



Extension Education in Harrison 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.

Harrison County – Summary of 2014 Educational Contacts

- **Total Educational Sessions Conducted - 246**
- **Total Contacts By Faculty & Volunteers - 3694**
- **Total Educational Contacts By Volunteers - 5265**
- **Total Contacts – 85,417**
- **Marketing Contacts (Newsletters, Web Site and Email) – 12,625**

Beef & Forage Management Plan

Purpose & Background Data:

Beef Quality Assurance and the Texas Beef Quality Assurance program continue to be an important issue in Harrison County. To date, a small amount or number of producers are certified. BQA will be one of the driving forces in continued quality beef production and our producers need to realize this especially as its effect marketing issues.

Beef and forage production is still a major factor and contributor to the total agricultural income in Harrison County, accounting for over 25% of the total agricultural income that is reported each year. The Beef Quality Assurance issue, as it deals with proper beef cattle health management and food safety, have come about in a big way since 2000. More than ever, beef consumers are aware of the issues that effect food safety and providing a wholesome, safe product for their families. Beef producers need to be more aware of this issue as it relates to their product, beef cattle. Harrison County beef producers, under the direction of the Harrison County Cattlemen's Association, provides input into the program planning, implementation and evaluation of educational programs and activities to address beef quality assurance issues, as well as general beef cattle management as a whole. The programs planned will effect not only beef cattle management, but forage production practices as well.

Planning Group – Harrison County Cattleman’s Association Board of Directors

Response

The 2014 Harrison County Pocket Gopher Control Demonstration was held as a field day setting here in Harrison County. The program was sponsored by the Harrison County Cattleman’s Association and featured “hands-on” demonstrations on using the burrow building machine behind a tractor, as well as hand treating the gopher mounds in the pasture. Robbie Keen, with Red River Specialities in Shreveport, LA, was a featured speaker to discuss new products that are on the market that are safer and more effective than the old stand by baits. The demonstration also featured two (2) credit hours toward pesticide applicators pesticide license.



The 2014 East Regional Beef & Forage Conference was held in Rusk County and was a multi-county effort by the following counties; Gregg, Harrison, Panola, Rusk and Upshur Counties. Program speakers for the day included; Stan Bevers, Professor and Extension Economist who discussed cost of developing or raising heifers vs. purchasing them, Dr. Ray Smith, Professor of Plant Breeding at the Overton Center who discussed clover utilization and research updates on clover breeding at the Overton Center. Shane Colston, Business Manager and Certified Crop Advisor with Winfield Solutions presented information on new herbicides for forage producers and Dr. Robert Wells, Livestock Consultant with the Noble Foundation in Ardmore, Oklahoma. Robert discussed manure scoring and how it can be used as a management tool for beef & forage operators in their operation. This was the second year for the conference and will continue to rotate in future years to one of the sponsoring counties. The projected economic benefit for this event was \$6.52 per acre and \$12.54 per head of cattle based on survey results that were conducted at the conclusion of the program.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

The 2014 Harrison County Fall Beef Cattle Marketing Program was held with the Harrison County Cattleman's Association sponsoring the program. Legacy Ag Credit served as a meal sponsor for the evening. Brian Cummins, Retired County Extension Agent from Canton, Texas was the guest speaker and discussed "How to Avoid Discounts" in beef cattle.

The 2014 Reducing Risk In Beef Production Program, was a multi-County effort between Harrison, Panola and Shelby Counties and was held this year in Carthage. The Noon meal was sponsored by Legacy Ag Credit and the following speakers and topics were presented; Managing Financial Risk, was presented by Legacy Ag Credit, Rainfall Index, as well as Cattle Fllor Insurance was presented by Jen Livsey, with Texas Farm Credit. Dr. Vanessa Olson, Extension forage Specialist from Overton, discussed Winter Pasture Planning & Management. Dr. Jason Cleere, Extension Beef Cattle Specialist from College Station discussed "producing the Ideal Calf" for today's market. From the survey results at the conclusion of the program, the projected economic benefit per acre was \$11.07.

The 2014 Annual Meeting of the Harrison County Cattleman's Association was held in the Harrison County Extension office. The event is sponsored each year by the local cattleman's association and the featured speaker for the evening was Robert Lisman, Chief Appraier with the Harrison County Appraisal District here in Marshall. Robert discussed the major points in applying for an agricultural tax exemption in the county and the steps that a landowner needs to take. The awarding of the "Bill Davis" Award was also made to a well deserving beef & forage producer in the county as well as membership drive for 2015. The evening meal was sponsored by the Harrison County Cattleman's Association.



