



Extension Education in Gregg County

2016 Annual Report

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.

Gregg County – Summary of 2016 Educational Contacts

As of November 21, 2016

- **Total Contacts – 44,657**
- **Educational Event Contacts – 7,232**
- **Individual Contacts (Direct) – 7,494**
- **Individual Contacts (Indirect) – 24,055**
- **Marketing Contacts (Newsletters, Web Site and Email) – 8,969**
- **Volunteer Contacts (Individual) – 2,423**
- **Social Media Post – 505**
- **Social Media Followers – 2,885**

Beef & Forage Management Plan

Purpose & Background Data:

Beef Quality Assurance and the Texas Beef Quality Assurance program continue to be an important issue in Gregg County. To date, a small amount or number of producers are certified. BQA will be one of the driving forces in continued quality beef production and our producers need to realize this especially as its effect marketing issues.

Beef and forage production is still a major factor and contributor to the total agricultural income in Gregg County, accounting for 50% of the total agricultural income that is reported each year. The Beef Quality Assurance issue, as it deals with proper beef cattle health management and food safety, have come about in a big way since 2000. More than ever, beef consumers are aware of the issues that affect food safety and providing a wholesome, safe product for their families. Beef producers need to be more aware of this issue as it relates to their product, beef cattle. Gregg County beef producers, under the direction of the Oil Belt Farm & Ranch Club and Gregg County Extension Agriculture Committee, provides input into the program planning, implementation and evaluation of educational programs and activities to address beef quality assurance issues, as well as general beef cattle management as a whole. The programs planned will affect not only beef cattle management, but forage production practices as well.

Planning Group – Gregg County Extension AG/NR Committee & Oil Belt Farm & Ranch Club

Response

The Oil Belt Farm & Ranch Club meets on the 4th Tuesday of each month for their monthly meeting and educational program or speaker. The opportunity is also presented each month to offer one (1) CEU toward any Texas Department of Agriculture pesticide license to participants while attending the meeting, if at all possible.

Risk Insurance Program was held in Longview and was sponsored by the Oil Belt Farm & Ranch Club. Pasture, Rangeland, and Forage (PRF) insurance is a flexible risk management tool developed by USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) and reinsured by the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC). Losses are paid when rainfall or vegetative conditions during a specific time period in a specific area (grid) fall below a selected percentage of historic average conditions. Payments are based on final conditions in an entire grid, not on a specific property within that grid. Individuals select the time periods they would like to insure as well as the number of acres to insure during each time period. Livestock Risk Protection (LRP) insurance protects livestock producers from declining market prices. LRP provides coverage if, on a selected date, the actual price for a selected species and class of livestock falls below a coverage price chosen by the producer. In financial terms, LRP is similar to a put option that gives a producer the right to lock in a price floor for his or her livestock. The program was also presented by Texas Farm Credit.

Calving Difficulty Program was held at the Gregg County Extension office and was also co-sponsored by the Oil Belt Farm & Ranch Club in February. The purpose of this program is to acquaint cattle producers with calving management principles that will help minimize calf loss in their herds. The program was presented by Dr. Glennon Mays, DVM and Clinical Assistant Professor Texas A&M University College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences.



Agriculture and Natural Resources

The Beef & Forage Weekly Electronic Newsletter - The Agricultural Email list in the county and East Texas area, continues to grow monthly, as new producers ask to be added to the list. The email list serves several purposes, mainly to send out educational program reminders on a weekly basis, as well as the weekly Price Trends Cattle Price Report that is prepared weekly by Dr. Jason Banta, Extension Beef Cattle Specialist in Overton.

2016 Noble Foundation Tour was held in May and was a joint sponsored program between Gregg and Harrison County beef and forage producers. Producers traveled to Ardmore, Oklahoma to see the latest research based information on beef and forage topics, as well as feral hog management, pecan trees and horticultural hoop house design

Fencing Management Program was held in Longview in June, with Joel Kerby, Research Associate from the Texas A&M Research & Extension Center in Overton. Joel discussed fencing management, as well as lower cost use of electric fencing to manage beef cattle.

