



Helping Texans *Better Their Lives*

Extension Education in Wharton County 2020

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and its partners have 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. Among

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE *Providing Solutions*

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.

Wharton County – Summary of 2019 Educational Contacts

WHARTON COUNTY 4-H CONTACTS

4-H Members	386
4-H Volunteers	110
4-H Clubs	18
Curriculum Enrichment Participants	699
4-H Special Interest Clubs	1
4-H County Clubs	2

CONTACTS AT EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

Total Contacts	73,618
Educational Events	15,203
Other Contacts	58,415

OTHER CONTACTS

All Contacts	58,415
Individual Contacts – Direct	3,536
Individual Contacts – Indirect	14,131
Newsletters	30,223
Educational Resources	1,629
Individual Contacts – Volunteer	7,554

MEDIA CONTACTS

25 News Releases with a distribution reaching 39,813 contacts
200 Social Media Posts with 9,873 Followers

VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT

Total Volunteers	470
Hours Contributed	196

Agriculture and Natural Resources

2020 Upper Gulf Coast Rice Production Education Summary

Developed by:

Corrie Bowen, County Extension Agent – Agriculture & Natural Resources, Wharton County
Aaron Sumrall, County Extension Agent – Agriculture & Natural Resources, Matagorda County
Laramie, Naumann, County Extension Agent – Agriculture & Natural Resources, Colorado County
Michael Hiller, County Extension Agent – Agriculture and Natural Resources, Jackson County

Relevance

Rice has been a mainstay of the Colorado, Matagorda, Jackson, and Wharton County's economies since the early 1900's. 53% of Texas' 154,052 acre rice industry in 2019 is found in this four-county area. Rice acreage in Texas continues to decline, dropping 18%, from 187,684 acres in 2018. The decline in rice acreage and a 42% reduction in farm income (as identified in the 2017 Census of Agriculture) is placing financial stress on both the infrastructure and the farming community. The 2015 and 2019 Texas Community Futures Forum identified that crop producers will need to keep abreast of marketing opportunities, precision agriculture practices, and variety/seed technology developments to remain competitive in the industry. Additionally, producers will seek income from all available USDA programs to sustain the challenges brought about by trade negotiations with foreign trade partners. To achieve and maintain the economic viability of rice producers, we must provide business profitability and risk management-based programs in response to the educational needs of those in the region. The Western Rice Belt program area committee for Matagorda, Wharton, Jackson and Colorado Counties reflects this educational need.

Response

County Extension Agents with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension in Wharton, Matagorda, Jackson, and Colorado come together each year to provide the Western Rice Belt Conference and the Eagle Lake Rice Research Field Day. The conference is comprised of a Producers Seminar, along with a Consumers Seminar, held each year on the third Wednesday of January. All stages of the event from planning to evaluation are directed by two, multi-county Western Rice Belt Conference planning committees – one for the producers' section and one for the consumer section. Committees are made up of County Extension Agents, equipment dealers, rice warehouse managers, rice producers, U.S. Rice Producers Association, USA Rice, Inc., wives of rice farmers, and Extension Education Association (EEA) members. The committee builds the agenda each year to address current production and consumer issues in the rice industry with guest speakers from USA Rice, U.S. Rice Producers, Texas A&M AgriLife Agriculture and Food Policy Center, Texas Department of Agriculture, Texas A&M AgriLife Research, and more.

The Western Rice Belt Conference planning committee brought forth results of a November 19, 2019 round table discussion of conservation programs for working ag lands for rice producers to the January 15, 2020 Rice Conference. These results were used to better educate rice producers of conservations programs available to rice producers. The local USDA-NRCS and Soil and Water Conservation District conducted a local working group meeting at the conclusion of the Rice Conference on January 20, 2020. NRCS receives input from Working Groups to see how funds are best utilized in an area.

As a result of Covid-19, the annual Eagle Lake and Beaumont Rice Research Field Days could not be held in their traditional, face-to-face format. On July 9th, a team of Extension Agents from across the entire Texas Rice Belt made available one (1) Rice Research Tour available to rice producers in a virtual format,

via Zoom®. The Texas A&M Agrilife State Rice Initiative Team cooperated with Dr. Ted Wilson, Director of the Beaumont Rice Research Station to host the 2020 Rice Field Day in a virtual format.

To help promote food security awareness, the Western Rice Belt Conference coordinated and funded a large donation of rice in December 2020 to the Central Texas Food Bank in Austin, Texas.

Results

16th Annual Western Rice Belt Conference, El Campo, Texas – January 15, 2020

Two Hundred Fifteen (215) rice producers and 65 rice consumers attended the conference. To capture the adoption rate of conservation programs by those attending the Western Rice Belt Producers Seminar, a retrospective post evaluation instrument was administered via Qualtrics® in August 2020. 15 of 172 (9%) completed evaluations. **30.77%** of respondents indicated that they gained information on programs that can improve the productivity and efficiency of their farming operation. **23.08%** of respondents report that they already participate in government funded conservation programs. 21 rice producers attended the USDA-NRCS and Soil and Water Conservation District local working group meeting at the conclusion of the Rice Conference in January 2020, a **320%** increase in attendance compared to previous years' Local Working Group Meetings.

Conservation Programs That Best Apply to Rice Farming Operations

Conservation Program	% Response	# of Responses
Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQUIP)	50%	5
Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	30%	3
Rice Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)	20%	2

Western Rice Belt Conference donation to the Central Texas Food Bank

Western Rice Belt Production Conference Committee coordinated and funded a donation of 11,000 lbs (5/1/2 tons) of packaged rice to the Central Texas Food Bank during the week of Christmas 2020. This was an amount of rice for 110,000, servings of rice. This donation could not be possible without the collaboration of the Texas Rice Council, U.S. Rice Producers Association, Riviana Foods, the Central Texas Food Bank, and the Rice Marketing Association.

2020 Virtual Rice Research Field Day

112 rice producers registered for the Virtual Field Day, yet 64 attended via Zoom®. A retrospective post evaluation instrument was administered via Qualtrics® in August 2020. 5 of 64 (8%) completed evaluations. Evaluation results indicate that 100% of the participants would attend another virtual field day hosted by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension. 80% were completely or mostly satisfied with the Field Day being delivered via a ZOOM format. 100% of the participants logged in on a personal computer, with 60% identifying familiarity with other virtual formats such as Webex, Skype, and Google Meets. Only 40% identify familiarity with Microsoft Teams®. The recording of the 2020 Rice Field Day is posted along with twelve other research highlight videos at <https://beaumont.tamu.edu/RiceFieldDay/>

Client Change Level of Understanding: Virtual Rice Research Field Day

TOPICS	Mean Value BEFORE	Mean Value AFTER	Percent Increase
Understanding of the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP).	2.00	3.00	50.00%
Knowledge of current trade situation surrounding US Rice during the Covid-19 pandemic.	1.80	3.00	66.66%

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AgriLifeExtension.tamu.edu

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Agriculture and Natural Resources

2020 Commodity Marketing, Technology and Industrial Hemp Education

Developed by:

Corrie Bowen
County Extension Agent – Ag/NR
Wharton County

Relevance

Cotton, grain Sorghum, soybean, corn, and rice production continue to be a major economic force in Wharton County. USDA reports **234,079** total acres planted in 2020 in these five major crops for Wharton County. The 2015 and 2019 Texas Community Futures Forum identified that crop producers will need to keep abreast of marketing opportunities, precision agriculture practices, variety/seed technology developments, and alternative crops (e.g. Industrial Hemp) to remain competitive in the industry.

Wharton County ranks 22nd in the State in total agricultural receipts and 2nd in the State in total value of crops, including nursery and greenhouse production. The 2017 Census of Agriculture for Wharton County reports \$208,540,000 in total agricultural receipts, which is down 44% from the \$373,637,000 reported in the 2012 Census of Agriculture. As costs of production continue to increase and farm income declines, applied research and marketing education is needed to maintain a crop producers' economic sustainability in the years to come.

