



Extension Education in Starr County

Making a Difference

*Improving Lives.
Improving Texas.*

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:

STARR County – Summary of 2014 Educational Contacts

Program Area Committees – 5
Organized 4-H Clubs – 6
4-H Club Members - 205
4-H Community Based Outreach –1,800
4-H Curriculum Enrichment – 1,396
4-H Total Volunteers – 31
Starr County Fair Board – 20
FCS Program – 20,100
AgNR Program – 16,450

Agriculture and Natural Resources



- Agriculture Distance Learning Program
 - Agriculture Profitability Plan

Making a Difference

Beef Cattle Production & Management Program Starr County 2014

Developed by Omar Montemayor, County Extension Agent AGNR

Introduction. Beef cattle production in Starr County accounts for \$20 million annually in cash receipts and is the highest ranked agricultural commodity. The beef cattle industry in the region includes cow/calf, stocker cattle and a few feeder operations. Beef cattle enterprises vary from small acreage landowners to large commercial and purebred operations. Beef cattle production has a significant impact on the economic viability of Starr County.

Program. The following educational activities were organized, with the input and assistance of the Extension Agriculture and Natural Resource Committee and Leadership Advisory Board, to achieve the program objectives.

1. Agent conducted four (4) educational programs for Starr County ranchers that focused on sustainable and profitable beef cattle management systems. These programs were all picked by the Starr County Agriculture & Natural Resource Committee early in the year. Two of the four educational workshops were offered online through Lyncs. These workshops were projected on to a screen with the sound amplified through a speaker system. The educational activities were interactive as participants could ask questions through a chat room that was available to the person making the presentation. The other two educational workshops were conducted without the use of technology.
2. The four workshops were selected by the AGNR committee. The committee met earlier in 2014 to select the workshops from a list and then planned for the location and program evaluation strategy.
3. A special sale was organized with the support and assistance of the local livestock sales barn to promote the use of good commercial quality beef cattle in local rebuilding efforts.
4. Agent compiled summary of the Beef Cattle Production and Management Program based on the results of the evaluations that were collected from each of the participants that attended the educational programs.
5. Developed interpretation marketing piece will be shared with members of the county commissioner's court, task force members and general public .

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

Evaluation Method. A one page retrospective post- design evaluation was administered to each of the participants. The survey was used to determine the level of clientele knowledge change acquired by participating in each of the educational programs. The evaluation was developed with input from all AGNR committee members. The key focus was to increase of knowledge in practices related to drought management, restocking or destocking, grazing management, nutrition, reproduction efficiency, and marketing strategies.

Collaborators. The following groups assisted with resources to make this program possible:


- R.Y. Livestock Sales, Inc.
- Starr County Farm Bureau
- Texas/Mexico Border Coalition

Results. The following results are shared from the program evaluation to indicate the achievements of the project.

- 90% of participants gained knowledge on the importance of producing quality beef cattle products as per Beef Quality Assurance Program Standards
- 92% of participants felt that they learned the importance of re-building cow herds based on according to available pasture resources.
- 95% of the participants felt that their questions, or of any participants, could be satisfactorily answered using long distance technology.
- 89% of the participants indicated that they would follow best management practices in observing medication withdraw periods.

Summary. This program did appear to build knowledge and change perceptions concerning sustainable and profitable beef cattle management systems . Producer responses indicate that they have a better appreciation for beef cattle health herd management and rebuilding local cattle herds with quality commercial cattle while maintaining sustainable grazing practices.. This program will continue next year.

For More Information Contact:
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
500 N. Britton
Rio Grande City, Texas 78582
Tel. (956) 487-2306

V A L U E	
Livestock Production	
	Texas A&M AgriLife Extension programs targeted to large- and small-scale livestock producers help generate safer food and fiber products with maximum efficiency. The result is quality, consistent, affordable products and industries that support the state's rural economies.