A Feral Hog Program & Tour was held in July at the Research and Extension center in Overton, as Dr. Billy Higginbotham led us through the latest feral hog management and tour of a variety of traps and management options on display at the Overton center.

The Annual East Texas Regional Forage Conference was held in Marshall with the five county groups of counties co-sponsoring the program this year. Gregg, Harrison, Panola, Rusk and Upshur Counties participated. Program topics were as follows; Feral Hog Management, Veterinary Feed Directive, Pasture Herbicide Updates, Cost Comparisons of Winter Forage vs. Conventional Supplementation and Future Trends in Cattle and Commodity Prices.



The Annual Oil Belt Farm & Ranch Club Social & Winter Pasture Program was held at a local ranch with Dr. Vanessa Corriher-Olsen as the featured speaker. Dr. Olsen discussed winter forage utilization in a beef cattle operation. The evening meal was sponsored by Kelly Equipment of Longview.

Beef Production Alternatives was a fall program that was presented in October. Reggie Lepley, County Extension Agent AG/NR in Walker County was the featured speaker. Reggie discussed niche marketing, as well as a presentation on his recent trip to South America for the Beef Ambassadors program and gave some real insights on different ways that beef cattle are managed around the globe.

Fall Beef Cattle Program was held in Longview in November with Dr. Jason Banta serving as special guest speaker for the regular Oil Belt Farm & Ranch Club monthly meeting, Dr. Banta discussed the new veterinarian feed directive, as well as internal parasites on beef cattle.

The Monthly Oil Belt Farm & Ranch Newsletter is published every month and sent via email to club members, those that do not have email, hard copies are sent by regular mail. The newsletter features program updates and reminders, as well as beef and forage related articles from Texas A&M and other institutions like the Noble Foundation in Ardmore, Oklahoma.

Results

During the 2016 year, five beef and forage educational programs were evaluated using the "East Region" survey tools that are located on-line. These four events were; The East Texas Regional Forage Conference, Risk Management Program, Fencing Management Program and the Calving Difficulty Program.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

2016 East Texas Regional Forage Conference

Average head of cattle managed from the participants – 125.68 head
Average number of acres managed from participants – 429.78
Total anticipated economic benefit per acre - \$12.52
Total anticipated economic benefit per head - \$14.95
Average total economic impact per producers operation - \$7800.73
Total economic impact for this program – \$280,827.00



2016 Risk Management Program

Average head of cattle managed from the participants – 120 head
Average number of acres managed from participants – 320.55
Total anticipated economic benefit per acre - \$7.50
Total anticipated economic benefit per head - \$13.36
Average total economic impact per producers operation - \$4031.25
Total economic impact for this program – \$20,156.25

2016 Fencing Management Program

Average head of cattle managed from the participants - 101 head
Average number of acres managed from participants – 310.25
Total anticipated economic benefit per acre - \$10.38
Total anticipated economic benefit per head - \$11.85
Average total economic impact per producers operation - \$4,696.30
Total economic impact for this program – \$46,963.00

2016 Calving Difficulty Program

Average head of cattle managed from the participants - 88 head
Average number of acres managed from participants – 198
Average total anticipated economic benefit per acre - \$13.17
Average total anticipated economic benefit per head - \$13.02
Average total economic impact per producers operation - \$1,301.05
Total economic impact for this program – \$11,709.50

Total economic impact for the Beef & Forage major programs held in 2016 in Beef & Forage - \$359,655.75

2016 Beef & Forage Program Notes...

Office Contacts - 265
On-Site Contacts - 723
Phone Contacts - 288
Contacts by Extension Volunteers - 330
Email Contacts – 22,400
Newsletter Contacts - 960

Other Agricultural Related Programming Efforts (Base AG/NR Plan and Master Gardener Program)

