



Extension Education in Fort Bend County

*Making a difference
in 2020*

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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., 562,560 acres
Population – 811,688 (2020)
High School Graduates: 88.5%
College Educated: 41.4%
Average Household Income: \$119,536



Fort Bend County 2020 Summary of AgriLife Educational Contacts

Educational Sessions Conducted - 1,304 (304 for youth)
 Educational Session Contacts - 21,470 (6,269 for youth)
 Technology Assisted Programs - 697
 Contact Hours via Educational Sessions - 37,365
 4-H Clubs - 32; 4-H Club Members - 597; 4-H Adult Leaders - 70; Youth Leaders - 83
 Youth Curriculum Enrichment Participants - 52,500
 4-H Special Interest/Short Term - 22,202
 Master Volunteers - 318
 Texas Extension Education Club Members - 40
 Total of Volunteers - 1,167
 Total Volunteers Hours in Support of AgriLife in Fort Bend - 76,771
 Value of Volunteer Hours to Fort Bend Citizens - \$1,808,727.12
 Direct Contacts (office/site visits & phone calls) - 2,092
 Indirect Contacts (mass media—television, radio, newspaper) - 61,904
 Newsletter/Mail/E-Mail Contacts - 63,513
 Social Media Posts - 7,684
 Social Media Followers - 206,394
 eXtension ('Ask the Experts') - 575

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in 2020*

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2020 Fort Bend, Brazoria, Chambers, Galveston, Montgomery, and Harris Counties Pesticide Safety Education

Developed by:

Phillip Thielemann – Fort Bend County Extension Agent - Agriculture & Natural Resources

Phoenix Rogers – Galveston County Extension Agent - Agriculture & Natural Resources

Shannon Deitz – Harris County Extension Agent - Agriculture & Natural Resources

Jessica Chase – Brazoria County Extension Agent - Agriculture & Natural Resources

Tyler Fitzgerald – Chambers County Extension Agent - Agriculture & Natural Resources

Brandon Gregson – Montgomery County Extension Agent – Agriculture & Natural Resources

RELEVANCE

Fort Bend, Brazoria, Montgomery, Chambers, Galveston, and Harris Counties have a combined total of more than 2,751 pesticide applicators licensed with the Texas Department of Agriculture, with Fort Bend being home to 493 licensed applicators. Private Pesticide Applicators are required to acquire fifteen (15) CEUs (continuing education units) every five years. Commercial and Non-Commercial Applicators are required to acquire 5 CEUs every year in order to renew their licenses. There is a substantial audience and need for Extension to provide the educational opportunities for these applicators to obtain their CEU credits. In addition, new applicators seek opportunities to take the certification course and test to obtain their license. Another important consideration is educating pesticide users to increase user safety and reduce environmental impacts.

RESPONSE

Due to COVID-19 restrictions we were unable to offer face to face programming for these CEUs. Thankfully, TDA adjusted requirements for CEU attendance and virtual programming was our only option. In Fort Bend County, we offered three CEU programs in 2020. Southeast Town and Country 5 CEU Program, Southeast Brush and Weed Control for Forages, and Fort Bend Vegetable Conference.

- Town and Country was held on three different dates, Nov. 10, 2020, Dec. 10, 2020 and Jan. 14, 2021. We partnered with Montgomery, Brazoria, Galveston, Chambers and Harris counties. This program focused on Laws and Regulations, Weed Control in Pasture & Hay Meadows, Pesticide Labels & Sprayer Calibration, Managing Soil Fertility for Weed Control, Livestock Vector Control & Housefly Management.

-The First Annual Southeast Region Weed and Brush Control for Forages was conducted on Oct. 22, 2020. We partnered with Brazoria, Galveston, and Harris Counties. This program offered 1 CEU credit for a fee, or participants could take the course for free if not applying for a CEU. It focused on Huisache, yaupon and several grass weeds that grow among our desirable forages.

63 people attended and 14 of the participants were from Fort Bend.

-The 5-CEU Fort Bend Regional Vegetable Conference was conducted in February 2020. I was not employed with AgriLife at the time this program was conducted but felt best to give it merit in this report.

-Field days and turn-row meetings in the past offered CEUs but COVID-19 inhibited those programs from being conducted face to face.

Programs offered by other counties were promoted that offered CEU credits. Participation as far as for CEUs appeared to be minimal at those held in spring and early summer because we were not sure how TDA was going to allow participation in a virtual environment.

RESULTS

More than 96 Texas Department of Agriculture Pesticide License holders attended the Nov. and Dec. Town and Country 5-CEU programs hosted by Fort Bend County in virtual partnership with neighboring counties as mentioned above in the response section. Additionally, CEUs were promoted at the January and February Row Crop programs conducted in Wharton County. Retrospective post evaluations were used. Considering the training and continuing education required for licensed applicators, the increases in understanding and intentions to adopt new practices for selected programs below are very good.

- 91% of Town and Country CEU program participants indicated that they will be able to immediately apply the information they learned today in their operation.

Although I am fairly new to Extension I can see that COVID has impacted programs in a drastic way. The world of virtual learning is here to stay. We have and will continue to learn how to educate in virtual world, even as we slowly transition back to a more traditional method of educating.

FUTURE PLANS

We will continue to offer and promote relevant, up-to-date educational opportunities for pesticide license holders in 2021. I will reintroduce the Fort Bend Winter Row Crop Meeting on January 28 which will provide 3 CEU opportunities. It will however will be virtual due to COVID restrictions. Planning on offering CEUs for landowners' who own or manage area lakes and ponds. These programs would be focused on pond and fisheries management. I will offer additional CEU opportunities which include the annual Town and Country CEU class which is done in conjunction with our neighboring counties. To my knowledge we plan to continue additional programs under the title of Southeast Weed and Brush Control for Forages. Additional weed and brush species and control thereof are to be planned. Certainly, with hopes to program face to face in 2021 we are prepared to program virtually as well to comply with COVID safety.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to Brandy Rader, Fort Bend County AgriLife Extension Administrative Assistant to Agriculture for her hard work and support regarding promotion, registration, and implementation of pesticide safety programs in Fort Bend County. Thanks is also extended to the following AgriLife Extension personnel for their presentations and expertise: Dr. Don Renchie, Dr. Megan Clayton, Dr. Vanessa Corriher-Olsen, Dr. Jake Mowrer, Matt Matocha, Dr. Sonja Swiger, Dr. Todd Sink, Brad Tullis, Shannon Deitz, Brandon Gregson, Phoenix Rogers, Jessica Chase, and Tyler Fitzgerald. In addition, appreciation is expressed to the Row Crops and AHAC Advisory Committees of Fort Bend County for their guidance and support of Pesticide-related Extension programming conducted within the county and especially for their patience and understanding while we work through the COVID Pandemic.

2020 Fort Bend Co. Livestock, Forage & Landowner Outreach Summary

Developed by: Phillip Thielemann – Fort Bend County Extension Agent - Agriculture & Natural Resources

RELEVANCE

Livestock and forage production is still a vital agricultural industry in Fort Bend County. Fort Bend is also becoming more urban which means many more people are owning land but not necessarily in larger amounts. That presents itself for more education on landowner responsibilities. Also, livestock and forage producers still make up a significant portion of the agriculture audience in Fort Bend County. According to the 2017 Agriculture Census, more than 75000 hd. of various species of livestock were raised in Fort Bend County. The majority of that number being beef cattle. Opportunities are needed for producers to become more educated on current events and the latest in research and industry advancements. Additionally, 2020 proved to be very challenging with the occurrence of the COVID-19 Pandemic. This sent a ripple effect throughout the beef industry regarding inventory and then price. Fort Bend eventually felt those effects which presented needs for assistance education.

RESPONSE

To meet the needs of Fort Bend County Beef and Forage Producers, we promoted several Coronavirus Food Assistance Programs for producers. These webinar presentations provided an overview of the CFAP program and offered clarification on eligibility, pay limits, and payment calculation examples for the ranchers affected by COVID-19. They learned what was needed to sign up to receive assistance and when to expect receipt of funds. They also received information regarding farm loans available through FSA and conservation programs through NRCS.

As the COVID Pandemic persisted. In turn we were forced to resort to virtual programming to meet the educational needs of Fort Bend County Livestock/ Forage Producers and Landowners. We concentrated on promoting and producing programs that addressed pasture and hayfield management as a means to benefit livestock production. We counseled 4 producers on how to fill out a soil sample and water quality forms to be sent off to the lab in College Station. We introduced several new landowner programs addressing property liability, agricultural tax appraisals, and wildlife tax appraisals. Additionally, we hosted a program in efforts to reenergize interest from our beef producers in Fort Bend with a program entitled “Winterizing the Cattle Herd.” This was truly a first. It has been several years that Fort Bend Extension has addressed any livestock ownership best practices programs.

RESULTS

- Over 225 calls, emails, and in house visits have been addressed addressing livestock, forage production, and landowner inquiries since April 2020. These results have allowed a better evaluation for future programming in 2021.
- 15 site visits were performed through my short time of employment in 2020.

