



Extension Education in Harrison County

# Making a Difference

*Annual Report*

**2013**

*Improving Lives.  
Improving Texas.*

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

for nearly a century. The agency was established in 1915 under the Smith-Lever Act to deliver university knowledge and agricultural research findings directly to the people. Extension programs have continued ever since to address the emerging issues of the day, serving diverse rural and urban populations across the state.

Through a well-organized network of professional educators and more than 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 a significant return 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:

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## **Harrison County – Summary of Educational Contacts - 2013**

- ☞ Total Educational Sessions Conducted - 276
- ☞ Total Contacts By Faculty & Volunteers - 6,540
- ☞ Total Educational Contacts by Volunteers - 4,743
- ☞ Total Contacts - 68,790
- ☞ Web Contacts - 3,840

## Improving Landscape & Adult Volunteer Management Skills in Harrison County Through Gardening - Harrison County Master Gardener Program 2013

### Response

In Harrison County, two major program series were implemented to impact landscape management and improve adult volunteer development skills.

**Master Gardener Course** is an in-depth training program which provides 50 plus hours of in-depth instruction to an adult audience on various horticultural topics to prepare them to lead and instruct others in future programming efforts in horticulture related topics. Topics included in this in-depth training program included; Soils & Soil Structures, Basic Plant Fertility, Soil Testing, Insect Identification & Control, Plant Disease, Turfgrass Issues, Plant Propagation, Home Vegetable Production, Proper Use of Plant Materials, Composting, Basic Landscape Tree Care & Management and tours of the SFA Arboretum, Native Plant Center and commercial greenhouse operations in East Texas. The course ends each year with an awards luncheon that is held at a local restaurant, with service pins and course completion certificates awarded.



**Community Interpretation Events** were presented in 2013. The Annual Meet & Greet program was held in October, which gave the Harrison County Master Gardener Association members a chance to showcase program efforts, activities and community awareness to the public by way of exhibits and presentations during the event. Educational seminars that were presented that night included;

Organic Gardening, Composting, Fall Gardening and Fall/Winter Bed Preparations. The 2014 Harrison County Master Gardener class was also promoted by way of exhibit during the event.

### Results; (Course Content - Knowledge Gained)

Participant	Pre-Test Grade (% Correct)	Post-Test Grade (% Correct)	% Increase In Knowledge
1	34	60	26%
2	28	64	36%
3	50	64	14%
4	28	42	14%
5	50	58	8%
6	52	66	14%
7	56	72	16%
8	54	78	24%
<b>Average</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>19%</b>

In Harrison County, two major program series were implemented to impact landscape management and improve adult volunteer development skills. The target audience for the annual Master Gardener classes themselves are middle-age and retired adult male and female participants. It is also noted that as far as the target audience, it is hard participants who are employed to participate and attend the class sessions since they are held during working hours during the day.

The Master Gardener Course is an in-depth training program which provides 50 plus hours of in-depth instruction to an adult audience on various horticultural topics to prepare them to lead and instruct others in future programming efforts in horticulture related topics. Topics included in this in-depth training program included; Soils & Soil Structures, Basic Plant Fertility, Soil Testing, Insect Identification & Control, Plant Disease, Turfgrass Issues, Plant Propagation, Home Vegetable Production, Proper Use of Plant Materials, Composting, Basic Landscape Tree Care & Management and tours of the SFA Arboretum, Native Plant Center and commercial greenhouse operations in East Texas. There was a total of 12 class participants in this years program.

Eight completed both of the pre and post test at the beginning and the end of the course program, (66% of class participants).

### **2013 Master Gardener Program Notes...**

- Number of individuals that participated in the Harrison County 2013 Class Training - **12**
- Total number of Master Gardener Volunteers (Harrison County) - **60**
- Estimated Total Number of volunteer hours provided by Master Gardeners & Interns in 2012 - **3225**, which is worth an estimated **\$67,725.00** to local government in man hours volunteered.
- Number of people reached through Master Gardener program - **3354** in 2013.
- Total Volunteer Contact Hours in 2013 - **4442**

### **Acknowledgments**

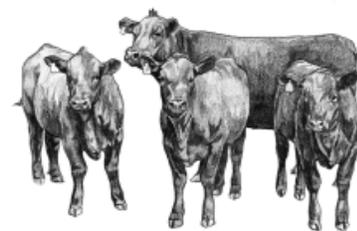
The Harrison County Master Gardener Association provides very valuable input into planning, implementing and evaluation of the horticultural programs that are held in Harrison County, we are fortunate to have such a dedicated group of volunteers in the county. We would also like to thanks several local businesses in the county and city of Marshall for their continued support and dedication to the local Master Gardner program.

