



## Extension Education in Brooks County

# Making a Difference

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service has long been dedicated to educating Texans. Extension education evolved nationwide under the 1914 federal Smith-Lever Act, which sought to extend university knowledge and agricultural research findings directly to the people. Ever since, Extension programs have addressed the emerging issues of the day, reaching diverse rural and urban populations.

In Texas, all 254 counties are served by a well-organized network of professional Extension educators and some 100,000 trained volunteers. Extension expertise and educational outreach pertain to the food and fiber industry, natural resources, family and consumer sciences, nutrition and health, and community economic development.

## EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE *Providing Solutions*

Among those served are hundreds of thousands of young people who benefit annually from Extension's 4-H and youth development programs.

Texans turn to Extension education for solutions. Extension agents and specialists respond not only with answers, but also with resources and services that result in significant returns on the public's investment. Extension programs are custom-designed for each region of the state, with residents providing input and help with program delivery. Here are just a few highlights of Extension impacts on this county and its people.

### Brooks County – Summary of 2015 Educational Contacts

Total

Educational Programs Conducted	6,349
Total Participants	2,143
➤ In-depth contacts	498
➤ Outreach contacts	1,531
Contact Hours	4,661
4H Members	
4H Leaders	
4H Clubs	
Westside Extension Education Club members	112
Office Contacts	4206
➤ Individual contacts direct	1051
➤ Individual contacts indirect	2603
➤ Social Media	14,400
➤ Followers	1,964
Newsletters	285
<b>Cash and In Kind Donations by AgriLife Supporters</b>	
<b>And Collaborators</b>	<b>\$40,173.53</b>
➤ BLT	\$34,167.79
➤ 4H Fundraising	\$2,729.39
➤ Food Handlers	\$1280.00
➤ Shooting Sports	\$944.44
➤ Roping	\$1052.00



## Family and Consumer Sciences

### Brooks County Friend to Friend – 2015

Developed by Celia Salinas, County Extension Agent-Family & Consumer Sciences—Brooks County

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 40 Texas counties in 2015.

39 women attended the Friend to Friend events on November 06, 2015 at the Brooks County Annex in the city of Falfurrias, Texas.

Demographics of women who attended the events:

- Median age was: 55
- Ethnic breakdown:
- Latina/Hispanic: 72.3 %
- White: 8.3 %
- Multiple race/ethnicity: 8.3 %
- Other/missing: 8.3 %

10 total volunteers assisted at party/events. A Nurse Practitioner urged women to obtain a mammogram/Pap screening at the events. At the end of the event 72 % of women, aged 40 or over, correctly identified the need for a mammogram screening every year. 3 Women requested help to navigate screening and diagnostic services. 38 Clinical sites are contracted statewide for screenings, diagnostics, radiologists and lab services. Women were referred to other available sources for Breast and Cervical screenings and diagnostics such as Community Action Health Center in Brooks County, etc.



## Success Stories

- During our testimonials we had an individual that beat breast cancer. Her testimonial was heartwarming as well as successful outcome as she is cancer free.

## Brooks County Better Living for Texans – Back to Basics -2015

Developed by Celia Salinas, County Extension Agent-Family & Consumer Sciences—Brooks County

## Relevance

More than 3.7 million 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 A&M 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 2015, 58 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. Of those participants, 58 completed the 30-day follow-up survey which allows us to assess the extent that targeted behaviors were adopted. NOTE: If you did not have any follow-up surveys or the number was small, you could just report on the pre and post data.

## Results

Friend to Friend Event in Brooks County with a large crowd of beautiful Ladies.

## Evaluation results

Intent to change behaviors was examined by evaluating the pre and post data from the program series.

Bottom: Nora Benavides giving her testimony to the ladies

*Meal Planning and Food Resource Management- intent to change*

Behavior	Current behavior			Intent to change	
	N	%		N	%
<b>Plan meals in advance</b>					
Always	0	0%		27	47.4%
Sometimes	4	6.9%		29	50.9%
Never	54	93.1%		1	1.8%
Not Sure	0	0%		0	0%
No response	0	0%		0	0%