Response

The Wharton County Row Crops Committee was instrumental in developing, delivering, and evaluating educational programs in 2020 that addressed new crop system technology, commodity marketing, and informed producers of a new and emerging industrial hemp industry. The following educational conferences and seminars were conducted in 2020:

- Upper Gulf Coast Feed Grain and Cotton Conference – January 23, 2020. This event is organized as a multi-county program in Wharton, Texas (Wharton County) – Wharton, Matagorda, and Colorado County cooperating. Selection of grain and cotton production topics and presenters is directed by Row Crops Committee members in each of the three counties.
- Result Demonstrations were implemented and data was collected on the following:
 - Replicated Agronomic Cotton Evaluation (RACE)
 - Uniform Corn Variety Trial
 - Soybean Variety Trial
 - Evaluation of the Effect of Application Rate of Chicken Pit Manure on Corn Grain Yield

Results

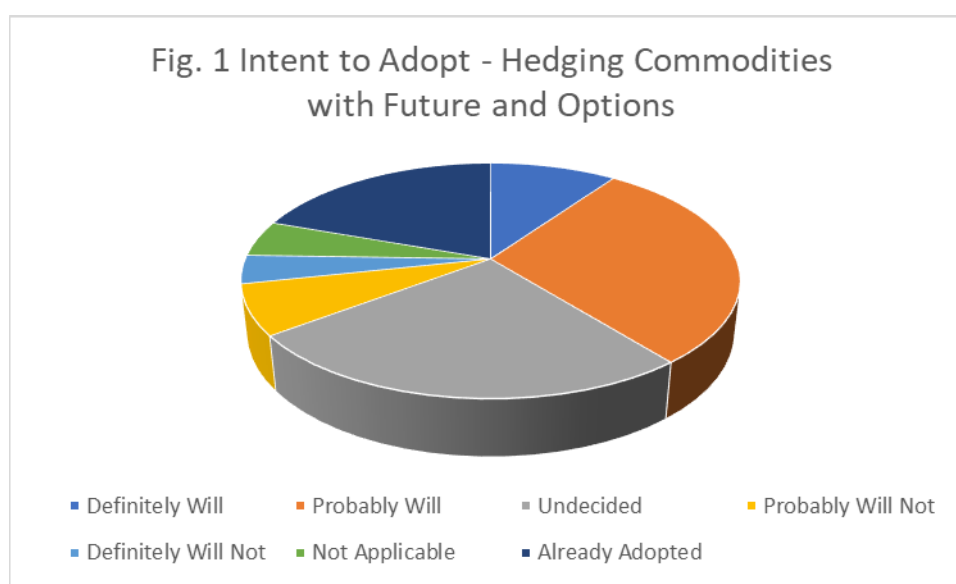
Upper Gulf Coast Feed Grain and Cotton Conference

To determine the programmatic results of the Feed Grain and Cotton Conference a retrospective-post evaluation instrument was administered the day of the conference. 105 of 190 (47.65%) completed evaluations. Fig 1. Respondents report that 51.9% of farmers who attended the conference intend to adopt the practice of hedging commodities with futures and options. 19% of respondents (or 20 people) report

that they already hedge commodities with futures and options. 4% have no intentions of hedging commodities with futures and options. Participants reported 190,288 acres managed, and a total anticipated economic benefit to their operations of \$837,682 or \$4.40 per acre.

Client Change Level of Understanding: Upper Gulf Coast Feed Grain and Cotton Conference

TOPICS	Mean Value BEFORE	Mean Value AFTER	Percent Increase
Knowledge of a new and emerging cotton disease known as 'cotton blue disease'	1.51	2.86	45.0%
Auxin herbicide drift minimization.	2.97	3.64	22.3%
Cotton risk management strategies given the 2020 current cotton market outlook	2.38	3.26	29.3%
Gene Drive Technology	1.33	2.76	47.7%



2020 – First Year of Hemp Production in Texas

Hemp growers must certify their hemp crop to the local USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) county office. Those certified Hemp acres are listed under the USDA's Crop Acreage Data report. This report dated October 1st indicates that Matagorda County certified 533.28 acres of Hemp; 0.5034 acres of Hemp certified in Fort Bend County; 0 acres of hemp certified in Wharton, Colorado, Jackson Counties. That same Crop Acreage Data report shows that 65,450 acres of Hemp were certified planted in the U.S. in 2020, compared to 146,780 planted acres of Hemp in the U.S. in 2019. 1,978.916 acres were certified planted in Texas in 2020 in a total of 42 counties. Approximately 1,038.38 acres in Texas were planted for the intended use for CBD; 376.24 acres for fiber; 533.28 acres for grain; and 31 acres for seed. Wharton County did not have any producers acquire a license to produce hemp in 2020. Market saturation for hemp, decreased CBD prices, a lack of viable research on agronomic practices, and a lack of reliable hemp varieties for the Upper Gulf Coast environment are a few reasons why Wharton County producers are slow to enter into hemp production.

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Agriculture and Natural Resources

2020 Pesticide Applicator Programming in Wharton County

Developed by:

Corrie Bowen
County Extension Agent – Ag/NR
Wharton County

Relevance

For the year 2020 Wharton County, Texas has **572** (compared to 586 in 2019) pesticide applicators licensed with the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA). Private Pesticide Applicators are required to obtain fifteen (15) CEUs (continued education credits) every five years in order to renew their license. Commercial and Non-Commercial Applicators are required to obtain 5 CEUs every year in order to renew their license. There is a substantial audience and a need for Extension to provide the educational opportunities for these applicators to obtain their CEU credits. In addition, new applicators seek opportunities throughout the year to take the certification course at the Wharton County Extension Office to obtain their license. The Wharton County Row Crops Committee and Western Rice Belt Production Conference Committee identify Continued Education Units (CEUs) as a priority of program planning for Wharton County.

Response

The Wharton County Row Crops Committee provided for one (1) individual course in 2020 that offered five (5) CEUs. The committee planned, promoted, and conducted this event based on client need and evaluation results from the 2019 Conference. This 5-CEU Pesticide Recertification Conference is scheduled each year at the Wharton County Youth Fairgrounds in Crescent, TX. CEUs were also awarded at the following seminars and workshops scheduled throughout the year: January 14, 2020 Grain Handlers Conference; January 15, 2020 Western Rice Belt Conference; January 23, 2020 Upper Gulf Coast Feed Grain and Cotton Conference ;February 13, 2020 5-CEU Conference; February/March 2020 Auxin Specific Applicator Training; April 14, 2020 Ag Symposium; and at seed meetings and/or field days for: Pioneer Seed®/Kresta Farms, and Krenak Seed Company. CEU credits are also made available to pesticide applicators by viewing a series of Last Chance CEU videos at the Wharton County Extension Office.

The mandatory Certification Training for potential pesticide applicators to obtain their pesticide applicator license was provided by the Wharton County Extension Office throughout the year on an as-needed basis or when requested.

Ag Science Teachers located throughout Texas is another audience of licensed pesticide applicators that County Extension Agent, Corrie Bowen educates. Since 2005 Agent Bowen has facilitated a Pesticide Applicator Certification Workshop and a Pesticide Applicator Recertification Workshop at the Vocational Ag Teachers Association of Texas (VATAT) annual conference. Ag Science teachers must also acquire their required recertification credits, but they often have difficulty attending the recertification course while they are teaching in the classroom. Offering CEUs at their annual conference helps teachers acquire their needed recertification credits. 2020 marked Agent Bowen's 16th consecutive year cooperating with the VATAT Board of Directors, providing and facilitating their annual pesticide workshops. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the VATAT Pesticide Workshops were held virtually in July via Zoom®.