The Beef & Forage Weekly Electronic Newsletter - The Agricultural Email list in the county continues to grow monthly, as new producers ask to be added to the list. The email list serves several purposes, mainly to send out educational program reminders on a weekly basis, as well as the weekly Price Trends Cattle Price Report that is prepared weekly by Dr. Jason Banta, Extension Beef Cattle Specialist in Overton.

Results

During the 2014 year, two major beef and forage educational programs were evaluated using the "East Region" survey tools that are located on-line. This two events were the East Region Forage Conference and the Reducing Risk In Beef Production program, both of which were multi-county educational efforts.

East Region Forage Conference

Average head of cattle managed from the participants - 112 head
Average number of acres managed from participants - 441
Total anticipated economic benefit per acre - \$6.52
Total anticipated economic benefit per head - \$12.54

Reducing Risk In Beef Cattle

Average number of acres managed from participants - 509
Total anticipated economic benefit per acre - \$11.07

2014 Beef & Forage Program Notes...

Office Contacts - 254

On-Site Contacts - 338

Phone Contacts - 329

Contacts by Extension Volunteers - 234

Email Contacts - 22,400

Acknowledgments

The Harrison County Cattleman's Association board of Directors offers great insight into the educational programs and activities in the county, thanks for their dedication and service to the educational needs of the county as a whole. Also to the farm supply stores and various vendors in the area for supporting Extension education. To Legacy Ag Credit for sponsoring many of the meals and educational content that was offered in 2014.

2014 Harrison Health & Wellness

Relevance

Nearly two out of three (64.5%) of U.S. adults are overweight or obese. The percentage of U.S. adults classified as obese doubled between 1980 and 2000 from 15% to 30%. Adult overweight and obese individuals are at increased risk for a variety of healthcare issues. Of the 23.6 million children and adults in the United States, or 7.8% of the population, who have diabetes, 17.9 million have been diagnosed with diabetes. Unfortunately, 5.7 million people (or nearly one quarter) are unaware that they have the disease. In Harrison County, the rate of adult obesity is 28.9%, the rate of youth obesity is 14.7% and the rate of adult diabetes is 11.7%.

Response

The Harrison Family & Consumer Sciences Committee discussed the obesity and diabetes epidemic in Harrison County. Everyone agreed to address the emerging issue by implementing Step Up & Scale Down and Cooking Well with Diabetes in Spring 2014. Step Up & Scale Down is a 12 week program designed to support people who want to live healthier lifestyles. The program uses weekly motivation, support, and accountability to assist people in meeting their goals. Cooking Well with Diabetes is a four week program designed to show individuals how to prepare tasty diabetic meals and snack.

Results

Step Up & Scale Down

23 adults completed the series

"I have learned to watch my sodium intake. I exercise more by walking."

"I did not realize how beneficial it is to plan my meals in advance."

"I have learned to snack on jicama and beets."

Evaluation of the program was conducted using a pre, post, and 30-day follow-up survey. This allowed us to assess intent to implement targeted weight management behaviors as well as the extent to which the behaviors were adopted. All 23 completed the follow-up survey. The following results were calculated by Dr. Jenna Anding and her team:

Participant characteristics

Overall, participants were mainly female (n=22; 96%) and included both Black (n=13; 57%) and White (n=10; 44%). Starting weight was reported for 3 of the 23 participants. Most (74%) indicated they had tried to lose weight in the past using a variety of methods.

Change in targeted behaviors

Table 1 shows the extent to which targeted diet and physical activity behaviors were being followed at the beginning of the program, immediately after the program ended, and then approximately one month later

Table 1. Change in targeted behaviors

Behavior	At the beginning of SUSD Number (%)	Immediately after SUSD ended Number (%)	One month after SUSD ended Number (%)
Eat breakfast 5-7 days a week	11 (48)	8 (35)	7 (30)
TV/video viewing 2 hours per day or less	10 (44)	11 (50)	10 (43)
Use calorie information at fast food restaurants “always or most of the time”	8 (35)	9 (39)	9 (39)
Plans meals and snacks “always”	0	5 (22)	5 (22)
Fills 1/2 of lunch and dinner plates with fruits and vegetables	6 (26)	10 (44)	10 (44)

As noted in Table 1, the number of participants who were eating breakfast 5 or more days a week at the end of the program dropped slightly compared to entry. The number who used calorie information at fast food restaurants remained stable (follow-up post compared to pre). More participants were filling 1/2 of their plates with fruits and vegetables (post and follow-up compared to pre). The percentage who watched television or videos for 2 hours or less each day increased at the end of the program but dropped back to the original number at follow-up.