## Family and Consumer Sciences

<b>Shop for food with a list</b>					
Always	0	0%		27	46.6%
Sometimes	11	19.0%		30	51.7%
Never	47	81.0%		1	1.7%
Not Sure	0	0%		0	0%
No response	0	0%		0	0%
<b>Compare prices when shopping</b>					
Always	0	0%		16	27.6%
Sometimes	4	7.3%		40	69.0%
Never	49	89.1%		2	3.4%
Not Sure	2	3.6%		0	0%
No response					
<b>Use unit pricing when shopping</b>					
Always	0	0%		14	24.1%
Sometimes	1	1.7%		42	72.4%
Never	57	98.3%		2	3.4%
Not Sure	0	0%		0	0%
No response					
<b>Run out of food before the end of the month?</b>					
Always	23	39.7%			
Sometimes	0	0%			
Never	0	0%			
Not Sure	0	0%			
No response					

### Food Safety – intent to change behavior

Behavior	Current behavior			Intent to change	
	N	%		N	%
<b>How often do you sanitize cutting boards after cutting up raw meat or poultry?</b>					
Always	15	25.9%		57	98.3%
Sometimes	34	58.6%		1	1.7%
Never	9	15.5%		0	0%
Not Sure	0	0%		0	0%
No response					
<b>How often do you thaw frozen meat at room temperature?</b>					
Always	45	78.92%		2	3.4%
Sometimes	10	17.55%		0	0%
Never	96.6	57%			
Not sure					
No response					

## Family and Consumer Sciences

How long did you leave your last meal out after it was prepared?					
Eaten/stored immediately	13	22.4%		2	3.5%
< 1 hour	2	3.4%		10	17.5%
1 – 2 hours	3	5.2%		45	78.9%
> 2 hours	3	5.2%		0	0%
Not Sure	37	63.8%		0	0%
No response					

**Adoption of Behavior:** The adoption of actual behaviors was assessed analyzing the data from 21 of the 35 participants who completed the pre-, post-, and 30-day follow-up surveys.

### *Meal Planning and Food Resource Management – adoption of behaviors*

Behavior	Beginning (pre)		Intent to change (post)		30-day Follow-Up	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<b>Plan meals in advance</b>						
Always	0	0%	27	47.4%	55	96.5%
Sometimes	4	6.9%	29	50.9%	2	3.5%
Never	54	93.1%	1	1.8%	0	0%
Not Sure	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
No response	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Shop for food with a list</b>						
Always	0	0%	27	46.6%	54	96.4%
Sometimes	11	19.0%	30	51.7%	2	3.6%
Never	47	81.0%	1	1.7%	0	0%
Not Sure	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
No response	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Compare prices when shopping</b>						
Always	0	0%	16	27.6%	41	70.7%
Sometimes	4	7.3%	40	69%	17	29.3%
Never	49	89.1%	2	3.4%	0	0%
Not Sure	2	3.6%	0	0%	0	0%
No response	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Use unit pricing when shopping</b>						
Always	0	0%	14	24.1%	39	68.4%
Sometimes	1	1.7%	42	72.4%	17	29.8%
Never	57	98.3%	2	3.4%	1	1.8%
Not sure	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
No response	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Run out of food before the end of the month?</b>						
Always	12	20.7%				
Sometimes	19	32.8%				
Never	27	46.6%				
Not Sure	0	0%				
No response	0	0%				



### Food Safety- adoption of behaviors

Behavior	Beginning (pre)		Intent to change (post)		30-day Follow-Up	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<b>How often do you sanitize cutting boards after cutting up raw meat or poultry?</b>						
Always	15	25.9%	57	98.3%	56	98.2%
Sometimes	34	58.6%	1	1.7%	0	0%
Never	9	15.5%	0	0%	1	1.8%
Not sure	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
No response	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>How often do you thaw frozen food at room temperature?</b>						
Always	45	78.9%	2	3.4%	0	0%
Sometimes	10	17.5%	0	0%	1	1.7%
Never	1	1.8%	56	96.6%	57	98.3%
Not sure	1	1.8%	0	0%	0	0%
No response	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>How long did you leave your last meal out after it was prepared?</b>						
Eaten/stored immediately	13	22.4%	2	3.5%	2	3.4%
< 1 hour	2	3.4%	10	17.5%	33	56.9%
1 – 2 hours	3	5.2%	45	78.9%	23	39.7%
> 2 hours	3	5.2%	0	0%	0	0%
Not Sure	37	63.8%	0	0%	0	0%
No response	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

#### Other findings:

5.3 % of the 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: 252.59

After BLT: 190.52

\*\* Based on those participants who reported monthly out-of-pocket food expenses at the beginning of BLT and 30-days after the program ended.

For participants who completed the pre, post, and follow-up surveys, the percentage who rated their perceived ability to prepare nutritious meals as either “good” or “very good” was 98.3 % before BLT (pre-survey) and 100 % after BLT (30-day post survey).

