TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

SOUTH REGION

IMPACTS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

2016

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

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South Region Overview

The South Region consists of District 10 and District 12 which are the southwest and southern districts in Texas for A&M AgriLife Extension. The South Region demographics include a total population of 5,669,802 with 32.26% white, 59.89% Hispanics, 5.31% African American, 1.16% Native American and 2.06% other. In addition, the South Region is comprised of 41 counties and supported by 2 District headquarters at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research & Extension Center in Uvalde (D10) and at Weslaco (D12). Also, the South Region has two urban counties who are designated a County Extension Director who oversee faculty and staff in Bexar and Travis County.

Today, the South Region continues its mission to support agriculture, families, and youth of South Texas with its technical expertise, training, and educational programs. Trainings and educational programs are implemented and conducted by A&M AgriLife Extension faculty and staff. There are total of 112 County Agents and Specialty Agents in the South Region and a total of 50 program assistants that provide program support in some form of educational capacity.

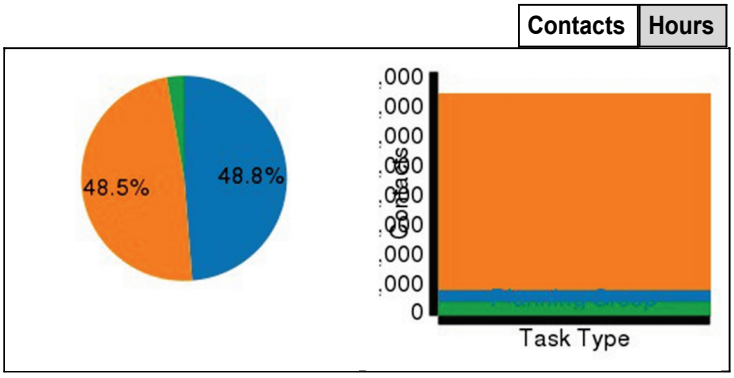
South Region Educational Contacts

Total Contacts	**2,069,912**
Educational Events	**752,823**
Other Contacts	**1,317,089**

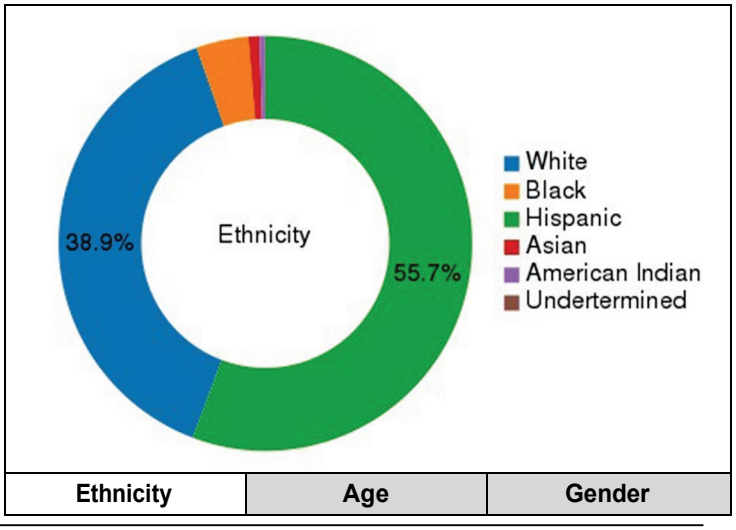
Educational Events

	Contacts	Hours
All Session Contacts	**752,823**	**2,357,532.75**

Plan Level	Contacts	Hours
In-Depth	**367,088**	**886,614.45**
Outreach	**365,275**	**1,396,755.6**
Organizational Support	**20,460**	**74,162.66**
Task Type	**Contacts**	**Hours**
Planning Group	**47,126**	**104,056.39**
Educational Method	**661,703**	**2,128,215.3**
Interpretation	**43,994**	**125,260.99**
Delivery Method	**Contacts**	**Hours**
Face-to-Face	**742,134**	**2,294,886.4**
Technology Assisted	**10,689**	**62,646.33**



