



Practicing collaboration and innovation to advance the unique interests of urban counties in Texas

**TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION**

Extension in the City

August 2023
Quarterly Newsletter

 PRAIRIE VIEW
A&M UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
AND HUMAN SCIENCES

Practicing collaboration and innovation to advance the unique interests of urban counties in Texas



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OUR WORK MAKES A DIFFERENCE.

IN THE LIVES OF TEXANS AND
ON THE ECONOMY.

MISSION STATEMENT:

“Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service works daily to make Texas better by providing innovative solutions at the intersection of agriculture, natural resources, youth, and health, thereby improving the well-being of individuals, families, businesses, and communities through education and service.”

VISION STATEMENT:

“Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service will be the leader in providing science-based information and solutions in agriculture and health to every Texan.”

SHARED VALUES:

“We value People, Programs, and Partnerships.”

Volunteers are vital to the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. Every year, some 100,000 volunteers team up with AgriLife Extension educators to do the hard work and the "heart work" of educating youth and adults throughout this great state.

Our volunteers are steadfast in their pursuit of serving Texas in meaningful and lasting ways. Volunteers are involved in every aspect of the Extension Service, including determining the needs of the local residents, planning and implementing programs to address these needs, securing resources, and evaluating programs. AgriLife Extension volunteers spend numerous hours working on tasks, such as leading educational programs, providing guidance and ideas regarding community needs, maintaining gardens, helping organize events at the county fair, helping a child with a 4-H project, or leading a project to serve the community.

Thank you, to all AgriLife Extension volunteers for the impact you make on the people and communities around you.

The Volunteer Spotlight for this quarter is on Fort Bend County!



Members of the VGEF project design team pose with a representative of the Texas Master Gardener Association with their 1st place award plaque

The Fort Bend County Master Gardener Association (FBCMGA) received the first-place award in the 2022 Texas Master Gardener Association's (TMGA) Search for Excellence "Teaching Site" category. This category recognizes a project that establishes a new, or substantially enhances an existing, physical location for educational purposes to display or share best horticulture practices. FBCMGA won the award with their Vegetable Garden Enhancement Project (VGEF). The goal of this project was to enhance learning experiences in natural resources conservation to Fort Bend communities by providing hands-on learning through on-site demonstrations. The award was presented at the Texas Master Gardener Association annual conference, then brought back to the county for a special presentation to the local members who made the project a reality!

Eat Smarter and Move a Little Harder! With Healthy Bites, Healthy Moves

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) has been helping families most at risk of suffering from hunger, food insecurity, and the inability to connect with available support systems since 1969.

Using “hands-on” experiences, both adult and youth participants complete a series of lessons on stretching food dollars, improving eating habits, and practicing food safety principles from EFNEPs primary adult curriculum Healthy Bites, Healthy Moves and youth curriculum Healthy Hero Adventures.

During both series of lessons, adult participants at AVANCE-San Antonio, Pre-K for SA, and South San Antonio Independent School District learn to prepare more meals and snacks at home, be more active, control portion size, and have more energy. Youth participants from San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department, Harlandale Independent School District, and School of Science and Technology, learn to build a healthy plate, set limits on sugar, fats, and sodium, be active, food safety, and to practice healthy behaviors.

Both have loads of fun while learning to eat smarter and moving a little harder to improve their health. If you are interested in participating contact Dario Dominguez, Extension Agent-EFNEP (Dario.Dominguez@ag.tamu.edu) at 210-732-9300 or visit <https://efnep.tamu.edu/bexar-county>.



Marva E Beck Junior Master Gardener Leader of the Year Award

The Texas Search for Excellence Awards Program is sponsored by the Texas Master Gardener Association (TMGA) with guidance provided by the Texas Master Gardener Coordinator from Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. The purpose of each award is to recognize outstanding Master Gardener people, associations, projects, and programs throughout the state of Texas for outstanding contributions within the state.

This award recognizes one adult, chosen from all submitting associations regardless of size, who demonstrates effective leadership in support of Junior Master Gardener programs in his or her Master Gardener association or county.

