

## WHAT WE DO:

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension is a unique education agency that provides programs, tools, and resources on a local and statewide level that teach people how to improve agriculture and food production, advance health practices, protect the environment, strengthen the economy, and enrich youth. In all 254 counties, County Extension Agents serve families, youth, communities and businesses throughout the state.

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# Horticulture

By: Jennifer Herrera, CEA - Horticulture



## MASTER GARDENERS



Earth Day Event at Los Fresnos Nature Park

Master Gardeners volunteered at Earth Day Events. They provided youth activities and educational information on composting, vegetable gardening and Earth-Kind landscaping. We reached over **150 participants**.



Harlingen Farmers Market



Ask a Master Garden Booth at Spring Plant Sale. Over **400+ participants** in attendance. Composting, Vegetable gardening, Herb gardening presentations were conducted along with children activities.



Master Gardener Plant Sale and Plant Clinic

## EARTH-KIND



Palm Tree Care and Maintenance program and Zoo Tour.

Speaker Chuck Malloy, President of the Palm Society of South Texas provided a Palm Tree Care and Maintenance program and Zoo Palm Tour.



Edible Fleurs Program

Over **25 participants** attended the Edible flowers program. Homeowner learned about the various flowers that grow here and are edible. Participants also sampled different flowers and recipes.

## SMALL ACREAGE



RGV Small Acreage Goat and Poultry program.



**50 participants** attend the Small Acreage Goat and Poultry program. Topics covered included Egg and Boiler production, goat production, management and nutrition.

# COASTAL & MARINE

By: Tony Reisinger, CEA - Coastal & Marine Resources

## GRADUATES

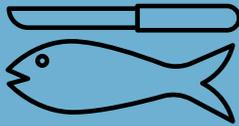
In April, we celebrated **41 new Texas Master Naturalists** with graduation ceremonies for the **South Texas Border** and **Rio Grande Valley Chapters** held at Estero Llano Grande State Park, Weslaco, TX and the new South Texas Ecotourism Center in Laguna Vista, TX respectively. Extending a warm and enthusiastic welcome to our graduates!



South Texas Border Chapter



Rio Grande Valley Chapter



## WEIGHMASTER TRAINING



For two evenings in May, we taught **24 candidates** (10 from the Rio Grande Valley) to become **Fishing Tournament Weighmasters**. The online course covered all aspects, including challenges fishing tournament weighmasters may face when working a tournament. Five experienced weighmasters assisted with the course. **The next online course is planned for September 26th and 27th, 6 - 8 pm.** If you are interested in attending, email Alexis Sabine < [asabine@tamu.edu](mailto:asabine@tamu.edu) >.



## SHRIMP SEASON



The **Texas Shrimp Season Opening** is **scheduled for July 15**, and environmental conditions this past spring give us an idea we should have excellent production! Brown shrimp are our target species and respond well to the prevailing drought conditions along the Texas coast this spring. We are however faced with some tough challenges to the shrimp industry:

- Many of our vessels cannot get crews due to an allotment of too few H2B Visa workers we depend on. Most American citizens avoid these jobs, and we must recruit workers from Central America and Mexico.
- The preceding Gulf of Mexico white shrimp season was so bountiful, buyers have huge supplies in cold storage and prices for the upcoming brown shrimp crop are predicted to be low.
- Diesel fuel costs are almost double what it was last year!
- Imports from India, Ecuador and Indonesia increased 14.5% during the first 4 months of 2022 over last year, further depressing prices.
- These issues combined are a perfect storm with potential of economic disaster in this realm of uncertainty for the fleet this season.



To prepare the Cameron County fleet for the 2022 shrimp season we inspected TEDs on shrimp vessels for compliance in Port Isabel and Brownsville. Pictured: Canh Nguyen, NOAA and Sara Stewart, Texas Sea Grant and LGL.



# Family & Community Health

By: Lilian Mezquida, CEA - Family & Community Health



## STRONG PEOPLE STRONG BODIES



These classes are designed for mid-life and older adults and include progressive resistance training, balance training, and flexibility exercises.



After 6 months the Strong People Group 1 and 2 completed the program.



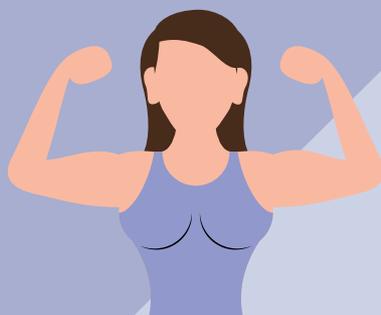
"My Cholesterol and glucose improved"



"Now I can move more, and I can exercise better than before."