Demographic		
Ethnicity	**Contacts**	**Hours**
White	**291,965**	**1,144,955.5**
Black	**30,603**	**158,339.01**
Hispanic	**418,010**	**982,909.66**
Asian	**6,450**	**38,744.60**
American Indian	**3,191**	**20,351.53**
Undetermined	**179**	**169.70**
Age	**Contacts**	**Hours**
Adult	**276,849**	**820,475.86**
Youth	**474,082**	**1,539,896.7**
Gender	**Contacts**	**Hours**
Male	**348,202**	**1,119,474.8**
Female	**402,013**	**1,226,048.4**



Volunteer #s

- Total Volunteer Contacts – 338,103
- Total #of Volunteers – 29,829

Regional Team

- Todd Swift – Regional Program Leader - ANR and 4-H Youth Development
- Luisa Colin – Regional Program Leader- FCS and 4-H Youth Development
- Kathleen Greer – District Extension Administrator – District 10
- Dr. Ruben Saldana – District Extension Administrator – District 12
- Nelda Speller – County Extension Director – Bexar County
- Madelena Johnson – County Extension Director – Travis County

Feeding Our World

AgriLife Extension teaches agricultural producers to adopt best management practices based on new scientific knowledge that will help them increase production, enhance sustainability, and conserve natural resources. And by educating the public about agriculture and food production, AgriLife Extension creates a partnership with all Texans that can improve food safety and security, reduce the prevalence of food deserts in our urban areas, and improve nutrition throughout the state.

Accomplishments

- Beef Cattle production ranks number one in agriculture commodity groups in production and value added revenue. 12 counties in the South reached 2,144 beef producers through educational programs outlining best management practices. 41 result demonstrations were conducted in beef, forage, and rangeland management. 83.3% of participants planned to adopt at least one best management health practice. 83.8% reported a potential economic benefit of $15.64 per head of livestock. 11% estimated more than $25.00 per acre benefit from participation in these programs.
- Ten counties participated in programming to topics related to the Sugar Cane Aphid. In the Rio Grande Valley alone approximately 400,000 acres of Grain Sorghum are planted each year. A team of Agents, Specialist, and Researchers collaborated to present 17 educational group methods to producers in this Superior Service Award winning program. An estimated $66 million dollar Sorghum crop was saved due to these educational efforts and the section 18 approval of pesticides for use controlling Sugar Cane Aphid. Estimates of total crop value saved for 2014-2015 now stands at $265 million in the LRGV and Upper Gulf Coast.
- Field Crop production of Forage, Cotton, Vegetables and Grains requires the use of latest technologies and expertise by producers to be profitable. Soil test campaigns and proper nutrient management is important to the profit margins and the environmental issues. Twenty one Counties offered soil testing, nutrient management, and pre-plant education. $450,000 of economic benefit as reported by participants.

$ 2.245 Billion-Total Annual Ag Income

Top Six Enterprises:

- Beef Cattle - $987 million
- Hay Crops - $290 million
- Hunting - $279 million
- Vegetables - $209 million
- Cotton - $208 million
- Fruit and Nuts - $91 million

Protecting Our Environment

Safeguarding our precious natural resources and maintaining a clean and healthy environment are among AgriLife Extension's top priorities. We promote sustainability in agricultural production, conduct conservation programs that reduce drought impacts, improve and preserve water quality, minimize wildfire risks, and help maximize water supplies through more efficient irrigation and conservation. We also help to promote the safe and reduced use of pesticides through the integrated pest management program.

