



## **Extension Education in Fort Bend County**

*Making a difference  
in 2018*

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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

## EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE *Providing Solutions*

across the state are 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 – 764,828 (2018)**  
**High School Graduates: 88.5%**  
**College Educated: 41.4%**  
**Average Household Income:**  
**\$118,558**



### **Fort Bend County 2018 Summary of AgriLife Educational Contacts**

Educational Sessions Conducted - 1,847 (471 for youth)  
 Educational Session Contacts - 233,241 (138,093 for youth)  
 Technology Assisted Programs - 47  
 Contact Hours via Educational Sessions - 205,409  
 4-H Clubs - 32; 4-H Club Members - 523; 4-H Adult Leaders - 90; Youth Leaders - 94  
 Youth Curriculum Enrichment Participants - 1,556  
 4-H Special Interest/Short Term - 12,886  
 Master Volunteers - 281  
 Texas Extension Education Club Members - 40  
 Total of Volunteers - 970  
 Total Volunteers Hours in Support of AgriLife in Fort Bend - 77,364  
 Value of Volunteer Hours to Fort Bend Citizens - \$1,916,783.40  
 Direct Contacts (office/site visits & phone calls) - 9,598  
 Indirect Contacts (mass media—television, radio, newspaper) - 71,911  
 Newsletter/Mail/E-Mail Contacts - 135,171  
 Social Media Posts - 5,710  
 Social Media Followers - 181,801  
 eXtension ('Ask the Experts') - 847 Total

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In 2018*

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# Making a Difference

## 2018 Fort Bend County Livestock and Forage Outreach Summary

*Developed by: John Gordy – Fort Bend County Extension Agent - Agriculture & Natural Resources*

### **RELEVANCE**

Beef and forage production are vital to the agricultural industry in Fort Bend County. Beef and Forage producers make up a significant portion of the agriculture audience in Fort Bend County. Opportunities are needed for producers to come for education on current events and the latest in research and industry advancements. To meet the educational needs of Fort Bend County's beef and forage producers, the Ag-Hort Advisory Committee provides support and guidance for the development of livestock and forage related programs.

### **RESPONSE**

To meet the needs of Fort Bend County Beef and Forage Producers, we concentrated on forage production as a means to benefit livestock production. We held a pasture soil sampling campaign in the spring to promote proper nutrient management and maximizing production of both pastures and hay fields. Additionally, we hosted a Soil Fertility Management Seminar and the Agriculture Symposium for beef and forage producers as well as the Fort Bend County forage testing campaign, in February, April, and November, respectively.

Following the response to hurricane Harvey and the housing of animals and establishment of an animal supply point, we worked with the Fort Bend County Animal Issues Committee and Dr. Wesley Bissett, Director of the TAMU Veterinary Emergency Team, the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office Livestock Division, County Animal Control officials, and the Fort Bend County Office of Emergency Management to update both the large and small animal emergency response plans.

### **RESULTS**

- Fort Bend County forage producers submitted 32 soil samples for analysis during the spring soil campaign. These results provided producers with a detailed report and recommendation on fertilizer applications to maximize forage yields and minimize costs, excess nutrient application, and negative environmental impacts.
- A Soil Fertility Management Seminar was hosted in February to follow up on the fall soil campaign. Dr. Jake Mowrer provided information on soil sampling, results interpretation, and guidance on application techniques for lime and fertilizer. Based on evaluation responses, the overall economic



impact for the program was more than \$74,000 for the twenty seven (27) attendees. Additional evaluation results are detailed below:


- 95% of respondents increased understanding of how to interpret soil, water, and forage testing lab soil results
  - 90% of respondents increased understanding of effective use of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium fertilizers
  - 90% of respondents increased understanding of how split applications help increase fertilizer use efficiency in intensively managed systems
  - 94% of respondents intend to adopt the practice of annual soil testing to determine fertilizer application rates
  - 88% of respondents intend to adopt the practice of comparing fertilizer prices based on cost per pound of nutrient in order to maximize economic benefit
  - 88% of respondents intend to adopt the practice of timing fertilizer applications to improve crop uptake of nutrients
  - 75% of respondents intend to adopt the practice of utilizing split applications of fertilizer (n & k) to improve nutrient use efficiency
- Forage producers also submitted a total of 6 hay samples to be subjected to a chemical analysis performed by the Soil, Water & Forage Testing Laboratory in College Station. This will provide producers and potential buyers with the information they need to appropriately supplement their livestock as they feed them this winter and into 2018. Sample numbers were much lower this year relative to previous years due to excessive rains that delayed hay cuttings for months.
  - In addition to the above mentioned programs, forage and livestock specific articles covering timely topics for our area, written by specialists or myself, are included in news bulletins that are distributed via e-mail to approximately 650 recipients. Some topics included brush management, timing of fertilizer applications, pasture weed management, and considerations for prussic acid poisoning in Johnsongrass in response to an early frost.

### **FUTURE PLANS**

We will continue to expand the livestock and forage program, and plan to form a working committee in the coming year. Additionally, additional applied research and result demonstration projects and programs will be implemented as need arises.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Special thanks Brandy Rader, Fort Bend County Administrative Assistant to Agriculture, for her efforts in programming and assisting in flood related matters, and to the following AgriLife Extension personnel for their time and expertise: Dr. Wesley Bissett, Dr. Jake Mowrer, Dr. Megan Clayton, Dr. Joe Paschal, and Dr. Tony Provin. In addition, appreciation is expressed to Ag-Hort Advisory Committee of Fort Bend County for their guidance and support of Extension programming conducted within the county.

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.

# Making a Difference

## 2018 Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, and Harris Counties Pesticide Safety Education

### Developed by

Jessica Chase, CEA-ANR, Brazoria Co., Tyler Fitzgerald, CEA-ANR, Chambers Co., John Gordy, CEA-ANR, Fort Bend Co., and Phoenix Rogers, CEA-ANR, Galveston Co.

### RELEVANCE

There are 2,593 pesticide applicators licensed with the Texas Department of Agriculture (texasagriculture.gov 2017) in Brazoria (592), Chambers (142), Fort Bend (552), Galveston (187), and Harris (1,120) counties. Approximately sixty percent of these are Private Pesticide Applicators and are required to obtain 15 CEUs (continuing education units) every five years to renew their license. The remaining 40% are Commercial/Non-Commercial Applicators who are required to obtain 5 CEUs annually. Clearly, there is a substantial audience and need for Extension to provide educational opportunities for these applicators to obtain their CEU credits. In addition, new applicators seek opportunities to take the certification course to test and obtain their license.

### RESPONSE

In order to better utilize local resources, the Agriculture and Natural Resources Agents from the Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, and Galveston County offices teamed up to develop a five hour CEU recertification program. Developed as a “traveling CEU program” that was rotated among counties, this multi-county event fully utilized local expertise among agents while reducing the need for Extension Specialists who can be difficult to schedule. The program was:

- “The ABC’s of IPM” by Jessica Chase, CEA-AGNR, Brazoria County
- “Record Keeping” by Phoenix Rogers, CEA-AGNR, Galveston County
- “Aquatic Weed ID and Management” by John Gordy, CEA-AGNR, Fort Bend County
- “Laws and Regulations Update” by Alternated by Phoenix Rogers and Jessica Chase
- “Environmental Effects of Pesticides and Water Quality” by Tyler Fitzgerald, CEA-AGNR, Chambers County

Each county also offered CEUs throughout the year at various seminars, such as forage and rancher’s programs, crop programs, and others. Finally, individuals attempting to acquire a license were provided opportunity to attend Private Applicator Trainings or Non-Commercial/Commercial applicator trainings.

### RESULTS

Individuals utilized the Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, and Galveston County Extension Offices to attend one of 10 Private Pesticide Applicator training sessions with the goal of obtaining their pesticide license. Additionally, five (5) individuals attended the Commercial/Non-Commercial Applicator training in Galveston County.

Over 250 (Ft. Bend: 99+36+60= 195) individuals attended 5-hour Recertification programs offered at Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, and Galveston counties. Retrospective-post evaluations were utilized and

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highlighted responses are summarized below. Participants showed high levels of understanding after attending the programs (Table 1) as well as high intentions to adopt recommended practices (Table 2).

<b>Table 1: Level of understanding</b> (cumulative rating at Good or Excellent)	<b>Understanding After Program Good/Excellent</b>			<b>Average</b>
	<b>Galveston 51</b>	<b>Brazoria 59</b>	<b>Chambers 25</b>	
Importance of pesticide safety	100%	100%	100%	100%
Importance and types of personal and protective equipment	100%	100%	100%	100%
Importance of reading pesticide label before use	100%	100%	100%	100%
The different parts of a pesticide label	100%	100%	100%	100%
Importance of IPM method of managing pests	98%	100%	100%	99%
That IPM is combination of tactics to manage pests	100%	100%	100%	100%
Control measures for managing feral hogs	91%	95%	100%	95%
Different types of traps for feral hogs	91%	98%	100%	96%
Factors that can affect off target movement of pesticides	98%	100%	100%	99%
How temperature inversion can cause long distance drift	91%	93%	100%	95%

<b>Table 2: Intentions to Adopt</b> (excludes already adopted and not applicable)	<b>Probably / Definitely Intend to Adopt</b>			<b>Average</b>
	<b>Galveston</b>	<b>Brazoria</b>	<b>Chambers</b>	
Use least toxic pesticides that are still effective	84%	92%	95%	91%
Use appropriate personal protective equipment	96%	100%	100%	99%
Read pesticide label before using a product	95%	100%	100%	98%
Utilize IPM tactics when managing pest issues, such as mechanical or physical controls	96%	90%	100%	95%
Utilize best management practices for reducing drift	96%	100%	100%	99%
Use of technology in controlling hogs	68%	83%	93%	81%
Use of pre-baiting traps when controlling feral hogs	67%	81%	100%	83%

Working with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Agriculture and Environmental Safety, the Texas Department of Agriculture, and other counties in the Southeast Region, an agriculture waste collection event was held in Wharton County on November 28. More than 121,836 pounds of pesticide waste was collected. The average cost for the 114 vehicles that dropped off product would have been roughly \$1,582.12 for disposal. In all, total savings were estimated at \$180,361.68. This does not include any transportation or labor charges, so the total average per vehicle would be close to \$2,000, making the estimated total savings for producers in the area that was targeted approximately \$228,000.

## **FUTURE PLANS**

The agents in Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, and Galveston County Extension Offices will continue to offer relevant, up-to-date educational opportunities for pesticide license holders. A traveling CEU recertification program is planned for 2019 that can be hosted in these counties and others if requested.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Appreciation is expressed to the program area committees of Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, and Galveston counties for their guidance and support of pesticide-related Extension programming conducted within the area.

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# Making a Difference

## 2018 Coastal Prairie Master Naturalist Outreach Summary

*Developed by:*

*John Gordy, County Extension Agent - Agriculture & Natural Resources, Fort Bend*

*Stacie Villarreal, County Extension Agent - Agriculture & Natural Resources, Waller*

### RELEVANCE

Fort Bend and Waller Counties have a combined population of more than 760,000 with an increasing percentage of those residents living in residential areas and many moving into semirural areas for the first time. Many of these individuals have interests in wildlife and nature. Texas Master Naturalists are a group of volunteers that are interested in natural aspects of the local geography including prairies, wildlife, fish, and other things. Our local chapter, the Coastal Prairie Master Naturalists, is a group of volunteers that work to educate themselves and the general public about such topics.

### SUMMARY

Master Naturalists are local volunteers in the community who work with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Texas Parks and Wildlife to increase the availability of nature- and wildlife-related information and improve quality of life through various volunteer service projects. Each year, new volunteers complete classroom instruction over several months in order to become certified as a Texas Master Naturalist. Existing volunteers complete advanced training and volunteer service every year to maintain their status as Master Naturalist Volunteers.

Coastal Prairie Master Naturalists are involved in regular public outreach programs at Seabourne Creek Park in Rosenberg, where they host bird hikes and other events such as their Annual Seabourne Creek NatureFest. At the Prairie Heritage Festival, they have educational experiences and programs addressing wildlife including birds, mammals, fish, and reptiles, as well as native plants and prairie restoration. This year the festival was hosted on November 3rd and there were 2,052 members of the general public that attended, up more than 400% from 2017.

Master Naturalists set up a booth and participate in AG'tivity Barn, our county agriculture awareness



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event in conjunction with the Fort Bend County Fair. This year, more than 750 elementary age students from school districts across the county attended the week long AG'tivity Barn. Additionally, Coastal Prairie Master Naturalists assisted with STAAR Blitz, along with Lamar Consolidated ISD and the Henderson-Wessendorff Foundation at Long Acres Ranch to provide educational presentations elementary school students preparing for state exams.

## VALUE

### Wildlife Management



Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service programs about fish and wildlife teach participants how to effectively manage these valuable resources. Hunting, fishing, and wildlife watching contribute approximately \$8 billion to the state's economy annually, supporting 139,000 jobs in Texas and enhancing the quality of life of all residents.

From August 26<sup>th</sup> through October 23<sup>rd</sup>, eighteen (18) new members completed 50+ hours of training classes covering topics including Texas Eco-Regions, Insects, Birds, Mammals, Reptiles, Plants, Streams, and other disciplines related to the natural sciences and educating the public. They will be working toward earning full membership in order to continue providing nature-related programming for the citizens of Fort Bend County. The Coastal Prairie Master Naturalist chapter has more than 85 volunteers that contributed over 9,750 volunteer hours which have economic benefit of more than \$240,000 to Fort Bend and Waller Counties. In total, Coastal Prairie Master Naturalists participated in more than 30 public and school-related events with more than 4,400 adults and children in attendance.

### FUTURE PLANS

In 2019, the Coastal Prairie Master Naturalist Chapter plans to, again, host a training class for new members. Additionally, they plan to expand education efforts to include even more programs at Long Acres Ranch, a joint project between Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and the Henderson/Wessendorff Foundation.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to Mac McDowell, Fort Bend County Volunteer Coordinator, for her hard work managing and assisting the Coastal Prairie Master Naturalists. Additionally, we appreciate Clint Faas, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Biologist and Co-Advisor, City of Rosenberg Parks Department, and to the Board of the Coastal Prairie Master Naturalist Chapter for their efforts in wildlife and natural sciences education to the residents of Fort Bend and Waller Counties.



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# Making a Difference

## 2018 Fort Bend, Brazoria, & Waller Counties Row Crop In-Depth Summary

*John Gordy, Fort Bend County Extension Agent - Agriculture & Natural Resources*

*Jessica Chase, Brazoria County Extension Agent - Agriculture & Natural Resources*

*Stacie Villarreal, Waller County Extension Agent - Agriculture & Natural Resources*

### RELEVANCE

Row Crop production is an approximately \$124 million dollar industry in Fort Bend, Brazoria, and Waller counties. In Fort Bend County, row crop production accounted for about 80% of agriculture-related sales in 2012 (NASS Agriculture Census). The large majority of the field crop production is conducted as a dryland enterprise, thus, more susceptible to drought and climatic irregularities. Profitability is affected directly for all producers by market/price changes. Specific local needs include selection of varieties and use of best management practices for fertility, disease, and insect management.

### RESPONSE

The Fort Bend, Brazoria, and Waller County Offices of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, working with the Fort Bend Row Crop Committee and other cooperators and partners, provides educational programming, result demonstrations, and applied research results to help producers make the best decisions regarding row crop management. In 2018, we conducted result demonstrations and applied research plots addressing hybrid selection in sorghum (Fort Bend and Brazoria Counties) and corn (Fort Bend and Brazoria Counties), variety selection in cotton (Fort Bend County), evaluation of sorghum hybrids for sugarcane aphid tolerance, insecticide efficacy for sugarcane aphid in sorghum, utilizing cover crops in rotation with cotton, and selection of liquid/dry P and K fertilizers in cotton. All of the result demonstrations will be summarized and results will be combined into a comprehensive manual to be distributed at the annual winter row crops meeting in January.

In 2018, we replaced the Summer Crops Tour with several commodity-specific turn-row meetings highlighting timely topics including management of disease, and insect and weed pests, fertility, and consideration of other management topics. Producers really appreciated this approach as it allowed them to participate in educational activities that were most relevant to their operations. We also provided updates on Worker Protection Standards and other Laws and Regulations-related topics. Additionally, we provided in-season bulletins to cover important topics for our area including insect, disease, and weed issues and program announcements – these were distributed via Facebook, and e-mailed to producers, consultants, and industry partners. With cotton seed being added as a program crop, we also hosted a seminar where representatives from the Agriculture and Food Policy Center explained details and implications of program options. Finally, we hosted a Producer and Sponsor

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Appreciation Luncheon on November 1<sup>st</sup> where we provided a brief summary of result demonstrations, thanked sponsors and producers, and had State Representative Phil Stephenson say a few words to highlight work being done to fund agriculture waste collection events, and to promote the collection event that was scheduled to take place at the end of November.