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- Over 258 people reached as a result of programs produced by Fort Bend AgriLife Extension. These programs encompassed subjects in household IPM, range/ pasture mgt./ livestock mgt./ landowner legal issues (liability).
- Over 70 members of our ANR clientele participated in our Livestock/Forage and Landowner Programs (Specific Programs Below)
 - Winterizing the Cattle Herd
 - Southeast Weed and Brush Control in Forages
 - Landowner Liability Protection
 - Land Tax Appraisal Part 1 – Agricultural
 - Land Tax Appraisal Part 2 - Wildlife

FUTURE PLANS

We will continue to expand the livestock and forage program, and work toward forming a task force committee in the coming year. This taskforce will assist in identifying the needs of our livestock producers in Fort Bend. Applied research and result demonstration projects and programs will be implemented as need arises.


We have plans to partner with Brazoria County AgriLife to host programs to benefit livestock and forage education. One such program which also involves Galveston is the Soil Campaign to be initiated in January 2021.

The landowner portion of this current plan has been developed into its own plan to better meet the individual needs our clientele. Certainly, with hopes to program face to face in 2021 we are prepared to stay virtual as well to comply with COVID restrictions.

There are plans for a newsletter to include information for forage and livestock producers covering timely topics for our area and important dates as they may arise. The newsletter would be distributed via Facebook, the county webpage, and electronic copies mailed to respective recipients and stakeholders, respectively.

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 and Prairie View Extension personnel for their time and expertise: Dr. Joe Paschal, Dr. Vanessa Corrigher-Olsen, Dr. Megan Clayton, and Dr. Tony Provin. In addition, appreciation is expressed to AHAC 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	
	<p>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.</p>

2020 Fort Bend, Brazoria, & Waller Counties Row Crop Outreach Summary

Phillip Thielemann, 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 accounts for about 83% of agriculture-related sales in 2017 (NASS Agriculture Census). The majority of the field crop operations in Fort Bend are categorized as dryland operations. The issue is that these operations are more susceptible to the climatic conditions that the Upper Gulf Coast region provides. The producers of these crops has specific needs that include selection of varieties, best practices for management of fertility, disease, and insect management. These needs addressed insures proper management of these lands in order to profit from market/price changes.

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.

Fort Bend Row Crop Producers saw unprecedented times in 2020. As May and June is the time of year that usually sees annual row crop tours and turn row meetings, these activities had to be cancelled because of face to face restrictions due to COVID. We did however promote several programs virtually to try and fill the void of no row crop and turn row meetings. The following programs were made available to our producers in place.

-San Patricio Field Crop and Tour – 6/2/20

-Monthly Cotton and Grain Update 7/15, 8/19, 9/16,

-Coronavirus Food Assist Program for Farm and Ranch Producers – 6/3/20

-Southeast Regional Row Crop Initiative Grain & Cotton Marketing Update – 6/17/20

-Hybrid and variety trials for sorghum were still conducted by our cooperators and results were shared via email on Dec. 17th with our Fort Bend Row Crop Producers.

Periodic site visits were conducted at the following farms, Poncik Farms, Wegner Farms to monitor for reporting weekly USDA crop conditions. Both Farms are located in different parts of the county in order to compile a better overall crop condition.

RESULTS

The hybrid and variety trials provide important information for producers when considering newly available choices. For Fort Bend County, the top four cotton hybrids evaluated out-yielded the bottom four cotton varieties by an average 1181.6 lbs./acre (2.4 bales). This is a potential revenue benefit of approximately \$629.00/acre. There is a revenue advantage of \$73 per acre over the lower yielding varieties. If those or similar hybrids and varieties are adopted on half of the cotton acres planted in Fort Bend, this equates to an economic benefit of \$1.3 million in Fort Bend County. 14000 acres of grain sorghum was harvested at an average yield price per acre of \$53/ acre. This equates to \$693,000 economic benefit. No Sorghum or Corn Race trials were present this year. I was not employed at the time these should have been pursued. Cotton Race Trial results “2020 REPLICATED AGRONOMIC COTTON EVALUATION (RACE) SOUTH, EAST AND CENTRAL REGIONS OF TEXAS” have been made available to our producers on Dec. 17, 2021

FUTURE PLANS

In 2021, we plan to offer our annual Winter Row Crop Meeting at the end of January however, it will need to be virtual. Turn-row meetings are being planned to allow more flexibility for growers to attend subjects that directly pertain to their operations. Here’s hoping COVID 19 will be less restrictive. We will continue to promote programs from our neighboring counties that offer educational opportunities and CEU opportunities as well.


There are plans for a newsletter to include information for forage and livestock producers covering timely topics for our area and important dates as they may arise. The newsletter would be distributed via Facebook, the county webpage, and electronic copies mailed to respective recipients and stakeholders, respectively.

We will be partnering with Brazoria County with several of our row crop program.

Certainly, with hopes to program face to face in 2021 we are prepared to stay virtual as well to comply with COVID restrictions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to Brandy Rader, Fort Bend County AgriLife Extension Administrative Assistant to Agriculture, for her hard work and support with promotion, registration, and implementation of row crop programs in Fort Bend County. Special thanks to the Fort Bend Row Crops Committee – Linda and Paul Freund, Kenny Poehls, Lisa and Alan Stasney, - 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. Mark Welch, Mac Young, Dr. Robert Bowling, Dr. Ronnie Schnell, and Jeff Nunley, Corrie Bowen with Wharton County Agrilife Extension. South Texas Cotton and Grain, for their expertise and contributions, as well as to the Fort Bend County Farm Bureau for their partnership and 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.

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE
Providing Solutions

2020 Coastal Prairie Master Naturalist Outreach Summary

Developed by:

Phillip Thielemann, 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. A large percentage of those residents are living in residential areas and many who are seeking a quieter life beyond the town moving into semirural areas many for the first time. The Coastal Prairie Master Naturalists is a group of volunteers that are interested in natural aspects that Fort Bend and Waller Counties has to offer through its geography including prairies, fish and wildlife, as well as other things. Our local chapter of Coastal Prairie Master Naturalists, is a group of volunteers that work to educate themselves and the general public about the nature that exist in our county and around them.

SUMMARY

The Coastal Prairie Master Naturalists are local volunteers in the community who work to increase the availability of nature- and wildlife-related information and improve quality of life for our county citizens through various volunteer service projects. They are sponsored and work under the guidance of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Texas Parks and Wildlife. New volunteers' complete classroom instruction over several months in order to become certified as a Texas Master Naturalist. Once they receive their certification in order to keep their



status, existing volunteers must complete advanced training and volunteer service every year to maintain their status as Master Naturalist Volunteers. 2020 however brought with it many challenges for our Coastal Prairie Master Naturalists chapter. Many of the in person programs

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were forced to go virtual as well as some had to be cancelled. are involved in regular public outreach programs at Seabourne Creek Park in Rosenberg is a wonderful place where CPMN hold regular public outreaches. There they host bird hikes butterfly tours as well as other events. These events were cancelled for safety reasons due to COVID-19. An event that many look forward and draws a lot of attention is the Prairie Heritage Festival. Tt too had to be cancelled for COVID Safety concerns. As Fall approached it appeared that our CPMN volunteers would be able to resume some in person programs, however with a sudden spike in November and December again current plans had to be put on hold.


From March 21st through June 1st, twelve (12) new members completed 50+ hours of training classes that cover a host of subjects including Texas Eco-Regions, Insects, Birds, Mammals, Reptiles, Plants, Streams, and other disciplines related to the natural sciences and educating the public. The Coastal Prairie Master Naturalist chapter has more than 145 volunteers that contributed over 2881 volunteer hours which have economic benefit of more than \$73,370 to Fort Bend and Waller Counties. This number is unfortunately being down from years past. Not due to less interest but restrictions on attendance due to COVID-19.

FUTURE PLANS

We are in great faith that 2021 will bring better times which will increase our ability to offer in person trainings and volunteer hours. The Coastal Prairie Master Naturalist Chapter plans to, again, host a training class for new members. Additionally, they plan to continue educational efforts to include even at Long Acres Ranch, a joint project between Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and the Henderson/Wessendorff Foundation. The City of Rosenberg put the Interpretive Nature Center at Seaborne Park on the ballot late last in 2020 and it passed. They are planning to issue a bond issue in the coming months for the initial phase. Coastal Prairie Master Naturalist would most likely be the personnel to conduct the educational activities there.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to Margo (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, and finally the staff at Long Acres Ranch.

V A L U E	
Wildlife Management	
	<p>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.</p>

Helping Texans Better Their Lives

2020 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 2020 population is estimated to be at 835,000 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 (69,000), Rosenberg (38,000), and Sugar Land (119,000). 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

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension in Fort Bend County, along with the Fort Bend County Master Gardeners, have developed a home gardening 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.

VALUE

Earth-Kind® Landscaping



The Earth-Kind® program teaches participants how to care for gardens and landscapes with environmentally friendly, research-proven techniques. Instructional topics include water conservation, responsible fertilizer application, and non-chemical options for controlling pests. Use of Earth-Kind® practices benefits Texas by saving water and protecting surface and groundwater resources from potential contaminants.

