

TEXAS EXTRA

TEXAS EXTENSION ASSOCIATION OF
FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

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President's Note

Well, we made it through 2020 and to say it has been a challenging year would be an understatement. Typically, at the end of the year I take some time to reflect upon the things I am thankful for and set goals for the upcoming year. While I have yet to set any concrete goals for the new year, I can look back on 2020 with a different kind of thankfulness and gratitude. I encourage you all to do the same: Sift through the hardships and challenges this year offered and reflect on how you discovered new strengths within yourself and celebrate those achievements!

Professionally we have learned how to improvise and adapt our programs to keep our clients and each other healthy. This is evident by the innovative methods of FCH, BLT, and EFNEP agents across Texas as we implemented ways to continue to help Texans within our programs in addition to assisting others in navigating through the COVID-19 challenges. I hope that you reflect on your own creative and adaptive programs and apply for Awards this year.

Please check out the TEAFCS website for more details on awards submission. I cannot wait to see Texas agents shine at the State, Regional, and National level!

Wishing everyone a safe, happy, and healthy 2021!

Liz Espie
President



District Happenings ...

Dawson County Creativity Workshop

Creativity Nicole Singleton, FCH Agent conducted a creativity workshop for youth in her county during October. A local fabric shop donated a bunch of fabric scraps for them to use. The youth took the scraps, their imagination and sewing skills to create "Selfies". These 4-H style Selfies used hand sewing techniques as well as machine sewing. Their masterpieces are works of art, were fun for all, and everyone learned some new sewing skills.



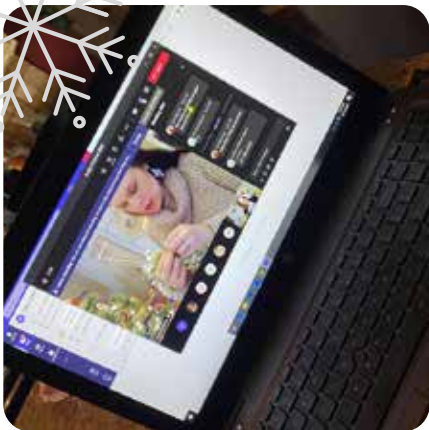
DISTRICT 2

Bailey, Castro, Lamb. & Parmer Counties Simply Christmas

This year's annual Simply Christmas program was a little different, held in December, Agents Kathy Carr, Felice Acker, Kendra Callahan, Wendy Case, and Courtney Lowe have been hosting this program for years and is usually held once in each county to highlight some holiday foods, and cost saving, easy crafts families can do at home. However, for 2020, the program went virtual!

Everyone who signed up received a Simply Christmas kit that included items to make: an easy holiday snack, tinsel garland wreath, and

point ornament. It also included a cookbook of the agents' favorite holiday foods and some easy to make food gift ideas. The program was held on Friday, December 11, 2020 at noon. For one-hour participants followed along to make the items in their kit. The program was recorded, and the video shared for reviewing. Although it looked a little different, fun was still had, and Christmas joy was still shared.



District Happenings ...

DISTRICT 3

Stephens County Learn, Grow, Eat, Go!

The goal of a school garden is to provide “hands-on” group and individual learning experiences that provides a love of gardening, development of an appreciation for agriculture, and cultivating of the mind. Exposure to vegetables plus participating in a school garden have been shown to improve consumption of fruits and vegetables. Through the school garden we hope this love will carry home to the families, growing their own family garden and growing new advocates for agriculture.

Through this interdisciplinary program combining academic achievement, gardening and agriculture awareness, nutrient-dense food experiences, physical activity and school and family engagement. Youth Gardening Projects have been shown to help increase children’s self-esteem while also helping them develop a stronger sense of ownership and responsibility. I overall hope to achieve growing good kids that will grow up to be agriculture advocates.

The South Elementary Garden project will follow a linear set of academically rich, proven lessons. Students will learn about plants, what they need, how plants provide for our needs and how a class can work together to provide for the garden. Weeks of teacher led classroom lessons aligned with TEKS and STAAR standards, 4 Fall raised garden beds will be built, maintained and harvest year around. Student will keep up with a garden journal. Students will use the vegetables from the school garden to experience fresh vegetable tastings in class and vegetable recipe demonstrations in class. Students will have the opportunity to take vegetable from the school garden to conduct recipes at home.



DISTRICT 3

Knox, Wilbarger, Wise, Baylor, Childress, Montague, & Parker Counties **Rolling Plains Diabetes Education**

The goal of a school garden is to provide “hands-on” group and individual learning experiences that provides a love of gardening, development of an appreciation for agriculture, and cultivating of the mind. Exposure to vegetables plus participating in a school garden have been shown to improve consumption of fruits and vegetables. Through the school garden we hope this love will carry home to the families, growing their own family garden and growing new advocates for agriculture.