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE
Providing Solutions

Making a Difference

2014 Agriculture Profitability Plan Starr County

Developed by Omar Montemayor, County Extension Agent AGNR

Introduction. Despite the wide spread urbanization of the Rio Grande Valley in the last decade, Starr County remains semi-rural with the majority of its income derived from agriculture. It is estimated that over 50,000 acres are under production agriculture worth a little over 45 million dollars. The beef cattle industry in Starr County is worth 30 million dollars followed behind by wildlife with about 10 million dollars

Local producers need to keep up to date on new management practices that will increase production and total farm/ranch profits. Additionally these individuals need basic educational information on environmental stewardship and natural resource management.

Program. The following educational activities were organized, with the input and assistance of the Extension Agriculture and Natural Resource Committee.

1. Educational programs and workshops that offered 5 continuing education units toward a private applicator license.
2. Bull Gain Test and Heifer Development Program that offered a feedback program on the performance of animals consigned to the feedlot.
3. Texas Department of Agriculture private applicator license trainings.
4. Four (4) Beef Cattle Management Workshops.
5. Aerial Brush Control Demonstrations.
6. A Ranchers Field Day.
7. Worker Protection Standard Trainings (Pesticide Safety).
8. Special Beef Cattle Sale.
9. Vegetable and Row Crop Production Workshop

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

10. Livestock Emergency Management Workshop

Collaborators. The following groups assisted with resources to make this program possible:

- Starr County Farm Bureau
- Texas Mexcio Border Coalition
- USDA-FSA
- USDA-NRCS

Summary. Starr County Agriculture producers gained a better perspective about some of the issues affecting their operations. In addition to offering some improved management strategies to making their operations more profitable, they also learned about drought management recovery practices that would help them manage their operations more efficiently. This year was a very critical year with many beef cattle producers re-building their cow herds.

Family and Consumer Sciences



- Friend to Friend – Pink Party
- Si Yo Puedo Controlar Mi Diabetes
- Child Care Provider Conference
 - Better Living for Texans
 - Working on Wellness
- Growing & Nourishing Healthy Communities

Making a Difference

Friend to Friend – Starr County 2014

Developed by Elva Yolanda Morado, CEA-Family & Consumer Sciences

The *Friend to Friend* program's purpose is to encourage women to get regular mammograms and Pap tests for the early detection of breast and cervical cancer, when the disease is most curable.

Relevance

- Regular screening significantly increases the likelihood of finding cancer early, when treatment is more often successful.
- Women living in rural areas of Texas are less likely than their urban counterparts to have had a mammogram or Pap test within the past two years.
- Mortality is higher for rural women because of later diagnosis.

Response

- This project's goal is to decrease breast and cervical cancer morbidity and mortality for women living in rural Texas counties by improving screening rates and early detection of cancer.
- Funding was applied for and awarded by the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT) to fund screenings and transportation to uninsured and underserved women in need of screening services.
- The county Extension agent, regional cancer prevention specialist, and patient navigators plan and implement a *Friend to Friend* event. Women attending are given the opportunity to sign a commitment card to obtain a mammogram and/or Pap test within the next year and the option to complete a help request form for assistance in obtaining screening services.

Impact of the Program

- *Friend to Friend* was implemented in 44 Texas counties in 2014.
- 149 women attended the *Friend to Friend* events on May 5, 2014 and May 8, 2014 at the Multi-Purpose Center– Fort Ringgold Campus in Rio Grande City, Texas and at the Roma Community Center in the city of Roma, Texas.

Demographics of women who attended the events:

- Median age was: 46.
- Ethnic breakdown:
 - African American: 0%
 - American Indian/Native American: 0%
 - Asian/Pacific Islander: 0%
 - Latina/Hispanic: 96%



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

- White: 0%
- Multiple race/ethnicity: 0%
- Other/missing: 4%
- 15 Total volunteers assisted at party/events.
- A Physician, Other Health Professional, and Breast Cancer Survivor urged women to obtain a mammogram/Pap screening at the events.
- At the end of the event 75% of women, aged 40 or over, correctly identified the need for a mammogram screening every year.
- 135 Women requested help to navigate screening and diagnostic services.
- 67 Clinical sites are contracted statewide for screenings, diagnostics, radiologists and lab services. An avg. monthly payment for screenings and diagnostics thru the contracts is \$32,636.00.
- 238 Mammogram screenings and diagnostics were paid for through CPRIT funds.
- 177 Pap screenings and diagnostics were paid for through CPRIT funds.
- 14 Women were referred to other available sources for Breast and Cervical screenings and diagnostics.