Physical activity also trended upwards during the program. Initially, participants reported being physically active for 30 minutes or longer an average of 3.4 days per week. At the end of the 12-week program, that number had significantly ($p < .001$) risen to an average of 4.9 days, a number sustained 30 days later (follow-up survey).

Table 2. Perceptions about health

Behavior	Beginning of SUSD Average number	Immediately after SUSD ended Average number	One month after SUSD ended Average number
Out of the past 30 days, the number of days that one's physical health was not good.	4.2 ± 7.8 ^a	3.1 ± 6.2 ^a	3.2 ± 6.4 ^a
Out of the past 30 days, the number of days that one's mental health was not good.	3.1 ± 6.5 ^a	3.3 ± 3.7 ^a	2.3 ± 3.8 ^a
Out of the past 30 days, the number of days that poor health kept one from doing usual activities.	2.1 ± 4.3 ^a	1.0 ± 1.4 ^a	2.4 ± 6.4 ^a

Overall, perceptions about participant's own health varied. Initially, participants reported that out of the past 30 days, their physical health was not good for nearly 4.2 days. That average dropped slightly immediately after the program ended and held steady 30 days later. Mean number of days that self-perceived mental was not good was 3.1 when the program began, was 3.3 immediately after the program ended and remained at 2.3 thirty days later (no significant differences). There was no change in the number of days that poor health (physical or mental) prevented a participant from doing usual activities.

Change in BMI

Change in BMI could not be measured as the sample size was too small (n=3).

Summary

Weight loss is a long and challenging process for most adults. While participants who completed the *Step Up and Scale Down* program did not lose a significant amount of weight overall, there was evidence of the adoption of several habits (including eating

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more fruits and vegetables, eating breakfast, and increasing physical activity) that may lead to more positive health benefits down the road.

Cooking Well with Diabetes

100% (6 out of 6) learned how to make food taste sweeter by adding vanilla

83% (5 out of 6) learned how to flavor food without increasing sodium content

66% (4 out of 6) learned how to modify recipes to lower sodium intake

“I like the plate method better than counting carbohydrates.”

“I did not I could use other herbs and spices to season my food.”

“I now drink unsweet tea.”

Acknowledgements

A special thank you goes to the Harrison Family & Consumer Sciences for recognizing and willing to address the obesity epidemic. The program would not have been a success if the committee members did not assist with planning, implementing and interpreting the program. A huge thank you goes to Dr. Jenna Anding her team for compiling the results.

Future Plans

The Harrison Family & Consumer Sciences plans to continue to address the obesity epidemic in Harrison County through Step Up & Scale Down and other health and wellness programs.



Local Physical Fitness expert explains the Importance of exercise



Students prepare tasty Broccoli Raisin Salad in Cooking Well with Diabetes class

2014 Money Smart in Harrison County

Relevance

The recent economic downturn and resulting recession have heightened consumer awareness of the need for financial literacy education. Steady rates of unemployment, foreclosures, and credit delinquencies have contributed to increased interest among consumers in budgeting, saving and cutting back spending.

Research studies indicate that people of all ages, incomes, and education levels lack the basic financial knowledge and skills to ensure long-term stability for themselves and their families. One result of this limited financial knowledge and skill is the estimated 73 million Americans classified as 'unbanked' or 'underbanked.' The Corporation for Enterprise Development reports almost 51% of Texans do not have a savings account; 20% of Texans have zero net worth; Texans have the lowest credit scores in the nation and Texas ranks 44th in the rate of homeownership. Results of the 2013 FINRA Financial Capability Study indicate that 19% of Texans participating in the study reported spending more than their income; 30% reported having past due medical bills; 57% lack an emergency fund that would cover up to 3 months of expenses; and 39% reported using a non-bank lending product (e.g. payday loans) in the past 5 years.

