Niche Gardening—October 13 - learn how to combine colorful fruits and vegetables among typical landscape plants to add color and beauty along with the benefits of fresh produce.

For more information or to register contact the Extension office at 281-342-3034 or email brandy.rader@ag.tamu.edu

Fort Bend County Recovery

Hurricane Harvey: County Updates



FEMA

all totals as of March 23, 2018



22,862



APPROVED
REGISTRATIONS
FOR INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE

99.7% HOME
INSPECTIONS
COMPLETED



NATIONAL
FLOOD
INSURANCE
PROGRAM
(NFIP)

Claims **3,799**

Paid
\$203.53 MILLION

PUBLIC
ASSISTANCE

Provides grants to Government organizations
and certain private nonprofits.



3

PROJECTS
OBLIGATED



\$5.1 MILLION
FEDERALLY FUNDED

Housing and
other disaster
related expenses:

\$94.36 MIL

additionally

Direct
Housing

45

HOUSED

91 total

49% complete

Small Business Administration (SBA)

Loans
Approved: **3,338** for **\$303.06 MIL**

138

HOUSEHOLDS
IN FEMA
FUNDED HOTELS



Snap-Shot of Upcoming Events:

- Fruit & Nut Clinic—April 4, 9-11:00 a.m.
- Home Preservation Tomatoes—April 20 & 21, 8:00—12:00 noon.
- Parenting Connections—April 24, 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.
- Booster Seat Campaign—April 27, 9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.
- Home Food Preservation—May 10 & 11, 8:00 a.m.—12:00 noon.
- Parenting Connections—May 15, 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.
- Food Handlers' Course—May 22, 9:00-11:00 a.m.
- Booster Seat Campaign—May 29, 9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.
- Food Manager's Certification Reg. Deadline—June 5 & 6, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
- Child Care Providers Ed. Course—June 9 & 10, 8:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.
- Booster Seat Campaign—June 20, 9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.
- Robotics, Engineering, Coding & More Classes—June 23, 12:00 noon—2:00 p.m.
- Youth Fashion Week Reg. Deadline—June 26, 5:00 p.m.
- Funding Assistance Overview for Ag Producers Deadline—June 30, 5:00

For all of the above programs visit fortbend.agrilife.org or email us at fort-bend-tx@tamu.edu or call us at 281-342-3034

A Glimpse of Fort Bend Co.

The 2017 population has reached 764,828 of which 41.4% are college educated, 88.5% are high-school graduates and earn an average household income of \$118,558. 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 741,237".

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/.



Vincent J. Mannino

County Extension Director - Fort Bend County
1402 Band Rd. Suite 100, Rosenberg, TX 77471

Phone: 281-342-3034, Fax: 281-633-7000

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

www.facebook.com/FortBendCountyExtension