This award is given in the name of Mrs. Marva Beck, 2000 Texas Master Gardener President, for her visionary leadership, initiative, and ability to plant seeds of hope for the gardening youth of Texas. This award is given yearly in her name to commemorate her contributions to the JMG program.

Congratulations to our very own Angelica Gutierrez, County Extension Agent - Family & Community Health, for receiving this prestigious award this year. Angelica has worked for Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service for 18 years. Her commitment and dedication to improving the lives of families, youth, and the community is evident through her work with Learn, Grow, Eat & Go! (LGEG), is a popular research and evidence-based curriculum project of the International Junior Master Gardener program.



TEXAS 4-H ROUNDUP

Texas 4-H Roundup is the culmination of a 4-H member's year of hard work and dedication. It is designed to supplement the county 4-H program and provide learning opportunities in the areas of Ag & Livestock, Family & Community Health, Leadership & Citizenship, Natural Resources and STEM. Texas 4-H is committed to continuing its mission to prepare youth to meet the challenges of childhood, adolescence, and adulthood, through a coordinated, long-term, progressive series of educational experiences that enhance life skills and develop social, emotional, physical, and cognitive competencies.

Bexar County had a total of 32 4-Hers participate in Texas 4-H Roundup this year with numerous placings in various contests showing just how hard they have worked all year preparing for this very moment.

On the third day of this year's Texas 4-H Roundup, Food Challenge Contest teams Jayden's Angels (Nicole Compton, Emily Felty, Jayden Ingalls, and Samantha Richardson) received 2nd place in the Side Dish category and Come and Take it (Klaire Belzung, Julie Cosper, Elli Flowers, and Casey McGinnis) received 5th place in the Main Dish category.

In the Meat Judging and Identification contest, 1st Place in the Individual category went to Brigette Bettice, 5th Place to Reese Royce, and 6th Place Dakota Pieniazek! 1st Place in the Invitational Team category went to Brigette Bettice and Dakota Pieniazek.

In the 4-H Talent Showcase, Phobia Party (Hope Berry, Thomas Chacko, Elizabeth Gill, Titus Gill, Benjamin Flanigan, and Aaron Flanigan) received 1st Place in the Variety Show category and Maggie Ogea received 1st Place in the Vocal category.

The grand finale of the third day of Texas 4-H Roundup was Jayden Ingalls being presented with a \$20,000 scholarship from the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo at the awards assembly proving once again that you DON'T MESS WITH THE BEXAR (BEAR)!

During the fourth and final day of Texas 4-H Roundup, in the Educational Presentations contest, Brylee Meeks and Jayden Ingalls won 1st Place and Alexis Lange won 3rd Place in the Promote 4-H category, Emma Belzung won 2nd Place in the Health & Wellness category, and Reid Warner won 3rd Place in the Open Educational Presentation category.

Bringing Texas 4-H Roundup to a close was Brigette Bettice who won 1st Place in the Invitational Livestock Judging contest!



DINNER TONIGHT- SIMPLY DELICIOUS: A PARTNERSHIP WITH DALLAS COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (DCHHS)

The AgriLife/DCHHS team developed a Dinner Tonight recipe book for distribution at health-related events such as health fairs and Dinner Tonight Healthy Cooking Schools. Through this project, participants received a copy of the Simply Delicious cookbook and various educational reinforcement items (measuring cups/spoons, family mealtime conversation starter cards), and 50 participants attended Dinner Tonight cooking schools.

Program implementation and recipe book distribution will be prioritized based on Dallas County zip codes most impacted by COVID-19. Events will be held within those zip codes at community sites or partner agencies. Dinner Tonight Healthy Cooking School participants will be invited to complete the standard Dinner Tonight retrospective pre-post survey, which measures knowledge gained in meal planning, sodium, fat, and calorie content of food, and how foods impact health. They will also be asked to assess their confidence level pre-post in meal planning, modifying recipes to reduce sodium, fat, and calorie content, and safely selecting and storing fruits, vegetables, and meats. The goal will be a minimum of 100 participants, and we will aim for 50% of participants to complete the survey.