Group 3 will complete the program on September 19, 2022.



"I have more strength and energy"

# Agriculture

By: Marco Ponce, CEA - Agriculture



## COTTON AND GRAIN SCOUTING SCHOOL

County Extension Agents and the IPM Agent conducted a cotton and grain sorghum scouting school. This training was focused primarily on educating industry personnel on how to identify pests and disease problems in cotton and grain. Participants were taught to make informed decisions regarding infestation thresholds in relation to the economics of spraying their crops.



## TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE DIRECTOR VISIT

County Extension Administrator planned and coordinated a county visit from Texas A&M AgriLife Director, Dr. Rick Avery. Dr. Avery's visit included participating in a Strong People Strong Body program, visiting with Master Gardener and Master Naturalist Volunteers, Visiting the County Ecotourism Center, and visiting with two staff members of County Commissioners David Garza and Gus Ruiz.



## RGV POULTRY AND GOAT WORKSHOP

County Agents conducted a poultry and goat workshop that was designed for small acreage producers. Topics of discussion included: feeding, nutrition, facilities, health, and disease management. USDA-FSA personnel also discussed loan programs that are being offered to small acreage producers. Participants gained knowledge that would better prepare them for raising poultry for eggs and meat production, as well as raising goats for milk and meat purposes.



## CORN AND GRAIN SORGHUM FIELD DAY

County Agents conducted a grain sorghum and corn field day at Fike Farms. Two CEU's were given out at this program which included an IPM presentation and a Laws and Regulations presentation. Participants then caravanned to the demonstration fields in order to hear discussion for seed representatives and their varieties.



# BETTER LIVING FOR TEXANS

By: Nidia Garcia, Extension Agent - Better Living for Texans  
Esmeralda Avila, Nutrition Education Associate



## Youth Nutrition Programs:



8th Graders from Stillman Middle School

### CHOOSE HEALTHY

Eight grade students from Stillman Middle School in Brownsville participated in the Choose Healthy 4-week nutrition. **Students learned about basic nutrition and wellness principles, MyPlate, living a balanced life, making healthy choices, and healthy beverages.** Each student enrolled in the program received a Choose Healthy booklet along with educational reinforcement items and tasted easy and nutritious food recipes. **126 students completed the 4-session program.**

### COLOR ME HEALTHY FOR SNAP-ED



The **Color Me Healthy for SNAP-ed kindergartener's nutrition program** was implemented in collaboration with Prairie View A&M FCH Agent, Gloria Carter and Better Living for Texans - Extension Agent, Nidia Garcia at Lamar Elementary Dual Language Academy in June 2022. A **total of 66 students completed the program** during the Harlingen CISD Bilingual Summer School. **Students learned about trying and tasting new fruits and vegetables, increasing physical activity, and identifying foods and beverages that are healthy choices for teeth and bones.**



## Growing & Nourishing Healthy Communities

By: Kristina Loredo, Extension Agent - Better Living for Texans



Rodriguez Elementary After School ACE Program students proudly show off their Junior Master Gardener Certificates!



Early Childhood Learn, Grow, Eat and GO! participants taste test Spinach!



Installation of a raised bed garden with parents and staff from Del Castillo Elementary.



### LEARN, GROW, EAT AND GO!

The **Learn, Grow, Eat and Go!** Childhood program graduated **31 2nd graders** from Dr. Rodriguez Elementary School After School ACE program with a small graduation ceremony where parents attended and listened to all the great work they accomplished.



In June we completed the **Early Childhood Learn, Grow, Eat and Go!** with Dr. Rodriguez Elementary School PreKinder and Kinder students where each week they **learned about roots, stems, soil and taste tested carrots, radishes, spinach and celery as well as planted carrots and radishes.**

### GROWING AND NOURISHING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

The **Growing and Nourishing Healthy Communities Program installed Raised Bed Gardens** at Pena Elementary, Burns Elementary and Del Castillo Elementary of Brownsville Independent School District in April.

# Cooperative Extension Family & Community Health

By: Gloria Carter, CEP- Family & Community Health



## CHOOSE HEALTH: FOOD, FUN & FITNESS



**22 youth participants** from Dr. Rodriguez Elementary School's ACE program and an additional **13 youth** from Frank Roberts Elementary (San Benito afterschool program) participated in the **Choose Health: Food, Fun & Fitness program**. The sessions emphasized the importance of drinking fewer sweetened beverages, eating a variety of fruits and vegetables, eating whole grains, making healthier fast-food choices, and staying physically active.