Family and Community Health County Extension Agents in Knox, Wilbarger, Wise, Baylor, Childress, Montague, and Parker Counties planned, implemented, and posted online via social media a series of public service announcements, and recipe demonstrations related to diabetes education. They included:

- 11/03 - ABC's of Diabetes public service announcement - 781 reached, 37 engagements
- 11/05 - Sweet Potato Muffin Recipe Demonstration - 1324 reached, 79 engagements
- 11/09 - Keeping Blood Glucose in Check public service announcement - 546 reached, 44 engagements
- 11/13 - Peach Crisp Recipe Demonstration - 23 reached, 26 engagements
- 11/16 - Portion and Plate Size public service announcement - 527 reached, 51 engagements
- 11/19 - Waldorf Salad Recipe Demonstration - 889 reached, 77 engagements
- 11/23 - Type 2 Diabetes Facts or Myths public service announcement - 160 reached, 16 engagements
- 11/24 - Pumpkin Pie Parfait Recipe Demonstration - 434 reached, 33 engagements
- 11/25 - Celebrating Sensibly with Diabetes public service announcement - 46 reached, 10 engagements
- 11/30 - Healthy Coping Strategies w/Diabetes public service announcement - 428 reached, 35 engagements
- 12/01 - Reducing Complications of Type 2 Diabetes public service announcement - 254 reached, 18 engagements

Knox, Baylor, Bell, Childress, & Wilbarger Counties **Central Region Mental Health Education**

The COVID-19 pandemic increased the challenges that families were facing in 2020. A Central Region FCH team saw the need to address the issue of stress due to COVID-19 and developed a series of virtual programs to provide families with the information and tools they needed to help them cope successfully, while social distancing and being at home. Programming efforts included:

- Conducted “Stress Less: Mind Matters COVID-19 Edition in May. This program provided a general overview of stress and its effects on the body, with emphasis on how COVID-19 played a role. 48 participated virtually
- Developed and distributed video via social media regarding healthy activities to relieve stress in May. The video discussed simple activities that could be done at home when a person feels overwhelmed. viewed 2,100 times
- Developed and distributed video via social media regarding healthy stretches to relieve stress in May. The video emphasized breathing, along with simple, low impact moves that can be beneficial in relieving muscle tension. viewed 763 times
- Conducted “A Good Night’s Rest is Best” in June. This program discussed the importance of sleep and provided tools to help develop and maintain good sleep habits. 33 participated virtually
- Conducted “Carrot, Cake or Casserole: How to Manage Stress Eating” in June. This program discussed how to recognize hunger cues. 40 participated virtually
- Conducted Eating with Purpose and Without Guilt” in July. This program focused on being mindful about what and how you eat, while recognizing that the stress of the current pandemic can have an effect on eating patterns. 23 participated virtually
- Conducted “Your Work, Your Life: Keeping a Healthy Balance” in October. This program focused on recognizing the roles work and family play in managing stress. 15 participated virtually
- Promoted and released the links to the recorded sessions to local Headstart parents, October 34 viewed the series
- Conducted “Managing Stress During the Holidays” in December. This program focused on how to recognize and reduce holiday stressors. 21 participated virtually

The recordings of each of the programs were made available for families to view virtually after each session, 425 people viewed the recordings from May to December.



District Happenings ...

DISTRICT 4

Hopkins County Fall 4-H Foods Project

The pandemic didn't slow down the 4-H Foods & Nutrition project for Hopkins County. Agent, Johanna Hicks, and a team of volunteers provided five project kits per member to pick up from the Extension Office and complete at their leisure. Each kit included two or more challenge to complete. Projects included:

- Set the Table; Read the Label – learning how to set a casual and formal place setting; exploring nutrition labels and comparing two similar items from their pantry
- Mix and Measure – recognizing the difference between liquid and dry measuring cups, and measuring spoons; measuring specific ingredients using the correct utensil
- Gadgets and Gizmos – identifying various kitchen gadgets; learning to use a spiralizer
- Exploring Herbs and Spices – using 4 different herbs and spices on mashed potatoes; using 4 different spices and extract on oatmeal
- Crockin' Kids – learning how to use a slow cooker and preparing a meal; food safety; how to convert a regular recipe to a slow-cooker recipe

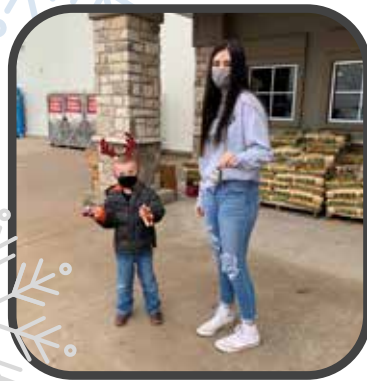


Hicks was able to purchase a spiralizer for each participant through a 4-H Foundation grant, and almost all items needed to complete the projects were included in the kits. Activity sheets from the Foods & Nutrition Explore Guides were used, as well as other resources. A check sheet for completed projects and an evaluation were included and upon returning both items to the Extension Office by November 10, participants received a Wal-Mart gift card. Seventeen members participated in the fall foods project and many sent pictures. One 4-H member invited his neighbors over to participate in the herbs & spices experiment with mashed potatoes. Other 4-H members enjoyed learning to set the table, while still another “went crazy” with the spiralizer, according to his grandmother. 100% of participants learned one or more new skills; 100% indicated that the projects were “super fun”; 100% understand how to correctly measure liquid and dry ingredients; 94% understand how to read a nutrition label; 94% can identify different kitchen tools and their uses. Another fun 4-H Foods Project is in the books!

District Happenings ...

DISTRICT 4

Rains County 4-H Community Service Projects



November and December were full of Community Service projects in Rains County!

Rains County 4-H Members helped raise money for local organization, Good Samaritans. Good Sam's is a non-profit organization serving the needs of residents of Rains County citizens. They provide food assistance, free clothing, and emergency assistance to those in need.

Due to COVID-19, we were unable to partner with Lone Oak 4-H, in Hunt County, for the Annual Any Soldier project, but we were happy to help when they decided to collect board and card games for patients at Children's Hospital.