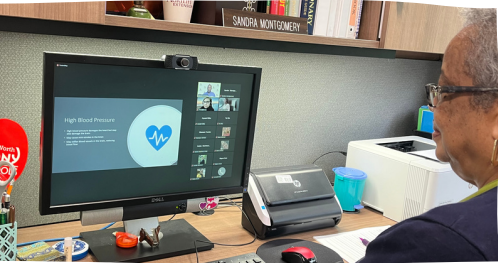


Dinner Tonight, the Dallas County Extension Agent, and Master Wellness Volunteers will host Family Mealtime exhibits. The goal will be four exhibits with 3900 recipe books distributed. To receive the recipe book, participants will be invited to register to receive Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service weekly Dinner Tonight recipes and cooking tips via email or social media. The number of registered participants and recipe books distributed will be tracked.



LUNCH AND LEARN: MASTER OF MEMORY PROGRAM IN DALLAS COUNTY IN-PERSON &-VIRTUAL FOR COUNTY EMPLOYEES AND OTHER AUDIENCES

In April, the Prairie View A&M University/Cooperative Extension Program's Family & Community Health Agent, Marvin Young, simultaneously implemented an in-person and virtual version of the Master of Memory program. Young met with Rosemont/Meadows Apartment Complex residents on Wednesdays while serving Dallas County employees via Zoom on Fridays. From March 24 - April 28, 2023, Young implemented twelve different sessions garnering more than 200 contacts in Dallas County. The audiences from in-person and virtual audiences included county professionals, single parents, seniors, and Extension staff members who learned how to utilize strategies to improve and increase their memory. This program initiated and strengthened a new relationship between Dallas County employees and Dallas County Extension programming. Participants who completed the program stated they enjoyed learning skills they could readily utilize. They learned the different learning styles, different types of intelligences, and the importance of relaxation and concentration to improving memory.



2024 Better Living for Texans Calendar Creation

As Better Living for Texans attempts to provide education to SNAP/WIC recipients, we must acknowledge all Texas counties' diversity. As the Latino/Hispanic populations rise in the State of Texas, resources in Spanish are needed, and the culture and cuisine must be represented. Extension Agent, Sarah Ashley Pisquiy, was selected as one of the nine agents chosen in the State of Texas. Ms. Pisquiy has offered transcription, translating, and transcribing services for the 2024 Better Living for Texans Calendar Creation state project. In addition to those services, Ms. Pisquiy created recipes for November (Native American Culture - Three Sisters Soup and December (Texas Pride Month). Before Extension, Ms. Pisquiy worked in event planning; those skills once used were an asset for the production of the BLT calendar, as other cultures were highlighted in the project. Through this unique experience, the agent learned about different culture's cuisine, food staples, food preparation, and nutrition. Aspirations are for the calendar to educate others on foods from other cultures.



We Want to Hear Their VOICE!

Summer 2023 Ultra Leadership
& 4-H Texas Round UP Experience Essay
by: Gabriella Pardo

Head, Heart, Hands, and Health. How can I apply all of those to the way I live in this world? It's a question most kids have when participating in 4-H. It's also a standard we hold ourselves to as we age. As I get older, I realize that I've grown and learned from many opportunities that were given to me. Since moving to Texas, my 4-H experience has been a big highlight in my teenage memories. Many could be listed, but two events that were important to me were the Texas 4-H State Roundup and District 4 Leadership Lab events.

To begin with is the 2023 Texas 4-H State Roundup, which took place from June 6th to June 9th at Texas A&M's College Station Campus. On the first day I arrived, I was blown away by the campus we were visiting and the number of people who attended the roundup. I talked with many people from across the state and got friendly with kids my age who were also attending for the first time. Interactions like those are very significant to me because I tend to want friends I can talk to all the time. Other than friends, I gained knowledge I could have never learned anywhere else, which is my pure honesty. Although I won't go to college for another two or three years, it was a privilege to learn about the process of applying and getting ready to enter college. I also narrowed down my decision on what career I would like to pursue, which is something most young people don't figure out until it's very late. I'm glad to have had the opportunity to attend such an informative and fun event.