Results

Six **(6)** new applicators attended the Private Pesticide Applicator training and testing sessions offered at the Wharton County Extension Office in the year 2020. The number of Private Applicators completing the certification training at the Wharton Office has declined due to Covid-19, whereas applicators have an option of also completing the training online.

For year 2020 Wharton County awarded a total of twenty-three **(23.0) CEUs** at group meetings to a total of **779** individuals. In addition to CEUs obtained at group meetings, a total of seven **(7)** licensed Pesticide Applicators obtained a total of **14** hours of CEU credits by viewing our Last Chance CEU videos at the Wharton County Extension Office. It's estimated that due to Covid-19, the number of pesticide applicators reached with recertification credits at group meetings is down **17%** compared to year 2019.

February 13, 2020 5-CEU Pesticide Recertification Conference

A retrospective-post evaluation instrument was conducted on the day of the 5-CEU Pesticide Recertification Conference. **115 of 115 (100%)** completed the evaluation instrument! Participants reported 111,421 acres managed, and a total anticipated economic benefit to their operations of **\$714,292** or **\$6.41** per acre.

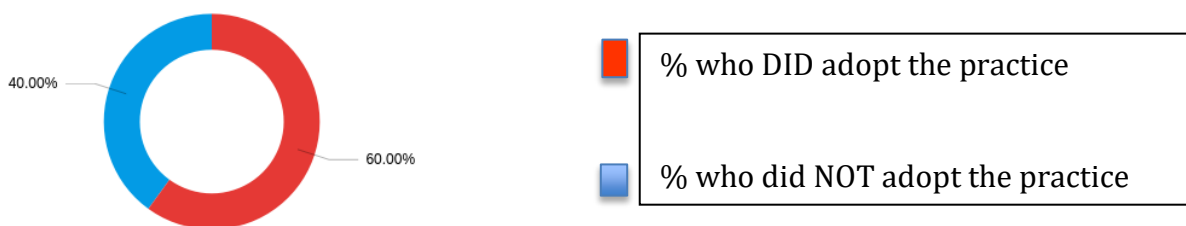
Client Change Level of Understanding: February 1, 2018 5-CEU Pesticide Recertification Conference

TOPICS	Mean Value BEFORE	Mean Value AFTER	Percent Increase
Impact of predation on the livestock industry	2.24	3.45	40.3%

July 27, 2020 VATAT Virtual Pesticide Workshop

Thirty-six (36) Ag Science Teachers attended the Virtual TDA Pesticide Recertification Workshop via Zoom, which addressed new herbicide chemistry, school IPM laws, and fly control in school project barns. These topics were identified by Ag Teachers at the 2019 VATAT conference workshops. **15 of 36 (42%)** completed a Qualtrics Survey in August 2020 for the Pesticide Recertification Workshop. 86% (12 of 15) estimate an economic benefit from participating in this virtual workshop. (Chart 1) 60% of the Ag Teachers adopted the practice of rotating insecticides by group number and by mode of action to avoid building insect resistance that was taught at the 2019 VATAT Pesticide Workshop. Participants increased their awareness of the Texas Administrative Code Title 4, Part 1, Chapter 7, Subchapter H, Division 7: Pest Management Program for School Districts, sections §7.201-§7.205 by 74%. Participants increased their knowledge of fly control technologies by 67.4%.

Chart 1. Percentage of Audience who adopted the practice of rotating insecticides in the past year to avoid building insect resistance.



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4-H and Youth Development

2020 Wharton County 4-H Program

Developed by Laura Reyna County Extension Agent 4-H Youth Development, Wharton County

Relevance

4-H empowers youth to reach their full potential by promoting positive youth development through participation in animal projects, community service projects, family and consumer science projects and leadership projects just to name a few. In Wharton County we have individuals that are involved in every different aspect of the 4-H program. By involving these youth in the many different projects and activities they are able to experience positive youth development that helps to prepare them for their futures.

Target Audience

4-H Youth participants, ages 8-18, in Wharton County who strive to help the community and prepare for the future.

Response

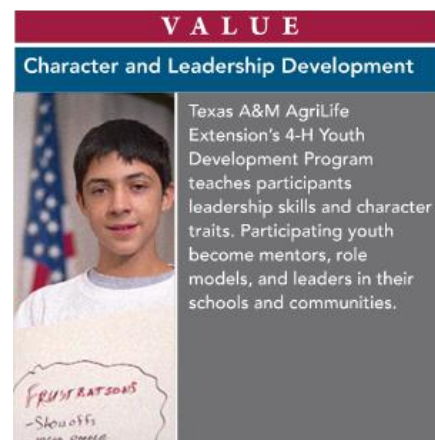
As a former Wharton County 4-H member improving the program continues to be a top priority. We continue to work on nurturing the relationships with 4-H members, their families, and those who support the program. By doing so we were able to increase enrollment and participation. It is also important to provide quality contest and programs that our members enjoy participating in. By providing adequate training for our adult volunteers this allows us to empower them to help us lead our youth. A training was held for club managers and volunteers, they were able to learn the different aspects of the 4-H program and given the tools needed to run a successful 4-H club. We also hosted virtual opportunities to learn about the 4-H program as well as hosting a virtual recordbook workshop. Setting our 4-H members up for success is another way that we can continue to retain members.

A big part of 4-H is working with and helping the community, One Day 4-H has given our 4-H clubs an outlet to do this during National 4-H week. We held a county wide community service project where our 4-H members collected artificial flower bouquets to place at the cemeteries across the county. This was a great outdoor activity that our club members could do. We also host a community service project each month during the County Council Meetings, our youth truly see the impact that they can have by helping others in numerous ways. Youth participants have learned that through their community service efforts they are directly helping our community, in turn this helps promote their positive youth development.

The year 2020 was a unique one that was not without many hurdles but our 4-Hers continue to strive to do their very best at all times and are looking forward to the year to come.

Results

- 357 members enrolled in Wharton County 4-H
- 72 Adult volunteers enrolled on 4-H Connect
- 17 Community Clubs, 1 project club, 1 county club and 1 Parent Adult Leaders Association
- 16 Adult Volunteers participated in Volunterr/Club Manager workshop
- 17 Youth participated in District Food Show
- 4 Teams/16 Youth participated in District Food Challenge. Senior team placed 1st



- 33 youth exhibitors participated in Ft. Worth and San Antonio Major Livestock Shows. We also had several more entered to participate in the Houston Livestock Show, Rodeo Austin, and Rio Grande Valley Livestock Show.
- 2 Dairy Judging teams
- 34 individuals participated in online recordbook training
- 120 Wharton County youth participated in the Wharton County Youth Fair Exhibitor Showcase
- 36 youth participated in the County Photography Contest, submitting 264 pictures
- 23 youth participated in County Roundup
- 14 youth entered the County Fashion Show
- 1 youth entered the County Fashion Story Board Contest
- 26 youth/6 teams entered the Duds to Dazzle Contest
- 42 youth participated in the County Round-up
- 48 pictures advanced to the District Photography Contest
- 9 youth with 19 photos participated in State Photography Contest
- 5 youth participated in the District Horse Show
- 26 youth participated in the County Recordbook Contest
- 6 youth and 6 Adults participated in State 4-H Roundup
- 1 Texas 4-H Fashion & Interior Design Ambassador
- 1 District 11 4-H Council Officer
- 1 senior 4-H member received a Texas 4-H opportunity scholarships in the amount of \$20,000.
- 20 youth participated in the District Recordbook Contest
- 65 Youth and adults in attendance at the annual awards banquet which was held outside
- 2 youth participated in the State Recordbook Contest
- 1 State Recordbook 2nd place winner, 1 State Recordbook 3rd place winner
- 85 youth and 20 Adults participated in One Day 4-H efforts across the county
- 35 youth participated in the County Food Show
- 58 youth/16 teams participated in County Food Challenge

Summary

Results indicate that the 4-H program is greatly appreciated and very important to the Youth and Community of Wharton County. Plans are to continue working with volunteers, youth and the community to make the Best Better!



