



# Making a Difference

Improving Lives.  
Improving Texas.

## Extension Education in Brooks County

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service has been dedicated to educating Texans for nearly a century. In 1915, the agency was established under the federal Smith-Lever Act to deliver university knowledge and agricultural research findings directly to the people. Ever since, AgriLife Extension programs have addressed the emerging issues of the day, serving diverse populations across the state.

Through a well-organized network of professional educators and some 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 significant returns 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:

## Brooks County – Summary of 2012 Educational Contacts

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Total Educational Contacts	267
Total participants	26,224
Contact Hours	38,876
4H Members	67
4H Leaders	46
Special Interest	707
Westside Extension Educators	13
Office Contacts	2420
Site Visits	1069
Phone calls	2427
Newsletters	3787
Cash and in kind donations by AgriLife Supporters and collaborators	
BLT	\$25,379
4H Fundraising	\$3,468.50
Texas Friendly Hospitality	\$730
Shooting Sports (NRA)	\$5,800
Cost Recovery	
Prescribed Burn	\$220
Get Fit	\$300
Do Well Be Well	\$50
Range and Pasture	\$70
Pesticide Trainings	\$160

## 2012 Brooks County Prescribed Burn Plan Plan Summary Report

### Relevance:

Prescribed burning in Brooks County has been a valuable management tool when used properly. Prescribed burns suppress most woody plants while encourages grass and forb growth that benefits both livestock and wildlife. Unfortunately when not used correctly prescribed burns can get out of control damaging property, structures, and to some extremes even cause loss of life. In order for the producers to use this valuable management tool safely, it is important to educate them in proper techniques to successfully implement and conduct a prescribed burn. The South Texas Prescribed Burn Association, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Texas Parks and Wildlife, and Natural Resources, Conservation Services and Brooks County Commissioners Court identified issues that needed to be addressed in educating producers and landowners about the proper way of implementing and conducting a prescribed burn.

### Response:

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Brooks County developed the following activities to address this relevant issue.

- ⇒ Prescribed Burn Program Newsletter (January-February 2012)
- ⇒ Prescribed Burn Program (February 2012)
- ⇒ Prescribed Burn Demonstration (February 2012)

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Brooks County partnered with South Texas Prescribed Burn Association, Texas Parks and Wildlife and Natural Resources Conservation Services to implement this plan and would like to recognize this ongoing partnership.

### Results

A customer Satisfaction survey (retrospective post) was utilized to measure programmatic impact. A total of 27 of 35 participants returned the survey.

The first section focused on overall satisfaction of the program.

- ⇒ Overall satisfaction of the program – 98.1%
- ⇒ Satisfaction with the information being easy to understand – 93.6%
- ⇒ Satisfaction with timeliness of the information – 92.1%

The last section focused on intentions to change based on what the participant learned:

- ⇒ Do you anticipate benefitting economically as a direct result of this activity – 88%
- ⇒ Do you plan to take any action or make any changes based on the information from the program – 91%

## Agriculture and Natural Resources

### Summary of results:

Results indicate that the Brooks County Prescribed Burn Program met its objectives to increase knowledge and behavioral changes with the producers and land owners that participated. A total of 98.1 % of the participants indicated that they were completely or mostly satisfied with the entire program. In conclusion due to the high percentage of satisfaction with program we will continue to offer the program in the future.

### Topics covered:

- ⇒ Effects of Fire on rangeland
- ⇒ Fire Weather Season
- ⇒ Equipment and Safety
- ⇒ Preparing Burn Plans

### Acknowledgements:

Special thanks to the following presenters, Dr. Megan Clark, Mr. Vivian Garcia, Mr. Joel Torres, and Mr. Range Fugate, Judge Raul Ramirez and Mr. Steve Drillete. Additional thanks are due to the following Cooperators, Loma Blanca SWCD# 328 for the meal and Mr. David Escobar for hosting this program.

### Future Program Actions:

Work with South Texas Prescribed Burn Association, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. Texas Parks and Wildlife, and the Natural Resource Conservation Service will continue to offer educational programming that targets different issues that arise within Brooks County to better educate our landowners and producers of those issues.