Secondly, and most memorably, is the 2023 District 4 Leadership Lab. This was from June 19th to June 21st at Camp Copass in Denton, Texas. An hour into this camp, I found out that my social skills would be used at their full potential. Aside from conversing with others from outside Dallas County, I took it upon myself to learn more about the members of Dallas County as well. This went perfectly, and now I can say that I have many friends in my county. We decided to do refreshing activities like golfing, swimming, and kayaking. However, those could not even compare to when we got our "party on" during the dances that took place over the course of three days. Together we sat through many speeches and presentations given by our agents, and we were able to learn about our present and future involvement in 4-H. It was almost heartbreaking to watch everyone leave for home on the last day, but I was content with the camp and the time I spent with my new friends.

The question I stated at the beginning of this essay was one I've had during the past events I've been to. "How can I apply all of those to how I live in this world?" When I think back to how I used my 4 H's, I can pinpoint the times they were most obvious. I used my Head for clear thinking, meaning I took invaluable information in the coming years. I used my Heart for greater loyalty, signifying that I could connect with other people and make sure they felt included in activities that we all took part in. I used my Hands for larger service, implying that I made myself useful and helped people physically and mentally when they couldn't understand certain situations. And finally, I used my Health for better living because I could not have gone through these amazing experiences without ensuring I was comfortable and healthy for the days I dedicated to the events. I am truly grateful.

WELLNESS EVENT AT SOCORRO ISD

Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) partnered with the Socorro Independent School District (SISD) Wellnessland program. Extension Agent Luz Waters and Nutrition Education Associate Cynthia Mena presented the importance of healthy eating and how to prepare a healthy snack. The Wellnessland event reached 200 students in need from kindergarten through 5th grade within the Socorro Feeder Pattern. Students enjoyed learning to make EFNEP's Green Monster Smoothie, a healthy snack that contains spinach, yogurt, banana, and pineapple. Students loved the smoothie, and for many, it was their first-time trying spinach. Students received a wellness box, created a gift for a loved one, learned how to prepare a healthy snack, and enjoyed the holiday spirit.

As part of EFNEP's commitment to providing nutrition education to families and youth with limited resources, we continue to partner with the various school districts and community organizations throughout El Paso County. These students participate in a series of fun and educational lessons on good nutrition and food safety as part of summer programs, classroom, and after-school activities. Through fun and engaging activities, youth learn to: build a healthy plate, set limits on sugar, fats, and sodium, be active, food safety, and practice healthy behaviors.



EFNEP educators provide a cooking demonstration to elementary students at wellness event.



EFNEP youth educator Cynthia Mena and Office Specialist Lily Valles pose for at the annual event.

GARDENING & HEALTHY EATING ARE BRINGING KIDS TOGETHER!

Better Living for Texans has collaborated with the Boys and Girls Club after school program at Sunrise Mountain Elementary to implement Learn, Grow, Eat and Go! [LGEG]. This year the vegetable bed and several gardening containers yielded tomatoes, radishes, lettuce and spinach, and students were able to harvest and try the vegetables. A total of 170 students have completed the ten-week LGEG series, learning how to grow their own vegetables, and reaping the benefits of gardening including; stress relief, organizational skills, STEM learning and healthy eating habits.

With the help of Master Garden Volunteers, the Boys and Girls club staff, and Better Living for Texans, the empty school garden area became alive. Now, the garden brings kids together and more than 500 students get the opportunity to enjoy the space.

Talking about how healthy eating and gardening keeps making an impact on little ones, the curriculum Early Childhood Learn, Grow, Eat and Go! [EC LGEG], has been implemented in Head Start centers throughout El Paso County. The series was developed for three to five year-olds, providing exposure to healthy eating habits, learning about plants and gardening, and fun physical activity games. A total of 260 students have graduated from EC LGEG since the curriculum was released last year, and several centers are now waiting to start a collaboration in the upcoming school year. Teachers and students are delighted by the fun learning experience, and kids are learning that vegetables don't come from the grocery stores but rather provided by Earth!



