



Extension Education in Webb 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:

Webb County - Summary of 2012 Educational Contacts

Agriculture & Natural Resources Contacts:

| Contact Hrs. Via Educational Programs | Office Visits | Site Visits/Contacts | Phone Calls | Newsletter/Mail/E-Mail Contacts | Total All Contacts |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|----------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| 8,002 | 552 | 2,176 | 1,524 | 1,835 | 14,089 |

Family & Consumer Sciences Statistics for 2011:

In 2012, Webb County Family and Consumer Sciences programs consisted of 771 group method presentations with a total of 19,279 participant contacts for educational sessions. 2,886 individual method contacts were documented, including 15,426 educational hours. These residents were reached through a number of different programs, including Better Living for Texans, Walk Across Texas, and Yo Puedo programs.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

2012 Webb County Strategies for Ranching Sustainability

Developed By: **George L. Gonzales, County Extension Agent Agriculture & Natural Resources**

Relevance/Issue Description:

The Webb County Extension Agriculture/Natural Resources program area committee suggested that educating agricultural producers in Webb County with strategies for ranching sustainability would greatly help them in remaining profitable with their ranching operations during times of drought and an unstable economy.

Target Audience:

This program was targeted towards local and area agricultural producers that own, lease, or manage agricultural farming and ranching property in Webb and adjoining counties. The target audience are primarily cow/calf producers that lease their ranches for hunting as well. The average size ranching operation is about 3,000 acres.

Response – Events / Activities:

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension in Webb County developed the following educational events and activities to address this relevant issue:

- Marketing, Promotion and Media – January 2012
- Agricultural & Natural Resources Newsletter – January 2012
- Private Applicator License Training – January 26, 2012
- Pasture, Rangeland and Forage Rainfall Index Insurance Seminar- February 16, 2012
- Pesticide Applicator Recertification Course – May 23, 2012
- Agriculture Water Conference - March 29, 2012
- Sustainable Agriculture Field Day – May 10, 2012
- Rebuilding the Beef Herd Evaluation – June 21, 2012
- Pesticide Applicator Recertification Course – December 5, 2012

These educational programs were designed to address ranching economics, forage and wildlife Management during drought, farm and ranch security issues, water well livestock water quality and rainwater harvesting to aid wildlife. Topics discussed at these programs included rainfall index insurance, weather outlook, drought management strategies, sustainable agriculture production methods and rebuilding the beef herds.

Partnerships & Collaborators:

During 2012, the overall success of these educational programs was greatly enhanced by support from local lending institutions, private ranches and businesses, feed stores, agribusinesses and corporations as well as other agricultural program supporters. These partners and collaborators provided sponsorships, door prizes, meals and refreshments and hosted many of these educational events.

Evaluation Strategy:

An evaluation instrument (retrospective post approach) was utilized to measure participant knowledge gained and adoption of recommended practices. A total of 42 of 200 (21%) completed and returned the retrospective post surveys after each of these programs. Program participants attended an average of three educational programs during 2012 and indicated that they would highly recommend the educational activities to other for their educational benefit.

Results:

The 2012 Pasture, Rangeland and Forage Rainfall Index Insurance Seminar conducted on February 16, 2012. Program impact and benefit was determined by utilizing a retrospective post survey. 7 program evaluation surveys were secured from agricultural producers that attended this seminar. A total of four statements were used to measure this program.

- There was 67% increase in knowledge by participants on the Pasture, Rangeland and Forage Rainfall Index insurance.
- Overall, there was a 56% average percent increase in knowledge by participants attending this program.

| Statement | Mean Value Before | Mean Value After | Mean Increase | Percent Increase |
|---|-------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|
| 1. Understanding of who provides the Pasture, Rangeland and Forage Rainfall Index insurance. | 1.63 | 4.30 | 2.67 | 62% |
| 2. Understanding of how the Group Risk Programs provided by the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation operate. | 1.50 | 3.50 | 2.00 | 57% |
| 3. Understanding of how indemnities are calculated for the Pasture, Rangeland and Forage Rainfall Index insurance program. | 2.14 | 4.00 | 1.86 | 46% |
| 4. Understanding of the time periods I can select under the pasture, rangeland and forage rainfall Index insurance program. | 1.81 | 4.50 | 2.69 | 60% |

The Agriculture Water Conference conducted on March 29, 2012. Program participants completed 10 retrospective post surveys. Twelve statements were used to measure this program.