## BALANCED LIVING

Over **20 participants** from Proyecto Juan Diego completed the **Balanced Living health & wellness series**, wherein they learned strategies to reduce stress, manage their time, improve their nutrition, exercise, and sleep better. The sessions were **held over Zoom**.



Balanced  
Living

University of Idaho  
Extension

## A TASTE OF LATIN AMERICAN HERITAGE



Agent Gloria Carter facilitated six sessions from the **A Taste of Latin American Heritage curriculum** in May and June at Cano Health. A "**Taste of Latin American Heritage**" is a plant-based nutrition & cooking program created by **Oldways: Health Through Heritage**. Participants were introduced to Latin American heritage foods' vibrant history, culture, and nutrition. They also participated in cooking demonstrations where they learned how to cook and/or incorporate the foods they learned about into their meal planning. **Over 30 participants completed the program.**

# Expanded Food And Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)

By: Beatriz Loya, Extension Agent- EFNEP



## SUPPORTING TEXAS FAMILIES WITH GREATEST NEED SINCE 1969

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) helps young families and youth with limited resources—those most at risk to suffer from hunger, food insecurity, and the inability to connect with available support systems. EFNEP offers practical lessons in basic nutrition, food preparation, food budget management, and food safety in settings convenient for the participants. Program graduates reflect significant, lasting improvement in eating behaviors and healthy food habits. Texas has a need for EFNEP—2019 data show that 16 percent of Texas families with children under the age of 18 were living below poverty level, compared to 14 percent of U.S. families.

### EFNEP MAKES A REAL DIFFERENCE

#### Adult Program

Using hands-on experiences, EFNEP adult participants complete at least a **six-lesson series** on stretching food dollars, improving eating habits, and practicing food safety principles. As a result of participation in EFNEP, participants will learn to prepare more meals and snacks at home, be more active, control portion size, and have more energy.



Laura Dorado, Nutrition Education Adult Assistant with Sharp Elementary BISD Adult Education graduates.



Laura Dorado, Nutrition Education Adult Assistant with Riverside School BISD Adult Continuing Education graduates.

#### Youth Program

The EFNEP Youth program is directed toward low-income school-age youth. These students participate in a series of fun and educational lessons on good nutrition and food safety as part of summer programs and classroom and after-school activities. Through fun and engaging activities, youth learn to build a healthy plate, set limits on sugar, fats, and sodium, be active, food safety, and to practice healthy behaviors.



Noemi Martinez, EFNEP Nutrition Education Youth Associate teaching kids at Morningside Elementary summer camp about sugar.



Landrum Elementary BISD Adult Continuing Education Taking Session # 3



### EFNEP REACHES DIVERSE AUDIENCES

In Texas, ethnically diverse EFNEP nutrition assistants reach youth and adult groups whose principal language may be English or Spanish.

During the 2nd Quarter of 2022:

- 255 families enrolled in EFNEP
- 113 participants graduated
- 754 youth contacts were made through the EFNEP Youth program
- 440 youth contacts graduated from the EFNEP Youth program
- 100% of EFNEP participants have children under the age of 19
- 79% of families were at or below 100% of federal poverty level
- 81% of families enrolled in one or more food assistance



Life Pregnancy Center in Brownsville taking Session # 3

### VOLUNTEERS STRENGTHEN EFNEP

During the 2nd Quarter of 2022, **22 volunteers** donated **344.5 hours of work to EFNEP in Texas**. At the Texas rate of **\$26.43/hr**, this volunteerism has a minimum dollar value of **\$9,105.14**. Volunteers make a difference in their own communities and contribute to EFNEP's continued success.

### COST - BENEFIT OF EFNEP

Studies have shown that for every **\$1** spent on EFNEP, **\$10** were estimated to be saved in **health care costs** and **\$2** saved in **food costs** by participants. For Texas, this is **\$43 million** in estimated health care cost savings and almost **\$8.6 million** in food costs.

# Cooperative Extension 4-H & Youth Development

By: Stephanie Bowman, CEP- Cooperative Extension- 4-H & Youth Development



PRAIRIE VIEW  
A&M UNIVERSITY

## HEROES 4-HEALTH



Cooperative Extension Program agents collaborated to implement the Heroes 4-Health youth nutrition program series at two locations: Jubilee Academy-Harlingen, TX and Jo Nelson Middle School-Santa Rosa, TX.



A total of **435** youth completed six or more hours of nutrition education sessions from the Choose Health: Food, Fun, and Fitness curriculum, learning about the importance of adopting healthy diet and activity-related habits. Student also observed and tasted various nutritious recipes. Parents and families were also engaged by conducting a virtual family presentation with an opportunity to “cook-along” and taste a healthy recipe. Family newsletters were also sent home after each lesson.