Planning Group – Gregg County Extension AG/NR Committee, Gregg County Extension Beekeeper's Committee & Gregg County Master Gardener Association

Agriculture and Natural Resources

The Longview Beekeeper's Association was started in Gregg County in June 2015. The club meets on the 4th Thursday of each month and features club business and then a program speaker each meeting. The club averages 40 to 50 members each meeting and continues to grow in membership. The club became official in September of 2015, voting and approving the club by-laws. This new beekeeper's association serves a wide area, including members from not only Gregg County, but Harrison, Rusk and Upshur Counties as well. In 2016 the Gregg County Extension Beekeeping Committee was also formed due to the popularity of beekeeping in the area to give direction on educational programming efforts in the county.

Mass Media Contacts are achieved through a regular, weekly news column that is written and appears in the Sunday edition of the Longview News Journal. There is also a regular blog in the Longview News Journal that features comments and educational materials dealing with home horticulture topics.

The New Landowners Program Series was held in 2016, was held each month, starting in January and was completed in September of this year. Participants heard information on the following topics; Property Tax Valuations, Beekeeping Basics, USDA EQIP & Other Programs, Basis Forage Production, Using Herbicides as a Tool, Basis Beef Production, Pond Management, Feral Hog Management and Fencing Basics. Participants also received a three-ring binder with printed information and Extension publications as a reference guide. Plans are to hold this program series every two years.



Annual Pesticide Credit Hour Program was held in January with over 80 participants, who had the opportunity to earn five credit hours toward their Texas Department of Agriculture pesticide license. Various topics were presented and attendees from several counties participated in this annual event.

North East Texas Wine Grower's Field Day was held in Harleton, Texas at the Enoch's Stomp Winery with Gregg and Harrison County Extension offices coordinating this event. Topics included; -Fungal Pressure Management, Harvest Timing, Insect Control and tours of the winery were offered that afternoon. The noon meal was sponsored by Legacy AG Credit of Longview.



The Horse Nutrition Seminar was held in March, the Gregg County Extension AG Committee planned the program. Guest speaker was Dr. Dennis Sigler, State Extension Horse Specialist from Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in College Station, Texas. This was a basic horse management program that also focused on horse nutrition.



The Peach Tree Pruning Demonstration was held at a local peach farm and was co-sponsored by the Gregg and Harrison County Extension offices. Basic peach pruning was discussed and the reasons why you prune, as well as insect and disease management were also discussed.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

A Wildlife Program was held in conjunction with the Oil Belt Farm & Ranch Club meeting with Dr. Billy Higginbotham, Extension Wildlife Specialist from the Overton center. Billy discussed deer and food plot management.

The Gregg County Farm Pond Field Day was held at a local ranch and was co-sponsored by the Gregg County Extension Agriculture Committee. Aquatic weed control result demonstrations were discussed and results were explained. Dr. Higginbotham discussed aquatic weed control, water quality and stocking management. Pond water samples were also tested on-site for participants as well.



2016 Gregg County Beekeeper’s Field Day was held at a local apiary in eastern part of the county with great attendance from participants from both Gregg and Harrison County beekeeper’s. Major topics of discussion were; Fall Honey Extractions and Over Wintering Bees, this also included discussion on treatment of bees for hive beetles. Featured speakers were Davis Whitehurst, owner and local beekeeper and SS Brantley, long-time beekeeper from Jefferson, Texas.

Results

During the 2016 year, three outcome based educational programs were evaluated using the “East Region” survey tools that are located on-line. These three events were; North East Texas Wine Growers Field Day, Gregg County Farm Pond Field Day and The New Landowner Program Series that was held in 2016.

North East Texas Wine Grower’s Field Day

Level of understanding acquired...