- Participants understanding of the Rio Grande Basin and current water source was increased by 64%.
- As a result of attending this conference, participants revealed a 57% increase in knowledge on how water quality affects water intake of livestock.
- Overall, there was a 48% average percent increase in knowledge by participants attending this program.

| Statement | Mean Value Before | Mean Value After | Mean Increase | Percent Increase |
|---|-------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|
| 1. Understanding of The Rio Grande Basin and current water sources. | 1.71 | 4.71 | 3.00 | 64% |

| | | | | |
|---|------|------|------|------------|
| 2. Understanding of Benefits of rainwater harvesting to wildlife and/or livestock. | 1.85 | 4.57 | 2.72 | 60% |
| 3. Understanding of Financial incentives to harvesting rainwater. | 2.14 | 4.14 | 2.00 | 48% |
| 4. Understanding of Future water issues. | 2.03 | 3.54 | 1.51 | 43% |
| 5. Understanding of water requirements of livestock. | 2.14 | 4.42 | 2.28 | 51% |
| 6. Understanding of how water quality affects water intake of livestock. | 1.81 | 3.16 | 1.80 | 57% |
| 7. Understanding of how environmental factors affect water requirements of livestock. | 1.88 | 3.54 | 1.66 | 47% |
| 8. Understanding of how minerals and salt in water may affect livestock production. | 2.15 | 3.65 | 1.50 | 41% |
| 9. Having a better understanding for the scope of the drought in 2011? | 2.07 | 3.54 | 1.47 | 42% |
| 10. Understanding of the difference between El Nino and La Nina and their impacts to South Texas? | 1.88 | 3.54 | 1.66 | 47% |
| 11. Understanding of how to interpret the Climate Prediction Center 3 Month and 6 month Outlooks? | 2.42 | 3.88 | 1.46 | 37% |
| 12. Understanding of the importance of a high quality rainfall observation network and how to sign up to be a part of this network? | 2.26 | 3.54 | 1.28 | 36% |

The Sustainable Agriculture Field Day conducted on May 10, 2012. Program participants completed 15 retrospective post surveys. Seven statements were used to measure this program.

- 95% of the participants increased their knowledge on various livestock enterprises.
- A 90% increase on understanding of how to use Texas Market Maker for market research was documented from participants.
- Overall, a 68% average percent increase in knowledge by participants was revealed.

| Statement | Mean Value Before | Mean Value After | Mean Increase | Percent Increase |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Understanding of how to use Texas Market Maker for market research. | 2.5 | 4.75 | 2.25 | 90% |
| 2. Understanding of how to use Texas Market Maker to locate producers of specific products. | 2.63 | 4.63 | 2.00 | 76% |

| | | | | |
|---|------|------|------|------------|
| 3. Understanding of how to register my business with Texas Market Maker. | 3.00 | 5.00 | 2.00 | 67% |
| 4. Understanding of various livestock enterprises. | 2.5 | 4.88 | 2.38 | 95% |
| 5. Understanding of the pros and cons of the various livestock enterprises. | 3.38 | 4.75 | 1.37 | 41% |
| 6. Understanding of why it is best to spray brush at certain times. | 2.00 | 4.00 | 2.00 | 50% |
| 7. Understanding of how to do foliar, basal, and cut-stump herbicide applications with Brush Busters methods. | 2.00 | 4.57 | 2.57 | 56% |

Rebuilding the Beef Herd program conducted on June 21, 2012 program impact and benefit was also measured using retrospective post evaluation surveys. Ten program evaluation surveys were completed and turned in by program participants. Five statements were used to measure this program.

- A 47.5% change in overall knowledge for understanding of forage recovery after drought (56.0%), replacement cow and heifer options (38.3%) and strategies to build flexibility in your operation (58.3%).
- A total of 40% will adopt all options in evaluating replacements (10% have already adopted it), 50% will adopt stocking at less than 100% of capacity (20% already have), and 33% will implement a management/stocking plan that will allow for greater flexibility as forage conditions change (11% already have).
- The average sales reported due to drought was 50-55%. One sold out 100% (14% of total) and 2 (28.5%) reported selling between 51-75% of their cowherd.

Consultation with the County Extension Agent-Agriculture and Natural Resources via office and site visits, e-mail, phone calls were conducted as needed in 2012. A total of **340** office visits, **849** on-site contacts, **942** phone calls and **1,800** mail/e-mail contacts.

Acknowledgements:


The Webb County Agriculture/Natural Resources committee provided the leadership and direction for these educational programs that highly impacted all program participants as evidenced by program evaluation survey results. Local Extension volunteers contributed greatly towards the overall success of these educational programs conducted in 2012.

Future Program Actions:

Based on the results of this educational program and feedback from participants, the Webb County Agriculture and Natural Resources committee and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension will continue to plan and provide educational events and activities supporting maintaining ranching sustainability for future generations.

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.



Agriculture Day/Farm City Week Event 2012

Milton Elementary School

(Pictured left to right) Jorge Gutierrez, Milton Elementary School Vice-Principal, George Gonzales, County Extension Agent-Agriculture & Natural Resources and Justin Howell, Southwest Dairy Farmers Specialist. Milton Elementary students listening to lecture on dairy products.



