



Extension Education in Carson County
Making a Difference

*Improving Lives.
Improving Texas.*

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service has been dedicated to educating Texans

for nearly a century. In 1915, the agency was established under the federal Smith-Lever Act to deliver university knowledge and agricultural research findings directly to the people. Ever since, AgriLife Extension programs have addressed the emerging issues of the day, serving diverse populations across the state.

Through a well-organized network of professional educators and some 100,000 trained volunteers, Extension delivers practical research-based knowledge to Texans in all 254 counties. Our 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 are the hundreds of thousands of young people who benefit annually from Extension's 4-H and youth development programs.

Texans turn to Extension for solutions. Its agents and specialists respond not only with answers, but also with resources and services that result in significant returns on investment to boost the Texas economy. The agency custom-designs its programs to each region of the state, relying on residents for input and for help with program delivery. Here are just a few highlights of Extension's impacts on this county and its people:

Carson County – Summary of 2012 Educational Contacts

Educational Education Programs Conducted	197
Total Participants in Educational Programs	1,718
Total Group Method Contacts	7,851
Total Individual Method Contacts	19,501
Total All Contacts	27,352
Contact Hours	6,146
Office Contacts	1,636
Site Visits	2,614
Phone Calls	2,128
Total 4-H Members	115
4-H School Enrichment	148

2012 Carson County Lowering Input - Maximizing Profit

Relevance

Ag economics and water availability challenges were identified by the Carson County Ag PAC. Traditional crops such as wheat and corn double cropping requires significant inputs including high irrigation demands. Technological development in plant genetics has made significant progress in shorter season, lower input crops. Additionally, these short season plant varieties are becoming increasingly competitive in quality and production potential compared to full season. In the future, producers will become more challenged with lower available water for irrigation purposes which will have an impact on traditional cropping practices in our area. Producers must seek alternative lower input crops. Water is a very important and limited resource that needs to be conserved in a way that is not limiting the profitability of a producers operation.

Response

As a result, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the Carson County Agriculture Committee planned and put together programs focused on educating producers on ways to lower inputs and maximize profit emphasizing irrigation management and short season crops.

The 2012 growing season once again proved to be a challenge for area producers with drought conditions which affected all agriculture production areas. The Carson County Texas A&M AgriLife Extension staff assisted producers with their production challenges from irrigation management and practices, drought management, and insurance questions and concerns.

Targeted Audience

The target audience was area cotton, wheat, sorghum, and corn producers who have an interest in gaining knowledge on lowering inputs and maximizing profits.

Collaborators

Carson County Ag Program Area Committee, Dr. Steve Amosson, Dr. Brent Bean, Nich Kenny, Mark Kelley, Jacob Price, Dr. Ed Bynum, Dr. Peter Dotray, Dr. John Robinson, Carson County Commissioners Court, Attebury Grain, Panhandle Groundwater District, Carson County Gin, demonstrator Dudley Pohnert, and Dee Dee Jones.

Evaluation Strategy

A post evaluation instrument was administered to program participants as a means of determining the change of attitude towards lowering inputs and maximizing profits.

Educational Events

Crop Production Clinic - January 2012
Cotton Planning Group - January 2012
Irrigation Management meeting - February 2012
Wheat Meeting & Tour – May 2012
Wheat Planning Conference – August 2012
Cotton Tour – September 2012
Harvest Cotton Demonstration - November 2012
Pumping Plant Efficiency Testing with individuals

Timely Newsletters
 Timely News Articles
 Individual Contacts
 Drip Irrigation Cotton Tour – September 2012

Program Results

A total of 223 producers and Ag Industry Representatives participated in the lower input/maximizing profit educational programs throughout the year. 20 producers were targeted to complete an attitude change evaluation on lower inputs. 15 completed with useful surveys for a response rate of 75%. Acres represented from completed surveys were 18,000 acres.

	<i>Definitely Not</i>	<i>Probably Not</i>	<i>Undecided</i>	<i>Probably Yes</i>	<i>Definitely Yes</i>
Is it important to you to make the highest yields possible regardless of inputs and cost?	13%	20%	40%	13%	13%
Do you think it is possible to increase your profit margin by not producing as high of a yield?	7%	20%	40%	27%	7%
Can you be satisfied with good yields that can be achieved with less input?	0%	13%	33%	33%	20%
Do you feel like any of the new technology Irrigation Management could help you reduce irrigation cost and increase your profits?	0%	13%	33%	27%	27%

	<i>Have</i>	<i>Have not</i>
Have you adopted any new technology in your management system in the last year that will assist you in making irrigation decisions?	27%	73%

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension staff conducted educational events throughout the year to continue educating area producers on lowering inputs and maximizing profits. The results indicate that attitudes are slowly changing on lowering inputs to maximize profits.

