

South Region Program Review

Southeast District 9 ~ Coastal Bend District 11 ~ South District 12



Ensure a sustainable, profitable, and competitive food and fiber system in Texas

Beef Cattle Management Outcomes

- Over 100 hay producers in Liberty, Chambers, and Hardin Counties have increased knowledge of forage and grazing management practices to improve quality of grazing and hay production. Additionally, in Jim Wells, Jim Hogg, Duval and Brooks Counties improvements in quality of hay samples submitted for hay shows indicating that producers are adopting better practices that produce better quality hay.
- Brazos hay purchasers have learned how to accurately determine the true value of their supplies and match supplemental feeding programs more efficiently and have doubled the number of hay samples submitted for testing in the last 2 years.
- Over 190 participants in beef education programs in Calhoun 25, Dewitt/Lavaca 23, Bee/Goliad/Refugio 30, Fayette 77, Wharton 14 Counties have increased their knowledge of evaluating, selecting and managing breeding cattle to improve productivity.
- The 30 participants of the "Tri-county Beef Cattle Risk Management Program" in Bee, Goliad, and Refugio Counties reported \$111,994 of additional income realized by adoption of practices.
- In Fayette County, 77 producers reported they saved an average of \$14.73/ac due to their participation in educational programs to improve understanding of market factors that impact beef cattle prices received, and how to improve marketability through adopting good management practices, BQA, and etc. .
- Most counties conducted National Animal Identification educational programs resulting in increased understanding of the program. Besides increased knowledge, the number of registered premises increased across the region from 20 registered premises in December of 2004 to 1433 December of 2005. Example: Burleson, Lee and Madison counties have 53, 68, and 63 registered premises, respectively at the end of 2005, all of them after the start of the county educational programs.

Total Population	7,289,808
White	42%
Hispanic	41%
Black	14%
Other	4%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Crop Profitability Outcomes

- Irrigation efficiency education programs targeted 20 producers in San Patricio county with all 6 surveyed producers indicating their decision making had improved resulting in potential to improve profit by \$15-20 per acre or \$280,000.
- In last 5 years in Matagorda County, 117 of 195(60%) rice producers have adopted some type of conservation tillage or stale seed bed production system resulting in reduced input costs for fuel, equipment, labor and water use on first crop production. Also, 150 (75%) of the producers have adopted IPM strategies to reduce total chemical use. Additionally, 100 (50%) producers have improved their profitability by using better budgeting and business management practices in their operation.
- Limited resource producers in Hidalgo County were provided training and assistance with 22 of the 51 participants increasing their knowledge and completing the FSA loan application process, including developing financial statement, cash flow budget, budget for family living and farm operating expenses. Participants are now more knowledgeable on maintaining production and financial records for their operations.

Extension Faculty & Staff	D-9	D-11	D-12
CEA - 4-H	16	8	5
CEA - FCS/FR	19	19	11
CEA - AG/NR	18	19	18
CEA - Other	15	6	9
Specialists/Assistants/Associates	4	12	10
District Support Staff	3	8	6
County Support Staff	65	53	52
Totals...	140	125	111

- Thirteen of fourteen (93%) small vegetable growers and shed managers in Starr County increased their knowledge and received passing scores about compliance with state and federal regulation in vegetable and food safety.
- For the last 3 years, nutrient management educational programs in the RGV have used the soil testing campaign to show how farmers can reduce fertilizer input costs through soil testing and showing producers how to benefit from an estimated potential savings of 1,742,321 lbs of nitrogen with a

value of approximately \$446,338 and 2,345,310 lbs of phosphorous with a value of \$626,006. A total of 1,581 samples representing 69,824 acres within a four county area.

- Soil test campaign in Willacy County has shown that farmers can save an average of \$22.06/ac on Cotton, \$9.47/ac on Grain Sorghum, \$15.09/ ac on Sugar Cane, and \$14.33/ac on fertilizing Improved Bermuda grass.
- Of 35 Zavala County producers participating in a Spinach field day and education program, 33 producers indicated increased knowledge about protecting spinach crops from white rust and blue mold to maintain quality. As a result, the Spinach Group working on trials in Zavala County have been invited to the National Spinach Conference in Washington, June 2006, to present findings of fungicide trials.