## **RESULTS**

There were 93 attendees at the January Row Crops Meeting. We hosted corn, sorghum, and cotton turn-row meetings where 15, 15, and 30 individuals attended, respectively. The seed cotton and producer appreciation luncheon had 63 and 45 attendees, respectively. End of the year evaluations were sent to meeting attendees and an economic benefit of more than \$237,000 is estimated for survey respondents, from educational programs alone. Additionally, some significant evaluation findings were:

- 100% Indicated that they were mostly or completely satisfied with the helpfulness of information in making decisions about their situation
- 100% Indicated that they would recommend Extension row crop programs and support to others
- 93% Indicated that they took actions or made changes based on information presented at extension row crop programs


The hybrid and variety trials provide important information for producers when considering newly available choices. For Fort Bend County, the top four sorghum and three corn hybrids evaluated out-yielded the bottom (four sorghum and three corn) by an average of 840 lbs. (15 bushels) and 12 bushels per acre, respectively. Similarly, utilization of the top four cotton varieties over the bottom four cotton varieties averaged an economic advantage of \$65 per acre (from 2017 trial data, at the time of this summary, 2018 cotton plots had not been harvested). If those or similar hybrids and varieties are adopted on half of the row crop acres in Brazoria, Fort Bend and Waller Counties, this equate to an economic benefit of \$2.07 million in. **“The economic benefit from newsletters, bulletins, educational programs, direct grower interaction, and result demonstrations is estimated to exceed \$3.75 million in Fort Bend County in 2017.”**

## **FUTURE PLANS**

In 2019, we will continue to offer turn-row meetings instead of the summer row crops tour, to allow more flexibility for growers to attend subjects that directly pertain to their operations.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Special thanks to the Fort Bend Row Crops Committee – Linda and Paul Freund, Kenny Poehls, Lisa and Alan Stasney, and Mark Wleczyk - for their guidance and support of Extension programming conducted within the county. Appreciation is also extended to Dr. Gaylon Morgan, Dale Mott, Dr. Tom Isakeit, Dr. Muthu Bagavathiannan, Mac Young, Dr. Ronnie Schnell, Jeff Nunley, South Texas Cotton and Grain, and Coastal Plains Soil and Water Conservation District, for their expertise and contributions, as well as industry sponsors for financial and material support.

V A L U E	
Crop and Forage Production Education	
	Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service programs targeted to producers of crops and forages are increasing profitability and productivity of farmers, thereby helping to build and sustain rural economies and support jobs.

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# Making a Difference

## 2018 Fort Bend County – Sustainable Agriculture

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.

The expanding sector of small acreage landownership creates the need and opportunity for training and support for these individuals. These individuals, mostly new to rural land ownership and management, need many resources ranging from crop or enterprise selection, management, equipment and pesticide safety, and working with local and State agencies.

### RESPONSE

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, working in coordination with the Texas division of Southern SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research & Extension), has brought forth efforts to assist in identifying and evaluating diversification strategies for risk mitigation and improved economic sustainability using a variety of small acreage crops.

We are utilizing a range of programming to reach our target audience and deliver useful and timely information. Established programs in this area include the Fort Bend Regional Vegetable Conference, the Orchard Grafting Clinic, and the Fort Bend County Pecan Show and Richmond Pecan Harvest. We successfully completed the third year as the core educational partner of the Pecan Harvest festival which, in spite of poor weather conditions, brought in a total of **1500** visitors overall, **250** of which directly visited our pecan exhibit and learned about growing pecans in our region.

In coordination with this plan of work, we have been actively working with Extension specialists. More notable is work with Fran Pontasch on potential grape growers efforts and Monte Nesbitt on fruit and nut programs. This includes the continuation of a replicated variety trial on olive and Satsuma citrus. We continue our work with the newly established Loam Agronomics to support cover crop research on their 280 acre organic vegetable farm located in Richmond.

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## RESULTS

Outcomes from the annual Fort Bend Regional Vegetable Conference continue to look strong with a total guest and vendor count of **228** people. We continue the successful practice of separating the afternoon sessions allowing pesticide applicator license holders to gain needed CEU's, while offering producers and gardeners without a TDA license a range of topics that are much more suited to their needs.

**Activity Title:** Regional Vegetable Conference

**Activity Date:** February 8, 2018

**Activity Description:**

**Number of Participants:** 228

Percentages based on 184 respondents to the survey (Response rate = 81%).

**Overall:**

- 90% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the activity.

**Anticipated Changes & Economic Impact:**

- 63% of respondents plan to take actions or make changes based on the information from this activity.
- 55% of respondents anticipate benefiting economically as a direct result of what they learned from this Extension activity.

Response data that exhibits the fact that program is truly a regional event, below is a breakdown of responses of guests representing 15 counties.

**Which county do you garden or farm in?**

- 93 - Fort Bend
- 4 - Waller
- 18 - Harris
- 2 - Austin
- 12 - Wharton
- 26 - Brazoria
- 0 - Galveston
- 7 - Colorado
- 14 - Other:  
2- Matagorda 1-Caldwell 2-Fayette 3-Walker 1-Montgomery 1- Lavaca 3-Grimes 1-Falls

## FUTURE PROGRAM EFFORTS

Interest in new and expanding opportunities in sustainable agriculture continues to rise in Fort Bend County. With this rise, we should see an even greater interest in expanded programs concerning sustainable agriculture. Regionally, we will continue regional efforts in 2019 to work with a program area committee for sustainable agriculture to maintain partnerships, assist with program marketing, and develop a more robust offering of activities for these new and expanding audiences.

## Making a Difference

### **2018 Fort Bend County – Earth-Kind® Home Landscapes**

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

#### **RELEVANCE**

Fort Bend County, as a community, continually shifts from a once rural farm centered population to that of an urban/sub-urban one. As housing surplus in the Houston area becomes more scarce and valued higher, developers continue the trend of moving into Fort Bend County to help meet the housing demand. At a steady 3 percent growth rate, our 2018 population is estimated to be at 819,681 with 94 percent of that population being represented as urban and 6 percent as rural. The vast majority of this population centers around 4 major municipalities and represent mostly suburban development. These include Fort Bend Houston (42,000), Missouri City (68,000), Rosenberg (36,000), and Sugar Land (88,000). With development, comes challenges. These challenges include increased landscape water use and environmental issues such as landscape water runoff, green waste management, and energy conservation.

#### **RESPONSE**

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Fort Bend County, along with the Fort Bend County Master Gardeners, have developed a home landscape program series based on Earth-Kind Landscape principles. Earth-Kind Landscaping uses research-proven techniques to provide maximum garden and landscape enjoyment while preserving and protecting the environment. The objective of Earth-Kind Landscaping is to combine the best of organic and traditional gardening and landscaping principles to create a horticultural system based on real world effectiveness and environmental responsibility. The Earth-Kind Landscaping encourages Landscape Water conservation, the Reduction of fertilizer and pesticide use, Landscaping for energy conservation, and the Reduction of landscape wastes entering landfills. Individuals using Earth-Kind landscaping principles and practices can create beautiful, easy-care landscapes, while conserving and protecting natural resources and the environment.

To market the program to new and established homeowners, we adopted two program series, one focused on home food production and the other focused on landscape management. The Grow Your Own series consisting of six classes was delivered on Saturday mornings, aiming to attract a similar group of participants through the complete series. The Landscape Success series was held on Thursday evenings and similarly, participants attended the complete series of six classes.

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## RESULTS

110 registered guests participated in both 2018 programs, 75 of which attended a complete series of 6 classes. Results gained through formal customer satisfaction evaluations and verbal feedback confirm that these programs were well received and that people are eager to see continued efforts and new offerings in the future. The below evaluation results from a first type program shows the need for and success of these courses.



**Activity Title:** Edible Garden Planning

**Activity Date:** February 17, 2018

**Activity Description:**

**Number of Participants:** 81

Percentages based on 64 respondents to the survey (Response rate = 79%).

### 1. Overall satisfaction with this activity.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Completely	31	48.4	52.5	52.5
	Mostly	27	42.2	45.8	98.3
	Slightly	1	1.6	1.7	100.0
	Total	59	92.2	100.0	
Missing	System	5	7.8		
Total		64	100.0		

### 4. Do you plan to take any action or make any changes as a result of this activity?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	57	89.1	90.5	90.5
	No	2	3.1	3.2	93.7
	Not sure	4	6.3	6.3	100.0
	Total	63	98.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.6		
Total		64	100.0		

### 2b. Satisfaction with accuracy of the information.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Completely	49	76.6	79.0	79.0
	Mostly	13	20.3	21.0	100.0
	Total	62	96.9	100.0	
Missing	System	2	3.1		
Total		64	100.0		

### 5. Do you anticipate benefitting economically as a direct result of what you learned from this activity?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	41	64.1	69.5	69.5
	No	18	28.1	30.5	100.0
	Total	59	92.2	100.0	
Missing	System	5	7.8		
Total		64	100.0		

Specific noteworthy data from above include: 1. 52.5% complete satisfaction of program, 2b. 79% state the the information accuracy, 4. 90.5% plan to make changes as a result, and 5. That a total of 69.5% of guests state that they anticipate benefitting economically from attending this event.

## FUTURE PROGRAM EFFORTS

Utilizing our local planning committee, and using evaluation data and direct feedback from guests, we plan to build upon these series and to expand program opportunities. To increase value in our 2019 program series, we plan to conduct a retrospective follow-up evaluation to see how our participants are continually utilizing knowledge and learned practices gained by their participation in this program.

**EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE**  
*Providing Solutions*

## Making a Difference

### **2018 Fort Bend County – Master Gardener Programming** **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-four** individuals enrolled in the Fort Bend County Fall 2018 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 Texas Master Gardener.

Beyond the annual training of new master volunteers, we build better value into keeping Master Gardeners as active volunteers within the program. With an ongoing attrition rate of **88%**, we continue to hold an complete active membership of **190** Fort Bend Master Gardeners. To continue this level, we have also developed 6 Advanced Training programs specifically for active members, to help expand their knowledge and confidence, and to encourage them to contribute in more meaningful ways.

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Established in 2016, we have continued a monthly Lunch & Learn program series of advanced training for our members. These programs, each averaging a length of thirty minutes, were designed to offer a range of educational topics to enhance educational opportunities for our members. Topics for these programs range from composting to plant research and data collection.

Based off a local and State need, we opted to host the Texas Master Gardener Compost Advanced Training in December. **23** certified Texas Master Gardeners from across the State attended this three day training.

## RESULTS

The **Twenty-eight** individuals enrolled in the Fort Bend County Fall 2018 Master Gardener class will contribute in minimum of **831** 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 2018, if all remain active, would contribute an additional minimum of **1094** hours of volunteer service, though in reality they contribute exponentially more. The knowledge they each gain will help them serve as localized stewards in their neighborhoods and other ranges of influence. This greatly helps Texas A&M AgriLife Extension in fulfilling its goal of reaching and educating the diverse population of Fort Bend County.

The most notable result for 2018 was the development of both the Grow Your Own and Landscape Success program series'. Each of these 6 class series were taught by Master Gardener volunteers that had attended training and attained an area specialist designation. This exhibits the benefits gained by master volunteers attending specialist area trainings, most notable is the expanded reach of Extension programming efforts.

At the close of 2018, the Fort Bend Master Gardener Association has **65** (up from 45 in 2017) members certified and active as Texas Master Gardener Specialists. Each person dedicated 3 days to intense training, followed by a minimum hours of community service and continuing advanced training in that specialty. These designations include but are not limited to Compost, Propagation, Vegetable, Fruit, Citrus, Earth-Kind, Irrigation, Turfgrass, and Junior Master Gardener. These specialists provide their service to present programming under our community outreach education program entitled Speakers Bureau.

## 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. This includes development of a structured complete program evaluation instrument.

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

# Making a Difference

## 2018 Fort Bend County – General Horticulture Programming

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

### Fort Bend Beekeepers Association.

Serve as association advisor, host monthly meetings, and distribute monthly newsletter.

### Fort Bend Orchard Production Committee.

Serve as committee advisor and assist to implement annual programming efforts.

### Fort Bend Demonstration Projects.

Serve as advisor and guidance for ongoing and new applied and result demonstrations.

### Fort Bend Ag/Hort Advisory Committee.

Host and facilitate meetings, agenda content, and engage in regular activities.

### Fort Bend Ag'Tivity Barn Planning Committee.

Lead for horticulture related youth activities, garden demonstrations, and water education.

### Fort Bend County Master Gardener Association – Advisor and Program Lead.

61 Speakers Bureau presentations given in 2018, reaching total audience of **2,312**.

### Texas SARE Advisory Committee.

Serve as active member and provide input for future State-wide programming efforts.

### Houston Food Systems Collaborative – Houston Food Bank.

Serve on executive committee and plan calendar of ongoing programming efforts.

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### **Houston Area Urban Forestry Council.**

Active member and serve on Board of Directors.

### **Partnerships with Local Government.**

Develop and maintain ongoing partnerships with the Cities of Sugar Land, Missouri City, Katy, Meadows Place, Richmond, and Fulshear and forestry committee of Houston-Galveston Area Council.

### **Horticulture Industry Partnerships.**

Develop and maintain ongoing partnerships with the Texas Nursery & Landscape Association, Houston Gulf Coast Irrigators Association, Houston Area Urban Forestry Council, Organic Horticulture Business Alliance, Texas Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association, and local nurseries including Caldwell's Nursery, Enchanted Nurseries, and Greenleaf Nursery.

### **Assist and Support Neighboring County Offices.**

Provided horticultural support to Brazoria, Harris, Waller, Austin, Grimes, Galveston, Colorado, Jackson, Fayette, Washington, DeWitt, and Wharton Counties.

### **Regular Site Visits.**

Conduct an average of **15** site visits (homeowner & commercial) per month throughout the year.

### **Regular Office Visits.**

Respond to an average of **15** office visits per month throughout the year.

### **Coordination with Program Area Specialists.**

Regular cooperation with Monte Nesbitt and Stephen Janak (Fruit and Nut), Bill Ree (Pecan IPM), Fran Pontasch (Grape), Tim Hartmann & Mengmeng Gu (Earth-Kind), Jayla Fry (TMG), Lisa Whittlesey (JMG), and others.

### **Social Media Education and Marketing.**

Post to Facebook accounts (Fort Bend Extension and Fort Bend Master Gardener) an average of twice weekly throughout the year. Instagram (Fort Bend Master Gardener) once weekly.

### ***eXtension Ask the Expert* online questions.**

Respond to an average of **25** Ask the Expert questions per month throughout the year.



# Making a Difference

## Livestock and Forage Production in Fort Bend County for Limited Resource Producers and Beginning and Ranchers

**Derrick Banks, EA-CEP-ANR**

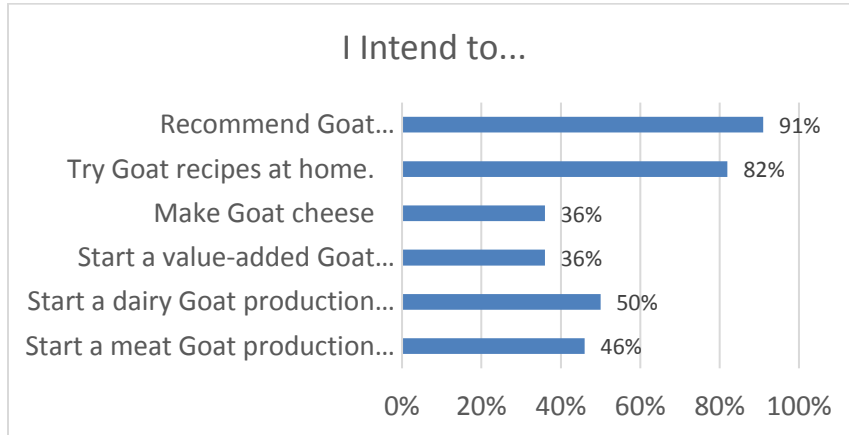
**Relevance-** According to the USDA, small ruminants, such as sheep and goats, have a special place in livestock production as value added producers of meat, milk, and fiber products in addition to other uses such as weed control, and livestock shows. There is a growing interest in sustainable and alternative livestock production systems among limited resource producers and beginning ranchers, with the expressed need for extension to provide unbiased, educational resources on small ruminant production, health, nutrition, marketing increases, and how to add value to their agriculture production practices. Small and productive, sheep and goats are well suited for grass based and small scale agriculture. They are relatively inexpensive than larger livestock, which is a great incentive for limited resource producers. A growing market is opening the doors for value added opportunities, from meat products to cheese to fiber. The Fort Bend County Extension Office receives an average of 7 calls each week from producers with expressed interest in Livestock and Forage Production, with small ruminant production being the most popular among beginning ranchers and limited resource producers. Unfortunately the climate in Fort Bend County presents great challenges for Livestock producers. Issues with diseases, predator control and herd health are the most common issues small ruminant producers face. Beef cattle producers are the second most popular group of livestock producers who call seeking knowledge and resources in controlling pests, herd health, and forage production.