Agriculture Day/Farm City Week Event 2012

Milton Elementary School

(Pictured left to right) Shane Teeters, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Game Warden, Jorge Gutierrez, Milton Elementary School Vice-Principal, George Gonzales, County Extension Agent-Agriculture & Natural Resources, Henry Leal, Extension Wildlife & Fisheries Task Force Chairman and Roel Gonzalez, Vice-President of the Webb County 4-H Parent/Leaders' Association. Milton Elementary students observe presentation by Shane Teeters on hunting and fishing regulations and confiscated game species.

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Webb County Extension Agent-Agriculture & Natural Resources, George L. Gonzales conducting interview with Univision reporter Marissa Limon during the Rebuilding the Beef Herd on June 21, 2012 at the L&F Distributors Conference Room.



Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Milton Elementary School coordinated collaborative efforts to collect non perishable food items for the South Texas Food Bank during the Agriculture Day/Farm City Week Event on November 16, 2012.

(Pictured left to right) George L. Gonzales, Webb County AgriLife Extension Agent-Agriculture & Natural Resources and Poncho Farias from the South Texas Food Bank here in Laredo.



Agriculture Day/Farm City Week Proclamation

Webb County Judge Danny Valdez (center) reading proclamation during the Ag. Day/ Farm City Week Kick-Off held at Milton Elementary School.



Agriculture Day/Farm City Week Event 2012 Milton Elementary School

Webb County Extension Agent Agriculture & Natural Resources, George Gonzales gives introduction, purpose and objectives of the annual Ag. Day/ Farm City Week Kick-Off event.

***Three Easy Bites* – Evaluation of a Curriculum Promoting Healthy Weight Behaviors 2012 State Report**

Relevance

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

Response

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

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

Participants could opt out of the survey evaluation process if desired. Nonetheless, 1113 pre/post survey sets, of which 851 included the 30-day follow up survey, were received from across the state of Texas. Most participants (70%) reported that Better Living for Texans (BLT) was the first AgriLife program they had attended. The typical *Three Easy Bites* participant was female (78%), described herself as Hispanic or Latino (63%) and was 52 years of age. Participants identified themselves as white (81%), black (14%) or Asian (2%). The highest level of educational attainment for most participants (82%) was 12 years or less. Many participants (32%) had been advised by a health professional they weigh too much.

Results

Behavior improvement was noted during the time *Three Easy Bites* was taught (Table 1). Pre/post improvements ($p > .001$) occurred; interestingly, behavior improvements ($p > .001$) were also noted from the post survey to the 30 day follow up survey period.

Table 1. Percentage of *Three Easy Bites* participants who answered always or almost always: pre/post/follow-up data sets (n=851).

| Behavior Questions | Pre-survey | Post-survey | Follow-up survey |
|---|------------|-------------|------------------|
| | % | % | % |
| How often do you plan breakfast ahead of time? | 33 | 56 | 68 |
| How often do you include at least two breakfast items from different food groups? | 57 | 72 | 85 |
| How often do you use a shopping list which includes breakfast items when you go to the grocery store? | 42 | 68 | 77 |
| How often do you plan snacks ahead of time? | 33 | 54 | 61 |
| How often do you snack in front of the television? | 21 | 17 | 13 |
| How often do you use the Nutrition Facts serving size information to determine how much of your snack to eat? | 25 | 52 | 62 |
| How often do you plan dinner ahead of time? | 46 | 66 | 74 |
| How often do you have enough fruits and/or vegetables to cover half of your dinner plate? | 55 | 67 | 80 |
| How often do you use a shopping list with fruits and vegetables when you go to the grocery store? | 58 | 77 | 85 |

Table 2. Mean behavior response (5=strongly disagree thru 1=strongly agree): pre/post/follow-up data sets (n=851)

| Behavior Questions | Pre-survey | Post-survey | Follow-up survey |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | | | |
| How often do you plan breakfast ahead of time? | 3.0 ^a | 2.3 ^b | 1.9 ^c |
| How often do you include at least two breakfast items from different food groups? | 2.4 ^a | 1.8 ^b | 1.6 ^c |
| How often do you use a shopping list which includes breakfast items when you go to the grocery store? | 2.7 ^a | 2.0 ^b | 1.7 ^c |
| How often do you plan snacks ahead of time? | 3.0 ^a | 2.4 ^b | 2.1 ^c |
| How often do you snack in front of the television? | 3.2 ^a | 3.6 ^b | 3.8 ^c |
| How often do you use the Nutrition Facts serving size information to determine how much of your snack to eat? | 3.3 ^a | 2.5 ^b | 2.1 ^c |
| How often do you plan dinner ahead of time? | 2.6 ^a | 2.0 ^b | 1.8 ^c |
| How often do you have enough fruits and/or vegetables to cover half of your dinner plate? | 2.4 ^a | 1.9 ^b | 1.6 ^c |
| How often do you use a shopping list with fruits and vegetables when you go to the grocery store? | 2.3 ^a | 1.8 ^b | 1.5 ^c |

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

The leader-facilitated learner-centered *Three Easy Bites* lesson approach may have helped clients internalize information and enhanced skills necessary to improve behaviors related to healthy weight. This curriculum was especially relevant given 32 percent of these participants had been told by a health professional they weigh too much. Statewide results (n=1113) suggest the *Three Easy Bites* curriculum was effective (p>.001) at improving participant behavior related to breakfast, snacking and dinner. Consistent improvements in eating patterns can

help clients to achieve and maintain healthy weight.