To market the program to new and established homeowners we continued a successful home food production educational series. The *Grow Your Own* series consisting of six classes was delivered on

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Saturday mornings, aiming to attract a similar group of participants through the complete series. The first of these six courses was conducted face-to-face prior to COVID-19 restrictions. The remaining five were conducted virtually through the use of Microsoft Teams. Our program *Landscape Success* was not launched in 2020 due to COVID-19 limitations in program design, speakers, and identification of community partner. To fill this local need, state and regional virtual garden and landscape programs *Aggie Horticulture Facebook Live* and *Gardening on the Gulf Coast* were marketed and delivered to local audiences. Since these two programs were not originally built into this plan of work, they were reported as output tasks within my general horticulture plan.

RESULTS

300 registered guests participated in 2020 programs, 29 of which attended the 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 Grow Your Own shows the need for and success of these courses.



Activity Title: Edible Garden Planning

Activity Date: February 15, 2020 **Number of Participants:** 51

1. Overall satisfaction with this activity.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Completely	24	57.1	66.7	66.7
	Mostly	11	26.2	30.6	97.2
	Somewhat	1	2.4	2.8	100.0
	Total	36	85.7	100.0	
Missing	System	6	14.3		
Total		42	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	41	97.6	97.6	97.6
	No	1	2.4	2.4	100.0
	Total	42	100.0	100.0	

2b. Satisfaction with accuracy of the information.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Completely	34	81.0	81.0	81.0
	Mostly	7	16.7	16.7	97.6
	Somewhat	1	2.4	2.4	100.0
	Total	42	100.0	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	24	57.1	58.5	58.5
	No	17	40.5	41.5	100.0
	Total	41	97.6	100.0	
Missing	System	1	2.4		
Total		42	100.0		

Specific noteworthy data from above include: 1. 57.1% complete satisfaction of program, 2b. 81% state the information accuracy, 4. 97.6% plan to make changes as a result, and 5. That a total of 57.1% of guests state that they anticipate benefitting economically from attending this event. Further, but not visualized, is that for 62% of guests, this was their first adult Extension activity, showing that we are actively reaching new audiences.

FUTURE PROGRAM EFFORTS

We plan to partner with the Fort Bend Library System to deliver the *Landscape Success* to a larger audience than its two previous years. 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 2021 program, we will conduct a retrospective online evaluation to see how our participants are continually utilizing knowledge and learned practices gained by their participation in this program.

Helping Texans Better Their Lives

2020 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 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. This year, due to COVID-19 restrictions, we participated in an online pilot program which, despite the lack of time to prepare for, was quite successful. **31** individuals enrolled in the Fort Bend County Fall 2020 virtual Master Gardener class, consisting of **15** sessions totaling **56** hours of education and in return are expected to give fifty hours of volunteer service to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension to become a certified Texas Master Gardener.



Sharing Knowledge

The Texas Master Gardener Program

What sets Master Gardeners apart from other home gardeners is their special training in horticulture. In exchange for their training, persons who become Master Gardeners contribute time as volunteers, working through their Extension office to provide horticultural-related information to their communities.

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 a complete active membership of **197** Fort Bend Master Gardeners. Each year, we typically offer our members 12 hours of continued education (recertification training) to help expand their knowledge and confidence. Due to COVID-19 limitations we were only able to offer **5** hours for 2020.

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We continued a Lunch & Learn program series of recertification training for our members, but COVID-19 impacts only allowed us to offer **3** hours in 2020. Topics for these programs range from taxonomy to plant research and data collection. Though we decreased our county-based programming, we were able to offer continuing education for our members totaling an estimated **550** hours from partner programs including Gardening on the Gulf Coast, Water University, Harris County Home Grown, Native Plant Society, Urban Harvest, Bexar County Backyard Basics, Texas Master Naturalist, among others.

RESULTS

The **31** individuals enrolled in the Fort Bend County Fall 2020 Master Gardener class will contribute a minimum of **1550** 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 2020, if all remain active, would contribute an additional minimum of **744** 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 2020 was the continuation of the Grow Your Own program series. This 6 class series was taught in part 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 2020, the Fort Bend Master Gardener Association has **66** members certified and active as Advanced Trained Master Gardeners. Each person dedicated 3 days of 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 Rainwater Harvesting. These specialists provide their service to present programming under our community outreach education program entitled Speakers Bureau.

FUTURE PLANS

The necessity to move virtual due to COVID-19 in 2020 has opened up significant opportunities for us to create hybrid programming moving forward. Staying optimistic that we will resume face-to-face events in 2021, we have found that some activities may still lend to an online format. Examples of these include state or multi-county programs with specialists involved, or may simply include activities like program area committee meetings. Our plans to build upon this strategy include training and professional development in areas of digital program formatting and media development, for our staff and for our master volunteer base.

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 advanced trained volunteers to assist in the planning and implementation of additional educational programs within our community, face-to-face and virtually.

V A L U E	
Earth-Kind® Landscaping	
	<p>The Earth-Kind® program teaches participants how to care for gardens and landscapes with environmentally friendly, research-proven techniques. Instructional topics include water conservation, responsible fertilizer application, and non-chemical options for controlling pests. Use of Earth-Kind® practices benefits Texas by saving water and protecting surface and groundwater resources from potential contaminants.</p>

Helping Texans Better Their Lives

2020 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 recent 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, 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 and the Fort Bend County Pecan Show and Richmond Pecan Harvest Festival. The vegetation conference was held prior to COVID-19 impacts. Our fall activities were diminished but not cancelled. Local leadership for the Pecan Harvest Festival was able to launch a virtual festival, including a range of online events, promotions, and education allowing us to continue educating residents about growing pecans in our region. Agriculture partners in this event included Fort Bend Farm Bureau, Texas Pecan Growers Association, and the Texas Department of Agriculture *GO TEXAN!* marketing program.

VALUE

Crop and Forage Production Education



Extension programs in crop production promote best practices that lead to reduced irrigation, safer pest management, and improved profitability of agricultural enterprises. This benefits Texas as a whole by contributing to the quality and quantity of water resources and enhancing both agricultural competitiveness and rural economies.

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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 production efforts, both Stephen Janak and Monte Nesbitt on fruit and nut programs, and Juan Anciso and Tom Isakeit on commercial vegetable production. This includes the continuation of a replicated variety trial on olive and Satsuma citrus. We have also joined the Southern Cover Crops Council to participate in multi-state research that will help many sustainable farmers across the south.

RESULTS

Outcomes from the annual Fort Bend Regional Vegetable Conference continue to look strong with a total guest and vendor count of **250** 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: Fort Bend Vegetable Conference

Activity Date: 2/6/20

Number of Participants: 183 (estimated total of 250 in attendance)

Percentages based on 138 respondents to the survey (Response rate = 75%).

Overall:

- 97% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the activity.

Anticipated Changes & Economic Impact:

- 69% of respondents plan to take actions or make changes based on the information from this activity.
- 57% 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 **11 counties!**

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| • 59 - Fort Bend | • 19 - Brazoria |
| • 1 - Waller | • 5 - Colorado |
| • 9 - Harris | • 13 - Unmarked |
| • 1 - Austin | • 6 - Other: 1 Brazos, 3 Grimes, 1 Gonzales, |
| • 7 - Wharton | and 1 Washington |

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 2021 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. With COVID-19 restrictions still in place going in to 2021, this program will be modified to say the least. Planning committee input suggests if cannot engage in face-to-face events in 2021, we would simply offer condensed virtual programs and look on to 2022 to move towards hybrid programming blending face-to-face and virtual events.

Helping Texans *Better Their Lives*

2020 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 Task Force

Serve as advisor and assist to implement annual fruit and nut 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.

Fort Bend County Master Gardener Association – Advisor and Program Lead

25 Speakers Bureau presentations given in 2020, reaching total audience of **1,170**.

Sustainable Agriculture Efforts - Southern SARE and Southern Cover Crops Council

Serve and provide input for future State-wide and multistate programming efforts.

Houston Food Systems Collaborative – Houston Food Bank

Resumed general membership after serving as board officer for total of 8 years.

Houston Area Urban Forestry Council

Active member and serve on Board of Directors as Education Chair.

Partnerships with Local Government

Develop and maintain ongoing partnerships with the Cities of Sugar Land, Missouri City, Katy, Meadows Place, Richmond, Fulshear, and 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 and Office Visits

Conduct an average of **2** site visits (homeowner & commercial) and an average of **2** office visits per month throughout the year. Numbers are down overall due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Coordination with Program Area Specialists

Regular cooperation with Larry Stein, Monte Nesbitt and Stephen Janak (Fruit and Nut), Fran Pontasch (Grape), Tim Hartmann & Mengmeng Gu (Earth-Kind), Jayla Fry (TMG), among 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, adding additional Fort Bend Master Gardener account to expand our abilities.