Rains 4-H members collected more than 125 different items for donation. Games will be delivered to Children's Hospital and distributed to patients and families. Tis the season!



While COVID-19 changed many of our holiday traditions, it did not stop the wonderfully active members from the two Rains County Texas Extension Education Association clubs, Piece Makers and Crafty Ladies, from their annual Christmas Stocking Community Service Project. Members handmade more than 150 stockings to be donated this year.

Each year Rains TEEA members sew and donate handmade stockings to county children and veterans in need.

District Happenings ...

DISTRICT 5

San Augustine County Virtual College Fair



San Augustine High School Virtual College Fair was held in partnership with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and Rural Student Success Initiative (RSSI).

Texas Universities and Colleges along with schools from other states - Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Kansas participated in the event. On the day of the event, groups of Seniors & Juniors then Sophomores & Freshman viewed the video from the auditorium. The 8th grade was also included but viewed separately. Students watched the 55-minute pre-recorded presentation and then were moved over to Zoom meeting for a live panel discussion with representatives from the universities.

Students received contact information from each participating college and a bingo card. The spaces on the bingo cards consisted of statements the students learned about the school throughout each presentation, like location, student to faculty ratio, and anything that makes the college unique (for example: TSTC's application only takes 10 minutes to complete). Those that completed and returned the bingo card were in a drawing for gift cards. The students also received a link for an online survey to complete to tell us how we are doing with our programming.

Sandy Jenkins, San Augustine County Extension Agent and Sandi Russell, Counselor at San Augustine High School organized the event along with Derek Nido, Texas A&M University Regional Advisor who was the moderator for the sessions and Terry Vaught, Regional Advisor Texas State University, who graciously volunteered to build the presentation video. All 17 RSSI schools across Texas were invited to participate.



College/Universities that participated included:

Angelina College LeTourneau University Louisiana Tech University Mississippi State University
Panola College Southern Arkansas University Stephen F. Austin State University Texas A&M University
Texas A&M University – Commerce Texas A&M University – Texarkana Texas State Technical College
Texas State University Texas Tech University University of North Texas University of Texas at Arlington
University of Texas at Austin University of Texas at Tyler Wichita State University – Kansas

District Happenings ...

DISTRICT 6

Crockett County

Virtual 4-H FCH Projects

Crockett County 4-H and Clover Kid members were unable to meet in person for programs in December, so their Holiday activities for Food and Nutrition and Fashion and Interior Design project continued virtually.

For Fashion and Interior Design, the office created No Sew Stocking Kits of felt, pom poms, ribbon, and glue. 4-H Members met with FCH Agent via zoom to learn how to create their stocking!

For Food and Nutrition, the office premade chocolate shells for 4-H members to fill and seal at home. 4-H'ers received kits of chocolate shells, cocoa mix, marshmallows, and a candy cane to create their cocoa bombs safely at home.



Pecos County

Virtual Programs

Programming in Pecos County continues with a partnership with Fort Stockton Senior Citizen Center. The members are not permitted to meet for Face to face programming so Maria Gilbert and Karan Heffelfinger have been doing videotaping for Fort Stockton Senior Citizen Center Facebook .

Programs started with the “Grilling Like A Texan” which including types of grills, grill safety, and types of items to grill. The next program was on Emergency Preparedness and Food Safety for the month of September. For the educational program in October the kick-off with Creative Ways with Pumpkins including nutritional value, decorating, and preparation techniques. The November educational program was Pies which included classifications of pies, nutritional value, how to reduce calories and preparational value.

For the December program the request was Decorating techniques. The educational program was decorating with Poinsettias from real, artificial, paper origami and all one can do with Poinsettias. A service project was also completed by Extension, and TEEA donating Holiday gifts bags of toiletry items, cookies, and assorted snacks. A second service project was to decorate an outdoor space at the Fort Stockton Focus Care Center so the residents have Holiday Cheer to view from their windows.



District Happenings ...

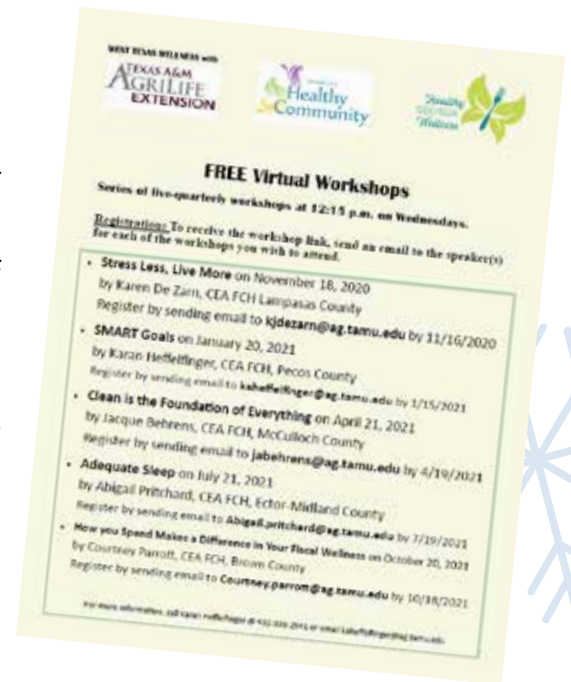
DISTRICTS 6 & 7

West Region (Districts 6 & 7)

West Texas Wellness

Starting in November 2020 and running through October 2021, FCH Agents Karen De Zarn (Lampasas), Karan Heffelfinger (Pecos), Jacque Behrens (McCulloch), Abigail Pritchard (Ector-Midland), and Courtney Parrott (Brown) presented a series of five-quarterly workshops focusing on wellness.