Response

The Harrison Family & Consumer Sciences Committee discussed the need for educating Harrison County citizens on financial management. The Harrison Family & Consumer Sciences Committee joined forces with the District 5 Texas Extension Association Family & Consumer Sciences-North Group to provide a financial management class to college students. A committee member contacted East Texas Baptist University and the University agreed to host the event. SIG Insurance Company was contacted and agreed to sponsor the event. One of the SIG Insurance agents was the guest speaker. In the Spring, the Harrison Family & Consumer Sciences Committee partnered with Praise Temple of Marshall Full Gospel Baptist Church to offer a five week **Money Smart** financial management series to the general public. In the Fall, the Harrison Family & Consumer Sciences Committee, Marshall Housing Authority, Marshall Inter-Agency, State Farm Insurance and Bancorp South sponsored a homeowner pre-qualification seminar.

Results

The following for the results at different locations:

East Texas Baptist University

30 college students attended the seminar

“I would like more information on planning a 401k”

“Thank you for teaching me about the various retirement options”

“I did not realize how important life insurance is”

Praise Temple of Marshall Full Gospel Baptist Church

27 adults completed the 5 week ***Money Smart*** series

93% (25 out of 27) learn the steps for setting financial goals

81% (22 out of 27) learn why it is important to be wary of rent-to-own, pay day loans, and tax time loans

74% (20 out of 27) is currently using a budget or spending plan

“Learning about the cost of pay day loans was the most helpful part of this class.”

“I plan to pay all of my monthly bills on time.”

“I plan to decrease beauty shop appointments and eating out.”

The following were results were compiled by Dr. Joyce Cavanagh, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Associate Professor and Extension Specialist-Family Economic and her team:

-Evaluation documents were received from 27 participants. 14 participants completed both pre and post workshop surveys as well as end of session evaluations for sessions they attended. Five participants indicated they used a spending plan prior to attending the classes. Of the 9 indicating they did not use a spending plan, 3 responded that at the end of the classes, they were currently using a spending plan. This is a significant result that if continued, can help these participants improve their financial situations over the long-term.

-Three participants improved the frequency with which they pay bills on time. One participant reported at the beginning of classes that they ‘Usually’ paid their bills on time; at the end of the classes they now report ‘Always.’ Another participant reported ‘Sometimes’ paying on time and now reports ‘Always.’ Another participant who reported ‘Almost never’ paying on time reports improving to ‘Usually’ paying on time.

-Few changes in how these participants paid their bills were reported, however, one participant reported using credit cards to pay bills at the beginning of the course. At the end of the course she reported using her checking account and online banking and no longer reported using the credit card for bill payment. Also, one of two participants

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reporting using check cashing stores at the beginning of the classes reported no longer using them at the end.

-The majority of the group indicated their monthly household income was less than \$1500. It is not surprising that most participants report saving money never or as often as they can with no improvement over the course of the classes. One interesting observation was that all of the participants had at least completed high school with 8 participants indicating they held a bachelors or associates degree. 4 of those with a bachelor's degree reported household income at less than \$1000. This group may benefit from programs that help them identify workforce opportunities and job search skills.

-All participants in the classes increased their knowledge of the concepts taught as shown in the following table (numbers in parentheses are the maximum possible score).

Module Title	Mean Before	Mean After
Borrowing Basics	16.4 (28)	24.5 (28)
Money Matters	11.67 (20)	17.3 (20)
Pay Yourself First	17.3 (24)	22.5(24)

Housing Authority

9 adults attend the homeowners' prequalification seminar

"I did not realize it was this easy to own a home."

"I did not know what a good credit score was until today."

"I learned what guidelines lenders use to make loan decisions."

Acknowledgements:

A big thank you goes to the Harrison Family & Consumer Sciences Committee for their willingness to address the financial needs of the Harrison County citizens. The committee was very instrumental in planning, implementing and interpreting. The program would not have been a success without the District 5 Texas Extension Association Family & Consumer Sciences-North group and their creative ideas. A big thank you goes to East Texas Baptist University, Praise Temple of Marshall Full Gospel Baptist Church, and Marshall Housing Authority for providing a location for the events. A big thank you goes to SIG Insurance Company making a huge financial contribution and providing a speaker. Another big thank you goes to State Farm Insurance for providing door prizes. A special big thank you goes to Dr. Joyce Cavanagh, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Associate Professor and Extension Specialist-Family Economic and her team.

Future Program Efforts:

In 2015, the Harrison Family & Consumer Sciences Committee plans continue their partnership with Marshall Housing Authority, Bancorp South and Marshall Inter-Agency to offer homeowners prequalification seminars.