State and Regional Educational Efforts – Post COVID-19 Quarantine

Aggie Horticulture Facebook Live & Gardening on the Gulf Coast: Gave a total of **5** presentations on diverse landscape topics and facilitated and wrangled questions for an additional **35** presentations delivered by cohorts.

Helping Texans *Better Their Lives*

2020 Sustainable Agriculture Plan- Feral Swine Control

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

RELEVANCE

Fort Bend County feral swine damage is an ongoing and increasing issue among our producers, and landowners. On average, the Fort Bend County Extension Office conducts at least 15 site visits per month in rural development communities to meet with farmers and ranchers about feral swine damage prevention. This year with Covid-19 we were able to reach a total of 200 agriculture producers virtually through educational programming efforts by the Cooperative Extension Program. Often times the hogs are living along the river system in heavily wooded or overgrown areas where they multiply through prolific reproduction rates, while causing serious damage to agriculture crops in the area, and causing serious accidents with motor vehicles on the roadway. Feral swine have been seen sharing water sheds with domestic livestock midafternoon, when these animals are typically nocturnal. Among their many superior traits reproduction and adaptability has proven to be among their strongest. Fort Bend County has approximately 567,000 acres of land, and of this amount there is a considerable amount of undeveloped acreage which allows feral hogs to reproduce at an uncontrollable rate.

OBJECTIVE

The Feral Swine Program in Fort Bend County was started to address the issue the feral swine infestation in the county, where feral swine are in a competition for territory due to rural and urban development. This program targeted landowners within areas where feral swine were considered to be an infestation across Fort Bend County. Landowners were worked with on a one-on-one basis to provide information on how to trap, prevent, and eliminate feral swine issues. The Feral Hog Coalition met a total of 3 times in 2020 to plan and implement feral swine educational programming efforts through the Cooperative Extension Program. By partnering with various agencies such as Texas Parks and Wildlife, Texas Animal Health Commission, Texas Farm Bureau, The Feral Hog Coalition, Fort Bend County Master Naturalists Volunteer group, and the Feral Swine grant provided to the Cooperative Extension Program through APHIS; traps were set in various areas throughout the county to collect data. A result demonstration using applied research was conducted using different trapping methods. This demonstration included a corral trap, a step by step guide on how to select a trapping site, a guide on how to construct the trap, methods on how to trap the hogs, and contact information for feral hog removal. The Boar Buster and Jaeger Pro feral swine trapping systems were also replicated during these trials to determine the most effective means for trapping an entire sounder of feral swine.

The infestation sites were scouted for damage and baiting stations were set up to start training the feral swine to return to a particular site to feast. Game cameras were set up to monitor the sounder's activity and strategies practices in which the landowners could adopt. Traps were then built based on the environment, and hogs were removed from the trapping sites, transported to (TDA certified) buying

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stations (holding sites) where they were weighed. After the hogs are weighed at the TDA certified holding area, the live hogs are then purchased and shipped to a USDA certified processing plant for an average of .20-.35 cents per pound, which is a decline from the previous market price of .45-.60 cents per lb. Feral Swine are picked up from the buying stations and transported to a processing plant where they are then slaughtered, processed, packaged, and shipped for consumption. Some of the meat is shipped as far as Europe where this meat is in high demand.

RESULTS

As a result of the feral hog programs being provided by the Cooperative Extension Program, producers in Fort Bend County are becoming more successful, aware, and efficient in managing feral swine issues on their property. Due to Covid-19 and the restructuring of programming, results were collected virtually through a verbal evaluation process. Cooperative Extension Program conducted quality In-depth programming efforts by hosting multiple trapping workshops, programs on the basic biology of feral swine, sausage making/processing programs, and educating producers on proper ways to handle feral swine meat while avoiding contamination. As a result of the Fort Bend County Trapping Demonstration 100% of the participants will change their current environment to prevent feral swine damage, 100% increased their knowledge gained, 100% of participants increased their skill level in feral swine prevention, 100% of participants increased interest in subject matter, 96% percent of participants gained a new opinion about feral swine trapping, 93% of participants adopted new practices presented, 100% would make better informed decisions, 100% would participate in more feral Swine programs, 100% of participants economic conditions would change. As a result of the Feral Swine Processing and Sausage Making Program 41% of participants will now change their behavior in Feral Swine processing, 100% will use the new eradication methods presented, 100% will change behavior in using advanced technologies for trapping, 100% will change behavior when consuming feral swine meat, 50% will seek funding from USDA/other agencies to control Feral Swine, 50% will participate in county efforts to control feral swine, 80% will change behavior in trapping feral swine for profit, 100% will implement a feral swine management plan. Also as a result to programming efforts, 100% gained knowledge in feral swine processing techniques, 100% gained knowledge in eradication methods, 100% gained knowledge in Technology advanced hog trapping equipment, 100% gained knowledge in feral swine marketing and profits, 100% gained knowledge in feral swine diseases and contamination, 100% gained knowledge in feral swine biology, 100% gained knowledge in state regulations for feral swine, 100% gained knowledge in trap types, 50% gained knowledge in safe consumption of feral swine meat, 100% gained knowledge in USDA and other funding sources for feral swine control, 100% gained knowledge in county efforts for controlling feral swine.

With the funds provided by the Feral Swine Grant, more traps were built in other areas to show producers various trapping methods that can be used to prevent feral swine damage. The project still has ongoing research that will be used to continue providing the public with resources they need to become aware of feral swine damage and/or control. Since the inception of this program, more than 1400 feral hogs were trapped in 3 years, and the Feral Hog Coalition have built 27 traps at multiple sites throughout Fort Bend County and across the state of Texas.

This program and demonstration is still ongoing. It was determined through research, demonstration, and programming efforts that trapping feral swine in a corral style trap is the most efficient way to remove a large sounder. When trapping hogs it is imperative to trap the entire sounder. Monitoring your game cameras gives you a better idea of what's going on in and around the trap. Keep your trap filled with bait is imperative if you want to keep the hogs coming back to the trap. You must have a quick efficient plan to remove the hogs from the trap before trapping them, as they will get stressed and cause damage the trap, or even worst be inhumanly kept for any period of time. Hogs cannot be legally relocated to any site other

than a holding site certified by the state of Texas. Bait used inside feral swine corral traps varied from a vegetable compost mix soaked in molasses to whole dried corn, and damaged bags of feed from local feed stores and grocery stores (City Farmer, Tractor Supply Co., HEB, Kroger and Walmart). We saved an average of \$80.00 per trap, totaling over \$1500.00 by utilizing donated baiting/feed sources.


FUTURE PLANS

Conduct trapping demonstrations with new trap models purchased through the Cooperative Extension Program, work with government agencies such as The NRCS to seek more funding to continue research in feral swine eradication. Work with Texas Animal Health Commission and the soil and water conservation district to continue testing water sheds in hog infested areas.

IMPACT PLAN SUPPORTED BY: The Soil and Water Conservation District, The Fort Bend County Feral Hog Coalition, the Livestock Coalition, the Sustainable Agriculture Committee, Texas Farm Bureau, Texas Parks and Wildlife, APHIS, Texas Animal Health Commission, Walmart, HEB, Kroger, Tractor Supply Co., Damon Farm and Ranch.

CONTACT:

Derrick Banks, Extension Agent, Cooperative Extension Program Agriculture and Natural Resources, Fort Bend County.

V A L U E	
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.

Helping Texans Better Their Lives

2020 Sustainable Agriculture Plan- Small Scale Horticulture Production in Fort Bend

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

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, cover crop production, and adequate watering cycles. The Sustainable Agriculture Committee met 3 times during 2020 to plan and implement the Cooperative Extension Program Soil Testing Program, The Cooperative Extension Forage Improvement program, and to participate in the planning of future cover crop trials and programs in Fort Bend County. A total of 75 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. The Cooperative Extension Program provided result demonstrations, and educational programs on cover crop production, in order to increase the knowledge and awareness of limited resource producers growing a variety of specialty crops/cover crops for additional streams of income. Producers were educated on best management practices for producing specialty crops and cover crops. 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 3 times and made a total of 25 contacts during these meetings. The Cooperative Extension Program and The Southern Cover Crop Board provided education on planting, maintaining, and harvesting; cover crops and identified 10 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

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soil types across the region. A series of cover crop programs were conducted virtually in Fort Bend County. A total of 80 contacts were made during the cover crop series, in which producers were able to randomly view the grow sites at the University research farm where several cover crop trials are taking place before Covid-19 protocols took place. A step by step guide on how to select a grow sites for Cover crops and specialty crop 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 sale their produce. An ongoing crop study was conducted by Cooperative Extension Program on the campus of Prairie View A&M University. 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, in order to control feral swine around their crops. 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 Specialty Crops and Cover Crop Production.