Encouraging Women



EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE
Providing Solutions

Making a Difference

Child Care Provider Conference – Starr County

Developed by Elva Yolanda Morado, CEA-Family & Consumer Sciences

Relevance

Parents know that the person who cares for their child many hours a week makes a difference in their child's life and well-being. Both common sense and research tell us that children's brains are growing most quickly during their first years of life, and that their experiences during these critical years lay the foundation for the rest of their lives. As A result, child care affects the way that children think, learn and behave.

Studies repeatedly have shown that quality child care - care that provides a loving, safe, stable and age-appropriate stimulating environment – helps children enter school ready to learn. Studies have shown that quality child care – which is too often not stimulating, uncaring and is even unsafe – deprives children of the strong start they need.

Response

Child Care Provider Conference

On August 16, 2014, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service conducted a child care provider training conference in Rio Grande City, Texas for **217** child care providers and directors who provide care for **5,642** children enrolled in **59** child care centers or family day homes. Two hundred and sixteen participants completed a written evaluation of the conference (see Table 1 for participant characteristics and outcomes). A total of **1,736** clock hours of training were provided to child care professionals seeking to meet state mandated training requirements established by the state of Texas.

Table 1. Child Care Provider Conference Outcomes

Number of participants: 217

Percentages based on 216 respondents to the survey (response rate = 100%)

95% female

5% male

Overall:

- 99% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the activity.

Content:

- 97% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the information being what they expected.
- 98% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the information being accurate.

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

- 98% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the information being easy to understand.
- 96% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the timeliness of information given on each topic.
- 98% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the helpfulness of the information in decisions about your own situation.
- 96% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the relevance of the examples used.

In addition to the above items, participants were asked to rate the quality of the conference compared to other child care trainings they have attended in the past by non-Extension organizations/agencies. Table 2 below contains the results.

Table 2. Value of Activity

- 97% of respondents said that the information and programs provided by Extension were quite or extremely valuable to them.
- 93% of respondents said that opportunity to network with experts and other participants with similar interests was quite or extremely valuable to them.
- 99% of respondents would attend another subject offered by Extension if it addressed a specific need or interest of theirs.

Results

As can be seen in the tables above, child care providers found the training to be very beneficial. Over 90 percent of participants acquired new information from the conference the training to be very relevant to the work they do, plan to utilize the information gained at the conference to improve their programs, and consider themselves better equipped to work with the children in their care. Moreover 78% of providers rated the training “Better” or “Much Better” compared to other trainings they have attended that were not conducted by Extension.

The surveys clearly showed that the quality of child care training provided was of great value in improving the ability of stronger thinking and attention skills and fewer behavioral problems. Great emphasis was on the importance of physical activity in child care centers. Participants reported that the elements presented were discipline, easy to implement and of great value in helping children and their families move towards adopting healthier life skills.



Quality Child Care Matters

Making a Difference

***Three Easy Bites* – Evaluation of a Curriculum Promoting Healthy Weight Behaviors**

2014 Starr County Report

Developed by Elva Yolanda Morado, CEA-Family & Consumer Sciences

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 healthier 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 Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service nutrition specialists. The curriculum promoted diet related best practice behaviors related to breakfast, snacking and dinner. *Three Easy Bites* session goals were as follows. 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, 116 pre/post/follow-up survey sets were received from Starr County. Results below reflect pre/post/follow-up data sets.