## 2012 Brush Country White-Tailed Deer Outcome Summary

### Brooks County

### Nikolo Guerra, CEA-Ag/NR

#### Relevance:

There are many different things Falfurrias is known for like Falfurrias Butter, the many dairies that once inhabited Brooks County, and finally watermelons. If you ask an avid hunter or outdoorsman they will immediately tell you that it is the great hunting that Falfurrias has to offer. Many species of wildlife play an important part in the economy of Falfurrias. The one species of Wildlife that is abundant in Falfurrias is the white-tailed deer. Every year thousands of hunters descend on Falfurrias to harvest that one trophy buck to hang on the wall or that first doe their children harvest. To prepare for deer season landowners and ranch managers are looking for different feeding programs and other management techniques to grow the deer hunters are willing to pay for. Through multi-county effort county agents from Jim Hogg, Brooks, Duval, Jim Wells, and Kleberg/Kennedy counties started the white-tailed deer management program to help ranch managers and landowners receive the latest information and techniques to help reach their goals in white-tailed deer management.

#### Response:

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Agents from Jim Hogg, Brooks, Duval, Jim Wells, and Kleberg/Kennedy counties developed the following activities to address this issue

- ⇒ White-tailed deer program newsletter (August-September 2012)
- ⇒ White-tailed deer management program (September 28, 2012)
- ⇒ Rain water harvesting result demonstration

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Brooks, Jim Hogg, Duval, Jim Wells, and Kleberg/Kennedy counties partnered with Texas Parks and Wildlife, and Natural Resource and Conservation Service to implement this program and would like to recognize this partnership.

#### Results:

A six question face to face survey was used to measure the participants' knowledge before and after the program. Also agent asked participants to rate their overall satisfaction of the program on a scale from 1-5.

- ⇒ The first section focused on three questions to measure knowledge gained before and after the program Questions were chosen randomly from topics covered by guest speakers.

1) What was your knowledge before program that on average one buck will breed one doe during the rut?

-On a scale of 1 through 4 one being the least 100% of the participants chose 1. After the program was over when asked the same question on a scale of 1 through 4, 100% of participants chose the number 4.

2) What was your knowledge before program that 25% of fawns make it to six months in a drought season?

-On a scale of 1 through 4 one being the least 75% of the participants chose 1. After the program when asked the same question on a scale of 1 through 4, 100% of participants chose the number 4.

*Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating*

## Agriculture and Natural Resources

3) What was your knowledge before program that does and fawns are shorted at feeders due to competition of dominant bucks?

-On a scale of 1 through 4 one being the least 50% of the participants chose 1. After the program was over when asked the same question on a scale of 1 through 4, 100% of participants chose the number 4.

⇒ Second section focused on whether or not participants would adopt practices of a rainwater harvesting system?

-Of the 7 participants asked before the program 75% of the participants said no 25% of the participants said yes. After the program those 75% of participants were asked the same question if they would adopt practices of rainwater harvesting system. Of those participants they all said they would adopt a rainwater harvesting system.

⇒ Final section was on overall satisfaction of the program.

-All participants were overall satisfied with quality of the program.

### Summary of Results:

Results indicate that the Brush Country White-tailed deer management program met its objectives to increase knowledge before and after the program. In conclusion due to the high percentage of satisfaction and overall attendance with program we will continue to offer the program in future.

### Topics Covered:

Genetic breeding success and fawn, recruitment, feeding fawns and fawn mortality

-Nutrition

-Harvesting rain water for wild

-White-tail movement patterns

### Acknowledgements:

Special thanks to the following presenters Sam Gavito, Dr. Megan Clayton, Mark Bartoskowitz, Albert Garcia, Sammy Guerra, Rene Garza, and The Gamez Ranch for facility.

### Future Program Actions:

Teaming up with Texas Parks and Wildlife, Natural Resource Conservation Service, and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service we will continue to offer educational programming that targets different issues that arise within deer management and to better educate landowners and managers.