SIG Insurance Agent discusses insurance Benefits at East Texas Baptist University



Bancorp South Bank President discusses loans at Praise Temple of Marshall

2014 Harrison Better Living for Texans

Relevance

11% of Harrison County population is food stamp recipients and 20,737 county residents are potentially eligible at 185% or lower of the Federal Poverty Income Level. Research suggests that limited resource individuals consume diets that are not in agreement with current dietary recommendations (i.e. Dietary Guidelines and Food Guide), potentially increasing their risk for developing chronic disease. Additionally, limited resource audiences are at a higher risk for food insecurity and hunger, which also impacts health.

Response

The Harrison Family and Consumer Sciences committee decided to continue to offer the Better Living for Texans program in Harrison County. The goals for the BLT program include: 1. Clients will improve dietary quality and engage more often in physical activity. 2. Clients will adopt one or more food resource management skills such as meal planning, comparison shopping, or shopping from a list. 3. Clients will indicate a reduction in out-of-pocket food expenses. 4. Clients will improve in one or more food safety practices such as proper hand washing, proper storage of food and proper thawing of food.

Results

Harrison County exceed their goal of reaching 60 participants in 15 one shot programs in 315 hours by 124%.

Acknowledgements

A big thank you goes to the Harrison Family and Consumer Sciences committee for their continued support of the BLT program. This program would not have been a success with the assistance of the Harrison County Ag/NR agent and support staff.



2014 Harrison Extension Education Association

Relevance

The Texas Extension Education Association was organized in 1926 as a way to strengthen and enrich families through educational programs, leadership development and community service by volunteer members of the Association, in coordination with Texas AgriLife Extension TEEA functions exclusively for charitable, educational and scientific purposes as a 501c3 organization.

Response

The Harrison Extension Education Association consists of one club: Sabine EEA Club. There are twenty-four members. They have continued to be active in the community.

Results

These individuals have donated a total of 1500 volunteer hours in programs and community activities. They raised over \$2000 during the Annual Cornbread & Bean Luncheon and an additional \$800. The monies were used for educational programs, conventions, training meetings and scholarships. They collected and donated food items to the local food pantry. They visited nursing homes and hospitals. Financial contributions were made to the Harrison County Literacy Fund, Boys & Girls Club of Big Pines and the Harrison County 4H scholarship fund. Donated auction items and money to the district and state for 4H scholarships. Donated funds to the Coins for Friendship to help support the state 4H Cente4r in Brownwood, TX.



2014 Harrison Quilt Study Group

Relevance

Quilting is becoming a lost art. Several female adults requested to start a quilt study group in 2004. In 2011, the membership of the quilt study group began to decline.

Response

Due to low enrollment, quilt study group members and the Harrison Family and Consumer Sciences Committee decided to have a four week beginners' quilt class in 2011. Each year the attendance has increased.

Results

The Quilt Study Group met each first and third Tuesday of each month to learn quilting techniques, fabric selection and different quilting patterns. They showed their finished projects at Quilt Shows and in their study group. This year members made and donated 20 quilts to Court Appointed Special Advocated for children (CASA) and Wounded Warriors.



2014 Multi-County Dinner Tonight

Relevance

The Dinner Tonight weekly video demonstration program was created by a team of agents interested in expanding outreach opportunities through technology. Each Monday, a video demonstration, featuring a quick and healthy recipe is released for the public to view. The Dinner Tonight Healthy Cooking Schools are a method of expanding the original dinner Tonight program and offering a face to face educational method to teach families about meal planning and healthy food preparation. While there are many groups who conduct cooking schools, the Dinner Tonight healthy cooking school has a unique emphasis. The demonstration recipes are cost effective, easy to prepare and fit into a healthy meal plan. The goals of the cooking school are to promote family mealtime while teaching families healthy meal planning and food preparation techniques. The vision for the Dinner Tonight healthy cooking school is to create a high-visibility, large-scale event that is fun and informative for participants.

Response

Harrison, Gregg, Panola, Rusk, Smith, Upshur and Wood Counties Family and Consumer Sciences Agents as well as volunteers planned and implemented a Dinner Tonight Cooking School in Smith County at the Tyler Rose Garden for approximately 50 adults.

Results

As a result of the planning and marketing efforts 55 adults attended the Dinner Tonight Healthy Cooking School. Agents demonstrated various menu ideas as well as table scape techniques. Chef Christian Chavanne, Tyler's Chef from France presented one food demonstration for Vegetable Tacos and also gave hints and tips for the kitchen.