Understanding of...	Before	After	% Change
Insect Pest	2.14	3.28	38.0%
Insect Control Measures	2.00	3.22	40.7%
Fungal Pathogens	1.89	3.22	44.3%
Fungal Control	1.89	3.19	43.3%
Crop Estimation	1.49	2.94	48.3%
Harvest Considerations	1.63	3.00	45.7%

Gregg County Farm Pond Field Day

Level of understanding acquired...

Understanding of...	Before	After	% Change
Pond Ecology	2.22	4.17	48.7%
Importance of Water Quality	2.06	4.17	52.8%
Pond Stocking	2.00	4.09	50.0%
Weed ID & Control	2.11	3.83	43.0%

Average total economic impact per landowner - \$375.00

Total economic impact for this program – \$6,000.00

New Landowner Program Series

Level of understanding acquired...

Program Content	Before program	After Program	% Increase
Property Tax Valuations	22.2%	88.9%	100%
Basic Beekeeping	10%	100%	90%
USDA Programs Available	10%	100%	100%
Forage Management	44.4%	77.8%	77.8%
Herbicide Use	44.4%	100%	88.9%
Basic Beef Production	22.2%	100%	100%
Pond Management	22.2%	100%	100%
Feral Hog Management	10%	100%	90%
Electric Fence Use	20%	90%	100%

Average total economic impact per producers operation - \$704.30

Total economic impact for this program – \$7,043.00

Total economic impact for “Other” AG Programs - \$13,043.00

Gregg County Master Gardener Program

The Gregg County Master Gardener program continues to be a viable and growing organization in Gregg County. The association continues to hold their monthly Master Gardener Association meetings, host educational programs for the public, post events on their Facebook site and help Extension staff with news articles and other promotional items.



The 2016 Master Gardener Class graduated fourteen interns from this class and was awarded completion certificates during their Annual Master Gardener Awards Luncheon that was held this spring. The 2017 Master Gardener class schedule has been set and registrations are coming in. The Annual Master Gardener class will be a joint program between Gregg and Harrison Counties. The class will start in January 2017.

Redesigning The Landscape “An Evening with Dr. Bill Welch” was held at the Gregg County Extension office and was co-sponsored by the Gregg County Master Gardener Association. This program gave participants an overview on plant materials and ideas for their local gardens and landscape features, the program was well attended.



2016 Spring Landscape & Gardening Seminar was held once again at the First United Methodist Church in Longview. This is a staple program for the Gregg County Master Gardener Association and is held on an annual basis every year. This year’s speakers were Greg Grant, Research Associate at Stephen F. Austin State University’s Native Plant Center in Nacogdoches, Texas and Kent Ormsby from Upshur County. Topics for this year’s seminar included; Vegetable Gardening, Landscape Plants and No-Till Gardening. This program was also a fundraiser for the Master Gardener Association as well.

The Fall Vegetable Program was held at the Gregg County Extension office here in Longview and was co-sponsored by the Gregg County Master Gardener Association. Special guest speaker was Dr. Joe Masabni, Extension Vegetable Specialist from the Overton Center. The program was very well attended and was probably one of our best attended programs in the horticulture program area for the 2016 year.

Agriculture and Natural Resources



The **Second Annual Fall Master Gardener Plant Sale** was held in October of this year at the Gregg County Extension office. This plant sale serves the association as their major fundraiser for the year. The association did well and the sale was a success, most of the plants sold were grown by Master Gardeners, with the exception of some roses.

2016 Holiday Decorating Seminar was held in Longview and sponsored by the Gregg County Master Gardener Association. The seminar was taught and led by local Master Gardener members and gave participants ideas on making holiday decorations with local, natural items.

Results

During the 2016 year, three In-Depth based educational programs were evaluated using the “East Region” survey tools that are located on-line. These three events were; the 2016 Master Gardener class, Redesigning the Landscape and the Fall Vegetable Program.

2016 Gregg-Harrison County Master Gardener Class

Level of understanding acquired...