**Response-** This program targeted limited resource livestock producers to provide them with the necessary training, knowledge, and resources to be profitable livestock producers, and minimize factors contributing to herd health. The Fort Bend County Sustainable Agriculture Committee met a total of 3 times in 2018 to plan and evaluate educational programs within the Fort Bend County Cooperative Extension Program Livestock and Forage Plan. There were a total of 150 contacts made during these meetings. Each meeting focused on program planning, development and implementation to ensure limited resource producers and beginning ranchers were presented with the opportunity to participate in hands on livestock training, received information on how to maintain healthy soils and grasses, and able to increase their knowledge in overall herd health and maintenance of their livestock. The Small Ruminant Production and Value Added Workshop Series hosted 18 small ruminant producers who learned how to increase the market value of their production by incorporating value added products; such as cheeses, soaps, milk, and ice cream production. Producers also had the opportunity to learn about Feral Hog eradication methods. The Cooperative Extension Program Artificial Insemination Training, in which 2 producers from Fort Bend County were selected to join 8 other Small ruminant producers at Prairie View A&M Universities International Goat Research Center to attend a hands on artificial insemination clinic and also became certified as part of a small ruminant workshop series. The Cooperative Extension Program Famacha Training where in which 2 producers from Fort Bend County were selected to join 8 other Small ruminant producers at Prairie View A&M Universities International Goat Research Center to attend a hands on artificial insemination clinic and also became

certified as part of a small ruminant workshop series. The NRCS Cross Fencing Seminar in Damon, TX., in which 6 livestock producers were selected to participate in a cross fencing funding presentation done by soil conservationists Karissa Graves. Instructional videos were shown along with educating the 6 producers on cover crop benefits. The NRCS Soil Testing Training, in which Limited resource producers were identified with soil or forage issues and were provided with a free soil test provided by Cooperative Extension Program. The Forage Testing Demonstration, in which 4 Limited Resource Producers and Beginning Ranchers participated in a forage testing campaign as part of the Small Ruminant Workshop Series. The Horn Fly Demonstration, in which 5 limited resource cattle producers were selected to participate in a horn fly study to help reduce the amount of pest pressure and economic loss to cattle producers due to the stress of horn flies on their cattle. The Fort Bend County Feral Hog Coalition met a total of 3 times to plan and implement The Fort Bend County Feral Hog Program, in which 70 limited resource producers and beginning ranchers learned about modern trapping methods, basic biology, and control methods in Fort Bend and Surrounding counties. The Livestock Coalition met a total of 3 times to help plan a Market Rabbit Selection Training where 3 beginning livestock producers learned how to select and evaluated market rabbits, Small Ruminant Selection and Evaluation Training where 6 limited resource producers learned the importance of selecting small ruminants with the necessary tolerable traits to survive in Fort Bend County. Livestock Selection and Handling in which 3 Beginning cattle producers were educated on how to properly handle livestock.

**Results-** Below is the sum of the clientele who answered, “*Probably will/Definitely will*” to the statements, I will...

1. Start a meat Goat production operation = 46%
2. Start a dairy Goat production operation = 50%
3. Start a value-added Goat production operation = 36%
4. Make Goat cheese = 36%
5. Try Goat recipes at home = 82%
6. Recommend Goat products to others = 91%



**Future Plans:** Plans include incorporating topics on specialized breeds within small ruminants, and conducting a Livestock management series which will cover Cattle, Small Ruminants, Poultry Production, and topics on utilizing government funding to purchase livestock.

**Impact Plan Supported By:** The Fort Bend County Feral Hog Coalition, the Livestock Coalition, the Sustainable Agriculture Committee, Texas Parks and Wildlife, APHIS, Texas Animal Health Commission.

**Contact individual:** Derrick Banks, Extension Agent, Cooperative Extension Program Agriculture and Natural Resources, Fort Bend County.

# Making a Difference

## Small Scale Horticulture Production in Fort Bend County

Derrick Banks, EA-CEP-ANR

**Relevance-** Fort Bend County has a major difference in soil profile and type depending on where you are in the county, and is an ongoing and increasing issue among our beginning producers and landowners. On average, the Fort Bend County Extension Office conducts at least 6 site visits per month in rural development communities to meet with farmers and ranchers about specialty crop production, and small scale horticulture production. Fort Bend County has approximately 567,000 acres of land, and of this amount there is a considerable amount of undeveloped acreage which is being turned into smaller plots of agriculture production land, and residential neighborhoods at an uncontrollable rate. Specialty crop production and cover crop production are among top priorities for local limited resource vegetable producers and beginning farmers, and vegetable producers. Vegetable production in Fort Bend County and has the most problems among growers due to differences in soil type, pest control, and nutrient deficiencies.

**Objective-** This program targeted limited resource producers to work with on a one-on-one basis to provide information on how to test your soil, site selection, weed and pest prevention, and adequate watering cycles. The Sustainable Agriculture Committee met 3 times during 2018 to plan and implement the Cooperative Extension Program Soil Testing Campaign, The Cooperative Extension Forage Testing Campaign, and to participate in the planning of future cover crop trials and programs in Fort Bend County. A total of 43 contacts were made during these 3 meetings. Presenters with the Natural Resource Conservation Service educated limited resource producers on how to properly take a soil test to improve overall soil health, and maximize production. Fort Bend County Master Gardeners Volunteer group were able to assist in training beginning farmers ranchers over best management practices for vegetable production. Soil test demonstrations were conducted at 3 different sites in Fort Bend County to accommodate limited resource producers in different parts of the county. Members from The Southern Cover Crop Board met 2 times and made a total of 12 contacts during these meetings. The Cover Crop Board provided education on planting, maintaining, and harvesting; cover crops and identified 5 producers in Fort Bend County to participate in a 2 year ongoing cover crop study to help promote cover crop planting, increase soil fertility, identify vigorous plant species to tolerate heavy clay soils, and other soil types across the region. A result demonstration using applied research was conducted using 2 different producers' plots to grow grafted cucumbers, which limited resource producers in Fort Bend County were able to view cucumber production sites,

attend grafted vegetable trainings, weed identification training, and pest control methods in vegetable gardening hosted at Prairie View A&M University with Dr. Ming Gao and Dr. Peter Ampiem. A total of 30 contacts were made during the grafted cucumber demonstration, in which producers were able to randomly view the grow sites. A step by step guide on how to select a grow site for cucumber production, a guide on how to conduct a soil test before planting and after harvest, methods on weed and pest control, and contact information for farmers markets and local surplus buyers in the area, to ensure limited resource producers and underserved populations had access to resources to help sell their produce. An ongoing specialty crop study was conducted by Cooperative Extension Program in which 10 producers in Fort Bend County were selected to participate in specialty crop education trainings in order to promote specialty crop production in Texas, in which 20 contacts with limited resource producers were made. The Fort Bend County Feral Hog Coalition met a total of 3 times to plan and implement The Fort Bend County Feral Hog Program, in which 70 limited resource producers and beginning ranchers learned about modern trapping methods, basic biology, and control methods in Fort Bend and Surrounding counties. With the funds provided by Sustainable Agriculture Research Education (SARE), more plots were put in other areas to show producers various gardening methods that can be used to increase yields, and lower pest and disease issues. The project still has ongoing research that will be used to continue providing the public with resources they need to become aware of factors that contribute to successful gardening.

**Results-** Upon uploading the continuing research from the ongoing cover crop tri; producers have access to the data in implementation of these practices on their property. 100% of producers who attended the grafted vegetable training gained knowledge on benefits of using grafted vegetables, 100% of the participants gained knowledge on How to grow rootstock and scion seedlings, 100% of the participants gained knowledge on how to attach a scion onto rootstock, 100% of participants gained knowledge on how to prepare planting medium/soil for growing after procedure, 100% of the participants gained knowledge on how to care for plants after grafting procedure to ensure growth, 100% of the participants intended to Replicate grafted vegetables procedures on your own farm, 100% of the participants would recommend grafted vegetables to others, 100% of the participants intend to grow grafted vegetables. As a result of the soil testing campaign, a total of 60 contacts with limited resource producers were made. 100% of the participants in the soil testing campaign effectively learned how to conduct a soil test. 100% of the participants have adopted the practice of taking soil tests before planting and after Harvest.

**Acknowledgements-** : Fort Bend County Master Gardeners, Fort Bend County Feral Hog Coalition USDA-NRCS, Fort Bend County Master Naturalists Group, Fort Bend County Sustainable Agriculture Committee, Attack Poverty, Houston Food Bank.

**Contact Individuals:** Derrick Banks- Extension Agent; Fort Bend County, Agriculture and Natural Resources Cooperative Extension Program- Prairie View A&M University.

# Making a Difference

## Government Assistance Funding Overview for Limited Resource Producers and Beginning Farmers and Ranchers

**Derrick Banks, EA-CEP-ANR**

**Relevance-** Fort Bend County limited resource producers and beginning farmers and ranchers face many challenges with funding being the number one issue to start and maintain a profitable agriculture operation. On average, The Fort Bend County Extension Office conducts at least 15 site visits each month to help limited resource producers and beginning farmers and ranchers determine what funding resources may be available to help them promote better agricultural management practices. Agencies such as the United States Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Texas Department of Agriculture, and Sustainable Agriculture Research Education all provide funding resources for limited resource agriculture producers, but often times limited resource producers have a variety of obstacles which create great challenges while trying to obtain available resources and knowledge in agriculture funding provided by government, state and local entities.

**Response-** This program targeted limited resource producers and beginning farmers and ranchers to provide them with the necessary training and knowledge to obtain agriculture funding to start or maintain their operation. The Fort Bend County Sustainable Agriculture Committee met 3 times during 2018 to plan and evaluate The Government Assistance Overview for Ag. and Youth Ag Producers, The Micro Loan Workshop, and The Business Planning Workshop. There were a total of 20 contacts were made during these meetings. Each meeting focused on program planning, development and implementation to ensure limited resource producers and beginning agriculture producers were presented with the opportunity to apply for available resources in which they qualified for. The Government Assistance Overview for Ag and Youth Producers focused on providing producers with education on NRCS Resources, Loans and grants provided by the USDA, Funding opportunities provided by SARE, The Beginning Farmers Grant and other funding opportunities provided by Texas Department of Agriculture. The Micro Loan Program Focused on educating producers on the proper steps of the Micro Loan application process, considerations were made to producers on marketing strategies and maintaining a profitable Agriculture Operation. The Business Planning Workshop focused on the business plan and presenters educated producers on the necessary components of the business plan, and how to properly design a business plan. Information on funding resources, presenter's office contact information was implemented into Cooperative Extension Program Newsletters, which allowed Limited Resource Producers and Beginning Agriculture Producers who could not be in attendance the



opportunity to benefit from the program. Two Articles were in the Prairie View A&M College of Agriculture and Human Sciences' Monday Minutes Newsletter. A Field Day was conducted to introduce producers to prior applicants who utilized funding resources to start and maintain successful agriculture operations. Mentors were also provided to producers since mentorship is one of the requirements to receive some of the agriculture loans available. The Micro Loan Program was also added as a component of the program series, to show livestock and Horticulture producers how to obtain a Micro Loan to assist with finances within their established operation.

**Results-** 32 applicants were asked agriculture related questions pertaining to educational and resource needs provided by government, state, and local entities. Participants indicated their level of knowledge before and after the program. A total of 26 consultant meetings with youth ag producers has resulted in 15 of those producers applying for the \$5,000.00 youth loan provided to active 4-H and FFA members by the USDA. A total of 60 consultant meetings with limited resource producers and beginning agriculture producers, in which 42 of the applicants have applied for funding through a federal, state, or local entity. A total of 20 program participants have applied for Micro Loans for a total of \$1,000,000 in funding applied for. A total of 2 producers have applied for the Macro Loan through USDA for a total amount of \$600,000. A total 6 participants in the program have applied for a total of \$12,000 in funding provided by SARE. A total of 7 Participants have applied for cross fencing funding and High Tunnel Funding through the NRCS. A total of 91% participants expressed knowledge gained from the program, and a total of 33% applicants expressed they would change behavior as a result of the information presented on effective marketing strategies. A total of 6 producers have entered the Agribility Program in conjunction with Texas A&M Agrilife Extension and The National Agribility Project, in which they have received help with financial advisement, marketing advisement, and one on one consultation with various agriculture advisors all free of cost.

**Future Plans-** Create a resource guide for Producers to access online to easily obtain funding resources, Develop and train more producers to become mentors, create more educational opportunities for limited resource producers to ensure they maintain a profitable operation, Incorporate this program into the Cover Crop Program.

**This Impact plan is supported by:** The National Agribility Project, Natural Resource Conservation Service, United States Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency, Texas Department of Agriculture, and Sustainable Agriculture Research Education.

**Contact Individual:** Derrick Banks, Extension Agent, Cooperative Extension Program, Fort Bend County

# Making a Difference

## Fort Bend County

### ***Better Living for Texans – A Fresh Start to a Healthier You!***

**Developed by Dianne Gertson, Fort Bend County Extension Agent-Family and Community Health**

#### **Relevance**

More than 3.7 million 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 – Better Living for Texans (BLT)**

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 gardening and the *Walk Across Texas* program to promote physical activity and improve access to vegetables and fruits.

During 2018, 106 Fort Bend County adults completed the BLT *A Fresh Start to a Healthier You!* series. This program focuses on improving vegetable and fruit intake, meal planning, increasing physical activity, and adopting selected behaviors that can reduce the risk of foodborne illness. Of those participants, 49 completed the 30-day follow-up survey which allows us to assess the extent that targeted behaviors were adopted. A Fresh Start to a Healthier You! series was offered at multiple Fort Bend Seniors locations, The Pinnacle Senior Center, UT Physicians, Mamie George Community Center and Fort Bend Gardens. Fifty four persons completed the Eat Smart Live Stronger series. This series focuses on label reading, food safety and meal planning.

#### **Results**

##### *Participant characteristics*

Average household size was 2.24; the average age of the participants was 70.91 years. Participation in the selected assistance programs was as follows: SNAP 58.3%, food pantries or other emergency food assistance 66.7%, free/reduced school meals 16.7%, Head Start 8.3%, TANF 0%, and WIC 0%.

## Evaluation results

Changes in targeted behaviors were examined by evaluating the pre, post and (where available) follow-up surveys of those individuals who completed the program series.

