



Extension Education in Atascosa County

Making a Difference

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service has long been dedicated to educating Texans. Extension education evolved nationwide under the 1914 federal Smith-Lever Act, which sought to extend university knowledge and agricultural research findings directly to the people. Ever since, Extension programs have addressed the emerging issues of the day, reaching diverse rural and urban populations.

In Texas, all 254 counties are served by a well-organized network of professional Extension educators and some 100,000 trained volunteers. Extension expertise and educational outreach pertain to the food and fiber industry, natural resources, family and consumer sciences, nutrition and health, and community economic development.

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE Providing Solutions

Among those served are hundreds of thousands of young people who benefit annually from Extension's 4-H and youth development programs.

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

Atascosa County – Summary of 2014 Educational Contacts

Total Educational Programs/ Meetings Conducted		180
Total Participants		7993
Total Contact Hours		8514
4-H Membership		340
4-H Clubs		8
4-H Volunteers		43
Curriculum Enrichment		4077
Office Contacts/ Site Visits		1371
Newsletters	4-H 2640	Ag 1713
Web Contacts		1800
Radio Announcements		9
News Releases		53
Atascosa County Ag Fair		577
Continuing Education Hours offered for Applicators		24

2014 Atascosa Cattleman's Outcome Summary

Relevance

Atascosa County is made up of 1236 square miles of Ranching and Farming property and according to the 2013 NASS report Atascosa County still has about 72, 000 head of cattle and calves in the county which would have us at the top of the state in overall beef production for Texas

Target Audience

The Educational Program targeted Beef Cattle Producers in Atascosa County.

Response

As a response of the need for Beef Cattle Education the County Extension Agent developed a group of educational articles and programs. Educational Articles were prepared for the Pleasanton Express, and the Leader News, Paper's Quarterly Agriculture and Natural Resources Newsletter, and educational opportunities included the Atascosa Cattleman's Annual meeting.

Results

A retrospective post questionnaire was used at the Atascosa Cattleman's Annual meeting to capture the knowledge that was gained as part of these educational efforts.

Atascosa Cattleman's Annual Meeting Educational event

16 out of 21 (80%) had a change in understanding Fertilizer prices and how they are driven by the global market.

18 out of 21 (90%) had a change in understanding new insecticides for grasshopper and fall armyworm control.

17 out of 21 (85%) had a change in understanding the new insect pest in bermudagrass

15 out of 21 (78%) had a change in understanding internal parasites and the control methods

16 out of 21 (88%) had a change in understanding external parasites and the available control methods.

15 out of 20 (75%) of participants went from a Good to Excellent on the subject matter that was taught at the Cattleman's annual meeting.

Summary:

Results indicate that the Atascosa Cattleman's met its objectives for increasing knowledge of Beef Cattle Production in Atascosa County. The Atascosa Cattleman's Association plans to work with the agent to develop more Beef educational programs in the future.

Special Thanks:

Poteet VFW Hall, McBees Bar B-Q

2014 Atascosa County Wildlife Management Outcome Summary

Relevance

Atascosa County is made up of 1236 square miles of rich wildlife diversity in which the Wildlife and Fisheries committee and the Atascosa Wildlife Coop have a strong desire to educate our wildlife managers on managing our native mixed brush plant communities which support wildlife populations. It is very important that land managers today understand basic ecological principles of plant succession, plant growth, food chains, water, mineral and soil nutritive cycles as they affect range, wildlife, and grazing management. In addition we should know and recognize the basic needs and preferences of the livestock and wildlife species for which we are trying to manage. It is equally important to manage for a high level of plant succession and quality wildlife habitat using the basic tools of grazing, rest, fire, hunting, animal impact, disturbance, and technology. This not only produces high quality habitat and animals, but also can lead to more stable conditions during stress periods such as our extended drought.

Target Audience

The Educational Program targeted Wildlife Managers, Homeowners and Community residents.

Response

As a response of the need for Wildlife Management Education the County Extension Agent developed a group of educational articles and programs. Educational Articles were prepared for the Pleasanton Express, and the Leader News, Paper's Quarterly Agriculture and Natural Resources Newsletter, and educational opportunities included the Trees Bees and Wildlife, and the Atascosa Wildlife Coop Annual Educational program and meeting.

Results

A retrospective post questionnaire was used at the Trees Bees and Wildlife Workshop to capture the knowledge that was gained as part of these educational efforts.