Si, Yo Puedo Controlar Mi Diabetes! (Si, Yo Puedo) is an evidence-informed, culturally competent educational program targeting low-literate Hispanic/Latinos with diabetes. The curriculum is predicated on the American Diabetes Association's national standards of care and employs the Social Cognitive and Self-regulation theories as its foundational support. Empowerment is an overarching theme of the program, and, to this end, *Si, Yo Puedo* aims to equip participants with knowledge and lifestyle skills to better control their diabetes.

Relevance

- Diabetes cost Texas more than 12 billion dollars.¹
- Texas Hispanic/Latinos 45 to 64 years of age are disproportionately affected by diabetes prevalence (11.0 percent) than their White, non-Hispanic counterparts (16.8 percent).
- In 2007, mortality rates were more than double among Texas.¹ Hispanic/Latinos (40 per 100,000) than Whites, non-Hispanics (19 per 100,000).¹
- Among persons with diabetes, a higher proportion of Texas Hispanic/Latinos (32.5 percent) could not see a doctor in the last 12 month due to cost compared to Whites (16.5 percent).²



Response

- Proper management is critical to minimize the potential negative effects of diabetes.
- Self-management education is the cornerstone for diabetic care and vital for blood glucose control.
- Recognizing the need for a culturally-relevant type 2 diabetes self-management education targeting Texas Hispanic/Latinos *Si, Yo Puedo* was developed to address this gap in health programming.

Impact of Yo Puedo

In 2012, 30 individuals registered to for the *Si, Yo Puedo* class offered in Webb County, TX. Among those enrolled in the program, 60.0% (N=18) of the participants completed the classes. An overwhelming majority of the participants (62%) reported never having received any diabetes classes.

The findings below summarize the impact of the *Si, Yo Puedo* program delivered in Webb County. Outcome

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indicators include diabetes knowledge, self-efficacy, acculturation, and diabetes self-care behaviors.

- Demographic characteristics: 69% were females, average age was 53 years, 96% were Hispanic, 42% yearly income was \$20,000 or less, 20% had less than a high school education, and 20% did not have private insurance.
- The majority of program participants were highly acculturated: only 34% had a score of 10 or less out of 25, where a total score of 25 indicated highly acculturated.
- An increase in diabetes knowledge was observed: from 7.9 (out of 10) at pre-test to 9.4 at post-test (out of 10).
- Diabetes self-care scores reveal that participants improved in performing routine health behaviors to better manage their diabetes: Pre-test mean score: 22.2 out of total score of 44; Post-test: 30.0 out of 44.
- Self-efficacy scores improved with participants reporting increases in their confidence to engage in diabetes self-care behaviors): Pre-test 2.6 M (out of 4); Post-test 3.5 M (out of 4). (Scale: 1 = I don't feel sure; 4 = I feel very sure.)

Success Stores

- *Cuidarme mas de la diabetes* (I take care of my diabetes more).
- *I am more aware of the need to manage my diabetes. I pay more attention to my blood examinations. I follow up depending on the results. I assume the responsibility to manage my diabetes.*
- *I have learned how to look after my diabetes and the many things it can do to your body.*

Reflections

Overall, 2012 evidence demonstrates that the *!Sí, Yo Puedo Controlar Mi Diabetes!* significantly enhances participants' engagement in diabetes self-care behaviors, improvements in self-confidence about diabetes self-care, and increases diabetes knowledge. This program lends support to the benefits of a culturally competent diabetes self-management education targeting lower literate, Spanish-speaking Hispanic/Latinos with diabetes. Given the high rates of diabetes among Hispanic/Latinos, *Si, Yo Puedo* is a program to address this concern in Webb County, Texas. Over the past year Webb County Extension partnered with community stakeholder to extend our reach to disadvantaged populations. We envision this effort to continue that will help ensure the sustainability of *Si, Yo Puedo*.

References

1. Texas Diabetes Council, Texas Department of State Health Services. *Changing the course: A plan to prevent and control diabetes in Texas*. Austin, TX: TDSHS Publication No. 45-10524.
2. Texas Diabetes Council, Texas Department of State Health Services. *Diabetes: A comprehensive approach*. Austin, TX: TDSHS Publication No. 45-10524.