2020 Prestige Leadership Conference

Developed by Laura Reyna County Extension Agent 4-H Youth Development, Wharton County

RELEVANCE

Council officers in Austin, Bastrop, Burleson, Colorado, Fayette, Karnes, Victoria, Wharton, and Washington counties are taught leadership skills in a variety of ways but they all share a common goal to develop a successful county council leadership program that works effectively.



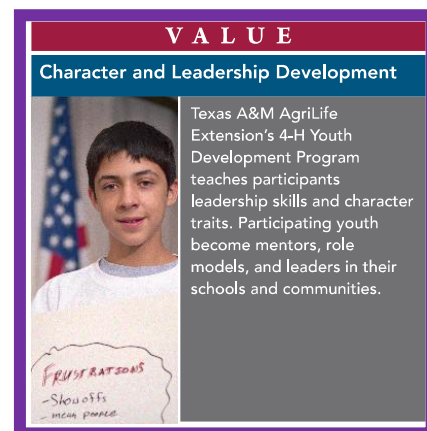
Among the nine counties, we elect approximately 70 council officers who lead over 3,000 4-H members. These council officers provide county-wide leadership to our 4-H programs. Their success as council officers relies on the training and skills that Texas A & M AgriLife Extension Agents provide. Over the years, we have noticed that as the times have changed and new technologies have been introduced, the level of leadership skills in our youth have regressed. Some of the issues to be addressed include public speaking, methods of communication, identifying learning styles, recognizing strengths and weaknesses, and more specifically, learning parliamentary procedures and effective leadership techniques.

RESPONSE

In response to the observations mentioned above, participating counties and the Adult Leaders Association in each county were engaged in the program development process. Prestige Leadership Conference (PLC) is a multi-county effort that was offered to the 2019-2020 County Council Officers of each participating county. The goals of the program were: 1) to prepare the council officers for the leadership positions that they have been elected to; 2) to enhance the participants' knowledge of their officer responsibilities and parliamentary procedures; 3) to introduce the participants to participants from other counties in an effort to promote networking, partnerships, and to enhance their social skills; 4) to broaden participants knowledge of project areas offered through the 4-H program; 5) to provide career exploration; and 6) offer a reward for our council officers. PLC was a two-day camp that was held on the Campus of Tarleton State University, Texas and the University served as a major sponsor of the event.

Prestige Leadership Conference activities included:

- Lessons on leadership, communication, teamwork, and decision making
- An overview of duties and responsibilities of officers
- Planning the 4-H year
- Organizing and conducting meetings and writing and handling motions
- Mock Meeting
- Tour of Tarleton State University
- Career Exploration in Animal/Dairy Science, Ag Mechanics, Wellness and Motor Behavior, and Aquaponics
- Hands on learning experiences



RESULTS

Unfortunately, this year we were unable to hold PLC due to COVID-19. However, I was able to use the information learned in the past to share with our local 4-Hers. Our kids were sure sad that we did not have the opportunity to visit Texas Tech as was planned. The great people at Tech did provide us with the opportunity to attend a virtual tour to learn more about the college and opportunities that were available to our youth.

Goals for 2021

- to increase participation
- to provide a more interactive learning experience
- train and utilize officers during Northern 4-H Academy (Volunteer and Club Officer Training)
- rotate PLC to various Universities

2020 Wharton County 4-H Beef Project In-Depth Summary

Developed by Laura Reyna County Extension Agent 4-H Youth Development, Wharton County

Relevance

Texas is the undisputed national leader in 4-H and FFA livestock project participation. Over 50,000 youth, spanning Texas engage in an animal project to gain research supported life-skill development. Each year, over 140,000 livestock are county or state validated by Texas youth. The stakeholders in these communities see the value of the project - they prove it by investing north of \$77 million in the future of these young people through county youth livestock auctions. Texas boasts the most opportunities for students to participate in 10 major or mid-major livestock shows. These massive events also provide additional financial support to Texas youth with an added \$21 million.

To be successful, livestock project families must have substantial educational support beginning at the local level. We are tasked with directly providing or facilitating the educational resources needed to best prepare youth to exhibit livestock. The livestock project requires significant time, hard work and financial investment. Extension professionals provide leadership to the livestock project through effective project meetings, workshops and volunteer training/management.

It is our hope that through exploring the Beef Project this will allow 4-H volunteers, educators, members, and youth to increase knowledge and understanding of the beef cattle project, include market steers, breeding heifers, and commercial heifers.

Target Audience

4-H Youth participants, ages 8-18, in Wharton County who strive to help the community and prepare for the future.

Response

As the Beef project grows here in Wharton County it is important to provide educational opportunities to youth and their families. Opportunities for them to learn about all aspects of the beef cattle industry and their show projects help them to make decisions that are beneficial in the long run. In speaking with a Mrs. Forganson from JD Hudgins she expressed a great deal of interest in assisiting with this opportunity. We were able to sit down and come up with several ideas that would be great opportunities for the youth of Wharton County with their Beef projects. Given the time of year we were planning a Beef Showmanship Clinic and Show that was open to all. This was going to be a fun day of learning with a show at the end for the kids to practice what they learned that day. We were certainly looking forward to this being the kickoff of our new join venture but as it was scheduled for the end of March it unfortunately did not get to occur.

As with all things during this time we discussed taking in virtual however we did not feel that it was the right way to start a new program and did not feel that we would have the buy in needed to be successful. Not having the ability to follow through with our program was a major let down but we came up with some really great ideas for sessions and learning opportunities. Below are a few of the sessions that we were looking forward to

- Selection: Selecting the right project for Show
- Feeding: Feeding 101
- Facilities: Visiting The Strack Family Barn
- Session with Dr. Pohler, local vet and club calf breeder
- Showmanship Series- Several sessions to ensure that our youth were well versed in showmanship
- What belongs in your showbox?
- Major Shows 101
- County Fair 101
- Do's and Don't of Beef Project
- Local Ranch tours
- and many more!

Goals

Since we were unable to follow through with our Beef Project series we are looking to regroup and ensure that this is in the best interest of our program. If continuing to follow through the big goals would be:

- Provide educational learning opportunities for youth with Beef Projects in Wharton County
- Ensure that individuals who participate in our series have success both in the ring and out
- Have fun while learning!

Summary

I do hope that we get to continue with this idea and concept. Beef cattle is something that so many more of our youth are getting involved in and I know that we can put together a great program. It is unfortunate that we had to put a pin in our momentum this past year.

2020 All Children and Babies Childcare Conference

Lori Schindler, Family and Community Health – Wharton County

Relevance:

The demand for quality child-care continues to rise as children are spending more time in care outside the family. An estimated 12.5 million children under the age of 6 receive some form of child-care on a regular basis from individuals other than their parents. Evidence indicates that professional training and continuing education on the part of child-care providers correlate with higher-quality care environments for children.

Response:

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension service organizes and conducts training opportunities for current and prospective child-care providers through regional conferences, county workshops, and online courses that meet professional development standards established by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Child-care Licensing. The purpose of the training is to enhance the knowledge and skills of providers and directors with regard to the care and education of children, as well as business management. Participants learn about a variety of topics, including child development, guidance and discipline, early childhood literacy, nutrition, and health and safety issues.

Results:

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, planning for a large scale conference to be held in collaboration with Wharton County Junior College at their facility proved to be very difficult and ultimately it was decided to cancel for the 2020 year as we did not feel we could put together a safe and high quality conference in the time frame we had to work with. In moving forward for 2021, with COVID-19 still an issue, a state-wide Early Childhood Education Steering committee has been set up and each District in the state has a month in which we are tasked with providing a virtual mini-conference that childcare providers across the state can attend and receive their CEU's in a safe environment while still receiving high quality training.