## Other Educational Programs in Agriculture/Natural Resource Areas;

### Beef & Forage Production

#### Relevance

Beef Quality Assurance and the Texas Beef Quality Assurance program continue to be an important issue in Harrison 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 Harrison County, accounting for over 25% 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 effect 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. Harrison County beef producers, under the direction of the Harrison County Cattlemen's Association, 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 effect not only beef cattle management, but forage production practices as well.

#### *Planning Group – Harrison County Cattleman's Association Board of Directors*

#### Response

**The 2013 Cattlemen's Crawfish Boil** is the major fund raiser for the Harrison county Cattlemen's Association. Funds raised with this event go toward the Annual Cattlemen's Association Scholarship program that awards a \$1000.00 scholarship to a well deserving Harrison County youth to attend college and further his/her educational needs.

**The 2013 Harrison County Forage & Hay Equipment Field Day** was held in the Waskom-Scottsville area of the county. Topics discussed during the day included; Management of Pastures During & After A Drought, Pasture Weed Control Updates, Equipment Maintenance Issues and Hay Equipment Demonstrations that afternoon after lunch. The field day was co-sponsored by The Harrison County Cattleman's Association and Fish & Still Equipment (local John Deere Dealership, as well as Kuhn, Great Plains and Krone North America equipment companies. Three credit hours were also made available to participants with a applicators pesticide license. The Noon meal was sponsored by Fish & Still Equipment and The Harrison County Soil & Water Conservation District.



**The 2013 East District 5 TCAAA Beef & Forage Tour** was presented and sponsored by the District 5 TCAAA (Texas County Agricultural Agents Association) for producers in East District 5 that wanted to attend. The tour was well attended and sponsored by; Texas Beef Council, AgriLand Farm Credit, Texas Farm Bureau, Dow AgroScience and Merial Pharmaceuticals.



**The 2013 East Regional Beef & Forage Conference** was held in Gregg County and was a multi-county effort by the following counties; Gregg, Harrison, Panola, Rusk and Upshur Counties. Program speakers for the day included; Dr. Donald Ball, Retired Forage Specialist and co-author of Southern Forages, Dr. Vanessa Olson, Extension Forage Specialist with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Overton, Dr. Garry Lacefield, Extension Forage Specialist with University of Kentucky and co-author of Souther Forages. Dr. Jason Banta, Extension Beef Cattle Specialist, also with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Overton presented beef cattle nutritional needs. This was the first year for the conference and will rotate in future years to one of the sponsoring counties. Plans are to have the conference in Rusk County in 2014.



**The 2013 Theft Prevention Meeting** was presented in Panola County at the Texas Country Music Hall of Fame in Carthage. This program was a three county program effort involving Harrison, Panola and Shelby counties. The Texas & Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association was a major sponsor of the event and the program included law enforcement activities in the area, as well as TSCRA's legislative efforts, including State Representative Chris Paddie discussing future legislation concerning water issues in the state.

**The 2013 Annual Meeting of the Harrison County Cattleman's Association** was held in the Harrison County Extension office. The event is sponsored each year by the local cattleman's association and the featured speaker for the evening was Jason Bagley, Senior Manager, Beef Quality & Exports for the Texas Beef Council out of Austin, Texas. The awarding of the "Bill Davis" Award was also made to a well deserving beef & forage producer in the county as well as membership drive for 2014. The evening meal was sponsored by the Harrison County Cattleman's Association.

## Natural Resource Programs

### Relevance

Will provide educational activities, as well as educational programs to Harrison County residents, based on recommendations of the Harrison County Natural Resource Committee. Subject areas will include forestry, farm pond management and wildlife. The goal was to reach wildlife managers, as well as producers who manage their own lands for natural resource purposes.

### Response

**The 2013 Multi-County Farm Pond Management Field Day** was held in Gregg County and was co-sponsored by Gregg, Harrison and Rusk Counties. The program featured the following topics; Aquatic Weed Control & Weed Management, Tiapia To Control Aquatic Weeds and Fish Stocking & Water Quality. Agents also performed water quality testing on pond water samples that were brought in by participants of the program to have pH and alkalinity test run. Aquatic weeds samples were also brought in by participants to have them identified for proper herbicide recommendations.