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Webb County

Better Living for Texans – Back to Basics

Relevance

In Webb County, an estimated 74,905 individuals receive benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), historically known as food stamps. Studies have shown individuals who live in poverty (including SNAP recipients) have dietary intakes that are not in agreement with current recommendations (i.e. Dietary Guidelines or MyPlate). This audience, like many, may not recognize their risk for foodborne illness. Having enough food to eat is also a challenge; an estimated 1 in 6 households in Texas experience food insecurity.

Response – Better Living for Texans (BLT)

The BLT Program is a cooperative endeavor among Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), and the Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) of USDA. A component of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), BLT offers food and nutrition education to SNAP recipients, applicants, and other low-income audiences to help improve their ability to plan and prepare nutritious meals, stretch food dollars, and prepare and store food safely. BLT also incorporates the *Walk Across Texas* program to promote physical activity.

During 2012, 101 Webb County adults completed the BLT *Back to Basics* series. This program focuses on meal planning, stretching food dollars, and adopting selected behaviors that can reduce the risk of foodborne illness. This report reflects results of the pre, post, and 30-day follow-up surveys completed by those participants.

Results

Most of the 101 participants identified themselves as female and Hispanic. More than 76% (n=77) had a high school education or less. Average household size of the participants was 4.9. Nearly 85% (n=86) of the participants received SNAP (food stamp) benefits. More than 60% received WIC (n=68) and free/reduced price school meals (n=66). Almost 16% (n=16) of the 101 participants reported they had received food from a food pantry within the last 30 days.

Meal Planning and Food Resource Management – adoption of behaviors

| Behavior | Current behavior (pre) Number (%*) | Intent to change Number (%*) | Behavior 30 days later Number (%*) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Plan meals in advance | | | |
| Always | 42 (42) | 93 (92) | 93 (92) |
| Sometimes | 54 (54) | 7 (7) | 4 (4) |
| Never | 4 (4) | 0 | 0 |
| Not Sure | 1 (1) | 1 (1) | 0 |
| No response | 0 | 0 | 4 (4) |
| Shop for food with a list | | | |
| Always | 44 (44) | 97 (96) | 97 (96) |
| Sometimes | 45 (45) | 4 (4) | 1 (1) |
| Never | 12 (12) | 0 | 0 |
| Not Sure | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| No response | 0 | 0 | 3 (3) |
| Compare prices when shopping | | | |
| Always | 45 (45) | 99 (98) | 95 (94) |
| Sometimes | 49 (49) | 1 (1) | 3 (3) |
| Never | 6 (6) | 0 | 0 |
| Not Sure | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| No response | 1 (1) | 1 (1) | 3 (3) |
| Use unit pricing when shopping | | | |
| Always | 27 (27) | 97 (96) | 67 (66) |
| Sometimes | 37 (37) | 1 (1) | 28 (28) |
| Never | 32 (32) | 0 | 0 |
| Not sure | 4 (4) | 2 (2) | 3 (3) |
| No response | 1 (1) | 1 (1) | 3 (3) |
| Run out of food before the end of the month? | | | |
| Always | 22 (22) | | 5 (5) |
| Sometimes | 55 (55) | | 12 (12) |
| Never | 19 (19) | | 78 (77) |
| Not Sure | 4 (4) | | 3 (3) |
| No response | 1 (1) | | 3 (3) |

* percentage is rounded up to the nearest whole number

Most participants were using the targeted food resource management practices either “always” or “sometimes” when they entered the BLT program. Immediately after the program ended there was a noted increase in the percentage of participants who intended to practice three of the four behaviors “always.” Thirty days later, the percentage of participants practicing all four behaviors “always” was higher than when the program began.

Immediately after the program ended nearly all (n=99) of the participants felt that they would be able to spend less money at the grocery store. Not only did out-of-pocket food expenses decrease, but the number of people who ran out of food “always” or “sometimes” dropped from 77 (pre-BLT) to 17 (30-days later).

Food Safety- adoption of behaviors

| Behavior | Frequency (pre) Number (%*) | Frequency (post) Number (%*) (intent to change) | Adoption of Behavior (30-days later) Number (%*) |
|---|--------------------------------|---|--|
| How often do you sanitize cutting boards after cutting up raw meat or poultry? | | | |
| Always | 84 (83) | 99 (98) | 97 (96) |
| Sometimes | 12 (12) | 0 | 0 |
| Never | 3 (3) | 1 (1) | 1 (1) |
| Not sure | 2 (2) | 0 | 0 |
| No response | 0 | 1 (1) | 3 (3) |
| How often do you thaw frozen food at room temperature? | | | |
| Always | 44 (44) | 7 (7) | 0 |
| Sometimes | 50 (50) | 2 (2) | 6 (6) |
| Never | 6 (6) | 91 (90) | 98 (97) |
| Not sure | 1 (1) | 0 | 0 |
| No response | 0 | 1 (1) | 3 (3) |
| How long did you leave your last meal out after it was prepared? | | | |
| Eaten/stored immediately | 18 (18) | 51 (51) | 81 (80) |
| < 1 hour | 61 (60) | 46 (46) | 17 (17) |
| 1 – 2 hours | 9 (9) | 4 (4) | 0 |
| > 2 hours | 2 (2) | 0 | 0 |
| Not Sure | 10 (10) | 0 | 0 |
| No response | 1 (1) | 0 | 3 (3) |

* percentage is rounded up to the nearest whole number

More than 80% (n=84) of participants reported sanitizing cutting boards after cutting up raw meat or poultry when the program first began. More participants indicated intent to do so immediately after the program ended and 96% (n=97) were doing so 30-days later. More people were eating or storing their food immediately after preparing after the program ended compared to when it began, and there was a tremendous increase in the percentage of participants who “never” let food thaw at room temperature.