Trees Bees and Wildlife Workshop Educational Results

- 8 out of 9 (88%) had a change in understanding on how to turn your backyard into a Wildscape.
- 8 out of 9 (88%) had a change in understanding in what animals and insects can be attracted to your backyard
- 7 out of 9 (77%) had an increase in understanding what type of plants and wildlife feeders to attract wildlife and other outdoor species.
- 9 out of 9 (100%) had an increase in understanding the different types of bee keeping supplies
- 9 out of 9 (100%) have a good to excellent understanding of general bee keeping hive management.
- 9 out of 9 (100%) have a better understanding of the bee keeping challenges and management problems.
- 8 out of 9 (88%) have a better understanding on how the drought affects trees.
- 7 out of 9 (77%) have a change in understanding the oak wilt disease.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

- 9 out of 9 (100%) have a better understanding of other tree diseases.
- 7 out of 9 (77%) have a increased understanding of tree nutrient management.
- 5 out of 9 (55%) have a change in understanding about not adding fill dirt/ flower gardens around trees
- 5 out of 9 (55%) have a change in understanding tree insects and their damage
- 8 out of 9 (88%) have a change in understanding tree water requirements
- 8 out of 9 (88%) have a change in understanding tree irrigation tips

Summary:

Results indicate that the Atascosa County Wildlife Program met its objectives for increasing knowledge to wildlife managers in Atascosa County. The Extension Wildlife Committee and Wildlife Coop plans to work with the agent to develop more wildlife educational programs in the future.

Special Thanks:

Lone Star Lodge
Gasch Family
Judith Green, Texas Parks and Urban Wildlife Biologist
Mark Kroeze Texas A&M AgriLife Forrest Service
Mark Peterson San Antonio Water Systems
Dr. David Appel Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

***2014 Multi-County Water Quality Education Plan
(Related to Oil & Gas)***

**Developed By: Jaime Lopez, Frio County Extension Agent-Ag
Dale Rankin, Atascosa County Extension Agent-Ag
Richard Griffin, Dimmit County Extension Agent-Ag
Larry Perez, La Salle County Extension Agent-Ag
Marcel Valdez, Zavala County Extension Agent-Ag**

Date of Summary: December 1, 2014

Relevance:

Water quality and quantity have emerged as the preeminent issue across the state including the Eagle Ford Shale area in South Texas. Agriculture and Oil & Gas industries are the largest water uses in South Texas, and both are under close scrutiny because of the potential for negative environmental (water quality) impacts. The goal is for homeowners and landowners to adopt best management practices to protect water quality and enhance water conservation so water supplies will meet future water needs in the Eagle Ford Shale area.

Response:

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Frio, Atascosa, Dimmit, Zavala, and LaSalle counties developed the following activities to address this relevant issue:

- “Update on the Carrizo/Wilcox Aquifer” – Matt Pope, Evergreen Underground Water District
 - Nueces River Authority Community Meeting on the San Miguel Creek
 - Frio, Atascosa, LaSalle, Dimmit, Zavala Water Screening Program
 - Multi-County Agent training on Water Screening Kit
 - “Public Briefing... Water Issues and Uses”
 - Frio, Atascosa, LaSalle, Dimmit, Zavala Hydrocarbon Water Testing Program
 - The Zavala County AgriLife Extension Agent presented a program to 5th and 6th graders at the Batesville Elementary school on the water cycle, home water conservation tips, what kids can do and be a part of water conservation and preventing water contamination and pollution. The students were given an opportunity to evaluate the program. Over 97 percent indicated that they learned at least 5 things regarding water conservation, the water cycle and what they can do as part of water conservation at home and at school.
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- The Zavala County Extension Agent developed a series of 3 news media releases informing the public on ways to conserve water at home and in the landscape during the hot dry summer months in South

Agriculture and Natural Resources

Texas. The news media releases were submitted and printed in The Zavala County Sentinel, The Uvalde Leader News, The South Texas Star and The Eagle Pass Business Journal.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Frio, Atascosa, Dimmit, Zavala, and LaSalle, would like to recognize and thank the partnership and cooperation of the above mentioned individuals, company reps, association and governmental agencies.

Results:

Water screening results provide critical information on current status of water. Fecal Coliform is the most common problem private well owner's experience. The presence of fecal coliform in water indicates that feces (bodily waste from humans or animals) may have contaminated the water. Water contaminated with feces have microorganisms present that can cause a number of "waterborne" diseases such as cholera, typhoid, and dysentery. Of the samples, 15 positive for fecal coliform (30.6%). Nitrate level was .7 average, with 20pm the high nitrate sample. Nitrate is converted to nitrite which combines with hemoglobin, the chemical that carries oxygen in the blood, to form methemoglobin. Oxygen cannot bind with methemoglobin, therefore, oxygen is not carried throughout the body. As a result, oxygen starvation occurs. This condition is called methemoglobinemia. If left untreated, death may result. Infants less than 6 months in age and young livestock are most susceptible. Salinity in the form of Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) was also determined on each sample. 967.5 TDS have salinity with range from 29 to 5500 TDS salinity.