### *Vegetable and Fruit Consumption*

Behavior	Pre			Post			Follow-Up	
	N	%		N	%		N	%
<b>Fruit Consumption</b>								
None or rarely	2	4.0		0	0	5	1	2.1
1-2 times a week	13	28		11	22.6	17	17	35.4
1 time a day	15	33.3		18	37.5	17	17	35.4
2 times a day	9	20		11	22.9	7	7	14.6
3 or more times a day	6	13		8	16.7	6	6	12.5
<b>Vegetable Consumption</b>								
None or rarely	1	2.3		0	0	0	0	0
1-2 times a week	12	27.9		11	23.4	12	12	25.0
1 time a day	15	34.9		15	31.9	19	19	39.6
2 times a day	10	23.3		16	34.0	13	13	27.1
3 or more times a day	5	11.6		5	10.6	4	4	8.4

### *Meal Planning and Food Management Practices*

	Pre			Post			Follow-Up	
	N	%		N	%		N	%
<b>Plan meals in advance</b>								
All of the time	7	15.9		8	16.7	6	12.8	
Most of the time	13	29.5		10	20.8	15	31.9	
Some of the time	16	36.4		22	45.8	17	36.2	
Hardly ever	4	9.1		5	10.4	6	12.8	
Never	4	9.1		5	6.3	3	6.4	
Not sure	0	0		0	0	0	0	
<b>Shop for food with a list</b>								
All of the time	12	27.3		12	25	9	18.8	
Most of the time	19	43.2		18	37.5	25	52.1	
Some of the time	8	18.2		12	25	8	16.7	
Hardly ever	3	6.8		5	10.4	3	6.3	
Never	2	4.5		1	2.1	3	6.3	
Not sure	0	0		0	0	0	0	
<b>Compare prices when shopping</b>								
All of the time	19	44.2		22	45.8	20	42.6	
Most of the time	11	25.6		11	22.9	12	25.5	
Some of the time	6	14.0		11	22.9	9	19.1	
Hardly ever	6	14.0		2	4.2	5	10.6	
Never	1	2.3		2	4.2	1	2.1	
Not sure	0	0		0	0	0	0	

	Pre		Post		Follow-Up	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Wash hands before preparing meals</b>						
All of the time	35	79.5	37	78.7	39	83
Most of the time	5	11.4	7	14.9	8	17
Some of the time	4	9.1	3	6.4	0	0
Hardly ever	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not sure	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Wash fruits or vegetables before eating or preparing</b>						
All of the time	30	69.8	35	72.9	36	75
Most of the time	10	23.3	11	22.9	10	20.8
Some of the time	1	2.3	2	4.2	2	4.2
Hardly ever	1	2.3	0	0	0	0
Never	0	0	0	0	0	0

### Change in Physical Activity Behaviors

	Pre		Post		Follow-Up	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>How often are you physically active for at least 30 minutes, five days a week?</b>						
All of the time	14	32.6	17	35.4	14	29.2
Most of the time	15	34.9	15	31.3	16	33.3
Some of the time	10	23.3	13	27.1	15	31.3
Hardly ever	2	4.7	2	4.2	2	4.2
Never	0	0	0	2.1	1	2.1

### Other findings:

50% of the participants identified BLT as their first exposure to AgriLife Extension. This suggests that the program is reaching new audiences who otherwise might not have the opportunity to benefit from Extension programs.

64.6% of the participants rated the BLT program as “excellent” while 22.2 % rated the program as “very good.”

In addition, 78.7% of the participants reported they were “very likely” to recommend BLT to another person; 14.9% said they were “likely” to recommend the program. In addition, the 87.2% of participants reported they were “very likely” or “likely” to attend another BLT program.

## ***Austin – Fort Bend County Child Care Provider Conferences, 2018*** ***Developed by Dianne Gertson, County Extension Agent – Family and Community Health***

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 16<sup>th</sup> 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.

### **Child Care Provider Conference**

In 2018 , the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service of Austin and Fort Bend Counties conducted **4** child care provider training conferences in Rosenberg for **176** child care providers and directors who provide care for **3,284** children enrolled in **34** child care centers or family day homes. One hundred seventy six participants completed a written evaluation of the conference. A total of **704** clock hours of training were provided to child care professionals seeking to meet state mandated training requirements established by the state of Texas. A variety of topics were offered, “Active Shooter”, “SIDS and Shaken Baby”, “Cleaning with Care and Confidence”, “Recognizing and Responding to PTSD in Children”, “Professionalism A to Z: Childcare Setting”, and “Autism: Solving the Puzzle One Piece at a Time”.

### **Results**

One hundred seventy six participants completed a written evaluation of the conference. Results indicate that child care providers found the trainings to be very beneficial.

	Yes	No
I learned new information	176	
I will use the information learned today	176	
I will use the information now	176	
I will use the information in the future	176	
The training will help me become more effective early childhood educator	175	
The information will help improve the quality of care	176	
Training provided clock hours	173	3
Topics were relevant	176	
Training was cost effective	171	3
Plan to attend trainings hosted by Extension	173	

Moreover, **71%** of providers rated the training “Better” or “Much Better” compared to other trainings they have attended that were not conducted by Extension.



# Making a Difference

## 2018 Fort Bend County Food Safety Program

Developed by Dianne Gertson, Fort Bend County Extension Agent-Family and Community Health

### Relevance

- **1 in 6 become ill from the food they eat**
- **Food borne illness from five pathogens** (Campylobacter, Salmonella, Listeria monocytogenes, E. coli O157:H7, and E. coli non-O157:H7 STEC) cost almost \$7 billion in medical expenses, lost productivity and death
- **All are at risk, but older adults, pregnant women, young children and those with chronic disease or compromised immune systems are at an increased risk**
- 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.
- Interest in home food preservation continues as evidence by increased availability of home food preservation supplies, increase in home food preservation questions fielded by Extension educators and the growing number of websites that feature recipes and information.
- Recommended practices should be followed to keep the food safe and prevent foodborne illness

### Response

- 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.
- A food handler card is now required for all persons working in food service.
- Our two-day certified food manager program, prepares food service workers to sit for a state approved Certified Food Manager exam.
- Collaborated with Fort Bend Environmental Health to market food manager and food handler classes
- Home food preservation classes, 'Salsa and Relish', 'Pickling and Pressure Canning', 'Tomatoes', 'Freezing and Drying' and 'Jams and Jellies' are offered throughout the year.
- Collaborated with Lee County FCH Agent on 7 home food preservation online videos – Peeling and Coring Tomatoes, Handy Tools, Using a Mandolin, Jar Packing, Canning Problems, Jar Filling, and Recipe Sources
- Continue to offer state approved Prometric Certified Professional Food Manager Exam.
- 27 persons completed the food manager program
- 35 persons completed the food handler program
- 38 persons participated in the home food preservation classes

## Results

- Ninety five percent passing rate for Certified Professional Food Manager Exam
- 100% are very likely to practice knowledge and skills learned in Food Manager course
- 57 % change in using a thermometer to check doneness in food after attending the Food Manager Course
- In food handler, overall increase in pre to post test scores of 81.93 to 88.17. 60.07% have had previous food safety training.
- In food handler, handwashing knowledge increased from 96.6% to 100%
- In food handler, knowledge of temperature danger zone increased from 65.5% to 79.3%
- In food handler, knowing when to calibrate thermometer increased from 69% to 82%
- Ninety one percent had a better knowledge of how to safely preserve food after the workshops
- 70% will only use tested recipes from approved sources
- 73% plan to preserve foods at home
- 327 total views of home food preservation online videos
- "I learned difference between when to use pressure can and when to use bath."
- "Follow instructions on recipes – don't add or delete ingredients. What ingredients and why you must use the correct – 2 kinds of preserving canning."
- "The techniques of pressure canning."

## Future Plans

- Offer Food Manager class 4 times in 2019
- Continue to offer Prometric Certified Professional Food Manager Exam
- Offer Food Handler class 6 times in 2019
- Offer Home Food Preservation classes
- Add additional home food preservation videos

## 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.

# Making a Difference

## 2018 Fort Bend County Healthy Food Preparation

### Relevance

*Summary developed by Dianne Gertson, CEA-FCH, Fort Bend County*

- Percentage of food budget spent away from home increased steadily since the 1970's
- Proportion of calories provided by away from home food has increased
- When dining out, there is a tendency to choose foods higher in calories and portions are increasing
- Providing families with healthy recipes is intended to encourage families to eat at home more often and make healthier food choices
- Obesity is a major risk factor for many chronic diseases
- Texas ranks 6<sup>th</sup> among states in childhood obesity (Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Texas)
- More than 60% of children are overweight, obese or very obese (NCBI)
- Obese youth are more likely to have risk factor for cardiovascular disease
- Healthy habits including healthy eating and physical activity can lower risk of becoming obese and developing related diseases

### Response

- Learn to cook quick, nutritious meals to achieve good health and decrease diet related diseases
- What's Cooking weekly recipes to encourage family mealtime with quick, nutritious, cost effect recipes
- Healthy Cooking Schools to teach families and individuals about healthy meal planning and food preparation
- Goals of youth cooking camps are to increase nutrition knowledge, food safety, cooking safety and food preparation techniques
- Lecture, learning activities and hands on cooking concepts can be used to make healthier eating choices and avoid high calorie non nutritive foods and snacks
- Incorporated Path to the Plate into Cooking Programs
- Recipes each day of camp are planned around a theme – Breakfast, Pizza and Dinner

### Results

- 320 in attendance with 171 returned surveys at Dinner Tonight Healthy Cooking School at Fort Bend Vegetable Conference in collaboration with Agriculture and Horticulture Agents. TEEA members, Master

Wellness Volunteers and FCS PAC assisted.

- 80% confident in planning healthy meals after attending Fort Bend Vegetable Conference
- 94% confident in safely preparing recipes demonstrated during Fort Bend Vegetable Conference
- 32 people attended 3 Healthy Cooking Classes held at Mamie George Community Center. Executive Director and Membership Coordinator assisted with marketing, registration and facilities.
- New Year Healthy Cooking and Teen Cooking programs were presented at various Fort Bend County Libraries with a total of 39 in attendance. Library program coordinators assisted with marketing, registration, food preparation and facilities
- 24 youth participated in Pantry 2 Plate and Teen Chef Camps. TEEA members, Extension Office Personal and teens - 4-H members and non members served as group leaders.
- Overall, pre test scores to post test scores increased from 49% to 76%
- Knowledge increased in the area of MyPlate, handwashing and parts of the plant
- Co-facilitated What's Cooking for Southern Region Agents
- Approximately 2500 receive weekly What's Cooking Recipe via email distribution or FBC FYI

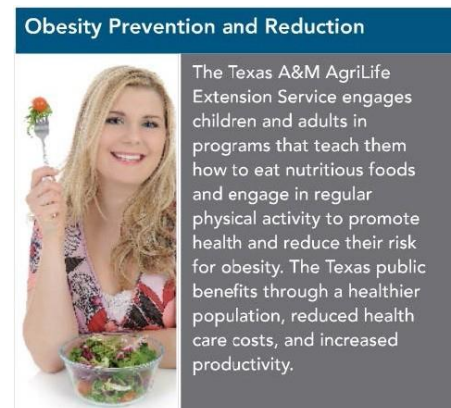
### **Cooking Camp Quotes**

- "I liked it when we got into groups and started learning how to cook the food, our lesson every morning and tasting our food."
- "I liked how we got to learn some parts of plants we eat and then go and use them to make food."
- "I enjoyed when each of us got to do a part to help our group make food."

### **Future Plans**

- Offer Instant Pot cooking programs.
- Continue collaboration with Fort Bend County Libraries and Mamie George Community Center to offer cooking programs
- Continue Youth Cooking Camps with learning activities to challenge campers
- Promote weekly What's Cooking recipes

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# Making a Difference

## 2018 Fort Bend County Health and Wellness

Developed by Dianne Gertson, Fort Bend County Extension Agent-FCH

### Relevance:

- Primary determinants of health are lifestyle, environment and genetics
- 9.7 percent (1.7 million) of Texans 18 years and older have a diagnosis of diabetes; another 425,157 are believed to have undiagnosed diabetes. In Fort Bend County, 8.8 percent of the population has been diagnosed with diabetes.
- Health care costs now average \$11,744 per person with diabetes, for an annual total cost of \$174 billion in the U.S. - \$116 billion for health care and \$58 billion in lost productivity.
- Currently, only 7 percent of people with diabetes are at recommended levels for blood glucose, blood pressure, and blood cholesterol.
- 80% of older adults complain about memory problems, but only 15% report them to their health professional
- Biological and psychological factors may affect memory. Hearing and vision loss and medical conditions may affect the mind.
- 33.7% of Texas adults are obese

### Response:

- Skills needed to effectively manage diabetes are well documented.
- Burdens of diabetes mismanagement are disproportionately borne by those with little or no insurance coverage, lower literacy, poor or no English skills, lower educational and income levels, and poor access to transportation.
- Extension health professionals developed *Do Well, Be Well with Diabetes*, *Cooking Well with Diabetes*, *Do Well Be Well with Hypertension* and *Master of Memory* class series of self-care and health-related topics delivered in multiple sessions.
- A *Do Well, Be Well with Diabetes* series was taught Mamie George Community Center, The Pinnacle Senior Center and UT Physicians in Rosenberg. People can improve their memory with training and practice
- Master of Memory is a 6 lesson series focusing on strategies and tools to improve memory and was taught at Mamie George Community Center and The Pinnacle Senior Center.

### Results:


- 43 persons attended DWBW; some to support family members and some for personal reasons. Coalition members assisted with marketing, registration, data collection, supply procurement and facilities.
- 39 persons met the criteria of attended all DWBW sessions and submitting all forms



- 32% of those attending DWBW had never attended a diabetes class indicating a critical need for classes
- After attending the DWBW series, 5.59 (mean days) can follow healthful eating plan. Increased from 4.12, showing a statistical significance of .003
- At the completion of DWBW, 70% reported their ability to control diabetes as good or better
- The total economic impact of DWBW is \$1,022,497
- 17 persons attended CWWD. Coalition members assisted with marketing, registration, data collection and facilities.
- An increase 21.4% use Nutrition Facts when planning meals after attending the class
- An increase of 16.7% use MyPlate when planning meals after attending the class
- 37 people attended the second annual diabetes conference in collaboration with Oak Bend Medical Center, Mamie George Community Center, UT Physicians and Access Health. Topics included Diabetes 101 (physician), Living Positively with Diabetes (Extension Specialist) Exercise (Area Agency on Aging\_ and recipe demonstrations (FCH Agent). Coalition members assisted in planning, marketing, identifying speakers and presenting conference.
- Nearly 100% of Diabetes Conference evaluations rated Good or Excellent in knowledge gained, usefulness and quality of presentation for all speakers
- 30 persons attended Master of Memory at Mamie George Community Center and The Pinnacle Senior Center. Executive Director and site managers assisted with marketing, registration and facilities for series
- After Master of Memory, 86% to 76% agreed that Memory loss may be a normal part of growing older
- After Master of Memory, 76% to 83% agreed that Hearing loss may negatively affect my memory
- The majority of those attending Master of Memory plan to use the information learned during the series

#### Future Plans:

- Offer DWBW and Cooking Well with Diabetes at several Fort Bend County Locations in collaboration with Coalition
- Work with collaborators to present 3rd Annual Diabetes Conference
- Offer Master of Memory at multiple Fort Bend County locations
- Add Do Well Be Well with Hypertension, Cooking Well with High Blood Pressure and Coping 2 Control to health related class offerings at multiple locations in Fort Bend County

V A L U E	
Do Well, Be Well with Diabetes	
	<p>This diabetes education program teaches participants about lifestyle changes and disease self-management, enabling them to improve their quality of life and lower their health-care costs close to the non-diabetes level. These reduced health-care costs are key to the program's public value.</p>

# Making a Difference

## 2018 Fort Bend County Texas Extension Education Association of Fort Bend

### Developed by Dianne Gertson, Fort Bend County Extension Agent-Family and Community Health

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.

Texas Extension Education Association of Fort Bend is comprised of 4 clubs with a total of 39 members. The four clubs meet on a regular basis to conduct business and have educational programs. Educational programs hosted by TEEA included: "Nutrition:", "Cooking with Herbs", "Campfire Cooking" and "Cutting Plants". Educational tours to the George Ranch, Galveston and Bird Watching were organized. At their annual meeting, they were trained to teach the lessons: "A Good Nights Rest is Best", "Who Do You Think You are?", and "Hearing Loss".

In addition to the educational programming, they provide community service throughout the county. They provided 4-H Leadership Lab scholarships. In addition to the monetary donations, members donate baby items to Activities Supporting Adolescent Parents (ASAP) at Lamar CISD and Ronald McDonald House. Members also make baby blankets to be given away at LBJ Hospital. This year EEA OF Fort Bend made 94 Texas potholders to be given away by TEAFCS at the NEAFCS Annual Session. Each potholder was valued at \$10.

They contributed over 1000 hours of volunteer service valued at \$24.14per hour (\$24,140.00) to educational programming and community service. Members are big supporters of the 4-H program and several volunteer throughout the year to help with projects.

TEEA officers and council delegates attend seven council meetings a year, a fall District Officer Training and a District Spring Conference that was held in Brazoria County this year. EEA of Fort Bend is hosting the 2018 Fall Training.

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.

## Making a Difference

**Plan Name:** 2018 Fort Bend County Child Passenger Safety/ Booster Seat Campaign  
**Developer:** Leticia Rolland-Hardy, Fort Bend County Extension Agent- FCS

**Relevance:**

Motor vehicle crashes are the number one cause of death among children ages 1 to 19. Children ages 2 to 5 who use safety belts prematurely are four times more likely to suffer a serious head injury in a crash than those in child safety seats or booster seats. Statistics show that less than half of Texas children are using booster seats.