Other findings:

63% (n=64) of the 101 participants identified BLT as their first exposure to AgriLife Extension. This suggests that the program is reaching new audiences who otherwise might not have the opportunity to benefit from Extension programs.

Average monthly out-of-pocket food expenses reported by participants:**

Before BLT: \$ 176.50

After BLT: \$ 135.83 (monthly saving of \$40.67)

** Based on 97 participants who reported monthly out-of-pocket food expenses at the beginning of BLT and 30-days after the program ended. Changes in out-of-pocket food expenses **were** significantly different.

If this reduction in out-of-pocket food expenses was not due to a financial hardship (e.g. loss of income or SNAP benefits) and if it could be sustained for a year, then these 97 individuals could potentially save a total of \$47,339 annually.

For these 101 participants, the percentage who rated their perceived ability to prepare nutritious meals as either “good” or “very good” was 64% (n=65) before BLT (pre-survey) and rose to 96% (n=97) after BLT (post survey).

74 of the 101 (73%) participants rated the BLT program as “excellent.” Another 24 participants (24%) rated the program as “good.”

Client Success Stories (Add success stories that you have gathered over the course of the FY12 program year.)

2012

WAT Outcome Summary Evaluation for Webb County

Walk Across Texas

Situation

Physical activity was recently named as one of the 10 leading health indicators by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Physical inactivity is associated with an increased risk of a number of chronic health conditions including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, some cancers, high blood pressure, as well as overweight and obesity. In 2012, it is estimated that up to 31.0% of Texas adults are obese, and that about 69.9% of Texas adults are overweight. It is estimated that between 30 and 34% of Hispanics are obese. Webb County with its high Hispanic population necessarily has a high obesity rate.

The percentage of young people who are overweight has more than doubled in the last 20 years. 15.6% of Texans ages 6-19 years are overweight. 16.8% of Texas children between 2 and 5 are overweight. It is now estimated that 17% of children in Webb County are overweight.

Sixty-one and a half percent of children aged 9-13 years do not participate in any organized physical activity during their non-school hours and 22.6% do not engage in any free-time physical activity. Additionally, research indicates that only 25% of adults and 27% of high school students get regular, moderate exercise. 29% of American Adults are not physically active at all.

Response – Walk Across Texas

Walk Across Texas is an eight week program designed to help people of all ages support one another to establish the habit of regular physical activity. Regular physical activity and controlling weight can significantly reduce the incidence and impact of chronic diseases like heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer, high blood pressure, and depression and is associated with a longer healthier life.

Program evaluation

Evaluation of the Webb County WAT program was conducted via the use of a pre, and post survey. This allowed for the collection of data that reflected current behaviors, and the extent to which behaviors were actually adopted. This report represents 102 adults who participated in the program and completed the pre- and post surveys.

Results

- *Participant Characteristics:* Most of the 102 participant who enrolled in WAT were female and Hispanic. The average age of participants was 39.28 years. 80% of participants were female. 90% of

participants were Hispanic. Including the cost of lost wages, the total potential economic impact for the participants is \$45,711.00.

| Table 1 – Participant characteristics | Number | Percentage |
|--|---------------|-------------------|
| Gender | | |
| Female | 82 | 80 |
| Male | 20 | 20 |
| No response/data missing | 0 | |
| Ethnicity | | |
| White | 10 | 10.2 |
| Hispanic | 92 | 91.8 |
| Improvements | | |
| Increased activity levels | 51 | 52 |
| Reported weight loss | 34 | 34.68 |
| Have more energy | 66 | 67.3 |
| Having more fun | 75 | 76.5 |

Program Impact

- To assess program impact, we examined behaviors followed at the time of program entry, and at the time the program ended. This is done by analyzing the data of the 102 participants who completed the pre- and post surveys in Webb Co. during 2012.

- The average age of participant was 39.38 yrs.

- 51% of participants were increased their activity levels.

- 34% of participants lost weight.

- 66% of participants reported having more energy.

- Including the cost of lost wages, the total potential economic impact for the participants is \$45,711.00.

Client Success Stories

Participants report sitting less and for shorter periods, spending their days "doing something".