Most participants (63%) reported that Better Living for Texans (BLT) was the first AgriLife program they had attended. The typical *Three Easy Bites* participant was female (97%), described herself as Hispanic or Latino (98%) and was 42 years of age. Most participants identified themselves as white (99%). Educational attainment for most participants (83%) was high school/GED or less. Many participants (35%) had been advised by a health professional they weigh too much.

Results

Self-reported behavior improvements were noted during the time *Three Easy Bites* was taught (Table 1). Improvements ($p < .001$) were noted for all behaviors thru the entire 30 day follow-up survey period as

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

indicated by the pre/post/follow-up surveys (Table 2).

Table 1. Percentage of *Three Easy Bites* participants who answered always or almost always: pre/post/follow-up data sets (n=116).

Behavior Questions	Pre-survey	Post-survey	Follow-up survey
	%	%	%
How often do you plan breakfast ahead of time?	27	35	66
How often do you include at least two breakfast items from different food groups?	51	63	91
How often do you use a shopping list which includes breakfast items when you go to the grocery store?	42	55	87
How often do you plan snacks ahead of time?	27	29	20
How often do you snack in front of the television?	19	19	9
How often do you use the Nutrition Facts serving size information to determine how much of your snack to eat?	11	25	21
How often do you plan dinner ahead of time?	44	57	79
How often do you have enough fruits and/or vegetables to cover half of your dinner plate?	45	62	91
How often do you use a shopping list with fruits and vegetables when you go to the grocery store?	72	78	96

Table 2. Mean behavior response (1=never thru 5=always): pre/post/follow-up data sets (n=116).

Behavior Questions	Pre-survey	Post-survey	Follow-up survey
How often do you plan breakfast ahead of time?	3.0 ^a	3.2 ^a	3.8 ^b
How often do you include at least two breakfast items from different food groups?	3.9 ^a	3.8 ^a	4.6 ^a
How often do you use a shopping list which includes breakfast items when you go to the grocery store?	3.2 ^a	3.6 ^a	4.5 ^b
How often do you plan snacks ahead of time?	2.9	2.9	3.0
How often do you snack in front of the television?	2.8 ^a	2.5 ^a	1.6 ^b
How often do you use the Nutrition Facts serving size information to determine how much of your snack to eat?	2.3 ^a	2.9 ^b	3.1 ^c
How often do you plan dinner ahead of time?	3.3 ^a	3.7 ^b	4.1 ^c
How often do you have enough fruits and/or vegetables to cover half of your dinner plate?	3.3 ^a	3.8 ^b	4.4 ^c
How often do you use a shopping list with fruits and vegetables when you go to the grocery store?	4.0 ^a	4.1 ^a	4.8 ^b

Answers coded: never=1; almost never=2; sometimes=3; almost always=4; always=5

a, b and c are significantly different (p<.001)

County results (n=116) indicate the *Three Easy Bites* curriculum was effective ($p>.001$) at improving participant behavior related to breakfast, snacking and dinner. Interestingly, some self-reported behavior improvements extended thru the follow-up period suggesting participants continued to adopt best practice behaviors. Best practice behaviors with the greatest participant improvement were:

1. Eating enough fruits/vegetables to cover half of the dinner plate
2. Including breakfast items on a shopping list

Statewide results (n=1095) indicate the *Three Easy Bites* curriculum was effective ($p>.001$) at improving participant behavior related to breakfast, snacking and dinner. All curriculum goals were met by participants. Interestingly, self-reported behavior improvement extended thru the follow-up period suggesting participants continued to adopt best practice behaviors. Best practice behaviors with the greatest participant improvement were:

1. Using the Nutrition Facts label to determine portion size of snacks
2. Using a shopping list which includes breakfast items
3. Eating enough fruits/vegetables to cover half of the dinner plate

The leader-facilitated learner-centered *Three Easy Bites* lesson approach may have helped clients internalize information and enhanced skills necessary to improve best practice behaviors associated with healthier weight. This curriculum was especially relevant given 24 percent of participants had been told by a health professional they weigh too much. Research confirms consistent improvements in eating patterns can help clients achieve and maintain healthier weight.