**2012 Better Living for Texans  
 Brooks County  
 Celia Salinas, CEA-FCS**

**Relevance:** Health disparities among low income populations are well documented. Obesity, heart disease and hypertension are conditions which are more prevalent in low income populations. The amelioration of these conditions thru improved nutrition choices is affirmed in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. However, dietary behavior change can be difficult and requires knowledge, skills, motivation and an environment conducive to change.

Basic food buying skills enable Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education (SNAP-ED) clients to consider more healthful food choices when shopping. *Get the Facts*, a three-lesson series on the Nutrition Facts food label, and “Three easy Bites” was developed by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service nutrition specialists to enhance participant skills necessary for positive dietary behavior change. The skills-building series focused on comparing serving size, fat and sodium information when selecting food choices. These three items were specifically selected as they relate to obesity, heart disease and hypertension.

**Response:** The evaluation of knowledge and intent to change behavior among *Get the Facts* and *Three Easy Bites* participants was accomplished thru the use of pre/post/follow-up survey instruments. *Get the Facts* and *Three Easy Bites* participants could opt out of the evaluation process if desired. Nonetheless, 47 *Get the Facts* survey sets were received from Brooks County, Texas. *Agent will opt to leave the stats for Three easy bites out from this point forward due to state wide statistics provided.*

The typical *Get the Facts* participant was Hispanic (100%) and female (75%) with a mean age of 49 years. Participants described themselves as white (99%). Most participants (91%) had a high school diploma, GED or less. Many participants (32%) had been told by a health professional they needed to lose weight. The typical household had 3 members, of which 1.2 were children. Of those participants (n=40) who reported receiving food stamp benefits the typical monthly amount was \$157.30. Participants reported other program use: food stamps (72%), free or reduced price school meals (23%), WIC (30%), and Head Start (28%). Most participants (64%) reported Better Living for Texans (BLT) was the first AgriLife Extension program they had attended. Participants (100%) rated the *Get the Facts* lesson series as excellent.

**Results:** Change in Knowledge  
 A trend in label reading knowledge improvement was noted during the time *Get the Facts* was taught. Knowledge increase was also noted during the 30 day follow up period. However, statistical significance could not be determined due to sample size.

Table 1. Mean correct knowledge scores (out of 6): pre/post/follow-up survey sets (n=47).

Pre-survey	Post-survey	Follow-up survey
1.0	4.9	5.7

**Change in Behavior**

Self-reported behavior improvement regarding serving size, fat and sodium food label usage was noted during the time this lesson series was taught. Dramatic behavior improvement was also noted during the 30 day follow-up period. However, statistical significance could not be determined due to sample size.

Figure 1: Percentage of *Get the Facts* participants who reported always or almost always checking the food label for serving size, fat or sodium while shopping for food. (n=47)

