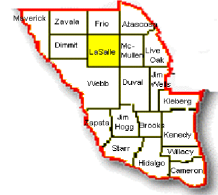




South District 12



# Making a Difference... ...in La Salle County

## District Extension Newsletter for Commissioners' Courts in South Texas



**Sally B. Allen**  
Agriculture &  
Natural Resources

In 2007, Texas Cooperative Extension celebrated the 100th anniversary of the County Extension Agent and of the Texas 4-H Program. In 2008, we launched a new initiative that included a name change to AgriLife Extension. I want to thank you for your continued support of Extension and it's many programs. I hope you find this newsletter helpful in updating you about the difference that Extension education is making in La Salle County and the public benefits these differences mean economically, socially, and environmentally to the community. We feel strongly that these preventive, educational approaches to community issues provide present and long term value to the County and its residents. Again, thank you for your support and please call whenever we may be of service.

Dr. Ruben J. Saldaña  
District Extension Administrator

## Agriculture and Natural Resources

The La Salle County Ag and Natural Resources committee formed by the County Extension Office has implemented several programs for landowners and the residents of La Salle County over the last year. They have provided four pesticide applicator trainings for private licenses. They have supported and provided information for the County Ag Day held in May as well as promoted two brush field days. The agricultural education and training needs of the county continue to be addressed by the County Extension Office and the committee. The County Extension Office has worked closely with the Farm Service Agency, Natural Resource & Conservation Service and the county committees to better the lives of residents. Wildlife, brush, and beef cattle programs have been established by the dedication of the Extension Office. Educational programs have also been provided for the local garden club on several occasions. The County Agent has worked with homeowners on analyzing home lawns and gardens and providing solutions and educational information to address their problems and concerns. Two local feed stores and the County Extension Office participated in a National Foreign Animal and Zoonotic Disease pilot program called CASHN from the fall of 2007 through the spring of 2008. This program could result in providing local animal producers with information on disease outbreaks and issues pertaining to their livelihoods.

With over 100,000 acres of land burned in wildfires in January and March of 2008, some programming efforts were cancelled or will be rescheduled for 2009.



THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM  
AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH & EXTENSION CENTER AT WESLACO

Dr. Ruben J. Saldaña  
District Administrator  
2401 E. Highway 83  
Weslaco, Texas 78596  
956.968.5581  
rjsaldana@ag.tamu.edu  
<http://southtexas.tamu.edu>

**2008  
Educational Outreach**

| Education in Group Settings |       |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| Number of Sessions          | 224   |
| Number Contacts             | 4,428 |
| Hrs Instruction             | 8,531 |

**Visit us at:  
<http://lasalle-tx.tamu.edu>**

**2008 4-H Enrollment**

|                   |     |
|-------------------|-----|
| Club Members      | 109 |
| Special Interests | 764 |
| Total Enrollment  | 873 |



LA SALLE COUNTY - COTULLA

## Community & Economic Development

Community and economic development continues to be a concern for community leaders and residents in La Salle County. This was an issue that rose to the top of the list of concerns of citizens during the Texas Community Futures Forum facilitated by the County Extension Office in 2002. As a result the residents and community leaders have made great efforts to address this issue. In 2006 the town of Cotulla was recognized as a city supported by the Texas Main Street Program. Since then the city of Cotulla has started the annual Cotulla 4th of July Jamboree and the Cotulla Music Festival. The La Salle County 4-H members have helped tremendously with these efforts along with the County Extension Office. The Main Street Program has been a big part of the restoration of the town. The County Extension Agent serves on several of the Main Street committees and advises the Board of Directors. Not only is the downtown in restoration the La Salle County Courthouse was also put on the list by the Texas Historical Commission Courthouse Restoration and that project will begin in the Spring of 2009.

## 4-H & Youth Development

In an effort to address the need for youth to gain leadership skills, the La Salle County Youth Board set forth the development of a youth leadership team. As a result 12 youth from the two County 4-H Clubs were selected to participate and complete a leadership program. These youth had completed some of the activities and applications of the program in 2007 and have now completed and graduated from the program in 2008. As a result of the program the participants indicated that the material was not always new to them, but the activities and assignments were challenging and fun. They realize that working together can bring new ideas to the table that by working alone might not be thought of. As part of the leadership team these individuals provide 4-H interpretations to local organizations, commissioner's court and other elected officials as well as promote the 4-H program in the schools and during Ag Day. As a result of the leadership skills training, each officer is now effectively participating in the programming efforts for their 4-H club. Each officer is responsible for providing a program and club activities at least once during the year. This has resulted in a variety of different projects and perspectives being provided to 4-H members.

The Cotulla and Encinal 4-H Clubs have participated in several community service projects, such as hurricane relief efforts, be an angel, collected cell phones for emergency shelters and collected needed items for families affected by Hurricane Ike. Both the Cotulla and the Encinal 4-H Club members continue to work the admissions gate at the Ranch Rodeo held at the end of the County Fair as their annual fundraiser, generating funds to have their annual banquet and club operating expenses. The Encinal 4-H Club picked up trash after the September Festival this last fall as a community service project. Both clubs participated in the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Jamboree and the Cotulla Music Festival by providing a booth with games and information on the 4-H program.

In the 2007-2008 4-H year we had one of the highest enrollment numbers for the county. Enrollment for the 2008-2009 is off to a good start. Youth continue to participate in livestock projects with assistance from the County Extension Agent. The photography project group has grown in the amount of youth participating and the horse project group continues to increase in numbers. This past year, we implemented the public speaking and educational presentations portion of the 4-H program. We had two members compete at the District 12 4-H Roundup and both placed first in their divisions. The senior member, Matt Kinsel advanced to state competition with his persuasive speech on the Iraqi War. Matt placed 2nd overall in the public speaking competition at the State 4-H Roundup held in College Station in June. Matt Kinsel was also elected as the District 12 4-H Council 2nd Vice President this summer and was selected to serve on the State 4-H Technology Team. Monthly 4-H meetings and one-on-one trainings continue to be the most effective programming efforts provided by the County Extension Office.



2009 La Salle County Livestock Show