Three Easy Bites



EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE
Providing Solutions

Making a Difference

Transforming Texas (TT) Healthy People in Healthy Communities – Starr County 2014
Developed by Elva Yolanda Morado, CEA-Family & Consumer Sciences

Relevance

Starr County is located in South Texas, Rio Grande Valley, and is a border county with Mexico. Starr County has the highest percentage of Hispanic residents of any county in the US.

Colonias, which are very low income areas that often lack safe and sanitary housing and have inadequate physical and social infrastructure are found throughout the county.

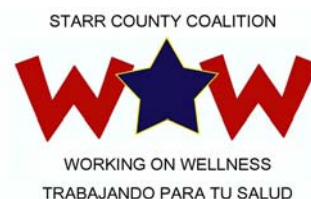
- Approximately 28% adult obesity rate
- Approximately 15% preschool obesity rate
- 29% of adults in Starr County are physically inactive
- 2% have access to recreational facilities
- 20% diabetes rate
- Almost 40% of residents live below the poverty line
- Approximately 35% of residents are uninsured

Response

The Texas Department of Health Services (DSHS) funded Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service for 3 years to support a chronic disease prevention program in Starr County. Project focused on improving the health environment of Starr County by increasing the resident's access to:

Fresh fruits and vegetables

- Physical activity opportunities/places to be active
- Smoke free environments
- Preventive community and clinical health care.



Yolanda S. Morado, Family Consumer Science Agent developed the Working on Wellness comprehensive health coalition. The purpose was to focus in identifying local health and nutritional needs. Fifteen community planning and implementation meetings were held in 2014.

Results

Significant environmental changes were seen in the County:

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

- Mobile farmer's market was developed to sell local produce within identified food deserts and colonia areas in Starr county.
- Reached 13,597 community members and sold approximately 86,415 lbs. of fresh produce
- Support for 2 additional gardens projects totaled to 12 school and community gardens in the county.
- Harvest logs indicate that approximately 3,007 lbs. of produce was harvested from the gardens.
- Six walking trails and playscape areas were developed at two local schools, two community centers, county and city parks and at the local community college.
- Approximately \$200,000 of in-kind contributions and over 10,000 hours were donated to the various gardens, trails and park projects during the project years.

Extension programs, funded thru other grant projects, improved:

- Integration of community prevention health services for limited resource individuals in this underserved county.
- Si Yo Puedo Controlar Mi Diabetes, Type II Diabetes education programs and the Friend to Friend, Breast and Cervical Cancer screening program are now being offered on a regular basis in communities across the county.
- Friend to Friend educational program contributed \$45,000 towards health clinical service for women in the county.



Transforming Texas

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE
Providing Solutions

Making a Difference

Growing and Nourishing Healthy Communities: Starr County 2014

Developed by Elva Yolanda Morado, CEA-Family & Consumer Sciences

Relevance:

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 35% of Starr County residents live below the federal poverty level.

Many are eligible for federal nutrition programs including SNAP (Supplementary Nutrition Assistance Program), WIC or school meals. While these programs encourage the consumption of healthy foods, research has shown that one of the factors that influences dietary habits of low-income audiences is the availability of healthy foods. A low-income community with limited access to healthy foods is often termed a “food desert.” SDA has identified food deserts in Cameron, Hidalgo, and Starr Counties which impact more than 26% of the combined population.

Response:

The Growing & Nourishing Healthy Communities (GNHC) program is funded by the USDA (SNAP) and implemented by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. The program goal is to increase SNAP and SNAP-eligible audience’s access to fresh produce by teaching basic gardening skills that allow and promote the development of backyard and community gardens.

In 2014, 6 community gardens were established across Cameron, Hidalgo, and Starr counties, reaching 45 families and more than 225 individuals. Participants constructed the gardens and participated in a series of programs that increased their gardening knowledge and skills. As produce was harvested, healthy food demonstrations were offered at the garden sites by Better Living for Texans program assistants. These demonstrations included healthy recipes that incorporated produce grown straight from the community garden.