Program Content...	Before	After	% Change
Basic Soil Fertility	2.08	3.50	47.3%
Soil Testing	2.08	3.42	44.7%
Fruit Production	1.92	3.17	41.7%
Tree Care	2.08	3.33	41.7%
Disease Management	2.08	3.17	36.3%
Composting & Soils	1.92	3.50	52.7%
Rose Pruning	1.73	3.64	63.7%
Landscape Critters	1.92	3.33	47.0%
Insect Management	2.08	3.42	44.7%
Vegetable Production	2.25	3.42	39.0%
Water Garden Features	1.92	3.33	47.0%
Plant Propagation	1.75	3.50	58.3%

Redesigning the Landscape

Level of understanding acquired...

Program Content...	Before	After	% Change
Make Better Decisions	2.05	3.43	46.0%
Use of Mulch	2.25	3.42	39.0%
Soil Preparations	2.17	3.17	33.3%

Average total economic impact per participant - \$337.23

Total economic impact for this program – \$6,745.00

Fall Vegetable Program

Level of understanding acquired...

Program Content...	Before	After	% Change
Soil Preparations	3.00	4.31	26.2%
Planning & Site Selection	2.94	4.31	27.4%
Pest & Disease Mgt.	2.55	4.19	32.8%
Weed Control	2.87	4.16	25.8%
Record Keeping	2.38	4.31	38.6%

Average total economic impact per participant - \$380.67

Total economic impact for this program – \$10,658.76

Total Economic Impact for the Master Gardener Program - \$17,403.76

Gregg County Master Gardener Annual Report Information

County name: **Gregg**

Numbers of individuals that received Master Gardener training in 2016: **14**

TOTAL NUMBER OF MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEERS (*“active”* certified Master Gardeners including Interns): **38**

Total number of volunteer hours provided by Master Gardeners and Interns in 2016: **3079**, which is worth **\$72,541.24** to Gregg County & the City of Longview.

Total number of people reached through Master Gardener program contacts: **4639**

Acknowledgments

The Gregg County Extension Agriculture and Natural Resource Committee and the Oil Belt Farm & Ranch Club both offer great insight into the educational programs and activities in the county, thanks for their dedication and service to the educational needs of the county as a whole. Also, to the farm supply stores and various vendors in the area for supporting Extension education. Thank you to Legacy Ag Credit for sponsoring many of the meals and educational content that was offered in 2016.

Total Economic Impact for all Agricultural Programs in 2016 - \$390,102.51, for programs that were evaluated.

Family and Consumer Science Program

Planning Groups – Gregg County Extension FCS Committee, Gregg County Diabetic Support Group and the Gregg County Worksite Wellness Committee

The Family & Consumer Science (FCS) Committee was formed in 2015 and supports the FCS Agent along with programs implemented in Gregg County. The committee was sustained by leaders of Gregg County and consists of health directors, business owners, parents, volunteers, and human resource director. The meetings were held once a month until the committee felt that the agent and committee were stable and now meet quarterly. This group continually supports all AgriLife Programs. There have been some changes and additions for the year 2017.



Food Preservation Class was held on April 2, 2016. This year Gregg and Upshur County worked together to teach food preservation. We had approximately eight attend and preserved apple butter as this was the majority choice. Once again, Precinct 1 was gracious to allow the class to be held in their kitchen and it was a success. Our plan is to have one class a year with other counties involved. We are planning to hold a 2017 class for 4-H members to offer preserving for the younger generation.

Gregg County Walk Across Texas was held from April 1 to June 2, 2016. With the obesity rate in Gregg County at 34% (% of adults with a BMI greater than or equal to 30 kg/m²), this event helps to get people to become active. 34% calculates to approximately 42,479 adults in this county. Obesity leads to other preventable illnesses like type 2 diabetes, hypertension, coronary heart disease, heart failure, high blood pressure, stroke, high blood cholesterol, metabolic syndrome and cancer. This is an eight-week program to help people of all ages support one another to establish the habit of regular physical activity. The program is recognized as a Best Practice Physical Activity Program by the Texas Department of State Health Services. There were 161 individuals that signed up for this event in Gregg County, 131 completed the 832 (per team) miles across Texas. A total of 26,382.64 miles were walked. We also had the Boys & Girls Club and the UT Innovation Academy participate in the program at a different time. The total youth participation was 101. There were 47 females and 54 males.