Participants report walking with a smile, being encouraged by others, feeling like part of the family, surges of energy and a greater sense of well-being.

Participants say that walking with a group is much more fun.

Participants report weight loss and more energy.

Participants report enjoying time spent with family members.

Goal: Decrease the demand for health care by decreasing the number of adults and children who are inactive or overweight through nutrition and activity programs

FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR 2012



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Making a Difference

2012 Webb County
Childhood Obesity
Crisanta Mussett, Webb County FCS-CEP Agent
Meeting Needs, Changing Lives

Relevance: According to the 2009 Behavioral Risk Factors Surveillance System (BRFSS) survey an estimated 1.7 million persons 18 years or older in Texas have been diagnosed with diabetes. Overweight and obesity rates among Texas adults are as follow: (1) 65.9% of adults were overweight, with a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 25 or greater, and 31.0% of adults were obese, with a (BMI) of 30 or greater. Adolescent overweight and obesity rates in Texas are as follow : (2) 15.6% were overweight, (85th and 95th percentiles for BMI by age and sex) and 13.6% were obese (> 95th percentile for BMI by age and sex). Finally, overweight and obesity rates among Texas children, age two to five years (3) follow: 16.8% were overweight,(85th to 95th percentile BMI-for-Age) and 15.3% were obese (95th percentile BMI-for-Age). These alarming figures are related diseases include coronary heart disease, hypertension and stroke, type 2 diabetes, and certain types of cancer The Webb County Family & Consumer Sciences (FCS) committee has identified obesity and diet related diseases as a top priority for programming in this county.

Response: Healthy Eating Habits, Educating Others, What's on MyPlate, How Much Sugar is in Your Drink, Herb Gardening, Let's Weigh In, and Live It Real Nutrition for Teens were programs that were conducted in Webb County. These programs provided technical and educational information to limited resource families and individuals to help them understand the importance of nutrition and diet. These programs were conducted to a total 312 participants with over 600 contact hours. The focus was to heighten awareness of the relationship between high calorie food consumption and lack of physical activity.

- These educational activities included: what are your fruits and vegetables, drawing MyPlate, spring herb gardening, measure sugar from reading food labels in soft drinks, play and place fruits and vegetables on MyPlate, let's weigh in and promote changing what we eat and lower BMI, also portion control for individuals with diabetes.
- Exercise classes were offered to promote physical activity.
- Marketing efforts with collaboration of the Webb County FCS committee, Totem Strategies, and Texas Department of Health and Human Services- Border Affairs division.
- Community partners included: Mercy Ministries, Keep Laredo Beautiful, Laredo, United and Webb Independent School Districts, Bethany House, Keep Laredo beautiful, Eagle Ford Shale, Dr. Michael Hochman, Methodist Health Ministries, Texas A&M International University
- Media included news release using Public Access Television, newspaper ads, and over 2500 fliers distributed

Results: Demographic data for the above activities were conducted from January through November 2012. A total 59 participants, responded to the post youth survey. Attending were 8 Caucasians, 4 African Americans and 47 Hispanics with 35 females and 24 males. A total of 44 participants responded to adult post survey. Attending were 4 Caucasians and 40 Hispanics with 32 females and 12 males.

Economic Impact:

- In-kind medical contribution to one workshop in the form of free diabetic eye exams over \$11,000 from Laser Eye Clinic of Laredo.
- In general other in kind contributions totaled over \$900.
- Based on both surveys 80% replied that they are cooking more at home and eating healthier 67% stated that they are saving money by not eating at fast food restaurants
- Future Plans will continue to include awareness and prevention of childhood obesity, healthy eating, My Plate, and physical activity workshops to our targeted clientele in 2013

| <u>Statement Youth Survey</u> | Before | After | Increase | Increase |
|---|--------|-------|----------|----------|
| Increase home cooked meals instead of buying from fast food restaurants. | 1.85 | 4.57 | 2.72 | 60% |
| Understanding of food choices can reduce your risk of illnesses. | 2.14 | 4.14 | 2.00 | 48% |
| Understanding of healthy eating. | 2.00 | 4.42 | 2.28 | 51% |
| Understanding of limiting the amount of salt, carbohydrates and fats in meals. | 1.50 | 4.10 | 2.60 | 63% |
| Understanding of role of exercise to stay better fit and healthy. | 1.71 | 4.71 | 3.00 | 64% |
| Understanding of replacing whole items with light, fat free, skim or organic products | 2.00 | 4.28 | 2.28 | 53% |

Comments provided by participants:

They showed us the amount of carbohydrates and fats in foods that we enjoy

Workshop was extremely interactive

They provided us with many healthy references and visual handouts

| <u>Statement Adult Survey</u> | Before | After | Knowledge Gained |
|---|--------|-------|------------------|
| Understanding of healthy eating habits by what you eat and not how you eat. | 60% | 98% | 38% |
| Understanding of food choices can reduce your risk of illnesses such as heart disease, cancer and diabetes, as well as defend against depression. | 35% | 85% | 50% |
| Understanding of role of exercise in countering diabetes. | 25% | 75% | 50% |