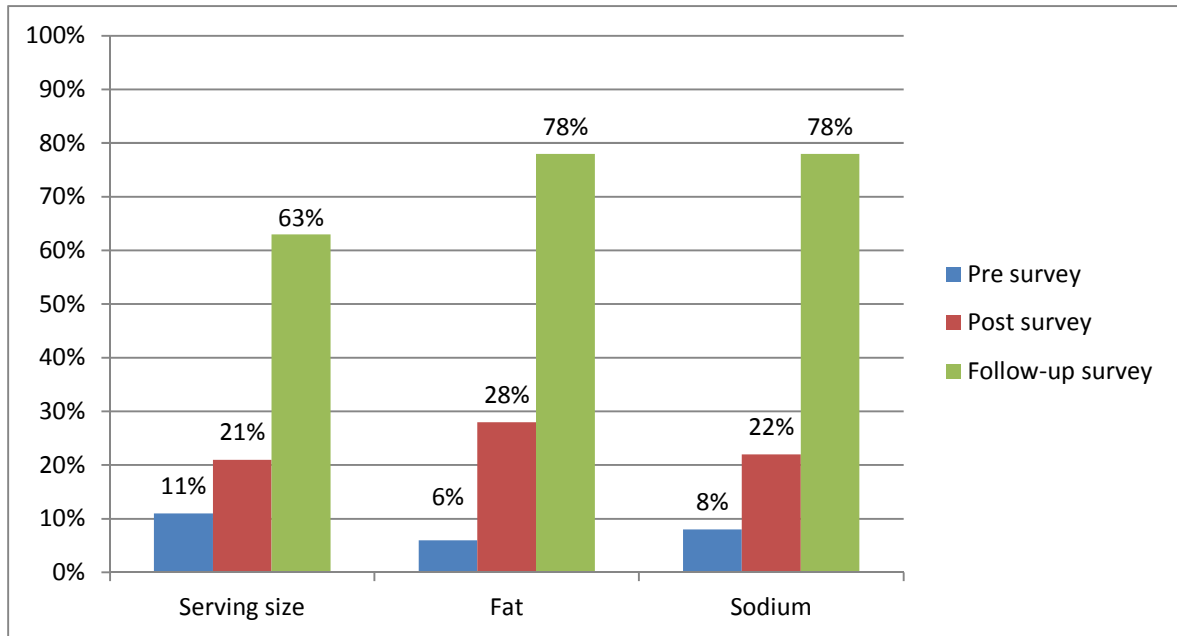


Table 2. Participants' comments

Participant responses to: "What changes have you made?"
<i>Buy things with less fat, sodium and sugar, eat correct portions and eat more fruits and vegetables</i>
<i>Control weight by eating more fruits and vegetables, using low sodium food and walking everyday</i>
<i>Eating more fruits and vegetables, staying away from trans fats, stopped drinking soda, making healthy choices</i>



*Get the Facts* is one of several Texas SNAP-ED approved curricula available to help meet the needs of local county Extension agents. Brooks County evaluation results suggest *Get the Facts* was effective at increasing participant knowledge and improving behavior related to nutrition label reading. These results were consistent with statewide evaluation results (n=1320) which also suggest this curriculum was effective ( $p > .001$ ) at improving both participant knowledge and behavior. Label reading skills are necessary for SNAP-ED clients to make healthful food choices and thereby reduce their risk of chronic conditions such as obesity, heart disease and hypertension.

**Future Plans:** To continue to provide research based nutritional programming to the clients of Brooks County.

## VALUE

### Better Living for Texans



These nutrition programs teach low-income audiences to prepare nutritious meals, stretch their food resources, improve their food-safety practices, and participate in regular physical activity. This not only improves the quality of life and reduces the risk of chronic disease for participants, but also lowers public health care costs.

## Promoting Healthy Weight Behaviors 2012 Brooks County Report Celia Salinas, CEA-FCS

### Relevance

Two thirds of the adult population is either overweight or obese. Certain breakfast, snacking and dinner behaviors are associated with achieving and maintaining a healthful weight. Research supports eating breakfast, planning snacks and dinner, as well as having enough fruits and/or vegetables to cover half of a dinner plate are associated with healthy weight.

### Response

A three lesson series, *Three Easy Bites*, was developed by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service nutrition specialists. The curriculum promoted positive lifestyle behaviors related to breakfast, snacking and dinner. *Three Easy Bites* session goals were -- families would:

- ⇒ Plan to eat breakfast, include foods from at least two MyPlate food groups, and include breakfast items on their weekly grocery list;
- ⇒ Plan which snack foods they will eat, eat their snacks away from the television, and compare their snack portion relative to the Nutrition Facts serving size; and
- ⇒ Plan their dinner meal, include fruits and/or vegetables with every dinner, and include fruit and/or vegetables on their weekly grocery list.

Participants could opt out of the survey evaluation process if desired. Nonetheless, 21 pre/post/follow-up survey sets were received from Brooks County, Texas. Most participants (76%) reported that Better Living for Texans (BLT) was the first AgriLife program they had attended. The typical *Three Easy Bites* participant was female (71%), described herself as Hispanic or Latino (95%) and was 41 years of age. Participants identified themselves as white (90%) or Asian (9%). The highest level of educational attainment for most participants (88%) was 12 years or less. Some participants (5%) had been advised by a health professional they weigh too much.

**Family and Consumer Sciences**

**Results**

There was a trend toward improvement in all behavior domains during the time *Three Easy Bites* was taught; the difference between pre-survey scores and 30-day follow-up survey scores was quite pronounced. These data suggest that clients improved behaviors consistent with healthier weight practices. Of note was the trend to reduce snacking in front of the television and to cover half of the dinner plate with fruits and vegetables. Statistical significance could not be determined due to sample size.

