

Extension Education - Making a Difference in Brazos County 2020 Executive Summary



Cooperative Extension Program



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AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Livestock, forage, and horse production continue to be three of the largest agricultural commodities in Brazos County. The following educational programs targeted agricultural producers:

Small Ruminant (Sheep & Goat) Education— A four session virtual series titled "Ranching Goats for Profit". Topics centered around incorporating meat goat production with existing beef cattle operations. Nutrition, health, reproduction, avoiding predation and marketing were the main points of discussion. Sessions averaged 65 viewers.

Youth Commercial Heifer Program—34 youth participated in the commercial heifer program where they selected, fed out and bred a pen of heifers. Learning opportunities included workshops, recordkeeping and interviews beyond daily management. 80 heifers netted \$260,000 in total sales directly benefiting youth participants.

Equine Education—Educational events conducted: Bryan Stock Horse of Texas (SHOT) Show that reached 1,200 people, Equine Evening at the Brazos County Expo, a 3-day adult horsemanship class and a 2-day youth horsemanship class. Brazos Extension Horse Committee (BEHC) contributions exceeded \$10,000 in grants and sponsorships.

Preserving Family Heritage: Estate & Legal Planning Seminar—Virtual seminar providing an overview of "Estate and Trusts" as well as "Understanding Probate and Alternatives". Participants were provided examples of detailed "flight plans" compared to the challenges survivors face when estate planning is not specifically detailed.

HORTICULTURE

Extension horticulture programs and services in Brazos County promote landscape water conservation and yard waste recycling, reduce fertilizer and pesticide use, add value to home properties, and educate youth on food production. 104 Master Gardener Volunteers gave 4,000 service hours to Extension programs, a \$108,800 gift to Brazos County.

- Face to Face Education (prior to COVID-19 shutdown) – 10 programs – 340 attendance
- Online Education Trainings – 8 Facebook Live presentations; 11 Southeast Region Gardening trainings
- Media Education – 54 news columns; 53 radio and television
- New Volunteers Trained – 15
- Master Gardeners re-certified – 89
- New Master Gardeners certified – 8

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY HEALTH (FCH)

FCH programs offer practical education to individuals and families.

Childcare Trainings. 18 child care providers earned 38 clock hours at an in-service and virtual training to attain state mandated training hours. Annual conference canceled due to Covid-19.

Child Passenger Safety Education/Car Seat Inspections. 13 seat inspections had the economic impact of \$15,298; additional education presented at College Station High School to expectant teens and young parents

Parenting Series. Eight parents attended classes focused on improving communication and parenting skills; classes helped parents to meet court mandates

Dinner Tonight Flourish at TAMU Healthy Cooking Groups. 60 Texas A&M University employees attended an in-person kick off cooking orientation event; 30 employees enrolled in group cooking classes March through August. Employees learned healthy food preparation, and food safety. Classes were offered virtually.

Health Talks. 91 employees with AgriLife Wellness, church members, and Head Start parents, Noon Lions Club hosted or attended sessions on breast cancer, stress management, money management, diabetes, and heart health.

Better Living for Texans (BLT). Classes and series emphasized healthy eating, stretching the food budget, and food safety to youth and adult community groups including Lincoln Recreation Center, Catholic Charities, Head Start, and Neal Elementary School, and the VA Clinic.

Walk Across Texas! (WAT). 250 teams participated in this eight week physical activity program. 288,435 miles were reported by team members. 70% of the teams accumulated 833 miles or more.

Certified Food Manager One Day Courses. 35 food service employees were trained on the latest food management practices that are based on the FDA Food Code and sat for the exam for their required five-year certification.

Master Wellness Volunteers. Three volunteers completed 40 hours for training, passed their exam, and are completing their 40 hours of service to become a certified master wellness volunteer.



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4-H AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Enrollment of 623 in 24 clubs, 141 Adult Volunteers, 99 Youth Volunteers

Pizza Ranch - Due to COVID-19, the live Ag awareness educational event has gone virtual and we will be sharing prerecorded videos with 4th grade classes in the next few weeks. Pizza Ranch allows young people to travel through educational stops referred to as "slices" to learn about the science and path that food takes to become pizza and the role that agriculture plays in the journey. Each 4th grader who attends the virtual event will be given a take home bag with educational goodies to share with their families.