**Response:**

One of the greatest achievements in child injury prevention has been in child passenger safety. The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Fort Bend County, in conjunction with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Passenger Safety in cooperation with Safe Riders, operated a child restraint fitting/inspection station at the Fort Bend County Extension Office. During this event, child passenger safety technicians and volunteers taught families how to transport children safely and correctly. They also helped to make sure everyone in the vehicles were buckled up properly. The Booster Seat Campaign was also conducted as a culminating activity.

**Results:**

Listed below are the results of the 2018 Fort Bend County Child Passenger Safety Program/ Booster Seat Campaign.

- 716 contacts were reached
- 45 new child safety seats were installed
- 46% of the children arrived correctly restrained in a seat belt
- 9 old/unsafe seats were collected and destroyed
- 54 inspections were conducted
- 100% of the children arrived unrestrained or incorrectly riding in a seat belt

**Value Statement:**

Medical costs, avoidance of lost future earnings, and improved quality of life. These economic benefits are an estimated \$1,988 per child age 0 to 4 and \$2,347 per child age 4 to 7 for new seats distributed, and \$558 per child for seat misuse corrected with an assumed 75% continued use. Based on this formula, the total economic impact for the 45 inspections conducted during the 2017 program year is \$43,842.25.

**Funding Sources:** Safe Riders, TXDOT

## Making a Difference

**Plan Name: 2018 Financial Management Program**

**Developer: Leticia Rolland-Hardy, Fort Bend County Extension Agent- FCS**

### **Relevance:**

Consumers awareness of the need for financial literacy education has increased, particularly in the areas of budgeting, saving and cutting back spending. Recent studies indicate that people of all ages, incomes, and education levels lack basic financial knowledge and skills to ensure long-term financial stability for themselves and their families. Results of the FINRA Financial Capability Study indicate that 19% of Texans participating in the study reported spending more than their income; 30% reported having past due medical bills; 57% lack an emergency fund that would cover up to 3 months of expenses; and 39% reported using a non-bank lending product (e.g. payday loans) in the past 5 years. The Corporation for Enterprise Development reports almost 51% of Texans do not have a savings account; 20% of Texans have zero net worth; Texans have the lowest credit scores in the nation; and Texas ranks 44th in the rate of homeownership.

### **Response:**

The Fort Bend County Financial Management Program conducted at the Pregnancy Resource Center, Ft. Bend County Extension Office, University Branch Library, and throughout Fort Bend County. The participants each gained knowledge about better managing their finances. The goal of the program is to help adults with low financial knowledge and skills to increase their financial knowledge, develop financial confidence, use banking services effectively and plan to increase adoption of recommended financial management practices. The Financial program was successfully conducted by using the Money Smart curriculum. The Money Smart curriculum consists of 10 1-2 hour modules. Module titles are Money Matters, Bank On It, Borrowing Basics, To Your Credit, Charge It Right, Check It Out, Pay Yourself First, Keep It Safe, Loan to Own, and Your Own Home.

### **Results:**

As a result of this program 65 contacts were reached through educational workshops, brochures, flyers, and volunteers. This evaluation analysis will capture the participants' knowledge of financial literacy information retained. (70%) of the participants showed an increase in their understanding of what credit is and its importance. Participants showed a (78%) increase in their learning about using a credit card responsibly and choosing the proper credit card. Participants showed a (67%) increase in knowledge gain about the two types of deposit accounts.

The estimated cost analysis and public value for the Parenting Connections Program is \$2,275.00.

### **Future Plans:**

The program will continued to be offered in 2019. The plan will focus more on senior aged adults and teens.

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## Making a Difference

**Plan Name:** 2018 Parenting Connections Program

**Developer:** Leticia Rolland-Hardy, Fort Bend County Extension Agent- FCS

**Relevance:**

Research shows that parenting styles directly impacts a child's behavior. There is ample evidence to support the correlation between parenting style and children's behavioral problems. The family is a socio-cultural-economic arrangement that exerts significant influence on a child's behavior and the development of their characters (Baumrind, 1991). Any ignorance on the part of parents may lead to unwanted damaging effects on children's growth and thereafter may create misbehavior problems in children. The pattern of parenting style is utilized to get normal variations in parents' endeavor in order to control and socialize their children (Baumrind, 1991).

**Response:**

The Parenting Connections Series was conducted at the Ft. Bend County Extension Office and Fort Bend Independent School District and various areas throughout the county. The participants each received a total of 4 clock hours of parenting education and training. Participants engaged in this program had the opportunity to learn about Child Growth and Development, Effective Communication, Positive Discipline, Self Esteem. The participants learned about the basic principles of child development. They also learned that about the domains of development. This program was designed to provide parents with an idea of what tends to happen in a child's life within a particular age range, as well as, the components of communication, to increase awareness of the developmental factors that influence a child's ability to communicate, to explore factors that promote healthy parent-child communication, and how to learn how to avoid common communication roadblocks. The Parenting Connections Program helped parents gain valuable information that would help them to be able to communicate with their children in a more effective manner. The program helped parents learn to increase awareness of the reasons for disciplining children, to learn about the strengths and weaknesses of various disciplinary styles, and to explore strategies for setting and enforcing healthy limits through the lesson on Positive Discipline.

**Results:**

As a result of this program 356 individual contacts were reached through educational workshops, brochures, flyers, and volunteers. This evaluation analysis will capture the participants' knowledge of parenting information retained. (100%) stated that they felt that the information they received would help them be a better parent. (100%) had a better understanding of what to expect from their child at a certain age. (99%) said that now have a better idea of what they can do as a parent to build a healthy environment for their children. The estimated cost analysis and public value for the Parenting Connections Program is \$51,110.92.

**Future Plans:**

The program will continued to be offered to parents in 2019.

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## Making a Difference

**Plan Name: 2018 Fort Bend County FCS 4-H Plan**

**Developer: Leticia Rolland-Hardy, Fort Bend County Extension Agent- FCH**

### **RELEVANCE-Background:**

High quality youth programs such as 4-H help to generate positive outcomes for youth including improved academic performance, social skills, classroom behavior improvement, and self-love and as well as, improvement in general health and nutrition. Communities and businesses also benefit when youth have safe and productive ways to spend their time learning new skills. A primary program area for FCS agents is health and nutrition. There are numerous in-depth and outreach programs available for implementation at the county level. However, there is a limit to the programming one person can implement. Volunteers can contribute greatly to the FCS program and can extend education further into the community. A group of trained volunteers who also serve as advocates for Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service can substantially increase the scope and impact of the FCS program.

### **RESPONSE- Educational Methods:**

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service collaborated with the Fort Bend County 4-H Department and local community businesses, and parents in conducting the Fort Bend County FCS 4-H Plan. Programs that fall under the Fort Bend County FCS 4-H Plan were conducted at the Fort Bend County Extension Office. These projects allow fashion week students and 4-H members to explore the academic disciplines of Family & Consumer Sciences as it relates to Fashion, Art, and Beauty and helps them gain valuable skills and knowledge that can be applied to daily life. Our mission is to inspire fashion creativity among like-minded students who learn from each other, explore their interest, and make new friends. Our goals are to share, explore, and expand ideas about the fashion industry, beauty industry, and art industry as it relates to fashion through field trips, fundraisers, workshops, competitions, and events. We hope that student involvement in the F.A.B. Club will be a positive step in creating lasting change for both our members and our community.

The objectives of the F.A.B Club are:

1. Learn responsibility, teamwork, and set and achieve goals
2. Plan and execute fundraisers
3. Learn about the different aspects of Fashion, Art, and Beauty
4. Learn the basics of sewing, craft making, and product creation.
5. Learn about different careers in the fashion, art, and beauty industry.
6. To develop the ability to speak and act in front of an audience
7. Prepare an educational presentation
8. Increase poise, self-assurance, and confidence
9. Travel to other destinations and have a good time experiencing other parts of the U.S.
10. Learn about the places we will visit before the trip.

### **RESULTS- Evaluation:**

As a result of this event 9 students were enrolled in the Fashion Art and Beauty Program.

### **FUTURE PLANS:**

The program will continue in to 2019 with minor program adjustments.

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## Making a Difference

**Plan Name: 2018 Fort Bend County Texercise Program**

**Developer: Leticia Rolland-Hardy, Fort Bend County Extension Agent- FCS**

### **RELEVANCE-Background:**

As senior citizens age, balance, strength, stamina and overall health can diminish. However, exercise can be a safeguard, keeping the body strong, reducing hypertension, keeping off dangerous midsection weight and even protecting the brain by improving memory and clarity. Preventable illnesses make up approximately 80 percent of the burden of illness and 90 percent of all U.S. health care costs. Cardiovascular diseases are among the 10 most frequent causes of hospitalization of people 45 years and older in Texas. More than 1 million Texans have been diagnosed with diabetes and another 0.5 million are believed to have undiagnosed diabetes.

### **RESPONSE- Educational Methods:**

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service collaborated with the Mamie George Senior Community Center in Fort Bend County in conducting the Texercise Program. The Texercise Program was conducted at the Bud O'shieles Community Senior Center. The Texercise program is a 6 to 8 week fitness and educational program. This program provides regular physical activity and helps to reduce the risk and minimize the impact of disease. The Texercise program helps participants get on track to a fit and healthier life by sharing nutrition information and sponsoring health and fitness activities throughout the county. The program promotes healthy muscles, bones and joints, improves flexibility, improves balance and coordination, increases stamina, and reduces the cost of medical care. The goals of this program was to provide adults with relevant nutrition education and access to available food resources, increase consumption of vegetables and fruits, and engage in regular physical fitness activities. This program helped enhance fitness by making it fun and competitive at the same time. Additionally, participants become aware of diet related diseases.

### **RESULTS- Evaluation:**

As a result of this event 164 contacts were reached through educational workshops, brochures, flyers, and volunteers. This evaluation analysis will capture the participants' knowledge of nutrition education, management of portion sizes, knowledge of reading food labels, food groups, and application of physical activity for healthier lifestyles. Participants completed a self-assessed pre-test prior to the first class, and a post-test after the last session. The evaluation summary is as follows: self-assessed sample Pre-test taken (50%) were overweight, out of the post-tests taken, (60% ) said that they did some form of physical activity daily. The post-tests revealed that (70%) improved flexibility, (80%) were able to identify food groups. Over (100%) reported that they were more mobile as a result of the class, (90%) reported that they would continue exercising after the program. (90%) reported that they would make an effort to eat healthy and exercise daily. The estimated cost analysis and public value for the Texercise program is \$7,380.

### **FUTURE PLANS:**

Previous program implementation results have shown that the length of time the program is implemented effects the program evaluation results tremendously. Therefore, in the future the program time will be extended from the 8 week cycle to the 12 weeks cycle. This should show a dramatic improvement in the participant results.

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## Making a Difference

**Plan Name:** 2018 Fort Bend County Health & Wellness: Walk Across Texas Program

**Developer:** Leticia Rolland-Hardy, Fort Bend County Extension Agent- FCS

### **Relevance:**

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, more than one-third (34.9% or 78.6 million) of U.S. adults are obese. Obesity related conditions include heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and certain types of cancer, some of the leading causes of preventable death. Preventable illnesses make up approximately 80 percent of the burden of illness and 90 percent of all U.S. health care costs. Alarming, 25.8 percent of the Fort Bend County population is overweight. According to the data and conditions associated with obesity, these statistics are cause for great concern in the Fort Bend County community. If the problem is not addressed, one third of all children born in 2000 or later will suffer from diabetes at some point in their lives. Whereas others will face chronic obesity-related health problems like heart disease, high blood pressure, cancer, and asthma.

### **Response:**

The Walk Across Texas Program was conducted among Fort Bend County Employees as a County Wellness Initiative. Walk Across Texas is an eight-week program designed 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 and was designed to help encourage regular physical activity during and after the program. For eight weeks, teams of eight people, school classes, or individuals walk 830 miles across a designated map of Texas.

### **Results:**

As a result of the program 96 participants enrolled in the Walk Across Texas Program for a combined total of 12 teams. Through their 8 weeks of physical fitness; the participants collectively walked a total of 22769.39 miles. Community-wide programs like Walk Across Texas have been strongly associated with significant increases in physical activity. With regular physical activity, 50% of people with pre-diabetes were able to temporarily or permanently delay the onset of type 2 diabetes. Participants significantly increased confidence in their ability to adhere to exercise over time. As a result many participants continue to walk in groups out of habit. At 8 weeks, participants stated and demonstrated ability to be more mobile as more miles were walked weekly in an attempt to ensure their goals.

### **Value Statement:**

The estimated annual medical cost of obesity in the U.S. was \$147 billion in 2008 U.S. dollars; the medical costs for people who are obese were \$1,429 higher than those of normal weight. Chronic diseases account for 70% of deaths and 75% of U.S. health-care costs each year.

**Future Plans:** Plans are underway to expand the WAT program.

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# Making a Difference

**Plan Name or Title:** 2018 Fort Bend County CEP Child Obesity

**By Line:** Developed by Courtney Bryant, Fort Bend County Extension Agent – Prairie View A & M University Cooperative Extension

**Relevance:** Childhood obesity is a major risk factor for many individuals in Fort Bend County. According to research nutrition throughout within the initial years of a child's life provides the essential building blocks for brain development, healthy growth and a robust system. In fact, a growing body of scientific proof shows that the foundations of a person's long health—including their predisposition chronic diseases—are for the most part set throughout this one, 1000 day window. It is why it's vital that girls and youngsters get the correct nutrition throughout this point. Deficiency disease early in life will cause irreversible injury to children's brain development and their physical growth, resulting in a diminished capability to find out, poorer performance at school, larger condition to infection and illness and a lifespan of lost earning potential. It will even place them at augmented risk of developing diseases like cardiopathy, polygenic disease and sure styles of cancers later in life. Many limited resource families and neighborhood lack grocery stores or access to healthy foods and children living in dense urban areas also lack access to safe, green spaces and parks that would encourage physical activity. Childhood obesity continues to affect families in many ways including the financial liability it imposes. It is also a concern for Fort Bend County with its increasing rate of 28% of residents reporting a child who is obese or at risk for obesity.

**Response:** Research has shown that the implementation of physical activities and programs that promote healthy living produce positive outcomes for not for just children, but their mothers and prenatal mothers can help prevent such issues. This year the Today's Mom was implemented to target the described issues.

- Today's Mom is a six-week program designed for expectant mothers to educate themselves on the importance of good nutrition during their pregnancy. The program seeks to also enhance and help the mom identify resources to support a healthy pregnancy. Each week for six weeks extension agent provided the expectant moms with tools surrounding breastfeeding, nutrition dense foods, and a journal to help track their eating and its influence on the development of their child. The objective of this program was to promote healthy eating and physical activity.
- The childhood obesity initiative was further carried out during the Jackson Elementary afterschool program, You Can Academy. This afterschool program supports the community garden located at Attack Poverty. During the afterschool program the children learn activities from the Learn Grow Eat Go curriculum as a means to enhance and expose themselves to the aspects of gardening. The objectives of the Learn Grow Eat Go program are to improve physical activity and healthy eating behaviors among children. Some of the

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activities include learning about the garden, variety of vegetables, seasons to grow, sensory skills, preparing recipes, and application in live settings. hat educational activities, events, and/or experiences were delivered to address many of the issues described above.

- Extension agent also partnered with the Fort Bend Hope Center for a Nutrition Camp this past summer. The nutrition camp targeted youth and addressed topics of eating healthy options video which explained healthy fruits and vegetables. Extension agent also brought Nutrition Smart Wheel to further explain food groups. Children were also able to win prizes and learn more about how to make a healthy plate from their choices.
- Extension agent presented at the annual Ag'tivity Barn which serviced over 800 students at Title I schools explore and learn topics related to gardening, vegetables, food groups, and physical activity. Ag'Tivity Barn lasts for a week, Monday-Friday, from 9am-12pm, where schools are rotated through groups to experience educational activities from various extension agents. Extension agent provided presentation and participated in experiential activities that help children identify various vegetables.

Location	Curriculum	Number of Contacts
Pregnancy Resource Center	Today's Mom (prenatal nutrition)	17
Fort Bend Hope Nutrition Camp	Healthy Living Options/Smart Wheel	15
You Can Academy	Learn Grow Eat Go	15
Ag'Tivity Barn	Rainbow Wheel	823
Total		870

### Results:

- As a result of the Today's Mom curriculum over ten families including expectant mothers were taught the importance of knife safety and various kitchen safe practices. The ten families were also taught recipes that they could add to their daily lifestyles. This program was not evaluated due to a lack of participation.
- This year a Learn Grow Eat Go workshop was conducted with the youth at Jackson Elementary, You Can Academy afterschool program. As a result, students have continued in the development of their community-based garden.
- The Fort Bend Hope Nutrition Camp helped 15 youth better understand healthy eating option and become aware of various food groups.
- As a result of the Ag'Tivity Barn at least 800 students from limited resource backgrounds were able to take part in a week-long
- activity of learning about agriculture, sustainability, physical activity, and healthy eating options.