Table 1. Percentage of *Three Easy Bites* participants who answered always or almost always: pre/post/follow-up (n=21).

Behavior Questions	Pre-survey	Post-survey	Follow up survey
	%	%	%
<b>How often do you plan breakfast ahead of time?</b>	0	9	19
<b>How often do you include at least two breakfast items from different food groups?</b>	0	33	85
<b>How often do you use a shopping list which includes breakfast items when you go to the grocery store?</b>	0	4	23
<b>How often do you plan snacks ahead of time?</b>	0	10	42
<b>How often do you snack in front of the television?</b>	71	4	0
<b>How often do you use the Nutrition Facts serving size information to determine how much of your snack to eat?</b>	4	9	19
<b>How often do you plan dinner ahead of time?</b>	0	19	71
<b>How often do you have enough fruits and/or vegetables to cover half of your dinner plate?</b>	0	42	90
<b>How often do you use a shopping list with fruits and vegetables when you go to the grocery store?</b>	0	4	4

## Family and Consumer Sciences

The leader-facilitated learner-centered *Three Easy Bites* lesson approach may have helped clients internalize information and enhanced skills necessary to improve behaviors related to healthy weight. This curriculum was relevant given some of these participants had been told by a health professional they weigh too much.

Statewide results (n=1113) suggest the *Three Easy Bites* curriculum was effective ( $p > .001$ ) at improving participant behavior related to breakfast, snacking and dinner. Consistent improvements in eating patterns can help clients to achieve and maintain healthy weight.

### VALUE

#### Obesity Prevention and Reduction



The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service engages children and adults in programs that teach them how to eat nutritious foods and engage in regular physical activity to promote health and reduce their risk for obesity. The Texas public benefits through a healthier population, reduced health care costs, and increased productivity.

## Family & Consumer Sciences Contacts 2012

### Brooks County

Celia Salinas, CEA-FCS

### Summary of Issue and Extension Efforts

This plan is to be used to capture all general FCS contacts not associated with any other plans. This plan is designed as a catch all for activities conducted in our County. Our goal is to capture contacts that are emerging throughout the 2012 year. For the 2012 Extension year agent provided a total of 66 educational sessions reaching nearly 4000 clients. A total of 668 contact hours. The most effective program agent Salinas conducted this year that was not an outcome was the "I Do You Do" fitness program. This program is a spin off of the Redefining our bodies program done in the 2011 year. Agent felt that people were still interested in health and wellness that she implemented a shorter version to jump-start metabolism as well as to encourage weight loss. With two of my dedicated women a total of over 100 pounds were lost.

### Results of Efforts

In 2012 FCS agent reached 3,974 clients through the efforts of educational programming, site, visits, volunteers and or other local media. Below you will find the activities and or programs conducted with our Brooks County families.

- ⇒ Centra trainings: Tax updates, County mandatory Meetings, Support Staff Trainings
- ⇒ Get fit programs: Zumba, Cardio, Flex Training, Cardio fitness for the elderly centers, I Do You Do fitness program.
- ⇒ SHAC, Brooks County Coalition, Migrant Headstart, New Covenant Christian Academy
- ⇒ Professional Development: South Region FCS Training, Youth obesity issues, bullying, power2waite
- ⇒ District 12 Committees: Marketing committee and South Region FCS planning group, FPM Certification

### Future Plans

Continue to invest my time and effort to the people of Brooks County.

## **4H Management 2012 Brooks County Celia Salinas, CEA-FCS**

### **Summary of Issue and Extension Efforts**

Brooks County is a rural community that has little to no extra curricular activities other than the ones provided in the school district with communities in schools. Our youth continue to ask for additional youth activities to keep them busy as well as off the streets. Our youth board continues to assist agents in programming as well as implementing a variety of events. Agents oversee 4-H and youth development program including management of 4-H club managers, volunteer leaders, clubs/groups, coordination of Youth Advisory Board and work with partners to ensure effective functioning of the 4-H and Youth development program. During the 2012 Extension 4H Year Agents reached 5,671 4H youth, families, volunteers, leaders. A total of 27 Educational programs were conducted as well.