Results:

It was clearly evident that the gardens increased a sense of community ownership and stewardship. It offered an opportunity for the community to come together and organize their efforts. The food production generated provided a significant source of produce. It gave families access to nutritionally rich foods that was unavailable to low-income families and individuals. The gardens allowed families without space to plant the opportunity to learn, grow and produce food for their families and neighbors. The community gardens were located within housing authorities, churches, and community centers.

Pre and post surveys completed by the participants indicated that this program helped improve the availability of vegetables and fruit in the home.

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

FT. Ringgold Parental Involvement



La Puerta San Pablo Apostol Church



La Casita Community Garden



Alvarez Headstart

Starr County Healthy Communities



Alvarez Community Garden



Roma Housing

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE
Providing Solutions

4-H and Youth Development



- Agriculture Literacy
- Annual 4-H Program Summary
 - 4-H Kids Fish Program

Making a Difference

Starr County Kids & Kows & More Agriculture Literacy Program 2014

Omar Montemayor, County Extension Agent AGNR
Yolanda Morado, County Extension Agent FCS

Relevance. Today's youth are very far removed from production agriculture, many do not understand the importance of the food and fiber industry and how it impacts our daily lives. Therefore, a program was established by partnering the Starr County Farm Bureau, United States Department Of Agriculture - NRCS and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service to address this need. More specifically, this program was established to educate the teachers, and youth about the value of agriculture in Starr County.

Response. As a result of this concern, Starr County Farm Bureau, and the Starr County Youth Board developed a youth Agriculture Literacy Program entitled "Kids & Kows & More". The program targeted 4th grade students from all the elementary schools in Starr County. This educational event provided the following educational components: Educational material to teachers (Farm Bureau Ag in the Classroom Curriculum), Ag Field Day for students to acquire hands knowledge about the food & fiber industry, and a teacher evaluation.

The following educational activities were organized to achieve the Kids & Kows & More program objectives.

1. Worked with school counselors, representing each of the elementary school campuses, to select topics for the agriculture literacy field day, set up schedule for the event, and assist with the development of the teacher evaluation instruments.
2. Contacted Texas Farm Bureau Representatives to acquire curriculum for teachers. The name of the curriculum is Agriculture in the 21st Century. Curriculum was distributed to all teachers attending in the form of a CD and many educational material handouts of individual presentations were also provided to teachers.
3. Established a Youth Ag Literacy Task Force to meet and plan youth field day event at the Starr County Fairgrounds. Group identified speakers for the event, secured sponsorships and assisted in distributing and collecting evaluation forms.

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

4. Agents hosted the tenth annual two day field day event called “Kids & Kows & More Starr County”. Agents worked on gathering sponsors, volunteers, group leaders and speakers and other individuals that made this event possible.
5. Agents compiled summary of agriculture literacy program based on the results of the teacher evaluations that were collected from each of the participating teachers.
6. Agents shared results of the agriculture literacy program with residents of the county through the local newspaper where they featured a story about the event. Results were also shared with the Youth Agriculture Literacy Task Force and 4H Youth board.


Evaluation Method. A one page retrospective teacher evaluation was administered to the participating teachers. This evaluation was developed with input from several school counselors. The strategy was used to determine the level of knowledge youth acquired through this educational event. A total of 52 teacher evaluations were used to determine the effectiveness of this program.

Collaborators. Starr County Farm Bureau, Southwest Dairy Farmers Association, Starr County Fair Association, Medina Electric Co-op, Hygia Company McAllen, Texas and H.E.B.

Results. A total of 838 4th grade students from 11 Starr County Elementary schools and three school districts participated in this event. The scale of responses for these statements was defined as 1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Excellent. Based on this evaluation, 91 % of all respondents strongly agreed that the students acquired an increased knowledge and appreciation for agriculture. 92% increased their knowledge of where their food comes from. 96% of all respondents (teachers) agreed that they too gained knowledge about the different commodities that were represented at this educational program. Furthermore, 86% agreed to use the provided curriculum and incorporate it in their school educational activities.