Sessions topics included: **Stress Less, Live More, SMART Goals, Clean is the Foundation of Everything, Adequate Sleep, and How You Spend Makes a Difference in Your Fiscal Wellness.**



DISTRICT 8

Eastland County

WATCH UR BAC

Virtual Training Offered by WATCH UR BAC Project

ALCOHOL AND DRUG AWARENESS PROGRAMS SCHEDULED
FIND A CLASS AND REGISTER / ATTEND MULTIPLE CLASSES

- Gateway Drugs - Nov 17 at 2p**
Introduction to what are Suboxone, Drugs and their harm
- Alcohol Monitoring Devices - Nov 18 at 2p**
Brief description of different devices, use and operation
- Impaired Motorcycling - Nov 18 at 10a**
What to look for to identify an impaired motorcyclist
- When Sean Speaks - Nov 18 at 2p**
Sean survived a horrific DRI crash as a passenger and he and his mother share their impactful story of life long consequences
- How Alcohol and Drugs Affect the Brain - Dec 2 at 2p**
Effects of Brain Development and Impact of Drug Use
- Media and Health - Dec 3 at 10a**
How Media Messages Influence the Public

The following are repeat of the above for second semester

- Alcohol Monitoring Devices - Dec 9 at 10a**
- Impaired Motorcycling - Dec 10 at 1p**
- Gateway Drugs - Dec 16 at 2p**
- When Sean Speaks - Dec 16 at 10a**

All classes are approximately 45 minutes

Click on the class to go register and instructions on how to join will be emailed to you.

Alcohol and Drug Awareness Program funded by TxDOT has started to make an impact in Eastland County. FCH Agent of Eastland County, Amy O'Brien-Glenn was interested in identifying programs that Texas A&M AgriLife had available to address some growing safety awareness and substance abuse issues in the County. After several planning sessions with Watch UR BAC Program Manager, Bobbie Brooks and her staff housed in College Station, a meeting was planned with Eastland County Judge and Justice of the Peace Pct. 1 and Justice of the Peace Pct. 2 via zoom to discuss the trends and educational trainings available to help the courts. The local Eastland County courts agreed to send appropriate offenders who could benefit from the educational programs to enroll with the local extension office, sometimes in lieu of court fees. The FCH Agent enrolls the client, and confirms they participate in the virtual trainings and take the evaluations following the courses, and then provides a certificate of completion for the client to present the court. The completed courses this year include: **Sean Speaks**, a program dedicated to spreading the word that Alcohol, Automobiles, and Asphalt do not mix, **Alcohol Awareness, Vaping, Distracted Driving, and Buckle Up. Every Trip. Every Time.**

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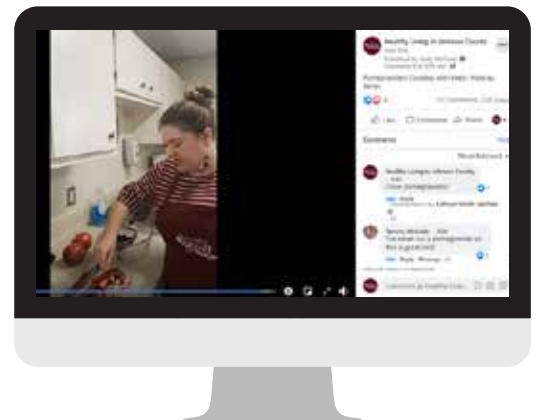
In addition, WATCH UR BAC had developed a Trends Update Training for Law Enforcement which Extension Agents can send to all their local Law Enforcement contacts. The awareness programs are virtual with evaluations which can be given back to the agent for reporting. The WATCH UR BAC program has developed some new programs to meet the needs in the counties this year with Extension Agent, Amy O'Brien-Glenn having the opportunity to participate in some planning, giving feedback, and viewing. Agent O'Brien-Glenn said, "It has been a personal passion and a favorite part of this job, thus far, knowing Texas A & M AgriLife can have such a meaningful impact on topics that affect so many in our county".

In Eastland County, the Agent has been working not only with the Courts but has met with local CPS staff to encourage them to use these valuable resources as needed with their clients, and our local Healthy Texas Youth Ambassador, Ryleigh Whitaker is helping get as many local teens in the county to watch these trainings, which are relevant, eye-opening, and impactful. The nice part of this program is they are all virtual now and can be watched on a phone or computer at the viewers convenience, especially during COVID-19. Several of the new trainings include: Trends Update Training for Law Enforcement, Problem Solving, and Gateway Drugs, Underage Drinking Prevention and Alcohol Poisoning, Media and Health, Brain Development, Effects of the Brain on Drugs and How It Relates To Impaired Driving, E-cigarettes and Vaping including Marijuana. If you have not watched these videos, I highly recommend you do and start spreading the word for others to watch, it could save a Texan's life.

Johnson County Cooking with Keely-Holiday Series

Due to recent COVID-19 restrictions and canceled programs, Johnson County FCH, Agent Keely McCrady, provided cooking tips for the holiday season to her clientele through a different avenue, Facebook live stream.

Operating on the Healthy Living in Johnson County page, McCrady hosted a live stream session every Wednesday morning since November 18th. Each session focused on helpful tips for cooking during the holidays. A few of the topics have included how to cut butternut squash, how to de-stem strawberries, and how to cook with cranberries. A recipe demo of the Dinner Tonight Cranberry Pecan Sauce was included with the cranberry lesson. Throughout the series, McCrady has tried to foster a more personal connection with her Facebook following and encourages viewers to share their cooking experiences and questions. So far, the videos have garnered over 700 views with a reach close to 2,000. The series will continue through the end of December featuring cooking tips for the Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's holidays.