Comments from the Dinner Tonight! Healthy Cooking School:

- "This was the best Dinner Tonight I have been to!"
- "Thanks so much for doing this in our town, we don't get to do this often. It was a great night out and you ladies did a wonderful job. Loved the dessert tasting."
- "Great tips given by all presenters. Liked that you had a Chef as a presenter."

"When you do this again, please have more tastings available, especially from what is cooked."

Acknowledgements

A huge thank you goes to Chef Christian Chavanne for volunteering his time and expertise. This this event would not have a success without the master wellness

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volunteers and especially, the Harrison County Family & Consumer Sciences committee. Last but not least, a special thank you goes to the all the Family & Consumer Sciences agents in this cluster who worked together so diligently.



2014 Multi-County Child Care Conference

Relevance

The demand for quality child care continues to rise as children are spending more time in contexts outside of the family. Over 60 percent of children from birth through age 6 (not yet in kindergarten) receive some form of child care on a regular basis from persons other than their parents (Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 2010).

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) estimates that there are over 100,000 child care providers caring for more than 760,000 children under the age of 13 in licensed or regulated child care facilities in the state of Texas. According to TWC, there are over 23,000 licensed or regulated child care facilities (child care centers, family day care). Additionally, child care is the 16th largest industry in the state, generating over 145,000 jobs and \$2.3 billion in wages for Texans.

With the demand for child care at an all-time high, researchers and policy makers have become increasingly concerned with the quality and accessibility of child care. Large-scale studies conducted across the U.S. have found that the quality of care on the national level tends to be poor to mediocre. At the same time, findings from longitudinal research have clearly established the fact that quality does matter when it comes to child care. Children who receive high-quality care (e.g., warm sensitive caregiving, well-

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educated child care staff, low child-to-adult ratios, small group size) develop better language, math, and social skills; exhibit fewer behavior problems; and tend to be better prepared for entrance into school (NICHD, 2006).

Having a well-trained child care workforce is essential to providing the high quality child care that children need to reach their developmental potential. Licensed and registered child care providers are mandated by the state of Texas to obtain a set amount of training (i.e., clock hours) in a variety of areas associated with the care of children. The child care provider training conference provides an avenue to reach early childhood educators with research-based information that will enable them to obtain state-mandated clock hour credits and continuing education units (CEUs), and enhance their knowledge and skills in the child care profession.

Response

Family & Consumer Sciences agents in Gregg, Harrison, Panola, Rusk, Smith, Upshur and Wood counties hosted the Annual Piney Woods Child Care Conference in Longview, TX at the Gregg County Extension Office.

Results

72 child care providers and directors who provide care for **894** children enrolled in **15** child care centers or family day homes. Sixty-seven participants completed a written evaluation of the conference (see Table 1 for participant characteristics). A total of **504** clock hours of training were provided to child care professionals seeking to meet state mandated training requirements established by the state of Texas.

Table 1. Child Care Provider Conference Outcomes (N = 67)* Item	Percent in Agreement*	Percent not in Agreement*
Acquisition of New Information		
Learned new information	100.0%	0.0%
Will utilize new information to strengthen program	100.0%	0.0%
Intent to Use Information		
Will use now	100.0%	0.0%
Will use in future	100.0%	0.0%
Training's Influence on Provider/Program Quality		

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Will be more effective provider	100.0%	0.0%
Will lead to improvements in quality of care offered	100.0%	0.0%
Relevancy of Training		
Helped provider obtain required clock hours	100.0%	0.0%
Topics relevant to daily work	100.0%	0.0%
Other		
Training cost-effective	98.5%	1.5%
Plan to attend another Extension conference	97.0%	1.5%

*Percentages do not equal 100% due to missing cases

Table 2. Perceptions of Quality Compared to Other Non-Extension Trainings (N = 67)*

Item*	Much Worse	Worse	Same	Better	Much Better
Compared to other child care trainings you have attended (not provided by Extension), how would you rate the quality of today's training?	0.0%	1.5%	43.3%	32.8%	11.9%

*Percentages do not equal 100% due to missing cases

As can be seen in the tables above, child care providers found the training to be very beneficial. Over 95 percent of participants acquired new information from the conference, considered the training to be very relevant to the work they do, plan to utilize the information gained at the conference to improve their programs, and consider

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themselves better equipped to work with the children in their care. Moreover, **45%** of providers rated the training “Better” or “Much Better” compared to other trainings they have attended that were not conducted by Extension.