Summary. This program did appear to build knowledge and change perceptions concerning agriculture and the environment. Teacher responses indicate that their students have a better appreciation for agriculture, food commodities, agriculture safety and water. This program will continue next year with the support of the Starr County Farm Bureau.

For More Information Contact:
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
500 N. Britton
Rio Grande City, Texas 78582
Tel. (956) 487-2306

V A L U E	
Science of Agriculture	
	Texas A&M AgriLife Extension “Science of Agriculture” programs teach youth about the role agriculture plays in the world and in their lives. Through their participation in these programs, youth become better educated voters and consumers.

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE
Providing Solutions



4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Making a Difference in

TEXAS A&M
AGRILIFE
EXTENSION

Annual 4-H Program Summary

County 4-H Youth Involvement

Chartered Community Clubs
Members Enrolled in 4-H Clubs
Youth Reached through Community-based Programs
Youth Reached through School-Based Enrichment Curriculum

County 4-H Leadership, Advisory, and Support Organizations

Youth Board Members attended Meetings
County 4-H Council Members attended Meetings
Adult Leaders & Parents Organization Members attended Mtgs

Total Youth Reached



of Youth Attending

Participation in County 4-H Events

County Participation in District Events

County Participation in State/National Events

Most Popular Club Projects in the County

Most Popular Curriculum in the County

County 4-H Volunteer Support

Registered & Screened Volunteers Supporting Clubs
Club Managers, Co-Managers, and Project Leaders
Hours Contributed by Volunteers in Support of Clubs

Livestock Show Premium Sale Proceeds*

Includes all projects (4-H and FFA)

Value of Volunteer Time Supporting 4-H



County 4-H Leadership & Personal Development Programs

Attended State-level Leadership & Personal Development educational or competitive events
Attended District-level Leadership & Personal Development educational or competitive events
Attended District Leadership Lab
Received 4-H Scholarships valued at a total of

Local Training Opportunities for Youth and Adults

Significant Leadership & Personal Development accomplishments from county Events & Activities

County 4-H Agriculture & Natural Resource Programs

Livestock Projects (all species)
Participated in County Livestock Shows
Attended State-level Livestock Shows
Attended District-level Agriculture & Natural Resources educational or competitive events
Youth Trained through "Quality Counts" Program

Local Training Opportunities for Youth and Adults

Significant Agriculture & Natural Resource accomplishments from county Events & Activities

County 4-H Family & Consumer Science Programs

Attended State-level educational or competitive events
Attended District-level educational or competitive events

Local Training Opportunities for Youth and Adults

Significant Family & Consumer Science accomplishments from county Events & Activities

Making a Difference

4-H Kids Fish Program

Starr County

2014

Developed by Omar Montemayor, County Extension Agent-AGNR

Elva Yolanda Morado, County Extension Agent-FCS

Introduction: Modern society has removed young people from enjoying the outdoors. It is important for young people to enjoy the outdoors, through recreational programs. Many young people do not participate in outdoor recreational programs that can stimulate social skills and develop healthy lifestyles.

Program: As a result of this concern the Starr County Youth Board along with local members of Texas Parks & Wildlife developed a program entitled “4-H Kids Fish”. The program targeted all youth that could access Falcon State Park in Starr County. This educational program provided the following educational components: Recreational fishing for young people to enjoy with their parents, and promoting a healthy lifestyle by featuring a Fun Walk within the park.

The following educational activities were organized to achieve the 4-H Kids Fish Program objectives.

1. Agents worked with club managers, representing each of the 4-H clubs to identify volunteers for the event.
2. Contacted Texas Parks & Wildlife volunteers and employees to secure fish, identify location and develop emergency management plan for the event.
3. Worked with local youth board to plan, implement, evaluate and interpret the educational program. Group also identified other recreational activities, secured over \$5200 in sponsorships and assisted in marketing the event.
4. Agents hosted this year’s 4-H Kids Fish program where over 193 youth participated. The fun walk, promoting healthy lifestyles, included 45 participants.
5. Agents compiled a summary of the 4-H Kids Fish Program based on the results of the evaluations that were collected from participants on the day of the event.
6. Agents shared the results of the 4-H Kids Fish Program with residents of the county through the local newspaper where they featured a story about the events. Sponsors were also recognized in the article featuring the story.