2020 Better Living for Texans

Lori Schindler, Family and Community Health – Wharton County

Relevance:


In Texas, 33 percent of the adult population is obese and 33 percent of youth (10-17 year olds) are either overweight or obese. Obesity increases the risk for diabetes, hypertension and poor overall quality of life. Moreover, health disparities among low income populations are well documented. Thus, individuals who live in poverty have dietary intakes that do not meet the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans or MyPlate recommendations. An estimated one in six Texas families experience food insecurities, meaning that the availability of nutritionally adequate and safe food is limited or uncertain. The goal of the Better Living for Texans and the USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) programs are to provide nutrition education that increases the likelihood of participants to make healthy food choices consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and Choose MyPlate.

Response:

The Better Living for Texans program (BLT) is a nutrition education program available for adults and children that are eligible to receive SNAP benefits. Since Fiscal Year 1995, BLT has provided research-based nutrition education programs that help people make healthy meals, improve their physical fitness, grow their own foods, save money at the grocery store, and adopt better food safety habits. Better Living for Texans is a cooperative endeavor between the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, and the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) that serves limited income families throughout Texas – offering classes at no cost to participants. Statewide, BLT receives over \$7 million each fiscal year for programming resources and materials, salaries, and benefits.

Results:

Due to COVID-19, I was unable to get the county on board for a Walk Across Texas event that we had discussed implementing this year. In order to continue with this event for 2021, several counties in District 11 have come together and are planning a virtual Walk across Texas event with some friendly competition among counties that are participating. I had also planned to present A Fresh Start to a Healthier You program series to The Wharton County Seniors Group that meets once a month. However, as this is a high-risk population, this particular group has not been meeting, not even virtually. For the 2021 year I am in contact with a group called Foster Grandparent Program and will be discussing with them the possibility of delivering this program virtually to their program participants who are already involved with the Foster Grandparent Program virtually.

V A L U E	
Better Living for Texans	
	<p>These nutrition programs teach low-income audiences to prepare nutritious meals, stretch their food resources, improve their food-safety practices, and participate in regular physical activity. This not only improves the quality of life and reduces the risk of chronic disease for participants, but also lowers public health care costs.</p>

Helping Texans Better Their Lives

CEA Annual Achievement Report (2020)

Kashara Bell, FCH Agent, Wharton County

In-Depth Program Planning (Also attach In-Depth Summary(ies))

- Reached underserved and limited resourced audience
- Maintained copies of all sign in sheets, consent forms, and evaluations
- Updated extension office with current events
- Referenced to NIFA Plan of Work (POW) when planning county programming
- Committee member conducted childhood obesity educational programs at Faith Christian Academy
- Family Community Health (FCH) committee meetings were conducted virtually and face to face on: February 11th, May 21st, October 6th, and December 8th,
- Committee members recruit volunteers, market and promote programs, and assist with programming i.e., sign in sheets, meeting room set up and break down, assists with dissemination and collection of surveys, assist with educational materials
- Committee member conducted nutrition educational programs

In-Depth Program Implementation

- 7 educational classes (health and wellness)
- 212 podcast listeners (health and wellness)
- 17 presentations (childhood obesity)
- 1,047 participants (childhood obesity)
- 6 classes (financial literacy)
- 282 participants (financial literacy)
- 4 county events (fostering strong families)
- 2,634 youth and adults (fostering strong families)
- Audiences: limited resource and underserved populations
- Educational methods: virtual workshops (YouTube, Facebook, and Zoom), presentations, classes, handouts, Facebook, and county website

In-Depth Program Evaluation

- **Childhood Obesity 4-H Hero's 4 Health Grant**
 - Reaching **1,047** youth and adults
 - **17** Presentations
- **Fostering Strong Families**
 - Reaching **2,634** youth and adults
 - **13** Presentations

*Texas A&M AgriLife Extension is an equal opportunity employer and program provider.
The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating*

- Partnered and work closely with committee members to ensure county wide coverage
- Data and evaluations were greatly affected due to programming being held virtually
- **Social media**
-78 posts to Wharton County FCS Facebook and Agrilife county page

Outreach Program Summary

- **Health and Wellness**
-7 educational classes (health and wellness)
-212 podcast listeners (health and wellness)

Accountability and Interpretation

- Wharton County Extension Service Staff Office Conferences 01/07/2019, 03/04/2019, 10/29/2019, 12/02/2019
- Report monthly to Texas Data
- Interpretation to commissioners court December 9, 2019
- Summer programming Interpretation Wharton County Library El Campo July 16, 2019
- Programming Interpretation with FCS Committee on 11/8/2019
- Report to Wharton County Leadership Advisory Board Meetings: 11/14/18, 12/09/2019

Volunteer Management and Engagement

- Upbring Headstart program committee
- School Health Advisory Committee (SHAC) at Sivells Elementary
- Wharton High School
- Communities in Schools
- Planned Wharton County System Library youth summer programming
- Volunteered at Faith Christian Academy
- 66 volunteer involvement; 75 volunteer hours valued @\$27.20 (\$2,040.00)

Other Human Resources

- Prairie View A&M University Tools for an Ethical Workplace – HR 03/23/2020
- Prairie View A&M University FERPA Basics – EVERFI Course - HR 03/23/2020
- Prairie View A&M University Protocol and Certification for Systems - HR 05/20/2020
- Prairie View A&M University Safe Practices for Returning to Office During the COVID 19 Pandemic- HR 05/21/2020
- Prairie View A&M University Information Security- HR 05/29/2020
- Prairie View A&M University EM: 102 CEA All Hazards Response and Recovery Exercise- HR 07/20/2020
- Prairie View A&M University HIPAA Privacy and Security for Human Research- HR 08/04/2020
- Prairie View A&M University Clery Act Basics - EVERFI Course- HR 08/31/2020
- Prairie View A&M University Building Supportive Communities: Clery Act and Title IX - EVERFI Course- HR 08/31/2020
- Prairie View A&M University Fire and Life Safety Training – RMS- HR 11/01/2020
- Prairie View A&M University Ethics- HR 11/01/2020
- Prairie View A&M University Creating a Discrimination-Free Workplace- HR 11/19/2020
- Prairie View A&M University Protocol and Certification for System Member Employees- HR 12/08/2020
- Prairie View A&M University Safe Practices for Returning to the Office During the COVID-19 Pandemic- HR 12/08/2020
- Supervise one Wharton County Administrative Assistant I, July 2016-present

Material Resource Development

Received monetary donations for programing support from:

- Upbring Headstart nutrition and health and wellness classes \$65.00 for food and program support
- Gifts for Fall Safety event fashion show and pumpkin decoration contest-Wharton /county Library System \$50.00
- Supplies for nutrition classes - El Campo and Louise Library \$437.00.00
- Funds for nutrition programs – Faith Christian Academy \$225..00
- Hero's For Health Walmart Grant- \$1800.00 per class (6 sessions)
- Amerigroup, BACODA, MEHOP, Access Health WIC, El Campo Memorial Hospital goodie bag donations- \$1,256.00

Internal Relationships

- Invited Prairie View A&M University Cooperative Extension Program Family and Consumer Science agent Teanna Donaldson and Stephanie Bowman to be guest speakers for our Free Financial Friday's workshop
- Created a training session with CEP Specialists Dawn Burton and Joyce Osbourne for the monthly CEP meeting
- Collaborated with Texas A&M Agrilife Family and Community Health Extension Agent Dr. Sonja Stuart Davis and participated in the December to Remember Calendar
- Collaborated with Texas A&M Regional Program Leader Erika Bochat and served on the (FCH) Resource Advisory Committee
- Participated in Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension Program Waller County Family and Community Health agent Clara Walker Amazing Me Virtual Social Hour
- Served on the Total You Wellness Committed with other county agents from Cooperative Extension Program, Prairie View A&M University