Future Programming and Interpretation

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension staff in Carson County and Ag PAC plan to continue its educational efforts in the area of lowering inputs and maximizing profits with emphasis in irrigated crops for the 2013 year and that the outcome summaries will be interpreted to the Carson County Commissioners Court, Carson Ag PAC, LAB, and key stake-holders and businesses in Carson county.

Summary

Results of the surveys indicate that the programs were successful in providing education to gain knowledge and change attitudes towards the adoption of practices that will benefit producers in lowering inputs and maximizing profits in the future. With this year's drought situation producers were forced to make difficult crop management decisions especially concerning irrigated crops. High commodity prices coupled with low gas prices make it difficult to convince producers to consider lowering irrigation inputs in grain production. However, producers must realize that irrigation water must be utilized and planned according to specific crops and acreage planted for continued successful crop production.

Carson County Sustainable Crop Production

Relevance

With Ag commodities in Carson County contributing over 53 million dollars to the local economy, producers are constantly battling volatile commodity prices, weather related problems, weeds and insect persistence. A variety of programming efforts focused on assisting producers in identifying proper seeding rates for crops, determining soil fertility, pest management, grazing practice and other best management practices.

Response

Carson County agriculture producers attended 8 educational programs with information on various row crop production practices and policy updates. The Carson County Agriculture Program Area Committee assisted with planning of these programs and participated through introducing program presenters or presented information at programs. Carson County Producers faced severe drought during the 2012 growing season that forced many producers to make difficult production management decisions and the Carson County Extension staff assisted them in making sound production practice decisions. Programs included:

- Crop Protection Clinic - Discussed best management practices for corn, sorghum and water use efficiency. One hundred-five area producers attended.
- Individual contacts to meet with producers in the field to evaluate crop progress, discuss irrigation needs, and management decisions that producers faced during the year because of the severe drought conditions.
- Irrigation Management Meeting was held in February. Area producers looked at irrigation management and ways to lower irrigation requirements for crops. Irrigation timing and amount were looked at as ways of managing irrigation water. Nine producers attended
- Cotton Tour for producers to evaluate differences in cotton varieties under the same production practices for irrigation and dry land situation. Twenty-five area producers attended.
- Wheat Tour and Field Day to evaluate differences between wheat varieties and to gain better knowledge of production practices where certain varieties will benefit the producers, and to discuss disease issues and controls. Seventeen area producers attended this meeting.
- Cotton Marketing and Production for producers to look at market potentials and possibilities for producers, updates on new released cotton varieties, destroying volunteer cotton and corn, fertility needs, and timing and termination of irrigation in regards to crop maturity. Twenty-four area producers attended.

Results

As a result of these programs over Carson County agriculture producers gained valuable information at educational programs on fertility, grass and weed controls, new crop varieties, insect problems, irrigation practices, and marketing techniques to assist them with production decisions within their operation. A total of 15 continuing education units were provided at these programs for licensed private pesticide applicators. As a result of these educational efforts producers were educated and informed of best management practices that would help their over-all economic well-being.

Friend to Friend in Carson County

The *Friend to Friend* program's purpose is to encourage women to get regular mammograms and Pap tests for the early detection of breast and cervical cancer, when the disease is most curable.

Relevance

- Regular screening significantly increases the likelihood of finding cancer early, when treatment is more often successful.
- Women living in rural areas of Texas are less likely than their urban counterparts to have had a mammogram or Pap test within the past two years.
- Mortality is higher for rural women because of later diagnosis.

Response

- This project's goal is to decrease breast and cervical cancer morbidity and mortality for women living in rural Texas counties by improving screening rates and early detection of cancer.
 - Funding was applied for and awarded by the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT) to fund screenings and transportation to uninsured and underserved women in need of screening services.
 - The county Extension agent, regional cancer prevention specialist, and patient navigators plan and implement a *Friend to Friend* event. Women attending are given the opportunity to sign a commitment card to obtain a mammogram and/or Pap test within the next year and the option to complete a help request form for assistance in obtaining screening services.
- Agent provided a cancer newsletter which included recipes for cancer patients and general cancer information. A display was set up at the county courthouse on identifying lumps in the breast according to different sizes.