**The 2013 Ag Water Seminar** was held in Marion County in Ore City and was sponsored by Harrison, Marion and Upshur Counties. The program featured topics & discussions on how water use in agriculture effects water quality in general. Dr. Billy Higginbotham, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Wildlife & Fisheries Specialist discussed the feral hogs impact, Lisa Fisher, Environmental Investigator with the Texas Commission on

Environmental Quality discussed water rights in Texas and Dr. Larry Redmon, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Forage Specialist from College Station discussed Healthy Streams and the impacts that over fertilization has on water quality.

**The Annual Multi-County Wildlife Informational Seminar** was held in September with Harrison and Panola Counties participating. The program focused on the following topics; Beaver Control Updates, Feral Hog Control Updates and Deer Nutritional Needs & Food Plot Information. The evening meal was sponsored by the Harrison & Panola County Soil & Water Conservation Districts.



## Small Farm & Ornamental Horticulture Program Area

### ***Plan Goals:***

To keep the Harrison County Farmer's Market a viable market for Marshall and the county. The majority of our members or participants are over the age of 65. We need to attract and retain newer producers to market their produce on the market.

To also assist homeowners and business with insect and disease issues that effect ornamental and landscape plants around their homes and to provide relevant, research based information on pesticide safety and recommendations.

Many agricultural producers in the county and the East Texas area have a TDA pesticide license in order to use restrictive use pesticides in their operation. Producers are required by Texas law to earn at least fifteen credit hours of CEU's every five years in order to keep the license current. The goal of educational effort is to offer agricultural producers viable, useful and up-to-date pesticide safety information, as well as product up-dates on newer products that are available for their use.

### **Response**

**The Marshall Beekeeper's Association** was formed in 2013, this is a newly formed educational group, program and audience. The association was formed in 2013 with a fairly small amount of people that are interested in beekeeping as a hobby and a small agricultural enterprise for a few. The group meets once per month in the Extension office and had grown to an average of 30 to 40 at each meeting. They held their first member tour and field day this year and we have formed a SPIN (Special Interest) 4-H club within the Marshall Beekeeper's Association due to the club wanting to attract more younger participants to the skill of beekeeping.

**The 2013 Multi-County Pesticide Credit Hour Program** was held in January, offering pesticide license holders a chance to earn 6.5 credit hours toward their pesticide license re-certification requirements. The program was held in Marshall at the Harrison County AgriLife Extension office and several speakers participated in presenting relevant information.

**The Private Applicators License Training Programs** are held twice each year, once in the spring in Longview and in the fall in Marshall, to allow for producers to earn and receive their private applicators pesticide license to enable them to purchase and use restricted use pesticides in their operation.

**2013 East Texas Turfgrass Conference** – is held each year at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research & Extension center in Overton. Topics related to Turfgrass management are presented each year to homeowners, city municipalities, local school districts and Master Gardeners across the district. This is a multi-county effort and is co-sponsored each year between East District 5 Texas County Agricultural Agents Association and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. Several speakers presented timely information on insect and disease management of turf, as well as information dealing with laws & regulations that pertain to commercial, non-commercial pesticide license. Five credit hours of continuing education credits were available for participants to use toward their renewal of the pesticide license. This is an annual event.

## 2013 Harrison Wisdom, Power, Control

### Relevance

*Wisdom, Power, Control* is an evidence-informed, culturally competent educational program targeting diabetic African Americans living in rural Texas communities. The curriculum is predicated on the American Diabetes Association's national standards of care and employs the Social Cognitive and Self-regulation theories as its foundational support. Empowerment is an overarching theme of the program, and, to this end, *Wisdom, Power, Control* aims to equip participants with knowledge and lifestyle skills to better control their diabetes.

- ❖ Diabetes cost Texas more than 12 billion dollars and it is the 6th leading cause of death in the state.<sup>1</sup>
- ❖ Texas African Americans 45 to 64 years of age are disproportionately affected by diabetes prevalence (20.8 percent) than their White, non-Hispanic counterparts (10.1 percent).<sup>2</sup>
- ❖ Among persons with diabetes, a higher proportion of Texas African Americans (27.7 percent) could not see a doctor in the last 12 month due to cost compared to non-Hispanic Whites (16.5 percent).<sup>3</sup>
- ❖ In 2010, the prevalence of diabetes in Harrison County was estimated to be 11.3 percent.<sup>4</sup>

### Response

- ❖ Proper management is critical to minimize the potential negative effects of diabetes.
- ❖ Self-management education is the cornerstone for diabetic care and vital for blood glucose control.
- ❖ Recognizing the need for a culturally-relevant type 2 diabetes self-management education targeting Texas African American *Wisdom, Power, Control* was developed to address this gap in health programming.

