

AgriLife Extension
South Region



**South
District**



Making a Difference... ...in Duval County

District Extension Newsletter for Commissioners' Courts in South Texas



Samuel Gavito
Agriculture &
Natural Resources

In 2007, AgriLife Extension celebrated the 100th anniversary of the County Extension Agent and of the Texas 4-H Program. I want to thank you for your continued support of Extension, but more importantly, for the opportunity it provides us to serve the people of Duval County. I hope you find this newsletter helpful in updating you about the difference that Extension education is making in Duval County and the public benefits these differences mean economically, socially, and environmentally to the community. We feel strongly that these preventive, educational approaches to community issues provide present and long term value to the County and its residents.

Ruben J. Saldaña
District Extension Administrator

Agriculture & Natural Resources

On October 29th and 30th, 2007, the Duval Extension Agent attended a training in Fort Worth, which consisted of county agents from across various districts in Texas. The training consisted of the County Animal Security & Health Network (CASHN) pilot test for the rapid transmission of timely alerts and educational information from the state veterinarians office to the local Extension office to local feed retailers and their customers. This was to aid in the early detection and rapid reporting of a foreign animal and zoonotic disease. This concept was developed by the National Center for Foreign Animal and Zoonotic Disease Defense (FAZD) to protect the U.S. agriculture and food infrastructure by connecting “backyard non-commercial livestock and fowl owners in the county” with veterinary information for early detection and rapid response. This plan is designed to implement bio security practices to help reduce the threat to the agriculture infrastructure in your county. The target audience for this program are local feed store owners and their customers. There were 3 alert test messages on an outbreak of foot and mouth disease, avian flu, and a fever tick outbreak from the State Veterinarians office on February 1st, February 20th, and April 1st, 2008 to the Duval Extension office. The Extension office then relayed this information to the local feed store owners, who cooperated with the Duval Extension agent. The feed store owners reached a total of 62 contacts. The Texas-wide results indicated that feed stores averaged 493 customers per week. Seventy-five percent of the feed stores indicated they preferred receiving alerts from their County Extension Agent rather than directly from their State Veterinarian. Sixty-nine percent of feed stores first received the message personally from the county extension agent, which was either by phone or a personal message. Twenty-seven percent received the alert by fax, and twelve percent by e-mail. In the post survey conducted by the Duval County feed store owners, they believed CASHN had a value for their business and felt that the CASHN pilot test was a very good idea due to the credible sources the information was coming from. The feed store owners in Duval County indicated they would like to be notified by telephone or a personal visit and not by fax or e-mail.



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**2008
Educational Outreach**

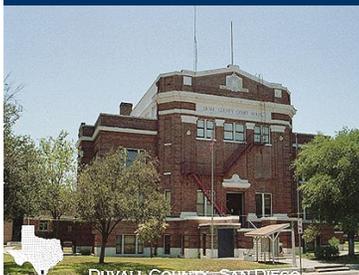
Education in Group Settings

Number of Sessions	47
Number Contacts	2,337
Hrs Instruction	13,526

**Visit us at:
<http://duval-tx.tamu.edu>**

2008 4-H Enrollment

Club Members	98
Total Enrollment	98



4-H & Youth Development

Texas has the highest participation totals in 4-H and FFA livestock projects in the country. In 2000, there were over 70,000 market entries for steers, swine, meat goats, and lambs across the state (Boleman, Howard, Smith, & Couch, 2001) These figures have continually climbed over the last decade and into the new millennium. Thus, Quality Counts in Texas has been developed for 4-H and FFA members who participate in these livestock project areas. Quality Counts in Texas is a new program for 4-H and FFA youth across Texas that exhibit livestock projects. This includes such market and breeding projects as beef cattle, sheep, swine, and goats. The purpose of Quality Counts in Texas is to provide an opportunity for youth across Texas to learn personal character attributes and acceptable livestock management practices associated with these projects. This unique combination of subject matter should result in the exhibition of the highest quality livestock projects by youth with unsurpassed character and ethics. Ultimately, this program will be an integral part of the junior livestock program. This will eventually lead to a safer, more wholesome nutritious product that is fed by responsible youth of Texas who are dedicated to providing the best meat products for consumers. The Quality Counts Program was implemented in Duval County by the Duval County Extension Agent. The Jr. High and High School age 4-her's from San Diego participated in this Quality Counts program on November 24th, 2008 at the San Diego Civic Center along with the club managers and parents. Topics taught to the 4-hers included the purpose of livestock projects in 4-h and FFA, quality assurance, and the 6 pillars of character and how to apply them to livestock projects. Food safety and potential hazards in meat products. Proper care of livestock that include medications, withdrawal times, drug residues, and proper facilities. Showing with sportsmanship and defining true success in the show ring. The pre-test was given to 10 San Diego 4-hers at the beginning of the 3 ½ hour session with the average 4-her missing 25 out of 42 questions for an average grade of a 40. PostNone of the 4-hers knew the 6 pillars of character on the pre-test. Following the session which included 8 segments of the cd and notebook, the post test was given and the results were very good. The average questions missed out of 42 was 4. This gives an average grade of a 91. This is an increase in knowledge by 51%. The average number of questions missed was 25 on the pretest, compared to only 4 on the post-test. On the post-test, all of the 4-hers knew the 6 pillars of character.



Agent Sam Gavito with members of the Duval County 4-H Rifle Team