Impact of the Program

- *Friend to Friend* was implemented in 46 Texas counties in 2012.
- 35 women attended the *Friend to Friend* events on 8/20/12 at the First Baptist Church Fellowship Hall in the city of White Deer.
- Demographics of women who attended the events:
Ethnic breakdown:
 - White, Non-Hispanic: 86.96%
 - White, Hispanic: 4.35%
 - African American: 0%
 - Asian: 0%
 - Native American: 4.35%
 - Other: 4.35%
- 10 people were on the planning committees or task forces and 8 total volunteers assisted at party/events.
- A Nurse Practitioner urged women to obtain a mammogram/Pap screening at the events.
- 7 women signed a commitment card to obtain a mammogram/Pap test within the next year.

Success Stories

Through this program there were 4 who went and got screened. One of these that got screened ended up having a spot on her breast and had to go for further testing. At this point they said it was a fatty tissue but will be watching it and she has to return for another mammogram in six months. One of the survivors who have served on the committee has assisted 12 ladies within the county on getting their mammograms through the resources that were provided during this program. Through the two years of doing this program, I felt that the programming was well received and successful.

BLT – Carson

Relevance

3% of 6,419 Carson County population are food stamp recipients and 1,458 county residents are potentially eligible at 185% or lower of the Federal Poverty Income Level (Source: Statistical Data Chart for BLT Reference). Research suggests that limited resource individuals consume diets that are not in agreement with current dietary recommendations (i.e. Dietary Guidelines & Food Guide), potentially increasing their risk for developing chronic disease. Additionally, limited resource audiences are at a higher risk for food insecurity and hunger, which also impacts health. BLT will be discussed at each office conference throughout the year. The FCS Advisory Committee will serve as the planning group for programming.

Target Audience

Limited Resource Families at the White Deer Food Pantry

Response

Carson County participants in BLT is at the basic level and contributed at least 104 hours of nutritional education for limited income families and had at least 20 direct educational contacts. Family & Consumer Science Agent worked closely with the food pantry in White Deer. Agent assisted with the distribution of food and provided a BLT Newsletter monthly with nutritional information along with recipes for the food they are receiving for the month. Educational Programs consisted of the following:

- Building a Healthy Plate – March
- “Mini” Supermarket Trips – April
- Watermelon – uses, nutritional value -May
- “Cheeseburger Soup” preparation -June
- Provided food safety tips and thawing instructions for turkeys. -November

Partnerships & Collaborators:

-White Deer Food Pantry

Results

Clients learned one or more food resource management skills such as meal planning, comparison shopping, or shopping from a list. Clients learned one or more food safety practices such as proper hand washing, proper storage of food, and proper thawing of food.

2012 Carson County Ag Literacy

Relevance

As today's youth are further removed from farming, they do not understand the importance of agriculture and how it impacts their daily lives. Carson County and surrounding youth are no exception to this fact. The Ag Literacy Awareness program targeting 4th grade students will be an effort to increase their knowledge and understanding of the importance of agriculture has on their daily lives.

Response

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Carson County with the Youth LAB and Ag PAC planned programs targeting 4th grade students and teachers, which will show increased awareness and knowledge about agriculture and natural resources. 4th grade youth will have a greater understanding of how agriculture impacts their daily lives.

Targeted Audience

4th grade students from Panhandle, Groom, White Deer, and Claude Independent School Districts.

Collaborators

Panhandle ISD, Groom ISD, White Deer ISD, Claude ISD, Farm Bureau, Carson County Commissioners, Ag PAC, and Carson County Youth Leadership Advisory Board.

Evaluation Strategy

A pre and post test using the Turning Point System was given to all 103 fourth graders as a means of determining knowledge gained in programming areas.

Educational Events

Through the Ag Fair Awareness Day the students attended the following sessions:

- Session 1: Water Erosion
- Session 2: Cotton Gin
- Session 3: Grain Sorghum
- Session 4: Beef
- Session 5: Swine
- Session 6: Sheep/Goats
- Session 7: Water Conservation

Program Results

<u>Question</u>	<u>% of increase with correct answer</u>
1 bushel of corn can make enough corn syrup to sweeten how many cans of soda?	<u>28%</u>
Goats are ruminant animals, which means they?	<u>49%</u>
What did Eli Whitney invent?	<u>37%</u>
A 500 lb bale of cotton is used to make how many 100 \$1 bills?	<u>60%</u>
A mature hog (pig) has how many teeth?	<u>29%</u>
What is the typical age of a market hog when he is ready to go to market?	<u>33%</u>
What is a momma pig called?	<u>22%</u>
One use of grain sorghum is to feed animals. What else is grain sorghum used for?	<u>42%</u>
How many stomachs do cows and goats have?	<u>44%</u>
Farmers use good production management practices to decrease soil erosion from?	<u>58%</u>

Summary

Through these educational efforts students increased their awareness of agriculture and had a greater understanding of the importance agriculture plays in their daily lives as well as to their local economy. The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Carson County plan on continuing these educational efforts in the future to continue this awareness.