## JUNTOS 4-H



The goal of this 5-year grant program is to target dropout prevention by focusing on college preparation for Latinx youth and their parents in Cameron County. In this first year, Berta Cabaza Middle School has recruited **3** volunteers and **35** youth to implement the Juntos 4-H program. In April, CEP-4H agent, CEP Regional 4H specialist, and BCMS after-school coordinator attended a state Juntos training.

## PARD 4-H CLUB OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

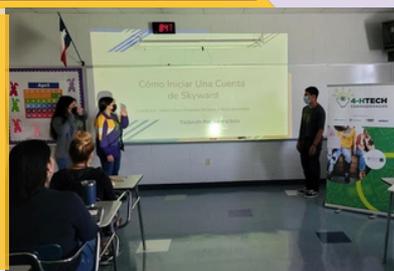


The Brownsville Parks & Recreation Department 4-H Club has been implementing the Project Wild curriculum during their Outdoor Adventures Summer Camp, in collaboration with the CEP-4-H agent. During six sessions conducted this quarter, **25** youth have learned about various outdoor and wildlife concepts such as birding, art in nature, and wildlife habitats. This camp will continue through the end of August.

## TECH CHANGEMAKERS PROGRAM



The Tech Changemakers Program in Cameron County empowers youth to become credentialed 4-H Tech Changemakers by completing virtual modules to build their digital skills and learn how to teach adults.



**12** students at Riverside Middle School and Vernon Middle School were trained during the afterschool programs. The youth from Riverside Middle School conducted six adult workshops and one outreach event during school events such as the District Autism Walk, adult English language courses, and open house. They taught digital skills such as online safety, email communication, and how to use the school’s parent portals, reaching **514** adult participants.

# 4-H & Youth Development

By: Klarissa Cantu, CEA - 4-H & Youth Development



## D12 Livestock Judging Contest

### Results:

#### Intermediate Team 1 - Placed 6th

Abigail Neu  
Keaton Fohn  
Wesley Ponce  
Emma Neu

#### Intermediate Team 2 - Placed 11th

Allyana Echartea  
Sophia Arellano  
Max Echartea



10 members participated

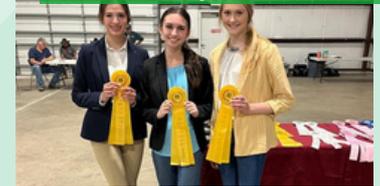


Individual  
Mia Ponce placed 1st place  
overall individually



#### Senior Team 1 - Placed 3rd

Mia Ponce  
Ryleigh Greer  
Avery Fohn



## Cameron County 4-H Events Participated in 2022

Texas 4-H Round Up - June 6th thru 9th, College Station, TX  
21 participants

D12 4-H Leadership Lab - June 14th thru 16th, La Feria, TX  
7 Participants

D12 Election Convention - June 17th, Falfurrias, TX  
3 Attended

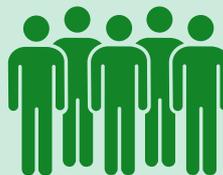
Cameron County 4-H Awards Banquet - June 30th, Santa Rosa, TX  
55 Attended

D12 Rifle Contest - April 23, Benavides, TX  
20 participants



2022-2023 CAMERON COUNTY  
4-H COUNCIL OFFICERS  
CONGRATULATIONS!!

PRESIDENT: NACOM MACHANUS	1ST VICE PRESIDENT: RYLEIGH GREER
2ND VICE PRESIDENT: TATUM HELMER	3RD VICE PRESIDENT: KEATON FOHN
SECRETARY: MORGAN STANKO	TREASURER: TYLER JOHNSON
DEVELOPER: EMMA NEU	PROGAMMENT/OWNER: SOPHIA ARELLANO
PROBATION: AVERY FOHN	HEALTH & SAFETY: PERRISSON VAUGHAN



## D12 4-H Fashion Show & D12 4-H Round Up

### Results: Fashion Show

Alana Cisneros - Construction: Everyday Living - Junior - Top Winner  
Tamara Mauricio - Construction: Everyday Living - Intermediate - Top Winner  
Bailey Helmer - Construction: Everyday Living - Senior - Top Winner  
Carissa Cantu - Construction: Semi-Formal/Formal - Senior - Top Winner  
Hollie Cantu - Construction: Theatre/Costume - Senior - Top Winner

### Results: Natural Fiber

Hollie Cantu - Senior - Top Winner

5 members participated