Accomplishments

- Water quality and conservation continues to be a major issue across Texas, particularly in the arid Southern Counties. Thirty one counties conducted events that reach adult and youth audiences in the areas of home, landscape, and agriculture production activities. 53,052 contacts related to water were made through events including Water Camps, Rainwater Collection, Hydrologic Stream Trailer demonstration, Water Well Screenings, Rainfall Simulators, Investigating Water, 40 Gallon Challenge, Irrigation Efficiency workshops, Master Gardener presentations, Healthy Streams, Aquaponics, and Earthkind. Of the participants evaluated 73.3% said they "definitely" or "probably" would adopt at least one of the best practices for conservation technologies presented.
- South Texas is known for some of the most interesting and diverse wildlife habitat in the United States. In 2015 6 face to face county programs addressed the emerging issue of Chronic Wasting Disease in the whitetail deer populations. All 41 counties offered mass media and press releases on the confirmed positive of this disease in Medina County. Extension Agents responded quickly learning information to address questions from the wildlife interested public.
- Quail population and habitat management programs were conducted in 9 South Texas Counties. Dimmit, Kinney, Real, Blanco, La Salle, Wilson, Uvalde, Zavala, and Brookes Counties. Quail Appreciation days were offered by Dr. Rollins and staff at two different locations in the South Region. 758 participants were involved in 307 events that addressed Deer, Quail, Predator, and Feral Hog management.

Growing Our Economy

All AgriLife Extension programs make an economic impact and create a significant return on investment for Texans. For more targeted economic investment, Extension helps communities grow by supporting entrepreneurship, developing leaders, and providing job-related continuing education. We help families and individuals learn to save and budget their money, make informed decisions about investing, and prepare for financial risks and major life events. Our custom-designed programs keep the Texas economy healthy and moving forward.

Accomplishments

- Many families face the constant challenge of managing limited resources to meet everyday expenses. Family Consumer Sciences Agent provided financial management program to increase the financial literacy of a variety of Texans. A total of 1,271 participants went through a financial program series either through Money Smart of Money Management in the South Region.

- Over 60 percent of children from birth through age 6 receive some form of child care on a regular basis from persons other than their parents. In the South Region, county extension agents and community partners held 4 multi-county and/or single county Child Care Providers Conferences and Directors Providers Conferences. A total of 309 child care providers and directors who provide care for more than 5,615 children enrolled in 76 child care centers or family day homes received over 1,903 clock hours of training. An additional 459 child care providers and directors who obtained 2,754 clock hours of professional development training in special needs children.

- Through the support and guidance of partner agencies and the AgriLife staff in Cameron, Willacy, and Hidalgo counties offered 3 agri-business workshops, assisted producers with Small Farm Production, Marketing & Food Safety program which brought new ideas for new farmers to start a business. Topics included Egg production, SARE Grant programs, Funding Opportunities, Food Safety Issues and How To Make $1.00 per Square Foot.

- Participants involved were able to apply skills and knowledge gained to better their financial goals. 95% of participants showed an increase of knowledge gained in support of programing. This program also offered a program that addressed new Agriculture Opportunities for Veterans & Beginning Farmers & Ranchers workshop held in Edinburg, Texas. This program added a youth component by offering Kids, Kows, and More to 300 students in Willacy County. 98% of the students evaluated indicated an increase in knowledge in level of how our food gets from farm to table.

Improving Our Health

Through a wide range of programs, AgriLife Extension educators help Texans take control of their own health to prevent and manage chronic diseases and conditions such as diabetes, asthma, and obesity; prevent infectious diseases; improve meal planning and food budgeting; increase physical activity; and improve food safety. With a new focus on health, Extension's goal is to reduce avoidable hospitalizations, health complications, and emergency room visits.