Sunrise Elementary students planting tomato seedlings in their garden beds.



Congratulations to Lorena Iverson who recently transferred from a BLT agent to the Regional Program Specialist-BLT for the West Region.

FORT BEND COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION KEEPS GROWING!

Becoming a Master Gardener requires intensive training in horticulture. Potential members are expected to attend 12 full classes. Interns receive in-person instruction and pass a written test to certify, then are required to complete 50 hours of approved volunteer service. After completion of all the class and volunteer requirements, interns become Certified Texas Master Gardeners.

To remain a Certified Master Gardener members must maintain their certification through annual volunteer hours of 24, and annual continuing education of 12 hours. The Extension service helps through educational programming and volunteer opportunities, as well as approving other outside educational events. Nineteen new members of the Fall 2022 class were celebrated for the completion of their requirements on June 6.



Graduates of the Fort Bend County Master Gardener Intern class celebrate with a "Garden Party"

4-H CONTESTS SHOWCASE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Spring and summer means contests for many youth in the 4-H program! Fort Bend County 4-H members are active in project activities that prepare them for opportunities to showcase their knowledge and skills in a collection of contests we call "Round Up." Each county hosts events to help their members not only prepare for the next level, but also to enhance their learning experiences. With over 20 contests to choose from, there is somewhere for every 4-H member to participate if they choose. The competition gets steeper as members move to the district level where they compete against 4-H members from 18 other counties. Beyond that, senior 4-H members in 9th - 12th grades can qualify to compete against members from 12 other districts across the entire state of Texas. Fort Bend County had excellent participation with several members competing and placing at district and state competitions.

At the District 9 4-H Round Up, called "Big Time in D-9," Fort Bend County 4-H had 39 participants competing across 9 contests. In these 9 contests, Fort Bend County 4-H members came out on top in 6 contests including Educational Presentations, Fashion Show, Fashion Storyboard, Food Challenge, Duds to Dazzle, Talent Showcase, and Photography. We also had 4-Hers compete in Consumer Decision Making and Robotics.

At Texas 4-H Round Up, held on the Texas A&M University campus in College Station, 12 Fort Bend County 4-H members competed and had two teams placed in their contests. Our Duds to Dazzle team "Thyme and Thread" received 8th place and our Horse Judging team received 5th Place.

These 4-H members made memories that will last a lifetime, and cemented public speaking and critical thinking skills that will serve them well.



The Thyme and Thread team pulled double duty at 4-H Round Up participating in both the Food Challenge and Duds to Dazzle Contests. They like to say that anything can be made better with a dash of thyme and a length of thread.



These kids are not just horsing around! Whether it's horse judging or horse shows, they show off their skills and bring home accolades for Fort Bend County!

Harris County 4-H partners with HCC Northwest College

The week of June 5th through June 9th, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Harris County 4-H unit worked with Master Gardeners and Houston Community College to provide a youth summer camp for kids aged 7-12 at HCC Katy Campus. Forty-six children attended the camp.

Among the many fun and educational activities, campers made ice cream to demonstrate the states of matter; created a city in a watershed demonstration, watching as water eroded the land and created sandbars and deltas causing toy structures to move, fall, or to stay stable.

Campers also used the Katy Campus Makerspace and were treated to story time and crafts by HCC Library staff.



Learn Grow Eat Go! and Nature Explore Curriculum Training Delivered to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Houston

Using a "Train the Trainer" model, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Harris County 4-H agents Katherine Hamilton and Zachary Giblin, along with BLT agent Jasmine Carey, were allowed the opportunity to teach the LGEG and Nature Explore curriculums to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Houston staff to then implement with youth directly at their sites. The LGEG curriculum allows youth to better understand plants and how they provide for people's needs, the process of establishing a garden, vegetable tastings, demonstration recipes, and physical activities. The Nature Explore curriculum provides environmental and water education, forest literacy, and career pathways using nature as windows on the world. Jasmine, Katherine, and Zach planned and delivered a four-hour training that included presentations on the importance of positive STEM learning experiences and how it can impact youth outcomes, hands-on sample lessons from each curriculum, and practice STEM facilitation sessions. The agents worked with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Houston and Girls, Inc. as a part of the Imagine Science Partnership to have 24 Boys & Girls Club staff trained in preparation for summer programming. Boys & Girls Club staff reported that they felt better equipped to deliver positive STEM learning experiences after attending the training.