External Relationships

- Communities in Schools
- Amerigroup
- BACODA
- MEHOP
- Access Health WIC
- El Campo Memorial Hospital
- Crisis Center
- Upbring Headstart
- El Campo Memorial
- HEB Wharton, TX
- Faith Christian Academy
- Established partnership with Texas Child Protective Services to conduct parenting classes
- University of Idaho Extension
- Elevate LLC.
- Wharton, El Campo, and Louise County Library
- Wharton County Junior College (Richmond and Wharton Campus)
- Sivells Elementary
- Wharton Middle School
- Wharton High School
- El Campo Leader News
- Wharton County News
- Wharton County Probation
- Wharton Journal Spectator

- Wharton County Junior College Senior Center
- Meleah House of Prayer

Other Teamwork Examples

- Attended Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service weekly D11 4-H Coffee and Chat
- Collaborated with Texas A&M Agrilife Family and Community Health Extension Agent Dr. Sonja Stuart Davis and participated in the December to Remember Calendar
- Collaborated with Texas A&M Regional Program Leader Erika Bochat and served on the (FCH) Resource Advisory Committee

Professional Development

- Assisted agents in multiple districts with branding, graphics, flyers
- Attended Prairie View A&M University Cooperative Extension program planning
- Received mentoring from Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension Program Family and Consumer Science agent Dr. Crystal Wiltz (Travis County), Rosondra Hartsfield (Falls County), and Te'Anna Reed (Harris County)
- Provided Canvas 101 training to CEP FCH agents
- Prairie View A&M University Cooperative Extension Heroes 4 Health Grant Orientation Training by Specialist Dawn Burton January 23, 2020
- New Drug trend with Young People Information meeting at Windsor Village August 15, 2019
- 4-H Online 2.0 Teams training by Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Program Specialist Meredith Carter July 15, 2020

Professionalism

- Supportive of co-workers programs and events
- Maintained required office hours requested by County and District Extension Adm.
- Comply with Prairie View A&M University policies and procedures
- Provided supervision of office administrative support staff
- Completed all SSO training provided by human resources

Family and Consumer Sciences

2019 Wharton Childhood Obesity 4-H Hero's 4 Health Grant

Kashara Bell- Family and Consumer Science Agent- Cooperative Extension Program



Relevance

Learning how and what to eat can be challenging. With our youth, we have to be careful how we introduce new things to them. Most of them might want to eat healthier, but financial and habit barriers. Obesity is a condition that is associated with having an excess of body fat. The adult obesity rate of Wharton County, TX was 28.5%

([https://www.dshs.texas.gov/uploadedFiles/Content/Prevention_and_Preparedness/obesity/Obesity_In_Texas_InfographicV5-accessible%20\(1\).pdf](https://www.dshs.texas.gov/uploadedFiles/Content/Prevention_and_Preparedness/obesity/Obesity_In_Texas_InfographicV5-accessible%20(1).pdf)). Obesity is classified as having a BMI (body mass index) of 30 or greater. Obesity related conditions include heart disease, stroke, and certain types of cancers. These are some of the leading causes of preventable death. The estimated annual health care cost of obesity related illness is \$190.2 billion in the United States. The United States is the eighth fattest country in the world. 31.8% percent of the population being overweight. Even though childhood obesity is our focus area, we must still education and inform their parents as well. The commonness of obesity in Texas was notably higher among African Americans and Hispanic compared to Caucasians and other races.

Response

Due to the pandemic, Wharton County Library was not able to have physical programs. In response, CEP Agent Kashara Bell developed follow along virtual programming videos and Come-and-Take Craft and project programs provided by Prairie View A&M University Cooperative Extension Program, Wharton County Library Systems, and Walmart Foundation Healthy Habits Grant. Patrons were able to pick up craft packets and nutrition supplies to complete the projects at home. There was a total of 1,047 patrons that watched our virtual programs and projects/supplies were physically handed out to eager patrons. The virtual programming was free and easily accessible through YouTube, mass email, and Facebook! Our FCS committee received many impact statements and positive messages for our efforts for continuing this annual summer program!

- Reaching **1,047** youth and adults
- **17** Presentations



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Family and Consumer Sciences

Education Efforts:

Hero's 4 Health Grant - The Heroes 4 Health goal is to empower youth to positively impact their community through educational programs that raise awareness of everyday healthy living practices in nutrition and physical activity. Our programming this year has been very different. In an innovated way! Covid-19 challenged us to make some needed adjustments in Wharton County. We were on strict regulations and couldn't meet face to face. We didn't allow that to stop us. A lot of my limited resource clientele don't have access to the internet or computers. To service the need, we partnered with 4 libraries in Wharton County (Wharton, East Bernard, El Campo, and Louise). The youth were allowed to virtually attend the workshops and watch the videos that we prepared at the libraries. We also made follow along bags, so that the youth could pick them up and follow along with the videos at the libraries or at home. It was very challenging at first, but the youth and parents adapted to the changes very well. We offered virtual programming through YouTube, Facebook, mass email, and zoom. In order to keep their attention and interest, we offered incentives and prizes along the way. Our youth in Wharton County love all things social media and live on the internet. So, we took trendy subjects and tailored them to fit our community.



- Offered virtually and physically at 4 locations- Faith Christian Academy, El Campo Library, Wharton Library, and Louise Library.
January 2020-December 2018

-Faith Christian Academy- Created a class called home making because the students loved earning about nutrition and life skills.

-Funded through the Hero's 4 Health Grant Walmart Foundation, Faith Christian Academy, and El Campo Branch Wharton Library Systems

- 1,047** students
- **17** presentations
- \$2,052** in grant funds, food donations, and supplies for programming
- 12** volunteers and **34** total hours

Results

Because of implementing most of our programs vitually, evaluations where hard to receive this year. However, here are results from the few that completed the evaluation online.

I plan to eat the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables.^a

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		1	2.9	2.9	2.9
	Maybe	3	8.8	8.8	11.8
	Yes	30	88.2	88.2	100.0
	Total	34	100.0	100.0	

a. What County do you live in? = Wharton County

I plan to drink less sugary drinks.^a

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		1	2.9	2.9	2.9
	Maybe	6	17.6	17.6	20.6
	Yes	27	79.4	79.4	100.0
	Total	34	100.0	100.0	

a. What County do you live in? = Wharton County

Family and Consumer Sciences

Participants Comments

"I really enjoyed Hero's for Health Healthy Habits this year because the workshops were very interesting and fun."- Abby Williams

"Participations in Healthy Habits helped me not feel so down because I missed my friends because of Covid-19"- Tim Sharnac

"The summer programming has helped my kids make better food choices. The vision board activity was a great way to have family time. We even planned our Christmas travel plans"-Mom from El Campo

Family and Consumer Sciences

2020 Wharton County Fostering Strong Families Kashara Bell- Family and Community Health Agent- Cooperative Extension Program

Relevance

What happens in your life can set the foundation of a lifetime. It's key that families have the tools and resources that they need to provide a stable and nurturing environment for their families. In order to reach that goal Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension Program must partner with communities in Wharton County to strengthen families and empower families to upgrade their life skills! We all have a shared responsibility for making our communities strong. According to the Wharton County Family plan the solution to prevent poverty and low resources is to offer educational programming. As the population continues to grow and diversify, our quality of life increasingly depends on understanding the impact of human behavior. Individuals who are raised in an environment, in which they learn to make informed decisions, manage their basic needs, and tackle pressing human and societal challenges emerge equipped to lead happier and healthier lives. A range of health and socioeconomic factors can affect family stability and strength. This program provides educational and technical information to limited resource families to strengthen family systems.