### **Results of Efforts**

In 2012 the Brooks county 4-H program reached a total of 5,671 participants through efforts of educational programs, site visits, volunteers and or the local media. Below you will find the activities and or programs conducted with our youth in Brooks County.

- ⇒ Working with the Youth Advisory Board with all 4-H Projects and events
- ⇒ Club Manager Meetings and trainings, BCFA Board meetings
- ⇒ Keeping up with all 4-H enrollments, Achievement events, One day 4H, Community Dinner
- ⇒ Club Meetings, District 4H meetings and events, Fund-raising
- ⇒ 4-H Monthly Newsletter, 4-H Marketing and Promotion, AG day

### **Future Plans**

Continue to plan and implement a cost effective and worthwhile 4H program for the people of Brooks County and surrounding areas. We will continue to encourage our youth to participate in local, district and state events. To continue to increase the 4H enrollment process throughout the year.

**Brooks County Shooting Sports 2012  
Outcome Summary  
Brooks County  
Nikolo Guerra, CEA-Ag/NR**

**Date: of Summary: November 28, 2012**

**Relevance:**

Since Brooks County is a rural community and local youth spend a lot of time around firearms and archery equipment for hunting and recreation the Brooks County Extension office decided to start a shooting sports club to help teach youth proper safety. Brush Country shooting sports was formed 11 years ago by certified instructors and volunteers to promote firearm and archery safety. The age group targeted in Brooks County shooting sports is 9-18 years of age. Through this program participants learn shooting safety, introduced to different types of equipment used while shooting correct shooting positions, how to score targets, and finally to be good sportsman. Those who participate in shooting sports travel and complete in many district, state, as well as county events. Shooting Sports is a very good project club to be a part of but because of the cost of equipment and ammo it is very expensive to operate. Through generous contributions from the NRA, Ed Rachal Foundation, local donors and fundraisers we are able to operate fully throughout the year. With these generous donations we are able to offer a very good program to the youth of Falfurrias.

**Response:**

The Brooks County Extension office along with certified rifle and archery instructors, Texas Parks and Wildlife, and Brooks County Sheriff's Department teamed up to offer the following programs in 2012.

- ⇒ Gun Safety Courses
- ⇒ Hunters Education Courses
- ⇒ Weekly Practice
- ⇒ Skill Shoots
- ⇒ County Shootouts
- ⇒ Multi-county Competitions
- ⇒ Postal Leagues
- ⇒ Sate Games

## 4-H Program

### Partnerships and Collaborators:

- ⇒ Texas Parks and Wildlife
- ⇒ NRA (National Rifle Association)
- ⇒ Ed Rachal Foundation
- ⇒ Brooks County Sheriff's Department
- ⇒ City of Falfurrias Police Department

### Results:

A ten question phone survey was used to measure impact of change in three different areas behavior and attitude, knowledge, and finally skills. There were a total of 15 kids who participated in phone survey.

#### First section focused on behavioral and attitude changes.

- ⇒ 100% (15 of 15) greatly increased their respect and their feelings.
- ⇒ 93% (14 of 15) greatly increased how well they listened to what others had to say.

#### Second section focused on knowledge gained.

- ⇒ 100% (15 of 15) greatly increased knowledge of shooting safety
- ⇒ 100% (15 of 15) greatly increased their knowledge for competition
- ⇒ 100% (15 of 15) greatly increased their knowledge to score targets

#### Third section focused on skills.

- ⇒ 93% (14 of 15) greatly increased their ability to use correct form when shooting
- ⇒ 93% (14 of 15) greatly increased their score through practice and coaching

### Summary of results:

Results indicate that participants who are practicing and competing with Brooks County Shooting Sports have greatly increased their knowledge, behavior, and skills throughout this program.

### Acknowledgements:

The Brooks County Extension Office would like to recognize Brooks County Commissioners Court, Brooks County Sheriff's Department, City of Falfurrias, Texas Parks and Wildlife, parents, instructors, and all volunteers who contributed to this project.