RESULTS


Upon uploading the continuing research from the ongoing cover crop trial; producers have access to the data in implementation of these practices on their property. 100% of producers who attended the Cover Crop training gained knowledge on benefits of using Cover crops, 100%, 100% of the participants gained knowledge on How to grow rootstock seedlings, 100% of the participants gained knowledge on how to grow and harvest Specialty Crops. 100% of the participants gained knowledge on how to conduct a soil test, 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 cover crop practices on their own farm, 100% of the participants would recommend cover crops to others, 100% of the participants intend to grow cover crops and specialty crops. As a result of the soil testing campaign, a total of 50 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

Soil and Water Conservation District, 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:

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

V A L U E	
Crop and Forage Production Education	
	<p>Extension programs in crop production promote best practices that lead to reduced irrigation, safer pest management, and improved profitability of agricultural enterprises. This benefits Texas as a whole by contributing to the quality and quantity of water resources and enhancing both agricultural competitiveness and rural economies.</p>

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE
Providing Solutions

Making a Difference

Fort Bend County

2020 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 2020, 40 Fort Bend County adults completed the BLT *Be Well, Live Well* series. This program focuses on improving vegetable and fruit intake, meal planning, and adopting selected behaviors that can reduce the risk of foodborne illness. Of those participants, 34 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 locations, The Pinnacle Senior Center, UT Physicians, Mamie George Community Center and Fort Bend Gardens.

RESULTS - Post versus pre survey

- 38.5% increased number of times a day fruit eaten
- 32.5% increased the number of times a day vegetables eaten
- 20% increased the portion of lunch and dinner plates filled with fruits & vegetables
- 17.5% increased the frequency of planning meals before shopping for groceries
- 27.5% increased the frequency of using a list when shopping
- 25% increased the frequency of comparing prices when shopping
- 12.5% increased the frequency of washing fruits and vegetables before eating or preparing meals
- 12.5% increased frequency of days getting 30 minutes or more of physical exercise

Follow up

- 20% increased the number of times a day fruit eaten
- 35% increased the number of times a day vegetables eaten

Making a Difference

- 10% increased the portion of lunch and dinner plates filled with fruits & vegetables
- 27.5% increased the frequency of planning meals before shopping for groceries
- 35% increased the frequency of using a list when shopping
- 27.5% increased the frequency of comparing prices when shopping
- 20% increased the frequency of washing fruits and vegetables before eating or preparing meals 20.5% increased frequency of days getting 30 minutes or more of physical exercise

VALUE

Better Living for Texans



These nutrition programs teach low-income audiences to prepare nutritious meals, stretch their food resources, improve their food-safety practices, and participate in regular physical activity. This not only improves the quality of life and reduces the risk of chronic disease for participants, but also lowers public health care costs.

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Making a Difference

Austin – Fort Bend County Child Care Provider Conferences, 2020

Developed by Dianne Gertson, County Extension Agent – Family & Community Health

RELEVANCE

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 16th 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.

RESPONSE

Child Care Provider Conference:

In 2020, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service of Austin and Fort Bend Counties were scheduled to conduct 4 child care provider training conferences in Rosenberg. Due to COVID-19, only one conference was held with 24 attendees, who provided care for 544 children enrolled in 6 child care centers or family day homes. Topics included “Ages and Stages” and “Biting and Toileting”. Twenty four participants completed a written evaluation of the conference. A total of 96 clock hours of training were provided to child care professionals seeking to meet state mandated training requirements established by the state of Texas.

In October 2020, 218 Fort Bend County contacts were achieved via online child care provider training.

RESULTS

Twenty four participants completed a written evaluation of the conference. Results indicate that child care providers found the trainings to be very beneficial.

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INDICATORS	YES	NO
I learned new information	23	1
I will use the information learned today	22	1
I will use the information now	21	2
I will use the information in the future	22	1
The training will help me become more effective early childhood educator	22	2
The training will help improve the quality of care	22	1
Topics were relevant	21	1
Training was cost effective	21	2
I plan to attend trainings hosted by Extension	23	0

Moreover, **91%** of providers rated the training “Better” or “Much Better” compared to other trainings they have attended that were not conducted by Extension.

FUTURE PLANS

For 2021, collaborate with Austin County to provide child care provider trainings and encourage online child care provider trainings. In addition, I plan to work with District 9 Child Care Group to offer statewide virtual child care provider training.

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Making a Difference

2020 Fort Bend County Healthy Food Preparation

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

RELEVANCE

- 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 6th 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 Weekly What's Cooking Recipes

RESULTS

- 250 people learned about Grilling 101 via video demonstration during Fort Bend Regional Vegetable Conference.
- 19 persons attended Healthy Cooking Classes held at The Pinnacle Senior Center. Pinnacle Staff assisted with marketing the program and facilities
- Youth Cooking Camps held via Facebook Live. Four demonstrations with 334, 349, 189 and 73 persons reached.

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- Multiple food preparation videos, including What's Cooking Recipe videos o Crockpot Bread reached 122
 - Make at Home Seasonings reached 67
 - Spaghetti Casserole reached 135
 - Mexican Skillet Casserole reached 94
 - Make Ahead Ground Beef reached 133
 - Stroganoff Casserole reached 100
 - Red Onion and Almond Green Beans reached 69
 - Curried Red Quinoa and Peach Salad reached 60
- Utilized Path to the Plate commodity information on weekly What's Cooking Recipes.
- Numerous food preparation related social media posts
- Co-facilitated What's Cooking Path to the Plate for Southern Region Agents
- Approximately 2500 receive weekly What's Cooking Recipe via email distribution or FBC FYI

FUTURE PLANS

- ✓ Continue online videos to demonstrate healthy cooking
- ✓ Continue collaboration with Fort Bend County Libraries, the Pinnacle Senior Center and Mamie George Community Center to offer cooking programs
- ✓ Continue Youth Cooking Camps via Facebook Live presentations
- ✓ Promote weekly What's Cooking recipes incorporating Path to the Plate

Making a Difference

2020 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, Cooking Well for Healthy Blood Pressure 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, *Do Well Be Well with Hypertension* series, *Cooking Well with Diabetes* and *Cooking Well for Healthy Blood Pressure* were scheduled to be taught at Mamie George Community Center, The Pinnacle Senior Center and UT Physicians in Rosenberg.
- *Master of Memory* is a 6 lesson series focusing on strategies and tools to improve memory and was scheduled to be taught at Mamie George Community Center and The Pinnacle Senior Center. People can improve their memory with training and practice


RESULTS

- 4 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.
- After attending the DWBW series 5.4 (mean days) can follow healthful eating plan. Increased from 3.73, showing a statistical significance of .010

- 10 persons attended CWWD. Coalition members assisted with marketing, registration, data collection and facilities.
- An increase 21.4% (8) use Nutrition Facts when planning meals after attending Cooking Well with Diabetes
- An increase of 16.7% (7) use MyPlate when planning meals after attending Cooking Well with Diabetes
- Remainder of DWBW, CWWD and MOM classes not held due to COVID-19
- Diabetes Conference not held due to MGCC closed to the public due to COVID-19
- Diabetes and DASH diet one shot programs offered via video at The Pinnacle Senior Center
- Participated in District 9 Amazing Me Challenge – 52 persons reached
- Participated in Southeast Region December to Remember Challenge
- Online Video for Handwashing – 123 persons reached
- Numerous health related social media posts

FUTURE PLANS

- Offer DWBW and Cooking Well with Diabetes at several Fort Bend County Locations in collaboration with Coalition
- Work with collaborators to present 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 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>

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Making a Difference

2020 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.

RESPONSE

Texas Extension Education Association of Fort Bend is comprised of 4 clubs with a total of 38 members. The four clubs meet on a regular basis to conduct business and have educational programs. Educational programs hosted by TEEA included: "Holiday Bulbs", and "Shade Plants". Additional programs were planned but not held due to COVID-19. These included "Vitamins and Enzymes" and "Music". Additionally, Fort Bend County EEA was planning the 2020 District 9 EEA Spring Conference. TEEA met in January and February. The remainder of meetings and the Spring Conference, State Conference and Fall Training were cancelled due to COVID-19.

In addition to the educational programming, they provide community service throughout the county. In 2020, community service was limited due to COVID-19. The 4-H Leadership Lab Scholarships were not provided. They did not donate baby items to ASAP at Lamar CISD or gather to make baby blankets to be given at LBJ Hospital.

The volunteer time normally contributed was severely limited due to the inability to gather. Members are big supporters of the 4-H program and several volunteer throughout the year to help with projects.

TEEA officers and council delegates typically attend seven council meetings a year. This year only 2 council meetings and programs were held in January and February. District 9 Spring Conference and Fall training were not held. EEA of Fort Bend was planning to host the 2020 Spring Conference.

TEEA members participate in the county fair by entering exhibits and volunteering in the Exhibit Hall. They serve as volunteer judges at multiple county fairs, as well. As was the case for 2020, these activities were not held due to COVID-19. They have numerous committees that meet as needed to conduct the business of the Texas Extension Education Association of Fort Bend. Hopefully 2021 will see TEEA resume to normal activities.