NEW 4-H IT CLOUD PROGRAM PARTNERSHIP

The 4-H program is always looking to improve and offer relevant programs that will benefit the youth of Tarrant County and Texas. In Tarrant County, we are working on creating more programs that will benefit high school-age students and allow more opportunities for them to be successful once they finish high school. This spring, I had the pleasure of meeting one of our new volunteers in our 4-H clubs, Alex Marques. Alex works as a Microsoft partner in information technology locally in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. During one of our volunteer leader's meetings, we got into a discussion about new program opportunities. Alex mentioned he would like to lead a 4-H IT Cloud Certification Program partnership with the Tarrant County 4-H program.

This month we had a county-wide interest meeting including a presentation at Polytechnic High School in Fort Worth to promote and start the online-based program throughout the summer. Through this program and through weekly assignments, student volunteers will complete tasks and learn about necessary resources to prepare high school-age students to take the Microsoft Fundamentals Certification exam. As a part of this course, students will also learn about job readiness skills and how to professionally make a LinkedIn profile which will help them become competitive for future careers. The course is fully online and self-paced. During our biweekly meetings, we will discuss future assignments, study materials, and answer questions that will best help the students for the following week. We are excited about this new course and partnership. This course will help many of our high school students receive valuable work-related experience for youth interested in a career in information technology.

We hope the success of this program will continue to provide relevant programs that will benefit the youth of Tarrant County.

Next Fall, I would also like to reintroduce the Techno-kids website building class for high school students interested in that program. Each program should continue after the summer if the interest level is there.

If you have high school students interested in future IT Cloud programs, contact Jordan Peldyak at Jordan.Peldyak@ag.tamu.edu for more information.

Program Objectives	Summer IT Cloud Online Class Dates
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Obtain a professional certification2. Establish professional credibility3. Realize a competitive advantage4. Increase future earning potential	Class #1: June 14th 6:00 PM Class #2: June 28th 6:00 PM Class #3: July 19th 6:00 PM Class #4: August 2nd 6:00 PM Class #5: IT Cloud Certification Prep and Exam (TBA)



LEARN TO EAT NUTRIENT-DENSE FOODS WITH LEARN, GROW, EAT AND GO!



Students from AV Cato Elementary's after-school Garden and Cooking Club, tasting Swiss Chard.



Students from Holiday Heights Elementary School ASPIRE program mixing our first recipe, Cinnamon Carrot Crunch.

With area schools being out for summer, I'm taking time to reflect on seven after school-programs that participated in Learn, Grow, Eat and Go! (LGEG) What a great experience for me to visit with the students and teachers and hear their joy and excitement after participating in this 10-week program. They loved trying new foods, learning new recipes, learning about nutrition, and sharing all that information with their friends and families.

Using this amazing curriculum from the Jr. Master Gardeners, our students tried 10 new vegetables or revisited them to see if they liked them. Several large changes in vegetable preference were noted from the pre-survey to the post-survey. Students increased Sugar Snap Peas preference from 18% to 40%, a 22% increase. Students also increased Bok Choy preference from 9% to 30%, a 21% increase. And finally, students increased their Cauliflower preference from 31% to 49%, an 18% increase. For many kids, it's scary to try new foods but they tried these 10 vegetables, and some found new foods to enjoy!

Students also tried these vegetables in 10 recipes, focusing on nutrient-dense vegetables. Of the 191 students, 41% indicated they made at least one of the LGEG recipes at home. During the after-school program, many students learned basic skills to make these recipes, including chopping, washing, measuring, mixing, grating, and using an electric skillet. When asked, "What is the most important thing you learned in LGEG?" a participant responded, "How to make food healthy and to be healthy."