The Regional Child Care Conference was held on June 11, 2016. This program provided training in Longview for 272 child care providers and directors who provide care for 4,540 children enrolled in 63 child care centers or family day homes. Two-hundred and seventy-two participants completed a written evaluation of the conference. A total of 1,904 clock hours of training were provided to child care professionals seeking to meet state mandated training requirements established by the state of Texas. The training was held at Greggton United Methodist Church. This was a partnership with Gregg County AgriLife Extension and Innovative Health Solutions

Family and Consumer Sciences

The Harvest Festival Home Economics Exhibition and Judging was held on October 27, 2016. This event offers 4-H and FFA members the opportunity to be creative with food, crafts and photography. There were over 200 entries submitted for this event. Changes with the rules and organization were made this year and seemed to make this a more successful event. There were 37 Food Creations, 19 Salsa, 18 Fine Arts, 27 Handcrafts, 51 Photography, 13 Poetry, 36 Pumpkin, and 11 posters entered. All the entries were exceptional and very creative.

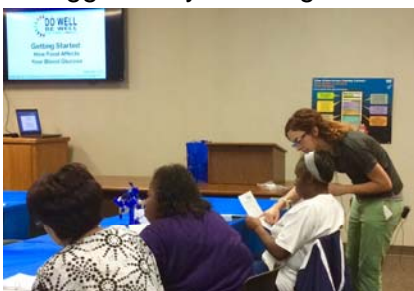


Dinner Tonight- was held on September 29, 2016 from 6-8 pm at the Kilgore Community House in Kilgore, Texas. There were five county FCS Agents and 26 participants. While there are many groups who conduct cooking schools, the Dinner Tonight Healthy Cooking School has a unique niche with demonstration recipes that are cost effective, easy to prepare and fit into a healthy meal plan. The goal was to promote family mealtime, teach families healthy meal planning, food preparation techniques, and promote Texas agriculture! This program was a success and we are looking forward to providing this information every year in one of the counties of District 5. Also, the facility was an in-kind donation from Gregg County.

Better Living for Texans (BLT) is a statewide nutrition education program that, when fully staffed, serves 217 of the 254 counties in the state of Texas. Since 1994, BLT has served the state's residents through teaching nutrition-related concepts focusing on Comparing Prices, Healthy Menu Choices, MyPlate, Preparing Healthy Meals and the Importance of Physical Fitness. Gregg County AgriLife Extension partnered with Garrett Healthcare Services and United Healthcare offering two programs: A Fresh Start to a Healthier You and Do Well Be Well w/Diabetes. We had a total of 48 graduates with both programs.



Maintain No Gain is a community and worksite wellness program created by the Cardiovascular Health and Wellness Program of the Texas Department of State Health Services. The program is designed to encourage participants to gain no more than two pounds during the holiday season. According to the 'Maintain No Gain' resource guide, "This six-week program will serve as a guide to control holiday weight gain and encourage a healthy lifestyle that will help persons decrease their risk factors for cardiovascular disease and stroke." The goals of the program are that participants maintain their weight within two pounds throughout the holiday season, beginning the week of Thanksgiving and continuing through New Year's. This was chosen by the Gregg County Working Well Committee a variety of departments are participating for the 2016 year.