4-H Virtual Educational Clips - Brazos County normally holds a series of five summer day camps to expose 4-H and non 4-H members to different project experiences that 4-H has to offer. This year we took those camps online and did virtual learning components on Facebook and reached over 2,000 people during the COVID-19 shutdown.

Animal Projects - Brazos County validated over 1,000 livestock projects for the 2019-2020 livestock shows. These included Market Steers, Commercial Heifers, Commercial Steers, Market Goats, Market Lambs, Market Hogs, Horses, Market Rabbits, Market Broilers, Market Turkeys and our growing Dog project. These projects were exhibited at their completion during the 2019 fall and 2020 spring livestock show seasons across the state and locally. Brazos County 4-H members are active on the County, District and State level including all of our Ambassadors: Livestock (10), Photography (2), Water (1), Equine (1), Fashion & Interior Design (1).

Non-animal Projects and Educational Activities - Active projects in Brazos County for 2019 - 2020: Citizenship, Computer Science, Consumer Education, Dog Care/Training, Fashion & Interior Design, Food & Nutrition, Healthy Lifestyles, Horticulture, Leadership, Outdoor Education, Photography, Public Speaking, Robotics, Shooting Sports, Theater and Performing Arts. Sadly, our kids were unable to participate in the District 9 Round Up as well as Texas 4-H Roundup. However, we had (5) 4-H Seniors who received scholarships totaling \$77,500.

Curriculum Enrichment and Outreach - Brazos County conducted a large outreach effort to kick off the start of the 2019-2020 4-H year. Informational/ Interactive activities were shared on Social media platforms to attract a new audience of young people. We are still developing new ways to obtain as well as gain new members through this pandemic.

Cooperative Extension Program - To strengthen the Brazos County 4-H program through educating limited-resource youth and families, the Learn, Grow, Eat & Go program was implemented at Harmony Science Academy, Brazos School for Inquiry & Creativity. and Arrow Academy. With the help of teachers and volunteers, over 300 youth learned about gardening, eating healthy and exercising 60 minutes a day. Again, this year, the Brazos 4-H Robotics Program with approximately 60 youth partnered with Harmony Science Academy, Brazos School for Inquiry & Creativity and other community clubs to conduct workshops and participate in Robotics competitions on the county level. This year 's Heroes 4-Health Kids in the Kitchen reached over 104 youth. It was a hands on cooking education in preparing healthier snacks as opposed to unhealthy options. The classes are led by youth ambassadors. New this year is the Kids Connecting Communities and Law Enforcement (KCCLLE). This program engages youth in the knowledge of Texas Law Enforcement by partnering with local police departments. It is designed to strengthen the relationship between youth and officers of the law. Brazos County youth also participated in 3 virtual summer camps. The camps were Youth Lab, Junior Youth Lab, and Ag Conservation Camp.

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Demonstration Idea Garden is a destination for tourists and county residents. It is a learning laboratory for Master Gardeners, as well as an educational site for residents to experience and gain inspiration for professional landscapes to utilize for their homes and businesses. The fiscal and service investment to date in this garden at the Brazos County Extension office is over \$475,000.

Brazos County Exposition Complex - Brazos County Extension Committees and Groups utilize the Brazos County Expo Complex for numerous activities that bring in visitors from across the state. These events include:

Southern Classic Youth Livestock Experience - Over 250 participants from Brazos and surrounding counties. The Southern Classic Beef, Lamb, Goat and Swine Clinic and Prospect Show is designed to provide an educational opportunity for 4-H and FFA families needing experience in the show ring. The weekend includes educational programs mixed with competitive experiences designed to prepare youth for their ultimate experience, "The County Youth Livestock Show".

Texas 4-H Horse Show - Over 350 4-H equine youth and their families from across Texas met in Brazos County to compete at the State 4-H Horse Show at the Expo. The Texas State 4-H Horse Show is the pinnacle of the 4-H horse project and offers opportunities to youth including up to 40 classes of competition, educational programs, scholarships, and college preparation opportunities.

Brazos Valley Fair & Rodeo - The Extension office supported the BVF&R livestock show by helping with shows and entries as well as directing traffic during unloading and loading periods.