Accomplishments

- With the incidence of diabetes rising, the Do Well, Be Well Diabetes program helped people adopt strategies to improve management of their disease. In the South Region there were 101 participants that completed the 5 week educational series. The potential health-care costs savings resulted from improved management of diabetes was an estimated $6,534,802.
- Better Living for Texans program in the South Region reached 1,541 participants with the Back to Basics curriculum which focuses on meal planning, stretching food dollars, and adopting selected behaviors that can reduce the risk of foodborne illness. In addition, a total of 339 participants completed the Three Easy Bites curriculum which focuses on diet related best practice behaviors related to breakfast, snacking and dinner.
- The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) offers practical lessons in basic nutrition, food preparation, food budget management and food safety in settings convenient for the participants. In the South Region there are 5 county EFNEP offices. A total of 11,723 participated in the adult phase of the program and 4,496 completed the 7 week program and 3,591 are still continuing in the program. In the youth phase of EFNEP, a total of 57,396 youth completed the 6 week series in the 5 EFNEP offices.
- The Master Wellness Volunteer Program provides volunteers with 40 hours of training in health and nutrition education. In return, the volunteers agree to give back 40 hours of service. In the South Region, there were a total of 22 Master Wellness Volunteers trained and 133 educational activities/programs implemented in the South Region.
- Walk Across Texas! is an eight week program to help people of all ages support one another to establish the habit of regular physical activity. A total of 296 adults' and 51 students participated. A total of 57,596 miles were averaged and the total potential economic impact was approximately $3 million dollars.

Enriching Our Youth

For over a century, AgriLife Extension has conducted youth development programs, including Texas 4-H, working in partnership with schools and youth organizations as well as with thousands of volunteers. Today, we offer hands-on learning experiences that help young people develop leadership, responsibility, and a spirit of service. Our goal is to ensure the health and well-being of our young people and to encourage them to be the leaders and motivators of tomorrow.

Accomplishments

- The Counties of Bandera, Caldwell, Gillespie, Kerr, and Kimble combined efforts to offer the multi-county YALL tour. (Youth Agriculture Lifetime Leadership) This tour promoted ag literacy and agriculture careers to youth, and was open to all senior age 4-H members of the South Region. **174** youth traveled by bus to the Panhandle of Texas to visit 16 different agriculture related business operations over a 5 day period. The linear evaluation strategy for this program will be to survey alumni of the program to determine if participation in the tour influenced their decision to pursue an agriculture related career. Verbal feedback from two Agents involved, "this was one of the most rewarding and potentially impactful programs they had been a part of in their Extension career."
- Welcome to the Real World! is an experiential learning program that allows young people the opportunity to learn about personal finance through real-life learning experiences without the real-world consequences. In the South Region a total of **2,391** students went through the program and a total of **85** adults went through the training.

- The **Regional Learn, Grow, Eat & Go Training** attracted **84** Educators, AgriLife Extension Master Volunteers, and AgriLife Extension staff from Hidalgo, Starr, Willacy, Webb and Cameron County schools for a day-long workshop with outdoor horticultural demonstrations and classroom activities based on the LGEG curriculum. This workshop was held May 8, 2015 at Palmer Elementary in Pharr, Texas.
  In addition to the train-the-trainer workshop for educators, a Gardening and Horticulture program for 4-H youth members of the Santa Rosa 4-H club was held. Topics of discussion were planting seeds, basic gardening and management, nutrition, and harvesting. Students also did some hands on activities such as planting seeds in small cups that they were able to take home. 4-H members also expressed interest in creating a vegetable garden for the 4-H club and some members expressed interest in competing in the horticulture division at the Rio Grande Valley Livestock Show.
  91% of participants agreed to definitely adopt the Junior Master Gardener curricula.
  3% of the participants have already adopted the curricula

- In the South Region a total of enrolled 4-H Club members were **13,075**.

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

About the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

Extending Knowledge. Providing Solutions.

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service strives to help all Texans learn and prosper from practical, research-based knowledge. With a statewide network that includes 252 county offices, extension educators and their more than 96,000 volunteers serve all 254 Texas counties, making some 25 million teaching contacts a year. Major outreach efforts include improving water quality and conservation, human health, and food systems. Our Texas 4-H Youth Development Program engages nearly 600,000 youth annually. Extension education provides a unique force for the betterment of Texas.

Learn more at *AgriLifeExtension.tamu.edu* or follow us on Twitter at *@txextension.*