Diabetic In-Depth Plan for 2016 began with a support group and a committee to help organize programs for Type 2 Diabetics. A 2012 report by the CDC estimates that approximately 10% of the population in Texas has been diagnosed with diabetes and the number increases every year. With the assistance of the committee, planning began by implementing a program called Do Well Be Well w/Diabetes. With two attempts and very little success, we decided to implement a Diabetic Cooking School. This was formed by

Family and Consumer Sciences

Gregg and Upshur County and only two people signed up for this event. Due to illness of several members of the committee, we decided to postpone this group until further notice. Moving forward, AgriLife Extension partnered with United Healthcare on other programs including Do Well Be Well w/Diabetes. This has been a successful event and we will have our participants will receive a certificate for completing this course in December of 2016.

The Gregg County 4-H FCS program hosted an event at the Panola Orchard and Gardens in Panola County. There were several participants including 4-H members, parents and volunteers. The owner of the orchard presented on the types of plants planted, the reason for the types, the health benefits and how to pick the berries. This event was a workshop that provided information for these students to learn more to help in presenting for the food challenge and food show activities.



The Gregg County Worksite Wellness Committee was formed in March of 2016. After inviting key members that are employees and passionate about the health and wellness of their co-workers, we began meeting monthly to establish the mission and goals of this group. A survey was implemented to the county employees with a total of 141 employees completing the Worksite Wellness Interest Survey. The average age was 48 years, with 23 males (16.3%), and 108 females (76.6%) participants. A large majority of the participants classified their race/ethnicity as White non-Hispanic (72.3%), with Black/African American (12.1%), Hispanic/Latino (7.8%), and Asian (0.7%) following. Approximately 37.6%; N=53) of the employees rated their general health status good followed by very good (27 %;

N =38). When asked which category, the participants would place themselves in, pertaining to their health behavior, over half (56.7%) of the participants responded "I have made some health behavior changes but have trouble following through." Employees reported that within the last 30 days, on average 2.57 days their physical health was not good, 5.16 days their mental health was not good, and 1.35 days their poor health, either physical or mental, kept them from usual self-care, work, or recreation activities. The committee has coordinated two programs in 2016 and plans to implement the Master Wellness Program and a 12-week weight program called Step Up Scale Down for 2017.

4-H and Youth Development

4-H & Youth Development

Texas 4-H is an organization for youth ages 8-18, and it's BIG! It's the largest youth development program in Texas with more than 550,000 members each year. No matter where you live or what you like to do, Texas 4-H has something that allows you to be a better you! You may think 4-H is only for your friends with animals, but it's so much more! You can do activities like shooting sports, food science, healthy living, robotics, fashion design, and photography. Gregg County currently has approximately 75 4-H members to date and four community clubs, *Shiloh (White Oak Community Center)*, *Happy Hearts (Longview, Mt. Calvary Baptist Church)*, *Livestock, (Liberty City Community Building)* *Shamrocks, (County Extension Office, Longview)*, that participate in a wide variety of projects from Leadership, Livestock, Fashion, Food Science, Robotics, Shooting Sports and much more. The skills learned from these projects allow for the youth of Gregg County to develop life skills through responsibility, citizenship, humility and dedication.



Planning Groups:

Gregg County 4-H Council- This council is made up of 11 to 18 year old 4-H members who have been selected by their peers to serve as a delegate from their community clubs on the county level. Their duties are to plan and implement county contest, events and programs. Additionally, these members act as leaders and role models to those new and younger members

Volunteer Leaders Council- This is a collected group of parents, leaders and volunteers to help in guiding our 4-H program through assisting the 4-H Council and managing events and fundraisers, as well as handling County 4-H funds.

Projects:

Citizenship – To learn, lead, and make a difference in our community through the 4-H citizenship project. As our members learn more about our community and how to participate, they will learn about local government and Texas legislative process. Some 4-H members even decide to serve on community boards for parks or local community groups. Your leadership, communication, decision making skills will improve as you develop a sense of pride in your community.



Livestock- Members involved in the 4-H Livestock project (beef, sheep & goat, swine, rabbit, poultry) learn all about animal health and nutrition, breeding, selection and marketing. Members can participate in market projects, breeding projects and even non-competitive projects. Make it your own! This is a great way to gain valuable life experiences while making lifelong friends.