Making a Difference

2020 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.
- Continue to offer state approved Prometric Certified Professional Food Manager Exam.
- 9 persons completed the food manager program; April and June classes were cancelled due to COVID-19; August and November classes were held with limited attendance due to COVID-19 and social distancing.
- 22 persons completed the food handler program; March and May classes cancelled due to COVID-19; remainder held with limited capacity due to COVID-19 and social distancing
- 2 persons completed salsa and relish with the remainder of home food preservation classes cancelled due to COVID-19

Results

- One hundred percent passing rate for Certified Professional Food Manager Exam
- 100% are very likely to practice knowledge and skills learned in Food Manager course
- 11 % change in using a thermometer to check doneness in food after attending the Food Manager Course
- 25% change in touching ready to eat foods with bare hands after attending the Food Manager Course
- In food handler, overall increase in pre to post test scores of 77.4 to 92. 68% (15) have had previous food safety training.
- In food handler, handwashing knowledge increased from 90% to 100%
- In food handler, knowledge of temperature danger zone increased from 46% to 86%
- In food handler, the act of removing dirt, soil, food or grease is known as cleaning increased from 91% to 100%.
- One hundred percent had a better knowledge of how to safely preserve food after the workshops
- Online video for canning Crushed Tomatoes reached 104
- “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.”

Future Plans

- Offer Food Manager class 4 times in 2021.
- Continue to offer Prometric Certified Professional Food Manager Exam
- Offer Food Handler class 6 times in 2021.
- Offer Home Food Preservation classes on demand via YouTube 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

2020 Fort Bend County Child Passenger Safety/ Booster Seat Campaign

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 2020 Fort Bend County Child Passenger Safety Program/ Booster Seat Campaign.

- 756 contacts were reached
- 26 new child safety seats were installed
- 2 old/unsafe seats were collected and destroyed
- 26 inspections were conducted

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 26 inspections conducted during the 2020 program year is \$51,688.00.

FUNDING SOURCES: Safe Riders, TXDOT

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FUTURE PLANS

We were able to accomplish our goals from year 2019 to secure additional funding for safety seats. However, due to the covid-19 virus our annual safety checkup event was cancelled and orders were issued for no safety seats to be distributed until further notice.

V A L U E

Passenger Safety



Participants in the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Child Passenger Safety Program learn how to properly restrain their child in an automobile child safety seat, reducing the risk of severe or fatal injury. The program creates public value by saving lives and by reducing health care costs and long-term disability care costs.

Making a Difference



Fathers/ Families Reading Every Day (FRED)

Leticia Rolland-Hardy, Fort Bend County Extension Agent- FCH

RELEVANCE

- Reading aloud to children on a frequent basis is one of the most effective ways to promote early literacy development among young children.
- Strong relationships exist between children's literacy skills, academic performance, and future income potential.
- Children who are read to at least three times a week by a family member are almost twice as likely to score in the top 25% on tests of reading ability as children who are read to less frequently.
- Children who read well in the early grades are far more successful in later years; those who fall behind often stay behind when it comes to academic achievement.
- When parents are actively involved in their children's education, children are more likely to receive A's, enjoy school, and are less likely to repeat a grade.

THE EXTENSION RESPONSE

- FRED is a literacy program designed to increase parental involvement in children's literacy development, with a specific focus on fathers.
- Parents of children enrolled in Head Start, Even Start, schools, and child care centers are presented with information to help them begin daily reading activities with their children.
- Since its inception in 2002, over 20,000 parents and children have participated in FRED.

IMPACT OF THE PROGRAM

- Three hundred and seventeen (317) parents and children completed the FRED program from Fort Bend County in 2020.
- When given a chance to express their agreement or disagreement with a series of statements related to the program, adult participants reported the following:

Statement	Percent Agreement
Got me reading to my child every day	65.3%
Increased the time I spent with my child	67.3%
Improved the quality of the time I spent with my child	59.4%
Helped me get to know my child better	62.2%
Helped me become more involved in my child's education	75.4%
Led to improvements in my child's vocabulary	62.8%
Led to improvements in my child's math skills	28.2%

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Helped my child with reading comprehension	74.2%
Increased my satisfaction level as a parent	49.0%
Improved my relationship with my child	55.3%

Parents were asked to share their experiences with the program, including any benefits that they or their children derived from participating in FRED. The following quotes are illustrative of the responses given by parents.

What did you like most about the FRED program?

- “I like spending the 1 on 1 time with my daughter and enjoying the good laughs.”
- “My daughter now likes to read for fun, not just as part of her homework.”
- “Got to know my beautiful girl better.”
- “It makes me read every day.”
- “The time we spend together.”
- “I already do these things with my child.”
- “Spending time.”
- “Help my child with reading.”
- “My child became an intentional reader.”
- “It makes me read every day.”
- “Child has to read to me every night.”
- “See my daughter [‘s] interest in reading.”
- “Helped my child with reading comprehension... It improves my child’s vocabulary.”
- “Independent reading.”
- “We had to read and learn together.”
- “That my kids read.”
- “Reading.”
- “Their vocabulary grows and they see how important reading is. Their imagination expands.”
- “Seeing my child happy when we read and act out what we read.”
- “Spending more time with my child.”
- “I like the FRED program because I got to spend more time with my child.”
- “It help[s] my child read more.”
- “Spend quality time with child.”
- “My child enjoys it!”
- “That it got me to read more.”
- “Helped my child to improve comprehension.”
- “I like that you get to read anything.”
- “To help my child read better.”
- “Get some time with kids to improve their reading skills.”
- “My daughter read to me every night before we went to sleep. It has become a part of our routine.”
- “I liked to get to spend time with my child.”
- “I enjoy watching/listening to him read and to explore more genres.”
- “I liked reading with my parents.”
- “I love reading all those children[‘s] and chapter books.”
- “It is very fun reading.”
- “The kids take the time to read and learn more.”
- “My child now reads aloud about 1-3 hours a day.”
- “The FRED program helped me get more into my book.”
- “Quality time together.”

Making a Difference

2020 Fort Bend County FCS 4-H Plan

Leticia Rolland-Hardy, Fort Bend County Extension Agent- FCH

RELEVANCE/BACKGROUND:

High quality youth programs 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

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RESULTS/EVALUATION

As a result of this event 437 participants were reached through the 4-H FCS program, committee meetings, association meetings, and the Fashion, Art and Beauty Program. Unfortunately, due to the effects of the covid-19 pandemic the Youth Fashion Week Camp had to be cancelled. This year 8 adult volunteers were utilized to plan the Youth Fashion Week Program but the program was cancelled due covid-19.

FUTURE PLANS

The program will continue in to 2021 with major program adjustments in order to help improve safety measures for all participants.

Making a Difference

2020 Fort Bend County Texercise Program

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

This year's results were skewed do to the effects of Covid-19. The Covid-19 pandemic happened at the beginning of the program and all programming was cancelled as a result. All senior centers were closed down due to the seniors being at an increased risk. As a result of this event 30 participants enrolled in the program. However, only 10 direct contacts were reached through educational workshops, brochures, flyers, and volunteers. The Texercise program showcased tremendous progress in flexibility and mobility of the participants when able to complete. 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. Only a minute sample of participants were able to

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complete a verbal self-assessed pre-test during 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, (30%) said that they did some form of physical activity daily. The post-tests revealed that (40%) improved flexibility, (50%) were able to identify food groups. (50%) reported that they would continue exercising after the program. (50%) 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 \$441.66.

FUTURE PLANS

This program usually shows dramatic improvement in the participant results. Previous program implementation results have shown that the length of time the program is implemented effects the program evaluation results tremendously. Plans are underway to help participants have a safer fitness experience.

Making a Difference

2020 Parenting Connections Program

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 sociocultural-economic arrangement that exerts significant influence on a child's behavior and the development of their characters. Any ignorance on the part of parents may lead to unwanted damaging effects on children's growth and thereafter may create misbehavior problems. 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, Fort Bend County Jail, and online via Microsoft Teams. The participants each received a total of 4 to 9 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, and Anger Management & Emotional Intelligence. 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

This year's results were skewed do to the effects of Covid-19. As a result of this program 89 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. (100%) said that now have a better idea of what they can do as a parent to build a healthy environment for their children. Many of the participants stated that the most useful thing they learned was to be patient and attentive while parenting. The estimated cost analysis and public value for the Parenting Connections Program is \$11,925.48.

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FUTURE PLANS The program will continue to be offered to parents in 2021.

VALUE

Parenting Education



Parenting programs from the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service increase participants' knowledge, skills, and abilities, which are essential to a child's development. Parents who are consistent, respectful, involved, and serve as positive role models increase their children's potential for success and help prevent delinquent behavior during the adolescent and teen years.

Making a Difference

2020 Fort Bend County Health & Wellness: Walk Across Texas Program

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 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 (WAT) was conducted among Fort Bend County Employees, and the Pinnacle Senior Center, as a County Wellness Initiative. WAT is an eight-week program designed to help people of all ages support one another to establish the habit of regular physical activity. WAT 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

Initially Fort Bend County had an obesity rate of 25.8 percent. Thanks to the WAT program and other fitness, health, and well-being programs the rate of obesity has decreased by .8%. Although the obesity rate is still alarming improvement has been shown overall due to programs like WAT. This year's results were skewed do to the effects of Covid-19. As a result of the program 859 contact were reached educational workshops, newsletters, and videos. There were 72 participants enrolled in the WAT Program for a combined total of 9 teams. Through their 8 weeks of physical fitness; the participants collectively walked a total of 7153.4300 miles. Community-wide programs like WAT 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.

