



**Extension Education in Cottle County**  
*Making a Difference*

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service has 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.

## **EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE** *Providing Solutions*

Among those served 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 on this county and its people.

### **Cottle County – Summary of 2015 Educational Contacts**

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<b>Founded</b>	<b>1876</b>
<b>County Seat</b>	<b>Paducah</b>
<b>Area (sq mi)</b>	<b>901.59 sq. mi.</b>
<b>Population</b>	<b>1505</b>

#### **2015 Contact Summary (YTD)**

<b>Total Educational Events</b>	<b>2,023</b>	<b>4-H Clubs</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Total Group Participants</b>	<b>7,457</b>	<b>Office Contacts</b>	<b>2,141</b>
<b>Contact Hours/Educational Program</b>	<b>30,038</b>	<b>Social Media</b>	<b>56,940</b>
<b>4-H Members</b>	<b>53</b>		
		<b>Phone, e-mail</b>	
<b>4-H Leaders</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>Newsletter/Mail</b>	<b>4,751</b>
<b>Total all Group/Individual Contacts:</b>	<b>71,354</b>		

***A Matter of Balance- Managing Concerns About Falls***  
**Program Summary for Cottle/King Counties**

**Relevance:**

Research indicates up to half of community-dwelling older adults experience fear of falling and that many respond to this concern by curtailing activity. A majority of falls occur during routine activities and are usually caused by a variety of issues. In fact, a large portion of falls are preventable. Being inactive may result in loss of muscle strength and balance. It can also compromise social interaction and increase the risk for isolation, depression, and anxiety. Fear of falling can actually contribute to falling. *A Matter of Balance* acknowledges the risk of falling but emphasizes practical coping strategies to reduce this concern.

*A Matter of Balance* is an evidence-based fall risk reduction program that emphasizes practical strategies to reduce fear of falling and increase activity levels. Participants learn to view falls and fear of falling as controllable, set realistic goals to increase activity, change their environment to reduce fall risk factors and exercise to increase strength and balance.

Because *A Matter of Balance* is certified by the Administration on Aging and the National Council on the Aging, there is an abundance of data from national studies to indicate the program’s effectiveness.

Nationally, after completing *A Matter of Balance*:

- 97% of participants are more comfortable talking about fear of falling
- 97% feel comfortable increasing activity
- 99% plan to continue exercising
- 98% would recommend A Matter of Balance

**Response:**

After meeting with the Family and Consumer Science Committees in both Cottle and King Counties, it was decided to hold *A Matter of Balance* classes in both Cottle and King Counties. The classes were held in August in Cottle County and November in King County.

**Results:** Participants were evaluated using a pre-test and post-test. 5 participants completed both pre and post tests.

As a result of participating in *A Matter of Balance* in **Cottle County**, participants increased confidence that they can manage falls risk better and actual falls if they occur and that they can take action to help reduce the risk of falling. In addition, participants indicated that their concerns about falling are interfering less with their social activity and they report that they have increased their exercise levels.

Statement	Response (N = 5)		Percent Change
	Pre-Series	Post-Series	
	Scale: Very Sure (4), Sure (3), Somewhat Sure (2), Not at All Sure (1)		
I can find a way to get up if I fall.	3.00	3.50	17%
I can find a way to reduce falls.	3.33	3.67	11%
I can protect myself if I fall.	3.00	2.67	(11%)
I can increase my physical strength.	3.33	4.00	21%
I can become more steady on my feet.	3.67	4.00	9%
	Scale: Extremely (5), Quite a Bit (4), Moderately (3), Slightly (2), Not at All (1)		
During the last four weeks, to what extent has your concern about falling interfered with your normal social	1.75	1.50	(15%)

**Family and Consumer Sciences**

activities with family, friends, neighbors or groups?			
	Scale: Moderate, 3 or more times per week (6), Moderate, less than 3 times per week (5), Infrequent for over a month (4), Trying to start (3), Do not but thinking of starting (2), Do not and do not intend to start (1)		
How much are you walking or exercising now?	4.60	5.60	22%

Regarding the overall series

Statement	Response			
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The leaders were well prepared.	80%	20%	0%	0%
The classes were well organized.	80%	20%	0%	0%
The participant workbook helped me better understand the classes.	80%	20%	0%	0%
As a result of this class, I feel more comfortable talking with others about my fear of falling.	80%	20%	0%	0%
As a result of this class, I have made changes to my environment.	25%	75%	0%	0%
As a result of this class, I feel more comfortable increasing my activity.	60%	40%	0%	0%
As a result of this class, I plan to continue exercising.	100%	0%	0%	0%
I would recommend this class to a friend or relative.	100%	0%	10%	0%

What other changes have you made as a result of this class?