District Happenings ...

DISTRICT 8

Bell County

Dinner Tonight! Healthy Cooking School



Dinner Tonight! Healthy Cooking School is still alive and well in Bell County! Jackie McLaughlin, FCH Agent, promotes Dinner Tonight! Healthy Cooking School with her Worksite Wellness Programs. One of her key worksites is City of Killeen and their employees. They have participated in Dinner Tonight! Healthy Cooking Schools for a several years and with great attendance and Jackie could not let this year go by without having at least one Dinner Tonight Cooking School with them. A Bell County Master Wellness Volunteers is the Worksite Wellness Coordinator and Human Resources Director, with her help, several of AgriLife programs are promoted throughout the year.

Joined by Andrea Haubner, FCH Agent in Williamson County, A ‘Trip to the Mediterranean’ was held virtually by Zoom in October with City of Killeen employees. Recipes prepared and demonstrated included: Mediterranean Beef Pitas, Fresh Beet Slaw, Roasted Kale with Caramelized Onions, Balsamic – Infused Berries, and No -Bake Dark Chocolate Bars. Jackie likes to say that every on in attendance thought the food tasted great, but we all know that is a stretch of the truth!

Erath County

Eldercare Conference



Andrea Brooks, FCH Agent, held the first annual Eldercare Conference in Erath County virtually on October 24th, with content sessions open through November 30th in celebration of National Caregivers Month. This conference was the result of funding by the local Texans Reducing Food Insecurity and Depression grant project in support of programs reaching those in the 55+ population, collaboration with Tarleton State University, Texas Health Resources, and other local partners. The conference was originally planned to be in-person and scheduled for April, but was moved to a virtual platform due to challenges associated with COVID-19. The TFID grant fund allowed for this conference to be provided at no cost to community and family caregivers, but CEU’s were available for licensed professional counselors, social workers, and select others at a \$20 rate.

Specifically tailored to the needs of our local caregiver population, sessions including a keynote It Hurts to Care! Help for the Helper, Opioid Use in Older Adults in Rural Communities, Navigating Familial Role Changes, Understanding Memory Issues: What’s Really Happening, Loss, Grief, and End of Life Issues, and Faith-Based Resources for Caregivers. Speakers included Dr. Sushma Sharma from the Dallas-Fort Worth Hospital Council Foundation, Dr. Subi Gandhi (Public Health Program Advisor and Professor at TSU), Dr. Julie Merriman (Associate Dean and Professor in College of Health and Human Services at TSU), Dr. Melody Loya (Department Head and Advisor for Social Work program at TSU), and other distinguished community speakers. This conference was attended virtually by 26 people, and the committee plans to offer it again in 2021 in either a virtual or in-person format.

District Happenings...

DISTRICT 8

Bell, Bosque, and Williamson Counties Maintain No Gain



For six weeks in the Summer of 2020, 106 participants from 14 Central Region counties participated in a revamped virtual **Maintain, No Gain**. Hosted by Chris Coon (Bosque), Andrea Haubner (Williamson) and Jackie McLaughlin (Bell), this program, while traditionally a holiday season program, was redesigned to meet

the needs of individuals who found themselves with added stress, reduced physical activity, and tempted by mindless eating during this particularly interesting season.

Program materials were adapted to meet the time of year and made to fit in an email format. Agents were then encouraged to send these emails themselves and adapt them to their counties to stay involved with their clientele. Of the 106 participants, 50 completed the pre-survey, 20 completed the post-survey, and of those, 16 participants completed both. After working with Extension Specialist Paul Pope these were some of the results: 86% showed a decrease/no change in weight, 50% had increased their water intake, and 46% were including more vegetables at every meal.

While the return rate for completed pre-/post-survey stands at only 15%, the team of agents behind this consider it a victory. In the future of virtual programming there is a need for new strategies related to participant retention and survey returns. I would like to thank our colleagues across the Central Region for being on the front line of this program; and Paul Pope for his tireless efforts to draw out our needed data.



Ellis County Nutrition Education Partnership

Ellis County FCH agent partnered with Waxahachie ISD and Lighthouse for Learning Community Education to provide various nutrition education programs. Programs included Cooking Under Pressure, Air Fryer Cooking, and Dinner Tonight-Trip to the Mediterranean.

For the Dinner Tonight Cooking School, agent co taught with local Master Gardener/Master Wellness Volunteer to deliver comprehensive lesson on cooking and gardening for the Mediterranean eating pattern. Five classes were completed in October and November, with a total of 35 participants were reached. Participants were able to enjoy a face-to-face learning experience in a safe, socially distanced setting.

Agent plans to continue classes with Lighthouse for Learning in Spring 2021.



District Happenings...

DISTRICT 9

Brazos County Breast Cancer Awareness



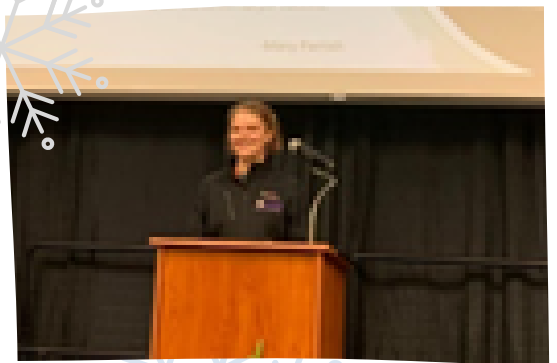
October was Breast Cancer Awareness Month! Texas A&M AgriLife Employee Wellness hosted a virtual Breast Health Awareness presentation on Wednesday, October 21, 2020. Flora Williams, Brazos County Extension Agent Family and Community Health discussed the basics about breast cancer including ways to lower risks through controllable lifestyle choices.