The estimated value for each participant in the multi-county water program is \$1, 895 mean x 49 samples = \$92, 855 value of program participants.

Results indicate that the Multi- County Water Plan met its objectives to increase knowledge and behavioral changes with the homeowners that participated. 92.3% of the participants indicated that they were completely satisfied with the entire program. The average estimate how valuable their participation in the Water Educational Program has been to them is, \$1, 895 per participant.

Acknowledgements:

Special thanks to Mr. Drew M. Gholson, John Smith, Diane Boellstroff, Ryan Gerlich and the Texas Water Well Owner Network Program for providing the expertise on screening the water samples and helping with the program. We would also like to thank the San Antonio River Authority and the Evergreen Underground Water Conservation District for being part of the program. Additional thanks are also due to Dr. Monty Dozier and Mr. Todd Swift for their guidance with the Multi-County Water Plan and to the agents from Dimmit, La Salle, Frio, Atascosa, and Zavala Counties.

Future Program Actions:

Working with agents from Dimmit, La Salle, Frio, Atascosa, and Zavala counties we will continue to offer water educational programs targeting homeowners and landowners so they can continue to monitor their water resources.

Atascosa County Car Seat Safety Usage Check 2014

Relevance

Motor vehicle accidents are the number one killer of children ages 3-14 in Texas and nationwide. Proper use of a child safety seat reduces one's risk of injury (or death) in the case of a crash by 58%. However, non-use and miss-use of child safety seats remain issues. According to Children's Safety Network, 2005, Child Safety Seat Checks cost approximately \$80 and have a return value of \$6,000 in medical expenses, future earnings, quality of life, and other resources cost. Public Health Region 8, which Atascosa is a part of, has a high strain of child hospitalizations and fatalities due to motor vehicle accidents. (Based on provisional data)

Target Audience

The Child Seat Safety Usage checks are geared towards Atascosa County families with children ages newborn to 14 years of age.

Response

As a response to the increase of traffic around Atascosa County, a car seat coalition was formed. The mission of the coalition is to inform the residents of the county of the importance of the usage of car seats. A child safety seat usage check was held in conjunction with education and resources on proper car seat practices.

Results

As a result of the car seat safety usage check, a total of 36 seats were checked for proper usage. 34 seats were given out with no child arriving correctly restrained. The economic value of this event resulted in a saving for the county of approximately \$216,000.00 according to Children's Safety Network, 2005.

Summary:

Results indicated that the Car Seat Safety Usage Check met the mission of the coalition. The coalition is going to continue having Car Seat Safety Usage Checks along with educating the residents of the county about proper car seat practices.

Special Thanks:

Methodist Healthcare Ministries (Wesley Nurses)

Tresha Smoot, RN; Poteet

Linda Harper, RN; Pleasanton

Texas Department of State Health Services

Sandra Calvillo, car seat technician

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Atascosa County Better Living for Texans, Bronze 2014

Relevance

According to the Food Environment Statistics for Atascosa County the percentage of low-income residents eligible for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is 38.10% (according to 2009 results). The Better Living for Texans program aims to teach healthy living while helping you to save money. By teaching healthy living practices it can reduce the amount of health concerns lowering the cost of health care issues.

Target Audience

The Better Living for Texans program is targeted for low in-come families and SNAP qualifying individuals.

Response

As a response to number of families receiving SNAP funding and the average monthly benefit being only \$92.00 per participant the need for healthy living on a budget was addressed with Better Living for Texans support. Classes were held at government housing units around the county addressing better health habits and the need for physical activity.

Results

As a result of classes given participants voiced being more aware of grocery store tactics in advertising and unit pricing. Participants also became more mindful of how much sugar and salt they were actually consuming.

Summary:

Results indicated that the classes were a success. When you have small changes they promote big changes. Classes will continue to promote not only healthy eating, but physical activity too. More classes will take place around the county as more partnerships are established.

Special Thanks:

Methodist Healthcare Ministries (Wesley Nurses),

Tresha Smoot, RN; Poteet and Linda Harper, RN; Pleasanton

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Atascosa 4-H Club Manager Training 2014

Relevance

Atascosa County has 8 4-H Clubs in the County and it is very important to keep them up to date on 4-H club activities and changes and Best Management Practices for them.

Target Audience

The educational program targeted 8 4-H Club managers and assistant club managers from across the County.

Response

As a need to keep them informed educational meetings have been held to educate them on 4-H Best Management Practices, 4-H Chartering guidelines and other items as needed.