### Results

In 2013, 36 individuals registered for the *Wisdom, Power, Control* class offered in Harrison County, TX. Among those enrolled in the program, 83.3% (N=30) completed the classes. About 46.6% (N=14) of the participants reported never having received any diabetes classes.

The findings below summarize the impact of the *Wisdom, Power, Control* program delivered in Harrison County. Outcome indicators include diabetes knowledge, self-efficacy, and diabetes self-care behaviors. Demographic characteristics: Approximately 83.3% (N=25) of the participants were females, average age was 65 years, 93.3% were African American, 53.3% (N=16) had a yearly income of \$20,000 or less, 46.6%

- (N=14) had a high school diploma, 70.0% of the participants had health insurance with majority (56.6%, N=13) of the participants having Medicare/Medicaid as their only form of health insurance.

Diabetes knowledge increased from 7.1 (out of 10) at pre-test to 8.9 at post-test (out of 10).

Diabetes self-care scores reveal that participants improved in performing routine health behaviors to better manage their diabetes: Pre-test mean score: 25.7 out of total score of 44; Post-test: 30.6 out of 44.

Self-efficacy scores improved with participants reporting increases in their confidence to engage in diabetes

self-care behaviors: Pre-test 2.7 M (out of 4); Post-test 3.2 M (out of 4). (Scale: 1 = I don't feel sure; 4 = I feel very sure.)

### Success Stories

- ❖ *How to control and manage my condition. Important steps to maintain good health. Manage stress, exercise, and right foods to eat. Make sure you maintain all doctor's appointments.*
- ❖ *What to eat, count the carbs, exercise*
- ❖ *check your feet, see your doctor regular, exercise and eat the right amount of foods*
- ❖ *Carbohydrate, portion size*
- ❖ *portion control, exercising, amount of carbs to take in a day*
- ❖ *I learned the importance of managing stress and checking my feet. I also learned the importance of doctor's visits. I learned how to check my blood glucose, the importance of eating and exercising. I learned the difference between high carbs and low carbs. I also learned how to classify foods.*
- ❖ *How to manage diabetes. The different things to do to manage diabetes and stay healthy*
- ❖ *How to manage stress, check my feet daily and eat of plenty vegetables.*
- ❖ *How best I can take care of my diabetes*

### Future Plans

Overall, 2013 evidence demonstrates that *Wisdom, Power, Control* significantly enhances participants' engagement in diabetes self-care behaviors, improvements in self-confidence about diabetes self-care, and increases diabetes knowledge. This program lends support to the benefits of a culturally competent diabetes self-management education targeting rural African-Americans with diabetes. Given the high rates of diabetes among African Americans, *Wisdom, Power, Control* is a program to address this concern in Harrison County, Texas. Over the past year, Harrison County Extension partnered with community stakeholder to extend our reach to disadvantaged populations. We envision this effort to continue that will help ensure the sustainability of *Wisdom, Power, Control*. In 2014, the Harrison *Wisdom, Power, Control* graduates will be offered to attend a *Cooking Well with Diabetes* class and *Step Up, Scale Down* class. By attending these classes the participants will be provided an opportunity to continue to manage their diabetes.

### Special Thanks

A special thanks goes to the Harrison *Wisdom, Power, Control* coalition and the Harrison Family & Consumer Sciences for assisting with planning, implementing, recruiting, advertisement efforts. A huge thank you goes to Dr. Ninfa Pena-Purcell and her staff for creating the curriculum.



## Better Living for Texans

### Relevance

In Harrison County, an estimated 20,737 have incomes that are 185% of poverty or below; 11% receive food stamp benefits. Research has shown that individuals who live in poverty have dietary intakes that are not congruent with current recommendations (i.e. Dietary Guidelines or MyPyramid). This audience, like many, may not recognize their risk for foodborne illness. Stretching resources so food is available throughout the month is also a challenge.



### Response

The Better Living for Texans (BLT) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP-Ed) is offered through the Texas AgriLife Extension Service and funded via the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), and the Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) of USDA. A component of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), BLT provides educational programs to food stamp recipients, applicants, and other approved audiences to help improve their ability to plan and prepare nutritious meals, stretch food dollars, and prepare and store food safely. BLT is delivered through a variety of teaching methods that reflect audience needs. Teaching methods include, lesson series, single education events, one to one consultations, demonstrations, and tours. The Harrison Family and Consumer Sciences Committee assisted with marketing and implementation of this program.



