

Making a Difference

Starr County Annual Achievement Report (2018) **Elva Yolanda Morado, County Extension Agent- Family Community Health,** **Omar Montemayor, County Extension Agent – AGNR**

Program Planning

The Leadership Advisory Board and program area committee members donated time and effort into the program development process. They showed great interest in the training opportunities we provided for them and they were able to see the impact they were having through their engagement, support and contributions to Extension programming.

The Working on Wellness Coalition provided the leadership for the Healthy South Texas initiative. Members of the Coalition along with resource persons formed smaller planning groups to plan, carry out and evaluate the various events.

The Family Community Health Committee supports the plans and programs for the Better Living for Texans program and Family Life events. Members included school administrators, day care providers, Head Start employees, health care providers, librarians and services agency personnel and clergy.

In Depth Program Implementation

My staff consists of 5-BLT program assistants and one Cooperative Extension Assistant EFNEP who all work on improving the diets and health of families in Starr County.

This included “3” Garden program: Growing and Nourishing Health Communities, 10 gardens & one orchard that harvested 1,210 pounds of produce. Learn Grow Eat Go had 5 schools with gardens with 827 students completing the curriculum, Working on Wellness Gardens two high school and one middle school harvested 625 pounds of produce. In the adult program 318 graduates – completed the Fresh Start to a Healthier You curriculum;

In the Family Life Plan we had 32 child care providers who recorded 256 clock hours.

The Healthy South Texas program had 17 separate events that included:

Dietary Changes:

- *Cooking Well with Diabetes – (16 participated), *Dinner Tonight Healthy Recipes for Healthy Eating 2 events (148 attended), *Learn Grow Eat Go – Harvest Day & Food Show – (618 – attended), *Growing and Nourishing Health Communities (105 Completed the Classes), *Woman’s Health Conference – Making Healthy Food Choices (43 attended)

Increased Physical Activity

- 17 Elementary School logged in 477,680 miles adult teams logged in 8,597 – Total: 486,277 miles
- 69 individuals attended the Kick Off Event and the Celebration Event
- 2 Elementary Schools met the criteria as a Healthy South Texas Recognized School
- 4-H State Health Ambassadors served on the planning committee for the County Relay for Life



Agriculture

An educational ranch field day that focused on sustainable and profitable beef cattle management systems as conducted. The program was scheduled in the Fall by the Starr County Agriculture & Natural Resource Committee and involved 63 local ranchers. This activity was co-sponsored by the local soil and water conservation district, Starr County Farm Bureau and Texas Mexico Border Coalition.

A special program to protect livestock and the rural community, entitled “Starr County Rural Security and Protection Program”, was introduced to Starr County landowners. The local AGNR committee along with other community organizations and public safety departments supported the program. The program would include metal signs to be posted at ranch gates that landowners would register at the local 911 department. The implementation of this program will continue next year when funding is secured to purchase the required metal signs.

4-H & Youth Development

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension hosted the thirteenth 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. A total of 954 4th grade students from 11 Starr County Elementary schools and three school districts participated in this event. Based on evaluations, 96% of all respondents strongly agreed that the students acquired an increased knowledge and appreciation for agriculture. 95% increased their knowledge of where their food comes from. 98% of all respondents (teachers) agreed that they also gained knowledge about the local 4-H and Youth Development different program. Furthermore, 91% agreed to use the provided curriculum and incorporate it in their school educational activities.



After a review of the surveys by the members of the Working on Wellness Coalition and the Family and Community Health Committee they concluded that there were notable behavior changes and adoption of best practices. Evidence of this is the requests for additional health programs for 2019. Due to the success of health programs Starr County has been awarded a CDC grant from the Division of Nutrition; Physical Activity, and Obesity to support future programs in the area of Health and Wellness.