Acknowledgements

A huge thank you goes to Dr Stephen Green and his team for compiling the evaluation results. A special thanks goes to the agents in this cluster who worked to together to provide such a success child care conference.

Future Plans

In 2015, the Family & Consumer Sciences agents plan to implement a Child Care Conference in Panola County.



Junior Master Gardener Program Plan (After School Program - Marshall ISD)

Relevance

The following three goals are being addressed with this outcome plan are:

1. Understanding of Natural Sciences, Life Sciences, Interest and Academic Achievement in Science

Texas schools are under many demands to perform well on the standardized TAKS test. Since the introduction of the test, students have been tested at various grade levels for achievement of skills in math, language arts, and writing. As a result of Senate Bill 103 and the introduction of Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), students are now tested on their ability to demonstrate an physical sciences, and earth sciences. School districts are anxious to find science curriculum that will help students master the knowledge and skills required by the state mandated standards.

2. Environmental Stewardship

Landscape irrigation in Texas accounts for up to 40-60% of the total residential water use during peak summer months. Water conservation is a critically important issue for residents throughout the state of Texas. Moreover, proper use of fertilizers and chemicals wastes is important to the long term health and safety of residents in the county. Finally, programs that promote reduction of landscape wastes and recycling will assist in maintaining land fill availability. This issue is critically important in preserving and protecting our valuable natural resources.

3. Healthy and Active Lifestyles Through Improved Diet and Physical Activity

Experts continue to promote healthy diets and life styles including exercise, reduced fat diets, and increased consumption of fruits and vegetables as an important factor in maintaining long-term human health. Unfortunately, research studies indicate that a high percentage of youths do not eat healthy diets and exercise regularly, which has resulted in increased childhood obesity and poor nutritional eating habits. This issue is critically important to improving the health and well being of the children of Texas.

4. Leadership Development and Community Service

Juvenile crime, school violence, and in detrimental youth activities including drug/alcohol abuse, bullying, coupled with poor youth self esteem have been manifested in an increase of youth violence and crimes.

A comprehensive prevention strategy that will engage youth in positive, worthwhile activities at an early age that foster leadership development, positive success and reinforcement, positive peer and adult role models, and engage youth in service learning projects are critical to improving youth quality in local communities...

Response

The purpose of this program was to make opportunities available to Carver Elementary School youth in the Marshall ISD school system in plant science and horticultural education in general. Another purpose, which is two fold, is to also give Harrison County Master Gardener Association members a chance to present and teach horticultural information to the school's 4th graders.

Our class on 28 May was the last for this year. We started on January 22nd with the "Hamburger Plant" in Chapter 1. The main themes of Chapter 1 are "Importance and Uses of Plants", "Plant Classification", "Plant Parts", "Plant Needs", "Plant Growth" "Plant Processes" and "Propagation". Some of the activities in this chapter include "Know and Show Sombrero", "Leaf-and Seed-Sort Information Chart", "Plant Parts We Eat", "P.L.A.N.T. Needs", "Plant People", "Oxygen Factory", "Paper Pot", and "Propagation Demonstration".

The focus of Chapter 2 is "Soils and Water" and the major themes are "Soil Color, Texture and Structure", "Nutrients", "Soil Improvement", "Water Cycle and You", and "Water Movement". To illustrate these themes we did "Touchy Feely", "Mud Pies", "Nutrient Variable", "Out of the Spout" and "Where Did It Go?".

In addition, we did several plantings with the students and they took the plants home to try and tend them for themselves. Some indicated that their plants were still doing well.

Results

The last class was spent reviewing what they had learned over the period from January through May. For the most part, they had a good grasp of what had been presented to them. We gave them a ten-question review, and with a little assistance with big words such as "chlorophyll", they all did very well.

Some pluses and minuses we experienced: The whole ACE (Federal After School Funded) program was much more organized and smoothly run under the direction of Polete Buard. Having persons in the room responsible for the discipline aspect was a plus this year, though for the most part, the children were well behaved and interested in the lessons. On the negative side, this is an after school activity and frequently the parents would come for their children before the lesson was over. However, having said that, a dedicated room was a real plus. All in all, the children seemed to enjoy the classes and had a lot of fun.

A post evaluation was conducted by the Master Gardener volunteers that coordinated and presented the program throughout the school year. The survey consisted of ten questions, out of thirteen children in the after-school program, seven were returned, the average score on the post test was 98.5% right answers to questions dealing with subject matter that was presented during the program series.