### Results

Harrison County goal was to reach 60 participants in 15 one shot programs in 315 hours. The goal was exceeded. Post surveys were utilized to evaluate participants knowledge after a few programs. Results indicated that 62% have a better understanding of the MyPlate and 65% agreed to start reading food labels. Harrison County Ag/NR agent and support staff assisted with reach the goal. Thanks to the team effort they exceed the set goal.

## Harrison Extension Education Association

### Relevance

The Texas Extension Education Association was organized in 1926 as a way to strengthen and enrich families through educational programs, leadership development and community service by volunteer members of the Association, in coordination with Texas AgriLife Extension TEEA functions exclusively for charitable, educational and scientific purposes as a 501c3 organization.

### Response

The Harrison Extension Education Association consists of two clubs: Town and County EEA Club, and Sabine EEA Club. There are twenty-seven members. These individuals have donated a total of 1700 volunteer hours in programs and community activities. The following are programs that members implemented:

Eat Healthy, Texas Style

Saving From a Rainy Day

How Does Your Garden Grow?

Re-Dress for Success

Living (Well) on Less



**Cornbread and Bean Luncheon Fundraiser**-The 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Cornbread and

Bean Luncheon Fundraiser raised over \$1,803.75 after expenses. Over 300 tickets holders at \$7 each attended the event. The money each year is used for educational programs, conventions, training meetings and scholarships.

**Chili Dog Luncheon Fundraiser**-The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Chili Dog Luncheon raised over \$1500 after expenses. The funded will be utilized for educational programs, conventions, training meetings and scholarships.

**Community Service Contributions**-Collected and donated food items to the local food bank. Visit the sick and shut-in senior citizens. Financial contributions were made to the Harrison County Literacy Fund, Boys & Girls Club of Big Pines and the Harrison County 4-H scholarship fund. Donated auction items and money to the district and state for 4-H scholarships. Donated funds to the Coins for Friendship to help support the state 4-H Center in Brownwood.



## Quilt Study Group

### Relevance

Quilting is becoming a lost art. Several female adults requested to start a quilt study group in 2004. In 2011, the membership of the quilt study group began to decline.

### Response

Due to low enrollment, quilt study group members and the Harrison Family and Consumer Sciences Committee decided to have a four week beginners' quilt class in 2011. Each year the attendance has increased.



### Results

After much success, the beginners' quilt class was held again 2013. Participants met twice a week during the month of June. The course was a success once again. Seven individuals from the course are currently participating in the quilt study group. The Quilt Study Group met each first and third Tuesday of each month to learn quilting techniques, fabric selection and different quilting patterns. They show their finished projects at Quilt Shows and in their study group. This year members made and donated 10 baby quilts to Court Appointed Special Advocates for children (CASA).



## Money Matters 2013

### Relevance

College students face financial challenges as students and will face new financial challenges upon graduation. During these tough economic times, college students are wanting to learn better ways to manage their finances and control debt. A financial seminar will be held on January 31st at East Texas Baptist University for college students and the general public. Dr. Jason Johnson, District 8 Resource Management Specialist will present a 2 hour program.

## **Response**

Family & Consumer Sciences agents in Smith County, Panola County, Wood County, Angelina County, Rusk County and Harrison County agreed to address the issue. East Texas Baptist University in Marshall, Tx agreed to host the event. Holiday Inn Express provided the guest speaker with a complimentary hotel room. SIG Insurance donated funds for the participant registration fee, snacks and door prizes.

## **Results**

A total of 35 students attended the event.

- 75% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the information being what they expected.
- 80% of respondents plan to take actions or make changes based on the information from this activity.
- 84 % of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the helpfulness of the information in decisions about your own situation.
- 89% of respondents anticipate benefitting economically as a direct result of what they learned from this Extension activity.
- 97% of respondents would attend another subject offered by Extension if it addressed a specific need or interest of theirs.

## **Future Plans**

In 2014, the Family & Consumer Sciences agents plan to implement the program again Harrison County, Marshall, TX on the East Texas Baptist University.

## **Dinner Tonight Healthy Cooking School**

### **Relevance**

The Dinner Tonight weekly video demonstration program was created by a team of agents interested in expanding outreach opportunities through technology. Each Monday, a video demonstration, featuring a quick and healthy recipe is released for the public to view. The Dinner Tonight Healthy Cooking Schools are a method of expanding the original dinner Tonight program and offering a face to face educational method to teach families about meal planning and healthy food preparation. While there are many groups who conduct cooking schools, the Dinner Tonight healthy cooking school has a unique emphasis. The demonstration recipes are cost effective, easy to prepare and fit into a healthy meal plan. The goals of the cooking school are to promote family mealtime while teaching families healthy meal planning and food preparation techniques. The vision for the Dinner Tonight healthy cooking school is to create a high-visibility, large-scale event that is fun and informative for participants.



