

Extension Education in Fort Bend County

2011

Making a Difference

In 2011, Extension education was alive and well! The Texas AgriLife Extension Service has been dedicated to serving Texans for nearly a century since it was established in 1915 under the Smith-Lever Act to delivery research-based information from our land grant universities—Texas A&M and Prairie View A&M. Although Fort Bend has enjoyed a 65.1% increase in population growth in the past ten years, a low unemployment rate and higher per capita income than most any other county in Texas and the U.S., our records show that Extension education is still high on the list of important resources. I am proud to say that here in Fort Bend we have seen an uptick in Extension users, 4-H member enrollment and volunteer involvement over the 2010 figures. Several reasons for this surge exist: 1) the local economy forces people to seek information to become more efficient regarding spending and return on investments; 2) health concerns and the high cost of health care warrants better lifestyle choices, from eating healthy, to exercise, to the reduction of “bad” habits such as smoking, over-eating & the consumption of alcohol; and 3) local citizens are spending more time at home and in the garden where safety and reduction in travel seem to be the driving force.

Thanks to a very dedicated staff, outstanding volunteers, the support of Fort Bend County Commissioners’ Court, our stakeholders, and the interest of our citizens & user groups for a great 2011 and an even more productive 2012.

Developing Our Youth

4-H is a community of young people in Fort Bend, across Texas and across America who are learning leadership, citizenship and life skills. 4-H is about having fun, learning, exploring and discovering. In 4-H, young people make new friends, develop new skills, become leaders and help shape their communities. Our accomplishments in 2011 were:

- 580 youth members and 195 adult leaders were enrolled in 24 clubs across Fort Bend.
- 2,372 youth curriculum enrichment participants took part in programs ranging from foods & nutrition, gardening, career enhancement, healthy lifestyles and anti-bullying.
- 94,955 youth enjoyed special interest activities such as agricultural awareness, health fairs and an assortment of camp-related activities.
- 17 youth received scholarships totaling \$33,600 from livestock shows, the A.P. George Foundation and Texas Extension Education Association.

Special programs included:

JUNIOR MASTER GARDENER TEACHER TRAINING – Seventeen teachers from Lamar Consolidated, Fort Bend and Needville ISDs were trained using the JMG Curriculum. This in-depth training gave teachers the tools they needed to get four JMG programs started in local schools.

AG4U Day - 32 youth and adults of the All-American Fresno 4-H Club of Fresno, TX attended the Houston Livestock show & Rodeo AG4U Day. The highlight of AG4U Day was the All-American Fresno 4-H Club being awarded and recognized as the winner of the Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo video challenge. The video entitled “A Community of Anticipation” can be seen at www.youtube.com .

2011 Educational Outreach

Educational Programs Presented:

911

Attendance at Educational Programs:

348,649

Individual Contacts: 117,977

Volunteers Involved: 1,047

120,337 volunteer hours

valued at \$2,570,400



Cooperative Extension Program
Prairie View A&M University

OUTDOORS & HEALTHY LIVING SUMMER

CAMP—an overnight camp hosted by CEP to expose youth to outdoor activities, identify entrepreneurship opportunities in outdoor education and increase the utilization of the great outdoors to foster healthy living. A total of 26 participants, ages 8-13 participated.

2011 4-H DAY CAMP - 107 youth and 15 team leaders participated in a one-day 4-H Day Camp. This year's theme was "Summer Beach Bash." The youth participated in arts & crafts, made photo albums, gifts that were donated to nursing homes, enjoyed healthy snacks, games and a great presentation on summer vegetables and the MyPlate program.

Major programs included:

RECREATION ROADSHOW - Missouri City Parks and Recreation teamed up with CEP to provide outdoor education & nutritional education sessions and to promote the use of local parks during the summer in June and July. A different neighborhood park was used to host educational sessions each week. Outdoor education activities included scavenger hunts, archery, science games, and nutrition education which included a healthy snack with fresh fruits and vegetables. A total of 137 youth participated.

QUALITY COUNTS – Texas has 89,000+ 4-H and FFA livestock projects, the highest in the country, and these figures are projected to climb. In response Quality Counts was developed for youth who participate in livestock project areas to provide youth the opportunity to learn personal character attributes and acceptable livestock management practices. Of our 580 4-H'ers in FBC, 276 have completed the Quality Counts program prior to 2011. In 2011, an additional 64 4-H'ers were trained and verified. Leaders noted a change in 4-Hers' knowledge in both quality assurance and character education. All who completed this program were awarded a Quality Counts tote bag that was sponsored by Frost Bank. As a result, total contacts were 64 4-H'ers verified, 380 reached through individual methods, and 980 reached by volunteers for a total of 1,367 total contacts.

2011 EARTH KIND® Kids Kamp - 15 youth participated in the 3rd Annual Earth-Kind® Kids Kamp hosted by Master Gardeners. The focus of this year's camp was "How Plants Grow" which included several presenters on topics relating to plant growth & development, the role plants play in our environment, and plant pests & diseases. Afterwards, the campers participated in a beautification project for community service at the Fort Bend Fairgrounds.