## 4-H Program

### Youth ANR and Livestock 2012 Brooks County Nikolo Guerra, CEA-Ag/NR

#### Summary of Issue and Extension Efforts

Every year 4-hers are involved in the local County Fair where they participate in showing their projects. Those projects consist of swine, beef, lambs, goats, rabbits, horse, and poultry. It is my duties to make sure that these kids get their projects by different deadlines and to make myself available when they have questions. To accommodate them Brooks County Extension agent makes monthly project visits to check on projects health, feeding programs, and answering any questions exhibitors or parents may have. Brooks County Extension agent made over 30 visits monthly in 2012 to meet the demand.

#### Results of Efforts

As a result of the project visits we were able to help exhibitors with a variety of problems. Some of the problems encountered was pink eye in a few pens of rabbits, after a veterinarian prescribed some eye drops those rabbits were able to show at county. Other types of problems encountered were holding some of the animals back on feed so they could make weight. We had to weigh rabbits and pigs daily a couple of weeks before show to make sure they were not over weight. If we as extension personnel were not there to assist we would have had some participants sifted from show.

#### Future Plans

Future plans include having more showmanship clinics where exhibitors could come to learn proper showing techniques and feeding techniques to help them accomplish their goals they had set for their project.

**Emergency Management 2012**  
**Brooks County**  
**Celia Salinas, CEA-FCS**

**Summary of Issue and Extension Efforts**

The purpose of the Brooks County Emergency Management Plan is to provide an opportunity for individuals, families, businesses, and communities across Texas to learn how to better prepare for unexpected events, mitigate to reduce risk, and how to recover from whatever event they may have experienced. Texas is subject to numerous disasters, whether they be natural, accidental or intentional. These hazards are somewhat unpredictable. Texas experiences the effects of hurricanes, drought, wildfires and other incidents.

**Results of Efforts**

For the 2012 year both agents didn't have much to report to this plan. Emergency management meetings were met as well as distributing preparing for the unexpected reaching 694 clients. Agent had a total of 9 educational programs as she met with adult care center as well as the local child care facilities and school districts. Also, meeting with the American Red Cross for future planning of shelter in place volunteers.

**Future Plans**

To continue to work closely with the emergency management team to provide reports as needed to our local management teams. To be on call throughout the state as needed.

## Community Resource & Economic Development Brooks County Nikolo Guerra, CEA-Ag/NR

### **Summary of Issue and Extension Efforts**

When I came into Brooks County one of my main responsibilities was to oversee maintenance and scheduling of events for Brooks County Fair Grounds. The Fair Grounds consist of a roping arena, fairgrounds, stage for field events, and a Home Economics Building. The only event that really took place at the fairgrounds was our county fair which takes place in March. As the county extension agent I saw a opportunity for the fairgrounds to be a place where activities of all sorts could be held which would benefit the community by drawing people to Falfurrias. Immediately we started a Fairgrounds development committee to pursue ideas to better utilize grounds for activities other than the county fair. Through the committee we came up with a few improvements to upgrade facilities to hold large events which include security lighting, 200 amp service poles, bleachers, stage, and adding grounds to county schedule to mow.

### **Results of Efforts**

Through efforts of Fairgrounds Committee City of Falfurrias, and Brooks County Judge and Commissioners Court we have been able to make many improvements. Which include six new security lights, 8 200 amp service poles to be used for electricity, new PA system for rodeo arena, and the biggest edition a stage. Due to the upgrades we have seen a spike in activities being held at Fairgrounds, which include monthly team ropings, Pan De Campo celebration, 4th of July celebration, Falfurrias Volunteer Fire Department Halloween Carnival, and Brooks County Youth Rodeo. Also we already have a biker rally scheduled with wounded warrior foundation for February 2013. All these events will be held annually from now on at fairgrounds.

### **Future Plans**

Future plans include adding covered bleachers to rodeo arena and fairgrounds. Also we are looking to adding new buck-out chutes for bull ridings and renovating press box. All these upgrades are in the process of getting approval.

# **Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Brooks County**

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## **Staff**

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4H Coordinator**

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