- My attitude toward exercise has improved as far as its importance.
- Exercise more faithfully.
- Exercised more.
- Keeping areas better lit and watching for pets when I walk.
- Checked throw rugs. Made them secure or removed them. Try to carry only one arm load of groceries at a time so I can hold on to handrail.

Other comments or suggestions?

- Keep exercising.
- Every older person would benefit using this program.

**Acknowledgements:** Texas AgriLife Extension would like to acknowledge the Paducah Housing Authority and King County for use of facilities for Extension events.

**Future Programming:** Programming in this area will continue as needed.

Significant Other Programs:

**2015 Cottle/King BLT**

6% of the Cottle County population and 1 % of the King County population are food stamp recipients and 891 of Cottle and King 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 and 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 educational programming offered to clientele (Senior Citizens, Headstart, students and parents, Paducah school students) includes monthly senior citizens programs, programs for Food Pantry recipients, programs for headstart students and parents, Organwise programming with Kindergarten, First, Second, Third and Fourth students and site visits.

**2014 Cottle/King Family and Consumer Science Programming**

Since Texas Cooperative Extension is almost the sole source of educational information relating to family and consumer sciences, the county Extension office offers educational programs to civic groups, employed persons, school, health clinic clientele, etc. Personal consultations and newspaper articles are other methods for reach the county populations with research-based information. Educational programming offered to clientele is School Health Advisory meetings, site visits and news articles

Cottle County Higher Education Prep/Scholarships

**Relevance:**

Paducah ISD is in need of increasing their ACT scores and college/trade school preparedness in its students. This Higher Education Prep/Scholarship plan will provide knowledge to parents and student preparing to take that next step towards higher education. Representatives from colleges, trade schools, financial aid institutions, and ACT experts will be utilized to develop and present educational programs.

**Response:**

Cottle County Extension staff worked collaboratively with Paducah ISD faculty and administrative staff to present a series of educational programs to students as well as parents addressing higher education prep and scholarships.

- \* Higher Education Task Force (1-7)
- \* Financial Aid 101 (FASFA) (2-16)
- \* Scholarship Workshop (3-2)
- \* Higher Education Newsletter (3-9)
- \* Higher Education Task Force (4-1)
- \* Higher Education Newsletter (7-1)
- \* Higher Education Task Force (8-13)
- \* Higher Education News Article ( 9-2)
- \* College/ Career Day – Goree (9-9)
- \* Ace the ACT (9-15)
- \* Importance of ACT Workshop (9-21)
- \* Higher Education News Letter (10-1)
- \* Higher Education Task Force ( 10-7)
- \* Student Financial Preparedness for College (10-8)
- \* South Plains Electric Scholarship Meeting (10-9)
- \* College day (10-15)
- \* Resume Building (10-21)
- \* Research Papers ( 11-30)

**Results:** In order to determine program results of the Cottle County Higher Education Prep/ Scholarship program a retrospective post was given to Paducah ISD Juniors and Seniors. A total of 15 of 22 total youth returned the instrument. Results are below:  
15 of 15 (100 %) knew that the ACT is important to help obtain scholarships as well as get into college.

13 of 15 (87%) knew the importance of career choices and that choice relates to a college degree plan.

14 of 15 (94%) knew the importance preparing a good resume.

## 4-H and Youth Development

15 of 15 (100%) recognized the importance of applying to colleges early.

15 of 15 (100%) recognized the importance of preparing scholarship applications early.

13 of 15 (87%) knew the importance of the FASFA.

### **Acknowledgements:**

The Cottle County Texas AgriLife Extension Agents would like to thank Paducah ISD Faculty for their assistance with this program.

The Cottle County Extension Office will continue its programming efforts in Cottle County and this information will be used as an interpretation piece to stakeholders.

### **Community Economic Development**

Provide leadership to local planning groups such as the Leadership Advisory Board and others to help facilitate educational programs and secure resources to address community and economic development needs. Teach individuals and businesses the knowledge and skills needed for building sustainable communities.

Develop new community leaders that can effectively lead organizations and communities.

#### Current Community Development Activities:

1. Developing Community Activity Center
2. Revitalize Downtown
3. Update Headstart Facility and add Day Care Facilities
4. Improvements at Stock Show Facility
5. Working with both Economic Development Committees



# Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Cottle County

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