MASTER NATURALISTS PRESCRIBED BURN

WKSP - The Coastal Prairie Master Naturalist held a prescribed burn demo on a 2 acre plot at Seaborne Creek Park under the direction of Texas Parks and Wildlife and AgriLife Extension. The focus of the training was to teach the 26 individuals the importance of safety, back-burning, wind speed & direction, the effects of humidity and legal issues.

PESTICIDE RE-CERTIFICATION TRAINING -

Because of the number of commercial, noncommercial, and private applicators in Fort Bend, a 5-hour pesticide re-certification program was provided. The training covered Transgenic Cotton Crops, TDA Laws & Regulations, Controlling Aquatic Vegetation, Brush Management in Pastures, and Calibrating Spray Equipment. Forty attended. A total of 135 were re-certified.

PESTICIDE PRIVATE APPLICATOR TRAINING AND TESTING -

This program provides educational training for individuals who want to become certified pesticide applicators. A total of 45 individuals participated in training efforts. Topics were Pesticide Laws & Regs, Record-Keeping, Environmental Considerations, Spray Equipment Calibration and much more. The test is administered by TDA with 100% passing the examination.

FORT BEND CO. CROP TOURS -

This year's crops tour focused on corn, cotton, sorghum and soybean production. Information was presented on varietal performance, insect & disease control, controlling alpha-toxins, and Nitrate & Prussic Acid poisoning. Participants were also treated to a herbicide result demonstration to control glyphosate-resistant pigweed (*Palmer amaranth*).

2011 EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS WORKSHOP -

Eighty-two were in attendance and represented 25 agencies that provide emergency preparation, response, recovery, and mitigation. AgriLife Extension provided information relating to the EDEN weblink and included the "Preparing for the Unexpected" and "After a Disaster" publications. The scope of this event was to inform and interact with other agencies to form a coalition of sorts.

MANAGING FERAL HOGS -

Extension and USDA Wildlife Services teamed to educate 60 attendees on legal issues, signs of damage, trapping methods, hunting/shooting, use of helicopters, etc. Surveys (52) indicated there were 35,943 acres impacted with \$197,900 due to feral hog damage. Attendees indicated that if management practices are followed a 55% savings could result. In addition, Fort Bend joined TDA's HogOut Program with results to be tabulated in January, 2012.

Strengthening Our Families

SEW & SO CAMP - a total of 40 youth attended two sewing camps in 2011 that included projects such as creating an apron, a pair of shorts, a pincushion, a pillowcase, two special community service projects, and a fashion story board - a new 4-H clothing project. The camp ended with an exhibit and fashion show for guests and parents to enjoy on Friday afternoon—the last day of each of the week-long camps.

2011 INFO. FAIR & SENIOR FRAUD EXPO - The Family & Consumer Sciences Committee planned the Senior Fraud Expo in conjunction with the Information Fair for 2011. Forty vendors, made up of local, regional and state agencies shared information in addressing the needs of clientele. Fifty-seven people attended the lectures that were provided: “Senior Medicare Fraud”, “Emergency Medical Response” and “Financial Fraud”.

PARENTING CONNECTIONS - Parenting plays an essential role in a child’s development and later-life successes. In 2011, a 4-lesson series was offered. Ten participants graduated after attending all 4 of the lessons. Lessons included Child Development, Communications, Positive Behavior and Developing Self-Esteem.

ABC CHILD CARE PROVIDER CONF. - This 4-county training attracted 172 child care providers and directors who provide care to over 3,360 children enrolled in 50 centers or family day homes. Evaluations indicated that less than 40% had additional educational education beyond a high school diploma, and 93% were licensed. Topics included safety, speaking gently, motor activities and interactive skills.

Improving Our Health

Facts relating to diabetes:

- 9.7 percent (1.7 million) of Texans 18 years and older have been diagnosed with diabetes
- 425,157 are believed to have undiagnosed diabetes
- 8.8 percent of the population has been diagnosed with diabetes in Fort Bend
- Type 2 diabetes continues to rise, particularly among Hispanics and African Americans
- The number of Americans with diabetes is projected to increase 43%, to 17.4 million by 2020
- Annual health care costs now average \$11,744 per person with diabetes
- Men with diabetes miss an average of 11 work days each year; women miss about 9 work days
- Almost \$1 of every \$5 spent on health care is for people with diabetes

Diabetes-related programs in Fort Bend included *Do Well Be Well with Diabetes*, *Cooking Well with Diabetes* through AgriLife Extension, and the *Diabetes Education Awareness & Prevention* Program through CEP.

DO WELL, BE WELL with DIABETES - DWBW graduated sixteen participants who attended the entire five week series. Participants, all diagnosed with diabetes learned about nutrition and self-care and received many incentive items for attending DWBW. The follow-up, *Cooking Well w/ Diabetes* was held in March with 6 graduates. Also, two Master Wellness volunteers assisted with educational presentations.