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

Evaluation Method: A one page retrospective post design evaluation was administered to the participating youth. This type of design is a popular way to assess learners' self-reported changes in knowledge, awareness, skills, confidence, attitudes or behaviors (Howard, 1980). This evaluation was developed with input from all 4-H adult volunteers and Texas Parks & Wildlife personnel. The strategy was used to determine the level of knowledge youth acquired through this educational event. A total of 38 evaluations were used to determine the effectiveness of this program.

Collaborators:

- Starr 4-H Youth Board
- Texas Parks & Wildlife

Results: A total forty (38) evaluations were summarized . The scale of responses for these statements was defined as 1=Poor, 2=Fair, 3=Good, 4=Excellent. Based on the evaluations, 92% of the respondents have a more positive feeling about the outdoor project they participated in . Ninety one percent (91%) have a better understanding of the resources the state park has for young people. It is also evident that participants learned, (93%) that fishing can be and excellent family recreational activity. Almost all the respondents (98%), have indicated that they would be more comfortable with serving in a 4-H leadership role because they participated in this activity.

Summary: This program did appear to build knowledge and change perceptions about recreational outdoor activities and healthy lifestyles. Participant responses indicate that they have a better appreciation for the state park and what it offers to the public and how 4-H is offering excellent leadership opportunities for young people. This program design will continue next year, possibly expanding the program and adding more activities.


References:

Howard, G.S. (1980). Resonse-Shift bias a problem in evaluating interventions with pre/post self reports. Evaluation Review, 4 (1), 93-106.

For More Information Contact:
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
500 N. Britton Avenue
Rio Grande City, Tx 78582
Tel. (956) 487-2306

VALUE

Character and Leadership Development



Texas A&M AgriLife Extension's 4-H Youth Development Program teaches participants leadership skills and character traits. Participating youth become mentors, role models, and leaders in their schools and communities.

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE
Providing Solutions

- Community Resource & Economic

Making a Difference

Community Resource & Economic Development – Starr County 2014 **By Elva Yolanda Morado, County Extension Agent-FCS**

The combined effort of young people not coming home after college, a struggling economy, loss of farmers/ranchers, and an aging workforce has resulted in a loss of vitality in Starr County. Extension Family and Consumer Life specialist working with Starr County Extension agents and local partners and collaborators have found compelling reasons for optimism.

The Texas Transformation grant has joined communities and their citizens to come together to deal with their own challenges, discuss resource restraints, seek out business opportunities, develop plans for growth management and explore ways to improve the quality of life of Starr County residents. Assessment projects and surveys have assisted local citizens in providing guidance on what can be done, identifying collaborating organization and agencies, and buying in elected officials and concerned citizens in building better and healthier communities and ultimately a better Starr County.

The Starr County Youth Fair continues to grow and is the single county event that brings together youth and residents from the entire county. Funds generated support future fair projects but provide numerous scholarships. The Queen's pageant is the major fund raiser for the 4-H program that supports leader trainings, resources for competition events and 4-H program enhancement grants.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service STARR County

**Elva Yolanda Morado, CEA-FCS Coord.
Omar Montemayor, CEA-AgNR (4-H Coord.)**

**Paul Bowers, PA-FDRM
Vit Kaspar, PA-FDRM**

**Ext. Assistant-EFNEP
Irma Ortiz (1890)**

**BLT Program Assistants:
Adela Mancha**

**Office Support Staff
Elizabeth Barrera
Gloria I. Barrera**

Contact Us

**500 N. Britton Ave
Rio Grande City, Texas 78582
956-487-2306*fax 956-716-8197
<http://starr.agrilife.org/>**