## **Response**

Harrison County, Gregg County, Rusk County, Smith County and Wood County Family and Consumer Science agents as well as volunteers planned and implemented a Dinner Tonight Cooking School in Gregg County at the Reserve for approximately 100 adults.

## **Results**

As a results of the planning and marketing efforts 138 adults attended the Dinner Tonight Healthy Cooking School. Agents demonstrated various menu ideas. The participants learned how to plan and prepare simple, delicious snacks and meals for their family members and friends.



# Making a Difference

## Child Care Conference

### Relevance

The demand for quality child care continues to rise as children are spending more time in contexts outside of the family. Over 60 percent of children from birth through age 6 (not yet in kindergarten) receive some form of child care on a regular basis from persons other than their parents (Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 2010).

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) estimates that there are over 100,000 child care providers caring for more than 760,000 children under the age of 13 in licensed or regulated child care facilities in the state of Texas. According to TWC, there are over 23,000 licensed or regulated child care facilities (child care centers, family day care). Additionally, child care is the 16th largest industry in the state, generating over 145,000 jobs and \$2.3 billion in wages for Texans.

With the demand for child care at an all-time high, researchers and policy makers have become increasingly concerned with the quality and accessibility of child care. Large-scale studies conducted across the U.S. have found that the quality of care on the national level tends to be poor to mediocre. At the same time, findings from longitudinal research have clearly established the fact that quality does matter when it comes to child care. Children who receive high-quality care (e.g., warm sensitive caregiving, well educated child care staff, low child-to-adult ratios, small group size) develop better language, math, and social skills; exhibit fewer behavior problems; and tend to be better prepared for entrance into school (NICHD, 2006).

Having a well-trained child care workforce is essential to providing the high quality child care that children need to reach their developmental potential. Licensed and registered child care providers are mandated by the state of Texas to obtain a set amount of training (i.e., clock hours) in a variety of areas associated with the care of children. The child care provider training conference provides an avenue to reach early childhood educators with research-based information that will enable them to obtain state-mandated clock hour credits and continuing education units (CEUs), and enhance their knowledge and skills in the child care profession.

## **Response**

Family & Consumer Sciences agents in Smith County, Rusk County, Gregg County, Wood County, Anderson County, Cherokee County, Henderson County, Panola County and Harrison County hosted the Annual Child Care Conference in Jacksonville, TX at the 1<sup>st</sup> Baptist Church.

## **Results**

91 Child Care providers and directors who provide care for 955 children enrolled in 17 child care centers for family day homes. A total of 819 clock hours of training were provided to child care professionals seeking to meet state mandated training requirements established by the state of Texas.

- 43.7% participants reported that this child care conference was better than others they have attended
- 97.7% participants reported they plan to utilize the learned information.
- 98.9% participants reported the topics were relevant to their daily work.

## **Future Plans**

In 2014, the Family & Consumer Sciences agents plan to implement a Child Care Conference in Longview, TX.

## Improving Academic & Life Skills of Harrison County Youth - Harrison County Junior Master Gardener Program

### Relevance

The following four goals are being addressed with this outcome plan are:

### ***Understanding of Natural Sciences, Life Sciences, Interest and Academic Achievement in Science***

Texas schools are under many demands to perform well on the standardized TAKS test. Since the introduction of the test, students have been tested at various grade levels for achievement of skills in math, language arts, and writing. As a result of Senate Bill 103 and the introduction of Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), students are now tested on their ability to demonstrate their knowledge in physical sciences, and earth sciences.

School districts are anxious to find science curriculum that will help students master the knowledge and skills required by the state mandated standards.

### ***Environmental Stewardship***

Landscape irrigation in Texas accounts for up to 40-60% of the total residential water use during peak summer months. Water conservation is a critically important issue for residents throughout the state of Texas. Moreover, proper use of fertilizers and chemicals wastes is important to the long term health and safety of residents in the county. Finally, programs that promote reduction of landscape wastes and recycling will assist in maintaining land fill availability. This issue is critically important in preserving and protecting our valuable natural resources.