Several nutrition lessons were taught including limiting sodium, added sugars, and saturated fats. One student learned, "That you do not put too much salt in your food and don't eat more sugar." The kids must have been listening since the average number of times a youth drinks sweetened beverages per day decreased from the pre-survey to the post-survey, from 1.6 to 1.5. I am confident that these numbers will continue to decrease as they continue to practice healthy eating and drinking habits.

Food safety is always taught in conjunction with nutrition education. "Wash your hands before you eat!" is what one student considers the most important lesson from LGEG. The surveys also indicate that more students are washing fruits and vegetables at home from a pre-survey of 67% to a post-survey of 75%. Proper

knife skills, organization, community, and kitchen safety are also taught as students help prepare the recipes.

The 191 students that participated in LGEG are now on a path to making healthier food choices by choosing nutrient-dense foods, limiting adding sugars, limiting sodium, and limiting saturated fats. Ms. Kaminski, one of the two teachers at AV Cato who taught LGEG, explains, "This is our first year doing the LGEG program; our students love it. We keep having new students wanting to join after hearing about the program from other students. We have one student from class who has health problems; he has been enjoying the healthy foods he is learning about that he can make at home with his mom, and he is excited to eat healthy foods now, which he had not wanted to do before. My students have learned a lot about gardening, giving them a feeling of ownership in our school they did not have before and realizing that even though they are little, they can do things with their parents to have fun outside and live a healthier life."

These students are also sharing what they learned with their friends, families, and community. I am so excited to see what youth we can educate and empower in the upcoming school year.

FRIENDS OF IPM AWARD FROM THE SOUTHERN REGION IPM CENTER

The mission of the Southern IPM Center is to champion the development and adoption of integrated pest management (IPM), the science of managing pests while protecting people, the environment and economy. Since 2003, the Southern IPM Center (SIPMC) has worked with USDA, Land Grant universities, Extension, and many other partners in promoting and facilitating the development and implementation of IPM in many settings across the region. Beginning in 2008, the Southern IPM Center recognizes Friends of IPM, or those with extraordinary potential to contribute to the development and implementation of research, extension, or implementation of IPM in the Southern region of the United States. The Southern region includes 13 states and 2 U.S. territories.

Wizzie Brown is a Senior Extension Program Specialist with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and a Board Certified Entomologist with diverse, extensive, robust, and impactful programming. Her programs focus on entomology for homeowners, gardeners, and pest management professionals. Furthermore, her outreach through podcasts, blog postings, and television media helps educate the public about insect pests that most people fear, and reaches far beyond the Austin metroplex. She has been known for her ability to explain insects in a relatable way, and has done so to many folks. In her career with Extension, she has reached a staggering 46,867 individuals through 973 educational programs.

In addition to traditional extension trainings, Wizzie excels at other forms of outreach such as educating thousands of youth about entomology with the help of 261 trained volunteers at the Insect EXPO to reaching pest management professionals and residents with her fire ant residential program that was adopted by a local neighborhood.

Wizzie was also able to successfully pivot programming during the pandemic, with the innovative Backyard Bug Hunt Webinar Series in 2020 followed by the creation of two new podcasts in 2021 ([Unwanted Guests](#) and [Bugs By the Yard](#)). Beyond these efforts, she has authored numerous extension, trade journal, and peer-reviewed publications and provided leadership and service to the Entomological Society of America-Southwestern Branch. It is clear that Wizzie's hard work has and continues to make a big difference to stakeholders and to the adoption of IPM in Texas and the Southern region.



BEXAR COUNTY

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Commissioner Sergio Coronado



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Commissioner Ann Howard
Commissioner Margaret Gómez



With the support of the County Judge and County Commissioners, each Texas A&M AgriLife Extension County Office offers the knowledge resources of the Texas A&M University System to local citizens for self-improvement, individual action, and community problem-solving.

Thank You.