A customer satisfaction survey showed that 95% of the 20 who returned the survey learned something new, 70% were likely or very likely to talk to their health care provider about cancer screenings within the next three months, and 100% indicated that they would use the information presented in the future. Employees thought the presentation was informative while some wanted more information on genetic testing.

Brazos County Outstanding Volunteer Recognition

On November 4, 2020 the Brazos County Office of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and PVAMU Cooperative Extension Program had their annual volunteer appreciation luncheon. Flora Williams, FCH Agent, announced the 2020 Outstanding Brazos County Family and Community Health Volunteer was awarded to Mrs. Mary Parrish-Iles. She has an astounding dedication to teaching health and wellness across the lifespan.

Mary is a member of the FCH/BLT Committee and the Walk Across Texas Taskforce. She has presented annually at childcare provider conferences, instructed BLT classes, and serves as an administrator to the WAT Facebook page, and on the marketing and mass media task group. Congratulations to Mary! She earned her black jacket.



District Happenings ...

DISTRICT 9

Brazos County Annual Elected Officials Luncheon

Brazos County FCH Agent, Flora Williams, co-workers, and the Brazos Leadership Advisory Board hosted the annual elected officials' event. This event highlights the educational programs conducted by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and PVAMU Cooperative Extension Program staff and volunteers.



Speaking on behalf of the family and community health program area and the Better Living for Texans program area were Mary Parrish-Iles, Henry Lewis, Dorothy Rainwater. Representing the FCH/BLT committee on the Leadership Advisory Board was Sara Mendez. They did a fantastic job telling the Extension story to local and state elected officials and administration.

Brazos County Annual 4-H Fashion Tour

Brazos County FCH Agent, Flora Williams, held the annual fashion tour was held on October 5. The Fabrics and Heroes Fashion Tour made three stops.

- **Stop 1:** College Station Police Department-Officer Snell presented an informative talk on the history and an overview of police uniforms. We left something EXTRA behind for the department to enjoy.
- **Stop 2:** Park Cleaners-Ben and Garrett Liles enlightened us on the clothing care business and equipment necessary for their operation. We even learned some of the famous people whose clothes have been cared for there.
- **Stop 3:** Cato Fashions-Georgia Williams, a clothing retail associate and former Brazos County 4-H Fashion Ambassador, shared what a typical day looks like in the store. She also talked about fashion trends.

We were excited to see new families!



District Happenings ...

DISTRICT 9

Brazos County Countywide Fashion and Fibers Workshop

Flora Williams, Brazos County FCH Agent gives kudos to the youth and adult fashion ambassadors for instructing the November 2 fashion and interior design workshop. The workshop focus was natural fibers and agriculture's role in fashion.



Peyton and Lana Smith instructed the wool session. This session demonstrated shearing a sheep followed by a question/answer session. Lainey and Courtney Dodd instructed the fabric burn test of natural and manufactured fabrics. Students performed burn tests of common fabrics. Olivia Davis and Peggy Leach instructed the bandana hanger covers simple sewing project. They also discussed drawbacks of using wire hangers. Grace and Amy Moravec instructed the no sew fleece blankets. They will be donated to Scotty's House.



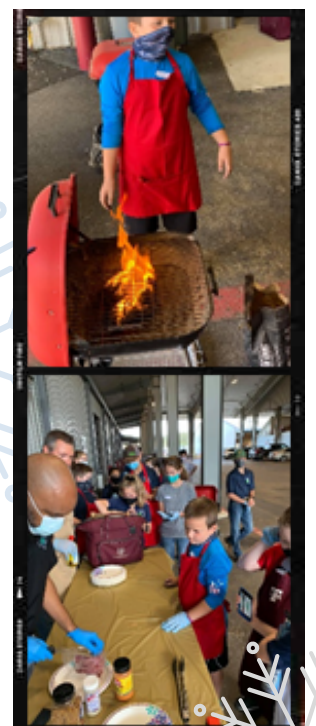
We were super excited for the new and returning families who came out. Special thank you to Texas Farm Bureau for the Clover Cash Grant that funded the workshop. Fashion would not be the same without the hardworking farmers!



Brazos County Annual Countywide Food and Nutrition Workshop

Brazos County FCH Agent, Flora Williams, highlights the Annual County Food and Nutrition Workshop. Sessions included a gardening hour with Mr. Skip Richter, cuts of beef and grilling 101 with Mr. Dusty Tittle. The young people learned about and planted carrots, spinach, and lettuce. Produce will be donated to a local community group in the future. The 4-H members also learned to set up a charcoal grill and cooked yummy steaks. Other sessions included nutrition lessons on fats and sugars taught by Mrs. Makayla Donaldson and Olivia Davis. Food demos of side dishes were presented by Carson and Lainey Dodd (Quinoa Broccoli Salad), Lance and Mark McGarr (Baked Potatoes and the fixings), and Frank Watson (Grilled Corn). The workshop concluded with a presentation on Food Safety and Quality Testing at Blue Bell by Stacy Eckert.