Top Six Commodities	Cash Receipts (\$1,000)
Beef (non-dairy)	\$ 1,293,164
Nursery	\$ 883,859
Cotton	\$ 266,913
Hunting	\$ 199,998
Rice	\$ 121,556
Vegetables	\$ 117,936

New Landowner/Small Landowner Program Outcomes

- In Brazoria and Harris Counties, evaluation of 37 participants of the Master Urban Rancher Programs found that 70% had increased their knowledge of managing their land resources and almost all obtained knowledge which can be applied to their operation.
- Participants in the New Landowner Education program in Washington county experienced an increase in knowledge on many subjects including managing cattle, pasture establishment and management, managing farm ponds, and general pesticide safety.
- In Fayette County, a new Web delivered education program was developed for New Landowners by the agent and resulted in increasing participants knowledge of cattle management practices and pasture management practices similar to face to face programs in other counties.

Enhance natural resource conservation and management

Watershed Management/Water Conservation

- Water for Webb County program reached over 306 producers controlling half of the rangeland acreage in the county. Evaluation responses by 30% of the 48 participants in the target audience indicates increased knowledge of land & range stewardship practices and the importance of plugging of abandoned water wells to prevent contamination of groundwater. In addition, 64% of the participants indicating the program helped them save money although no estimates were made..
- Multi-county irrigation management education program in Frio, Zavala, Dimmit, Atascosa counties taught 14 producers how to install and monitor water mark sensors in different crops. Producers learned how to make more informed decisions on irrigating their crops with the watermark sensor data, weather station data, evapo-transpiration rates and crop coefficients established for specific crops.
- Evaluation of 107 of the 157 participants of the 4 day intensive home horticulture training programs in Hidalgo County reported increases in knowledge of native plants, drip irrigation, benefits of compost, and rainwater harvesting with over 83% reporting that they planned to utilize the information gained in their gardens to improve water use efficiency .
- All 81 participants in rainwater harvesting educational effort reported gaining knowledge and 6 reported they plan to install rainwater harvesting systems and another indicated they are interested in having a system that also provides water in the home. Additionally, host agents were asked to provide a presentation to the state architects meeting in 05.
- Participants surveyed in the “Colorado County Agricultural Water Management Educational Program” have increased knowledge about the importance of soil testing to insure proper fertilizer application, reduce runoff, and protect groundwater resources. Additional water well educational efforts with 81 participants, including water screening program, revealed 16% of their 96 wells were contaminated with coliforms or salt, requiring special efforts to clean the well.
- In Montgomery County, Extension has been working with the Lone Star Ground Water Conservation District to educate 85 board members and managers of various water supply boards with surveys indicating increased knowledge and that training has been helpful in determining conservation strategies to extend the usefulness of ground water supplies and develop water alternatives for the future.
- Master Gardener Programs are active in 19 counties in the region including Brazoria, Brazos, Ft. Bend, Galveston, Liberty, Harris, Jefferson, Lee, Orange, Montgomery, Walker, Austin, Bee, Nueces, Victoria, Cameron, Kleberg, Hidalgo, and Cameron Counties. Program participants increased knowledge in selection of more adapted plant varieties, best management practices to enhance water conservation and quality, and promote environmental stewardship. Participants became active educators interacting with clientele to share their new knowledge and abilities in their community. In Galveston county, MGs provided 23,456 certified volunteer hours—equivalent to \$351,640 @ \$15/hr or 11.25 FTE’s. In addition, the Master Gardener web site received a total of 1,261,062 site “visits” or “hits” from January through December 2005. This is a twofold increase in hits over Calendar Year 2004 (546,472 hits).
- Master Naturalist Programs in Brazoria, Ft. Bend, Galveston, Harris, Waller, Aransas, Matagorda, Nueces and Cameron Counties indicate that agents trained more than 570 volunteers to support various educational efforts related

to water conservation and watershed management in their communities. In Brazoria County, 8 miles of beach dunes were rehabilitated and in Galveston County MN volunteers reached 19,770 people with educational programs about importance of conserving our natural resources, protecting the bay, and etc.