Response

Knowing how to solve family issues and conflict management is important for family resilience. Being educated on how to be resourceful and creative will expose possibilities when overcoming adversity. To strengthen families, we must: 1) engage youth and their families in an educational pilot program that promotes learning and behavior change in the areas of prevention, nutrition, and physical activity, 2) implement healthy living programs, 3) develop and begin implementing curriculums.

- Reaching **2,634** youth and adults
- **13** Presentations

Education Efforts:

Scare Away the Germs Event - The Prairie View A&M University Cooperative Extension Program partnered with the Communities in Schools of Brazoria County to host the event. Participants from Sivells and Wharton elementary schools, Wharton Junior High School, and Wharton High School learned about the importance of good hygiene and staying healthy. Students received goodie bags with educational materials about local resources, items from PVAMU CEP, healthy recipes, Red Ribbon Week drug information, donated hygiene materials, and school supplies. Middle and high school students also received individual

Family and Consumer Sciences

bags of customized trail mix as a healthy snack. Amerigroup, BACODA, MEHOP, Access Health WIC, El Campo Memorial Hospital, Prairie View A&M University Cooperative Extension Program, and the Crisis Center also donated items to the event.

- Program implemented at **Wharton High School, Sivells Elementary School, and Wharton Junior High School**
- Donations was provide by: **Amerigroup, BACODA, MEHOP, Access Health WIC, El Campo Memorial Hospital, Prairie View A&M University Cooperative Extension Program, and the Crisis Center**
- Provided **2,315** goodie/informational bag to students and families

Free Financial Friday's – Is a free virtual workshop that was accessible through Facebook and YouTube. Knowing how to manage your money is a key life skill. This program provides educational and technical information to families thus empowering family systems and family resiliency using information that will develop an understanding of how individuals and families obtain and use resources of time and money as well as community resources to achieve their standard of living and overall quality of life.

Free Financial Fridays Topics



- **Lesson 1** – 5 Helpful Financial Mobile Apps
- **Lesson 2** – Planner 101: Benefits of Using a Planner
- **Lesson 3** – Marriage & Finances: The Great Merger
- **Lesson 4** – Tips and Tricks
- **Lesson 5** – Building Safe and Happy Relationships
- **Lesson 6** – Blending Families

- Workshops are available on YouTube and Facebook
- Invited other agents across Texas to be Speakers
- 282** participants viewed the workshop virtually

Free Financial Fridays



Marriage and Finances: The Great Merger

TUNE IN AS WE VIRTUALLY HAVE A "MONEY TALK"

Teanna Donaldson

Kashara Bell

Family and Consumer Sciences

2020 Wharton County Health and Wellness (outreach) Kashara Bell- Family and Community Health Agent- Cooperative Extension Program

Relevance

Prairie View A&M University Cooperative Extension Program strives to address the health and wellness needs of Wharton County by offering programs that help prevent chronic illnesses (diabetes, cancer, Alzheimer, and heart disease), eliminate of health disparities, poor dieting, and unhealthy lifestyle habits. Wharton County profile states that 19% of the population is impacted by diabetes or cancer. Chronic health conditions have serious consequences for disease, premature death, and health care costs.

Response

Educating individuals on how to balance time, manage stress, eat mindfully, be physically active, and sleep well will help them live a more balanced life. Our podcast equips participants with the information they need to obtain a healthier lifestyle. The goal of our programing is to positively impact participant's health and wellbeing through improvements in mental health, self-efficacy, self-care behaviors, nutrition and physical activity. Wharton County Cooperative Extension Program strive to improve the health and quality of life for individuals, families, and communities by moving the nation from a focus on sickness and disease to one based on prevention and wellness.

- 212 podcast listeners
- 7 education presentations

Education efforts:

Balanced Living- is a curriculum designed to be delivered in a 1-hour class session, with a target audience of adults, working men and women, and adults wanting a greater sense of balance.

This curriculum has 5 units that covers key elements in balanced living

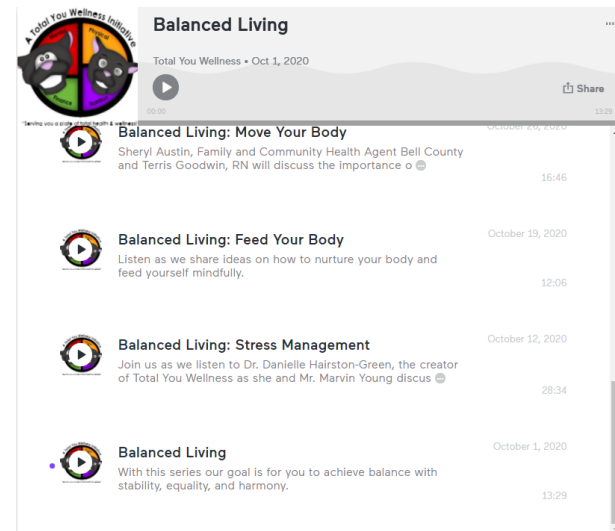
- 1: Time Management
- 2: Stress Management
- 3: Mindful Eating
- 4: Physical Activity
- 5: Sleep

Family and Consumer Sciences

-**Total You Wellness Community**- is a multi-county committee of Family and Community Health agents from Dallas, Austin, Travis, Harris, Waller, Falls, Bexar, and Wharton county that teamed up to offer Balanced Living in multiple counties.

Results

As a corrlaition we created a free health ad wellnes podcast. Each month we cater to our aduenice and cover relevant topics.
<https://anchor.fm/totalyouwellness/episodes/Balanced-Living-ekf68b>



CEA Annual Achievement Report 2020

Kate Crumley, Extension Agent - IPM

Counties: Wharton, Jackson, Matagorda

In-Depth Program Planning (In-Depth Summaries Also Attached)

Agricultural operating costs continue to rise nationwide while commodity prices remain low. Producers now need to find ways to cut input costs while increasing production and decreasing their environmental impact. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a tool that can aid producers in choosing the best approach economically and environmentally. IPM considers multiple tactics for the control of pests to reduce the occurrence of pesticide resistance, minimize environmental impact of pest control, and offer the best option from an economic standpoint.

In-Depth Program Implementation

- 2 IPM Steering Committee Meetings
 - Set goals and parameters for content of the Upper Coast IPM Blog
 - Define needs and priorities for the next 3-5 years
- Summer Field Scouting Program
 - \$15,939.12 donated for operating costs
 - Employed 2 summer field scouts
 - Coordinated 18 field locations
 - Scouted 2,019 acres weekly
 - Wharton County - 783 acres
 - Jackson County - 566 acres
 - Matagorda County - 670 acres

Upper Coast IPM Blog – 22 Published Issues

- 343 subscribers receiving email updates

IPM News from the Field – 7 Audio Updates

- 27 subscribers receiving text updates

Setup method for collecting in-season spray data for scouted farms and estimating in-season costs

Participating growers estimated economic value of scouting program in dollars per acre

In-Depth Program Evaluation

The summer field scouting program in Wharton, Jackson, and Matagorda counties had 18 participating growers. These growers were asked to fill out an online survey estimating the economic value of the field scouting program, or what they would value the program at if it was a paid service like a row crop consulting service. Of the 18 participating growers, 9 responded to the anonymous survey. They estimated the value of the program mostly at an \$8 to \$12 per acre dollar value. This amount is comparable to the value of an independent crop consultant offering the same services.