Comments provided by participants:

The dietitian gave me very clear and good information

I am going to exercise more

Very good, I can use at home

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), obesity is associated with increased health-care costs, reduced quality of life, and increased risk for premature death. Obesity and diet related diseases are of major concern, especially since they occur at high rates among Hispanic populations, which coincidentally make up the majority of the population in Webb County. Nutrition and fitness programs offer our community education and knowledge, opportunity to participate in physical fitness activities, which in turn improve the quality of life of our participants and their families and also positively impact household budgets through lower healthcare costs. If people are not physically active, “regular physical activity reduces the risk of developing diabetes, high blood pressure and some cancers. It also lowers blood pressure, helps build and maintain healthy bones, muscles, and joints and promotes psychological wellbeing. Physically inactive population costs money”, \$2681 per person annually. (6)

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Making a Difference

2012 Webb County

Food Safety

Crisanta Mussett, County FCS-CEP Agent

Meeting Needs, Changing Lives

Relevance: One out of every six people get sick. However, 56,000 people are hospitalized, and 1,500 people die; thus millions of dollars are lost due to medical expenses and loss of productivity in Texas. It can have long term health consequences: kidney failure, chronic arthritis, brain and nerve damage and death. Issues of concern from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) are Americans are eating more fresh foods, convenience food, global food economy, corporate food production, and new variations/emerging pathogens. This plan heightens awareness of the relationship between basic sanitation practices, when handling food. This practice reduces waste, conserves nutrients and prevents food-borne illness. The Webb County Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) committee identified relevant research based information on basic sanitation practices, importance of good personal hygiene and properly storing foods. In 2011 and 2012, there were outbreaks in spinach, spring mix salads, peanut butter, mangos, ground beef, turkey, cantaloupe, and lettuce. The food-borne illnesses were:

E. coli a type of bacteria that lives in your intestines and the intestines of animals.

Although most types of *E. coli* are harmless, some types are harmful and cause illness.

Listeria is a bacterium that is present in raw milk and foods made from raw milk. It can also live in food processing plants and contaminate a variety of processed meats. *Listeria* is unlike many other germs because it can grow in the cold temperatures of the refrigerator. *Listeria* is killed by cooking and pasteurization.

Salmonella bacteria most common cause's food poisoning in the United States. *Salmonella* causes more serious illnesses in older adults, infants, and persons with chronic diseases. *Salmonella* is killed by cooking and pasteurization.

Botulism is a rare but serious illness caused by a bacterium which occurs in soil. It produces a toxin that affects your nerves. Food-borne botulism comes from eating foods contaminated with this toxin.

Response: Clean, separate, cook, and chill are educational activities demonstrated in Webb County. At several locations, “keeping it clean and safe in the kitchen” was held. Illness causing bacteria can survive in many places around your kitchen, including your hands, utensils, and cutting boards. Therefore, washing hands, utensils, and surfaces right way prevents the spread of bacteria to your food your family. Even after you’ve cleaned your hands and surfaces thoroughly, raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs can still spread illness-causing bacteria to ready-to-eat foods, so keep separate. Demonstrations showed the importance of different color cutting boards, because this helps with food separation during preparation. Bacteria that cause food poisoning multiply quicker between 40° and 140 ° and we call this “Danger Zone”. Using a food thermometer will delineate when food is “done” and keep foods “hot” after cooking. Activities for proper refrigeration of perishable foods (within two hours) thawing or marinating. Along with holiday food safety tips (buffets and party platters) were described to at least 79 participants. The focus was effective ways to help keep families safe from food poisoning.

Marketing efforts collaborated with the Webb County FCS committee, Totem Strategies, and Texas Department of Health and Human Services- Border Affairs Division. The program involved, community partners such as: Mercy Ministries, Keep Laredo Beautiful, Webb County Community Centers, Bethany House, HEB, and South Texas Food Bank. Different media outlets were used for distribution, for instance, news releases using Webb County Administrative Services, newspaper ads, and food safety tools were distributed to over 2500 at local health fairs.

Results: Customer satisfaction surveys for 79 participants based on 33 actual surveys completed included 25 females and 8 males and 33 Hispanics. The participants were satisfied with the overall presentations, easy to understand, recommend activity to others in the 95% to 98% overall satisfaction. Comments included by participants were:

- did not know about using the same cutting board
- thank you for explaining food-borne illnesses
- thank you for the food thermometers
- holiday cooking tips were very helpful

Future plans include providing updated and relevant information for 2013 to Webb County residents. By supporting the food safety program, participants will adopt safe food handling practices which lead to safer foods served. This will benefit families and community members by reducing food-borne illness and associated health care costs by approximately \$295 per person. In-kind contributions were received in the amount of \$325.

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR 2012



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