2016 State Livestock Project Validations continue to be held with State Steer, State Fair of Texas Lamb & Goat Validation in June, State Lamb & Goat Validation in October and State Heifer Validation that is held in the spring and fall of each year. The validation system has been designed to better protect the ethics of the livestock show industry.

4-H and Youth Development

Judging – Judging is a great way to learn decision making and public speaking skills. Through judging you are able to learn past the individual production of your project and apply your knowledge on an industry bases and learn valuable marketing skills. Gregg County currently participates in Meat, Dairy and Wool judging winning the District 5 contest in all three events. Furthermore, the dairy judging team won 5th High Team as the State Fair of Texas and First High Team Brown Swiss at the Fort Worth Livestock Show.

Quiz Bowl – Quiz bowl is an opportunity to demonstrate all of the information that you have gained through your project. This is a contest that will help members learn more about his or her project while getting the opportunity to compete. It is a team event where you compete against another team and whoever buzzes in first, gets to answer the question. This is another project that offers members the opportunity to learn past their individual project and learn key knowledge of an entire industry.

Fashion Design–4-H members who are interested in fashion and being creative participate in the Clothing and Textiles project. Project members learn to sew, how to be a good consumer when purchasing clothes, and the art of designing clothes and accessories, and careers in the fashion industry.

Shooting Sports – Members that enjoy the outdoors and hunting, love the shooting sports project! This project covers firearm safety and teaches responsible handling and use. This project is hands on and members meet at the East Texas Rifle Range to better master their shooting techniques. Our members learn about a variety of firearms – currently our focus is in Archery and Shotgun.

Food & Nutrition- Preparing and serving food is a passion for our members who compete in the food & nutrition project! They learn kitchen and cooking safety, how to prepare nutritious meals and snacks, and meal ideas to reduce your risk of disease. Learning experiences focus on nutrition, food purchasing, food preparation, food safety, and related careers. Focus to teach youth that what you eat today affects your health tomorrow.

Robotics- Robots are all around us. From the food we eat to the cars we drive, robots help make our lives easier, more efficient, and simply more fun! The field of robotics is expanding at a rapid pace, and Texas 4-H is poised to help lead young people into this exciting field. Our members learn how to design, build, and program robots in an exciting and hands-on project. We build robots to do certain task; the robot can be whatever you can imagine, it just has to complete the task. This is a great project for creative minds.



Youth Development

Garden-n-Gloves- This lesson allows student's hands on opportunities to plant flowers/vegetables and watch their entire growth of the seed to a flower. The students record the progress of the seeds and partake in experiments to show how the environment and other conditions effect the seeds growth performance.

Wildlife Success Stories – This lesson teaches fourth graders how careful management can help protect endangered species of wildlife. Animals featured include the wild turkey, wood duck, black-footed ferret, shortnose sturgeon, white-tailed deer, alligator, Kemp's Ridley's sea turtle, bald eagle, golden-cheeked warbler, and red-cockaded woodpecker. The lesson plans are TEKS aligned and include STARR practice questions. Student copies and teacher transparencies are included, along with pre- and post-tests to track knowledge gained from lesson.



4-H and Youth Development

Hatch in the Classroom – This lesson provides an excellent opportunity to learn the development of each stage from the egg to the chick. The students record changes in the eggs by checking fertile eggs, monitoring temperature and humidity and listening for chirps in the last stage of growth. Educational activities include in-depth discussion on: egg formation, embryology, incubation and classroom experiments, such as, injecting food dye in the eggs which affects the color of the chick at hatch.

Science of Ag Day- Designed to target the 5th grade population to educate on the importance of agriculture. Schools toured multiple sessions that were taught by local agriculture students on the different agriculture industries. Sessions covered were: shop (power tool) safety, livestock production, horsemanship, bee keeping, trapping, ATV/tractor safety and hunting safety and conservation.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Harrison County

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