DIABETES EDUCATION AWARENESS & PREVENTION (DEAP) - DEAP was presented to assist in increasing the physical activity level of the 39 participants. The goal was to obtain 30 minutes of moderate to high intensity physical activity, 5 days a week. The evaluation surveys from the program revealed that most participants did engage in 30 minutes of physical activity at least 5 days a week; the most enjoyed workout activity was Zumba; the least was Yoga.

Other Health and Wellness-Related Programs

MAJESTIC GIRLS SUMMER CAMP - 44 young ladies of the Majestic Girls Summers Camp participated in an Eat Smart, a fruit & vegetable presentation. This presentation provided research-based evidence on the health benefits of fresh produce, and how a proper diet helps prevent the development of cancer, diabetes, and hypertension. The ladies shared their knowledge of the benefits of consuming fresh produce. When asked, “what do you know about fruits and vegetables?” they responded, “fruits and vegetables give us energy!” First Lady, Michelle Obama’s “Let’s Move” Campaign Dance was also utilized to encourage the young ladies to participate in activities that provide them with physical fitness needed to remain healthy.

THE ARC OF FORT BEND - Disabled children frequently miss out on social activities, which impedes their ability to better their communication skills and overall healthy well-being. The Arc of FBC works to include people with developmental disabilities in all aspects of society. In effort to support The Arc, Missouri City Parks & Rec. and CEP teamed to provide nutritional and physical fitness education activities to 18 participants. Each Arc member was provided with a healthy snack followed by fitness education with the ultimate goal of enhancing motor skills by increasing strength, coordination, flexibility and balance.

BETTER LIVING FOR TEXANS - The BLT program offered nutrition-related subjects designed specifically for food stamp eligible recipients. In 2011, target audiences included EvenStart, several Title 1 schools, SEARCH Homeless Shelters and local health fairs. Topics included *Back to Basics*, *Get the Facts*, and *Three Easy Bites*, while one shot events were made up of *Shopping Strategies*, *Stretching Your Food Dollars*, *My Pyramid*, *Food Safety*, *Reading Labels*, and *Facts on Sodium/Facts on Fat*. More than 200 were reached.

PRESERVING THE BOUNTY - The Family and Consumer Sciences Department provided a home food preservation workshop for 12 participants. The principles of water-bath and pressure canning were taught. Participants were able to taste bread & butter pickles and salsa after the canning demonstration. Included in the \$40 registration fee were a sample of each of the products canned, as well as a jar of apple jelly and green beans, and home food preservation guidelines & recipes.

Supporting Our Agriculture

2011 ANNUAL RICE PRODUCTION CONF. - Held in Beasley at Wendt's Camp House, specialists spoke on the impact of insects, crop expectations for 2012, effects of environmental stress, and an evaluation of the 2011 Rice Varietal Performances. There were 22 program participants; and the program was sponsored by Crop Production Svcs., RiceTec and Wiese Crop Insurance.

SUMMER BASIC HORSEMANSHIP CLINIC - This event was hosted by the FBC Horse Task Force at the George Ranch Historical Park with 12 youth participating. This 2-day, hands-on, one-on-one horsemanship clinic was presented by students from TAMU. They covered the basic skills including equipment usage, safety, and advanced skills (horse response to bit pressure, gait transitions and specialized event advice).

STOCK HORSE OF TEXAS (SHOT) CLINIC & SHOW - This clinic attracted 54 individuals seeking to strengthen rider and horse skills for pleasure and for occupation. Riders were taught to maximize horse

trainability, horse performance, and safety. Topics included Stock Horse Pleasure, Trail & Horse Trainability, Performance, Reining, Cow Working and Safety. A competition was held to evaluate gain in knowledge and skill with 103 spectators present. The event was sponsored by AgriLife Extension Service of Fort Bend County and the Horse Task Force.

AGRICULTURAL LITERACY FOR YOUTH -

Farm Bureau - At Sartartia Middle School, Extension and Farm Bureau provided an ag literacy program for approximately four-hundred 7th grade students. The program focused on the importance of Cotton, Corn, Rice and Dairy to Fort Bend County.

2011 AG'tivity Barn - Is an event and a collaborative effort with the FBC Fair Association. Many exhibits, depicting agriculture in FBC were constructed and facilitated by volunteers from the AG'tivity Barn task force, Master Gardeners, Master Naturalists, N. Fort Bend Water Authority and Farm Bureau during the 10-day county fair. Over 150,000 youth and adults were reached, plus 700 youth as part of school-day tours.

Fashions From the Cotton Patch - Over 100 people attended with 60 cotton items entered including 40 fashion storyboards. Participants enjoyed the full-day event and particularly the presentation by Dr. Allen Malone, CEA-AgNR about research trends in cotton as well as the demonstration by Marilyn Simmons, Galveston County CEA-FCS on the uses of cotton oil. The style show included both, a youth and adult division.

AgriLife Expo - Over 620 4th graders attended this ag literacy event which focused on beef, dairy, herbs and vegetables. Participants learned how each of these commodities contribute to the agriculture industry, the process each product goes through from farm to your table, and the by-products we enjoy from each.

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