Wildlife Management & Shrimp Profitability

- Producers in multi-county whitetail deer educational effort have increased knowledge about management methods and strategies and have described how they are now doing deer densities and buck to doe ratios never previously done. Additionally, 6 producers have implemented recommended BMP's for brush management through the NRCS programs.
- A total 296 of 435 shrimpers participating in educational programs qualified for trade adjustment assistance through the FSA receiving over \$1.1 million in assistance.
- As a result of shrimp quality educational efforts, producers are bringing in a higher quality product bringing prices that allowed them to compete on the world market for another year in spite of rising fuel costs. Shrimp processors have reported a "significant increase in shrimp quality from vessels in Cameron County and directly attribute it to the shrimp quality improvement education program".

Build local capacity for economic development in Texas communities

Entrepreneurship/Business Development:

- Brazoria County 4-H & Youth Development joined the Entrepreneurship Program with Clothing & Textiles for a project in 'accessory design.' Youth who completed the project indicated in program evaluations that they better understood entrepreneurship, business planning, financial management, and customer relations.
- The Harris County Micro-business conference, "Small Business Big Dreams," held at Neighborhood Center's Inc. Ripley House in Houston's East End, the primary audience was Hispanic. Participants indicated they learned methods to improve salesmanship, better market and advertise their business, and seek professional advice to help them make better business decisions. They also indicated that they plan to explore ways to acquire outside capital.
- Participants in "Multi-County Child Care Conference" indicate an increase in knowledge about managing the child-care business.
- Starr County youth entrepreneurship programming, 13 participants in this series of micro business workshops learned entrepreneurship skills, market place trends, research and development, marketing and budgets. A pre and post test indicated that these youth enhanced their knowledge in entrepreneurship, business planning, financial management, and customer relations.
- Because of Economic advancement programming in Karnes County, 98% of participants indicated they were more likely to utilize community business web pages.
- Pasos Al Mercado is a Starr County project to provide information about developing enterprises in the Rio Grande Valley. Participants gained knowledge from successful entrepreneurs, educators, and small business specialists. This also allowed participants to network with business owners, professionals and perspective entrepreneurs. As a results, 17 participants reported that their sales grossed between \$850 to \$2,500 in 2005. One participant quote: "I know I have talent but I am limited in my thinking that people will invest to buy what I make, that is why these classes are so good because everybody is like me".
- Extension faculty assisted the Bee County COOP in developing a feasibility analysis for a prospective bio-diesel plant.

Volunteer Development:

- Brazoria County Master Urban Rancher participants have increased their knowledge in managing small parcels of acreage sometimes referred to as ranchettes. As a result of this program the participants had a 70% increase in knowledge. Several participants have established small demonstrations and several have assisted resource people.
- The Brazos Valley Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist was initiated by 19 participants who completed the initial training class. They attended 12, 3-hour training sessions and upon completion, contributed at least 40 hours of volunteer time to the Brazos County Extension Program and area projects identified by the steering committee. 648 hours of classroom and field instruction were completed by class members at a savings of \$11,813 in educational value.
- Brazoria County Master Naturalists feel that the county has been blessed with an abundance of quality water, this will not always be the case unless certain actions are taken to insure an adequate supply of quality fresh water. The main volunteer effort continues to be in youth education, in which 4,335 youth were reached through this program.
- Waller and Fort Bend County Master Naturalists gained knowledge in improving and maintaining our precious natural resources. Major areas of concern are the population continuing to increase, expanding industries, increased runoff due to urbanization, and the potential for flooding. Master Naturalists will be use what they learn to teach residents on the use and conservation of water and the restoration of natural resources. Spring 2005 participants have demonstrated an increase in knowledge and commitment through actively restoring and educating others about local natural resources.
- Participants in the Galveston County Master Naturalist Program conducted several projects: maintaining 'monarch' butterfly and hummingbird habitats at Sundance Garden, registering oak trees in League City, restoring wetlands,

developing and maintaining trails at Horseshoe Marsh in Bolivar, mowing at the various partner sites, and prairie burning at Armand Bayou.

- Hidalgo County Master Clothing Volunteers have gained knowledge and skills to supplement their income and learned ways to market their hand crafted goods. Participants made and sold mums, jewelry, purses and other items to supplement their incomes. The economic impact of this program has generated more than \$180,000 for those taught by the Master Clothing Volunteers in Hidalgo County.