Thank you to the Youth and Adult FAN Ambassadors, Master Wellness Volunteer Julie Prouse, and the Extension Team. Everyone did amazing. A Texas Farm Bureau Clover Cash Grant provided most of the funding for the gardening and grilling workshop.



District Happenings ...

DISTRICT 9

Harris County Virtual Healthy Holidays Harvests

In recognition of National Diabetes Awareness month, Harris County FCH Agent, Dr. Sonja Davis, and the Harris Family & Community Health Program Area Committee partnered with UHealth Physicians and The Willow Partnership to host a virtual Healthy Holidays Harvest on November 12th.

The program was developed to provide individuals living with diabetes with information to empower them to remain in control of their blood sugar during the holidays, when an overabundance of high carbohydrate foods is consumed. Topics discussed were meal planning, water consumption, surviving holiday parties, mindful eating, and coping with the Holiday Blues.



Better Living for Texans Extension Agents, Jorgensen and Brown, conducted live food demonstrations of healthier options for traditional side dishes such as dressing, sweet potatoes, and green bean casserole. Participants really enjoyed the presenters and the information shared to remain healthy in control of their blood glucose during the holiday season.



Harris County Virtual Wisdom, Power Control Series

FCH Agents, Dr. Sonja Davis and Amanda Krippel, conducted a virtual Diabetes Self-Management Series that met twice a week from September 8th-October 1st. The agents were approached by representatives from Methodist Hospital who noticed an increase in hospitalizations related to diabetes. This series was developed to provide information for individuals living with Type II diabetes to manage their blood glucose during the pandemic.

The series was conducted in 8, one-hour sessions over a 4-week period with an average of 20 attendees. The Teams platform allowed for live interaction and participation between the attendees and the agents. If participants missed class, they received a YouTube link to view the recorded class to ensure they did not fall behind and allow for questions if they had any during the following class.



Harris County staff playing music during the move more class to encourage participants to dance, walk and move more.

Weekly sessions provided participants with information on understanding diabetes, knowing the difference between high and low carb foods, blood glucose readings, treating low blood glucose, the healthy plate method, reading nutrition facts labels and carb counts. Participants set weekly goals and completed homework assignments related to the 7 Diabetes Self-Care Steps: eat healthy, move more, check blood glucose, check eyes, teeth, and feet, take medication, see your doctor regularly and manage stress.

District Happenings ...

Harris County Fall Planters Program

Paul Winski (Horticulture Agent), Dr. Sonja Davis (FCH Agent), and Dara Cunningham (Community Relations) partnered with State Representative Alma Allen to host Fall Planters Program for seniors on November 10th. Winski taught participants the three elements of beautiful planters: thrillers, fillers, spillers, selecting pots, along with soil and pot selection and watering.



Agent Davis shared information about Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Harris County and assisted Winski. It was a great day and all the seniors left with gorgeous fall planters that they made.



DISTRICT 9



Orange and Liberty Counties District 9 TEAFCS Program

The District 9 Winter FCH Training and TEAFCS virtual meeting. County Extension Agents Fallon Foster (Orange) and Alexis Cordova (Liberty) hosted the training. They provided an interactive training on “Fostering EMPATHY and Gratitude During the Holidays and Beyond.” Agents were encouraged to complete a Self-Awareness Inventory and share best and worst experiences of the year through an activity of “Rose, Thorn, Bud.” Training objectives were to understand what the definition of Empathy is and how important it can be in our life and our profession, to learn how to recognize and identify feelings to better communicate both in-person and virtually, to practice and improve our responses to difficult common issues using higher thinking skills, to learn the different types of Empathy and know when to use them appropriately, and to “See the Good Gifts” in others.



We learned that teaching and practicing empathy is different in current times due to the state of our nation, agency, and virtual environment. As growing leaders in our communities, empathy is specifically an important characteristic to establishing and fostering strong relationships with others both in person and virtually, collaboration wins in getting things done and partnership is critical towards strengthening our programming impacts and outreach, and how having an open mind and actively listening to our team, committees, clients and leaders can be critical to successful efforts moving forward through the holidays and into the next programming year.

District Happenings ...

DISTRICT 10

Bexar County Kids & Cows Cattle Drive

Bexar County Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service staff and volunteers (including 4-H members and families) held a new event Kids & Cows Cattle Drive (replacing Kids, Kows & More, for Bexar County schools, which was cancelled due to COVID-19).

Held at the San Antonio Rose Palace, the event was kicked off by Bexar County Sheriff on Saturday and Ms. Rodeo on Sunday. In order to stay safe and healthy, participants signed up online for a time to drive through, experiencing the event from the safety of their own vehicle using an app. Stations highlighted Texas commodities and farm life to bring attention to agriculture. Participants visited station to see farm animals, crops, and equipment on their agricultural ride. Attendees could use a phone to track stations and learn more through videos created by staff members.

Youth received goodies at each station, supplies to do projects at home, and families could participate in a scavenger hunt from their vehicle. This family event was fun for all ages and expanded the audience from youth to families. A total of 278 participated in the event.

