

## 2020 Starr County Annual Report

The Starr County program development framework is made up of various entities: Leadership Advisory Board, Program Area Committees, Working on Wellness Coalition, Family Community Health Committee, 4H Advisory Board, Ag Natural Resource Committee, BLT – Advisory Committee. These groups work collectively to bring working groups, agency representatives together to identify issues, plan and implement programing.

Working on Wellness Environments Coalition leads the program efforts addressing families and communities to take action in establishing healthy habits: Events included = Access to Healthy Food.

- Establishing Farmer’s Markets (10 Vendors – 75 Attended)
- 3 – Markets October, November, December – 2019 – Escobares
- Committee meetings – (5) Oct., Nov., Dec., - 28 attended)
- 4 Markets Explored: Possibilities
- R.T. Barrera, Escobares, City of Rio Grande Youth groups
- Presentation at CDC in Atlanta
- NRCS Grant - \$ 9,49.20 High Tunnel
- Orchard Established 43 fruit trees
- 2020 Walkability – Projects:
- Establish sensors, Design Charrette, Moving Rio Forward



### Health South Texas – Adult

The Working on Wellness Coalition provided leadership to programing that including adding dieting changes & increasing physical activity: 2019 – Heart Health Dec

- 2019 – Cooking Well – Blood Pressure November
- 2019 – Cooking Well – Diabetes December
- 2020 – Walk Across TX – Kick Off – February
- 2020 – Cooking Well with Diabetes Virtual October
- 2020 – Cooking Well with Diabetes Virtual ACE
- 2020 – Virtual Cooking Classes sent



### Healthy South Texas – Youth

In 2020 we had eleven Healthy South Texas Ambassadors who were committed to their roles as Health and Wellness advocates. These projects included \*2019 \*Teaching CPR Hands on to Child Care providers October \* Defensive Driving to Farm Bureau Families – October – Simulator

- \*2020
- Operation Face Masks – April
- Souper Bowl – January
- COVID-19 – Awareness programs – September
- Food Item Donations – October
- Horticulture Support – November
- Blankets for Seniors – December
- In Collaboration with BLT – Program assistants we had 5 Recognized Campuses on WAT & LGEG



## Starr County Ranch and Beef Cattle Production



Despite the wide-spread economic growth in the last decade, Starr County continues to lead with agriculture production. 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 over 30 million dollars followed behind by wildlife with about 10 million dollars.

Increased value of weaned calves continues to be of economic importance to beef cattle producers. This year, local producers continued to participate in a unique information feedback program known as the Rio Grande Valley Bull Gain Test and Heifer Development Program. This program seeks to provide important information that allows producers to select bulls with superior genetic characteristics that would allow them to improve their ranch profitability.

Understanding agriculture market conditions is of great importance to local producers. This year, producers were given the opportunity to participate in a regional Master Marketer Program that was sponsored by Extension Economists. This program involved producers in a series of programs that helped them understand futures pricing and market signals that would help them plan for better economic returns.

The annual Ranchers program was conducted online this year. This event was co-sponsored with producers from the Rio Grande Valley. The program involved over 35 ranchers and focused on topics such as stocker calf management, USDA-CFAP Program, Risk Management Programs and Livestock Fraud Programs which have risen due to increased online purchasing of livestock.

### Starr County 4-H – Making a Difference

The Starr County 4-H Program witnessed its third year with increased enrollment! The enrollment increase is attributed to effective volunteer management and increased 4-H project experiences.

The 4-H Agriculture Product ID participation has increased immensely over the last year. This contest area has allowed local 4-H to participate at every level and many members have won state honors in this contest area.

Another popular area of interest is foods and nutrition. The local program has witnessed a large increase in healthy food preparation in contest such as 4-H Food Shows and Food Challenge. These popular contests have also brought state and national honors to local 4-H members.

### Better Living for Texans Program & Fresh Start to a Healthier You! And LGEG

Better Living for Texans program offers food and nutrition education to SNAP recipients, applicants, and other low-income audiences to help participants increase their consumption and access to fruits and vegetables, be more physically active, improve food security status, and prevent risk factors for chronic disease such as obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. There are **22,069** recipients in Starr County receiving benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (source:<https://.texas.gov/about-hhs/records-statistics/data-statistics/supplemental-nutritional-assistance-program-snap-statistics>)

The BLT programs targeted Senior and youth citizens. Face to Face BLT programs were implemented from October 2019 through February 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I am now working on a multi-county collaboration of educational videos for online and virtual classes.

A Fresh Start to a Healthier You! (all adults); and Growing and Nourishing Healthy Communities Garden Course (all Adults) were the adult programs implemented and Learn, Grow, Eat & Go. A ten session program developed to engage youth (3<sup>rd</sup> graders) and their families in school gardens, vegetable recipe tastings, classroom activities, physical activities, and take-home family stories.

During 2019-2020, **144** adults participated, and **113** adults completed A Fresh Start to a Healthier You Series, a pre- and post – survey was conducted to measure the adoption of healthy lifestyle behaviors after adults completed the A Fresh Start to a Healthier You Series. **26** Adults graduated in Growing and Nourishing Healthy Communities program. A retrospective survey was conducted to **10** participants and results show that a change in behavior after program was completed. We learned that participants now have fruit and vegetables at home almost always. We had a total **176**lbs. of harvested fruit and vegetables in our community gardens.

LGEG school Delia Gonzalez Garcia Elementary completed **236** pre and post surveys and Veterans Memorial Elementary Completed **115** pre and post survey in total **351** LGEG graduates programs were implemented in Schools, Head Starts, Nutrition Centers, Community Centers, Housing Authorities, Public Libraries, and Churches.

4-H Enrollment				
Year	Club Members	School Enrichment	Special Interest Projects	Total Enrollment
2018	217	10,020	230	10,493
2019	269	10,792	4,652	15,971
2020	281	1,189	1,000	2,751