2012 Carson County Food Challenge

Relevance

The 4-H Food Challenge is a grass-roots effort developed by County Extension Agents to address the need for a new, “highly-charged” foods experience. Modeled after such competitions as the Food Network’s “Iron Chef”, the 4-H Food Challenge allows teams of three to five 4-H members to create a dish using a predetermined set of ingredients. From these ingredients, 4-H members must identify, prepare, and then present information related to the preparation process, nutritional value, serving size, and cost of the dish. Throughout this process 4-H members are applying the knowledge and skills gained through participation in the 4-H Food & Nutrition project, demonstrating their culinary and food safety skills, and continuing to learn about making healthier food choices.

The specific objectives of the 4-H Food Challenge are:

- Provide opportunities for participants to exhibit their knowledge of skills when preparing and presenting a dish.
- Provide opportunities for participants to learn from other team members.
- Promote team work.
- Give participants opportunities for public speaking.
- Provide leadership opportunities.
- Give 4-H members the opportunity to participate in a new, exciting competitive event.

Response

The goal of implementing the 4-H Food Challenge is to give youth volunteers a new opportunity for increasing knowledge related to foods and nutrition and being able to apply the knowledge and skills gained through project experiences. 4-H Food Challenge was promoted and marketed to youth and adult leaders. Leaders were trained.

The Carson County Extension staff and adult leaders planned and implemented the 4-H Food Challenge. Youth were given the opportunity to practice making a dish in four different workshops. Youth practice their skills by preparing a dish and explaining how they prepare dishes, knowledge of MyPlate, nutrient knowledge, and food safety. There were a total of 16 participants with 8 girls and 8 boys. Carson County had 6 volunteers to assist with the practice sessions.

Targeted Audience

Carson County youth ages 9-13 that are interested in the Food & Nutrition Project.

Collaborators

Carson County had 6 adult leaders help with practice sessions and 4 adult leaders helped during the District Food Challenge contest; Carson County Commissioners Court.

Evaluation Strategy

A Pre & Post Test were given to 15 youth in a group setting using a handout. There were 15 who completed the evaluation.

Program Results

The pre & post evaluation yielded the following results:

- There was a 27% increase of participants who knew from MyPlate which foods provide calcium.
- A 13% increase in the number that knew from MyPlate that protein builds strong bones & teeth.
- A 1% increase in the number that knew oranges & apples fit into the fruit category on MyPlate.
- A 27% increase of participants that knew the amount of servings from MyPlate for fruits.
- A 27% increase of participants that knew the amount of servings from MyPlate for grains.
- A 40% increase of participants that knew the amount of servings from MyPlate for vegetables.
- A 13% increase of participants that knew the amount of servings from MyPlate for dairy.
- A 40% increase of participants that knew the amount of servings from MyPlate for protein.

Impact of the Program

- 16 youth attended the 4-H Food Challenge practice sessions on November 5, 12, 19, and 26, 2012 at the War Memorial Building in Panhandle. Contest was on November 28, 2012 at MK Brown Building in Pampa, Tx.
- Youth included 8 girls and 8 boys, all being white, non-Hispanic.
- 3 people were on the planning committee and there were 6 volunteers that assisted at the practice sessions.

Summary

Youth were able to enhance their nutrition knowledge and gave the youth an opportunity to speak in front of a set of judges because each participant had a speaking part in the contest. Feedback from youth was that they like the group competitive event and enjoy having to work as a team but still have their individual responsibilities. Food Challenge will continue to be a part of Carson County 4-H. Future plans will be to continue to recruit leaders and 4-H members to participate in the contest.

2012 Carson County Youth Livestock

Relevance

Traditional 4-H livestock projects play an important role in the quality of the 4-H program in Carson County. In 2012 there were over 265 livestock projects validated in Carson County with over half of those projects being 4-H projects. There is continuing need for youth educational activities so that they have a better understanding of the important aspects of caring for their animals, exhibiting their animals, and quality assurance principals to ensure that they produce a wholesome product for consumption. Livestock project members also improve their speaking skills, decision making, citizenship and animal husbandry.