### ***Healthy and Active Lifestyles Through Improved Diet and Physical Activity***

Experts continue to promote healthy diets and life styles including exercise, reduced fat diets, and increased consumption of fruits and vegetables as an important factor in maintaining long-term human health. Unfortunately, research studies indicate that a high percentage of youths do not eat healthy diets or exercise regularly, which has resulted in increased childhood obesity and poor nutritional eating habits. This issue is critically important to improving the health and well being of the children of Texas.

### ***Leadership Development and Community Service***

Detrimental youth activities including drug/alcohol abuse and bullying, coupled with poor youth self esteem have been manifested in an increase of youth violence and crimes. A comprehensive prevention strategy that will engage youth in positive, worthwhile activities at an early age that foster leadership development, positive success and reinforcement, positive peer and adult role models, and engage youth in service learning projects are critical to improving youth quality in local communities..



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### Relevance

The following three goals are being addressed with this outcome plan are:

#### **1. Understanding of Natural Sciences, Life Sciences, Interest and Academic Achievement in Science**

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#### **2. Environmental Stewardship**

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#### **3. Healthy and Active Lifestyles Through Improved Diet and Physical Activity**

Experts continue to promote healthy diets and life styles including exercise, reduced fat diets, and increased consumption of fruits and vegetables as an important factor in maintaining long-term human health. Unfortunately, research studies indicate that a high percentage of youths do not eat healthy diets and exercise regularly, which has resulted in increased childhood obesity and poor nutritional eating habits. This issue is critically important to improving the health and well being of the children of Texas.

#### **4. Leadership Development and Community Service**

Juvenile crime, school violence, and in detrimental youth activities including drug/alcohol abuse, bullying, coupled with poor youth self esteem have been manifested in an increase of youth violence and crimes. A comprehensive prevention strategy that will engage youth in positive, worthwhile activities at an early age that foster leadership development, positive success and reinforcement, positive peer and adult role models, and engage youth in service learning projects are critical to improving youth quality in local communities..

### Response

In Harrison County, particularly within the Marshall Independent School District, a five million dollar federal grant through TEA was developed by the Boys & Girls Club of Harrison County for an aggressive after school program in 2012 and was kicked off with the Marshall ISD. In 2013, the program was all inclusive to Carver Elementary school in the Marshall ISD system. The local school district paid for the enrollment of twenty Carver students into the Harrison County 4-H program via 4-

# 4-H and Youth Development

Hconnect, the funds came from the grant program mentioned above. The following programs and activities were held this year;

**Weekly JMG School Contacts By Volunteers** - was achieved on a weekly basis, two days each week, two groups of Master Gardener volunteers would teach Junior Master Gardener course work from the JMG manual one day, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and the next day, a different volunteer group would work with 4<sup>th</sup> grade students. There were ten in each group, for a total of twenty youth. This continued throughout the remainder of the school year.



**2013 After School Program** - was held at the Boys & Girls Club in Marshall during the month of January, sixty youth were reached using JMG curriculum and was taught by Boys & Girls staff and a Harrison County Master Gardener volunteer who coordinated the program.

**2013 Summer Reading Program** - was held at the Jefferson Caregie Library in Jefferson, Texas. Several Harrison County Master Gardener volunteers participated and helped for a week, as part of the Summer Reading program that is presented on an annual basis at the library in Jefferson. This is funded with a grant through the AEP Foundation, as well as a \$300.00 donation from the Harrison County Master Gardener Association. The weeks topic during the summer reading program that was presented by Master gardener volunteers was "Digging & Gardening".

**2013 Youth Water Camp** - was held in May and 473 youth were reached through this effort. Harrison County Master Gardener volunteers were recruited to assist with this task, as well as Program Area Committee and Leadership Advisory Board members and 4-H youth. Marshall ISD 4<sup>th</sup> graders were the target audience for this program which focused on water conservation issues and topics.



**2013 Marshall Junior High Composting Presentation** - was held and presented by Harrison County Master gardener Association members. 393 seventh grade students were reached through this presentation and was presented under the science topic 'bio-mass' topics from the school system.

## Results;

A short survey was prepared and submitted to all of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teaches at Carver Elementary School with the following results;

- 100% of the teachers felt that the students who participated in the Junior Master Gardener program learned new and exciting things about plants and plant growth.
- 100% would recommend the program to other 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade teachers.
- 100% of the teachers felt that the students who participated in the JMG program were excited and encouraged fellow students to participate.

## **Comments made by teachers as noted from the evaluation survey;**

"The students always came back to class smiling and eager to show me what they had made in the Master Gardeners. They looked forward to the next time."