Leadership Development:

- Workforce Development education programs in DeWitt and Austin Counties indicate that clientele increased their skills in both the interview process and resume development.
- Kleberg County Extension Leadership Development Program was designed to educate participants in economic development, local taxing districts, city and county government, and enhancement of leadership skills. 100% of the participants had an increase in knowledge local government, public education, and the local economy, including the impact that production agriculture has on the Kingsville area.
- Kleberg County's Extension Leadership Development program has had both short-long-term impacts through increased volunteerism and community involvement. Many participants of this program now plan to seek elected offices.

Economic Development:

- The Fort Bend County Housing Fair assisted participants in the home buying process. Topics included: "Understanding Your Credit," "Mortgage and Your Credit," "Home Ownership 101," "Credit Restoration and Repair," and "Mortgage Education." Collaborators included: Credit Coalition, Mortgage Assistance Program, Choice Homes, Credit Restoration Institute, and Credit Expert Mortgage Services. Local participants were able to obtain funding to purchase a brand-new home.
- During Hurricane Rita Preparations, twenty Brazos County Horse Committee members assisted the Brazos County Emergency Management Office with the evacuation of more than 1,000 horses from Gulf Coast counties threatened by the arrival of the storm. Working with the Producers Cooperative Association and Danny Williamson of the Texas Animal Health Commission, portable stalls were erected at the pavilion. Materials for these stalls were secured, shipped and returned at no charge to the county by Priefert, Inc. Response to this public service was highly supported and appreciated. The success of this volunteer effort is being used as a model by the commission for future hurricane evacuations.
- Approximately 200 Fort Bend County youth from Willowridge High School (Fort Bend I.S.D.), Needville High School (Needville I.S.D.), and the Juvenile Detention Center completed the NEFE High School Financial Planning Program. In addition, approximately 50 limited-resource adults participated in the hands-on activities and experiential learning of the 'All My Money' curriculum. Twenty percent of the participants that completed the program, developed and are managing their family on a monthly budget. Another 15 percent improved their overall financial outcome for the year. Finally, thirty-six high school seniors have developed a savings plan for the first time in their young lives.
- Webb County Extension has facilitated a 'Weapons of Mass Destruction/Incident Management/Unified Command' training delivered by TEEEX and NERRTC. Extension has brought together county, city and school district first responders, as well as rural area volunteers. The estimated cost to deliver each of these state-funded trainings is between \$25,000 and \$28,000, representing a cost savings to the county of these amounts.
- During the "Rio Grande Basin Initiative In-Home Water Conservation Project: residents in Webb County" participated in an in-home water conservation project through the Rio Grande Basin Initiative. The objectives of the project included increasing knowledge among family members by providing classes and educational information. The effectiveness of the project's conservation education efforts is determined by monitoring water bills of participants.
- The Karnes County Extension Economic Advancement program has assisted residents in addressing economic, community and personal financial development. This program implemented a Community Field Day, Commissioners Court Program, 'Saving for College & Tax Implications' program, and Holiday Home Tours and Park projects.

Improve the health, nutrition, safety, and
economic security of Texas families.

Child and Elder Care

- Child care is critical to the success of working parents. Wharton, Ft. Bend, Matagorda & Calhoun counties conducted a child care provider conference reaching 179 providers who work with 2,746 children. District 9 annual conference had over 250 earn CEU's or clock hour certificates.
- At least 25% of Texas families are involved in elder care. Austin, Colorado, Fayette, Grimes, Washington, Waller and Lee counties held their first Elder Care Conference reaching 20 professionals and 32 others. Brazos county annual Caregivers Conference had 140 participants. \$10,365 in kind and monetary contributions supported this event.

Parenting Skills

- The FRED literacy program is designed to increase parental involvement in children's early literacy development. Atascosa, Dimmitt, Ft. Bend and Harris counties had 256 adults and children complete the program.
- Brooks county teen pregnancy prevention program was in response to the emerging need of 20 teen births in the 2004-05 school year. 169 teens participated.
- Ft. Bend county educated 16 grandparents who are rearing grandchildren. Harris county focused on 200 fathers/grandfathers/uncles teaching them parenting skills, stress management, child abuse prevention and child support issues.