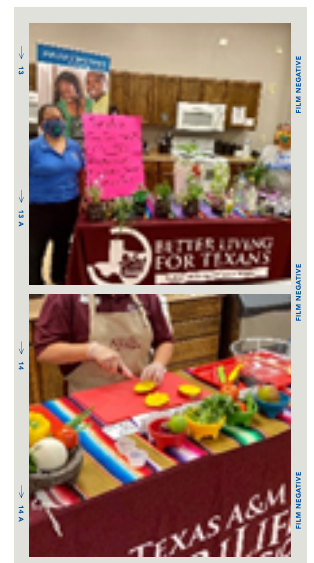


Bexar County Taste of Fiesta: A Virtual Dinner Tonight

Bexar County AgriLife Extension partnered with San Antonio Oasis and River City Produce to host Taste of Fiesta, a Dinner Tonight Program encouraging families to make healthier choices for meal such as making fresh salsa to enjoy with meals. Taste of Fiesta is traditionally a face-to-face event focusing on food safety and container gardening with a hands-on recipe experience. The Agent teaches how to make the recipe while providing the nutritional value and importance of the ingredients. Due to COVID-19, the event was modified into a virtual event for safety precautions.

When restrictions were lifted, FCH Agent Angie Gutierrez safely presented this program to the senior community San Antonio Oasis serves. AgriLife staff secured an in-kind fruit, vegetable, and herb donation from River City Produce and organized the event with AgriLife Agents presenting remotely. Participant received pre-washed salsa ingredients allowing them to follow along as Gutierrez presented on the importance of the fruits, vegetables, and herbs. Additionally, participants learned about container gardening from Master Gardener volunteers. Ashley Hernandez, Health & Wellness Educator, addressed the importance of food safety measures, CLEAN, SEPARATE, COOK, and CHILL.

A total of 27 seniors participated in the event and followed social distancing and other safety precautions. The first virtual Taste of Fiesta combined fun with education and was well received by the senior community. We thank our partners, San Antonio Oasis and River City Produce, for helping deliver this event in a safe manner.



District Happenings ...

DISTRICT 11

District 11 Counties Focus Friday



District 11 TEAFCS members worked on an initiative throughout the last quarter called Focus Friday. The purpose of the initiative was to bring awareness to health and wellness programs in AgriLife Extension by bettering the lives of Texans. Members of the association participate by producing educational videos each Friday.

During the last quarter, topics ranged from healthy side dishes to quality sleep environments. Focus Friday videos are available to view on the District 11 TEAFCS Facebook page. Be sure to follow the page to see weekly educational content as we focus on our health and wellness!



San Patricio County Walk Across Texas

Kathy Farrow, FCH Agent in San Patricio, hosted a County Walk Across Texas where 20 teams logged a total of 30,265.98 miles over a eight-week period. The program is aimed at helping participants establish the habit of daily physical activity with support from their peers. Research suggests, that when people walk for a period of eight weeks, they are more likely to walk for the long term. Participant feedback indicated team members increased energy levels, reduced stress and lost weight.

Potential economic impact of the Walk Across Texas Program in San Patricio County is \$830,652. 111 participants reported in the online wrap-up evaluation form that they benefitted from the participating in the program.



Participant Comments:

"It helped me to motivate myself to a daily schedule of walking. I also extended the distance I walk (1 mile became 2½ miles). Although, I generally go to the gym, now the walking has become a daily need. I did not lose much weight but clothing that did not fit is now comfortable!"

"Lab results were much better. No sugar medicine for me."

District Happenings...

DISTRICT 12

Hidalgo County

Step Up, Scale Down & Walk Across Texas

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Hidalgo County along with neighboring counties are implementing several virtual programs to help increase activity, including **Step Up, Scale Down** and **Walk Across Texas** every. Programs began in November of 2020 and will run through January of 2021.



Step Up Scale Down is a 12-week educational program based on the USDA Dietary Guidelines, which help Americans choose a healthful eating plan within their calorie requirements to achieve and maintain a healthy weight. The Dietary Guidelines provide sound scientific information about how proper dietary habits can promote health and reduce risk for major chronic diseases.

Walk Across Texas is a FREE, 8 week program designed to help Texans establish the habit of regular physical activity. Since 1996, more than 142,000 Texans have completed the program to significantly increase their physical activity level.

Hidalgo County

Drive-Thru Volunteer Recognition Ceremony

The Hidalgo County Master Clothing Volunteers hosted a drive-thru volunteer recognition ceremony on December 8, 2020. This program year, the MCVs held 4 community service projects and prerecorded sewing tutorials to continue the program virtually due to COVID-19.



Hidalgo, Cameron, Starr, and Willacy Counties Online Cooking Course

Extension agents from Hidalgo (Andrea Valdez), Cameron (Lilian Mezquida), Starr (Yolanda Morado), and Willacy (Perla Flores) Counties hosted an online Cooking Well course in October 2020. 315 participants were reached during the presentations and food demonstrations.



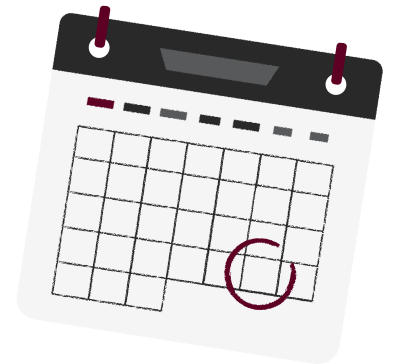
Editor's Note

Thank you to everyone that submitted something for this edition. I enjoyed seeing the different ways we continued to adapt programming with COVID-19 and enhance our digital presence and capabilities!

If you are a District Editor and did not receive a submission reminder from me or from your District President, please email me, sarah.latham@ag.tamu.edu, to ensure you are on my list and will receive future reminders.



Dates to Remember



Texas Extra Dates

Submission Due Date

March 15, 2021
June 15, 2021
September 15, 2021
December 15, 2021

Edition Release Date

April 1, 2021
July 1, 2021
October 1, 2021
January 1, 2022

