



Texas AgriLife Extension Service  
**South District 12**

## Annual Report: Willacy County

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

Through a well organized network of program specialists, professional educators, and some 98,000 trained volunteers, the Texas AgriLife Extension Service 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 AgriLife Extension's 4-H and youth development programs.

These are just a few highlights of AgriLife Extension's impact on Willacy County and its people.

### **Agriculture & Natural Resources**

During 2009, Willacy County agriculture producers were faced with the impact of the drought, marginal market prices and production costs exceeded prices received from agricultural commodities such as beef cattle. Educational programs that were planned, implemented and conducted by the Willacy County Extension ANR committee this past year included: A research demonstration test plot for sorghum grain out of La Sara, TX, a bull gain study conducted at Rio Beef Feedlot out of Raymondville, TX, numerous CEU joint conferences, joint Pesticide Applicator License courses, Hunter's Education Certification course, Water Conservation meetings with local residents, and Agriculture Public community service conducted by the youth involved through AgriLife Extension.

Educational programs planned for 2010 will include: CEU opportunities, Private Applicator courses, bull gain test, multiple research demonstration plots, field days that focus on up to date conservation practices both in water and natural resources.

### **Family & Consumer Science**

During 2009, the Willacy County Extension Office proudly participated in its first FCS program that had not otherwise been conducted in quite some time. In February, specialists from College Station came down to provide a child seat safety event that was conducted at the parking lot of Wal-Mart in Raymondville, TX. The economic impact from this event saved local citizens roughly \$60,000.00 in this tremendously successful event.

### **Expanded Food & Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)**

This year was an exciting year because due to officials at the state level and agents in Cameron county, we were able to house an EFNEP assistant here in Willacy County. This assistant is in charge of expanding the local outreach into communities where the typical ANR Agent does not venture into much. The audiences that have been reached include citizens from Sebastian, Lyford, Raymondville, La Sara and San Perlita. This is exciting to see AgriLife Extension in its growing numbers to more and more people who seek our services.

## 4-H & Youth Development

Willacy County has an expanding and growing 4-H program that continues to evolve and welcome new families regularly. Currently there are 4 clubs throughout the county along with an extensive county council which is comprised from members of each of the 4 clubs. 2009 was the most successful year for 4-H in quite a while because we had participants that competed in more district events than the previous years. Membership from clubs range from 10 members to 20. Very involved parents and volunteers are the reason why our clubs have continued to grow and reach new audiences. 2010 will be another successful year county-wide.

**Below are pictures from a few programs that Willacy County AgriLife Extension participated in this year:**