Family Financial Security

- Harris county provides 30 lesson series twice/year to 180 inmates teaching them positive money management skills. Several collaborators have indicated to the agent that they have been contacted by inmates when they are released seeking help managing money.
- Money Wise reached 68 probationers in Ft. Bend county who are mandated to attend. DeWitt county Workforce Development participants are required to participate in job skills training and money management. 30 of 50 participants completed an evaluation and 1/3 learned their credit card interest; 3 made budgets and opened savings accounts.

Health, Nutrition and Safety

- Regular physical activity significantly improves health and lowers the risk for chronic diseases including heart disease, stroke, diabetes, high blood pressure and colon cancer. Webb, Brazos, Harris, Ft. Bend, Walker, Grimes, Kleberg and Lavaca counties had 2,807 adults enter 2,150,364.7 miles on the Walk Across Texas website.
- The Better Living for Texans (BLT) Food Nutrition Education program is a \$3 million reimbursable Federal contract which focuses on nutrition education for food stamp recipient families. All FCS agents provide match time to this program conducted in 38 counties. In the fiscal year 04-05 2,978 group methods resulted in 60,648 contacts and 46,615 individual contacts were made. Brazoria, Brazos, Ft. Bend, Galveston, Harris, Montgomery, Orange, DeWitt, Karnes, Nueces, San Patricio, Victoria, Cameron, Hidalgo, Jim Wells, Kleberg, Live Oak, Starr and Webb counties conducted 100 evaluation series reaching 653 limited resource people with 331 of these in District 12. Brazos county reached 1,326 (counted once) which is 13% of the food stamp participants. 45% gained knowledge and 22 % made positive behavior changes.
- Expanded Food and Nutrition programs in Cameron, Hidalgo, Harris and Nueces counties had 9,962 adults enrolled with 9,490 graduating. 12,616 youth in 428 groups participated in youth programs including summer food sites and day camps. 155 Nueces county youth reported 92% now eating a variety of foods, selecting low cost foods and improved practices in food preparation and safety. One Hidalgo county graduate said "No wonder we often got stomach problems – I would leave chicken on the sink all day."
- Hidalgo county responded to a request from State Representative Veronica Gonzales regarding the need for limited resource families to learn about health care and to be screened. Dr. Castro, A&M School of Public Health assisted. About 450 attended. 325 had cholesterol screening (\$24,375 savings) 300 glucose tests with 210 advised to see a clinic because of elevated glucose (\$7,500 savings) and 75 visited with a physician who answered questions.
- Cancer prevention grants totaling \$6,919 supported cancer education in Brazos, Chambers, Dimmitt, Fayette, Jefferson, Lee, Liberty, Montgomery, Orange, San Patricio, Waller, Walker and Wharton counties.

Health and Nutrition to Prevent Chronic Disease

- 1.3 million Texans suffer from diabetes which costs about \$132 billion annually (70%) for health care and (30%) in lost productivity. 6.2% of Texans are diagnosed with this disease. In the South Region it is 7.1% or 1/3 of all the diabetes in Texas! Brazos, Galveston, Jefferson, Orange, Walker, Ft. Bend, Karnes, Washington, Atascosa, Brooks, Starr, Matagorda and Dimmitt counties reached 447 individuals with Do Well Be Well (DWBW) classes. Of these 406 were diabetics. Orange county also had a Diabetes Health Fair and 1.4 mile walk with 550 participants. As a follow up Cooking Well With Diabetes (CWWD) reached 87 in Wharton & Brazos counties. Economic impact is over \$12 million over the participants' lifetime.
- According to national estimates 1/3 of children are overweight or at risk of becoming overweight. Bee, Dimmitt, San Patricio and Nueces counties had school WAT with 10,622 walkers logging 107,627 miles. 53 of the 98 participants in San Patricio county completed evaluations and 94% learned to make wise snack choices and 90% recognized that walking could help keep them healthy. Trained teachers, food service workers and others in elementary schools taught nutrition to 586 students in Aransas, Grimes, Lee, and Fayette counties. Jackson county involved 14 youth in a summer YMCA program and Starr county Healthy Weight Week and Conference reached 1,630 students and teachers. Healthier Lifestyles for Kids reached 130 students in Ft. Bend county.