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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.

V A L U E**Walk Across Texas**

This eight-week fitness and health program challenges participants to adopt a habit of regular exercise. Research indicates that a walking routine of this duration is more likely to lead to continued moderate exercise, which improves quality of life and reduces the risk of chronic disease (including type 2 diabetes). This program yields public value in the forms of reduced public health care costs and a healthier, more productive workforce.

Making a Difference

2020 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 the 2014-2015 school year there were only 14 certified teachers to teach 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 throughout Fort Bend County. Several project area committee meetings were held to help with the planning of the Robotics/STEM programming. A Fort Bend 4-H Robotics Club interest meeting was held in response to the Robotics Club Planning Meeting. We were also to start a partnership with one of the largest school district through their career exploration program. As a response to the global pandemic, we offer several virtual learning opportunities for our 4-H audience as well as the surrounding communities.

Interest Meetings	Date	Contacts
Interdisciplinary Project Area Committee Meeting	October 21, 2019	5
Robotics Club Planning Meeting	October 21, 2019	1
Fort Bend 4-H Robotics 4-H Club Interest Meeting	October 23, 2019	23
Interdisciplinary Project Area Committee Meeting	June 8, 2020	6
Fort Bend ISD Career & Technical Education Planning Meeting	July 7, 2020	2

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.

RESULTS

Program	Date	# of youth	Location	Activity
Robotics 1 EV3 curriculum	Nov. 6, 2019 – Feb. 12, 2020	14	Rosenberg, TX	Building and programming EV3 Lego Mindstorm Lego Kits
Hour of Code	April 4, 2020	5	Virtual Program via Zoom	Attendees worked through the Flappy Jack video game tutorial
Fort Bend 4-H STEM Week	July 20,2020- July 24,2020	38 454 views via Facebook & 350 min. of watch time	Virtual Program via Zoom & Fort Bend 4-H Facebook page	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Liquid Layers• Solar Power Oven• Tower of Hanoi• Calming Glitter Jar• Mentos Soda Car

New Robotics 4-H club was formed and the existing Drone 4-H Club – Wiggle and Wags grew by 7 members. Fort Bend 4-H Brazos Club went on to compete in the San Antonio Livestock and Rodeo Ag Robotics Competition, they were also set to compete at Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo Ag Robotics competition as well but it was canceled due to the pandemic.

4-H Clubs	# of youth	Location	Activity
Fort Bend 4-H Brazos Club	14	Rosenberg , TX	Building and programming EV3 Lego Mindstorm Lego Kits
Excel Adventist Academy -Wiggle and Wags 4-H club	16	Houston, TX	Mechanical Engineering and Drone Curriculum

FUTURE PLANS

Fort Bend 4-H will continue to work on increasing participation in the Robotics project. We hope the new partnership with Fort Bend ISD Career & Technical Education program will increase visibility as well as provide us the opportunity to offer career exploration programs for the students of Fort Bend ISD.

Making a Difference

2020 Fort Bend County 4-H Grows

*Developed by: Angela Romans, County Extension Agent – Urban Youth Development,
Damion Turner, County Extension Agent – 4-H & Youth Development, Amber J. Foster, Extension 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 facets of the Fort Bend County 4-H program for 2019 -2020 include:

4-H Organization		
597 4-H Members	70 Adult Volunteers	32 4-H Clubs
Curriculum /Group Enrollment – 53,261		
Ag in the Classroom – 52500	Biological Sciences – 402	Plant Science –321
Technology and Engineering – 38		

RESULTS

Fort Bend 4-H play large role in the 2019 Fort Bend County Fair. We assisted with setup as part of our county wide community service project “One Day 4-H.”



We also participated in the Fort Bend County Fair parade where over 15,000 people attended to kick off the week of the Fort Bend County Fair.



To address the needs of our 4-H youth during the global pandemic all programming was done virtually including not limited to club meetings, county meetings, and workshops. Our annual Award Banquet was a drive-thru award recognition event where 4-H members were able to pick up awards and take photos.



FUTURE PLANS

Fort Bend 4-H will continue to strive to increase overall membership while promoting diverse program with various 4-H projects. We will also strive to increase visibility throughout Fort Bend County by creating more partnership with community organizations and businesses.

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE
Providing Solutions

Making a Difference

2020 Fort Bend County World of Science

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

Fort Bend Master Gardeners Youth Activity Committee held monthly planning meetings, and went to virtual meetings during the global pandemic. The volunteer group also conducted an Intern Training for the Master Gardeners of the neighboring Victoria County.

Planning meetings /Intern Trainings

Youth Activity Committee- Planning Meeting –Sept. 12, 2019
 Youth Activity Committee- Leader Planning Meeting –Sept. 16, 2019
 Youth Activity Committee- Planning Meeting –Oct. 17, 2019
 Victoria County Master Gardener – Intern Training –October 2, 2019
 Youth Activity Committee- Planning Meeting –Nov. 20, 2019
 Youth Activity Committee- Virtual Planning Meeting –May 20, 2020
 Youth Activity Committee- Virtual Planning Meeting –June 18, 2020

We provided curriculum enrichment programs to provide hands on activities for STAAR testing and TEKS requirement subject matter for Fort Bend ISD and Lamar Consolidated ISD. We also participate in community events to provided educational activities as well as promoted the Junior Master Gardener Program.

School /Organizations	School District /Location	Curriculum	Objectives covered
San Jacinto Council Girl Scout Troops	Rosenberg	Junior Master Gardeners	Plant Science
Huggins Elementary	Lamar Consolidated ISD	Learn,Grow,Eat, GO!	Garden Setup
Quail Valley Elementary	Fort Bend ISD	Hatching in the Classroom	Life cycle of living organism

Pecan Harvest Festival	Downtown Richmond	Junior Master Gardener	Plant Science
Texian Market Days	George Ranch Historical Park - Richmond	Junior Master Gardeners	Plant Science
T.W. Davis Family YMCA	Richmond	Junior Master Gardeners	Plant Science

RESULTS

- **Hatching in the Classroom** – we reached **407 students** at Quail Valley Elementary of Fort Bend ISD. Derrick Banks -Extension Agent, Agricultural and Natural Resources, provided educational talks at the school covering topics of breeds, incubation, and parts of the eggs. He also candled the eggs at day 18 to display the various stages of embryo development.
- **Junior Master Gardener** – our Fort Bend County Master Gardeners Youth Activity Committee has reached **1,170 contacts** through their educational programs and community events. They have contributed **3,905 volunteer hours** to the Junior Master Gardeners program.

FUTURE PLANS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to continue to branch out, reaching multiple school districts with science enrichment curricula. We also planning on creating and using a social media platform to provide resources to schools and well as advertise the Junior Masters Gardener Program to the community. A special thank you to the listed school districts and Fort Bend County Master Gardener Program for playing an essential role in the implementation of the mentioned curriculum enrichment programs.

2020 Fort Bend County In-depth Summary Equine & Livestock

Damion Turner, County Extension Agent – 4-H & Youth Development

RELEVANCE

Fort Bend County has a constant growing demographic with rapid and constant environmental expansion. Fort Bend County's Livestock/Horse program areas have the largest interest and involvement in the county. With that level of interest, it is imperative to create and develop programming the cater to the interest of the majority. With the assistance of the previous Parent Leader Association, and the newly established FBC 4-H Advisory Committee we were able to identify need of the county. The county is also starting to see a massive shift from the traditional rural demographic into the more urbanized non-traditional demographic. Therefore, it is extremely important that we constantly and continue to educate our youth on the vital part agriculture plays in their daily lives.

- 50% of 4-H Membership are involved in Livestock/Horse Project Area
- 25% of FBC 4-H Members are involved with 2 or more projects areas under the Livestock/Horse Area

Target Audience:

This program area is targeted towards the 50% of youth within the Fort Bend County 4-H program with livestock and horse project area or those interested in the livestock and horse project areas.

RESPONSE

Fort Bend County Extension Agent 4-H and Youth Development partnered with local adult volunteers, adult parent leader association, local stakeholders, and coworkers to assist with the development. This project area deals with a wide range of subject areas. Therefore, it takes a lot of cooperation, organizing and planning to make these events a success.

- Needs assessment survey sent to all current 4-H members and families.
- Coordinated with stakeholder and parent leader association, and now new established Fort Bend County 4-H Advisory Committee for sponsorship funding for future program efforts.
- Coordinate with parent leaders association/Fort Bend County 4-H and club leaders to plan educational events

Events/Activities

- Implement educational programs and events with the assistance of parent leaders, co-workers, and adult club leaders.