**Future Plans:** Plans are to continue these programs for the year 2019. However, many participants in the pregnancy resource school reported that they would like to have more food demonstrations and make them the primary focus of the class. As a result, the Nutrition Committee was developed by the partnership between Extension agent and the Sub-Nutrition Committee of Fort Bend (SHAC) to implement more programs dedicated towards child obesity.

- I would like to give a special thank you to the Fort Bend County Rotary club for funding the Friends of North Rosenberg-Attack Poverty and also the Pregnancy Resource Center which has continued to provide support to Prairie View A&M Fort Bend County Extension programs and endeavors. I would also like to thank the Fort Bend County Child Nutrition Committee of Fort



Bend for their support in and partnership to better the lives of the members within their community.

## VALUE

### 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.

# Making a Difference

**Plan Name or Title:** 2018 Fort Bend County Financial Literacy Series

**By Line:** Developed by Courtney Bryant, Fort Bend County Extension Agent – Cooperative Extension Program

**Relevance:** The current unsteady economic conditions will increase the requirement and heightens the awareness for continuing financial education. Low-income is outlined as a family financial gain below 2 hundredth of impoverishment. Statistics dating from 2012 show that 38.1% of the American state families were low financial gain operating families, 48.9% were low-income minority operating families and 42 percent were low-income operating families with no high school degree/GED. Steady rates of state, foreclosures, and credit delinquencies have contributed to redoubled interest among customers in budgeting, saving and managing spending. Studies indicate that folks of all ages, incomes, and education levels lack the essential monetary information and skills to confirm long stability for themselves and their families. Taking management of one's finances could be a crucial step in serving folks to move towards an additional stable future. All people, whether living in rural or urban communities, are confronted with varied problems which will and can influence their monetary stability. Handling cash is hard, particularly once there are few assets to travel around. Empowering these people with restricted means that by giving them the formation they must create monetary capability is essential.

**Response:** To address the issues of financial literacy several workshops were implemented throughout the county that focused on bettering the lives of Fort Bend County residents. Extension agent promoted four curriculums this year to promote financial education and awareness through mass and social media. As a result, this year the Fort Bend County Extension was able to establish a network of partnerships with Lamar Consolidated High School, University Branch Library, George Memorial Library, and the city of Kendleton, TX. Through these partnerships extension agent was able to conduct a variety of programs, workshops, and presentations from the Real World Financial Curriculum, Marriage Survival Curriculum, 50 Financial Literacy Lessons, and the Homebuyers Workshop to the residents of Fort Bend County. These series of workshops addressed several of the factors found to have an influential impact on a person's financial security. Workshops address the topics of spending, investing, career readiness, and how to communicate about finances within a relationship. The financial literacy curriculums, Marriage Survival, and the National Education Financial Education, and Personal Finance Activities Booklet were used as educational resources. These resources included several presentations and handouts to help educate participants on how to set financial goals and create a management plan for their money.

**Results:** For each workshop, an evaluation and interpretation were conducted to assess customer satisfaction, knowledge, and or willingness to adopt practices. A total of 227 participants were

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reached for the year 2018. Reports from the Lamar Consolidated High School showed that 90 percent of the students who attended the workshop felt that financial literacy was important, 85% of the students reported that they were interested in saving and investing, and 90% reported that they found the presentation useful and of value to their financial future. Results from the Kendleton Career Readiness Fair showed that 98% of attendees reported that they found the information presented useful and they would utilize and or share this information in their personal lives. Because of the Marriage and Finance Presentation results indicated that 90% of the participants felt the series help them to communicate more effectively with their partners about money. Participants also showed and increased knowledge of creating budgets together with their families. Participants also showed an increase knowledge in understanding their partner's personality style and financial infidelity. and that more educational presentations would be valuable to students such as themselves. A total of 5 participants attended the Homebuyer's workshop this year. As a result, 98% were able to learn the strategies, tips, and save participants over \$10,000 by introducing them and exposing them to down payment assistance programs.


Location	Number of Contacts
Kendleton Career Readiness	20
Lamar Consolidated High School	204
Marriage and Finances Presentation	3
HomeBuyers Workshop	5

**Future Plans:** As a result of the feedback obtained from participants the Financial Literacy series will return in the year 2019. Future plans would also incorporate more social service agencies and local businesses to participate in the presentation of the information.

- I would like to give a special thank you to Lamar Consolidated High School, Unlimited Heritage Fort Bend County Museum members, Fort Bend County Libraries (George Memorial Branch). Through their work with the community, many first time Fort Bend County residents and youth were educated on financial choices and lifestyles.

**VALUE**

**Financial Literacy**



Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service financial literacy programs provide adults and youth with basic financial education and resources to help them set and reach financial goals and plan for the future. When Texans make better financial decisions and implement recommended financial management practices, they increase their ability to achieve financial security.

# Making a Difference

**Plan Name or Title:** 2018 Fort Bend County Health & Wellness Series

**By Line:** Developed by Courtney Bryant, Fort Bend County Extension Agent – Cooperative Extension Program

**Relevance:** The government agency reports that falls will have a devastating impact on the health and independence of individuals as they age. Research also shows that one out of four older adults fall once a year and 95% of hip fractures are caused by a fall. Reasons for falling could vary, however several factors that increase your risk of falling like poor leg strength, problem walking, and poor endurance are often improved through Tai Chi.

Tai Chi has been gaining quality as evidence shows it to be one of the most effective and adaptable choices for the public. This makes it a perfect intervention for many clinics and community organizations. Tai Chi is also helpful for inflammatory disease and was developed to specifically address the pain and poor quality related to inflammatory disease. Tai Chi furthers improve stability and balance.

## What is Tai Chi?

Tai Chi is a graceful form of exercise that involves a series of movements, known as forms, which are performed in a slow, focused manner combined with controlled breathing. It is a low impact exercise that puts minimal stress on muscles and joints, making it suitable for many older adults. Tai Chi does not require special equipment and can be practiced indoors or outdoors, either alone or in a group. Tai Chi has been shown to: Improve balance, increase leg strength, reduce fear of falling, improve mobility, increase flexibility, Improve psychological health. For these reasons, Tai Chi is recommended to prevent falls among older adults. It is most beneficial to reduce fall risk when practiced for at least 50 hours cumulatively. Tai Chi has been shown to be most effective within rehabilitative settings where the emphasis is on retraining balance in older adults.

## Response:

To address the issue of fall prevention. Classes were implemented at the Fort Bend County Pinnacle Senior Center for the duration of a year. The class met once every week for six months and then twice a month for another six months. Class sizes were for 12-15 older adults who were introduced to relaxation and exercises with a lowered center of gravity. Extension also conducted the Lock Up Your Meds Outreach Presentations and the Balanced Daily Living Program.

## Results:

- As a result of the Tai Chi for Arthritis Health & Wellness program and campaign over 25 individuals learned 7 forms of Tai Chi. Some of the most significant results is that 95% of older adults reported gaining better mobility, more strength, less stress, and an increased ability to gradually bend their knees. The campaign allowed for many organizations to offer feedback, requests more factsheets regarding healthy living and health. The campaign also sparked interest in the community to host the class in person at several local community organizations.
- The Lock Up Your Meds presentation is an outreach presentation designed to educate and bring awareness to teens prescription drug abuse. It includes topics on the current state of prescription drug abuse among teens, common terminology and or slang used among teens and young adults,

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and the presentation also covers why teens use prescription drug abuse, and how many of these things can be prevented. To address the issue of prescription drug abuse, extension agent, Courtney Bryant, partnered with Pinnacle Senior Center, Brazos Senior Villa Apartments in Fort Bend County, and the Access Health Center to offer the Lock UP Your Meds initiative resource materials and a presentation addressing the issue. During the presentation extension agent also facilitated a discussion on the various statistics concerning prescription drug abuse among children and teens, the underlying reasons behind usage, and a discussion of terminology used among young adults currently. Because of the presentations over 75 individuals attended both presentations and at least 40 made a pledge to continue to regularly make inventory of their medications, safely dispose of any unwanted/expired medications, and to share the message with their family and friends.



According to the results at least 25% of the participants decided to make a pledge to continue to properly inventory, dispose, and share the message of locking up their meds to prevent drug abuse.

- The Balanced Living Program was also presented as Worksite Wellness program to the Fort Bend County Social Services Staff. This program includes topics on how to manage time, stress, moving your body, and feeding your body. The presentation was a day workshop on how to manage time. According to the results 43% of the participant believed that this class has helped them with skills which improve balancing and prioritizing their time. 25% of the participants reported that after taking the class they believed they would be able to simplify an area of their life. Forty percent of the participants reported. Research indicates that worksite wellness can save employers at least 1500\$ per employee.


Location	Curriculum	Number of Contacts
Pinnacle Senior Center	Tai Chi For Arthritis	108
Pinnacle Senior Center	Lock Up Your Meds	75
Access Health Center Richmond	Lock Up Your Meds	25
Brazos Senior Villas	Lock Up Your Meds	20
Fort Bend County Social Services	Balanced Daily Living	16
Total		244

**Future Plans:** As a result of the feedback obtained from participants. The Tai Chi program has been implemented in 2 additional community senior organizations. One location has signed up for the Balanced Daily Living program, and 2 organizations have scheduled for the Lock Up Your Meds Presentation. The campaign will continue into the new year of 2019. It is with high hopes that this program will be hosted throughout Fort Bend County.

- I would like to acknowledge the Pinnacle Senior Center, the Brazos Senior Villas staff, residents, and Access Health of Richmond patrons for use of their facilities, various contributions, and continuous support that helped make this county program such a huge success.

VALUE

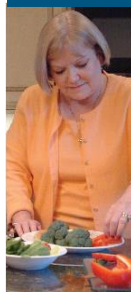
Cancer Prevention



Participants in Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service cancer-prevention programs learn ways to reduce their risk of developing many forms of cancer. When participants adopt behaviors that reduce cancer risks, the public benefits through reduced public health care costs and increased productivity.

VALUE

Do Well, Be Well with Diabetes



This diabetes education program teaches participants about lifestyle changes and disease self-management, enabling them to improve their quality of life and lower their health care costs close to the non-diabetes level. These reduced health care costs are key to the program's public value.

**EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE**  
*Providing Solutions*

# Making a Difference

**Plan Name or Title:** 2018 Fort Bend County Active Parenting Series for Parents

**By Line:** Developed by Courtney Bryant, Prairie View A& M University, Family & Consumer Sciences Extension Agent

**Relevance:** Research has shown that the maturity levels in children and adolescents rises with each generation. Parents are finding their jobs as parents becoming harder as their children grow. The Active Parenting Series allows parents to put the idea of parenting into a broader perspective that even they are able to relate to. Parents are now dealing with issues at every stage their child encounters such as the toddler phase or even as their teens experience adjustments in their hormone levels. It becomes important for parents to identify, plan, and prepare for issues that are bound to arise especially in adolescents- a lack of patience, identity crises, and coming to terms with making decisions for themselves. The Active Parenting Series allows the parents to be a part of this new direction their adolescent is taking and moving it in a positive force. The series helps families learn to facilitate discussions, improve relationships among each other, and create memorable family moments. The curriculum also assists the parents in developing secure, independent, and fulfilling individuals within the communities in which they live. This is important to the community of Fort Bend County because according to data, there are over 178,000 children under the age of 18. Research has shown that family factors such as poor parenting, family conflict, and mixed families can all prove to be an influence on the child's development.

**Response:**

- For this In-Depth Series, a total of 4 parenting education curriculums (Today's Mom, Active Parenting Series: 0-5-year olds, 5-12 year olds, and Teens) were presented throughout Fort Bend County. Each curriculum consists of 6-10-week sessions involving activities that help fostered growth in areas of communication, respect, responsibility, discipline, and a host of many pertinent skills designed to help improve family living. Extension agent implemented programs within the following organizations: Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office, Fort Bend Hope Center, Kendleton Picnic, and the Fort Bend County Pregnancy Resource Center. Parents participated in weekly role play activities and games that helped to stimulate real-world situations with their kids. Parents utilized parent education guides to support their learning from classes.

<i>Location</i>	<i>Curriculum</i>	<i>Number of Contacts</i>
<i>Fort Bend Hope Center</i>	Active Parenting of Teens	15
<i>Pregnancy Resource Center</i>		6

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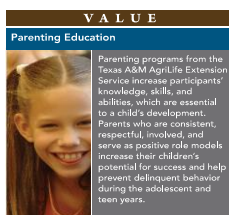
Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office	Active Parenting of 5-12 year olds, Active Parenting 0-5 Year Olds	50
Kendleton Picnic/Outreach Program	Active Parenting of 5-12 year olds	15
Total		86

**Results:** Because of the Parenting Initiative within the Fort Bend County Family and Consumer Sciences, extension was able to help over 100 women within the Fort Bend County area receive parenting education and help mothers to receive parenting certificates and participation letters to assist with their education and court cases. Due to the in-depth parenting education series provided parents were able to grasp many concepts and fears that might have not used before such as discipline and how to effectively carry out amongst their household. At least 90 percent of participants reported their knowledge of parenting has increased and that they feel they could communicate more effectively with their children. Results also showed an increase in knowledge on areas of discipline, adopting new skills to communicate, and managing the stressors associated with parenting. Participants reported that the series gave them the encouragement and motivation to mend relationships with their children and to become more involved in their lives. At least 90% of participants reported gaining knowledge in the different parenting styles, developing mutual respect, and effective communication skills.

#### Future Plans:

- My future plans for this program would be to increase the activities and become more diverse in the delivery of the educational method. One of the limitations to this is that the clientele served were incarcerated and this can sometimes effect the attendance and retention. It also limits the activities that the individuals can partake in. The parenting series have shown great results and adoption of behavior change. The next steps would be to make this into an in-depth pilot program.
- The Active Parenting of 0-5 years of age proved to be a great success. It helped parents to develop a better understanding of how crucial parenting is at its early stages and the impact early childhood has on their children. Future planning would consist of introducing this curriculum into other setting so that other families might have the chance to benefit. This program can also be conducive for in-home parenting programs. In addition, the Parents Task Force within the Family & Consumer Science Program Committee will be able to identify new parenting education curriculums that target and address issues that parents feel are more beneficial to them and their families.

#### Public Value:



\*I would like to acknowledge the staff at the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Department, Pregnancy Resource Center of Fort Bend County, Fort Bend Hope Center, for the use of their facilities and allowing me to help to improve the lives of those that they serve.

**EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE**  
*Providing Solutions*

## *“Making a Difference,” Southeast District 9*

**Plan Name or Title:** 2018 Base FCS-4H Outreach

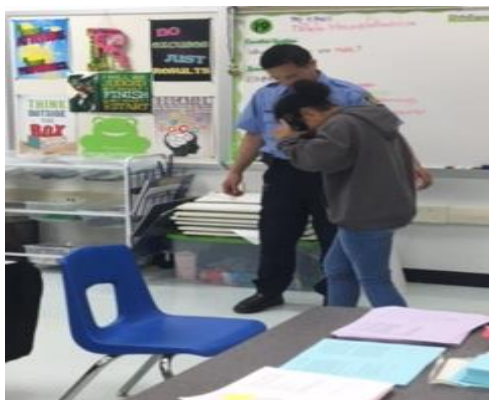
**ByLine:** Developed by Courtney Bryant, Fort Bend County Extension Agent  
- Cooperative Extension Program

**Program/Issue Summary and Response:** This year the extension agent participated in several events that promote 4-H and youth development. Extension agent marketed and promoted through social media and email blasts a call for students and volunteers interested in film. As a result, the 4-H Fort Bend County Production Club was formulated. During the year of 2018 the club gained 12 new members who were interested in participating. This year the club had two planning meetings to discuss the future of the club and future trainings that the 4-H members thought would be beneficial to them. The club is designed to promote and enhance the awareness of children’s education and enrichment activities in the areas of screenwriting, film/tv production, directing, and acting.