“ Impact of up to \$12 million in savings over the lifetime of participants of health programs ”

Food Safety

- Estimates are that 50% of family food dollars are spent on meals prepared outside the home. Extension agents in Waller, Lee, Colorado, DeWitt, Fayette and Washington counties conducted FPM (Food Protection Management) classes reaching 121 food service workers. 76% were employed in establishments with 15 or fewer employees. Those who had one day classes had a 49% pass rate while the 2 day classes had 65%.

Child Passenger Safety

- Children are often not properly restrained in car seats. Brazos, Waller, Grimes, Burleson, Fayette, Wharton & Hidalgo counties checked 335 child safety seats and distributed 272 new seats last year. The possible health care savings is \$603,000. Brazos county trained 27 child care providers in proper safety seat use to be sure they properly secured children when transporting them.

Home Water Conservation

- Hidalgo, Starr & Webb counties participated in the Rio Grande Basin Initiative home water conservation program each working with three families to monitor bathroom water use and how it affected water bills. Results will be available the end of May.

Volunteer Development

- Clothing Master Volunteers in Hidalgo, Cameron, Starr and Brazos counties have 135 volunteers who teach a variety of classes to empower women to earn money. Results are in the CRED report.
- There are 89 TEEA clubs with 1335 members in the region. They contribute and provide many volunteer hours and financial support to 4-H programs as well as other community events.

Prepare Texas youth to be productive, positive, and equipped with life skills for the future.

Career Opportunities

Educational program focused on increasing knowledge of career opportunities and college enrollment among youth through a broad range of delivery methods.

- Agents in Austin, Cameron, Ft. Bend, Grimes, Harris, Jefferson, and Webb counties utilized career fairs throughout the year to promote careers in agriculture as well as careers in Extension to elementary-age youth.
- Ag Literacy events in Webb, Colorado, and DeWitt counties demonstrated increased knowledge of agricultural commodities as well as careers in the production of those products. Farm City Week in Webb County reached 160 elementary aged youth with career information in agricultural industries. Harris County and the thousands of youth that participate in learning about agriculture during the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo has made resulted in outreach efforts to a diverse youth audience in the Greater Houston area.
- Kleberg/Kenedy County's annual South Texas Career Expo brought over 2,900 high school students from surrounding counties to interact with over 127 booths focused exclusively on career exploration. The annual event has reached in excess of 10,000 students in the last four years.

Career Development & Higher Education

Group Methods	7,093
Youth	6,065
Individual	9,957
By Volunteers	3,964

- Jefferson County has focused on career exploration by utilizing 4-H projects to expand the base of project activities to include careers associated with their 4-H projects.
- Job shadowing has proven to be a valuable tool in Calhoun county as middle school students experience the working environment of professional educators.
- Career Development Courses as part of high school educational courses in Washington and Brazos counties provided structured curriculum to improve students' abilities to investigate careers and learn public speaking skills. Students also learned to build resumes and market their personal skills in pursuit of employment opportunities. Project PACE in Kleberg/Kenedy counties also provided a structured series of lessons on career development and higher education.

- Jim Wells, Washington, Brazos and Jefferson counties provided career development opportunities for college students. Educational programs included career opportunities in Extension as well as preparation for job searching upon completion of their undergraduate studies.

- Educational programs focused utilized Mini-Society curriculum and included over 6,800 contact hours to more than 2,000 youth to assist them in career exploration and help them develop valuable marketing skills. Harris, Washington, Grimes, and Waller counties used this program extensively to reach youth with a comprehensive entrepreneurial experience. Other curriculum such as "The Real Game" in Orange County also provided educational experiences.

4-H After School

Educational programs enable youth to make constructive use of out-of-school time through 4-H After School clubs and educational programs.

- Montgomery County provided training for 125 volunteer "teen teachers" as part of an NFL/J.C.Penney grant.

Volunteer teachers work directly with after-school youth and teach skills in workforce preparedness.

- Victoria County's *Yea 4-H!* program in cooperation with the YMCA reached 35 participants with 742 contact hours of educational programs. Programs focused on knowledge of 4-H, attitude towards 4-H, and knowledge of leadership. Results indicated 61% increase in knowledge of the 4-H program and 13% increase in knowledge of community service. Montgomery and Orange counties also provided after-school programs in local YMCA and school groups.