Results

A customer Satisfaction survey with retrospective post questionnaire was used to evaluate the program.

- 7 4-H Club Managers attended the 4-H managers training.
- 7 out of 7 (100%) had an increase in understanding the 2014-2015 4-H Chartering Process.
- 6 out of 7 (85%) had an increase in understanding the IRS Financial Retention Policy.
- 6 out of 7 (85%) have a change in understanding the Check request form for 4-H account fund management.
- 6 out of 7 (85%) understand why 4-H clubs should not have a debit card.
- 7 out of 7 (100%) had an increase in understanding the Notification Policy for 4-H fund raising activities.

Summary:

Results indicate that 4-H managers increased their knowledge of, 2014-2015 4-H Chartering process, 2013-2014 IRS Tax filing deadline, IRS Financial Retention Policy, Check Request Forms for 4-H account fund management. No Debit cards for 4-H clubs Texas Sales Tax for 4-H Clubs. . Plans are to continue with the 4-H Club Manager Trainings.

Special Thanks:

The Jourdanton Lutheran Church for the use of their facility

2014 Atascosa County Officer Training

Relevance

Atascosa County has 8 4-H Clubs in the County and a slate of 4-H County Council Officers that all have leadership roles that make the 4-H program a success in the county. 4-H Club Managers and Council members identified parliamentary procedure and officer leadership training as an important need for the county. With these groups identifying this as an important need for 4-H members the County Extension Staff utilized this opportunity to focus on leadership and team building

Target Audience

The educational program targeted 8 4-H Club Officers and 4-H County Council Officers.

Response

As a response of the need for parliamentary procedure training and 4-H officer leadership training the County Extension Staff held educational trainings with assistance of the club managers and council Officers.

Results A customer Satisfaction survey with retrospective post questionnaire was used to evaluate the program.

- 26 4-H members attended the 4-H Officer and Leadership training and returned 100% of the surveys.
- 11 out of 26 (43%) had an increase in understanding what there officer responsibility should be.
- 13 out of 24 (54%) have a change in understanding of knowing what the taps of a gavel mean.
- 13 out of 23 (56%) have a better understanding on how to make a main motion.
- 12 out of 23 (52%) have a change in understanding how an ice breaker can be incorporated into a club meeting.
- 13 out of 25 (52%) understanding the importance of a good program as part of the meeting.
- 13 out of 25 (52%) understanding the basic knowledge of Parliamentary Procedure.
- 28% of participants plan to adopt ice breakers as part of there meeting
- 52 % of participants plan to take action to adopt the use of a gavel in meetings.

Summary: Results indicate that 4-H members increased their knowledge of the officer responsibilities, understanding how to make a main motion, understanding what the taps of the gavel mean, how to incorporate an ice breaker into a club meeting . Plans are to continue with the 4-H Officer Leadership training and continue to develop educational articles in the 4-H Newsletter.

Special Thanks:

The Jourdanton Lutheran Church for the use of their facility

Atascosa County One Day 4-H

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. 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. One Day 4-H was selected by the 4-H members of the Atascosa County 4-H Club.

Response

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

Atascosa County held 4 One Day 4-H activities to include.

- ✓ Lytle 4-H Main Street Cleanup
- ✓ Black Hill 4-H completed the Black Hill Community Center Cleanup
- ✓ Poteet 4-H Club St Phillips Benizi Catholic Church Fall Festival Cleanup
- ✓

Results

There were a total of 24 participants in the One Day 4-H events

Future Plans

We will continue to conduct One Day 4-H in Atascosa County, it offers youth the opportunity to work as a team on a community service project that helps people in our community.

4-H and Youth Development



Community Economic Development

2014 Atascosa County Community Resource and Economic Development Output Summary

- The Atascosa County Extension Office assisted the community in several different areas to include the Atascosa County Junior Livestock Show where the Junior Premium Sale was conducted that generated \$747,000.00 dollars for the youth of Atascosa County
- The Atascosa County Extension Office worked beside the leadership of the Atascosa County Fair Board to host the Atascosa County Fair where 429 entries were received that represented 10 counties across the State of Texas that came into the County for the first weekend in October.
- The Atascosa 4-H council held the South Texas Double Trouble Prospect Show in the County that had 213 beef project entries that came from 14 counties across the State of Texas.
- The Atascosa 4-H Ambassadors raised \$440.00 dollars that they donated to the American Cancer Society.
- The Atascosa County 4-H council raised \$182.00 for Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation
- The Atascosa Club Calf Producers held their annual Club Calf Sale and it generated around \$79,800 dollars for the producers of the County and had approximately 93 registered buyers from Texas.

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