**Plan Name or Title:** 2018 Teen Driver Safety Day

**ByLine:** Developed by Courtney Bryant, Fort Bend County Extension Agent  
- Cooperative Extension Program

**Program/Issue Summary and Response:** Since 2016 Texas has ranked in the middle for teen driving fatalities. To address factors related to these safety statistics extension agents, Courtney Bryant, partnered with Texas A&M Agrilife Specialist, Bev Kellner, to present the Distracted Driving Simulator at this year’s Health and Resource Wellness Fair of Fort Bend hosted by Willowridge High School. Extension agent was able to spend six hours with over 300 students, parents, and teachers illustrating the importance of distracted driving and its effects on teens. With the help of the Harris County Fire Department participants were also able to experience the simulation of distracted driving and driving while under the influence using the DUI simulator goggles.



**Results:** According to the results at least 90% of the participants reported they found it difficult to drive while experiencing distractions. At least 15% of the participants reported that they have experienced one and or multiple of the following distractions while driving: eating, radio, fellow passengers, make up, and other vehicles. Teens also reported that this presentation was beneficial to the decisions they would make in the future when they decided to operate a vehicle.

➤ I would like to acknowledge Bev Kellner and her team, Willowridge High School and Staff for the

use of their facilities and volunteers who allowed extension the opportunity to help improve the lives of those that they serve.

**Plan Name or Title:** 2018 Base FCS-4H Outreach, Chopstick Etiquette

**ByLine:** Developed by Courtney Bryant, Fort Bend County Extension Agent  
- Cooperative Extension Program

**Program/Issue Summary and Response:** This year the extension agent partnered with the Sugarland United Methodist Church on youth development. The focus this year was on etiquette and extension agent was invited to present on chopstick etiquette as an additional to diversity and awareness. Program was marketed to parents of children who attend Sugarland Methodist Youth Recreation Center. Extension agent used the Manners of the Real-World Curriculum to present chopstick etiquette. The topics discussed included countries that use chopsticks, chopstick etiquette, and the basics of how to use chopsticks. As a result, over 50 children learned to use chopsticks and gained additional knowledge of their history and use. 100% of the children reported that they enjoyed the activity and requested additional activities similar to its nature. Extension agent will be presenting additional etiquette topics in the future.

**Plan Name or Title:** 2018 Base FCS-4H Outreach, Chopstick Etiquette

**ByLine:** Developed by Courtney Bryant, Fort Bend County Extension Agent  
- Cooperative Extension Program

**Program/Issue Summary and Response:** This year the extension agent partnered with the Fort Bend Hope Center, a volunteer and afterschool program facility targeting Fort Bend County youth and residents. Extension agent conducted a Mentor Workshop designed to help those mentoring and tutoring kids in the Fort Bend County area. Topics of the presentation included the distinguishing factors between tutoring and mentoring, how to work with children with behavior problems, interactive games, the objectives for tutors and mentors, and experiential learning activities for those tutoring children in fourth grade math. As a result at least 10 volunteers were able to gain additional knowledge and skills on how to address issues within their afterschool programming that would make their time spent together more effective and efficient. According to the reports, 95% of the participants reported that the presentation was helpful. 95% also reported that they would utilize the skills presented in the session and would like to have more educational presentations related to this issue.

Location	Number of Contacts
Fort Bend Reel Production Club	12
Willowridge Health and Wellness Fair	300
Sugarland United Methodist Etiquette Call	60
Fort Bend Hope Center	6
School Health Advisory Council	12
<b>Total</b>	390

- I would like to acknowledge Bev Kellner and her team, Willowridge High School and Staff, Sugarland United Methodist Church, and the Fort Bend Hope Center for the use of their facilities and volunteers who allowed extension the opportunity to help improve the lives of those that they serve.

# Making a Difference

## 2018 Let's Go - Let's Grow 4-H in Fort Bend County

Developed by: Justin R. Saenz, Count Extension Agent – 4-H & Youth Development  
Supported by: Angela Romans, County Extension Agent – 4-H & Urban Development  
Supported by: Amber J. Foster, County Agent – 4-H & Youth Development

### RELEVANCE

4-H is a youth development program that began over 100 years ago. The goal of 4-H is to “grow” and promote confident, capable, and caring kids with the life skills to thrive in today's world and succeed in their boldest dreams for tomorrow. 4-H programs are research-backed and offer life-changing experiences to youth in Fort Bend, in Texas, and around the world. 4-H is the youth development program of our nation's Cooperative Extension System and USDA.

4-H is the youth development program of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service that focuses on the needs, concerns & interests of youth. Its aim is to help youth gain a positive self-concept, rational social behavior, knowledge, and problem-solving capabilities through planned individual projects, meetings, group activities and participation in different events. Members develop new skills, learn cooperation, develop leadership abilities, improve their citizenship, and have fun.

### RESPONSE

Fort Bend County agents work diligently to oversee the 4-H and youth development program including management of 4-H clubs/groups as a whole, 4-H members, club managers, volunteer leaders, coordination of Youth Board/Council, and work with partners & collaborators to ensure effective functioning of the 4-H and youth development program.

The many facets of the Fort Bend County 4-H program include:

4-H Organization		
523 4-H Members	90 Adult Volunteers	32 4-H Clubs
County contests – Roundup with 201 entries		
Fashion Show – 4	Photography – 103	Consumer Decision Making – 8
Fashion Story Board – 14	Share-The-Fun – 2	Vet Science Skill-a-thon – 5
Food Show – 10	Educational Presentation – 7	Recordbooks – 29

*The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife.*

Food Challenge – 16		Duds to Dazzle – 3
<b>District contests - Roundup with 103 entries</b>		
Vet Science Skill-a-thon – 2	Robotics Challenge – 0	Rifle & Air Rifle – 11
Fashion Story Board – 10	Educational Presentation – 6	Duds to Dazzle - 0
Food Show – 3	Swine Quiz Bowl – 16	Consumer Decision Making – 3
Ag Product ID – 3	Horse Judging – 5	Recordbooks – 17
Photography – 10	Livestock Judging - 4	Share-The-Fun – 2
Indoor Archery Contest – 4	Food Challenge Team - 3	Fashion Show - 4
<b>State contests – Texas 4-H Round up 45 entries</b>		
Share The Fun – 1	Educational Presentation – 21	Vet Science Skill-a-thon – 2
Swine Quiz Bowl – 8	Recordbook – 2	Indoor Archery – 11
Livestock Judging – 1	Vet Science Camp – 3	State Shooting Sports - 7
<b>County Project Validations - 180</b>		
Dogs – 7	Horses – 2	Goats – 39
Lambs – 30	Heifers – 51	Steers – 51
<b>Major Shows – 125 entries</b>		
Fort Worth – 5	San Antonio – 50	San Angelo – 1
Houston – 53	Austin – 12	State Fair of Texas – 4
<b>Camps – 43 Attendees</b>		
Robotics Canp – 23	Day Camp – 43	Fashion Camp – 14
<b>Special Interest/Enrichment – 12,886</b>		
Ag in the Classroom – 9,248	Animals – 386	Biological Sciences – 1,017
Civic Engagement – 1,349	Communications and Expressive Arts – 8	Community/Volunteer Service –18
Consumer and Family Science – 19	Environmental Education/ Earth Sciences –497	Food and Nutrition – 23
Health –27	Leadership and Personal Development – 56	Personal Safety – 1
Plant Science – 55	Technology and Engineering – 182	

## **FUTURE PLANS**

In 2018 the 4-H Team in Fort Bend will strive to increase overall membership and to promote non-traditional projects, particularly in the more urbanized sectors of this county.



# Making a Difference

## 2018 Fort Bend County Learn, Grow, Eat & GO! & School Gardens

*Angela Bosier-Romans, County Extension Agent-Urban Youth Development,*

*Fort Bend County and James Boone Holladay, County Extension Agent-Horticulture,*

*Fort Bend County*

*An interdisciplinary approach to reducing child obesity through the Learn, Grow, Eat & GO! Curriculum (a modification/revision of the Junior Master Gardener "Nutrition in the Garden"), and the Coordinated Approach to Child Health program.*

### Relevance

The high prevalence of childhood obesity in Texas is cause for concern because it is linked to negative health consequences for children and their families. Schools are uniquely positioned to have a positive impact on children's knowledge and behaviors associated with obesity. For example, vegetable exposure plus school gardening has been shown to improve consumption of fruits and vegetables. Adding more frequent and more vigorous physical activities during school has been shown to improve student fitness and weight. The home environment is also an important influence on a child's eating and activity behaviors. The greater the frequency of vegetable consumption and physical activity by parents, the greater the consumption of these foods and exercise by their children. With child obesity rates among low-income children in Texas ranging from 10% to over 20%, engaging schools and families in prevention efforts is critical.

### Response

The Learn, Grow, Eat & GO! (LGEG) curriculum emphasizes science, math, language art/reading, social studies and health through effective learning activities with the LGEG program. The LGEG curriculum was designed to engage children and their families in school gardens, vegetable recipe tastings, classroom activities and take home family stories. Fort Bend 4-H partnered with the Fort Bend County Master Gardener Youth Activity Committee to plan teacher trainings for Learn, Grow, Eat, Go! , conducted youth educational activities using the Junior Master Gardener curriculum, and attended promotional events throughout Fort Bend County.

Youth Activity Committee hosted planning meetings to plan for upcoming events.

When	Attendance	Events Planned
April 9, 2018	34	Butterfly Celebration
April 11, 2018	35	Butterfly Celebration
May 30, 2018	22	Teacher training
July 12, 2018	6	Earth Kids Kind Camp
July 19, 2018	26	Earth Kids Kind Kamp
August 15, 2018	5	CORE meeting

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Youth Activity Committee provided numerous educational presentations to various schools and community organizations throughout Fort Bend County.

#### **April**

- Walker Station Elementary - Richmond, TX
- T.W. Davis YMCA- Richmond, TX
- Settlers Way Elementary – Sugar Land , TX
- Walker Station Elementary – Sugar Land, TX
- Fort Bend Arts Festival – Katy, TX
- River Park West Earth Day – Sugar Land, TX

#### **May**

- Colony Bend Elementary – Sugar Land ,TX
- Colony Meadows Elementary, Sugar Land, TX
- Settlers Way Elementary, Sugar Land, TX
- Butterfly Celebration – Rosenberg, TX

#### **August**

- Earth Kid's Kind Kamp- 5 day camp, 37 campers attended. The camp was led by Fort Bend Master Gardeners covering variety elements of plant science and botany.

### **Results**

**Fort Bend County Master Gardeners Youth Activities** – the Master Gardeners of the Youth Activity Committee hosted several events throughout Fort Bend County. They have partnered with Girls Scouts of America, local schools, and child care centers to promote the Junior Master Gardener Program. They have made over 998 contacts and have contributed more than 2754 volunteer hours to the JMG program.

**Learn, Grow, Eat Go! /School Gardens-** Master Gardeners were utilize to help implement the program by helping with the educational aspect of gardening. They conducted educational lessons on how to plant seeds and transplants, plant spacing, and harvesting produce.

- WIDE school - located in Missouri City, TX an after-school 4-H club with 70 members.
- Quail Valley Elementary- located in Missouri City, TX an after-school 4-H club with 30 members.

### **Future Plans**

We will begin working with Lamar Consolidated ISD to implement the Learn, Grow, Eat, Go! curriculum for their elementary schools.

# Making a Difference

## 2018 Fort Bend County 4-H Robotics Program

*Developed by Angela Romans, County Extension Agent – Urban Youth Development*

### RELEVANCE

There has been a lack regarding computer science classes being available on the middle and high school level in the state of Texas. In 2014-2015 school year there were only 14 certified teachers to teacher computer science courses. The University of Texas – Austin, Center of STEM has created the WeTEACH\_CS teacher certification program to help increase the number of certified teachers which is now 210. With the deficit in computer sciences courses, the major group that is lacking representation in computing jobs is females of underrepresented minorities, particularly Blacks and Hispanics in the world of STEM. The percentage of STEM and computing jobs held by women has been declining since 1991. Of the jobs that are available only 8% were held by women who are an underrepresented minority (Fletcher, 2017). By capturing students' interest in STEM content at an earlier age, a proactive approach can ensure that students are on track through middle and high school to complete the needed coursework for adequate preparation to enter STEM or computer science programs at institutions of higher learning (DeJarnette, 2012). Informal community based education programs like 4-H provide important resources that can be utilized to address the emerging issues of STEM and computer science literacy crisis.

### RESPONSE

Fort Bend 4-H Robotics Program is focused on 4-H project growth, community outreach, and school enrichment throughout Fort Bend County. Several planning meetings have taken place with Robotics project leaders, community partners, and interested parents to discuss programming and activities to increase awareness STEM related careers.

Planning Meetings	Date	Contacts
STEM Task Force	Jan. 9, 2018	3
Robotics Camp/Drone 4-H program	Feb. 8, 2018	2
Homeschool Association	May 2, 2018	3

Interest meetings were held at local libraries to discuss Texas 4-H Robotics program and activities we offer in Fort Bend County. We also hoped to start new 4-H Robotics clubs in areas that had not yet been reached in the county.

Interest Meetings	Date	Contacts
George Memorial Library	April 17, 2018	10
Holy Rosary School	January 25, 2018	1
Sugar Land Branch Library	January 12, 2018	1
World of Science –Sartartia Middle School	January 12, 2018	250
Robotics Project Leader Training	August 25, 2018	5

Several programs were implemented including Spring Break Robotics program, Fort Bend 4-H Robotics Camp, STEM workshops, and school enrichment.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b># of youth</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Activity</b>
JIMU Robotics Program	Jan. 10, 2018	39	George Jr High School	Build and Code Jimu Robot
Spring Break Robotics Workshop	March 14, 2018	10	University Library	Build and Code Jimu Robots / Fashion/ Yoga
Robotics, Engineering, Coding & More	April 14, 2018	14	Cinco Ranch Library	Made prototype hydraulic robots
Ecobot Challenge	May 17, 2018	48	Mary Austin Holley Elementary	Constructed ecobot to help toxic waste cleanup simulation
STEM Drone Workshop	June 23, 2018	16	Cinco Ranch Library	Coding/reverse engineering / drone flying
Fort Bend Robotics Camp	July 23-25, 2018	23	Fort Bend County Fairgrounds, BLDG B	Lego EV3 Mindstorms/ Coder Kids/ JIMU Robots/ STEMdrones

## **RESULTS**

- Two new Robotics 4-H clubs were formed. One of our existing 4-H clubs competed at Brazoria County Robotics Challenge and placed 1<sup>st</sup> place and Texas 4-H Virtual Gear Challenge and placed 19<sup>th</sup> place.
- Fort Bend Robotics Camp evaluations showed a significant increase in the understanding of how to build robots by 100%. Also, from the 20 evaluations received, 8 campers stated they would like to pursue a career in STEM related field.
- Ecobot Challenge – Ms. Danielle Moss, the coordinator, stated “The robot activity was amazing! You gave the girls an opportunity to do something they might never experience otherwise. We all enjoyed it!”
- Spring Break Robotics Workshop and JIMU Robotics Program evaluations showed a significant increase in understanding how to build and program robots.
- STEM Drone Workshop and Robotics, Engineering, Coding & More Workshop-No evaluations were given however, relationships were formed with Coder Kids of Katy and STEMdrones; they were able to assist with the robotics camp programming.

## **FUTURE PLANS**

Fort Bend 4-H will continue to work on increasing participation in the Robotics project. Our goal for the upcoming year is to have teams compete in the District Roundup and State Roundup Robotics Challenges. We will also like to host a Fort Bend Robotics Challenge on the County level.

# Making a Difference

## 2018 Fort Bend County Hands-on Earth Sciences

Developed by: Justin R. Saenz, Count Extension Agent – 4-H & Youth Development

**Relevance:** As an organization founded by educators, 4-H knows schools cannot do it alone. In partnership with Long Acres Ranch; a relatively undeveloped property, Long Acres Ranch is unique within the urban setting of Fort Bend County. The Ranch is a venue for organizations with missions that support appreciation of nature and the environment through education and recreation.

School-based programs access to the Ranch as a resource to add enrichment to the classroom...truly an outdoor learning laboratory. Field trips are important tools for reinforcing concepts taught in the classroom, bringing a real-world application or first-hand experience to the students. For many students, these field trips provide exposure to aspects of our natural world for the first time.



**Response:** In an effort to increase the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) Science scores of Lamar CISD's 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders, through hands on earth science reviews of identified Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills.