Positive Youth/Adult Relationships

- With almost 20,000 youth being reached using ornamental horticulture as a project, Junior Master Gardener programs throughout the region demonstrated measurable outcomes in youth in a wide range of areas. These programs require a great amount of support from Master Gardeners and other volunteer groups like Master Naturalists. These volunteers have the opportunity to teach youth about horticulture and the relationships that this opportunity fosters are expressed in students' grades, test scores, and average daily attendance. All of these have a lasting impact on the schools, but more importantly on the youth that participate. JMG programs like those in Hidalgo and Harris counties train many adult volunteers to work with youth groups and support the development of youth/adult relationships which is critical to youth development.
- Buckskin & Bobwhite brigades in Dimmit and Atascosa counties serving this region, although they provide subject matter training in addition to leadership training, are delivered in a manner that allows for positive youth/adult relationships to foster learning and increasing the youth's ability to communicate effectively. The participants of these programs not only develop a commitment to the program, but to the adult volunteers and county Extension agents that support these programs.
- Project leader development and programs like the 4-H Master Volunteers also have been extensive in Extension districts 9 and 11. Training volunteers like the Master Volunteers to work with youth supports the basic developmental need youth have for positive growth. There continues to be support by adult figures who are not parents of youth for the more than 500,000 projects that youth in this region involve themselves in.

Building Life Skills

Educational programs build life skills in youth through character education, literacy, and leadership development.

- Quality Counts continues to be a region-wide educational approach supporting one of the largest and most beneficial 4-H projects areas (all livestock projects) resulting in 31,550 contact hours with over 4,200 youth in addition to more than 24,600 individual contacts. The program focuses on teaching youth and adults two general themes, character education and meat quality assurance, through interactive and experiential teaching methods. Over 500 trained volunteers have also reached an additional 6,400 youth using this curriculum.
- Texans Building Character is another region-wide educational effort reaching in excess of 10,000 youth with programs impacting their knowledge of positive character traits and demonstrating that in the classroom as well as in other situations where youth find themselves interacting with other. Impacts demonstrated a 63% increase in personal responsibility in Karnes County. Other programs demonstrate reduced behavior problems of students in Cameron and Dimmit county. Over 600 volunteers have been trained in this curriculum and have used it to reach an additional 6,700 youth through educational programs.
- Leadership development continues to be a central focus of all 56 counties' youth development programs. Impacts in leadership development programs demonstrated increased understanding of leadership qualities and their value in working with groups of people. Educational efforts in counties like Nueces, Starr, and Harris counties demonstrate some of the more focused approaches to leadership development in youth and adults that support them. Group think and cooperative learning experiences to achieve common goals with 4-H Ambassador, club leadership, county leadership, district leadership, and state leadership groups are monthly activities that include peer teaching as a method of delivery. Officer training for leadership groups include over 3.5 hours of training for more than 2,500 youth.

"1 of every 5 youth in 4-H clubs participate in formal officer/leadership training events"

An additional 5,600 youth are trained directly by volunteers in group activities and events.

Healthy Lifestyles

Supporting youth in adopting healthy lifestyles by promoting good nutrition and physical activity and by addressing issues such as childhood obesity, substance abuse, and relationship education is a multi-disciplinary effort in the region.

- Walk Across Texas has been implemented in schools across the region with youth support by campuses nurses and coaches.
- 4-H programs include recreational activities to promote physical activity coupled with learning teamwork and other life skills. Project work is also supported through over 65,000 foods and nutrition projects conducted leaders and ENP staff.