57 of the participants rated the BLT program as “excellent” while 1 rated the program as “good.”



### ***Choose MyPlate – Evaluation of a Curriculum Promoting Healthful Food Choices-2015***

Developed by Celia Salinas, County Extension Agent-Family & Consumer Sciences—Brooks County

#### **Relevance**

In Texas, two-thirds of the adult population is either overweight or obese and 15 percent of children are obese. Obesity increases the risk for diabetes, hypertension and poor overall quality of life. Risk factors for obesity include poor diet quality, sedentary behavior and a lack of energy balance among other factors. For example, in Texas only 13 percent of adults meet the recommended five daily servings of fruits and vegetables. Consuming the recommended amounts of fruit and vegetables is associated with improved diet quality and healthier weight.

#### **Response**

A five lesson series on the USDA Food Guidance System – *Choose MyPlate* was developed by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service nutrition specialists. The series addressed positive food choice consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. The learner-centered curriculum delivered subject matter content by incorporating facilitated interactive modalities and promoted daily physical activity. Session titles and goals were as follows:

- **Add more vegetables to your day:** Participants will increase knowledge of vegetable varieties and tips on how to add vegetables to their eating plan.
- **Focus on fruits:** Participants will increase knowledge of fruit health benefits as well as tips on purchasing and consuming fruit.
- **Make half your grains whole:** Participants will increase knowledge of whole grain food products and how to identify these foods using a Nutrition Facts label.
- **With protein foods, variety is key:** Participants will increase knowledge of Protein Foods and how to create a meal based on limited ingredients.
- **Get you calcium-rich foods:** Participants will increase knowledge of the differences between low-fat or fat-free milk and whole milk by using the Nutrition Facts label.

*MyPlate* participants could opt out of the evaluation process if desired. Nonetheless, 20 pre/post survey sets were received, of which 20 included the follow-up survey, from Texas. Only the pre/post/follow-up surveys sets (n=20) were analyzed.

The typical participant was female (52.6%), described herself as not Hispanic or Latino (0%) and was 50 years of age. Participants identified themselves as white (88.2%). The highest level of education attainment for most participants (10.2%) was 12 years or less. Some participants (0%) had been advised by a health professional they weigh too much.

#### **Results**

A trend in self-reported behavior improvement was noted (Table 1).

Table 1. Percentage of *MyPlate* participants who reported they agree or strongly agree:  
pre/post data sets (n=20).

## Family and Consumer Sciences

Behavior Statements	Pre-survey	Post-survey
	%	%
<b>I switched to lower fat milk</b>	5.6	61.1
<b>I eat more than two vegetables every day</b>	35	85
<b>I drink fruit drinks that are 100% juice</b>	15	75
<b>I eat 100% whole wheat or 100% whole grain bread</b>	20	80
<b>I limit my protein foods to ¼ of my dinner plate</b>	35	80

The *Choose MyPlate* five lesson series addressed knowledge and skills necessary to help support improvement in client behavior. Participant behavior improvements, in rank order, were:

1. Eating more than two vegetables daily
2. Eating 100% whole wheat or 100% whole grain bread
3. Limiting protein foods to ¼ of the dinner plate
4. Drinking only fruit drinks that are 100% juice
5. Switching to lower fat milk

These data suggest clients improved their behaviors associated with enhanced diet quality. Poor diet quality is a risk factor for obesity and overall declining health. Consistent improvements in diet quality can help clients achieve and maintain healthier weight, reduce their risk for obesity, and improve overall quality of life.

**Brooks County Family and Consumer Sciences General Contacts- 2015**

Developed by Celia Salinas, County Extension Agent-Family & Consumer Sciences—Brooks County

**Relevance:**

**Response:**

This plan is to be used to capture all general FCS contacts not associated with any other plans. This plan is designed as a catch all for activities conducted in Brooks County. Our goal is to capture contacts that are emerging throughout the 2015 year. For the 2015 Extension year agent provided a total of 39 educational sessions reaching nearly 1539 clients. The most effective program Agent Salinas conducted this year that was not an outcome was the food handlers program. This program has been in the county for over 2 years. Agent also assumed many responsibilities through many of her district committees as well.

**Results:**

In 2015 FCS agent reached 1539 clients through the efforts of educational programming, site, visits, volunteers and or other local media. Below you will find the activities and or programs conducted with our Brooks County families.