"I think this was an excellent program for those students who participated in it. They enjoyed it and learned many interesting facts. They were always eager to attend these classes. I wish all students

# 4-H and Youth Development

were allowed an opportunity to enjoy these learning experiences with the Junior Master Gardener program instructors”.

Contacts made in the Junior Master Gardener Program for the 2012-2013 school year are as follows;

**Total Contacts - 1795**

**Total Face to Face Contacts - 645**

**Total Contact Hours By Volunteers - 437 Hours**

## Harrison Youth Water Camp

### Relevance

Water conservation and use continues to be a significant issue across Texas and citizens -- youth, in particular -- need to be educated about water, where it comes from, its uses and how it can be conserved and protected.

### Response

The Harrison Leadership Advisory Board identified water education as a major need. Members noted it was vitally important that Harrison youth increase their knowledge about water, where it comes from, its uses, and how it can be conserved and protected. Everyone agreed the event will be held at the Marshall City Arena in Marshall and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Service and Game Warden will be invited to be a part of the event. The Harrison LAB and representatives from the Harrison Ag/NR committee, Harrison FCS committee, Harrison 4-H Advisory Board and Harrison Master Gardeners implemented a Youth Water Camp for approximately 475 4th graders in Marshall ISD. All volunteers attend a four hour training prior to the camp which was conducted by Lorrie Reeves, Texas AgriLife Research Urban Water Programs Program Assistant. The volunteers assisted with not only implementing the lessons but also marketing and promotion efforts.



### Results

473 4<sup>th</sup> grade students attend the Harrison Youth Water Camp at the Marshall City Arena. Only 251 out of 473 completed the pre-test, the results are as follows:

69% (174 out of 251) reported water is a major source of energy.

75% (189 out of 251) reported water can be found in the clouds.

32% (81 out of 251) reported plants do need water to grow.

Only 254 out of 473 completed the post-test, the results are as follows:

91% (232 out of 254) reported water is a major source of energy.

92% (234 out of 254) reported water can be found in the clouds.

81% (206 out of 254) reported plants do need water to grow.



The volunteers enjoyed implementing the Youth Water Camp. One volunteer stated, “all Marshall youth should have attend the camp to learn about water conservation. I look forward to assisting again next year.” One of the students stated, “I had a lot fun learning how Freddie the Fish lives”.

### Future Plans

In an effort to continue to increase Harrison County youth’s knowledge about water, the Harrison LAB and representatives from the Harrison Ag/NR committee, Harrison FCS committee, Harrison 4-H Advisory Board and Harrison Master Gardeners will implement another youth water camp in 2014.

## Relevance

One day 4-H is a grass roots community service effort for 4-H youth to identify, plan, and implement a community service project that serves the needs of their particular community and/or county. Modeled after the Texas A&M University's Big Event, one day 4-H teaches 4-H members the importance of giving back to their communities based on issues they see are affecting the lifestyles of the citizens. Throughout this process, youth have the opportunity to develop a partnership with adult volunteers as they plan and implement their service project. One day 4-H helps develop the core life skills of communication, responsible citizenship, contribution to group effort, teamwork, self-motivation, problem solving, service learning, planning/organizing, and social skills. The specific objectives of one day 4-H are: • Provide opportunities for youth to perform community service projects in their individual communities and counties based on their identified needs. • Provide opportunities for participants to learn about social and community issues and develop ways of resolving those issues. • Provide opportunities for participants to learn from other team members. • Promote teamwork. • Give participants opportunities to work in a strong youth-adult partnership. • Provide leadership opportunities. • Give 4-H members the opportunity to participate in a new, exciting event that promotes 4-H.

## Response

Harrison County 4-H members participated in the state wide one day 4-H event. They implemented a can food drive.



## Results

Harrison 4H members collected canned goods on the Saturday prior to the One Day 4H Event. On date of the major event, Harrison 4H members collected over 250 canned goods at the local Fire Ant Festival. Members also raised funds by face painting, playing games and nail painting. The collected funds and canned goods were donated to the local food pantry.

## **Fire Ant Festival**

Fire Ant Festival is one of the primary festivals held in Marshall Annually. The purpose of the event is to celebrate how Harrison County tries to manage fire ants and boost the economy. Each year the Extension Office assist with one of the contest while marketing the Extension program.

## **Wonderland of Lights**

Wonderland of Lights is another major festival held in Marshall Annually. People from across the country come to Marshall, TX to view the Christmas lights. Visitors can also enjoy an outdoor skating rink and tour immaculate homes with Christmas decor.

# Texas AgriLife Extension Service

## Harrison County

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