Estimated Economic Value of Scouting Program in Dollars per Acre	
< \$8	1 grower
\$8- \$12	6 growers
\$13- \$15	2 growers

Outreach Program Summary

ADULT EDUCATION PRESENTATIONS
Master Gardener IPM- 2 virtual
Upper Gulf Coast Grain Handlers Meeting
Jackson County Field Day
Upper Gulf Coast Feed Grain and Cotton Conference
Krenek Seek Meeting
Leadership Advisory Board and Commissioners' Court Interpretation Luncheon- video

YOUTH EDUCATION PRESENTATIONS
Insect Identification Video Voiceovers

PLANNING COMMITTEES
Upper Gulf Coast Western Rice Belt Production Conference
Upper Gulf Coast Grain Handlers Conference
Wharton County TDA Pesticide Applicator 5 CEU Recertification Conference
Jackson County Youth Ag Day
Jackson County Field Day
Jackson County Row Crop Committee
Wharton County Row Crop Committee
Matagorda County Row Crop Committee
Matagorda County Row Crop Committee
IPM Committee

Accountability and Interpretation

- Monthly Texas Data Reports submitted
- Making a Difference Document for Leadership Advisory Board Committee
- 12 monthly mileage reports sent in to Minnie Russell
- Finances for Texas A&M Account managed through the Entomology department at Texas A&M and Peggy Lundstrom
- Finances for grant accounts managed and reviewed by Kaylyn Clements with Sponsored Research Services
- Cotton Inc grant use reviewed by Ryan Kurtz
- Finances for TPMA accounts managed through Melissa Wade at TPMA
- TPMA accounts reviewed by IPM committee members
- IPM Scouting Program reviewed by the IPM Committee
- Field trial recommendations and program changes made or reviewed by the IPM Committee
- Annual review with David Kerns

Volunteer Management and Engagement

- 2 LAB Meetings
- 2 IPM Committee Meetings
 - IPM Committee members spoke to business owners in the community in regards to funding the summer scouting program

Other Human Resources

- Hired Duane Schroedter as a field scout
- Hired David Otradosky as a field technician

Material Resource Development

- \$15,939.12 donated by local businesses to support the scouting program
- \$5,000.00 generated from company field plots
- \$8,000.00 granted by commodity group proposals
- \$14,580.00 in value in seed, chemical, and bale wrap donations for plot work

Internal Relationships

- 3 office conferences within the Wharton county extension office, and a series of informal COVID update meetings
- Mentored by Stephen Biles
- Work effectively with agents: Corrie Bowen, Mike Hiller, Aaron Sumrall, Stephen Biles, Laramie Naumann, Kevin Gibbs, Boone Holliday, Laura Reyna, Lori Schindler, and Phillip Thielemann
- Work effectively with Specialists: Dr. Tom Isakeit, Dr. David Kerns, Dr. Dalton Ludwick, Dr. Ben McKnight, Dale Mott, Dr. Ronnie Schnell, Dr. Daniel Hathcoat, Dr. Josh McGinty, Rudy Alaniz, and Clint Livingston

External Relationships

- Contact with local crop consultants for field updates and emerging issues
- Working relationships with agricultural company representatives
- Multiple photos used by Southwest Farm Press and AgFax
- 5 AgFax interviews for in-season field conditions
- 1 ricefarming.com article feature
- Secretary for the Texas Agriwomen Gulf Coast Chapter
- Gave vaccinations with Wharton County Stray Pet Outreach Team

Other Teamwork Examples

- Worked with multiple company representatives planting and harvesting field trials
- Gathered materials for in-field trials
- Maintained and updated Spider Sprayer for field use with help from an equipment company
- Maintained farmer relationships and facilitated support for field trials

Professional Development

- Attended the Cotton Physiology Meeting
- Attended the Texas Pest Management Association Meeting
- Conference Call for Texas State Support Committee
- Attended the IPM Professional Development Training
- Attended the Plant Protection Conference

Professionalism

- Strive to provide accurate and research-oriented information regarding pest control in all settings
- Handled 4 cases of unknown insect infestations

COVID-19 Addendum

Describe any significant impacts that COVID-19 may have had on your original 2020 program plans:

- Grant processing was delayed
- Hiring was severely delayed
- Scouting reports delivered digitally
- All meetings with growers had a virtual component after March, if not entirely virtual
- All usual youth presentations were cancelled

Describe any adaptations you made to adjust your program plans to meet the requirements for limited face-to-face contact:

- IPM Committee meetings were socially distanced, and one held outdoors
- Field meetings and planting and harvesting events were socially distanced
- Field technician was required to drive his personal vehicle to all work locations

Describe any complete changes made to original plans, if adaptations were not possible to continue with some variation of your original plans:

- I videoed and edited the Colorado County Field Day to share online when the in-person event was cancelled

Describe other considerations for evaluation of your 2020 performance and program impact:

- My travel budget was altered, with my mileage and my field technician's mileage being much higher than anticipated

IPM Programming: 2020 Wharton, Jackson, and Matagorda Row Crop Plan

Developed by Kate Crumley, EA- IPM, Wharton, Jackson, and Matagorda Counties

Relevance:

Agricultural operating costs continue to rise nationwide while commodity prices remain low. Producers now need to find ways to cut input costs while increasing production, and decreasing their environmental impact. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a tool that can aid producers in choosing the best approach economically and environmentally. IPM considers multiple tactics for the control of pests to reduce the occurrence of pesticide resistance, minimize environmental impact of pest control, and offer the best option from an economic standpoint.

Response:

- 2 IPM Steering Committee Meetings
 - Set goals and parameters for content of the Upper Coast IPM Blog
 - Define needs and priorities for the next 3-5 years
- Summer Field Scouting Program
 - \$15,939.12 donated for operating costs
 - Employed 2 summer field scouts
 - Coordinated 18 field locations
 - Scouted 2,019 acres weekly
 - Wharton county - 783 acres
 - Jackson county - 566 acres
 - Matagorda county - 670 acres
- Upper Coast IPM Blog - 22 published issues
 - 343 subscribers receiving email updates
- IPM News from the Field - 7 audio updates
 - 27 subscribers receiving text updates
- Set up method for collecting in season spray data for scouted farms and estimating in season costs
- Participating growers estimated economic value of scouting program in dollars per acre

Results:

The summer field scouting program in Wharton, Jackson, and Matagorda counties had 18 participating growers. These growers were asked to fill out an online survey estimating the economic value of the field scouting program, or what they would value the program at if it was a paid service like a row crop consulting service. Of the 18 participating growers, 9 responded to the anonymous survey. They estimated the value of the program mostly at an \$8 to \$12 dollar value. This amount is comparable to the value of an independent crop consultant offering the same services.

Estimated Economic Value of Scouting Program in Dollars per Acre	
< \$8	1 grower
\$8- \$12	6 growers
\$13- \$15	2 growers

Future Plans:


The steering committee made recommendations to change which fields and growers participate in the summer field scouting program during the 2021 growing season. These changes will ensure that the field scouting program covers a broader area of the three counties, but will not increase the acreage. This will also change the participating growers, and give the opportunity for new participants to benefit from the information gathered by the summer scouting program. This will broaden the number of growers who have directly benefitted by a Texas A&M IPM agent checking their fields and using research supported scouting methods and economic thresholds to make chemical application decisions.

In 2021 the program will generate in season mapping of insect populations from fields. This information will be shared along with spray records of the locations to show how insect populations can move in this three county area.

The Upper Coast IPM Blog will still be available at uppercoastipm.blogspot.com. The audio updates will start with the scouting program and the blog updates, and will be available online and via text update, and will also be available as a podcast.

VALUE

Crop and Forage Production Education



Extension programs in crop production promote best practices that lead to reduced irrigation, safer pest management, and improved profitability of agricultural enterprises. This benefits Texas as a whole by contributing to the quality and quantity of water resources and enhancing both agricultural competitiveness and rural economies.

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE
Providing Solutions

Extension Education in Wharton County

Personnel

Corrie Bowen
County Extension Agent
Agriculture and Natural Resources

Kate Crumley
Extension Agent
Integrated Pest Management

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