This informational review of programs contains current educational information supported by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, which aims to improve the quality of life in Cameron County communities. The topics included are: Agriculture/Natural Resources, Family Consumer Sciences, 4-H & Youth Development, Coastal Marine Science, Urban Horticulture, Expanded Food & Nutrition Education, and the Healthy South Texas Initiative. There is a wide variety of extension educational publications available upon request from our office, or by visiting the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension website at http://agrilifebookstore.org.

### Agriculture

**By: Dr. Enrique Perez, CEA Agriculture**

**Pesticide Safety Training**

Agriculture producers with restricted state license for use of pesticides in agriculture participate in a Pesticide Safety Training for re certification/renewal of Texas Department of Agriculture requirements. Texas AgriLife Extension provides the educational training.

**Bull and Heifer Development Program for Beef Cattle Producers**

Beef cattle producers had the opportunity to participate.

More than 80 head of cattle entered their livestock in a 120 day feeding program. All cattle were preconditioned and were on feed at the Rio Beef Feedyard. At the end of the feeding program cattle were evaluated as to their average Daily gain and body score conditioning for today livestock market.

### Coastal & Marine Resources

**By: Tony Reisinger, CEA Coastal & Marine**

Our Rio Grande Valley and South Texas Border Texas Master Naturalist chapters comprised of 249 members, held 20 training classes and field trips for 37 and 28 interns respectively. Graduations will be held in April and in the same month the Rio Grande Valley Chapter will celebrate its 15th anniversary.

Our turtle excluder device (TED) project trained 91 shrimp fishermen aboard 32 shrimp vessels this quarter. Preliminary production figures from 2016 for the Brownsville-Port Isabel shrimp fleet indicate landings of 12 million pounds valued at $53 million (NOAA-NMFS). Production is down and the price is up. A looming challenge to the industry this year is the loss of crews through the H2B worker program.

The Texas Coastal Naturalist program co-sponsored a Fishing Seminar in Harlingen on February 20 with 301 attendees, a sea turtle & oil workshop in Brownsville in March with over 100 attending.
Watch Ur Bac’s Simulator is used to demonstrate the effect of alcohol and other drugs on driving skills. Fatal Vision goggles, which distort vision, are worn by the driver during the simulation experience to further duplicate the effect of alcohol or other drugs on one’s vision.

We have 2 Master Clothing Volunteers that will be teaching Basic sewing class in Cameron County. The purpose is to expand the resources of the county Extension Agent through the use of highly trained and experience volunteers who can respond to the requests for clothing construction information for low-income Hispanic women, and to increase the job readiness skills among participants involved and help them become aware of their increased employ-ability potential for part- r full-time sewing-related work.

Participants were evaluated after completing the parent education series using a retrospective evaluation tool. All participants are referred by Department of Families and protective services, Adult Probation and other agencies.

The Better Living for Texas (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.

- Improving Vegetable & Fruit intake
- Meal Planning
- Increasing Physical Activity
- Adopting behaviors to reduce the risk of food borne illnesses
Cameron County Healthy South Texas
By: Lilian Mezquida, CEA - Family & Consumer Science,
Elyssa Davis - Extension Program Specialist

Walk Across Texas Kick-Off at Rio Hondo.
A FREE, 8 week program designed to help Texans establish the habit of
regular physical activity. Texas A&M AgriLife partners with schools,
clubs, community groups, work sites, and cities incentives, support, and
events to celebrate the beginning and end of the 8 week journey.

- 17 teams participated
- 20,969 miles walked
- 7 classroom teams
- 17,872 miles walked

Urban Horticulture
By: Jennifer Herrera, CEA - Horticulture

Small Acreage
A series of educational programs were conducted
for beginning farmers, local growers and residents
interested in starting a business. The programs
consisted of a Soil Management for Local Growers,
Aquaponics, Organic Gardening, RGV Grape
Growing, RGV Vineyard and Home Winemaking
Workshop.

Master Gardeners
The Cameron County Master Gardeners
have hosted four Rainwater Harvesting
classes, a Home Composting Workshop,
and three Earth-Kind Landscaping for
Cameron County families. The Rainwater
Harvesting programs will continue monthly.

Growing & Nourishing Healthy Communities
Cameron County Texas A&M AgriLife Extension began its fourth year with the “Growing and
Nourishing Healthy Communities (GHNC)” project. The goal of this grant is to increase Cameron
County residents’ access to fresh produce by teaching basic gardening skills that allow and
promote the development of backyard and community gardens. A series of six educational
sessions were administered at each garden location to families participating in the GNHC
program. There are now 11 community gardens through the GNHC program.
Expanded Food & Nutrition Education Program
By: Oscar Zamora, Expanded Food & Nutrition

Supporting Texas Families with greatest need
Since 1969

October

4 Nutrition Education Assistants

974 Adults enrolled
140 Graduated EFNEP Program

January

2 Nutrition Education Associates

23 groups enrolled
1,211 Youth throughout Cameron County

- EFNEP partners with the WIC program in providing nutrition education to their WIC participants. In the months of October through January, 490 of the 974 adults enrolled in the EFNEP program were WIC participants.

- In 2016, (January 24th -February 24th) UTRGV senior dietetic student Jessica Vega who is currently enrolled in a 2 year coordinated dietetics program has been assigned to our office to complete 100 hours of her community rotation. The Coordinated Dietetics Program is designed to develop a competent entry-level dietitian in all areas - food service, clinical, and community. The program also combines both the academic and supervised practical training required by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

Volunteers make a difference

29 Volunteers

324 Hours of work to EFNEP in Cameron County

Texas Rate of $25.11/Hours = $8,136
4-H & Youth Development
By: Marco Ponce, CEA - 4-H & Youth Development
Cameron County 4-H members have been extremely active in a wide array of contests, educational activities, and community service projects.

Sale of Champions
$144,974

Several other 4-H members won breed and overall championships in the various breeding divisions. Cameron County 4-H clubs had well over 550 entries and were well represented in each of the shows divisions. We also had the first place Intermediate Livestock Judging Team and three High Point Individuals.

CEP 4-H & Youth Development
By: Guadalupe Castro, CEP - 4-H & Youth Development

HEROES 4-Health Ambassadors

The Heroes 4-Health Ambassadors attended the Texas State Healthy Living Summit in New Braunfels Texas on March 10-12, 2017. Samantha Clavo 16, Perla Sanchez 18, and Kayla Sauceda 15 represented Cameron County CEP 4-H as Teen Health Ambassadors at the Summit. They attended several sessions on leadership and healthy living, and were given the opportunity to present on the programs that they do in Cameron County to Teen Health Ambassadors from all over the state.

Sewing Basics
20 4-H Students

Healthy South Texas Specialist Elyssa Davis with student

How to design & build a functional robot
How to program robot to go through an obstacle course

Future Leaders of Brownsville
18 students participated