- RAPPB Brooks County Coalition Meeting
- Brooks County Fair Validation Home Economics
- Step up to scale down training
- South Region FCS Resource Committee
- Program Appraisal System
- Health and wellness coalition
- Food Handlers – Taqueria Jalisco
- Wellness TAC Survey Workshop
- Family and Consumer Sciences Committee
- Manner Matter La Gloria School
- Retired teachers program – Master of Memory
- Food Handlers Training (1)
- Health and Wellness Coalition
- Backyard Basics- Workshop
- Grill and Chill Lunch County Employees
- Brooks County Health and Wellness insurance wellness program
- Family Mealtime
- Do Well Be Well classes
- District 12 Marketing Committee
- Regional Program Planning
- Food Handlers/Cottage
- Fall County Office Management Conference
- Learn Grow Eat and Go curriculum
- Jim Wells County HE judging



## Family and Consumer Sciences

- Be Well Brooks County
- Food Handlers – Oasis
- District 12 Judges and Commissioners
- Jam Workshop

Successes: Agent lunch and learn demonstration, grill and Chill, and Braggin Rights wellness challenge with county employees. County auditor August Patroelj grilling the kabobs.





## 4-H and Youth Development

### Brooks County One Day 4H - 2015

Developed by Celia Salinas, County Extension Agent-Family & Consumer Sciences—Brooks County

#### Relevance:

One Day 4-H is a grass roots community service effort for 4-H youth to identify, plan, and implement a community service project that serves the needs of their particular community. One day 4H is modeled after the Texas A&M University's Big Event, One Day 4-H teaches 4-H members the importance of giving back to their communities based on issues they see are affecting the lifestyles of the citizens. One Day 4-H helps develop the core life skills of communication, responsible citizenship, contribution to group effort, teamwork, self-motivation, problem solving, service learning, organizing and social skills

#### Response:

Planning phase was part of the community clubs and each manager selected youth to assist with the event. The specific objectives of one day 4-H is as follow:

- Provide opportunities for youth to perform community service projects in their individual communities and counties based on their identified needs. In Brooks County it was the food bank as there first priority
- Provide opportunities for participants to learn about social and community issues and develop ways of resolving those issues. Our youth made care boxes and placed them throughout the county offices, schools and La Gloria ISD.
- Give participants opportunities to work in a strong youth-adult partnership. Both parents and youth worked together in planning, coordinating and implementing the event. Youth assisted the 4H members as they collected the food items and distribution of 175 pounds of nonperishable items.

#### Results:

In Brooks County with our “One Day 4H” project our 4H youth and parent volunteers raised 175 pounds of nonperishable foods that did go the food pantry located at the First Baptist Church in Falfurrias. Brooks County 4-H Feeding the Hungry one can at a time.



## Community Economic Development

### **Brooks County Community Resource and Economic Development- 2015**

Developed by Celia Salinas, County Extension Agent-Family & Consumer Sciences—Brooks County

#### **Relevance:**

Provide leadership to local planning groups to help facilitate educational programs and secure resources to address community and economic development needs. Teach individuals and businesses the knowledge and skills needed for building sustainable communities. Develop new community leaders that can effectively lead organizations and communities.

#### **Response:**

In Brooks county several events have been planned, coordinated and implemented through the Brooks county Extension Office. Such events are as follow:

- TCCF for Brooks County was completed on April 7, 2015 process took 3 hours and both agents conducted the event.
- Liaison with the Brooks County Emergency Management team and county office.
- Reviewed and discussed the county Extension office Disaster plan.
- RAPPH Brooks County Coalition Meeting
- Brooks County Fair Validation of Home Economics
- Brooks County Fair Association
- Falfurrias Lions Club President as well as community Service projects with South Texas Literacy

#### **Results:**

In Brooks County the Texas community future forum was complete in the spring. Both agents completed and uploaded the data as required. Agent Gonzalez oversees the Emergency Management shelters in place team as required by the Emergency management team. Also, agent sits as an advisor to the Brooks County Fair Association.

# **Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Brooks County**

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## **Personnel**

Celia Gonzalez , CEA-FCS  
Brooks County Coordinator  
Brooks County 4H Coordinator

Victorino Cantu, CEA-ANR  
Brooks County

Helna Carrera, BLT- Program Assistant  
Brooks County

Nora Salinas, Adm. Assistant  
Brooks County

## **Contact Us**

219 Calixto Mora Ave.  
Falfurrias, Texas 78355  
(361)325-4402  
(361)325-4157  
[Brooks.agrilife.org](http://Brooks.agrilife.org)