- 8.11(C) explore how short-and long-term environmental changes affect organisms and traits in subsequent populations
- 7.8(C) model the effects of human activity on groundwater and surface water in a watershed
- 8.11(B) investigate how organisms and populations in an ecosystem depend on and may compete for biotic and abiotic factors such as quantity of light, water, range of temperatures, or soil competition
- 7.11(C) identify some changes in genetic traits that have occurred over several generations through natural selection and selective breeding such as the Galapagos Medium Ground Finch (*Geospiza fortis*) or domestic animals
- 7.11(A) examine organisms or their structures such as insects or leaves and use dichotomous keys for identification

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- 8.9(C) interpret topographic maps and satellite views to identify land and erosional features and predict how these features may be reshaped by weathering

Seven local schools were selected to visit Long Acres Ranch with 1,967 going through the hands-on science review over nine days.

**Results:** Success of the program looked at changes from 2017 to 2018 change in performances as they relates to:

#### MASTERS GRADE LEVEL

Performance in this category indicates that students are expected to succeed in the next grade or course with little or no academic intervention. Students in this category demonstrate the ability to think critically and apply the assessed knowledge and skills in varied contexts, both familiar and unfamiliar.

#### MEETS GRADE LEVEL

Performance in this category indicates that students have a high likelihood of success in the next grade or course but may still need some short-term, targeted academic intervention. Students in this category generally demonstrate the ability to think critically and apply the assessed knowledge and skills in familiar contexts.

#### APPROACHES GRADE LEVEL

Performance in this category indicates that students are likely to succeed in the next grade or course with targeted academic intervention. Students in this category generally demonstrate the ability to apply the assessed knowledge and skills in familiar contexts

School	Number of Students	Approaches GL Change '17 to '18	Meets GL Change '17 to '18	Masters GL Change '17 to '18
Briscoe JR High	449 8 <sup>th</sup> graders	+2%	+10%	+18%
George Jr. High	528 8 <sup>th</sup> graders	-5%	+1%	+7%
Lamar Jr High	417 8 <sup>th</sup> graders	+4%	+7%	+8%
Leaman Jr High	298 8 <sup>th</sup> graders	0%	+3%	
Huggins Elementary	130 5 <sup>th</sup> graders	+14%	+11	+6%
Jackson Elementary	56 5 <sup>th</sup> graders	+7%	+9%	+13%
Jane Long Elementary	89 5 <sup>th</sup> grades	-2%	+1%	+1%





# Making a Difference

## 2018 4-H Veterinary Science Certificate Program

Developed by: Justin R. Saenz, Count Extension Agent – 4-H & Youth Development

### 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 learn and work with professionals in the field. 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 skill 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. Each year we are seeing significant growth.

Since the establishment of the Veterinary Science Certificate Program in Fort Bend in 2012 we created nine 4-H clubs that specialize in the vet science project. Each July a Vet Science Certificate Program Informational meeting is held, this year we had 68 attendees, resulting in the formation of three new club: Wiggles & Ways, Rose Rich, Jr. Vet Science 4-H Clubs.

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## RESULTS

Youth Participants	Adult Volunteers	Number of Clubs
74	22	12



- In 2018, we had 2 youth who completed the 5-year curriculum and received a Texas 4-H Veterinary Project Completion Certificate and a recognition plaque from Fort Bend County, during our annual awards banquet.
- We had three vet science 4-H members take part in the Vet Science Skill-a-thon at State 4-H Roundup. The Veterinary Science Skill-a-thon is a competitive event designed to test the knowledge and skills that a 4-H member can gain through his or her involvement in the Veterinary Science project.
- To advance the knowledge and understanding of the vet science Skill-a-thon to our student currently enrolled in the Texas 4-H Veterinary Science Certificate Program. We hosted Genetics workshop given by Dr. Joe Mask. We had 50 attend, 20 adults and 30 vet science youth.

## FUTURE PLANS

Fort Bend County is committed to grow the Vet Science Program in the coming years. Fort Bend County will host their second County Roundup Vet Science Skill-a-thon in March along with the second District Roundup Vet Science Skill-a-thon in April. The foundation of positive youth experience in 4-H begins at the club level; we are committed to being a stronger resource for our club managers.



# Making a Difference

## 2018 Fort Bend County Hatching in the Classroom

Developed by Angela Romans County Extension Agent – Urban Youth Development-Fort Bend County,  
Derrick Banks Extension Agent, Agricultural and Natural Resources – Fort Bend County

### RELEVANCE

Most elementary schools use textbooks to teach science in the classroom. Hands-on science curricula have become very popular over the last decade. It has been a major focus of the National Science Education Standards. Hands-on learning has been proven to decrease behavioral issues as well as help students begin to develop critical thinking skills. The students not only learn about science but they also gain reasoning and research skills.

### RESPONSE

*Embryology: Hatching in the Classroom Projects* is designed to provide the background information and exciting experiential activities dealing with life sciences and designed for use in the classroom. With this curriculum, students will have the opportunity to develop scientific thinking skills related to qualitative and quantitative observations, practice forming hypothesis and explore the overall scientific method. The focus this year was to expand the curriculum by reaching more students throughout Fort Bend County. Several meetings were held with school counselors, teachers, parent volunteers and principals advertising the Hatching the Classroom project. I met with a total of 7 schools and their personnel advertising our Science, Engineering, Technology (SET) projects that we offer. We were then able to plan how to incorporate Hatching in the Classroom into their already existing curriculum. Planning meetings are listed below.

School Name	School District	Date
Quail Valley Elementary	Fort Bend ISD	August 18, 2018
Riverbend Montessori School	Private – Sugar Land	June 28, 2018
Colony Bend Elementary	Fort Bend ISD	June 28, 2018
Colony Meadows Elementary	Fort Bend ISD	June 28, 2018
Jane Long Elementary	Lamar Consolidated ISD	June 28, 2018
Valasquez Elementary	Lamar Consolidated ISD	April 15, 2018
Seven Lakes Jr. High School	Katy ISD	August 15, 2018

We were able to successfully implement *Embryology: Hatching in the Classroom* in the following school

- Seven Lakes Jr. High School
  - **675** students participated in the project. Incubators were setup in three 7<sup>th</sup> grade science classrooms. Teachers used the project as a resource for biosystems, animal adaptations and natural selection.

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- Valasquez Elementary
  - **105** 1<sup>st</sup> grade students participated in the project. Incubators were setup in the school's science lab. The school also owns its own chicken coop. Once hatched, chicks were kept and raised by the students. Over **400** students were able to view the live birth of the chicks through the school's live stream online. Derrick Banks, our Agricultural & Natural Resource Agent, Cooperative Extension Program also performed a live candling of the 1<sup>st</sup> grade class preparing the incubators for Hatch Day.

## **RESULTS**

Seven Lakes Jr High School 7<sup>th</sup> grade classes were given the Hatching in the Classroom evaluations. 472 out of the 675 evaluations given were received back.

<b>Change in Understanding</b>	<b>% increase</b>
Correctly handle a baby chick	62.3%
The incubation process	60.1%
Development process of the embryo	65.5%
Different parts of the egg	61.4 %

Valasquez Elementary 1<sup>st</sup> grade teachers were given a teacher's evaluation.

- Ms. Valerie Millwee stated ***"It helped us meet our TEKS 1.10C and 1.10 D (Compare ways animals resemble their parents and observe and record life cycle). This was a wonderful experience! I loved see the chicks hatch and grow just as much, if not more than the students!"***
- Ms. Martiza Bell stated ***"I saw a huge growth in my students' interest of life cycle. Not only for a chicken. They learned so that they wanted to know more facts about other life cycles. Research was their favorite thing throughout the program."***
- Mrs. Simmons stated ***"All TEKS objectives were covered. It allowed all learning styles to grasp the life cycle."***

## **FUTURE PLANS**

We plan to continue growing the program focusing on meeting the needs of required TEKS and STAAR testing requirements for school districts through Fort Bend County. Also, we would like to form partnerships with similar entities, so we are able to keep up with the supply and demand of the program.



**EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE**  
***Providing Solutions***

# Making a Difference

## 2018 – 4-H Management Plan - Fort Bend County CEP

*Developed by Amber J. Foster, Extension Agent-CEP – 4-H and Youth Development*

*Supported by: Angela Romans, County Extension Agent – 4-H & Urban Development*

*Supported by: Derrick Bryant, Extension Agent-CEP Agriculture*

*Supported by: Courtney Bryant, Extension Agent-CEP FCS*



### RELEVANCE

Over 100 years ago, 4-H and youth development program began a mission to educate the future of America. With this primary objective, 4-H clubs throughout Texas are increasing brilliant, adaptable, and aware kids with the life skills to thrive in today's world while succeeding in their future endeavors. 4-H programs are research-backed and offer life-changing experiences to youth in Fort Bend, in Texas, and around the world. 4-H & Youth Development at Prairie View A&M University-Cooperative Extension Program focuses on the needs, concerns & interests of youth in limited resourced areas in Texas. Its aim is to help youth gain equal opportunity as their fellow youth without limitation. Fort Bend County identifies issues are after-school youth activities, generalized health and wellness education, health issues relating to youth, and partnerships between community leaders and youth.



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## RESPONSE

Fort Bend County 4-H and Youth Development depart work effortlessly to recognize and locate areas of limited resource populations with large numbers of youth. Informational meetings and events are hosted in these areas to allow parents and youth to join and be fully aware of the Fort Bend Extension youth programs. Partnerships between the Lamar Consolidate Independent School District's School Health Advisory Committee (SHAC), Fort Bend County CONNECT, Fort Bend Independent School District (FBISD), Baylor College of Medicine (BCM), The Institute of Spirituality and Health (ISH), and Attack Poverty of Richmond all created opportunities for the limited resource youth of Fort Bend County.

### Community Outreach

**Fort Bend CONNECT-** met monthly to serve the limited resource youth and families of Fort Bend. Over twenty different industries presented on topics and issues that youth was facing in the county.



**LCISD SHAC-** met monthly on the health needs of the limited resource youth of Lamar Consolidated School District. CEP 4-H and Youth Development provided 4-H in-school clubs and classes throughout the school year.

**FBISD-** created in school 4-H clubs on healthy living and gardening. Educated the community through the smoothie bike on STEM and Healthy alternatives.

**BCM and ISH-** conducted research on implementing yoga in the school system for students suffering from

ADHD.

### 4-H Clubs and Volunteers



<i>Club</i>	<i>Location</i>
FB Fresno	<i>Fresno, Texas</i>
Lantern Lane Elementary	<i>Houston, Texas (Fort Bend ISD)</i>
Kendleton 4-H	<i>Kendleton, Texas</i>

## RESULTS

The impact of the Cooperative Extension Program 4-H and Youth Development program of Fort Bend County has increased the wellbeing of the limited resource youth and families. As a result of outreach efforts to limited resource youth and families are introduced to the benefits of joining 4-H clubs within their community and schools. Knowledge of scholarship opportunities, 4-H project areas, and educational programs that enrich limited resource population are all gains from this year. Skills increased during this year was public speaking, STEM activities, positive self-esteem practice, food safety and cooking, and community engagement.





# Making a Difference

## 2018 – Heroes 4-Health Program - Fort Bend County CEP

*Developed by Amber J. Foster, Extension Agent-CEP – 4-H and Youth Development, Krystal Wilcox*



### RELEVANCE

The Heroes 4-Health Walmart Grant allows leadership in healthy lifestyles for teenagers while reaching out to limited resourced grade school youth in summer and afterschool programs throughout Fort Bend County. Health issues relating to youth and summer and afterschool programs are currently identified issues throughout Fort Bend County. The decrease of physical education in the public school systems creates a limitation for youth to learn healthy eating habits and physical activities. The limit of educating healthy habits for youth leads to an increase in childhood obesity statistics. The Cooperative Extension Program of Prairie View A & M University addresses behavior adoption in the 2016 Plan of Work: Outcome 10 - % of limited resource youth adopting behaviors that lead to a healthy lifestyle.

### RESPONSE

In Fort Bend County's Heroes 4-Health grant program, we developed a group of teen leaders to go out throughout the county to teach limited resource populations about healthy habits. The Fort Bend County Health Ambassadors (teen leaders) major goals included to increase limited resource youth knowledge about eating healthy, introducing limited resource areas to healthy alternatives, and fun ways to increase physical activities. The Fort Bend County Health Ambassadors trained and developed skills from Purdue University's Choose Health Fun and Fitness (CHFF) curriculum. CHFF allowed the ambassadors to implement healthy drinks, whole versus refined grains, increasing color in vegetables on a plate, and cognitively connecting physical activities to the nutrition lesson. For school and community health fairs, ambassadors informed communities for two hours about healthy habits through smoothie bike demonstration. During Christmas Break, Fort Bend County Health Ambassadors gain deeper insight on their duty to health at the Teen Leadership Summit. The "Spring into Action" camp held in Kendleton, Texas allowed the ambassadors a chance to work with parent-child community on healthy living. For six weeks at Lantern Lane Elementary, ambassadors would educate students on eating a balance meal and play competitive games with the students. For healthy lifestyles through mindfulness practices, yoga program taught at DeBakey High School and B.F. Terry High School. Throughout the summer, the Health Ambassadors taught youth about fun and exciting physical fitness to the youth of the Boys and Girls club of Stafford, Richmond and Missouri City.

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## **RESULTS**

### **Curriculum Enrichment**

**Lantern Lane Elementary-** 12 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> graders were introduced to the CHFFF curriculum. Over a weekly visit for a 6-week period Ambassadors taught youth on healthy eating and physical activities. By the end of the 6 weeks student were able to read labels, know difference between whole and refined grains, and healthy drinks.

**DeBakey High School** - 66 limited resourced students are introduced to yoga as a way of healthy living through mindful practice.

**B.F. Terry High School** – 129 limited resourced students are introduced to yoga as a way of healthy living through mindful practice.

**Boys and Girls Club, Rosenberg/ Richmond-**110 limited resourced youth from grades 4-7 were introduced to the CHFFF curriculum. For 4 days, 3-1 hour rotations of classes in physical activities, healthy nutrition, robotics, leadership, and fashion were taught during the Wellness Warrior Week. By the end of the week student were able to read labels, know difference between whole and refined grains, and healthy drinks.

**Boys and Girls Club, Stafford-** 120 limited resourced youth from grades 4-7 were introduced to the CHFFF curriculum. For 4 days, 3-1 hour rotations of classes in physical activities, healthy nutrition, robotics, leadership, and fashion was taught during the Wellness Warrior Week. By the end of the week student were able to read labels, know difference between whole and refined grains, and healthy drinks.

**Boys and Girls Club, Missouri City** 124 limited resourced youth from grades 4-7 were introduced to the CHFFF curriculum. For 4 days, 3-1 hour rotations of classes in physical activities, healthy nutrition, robotics, leadership, and fashion was taught during the Wellness Warrior Week. By the end of the week student were able to read labels, know difference between whole and refined grains, and healthy drinks.

Because of this curriculum enrichment, limited resourced youth throughout Fort Bend County are able to maintain a healthy lifestyle through teachings and practice. Youth gained knowledge in reading nutrition labels, a balanced diet, increasing vegetable intake in all meals, creating a space for mindfulness, and the importance of physical activity. Youth increased skills in reading ingredients on food labels, building a physical fitness activity regimen, and practicing self-care daily. For the Purdue University's Choose Health Fun and Fitness curriculum, there were 366 participants from Ft. Bend County: 43% were females, 49% were males, and 8% chose "I don't want to say." In terms of ethnicity the major groups were; Asian (6%), Black or African-American (36%), Hispanic or Latino (16%), Native American (10%), Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander (11%), White or Caucasian (11%); while (7%) chose "more than one race." While most of the participants (31%) typically spend 2 hour on 4-H activities each week, 27% spend 3 hours, 16% spend 1 hour, 11% spend 4 hours, 10% spend 1 hour, and 6% spend 5 or more hours on 4-H activities each week. Under the demographics, 63% reported to learn about healthy eating habits through 4-H, 61% eat with their family, 60% eat a healthy breakfast. All evidence collected through survey both paper and electronic at the end of each 6-lesson session. It is safe to say that the Heroes for Health program is making a major impact on the limited resource youth of Fort Bend County.



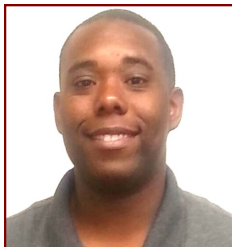
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# Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service - FORT BEND

## 2018 Extension Agents & Staff



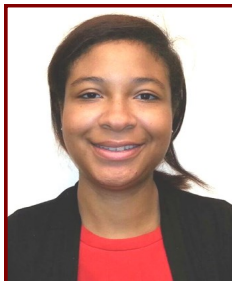
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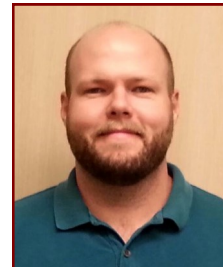


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