Response

A variety of project trainings were offered to adult volunteers and youth livestock participants. Project trainings were offered by both Carson County Extension Agents and Volunteer Leaders with expertise in subject matter areas. Project meetings and workshops focused on individual animal species including, beef, sheep, goat, swine, and horse. Agent recruited and trained adult leaders and parents throughout the year on various aspects of livestock projects to help use livestock to make blue ribbon youth. Agent served on the Carson County Junior Livestock Board and assisted with District Livestock Judging, District and State Horse Show and the Tri-State Fair.

Results

Carson County had a total of fifty-five 4-H members participate and exhibited their Swine Project, Beef Project, Lamb Projects, Goat Project, and Horse Projects. Carson County had numerous 4-H members exhibit their animals at major livestock shows in Fort Worth, San Antonio, Houston, Austin, and San Angelo. We also had 4-H members participate in the District Livestock Judging contest as well as the Tri-State Fair Livestock Judging contest.

With new interests from leaders the Meat Goat Project was added to the Carson County Livestock Show four years ago. There has been a lot of interest in the Meat Goat Project and has been a great learning experience for youth and leaders alike. Throughout the year the agent conducted a total of 10 group sessions to help train volunteers, leaders and youth in each of the various livestock project areas.

4-H Curriculum and Projects/Family and Consumer Sciences for Youth

Relevance

Youth need a variety of projects and activities to help them to learn and develop appropriate life skills that will contribute in forming them into productive members of society.

Response

During the year, 4-H members participated in Food Fight, Food Challenge, Nutrition Quiz Bowl, County and District Food Show, Consumer Decision Making, County and District Clothing and Textiles Fashion Show, Quilt Challenge, County and District Photography Contest, and 4-H District Round Up.

Results

During the year, 4-H members participated in the Clothing and Textile Project, which includes the County Fashion Show, Storyboards, and Arts and Crafts Show at the County and District level. Carson County had 10 participate at the District Fashion Show.

Carson County had 4-H members who participated in the District Consumer Contest. Agents held a 4-H Record Book Training in April 24th with 8 being present for the training. Agent held a bread workshop for 4-H youth. The workshop taught youth how to make biscuits, yeast bread, and how to decorate cupcakes. There were a total of 21 youth present.

Carson County had 6 youth who participated in State RoundUp. Three in 'Method Demonstration', 2 in 'Fashion Show', and 1 in 'Food Show'.

Carson County had 4 teams in the "Food Fight" contest at the Tri State Fair which is similar to the Food Challenge. In the Food Challenge contest, Carson County had two teams with a total of 8 participating. In the Nutrition Quiz Bow contest we had two teams which consisted of 7 youth.

In Photography there was a total of 60 photos submitted for the District Contest. Photography leader taught photography participants how to take landscape pictures by using the third and third method when taking landscape pictures. Carson County had a very busy and productive year.

Relevance

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension provides educational programs in community and economic development to enhance the quality of life for the residents in Texas. Community development programming targets the development of individual abilities and community support for creating and growing businesses, jobs, wealth, income, job preparedness, career development, understanding community capacity and resources, community infrastructure, etc.

Response

Agents have met throughout the year with different community organizations to provide assistance and information to promote and enhance Carson County. Agents have assisted with the Relay For Life Walk, July 4th activities, and each community special events such as Kick Back Day in White Deer and Groom Day.

Carson County Emergency Management

Relevance

Texas is subject to numerous unpredictable disasters, whether they are natural, accidental, or intentional. Texas has experienced its share of natural disasters in recent months, and Carson County and its residents are not exempt from these disasters. The purpose of this plan is to provide the opportunity for individuals, families, businesses, and communities in the county to increase their knowledge on how to better prepare for these unexpected events and disasters, mitigate, respond, and to recover from the effects of the disasters.

Response

The Carson County Leadership Advisory Board recognizes that educating residents of Carson County on emergency preparedness is an issue that will always need to be addressed. Throughout the year, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Carson County has worked closely with the Carson County Emergency Management Coordinator on efforts to educate the citizens of Carson County.

Results

Agent has conducted emergency preparedness workshops at all 4-H club meetings conducted Emergency Preparedness Workshops for all Carson County 4-H members. Agents assisted Emergency Manager in mock emergency exercises when possible that involved different community health issues and disaster situations. Carson County Animal Issues Committee also continued to meet and keep updated with issues that Carson County residents with livestock and pets could be faced with.

Agents will continue to work closely with Carson County Emergency Manager and provide timely educational programs and events to keep Carson County residents informed and prepared for unexpected events.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Carson County

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