Equine Plan

- **Turner's Tuesday Tips**
 - Monthly educational videos beginning in May, in which various topics related to equine/livestock project education. The use of various social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube). Over 1500 individuals were reached and impacted through online platforms.
- **Equine Project Member Highlights**
 - 25 FBC 4-H horse project members participated in the event. Members were asked to submit photos of active involvement with their horse project. The photos and write-ups were posted online weekly through our social media and online platforms. Over 1,000 individuals were reached through online platforms.
- **Equine Project competition trainings and clinics**
 - In person training were held in the months of August-February on the Second Tuesday of Every Month in which approximately 10-20 participated monthly. In conjunction with monthly competition trainings. Horse project clinics and education events were given through the months of August to March on the first Sunday of every month at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds. Approximately 10-20 were in attendance, with the efforts lead by club leaders and extension staff.
- **2020 Fort Bend County Horse Show (First)**
 - Coordinated and organized the first Fort Bend County Horse Show. This was a multi-county event with Fort Bend and Brazoria Counties. Event was held in Fort Bend County at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds. There were 10 FBC 4-H horse project members that participated in multiple: Speed, English and Reining events. Buckles and awards were donated by Bob Berg Buckles in the monetary amount of \$2500. Efforts lead by club leaders and extension staff.

Livestock Plan

- **Major Show**
 - FBC 4-H participated in most of the major shows offered in the state. Major shows such as: Houston, San Antonio, San Angelo, Austin and Fort Worth. FBC had a total number of approximately 250 livestock participants entered all five major shows given. Projects such as: beef, sheep, goats, swine, rabbits, poultry, as well as ag mechanics.
- **Major Show Validations**
 - Yearly validation efforts to officially validate show animals for upcoming major shows. Location at the FBC Fairgrounds. Three validation events are held yearly beginning in June with Market Steers/Breeding Heifer, 97 animals were validated in the one-day event. Fall Breeding Heifer Validation held in the month of October, 67 animals were validated. Fall Sheep and Goat Validation also held in October, 90 animals were validated at the event. Efforts were led by county staff, support staff and volunteers.
- **Livestock Member Highlights**
 - 50 FBC 4-H livestock project members participated in the event. Members were asked to submit photos of active involvement with their livestock project. The photos and write-ups were posted online weekly through our social media and online platforms. Over 1,000 individuals were reached through online platforms.

- **Livestock competition trainings and clinics**

- In person training were held in the months of August-February on the third Tuesday of Every Month (more events were often held in conjunction with the monthly meeting) in which approximately 10-20 participated in the efforts. Monthly meetings were held at the extension office and other various locations to evaluate livestock. Led by club leaders and extension staff. Planned and coordinated with PLA for quarterly livestock showmanship/nutrition clinics and prospect show. The annual Winter Extravaganza (January), approximately 400 in attendance. Multi-Species Showmanship Clinic Fall and Spring (March) Total of 40 participants. Efforts were led by county staff, support staff, and volunteers.

- **Vet Science Workshops**

- Vet science workshops worked in conjunction with the Vet Tech Certification Program, FBC has a total of three vet science clubs with approximately 60 members in the program area. Bi-Monthly hands-on programs were held for members to attend and participate. Workshops such as Injections site:15 participants, animal physiology:12 participants, and hippology practice:10 participants. Workshops were delivered by extension staff and volunteers.

Partnerships, Collaborations, & Interpretation

Agent partnered with stakeholders, parent leader association, co-workers and adult volunteers. As the new county 4-H agent I have the privilege to begin building relationships with local organizations and stakeholders. With the assistance of Fort Bend County parent leader association and co-workers we were able to implement successful programming.

RESULTS

Word of Mouth and post surveys were utilized to measure programmatic impact and educational change at multiple events. A customer service and need assessment surveys were created to assist with educational program development and change in program area. Survey was distributed electronically to all leaders and members in good standing through 4-H connect.

Summary of Evaluations:

The response was 100% in increasing the knowledge and attitude change of the youth and adults within the livestock/horse project area. Being a new agent to the county it is important that I build relationships and understand the demographic of the county. With the implementation of educational programming and livestock events, this has opened up a pathway to fill an area in Fort Bend County that has been recently lacking.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

With the assistance of Fort Bend County parent leader association, we were able to put on two prospect shows, and two showmanship clinics. Donations and sponsorships of approximately to assist with program expenses and funding.

- Capital Farm Credit, \$1,000
- Bob Burg Buckles/Awards, \$2500
- Farm Bureau, \$2000.00
- Damon Farm and Ranch, \$1500

Helping Texans Better Their Lives

2020 Fort Bend County Outcome Summary Ag Awareness & Outdoor Sports

Damion Turner, County Extension Agent – 4-H & Youth Development

RELEVANCE

Fort Bend County has a huge and diverse demographic; therefore, it is important that our program reaches as many of the demographic as possible. We must make sure that we allow for opportunities with non-tradition programming for those from the urban demographic. With the shift and constantly changing from rural to a more urbanized society. Our program must make sure we offer program that allow them to participate and have to full 4-H experience.

Target Audience:

Fort Bend County Extension Agent 4-H and Youth Development partnered with local adult volunteers, adult parent leader association, local stakeholders, and coworkers to assist with the development. This project area deals with a wide range of subject areas. So, therefore it takes a lot of cooperation, organizing and planning to make these events a success. More specifically the program the FBC Ag-tivity Barn is targeted to 4th grade youth attending schools in three different school districts in Fort Bend County.

RESPONSE

- FBC Fair Ag-tivity Barn (Virtual)
 - Program was targeted to 4th grade youth attending schools in three different school districts in Fort Bend County. Letters and informational brochures are mailed out in January to six school districts in Fort Bend County (Brazos, Fort Bend, Katy, Lamar Consolidated, Needville, and Stafford). This is a blanket letter used to promote and market the importance of education and the Ag-tivity Barn. Thirteen different project area and workshops related to agriculture and fitness. The 4th grade educational event is usually held in conjunction with the Fort Bend County Fair in September for a total of four days. Due to Covid-19 restriction the event was held virtually. Various volunteers were utilized to implement the virtual event. Volunteers/staff were utilized in their specific area of expertise to create specialized video to be disbursed to the participating 4th grade classes. Approximately 1,000 youth and adults were reached through the virtual efforts.

Shooting Sport/Outdoor Skills

- Coordinating with coaches and volunteers. Weekly practices for all disciplines on Tuesday/Thursday multi-discipline practices approximately 5-10 participants. Located at the

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FBC Shooting Range. Efforts are led by club leaders and extension staff. Implementation and planning of tournaments, competition, and trainings. Coordinated three local tournaments and competitions: Whiz bang (Cancelled due to Covid-19), Archery (Cancelled due to Covid-19), Small bore (rifle) (Cancelled due to Covid-19).

- Process of creating the shotgun discipline to FBC 4-H Program
- Formation of new Outdoor Skills Clubs to focus on Outdoor skills and wildlife focus curriculum.
 - Long Acres Outdoor Skills Club, 20 members

Shooting Sports Member Highlights

- 25 FBC 4-H shooting sports/outdoor skills project members participated in the event. Members were asked to submit photos of active involvement with their shooting sports/outdoor skills project. The photos and write-ups were posted online weekly through our social media and online platforms. Over 1,000 individuals were reached through online platforms.

FBC 4-H Virtual Fishing Extravaganza

- FBC Virtual fishing tournament open to all FBC 4-H members. Members were presented with the opportunity to compete in two fishing divisions (Saltwater/Freshwater). Participants were asked to send in photographs of their catch, with the caption #fortbend4hrocks. The winner was determined by the longest/biggest fish in each category. The winner of each category received a personalized buckle donated by Bob Berg Buckles in the value of \$250.00 each and \$500.00 total awarded . There were approximately 40 participants who submitted photos.

Partnerships and collaborations

Partners for the event include the Fort Bend County Farm Bureau – many of its directors and spouses and local Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists. Several of the board members and their spouses serve as presenters on the topics of corn and cotton. The Farm Bureau also provides the mobile agriculture trailer to use as an exhibit. The Fort Bend County Fairgrounds serves as the facility venue for the event. The 4-H Ambassadors assisted with giving presentation and leading groups. The Fort Bend County Master Gardeners volunteer their time to teach the gardening and horticulture sessions. The Fort Bend County Agriculture and Natural Resources Agent and 4-H Agents lead the sessions on fitness, healthy living and livestock. The Fort Bend County AgriLife, Better Living for Texans (BLT) Assistants, Family Consumer Sciences Agent and EFNEP agent also partner with the 4-H program to count this as a county supported BLT programming effort.

RESULTS

With the assistance of the Fort Bend County Fair association and AgriLife staff, we calculated the attendance numbers that participated with the event.

Summary of Evaluations

Increasing the knowledge of the youth of in agriculture is the most important aspect of the program. Being a new agent to the county it is important that I build relationships and understand the demographic of the county. With the implementation of educational programming and livestock events, this has opened a pathway to fill an area in Fort Bend County that has endless possibilities.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service - FORT BEND

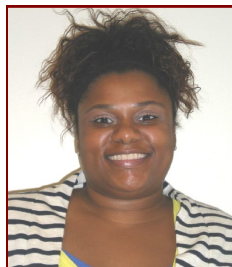
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