4-H and Youth Enrollment 2004-2005	
Total Youth in Region (9 to 19)	1,354,013
Total 4-H Members	452,307
—>> 4-H Clubs	18,596
—>> Special Interest	364,273
—>> Curriculum Enrichment	64,906
—>> Other	4,532

- Southeast District 9 maintains a website at <http://bryan.tamu.edu/> that shares online information such as the District 9 Newsletter, 4-H Calendar/Events & County Assignments, County Fairs/Livestock Shows/Judging Contests, Award Opportunities, Youth Protection Standards and Professional Development Opportunities.
- Fort Bend County Master Gardeners' Association hosts a Community Education website located at <http://www.fbmg.com/community1/communityhomepage1.htm>
- Brazoria County's website offers two great software tools for Ag - the Beef Cattle Herd Health Management Calendar and the Dry Fertilizer Blend Calculator through the Dist. 9's website at <http://bryan.tamu.edu/> then click on Brazoria!
- Harris County has developed a fertilizer calculator program that can be accessed and utilized by weblink at <http://harris-tx.tamu.edu/anr/links/soils.htm>
- Brazoria County has updated it's Master Gardener's Home Page to include the new speaker's bureau list of topics. Check out <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/brazoria> .
- Jefferson County has created a Wednesday noon television segment on the CBS affiliate, KFDM Channel 6, that each agent supports in rotation to insure all program areas of Extension are exposed to the viewing audience.
- A Sea Grant Website that links directly to each CEA-M home county is being developed to promote timely information/publications, emerging needs and upcoming events. Example: <http://texas-sea-grant.tamu.edu/mas/staff.php?staffpick=tloney>
- A new email listing of nearly 300 Jefferson County Ag producers has been developed to relay pertinent bits on information more expediently than other forms of mass media.

Technology-Based Outreach

- *Increased number and quality of internet-based educational content*
- *Delivery of educational efforts via e-mail*

- Harris County Master Gardeners are now offering Tuesdays as Spanish Day on "Ask the Gardener Hotline" (ph. 281.855.5600). Spanish Day is being promoted on Spanish Radio 1010 AM KLAT in the La Tremenda segment.
- Coastal Bend Dist 11 maintains an extensive website dedicated to such Extension program areas, hot topics and emerging needs, calendars, Dist. 11 Center information, links, newsletters and professional development opportunities. The address is: <http://agfacts.tamu.edu/D11/> .
- District 11's new Excellence in Extension Programming newsletter keeps

the county commissioners' court members and other elected officials informed of major Extension programming efforts and outcomes, interpretative events, personnel changes, and awards/recognition. Go to: <http://agfacts.tamu.edu/D11/newslets/newsletters.htm>

- District 11 Distance Education Committee has been established to develop distance educational delivery strategies.
- A scheduling calendar, scholarship forms, and supportive materials for the R/V Karma are located at <http://floatingclassroom.tamu.edu>
- A multimedia, web-based, training course is being completed that teaches essential employees skills necessary to ensure the quality and safety of seafood products during retail stewardship.
- District 11 is the highest user of Centra Symposium for internal and external training and educational material development.
- Fayette County has created a new landowner's educational website at <http://fayette-tx.tamu.edu/> which is dedicated to various outdoor educational topics.
- A drought-response website has been developed by District 11 faculty to assist clientele in managing drought-related issues. <http://tced11.tamu.edu/droughtinfo.htm>
- San Patricio County Extension Agent offers a Soil Moisture website to assist cotton and corn growers with irrigation scheduling in the Ag News link of <http://san-patricio-tx.tamu.edu/> .
- South Region District 12 4-H unit has developed an extensive, interactive website at <http://d12-4h.tamu.edu/> that covers special features, District 12 events, hot topics and major headlines to promote 4-H and youth activities throughout South Texas.
- South Region District 12 maintains a website at <http://agfacts.tamu.edu/D12/> that links directly to each County Extension Office and offers information within each educational program area including 4-H/Youth Development, Entomology/IPM, Livestock/Animal Science, Ag Engineering and Ag Economics.
- Zavala County provides a hot link to each weekly news column on their website to keep Extension clientele informed of current events, general information and emerging needs. See <http://zavala-co.tamu.edu/PubCat.cfm?COUNTY=Zavala&CatID=1226>
- Updated weather information, evapotranspiration, and crop watering recommendations are readily to homeowners and commercial producers alike at four locations in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, and also Sinton County and Fort Bend County at <http://texaset.tamu.edu/> .
- Frio County maintains a Frio County Pesticide Applicator Newsletter that keeps commercial producers informed of changes in law and regulations, pesticide label changes and product phase-outs. The web link is: <http://frio-tx.tamu.edu/newsletters/novpestltro5.pdf>