Acknowledgments

The Harrison County Master Gardener Association provides very valuable input into planning, implementing and evaluation of the Junior Master Gardener horticultural program that was presented at Carver Elementary School in Marshall Texas, we are fortunate to have such a dedicated group of volunteers in the county.

4-H Youth Livestock Project Plan

Purpose & Background Data:

The goal of this plan is to provide opportunities for youth to be involved in 4-H Livestock related projects and exhibit personal character attributes and acceptable livestock management practices associated with these projects.

Also, provide training opportunities for 4-H volunteer leaders to gain knowledge through livestock mentoring programs that may be offered across the region and/or state.

Harrison County is in a re-building stage in our 4-H livestock project area, our project participation is shifting from a traditional horse project county, to a general livestock project type county with the main focus being on the swine project.

In 2012, Harrison County had it's first volunteer leader attend and complete the new state-wide 4-H Mentor Training program. This years volunteer from the county, Rex French, completed his first year as a volunteer Livestock Mentor and 2013 was a great year for the trail program.

Most of the programs and activities that were held in the county in 2013 consisted of project validations for county and state project validations held at different time throughout the year, as well as one on one project visits from January through the month of March of 2013.

Results:

Through the Harrison County Livestock Mentor program which was started in 2013, we have seen our livestock project participation grow with the number of youth participating in our local county show through the following programs and activities:

The 2014 Rabbit Project Management Workshop was held here in the local Extension office prior to our county show, Farm City Week. Local rabbit breeder and 4-H leader Jackie Degner presented basic information to local 4-H and FFA students on rabbit care and management.

2014 Livestock Mentor visits continue to be made, mainly starting in January and running through March. Using the "Livestock Project Trailer" has been a great help as we use this to carry livestock scales with us to make project visits throughout the county.

2014 State Livestock Project Validations continue to be held with State Steer, State Fair of Texas Lamb & Goat Validation in June and the new State Heifer Validation program that was started in November.

The Quality Counts program that teaches youth about making right decisions and building character in the livestock projects was also presented on a special request basis via the internet.



2014 Harrison Let's Go, Let's Grow

Relevance

The Let's Go, Let's Grow initiative is an exciting opportunity to increase 4-H club enrollment. This plan is meant to be a marketing and promotion plan for 4-H, as well as a strategic initiative to offer NEW projects and activities to NEW target audiences. The result will be recruitment of NEW 4-H members and volunteer leaders. The 4-H and Youth Advisory board will direct the Let's Go, Let's Grow initiative. They should meet a minimum of three times per year and support program outreach and expansion. In Harrison County, the 4H enrollment took a serious down fall after the 4H agent position was eliminated.

Response

The Harrison 4H Advisory Board decided something new and different need to be done to attract youth to the 4H program. The Grow Green Marshall Board was formed including local citizens, a Master Gardener and a city councilman who is a former Harrison 4H member.

Results

As a result of the Grow Green Marshall Board efforts, the Grow Green Marshall 4H club was formed and the Harrison County 4H enrollment increased by 142%. A local church donated a lot for the youth garden and local citizens volunteered their time to assist with cleaning the ground, planting seeds and teaching basic gardening tips. Also, the Marshall Beekeeping Association assisted with forming the Harrison 4H Beekeeping Spin Club. Approximately six youth joined and learned the basics of beekeeping and participated in the Beekeeping Essay Contest.

Acknowledgements

A huge thank you goes to the Harrison 4H Advisory Board, Harrison Beekeeping Association and Grow Green Marshall Board and the various volunteers for donating their time and efforts for making the program a success.

Future Plans

The Grow Green Marshall Board, Harrison 4H Beekeeping Association and the Harrison 4H Advisory Board plans to continue to work together to increase the enrollment in Harrison County.



Community Economic Development

Fire Ant Festival

Fire Ant Festival is one of the primary festivals held in Marshall Annually. The purpose of the event is to celebrate how Harrison County tries to manage fire ants and boost the economy. Each year the Extension Office assist with one of the contest while marketing the Extension program. Members of the Harrison County 4-H program also set up an informational booth each year to help promote and market the local 4-H program.

Wonderland of Lights

Wonderland of Lights is another major festival held in Marshall Annually. People from across the country come to Marshall, TX to view the Christmas lights. Visitors can also enjoy an outdoor skating rink and tour immaculate homes with Christmas decor.

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