Educational programs of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin.


Educational programs of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin.

Enhancing Our Horticulture

East Austin Garden Fair

The East Austin Garden Fair is an annual event offered each spring. The focus of this year’s fair was “edible landscaping.” Many people do not have the space or the time to invest in a large garden, but that shouldn’t stop them from planting a few easy-to-grow vegetables. The goal was to educate the community on integrating vegetables into small areas of the landscape, or even grow them in containers on a patio. Over 200 people attended the garden fair in 2011, where they were able to visit booths, see demonstrations, and gather information on edible landscaping, proper irrigation and soil amendments for food crops, how to grow tomatoes and other vegetables, as well as rainwater harvesting, backyard chickens, worm composting, and gardening with children. Each year, participants are given a free plant if they visit every booth, and this year’s give away was a tomato plant.

Supporting Our Agriculture

Rainwater Harvesting Workshop

Rainwater harvesting has been the focus of many environmentally-forward thinkers for quite some time, and it continues to be an important method of sustaining the availability of our natural resources. And after Central Texas experienced the worst drought and hottest summer on record, the importance of rainwater harvesting has only increased. Efficient water-use is increasingly important to Texas, and with the state’s growing population and limited supply of both ground and surface sources, we must use water wisely. In response to this important issue, nine presentations were offered and one all-day workshop was held, with a total of 512 participants. In addition, consultations were given at three schools that installed extensive rainwater harvesting systems.

Pesticide Applicator Licensing

It is of paramount importance for those wishing to use pesticides know how to do so safely and effectively, while with minimal effect on the environment. Pesticide applicator licensing is regulated by the Texas Department of Agriculture. The Texas AgriLife Extension Service partners extensively with the TDA in many areas, including providing educational programs for individuals wishing to obtain their pesticide applicator license.

Information on pesticide laws and regulations, integrated pest management strategies, safe use and handling of pesticides, and how to deal with particular pests (animal, plant, and disease) is presented at these monthly programs. In 2011, Extension offered the four-hour required training program 10 times, with a total of 61 participants.

For more information, contact:

Dolores Sandmann
County Extension Director
1600-B Smith Road, Austin, TX 78721
512.854.9600 • FAX 512.854.9611
DSandmann@ag.tamu.edu
http://travis-tx.tamu.edu

2011 Educational Outreach

Educational Programs Presented: 4,574
Attendance at Educational Programs: 97,624
Individual Contacts: 180,620
Volunteers Involved: 1,269
36,543 Volunteer Hours
Value at $780.558*

*Actual value of volunteer time, provided by Independent Sector

Get Ready Program—Youth Learning Leadership Skills

Get Ready is a new initiative proposed by Austin Independent School District for 6th graders from Harris, Winn and Pecan Springs Elementary schools. 15 youth from each of the three schools were selected to participate. Get Ready is designed as a preparatory program to help youth become more equipped to graduate high school, develop their leadership skills, and increase their understanding of county government and how it functions.

Space Camp

This summer 4-H CAPITAL instructors led Space-themed lessons at eleven Austin ISD and Del Valle ISD summer camp programs, reaching 536 youth. The program corresponded academically with the students Science TEKS standards for the school year.

National 4-H Week

The 4-H CAPITAL Project celebrated National 4-H Week (Oct. 3 – 7) in a big way! Our youth participated in One Day 4-H — the state-wide 4-H day of service, and National Youth Science Day.

During One Day 4-H our kids wrote 340 letters of support to the young victims of the Bastrop County fires. 4-Hers learned about the disaster and how it affected the Bastrop communities. They also worked with their instructors to learn about fire safety and how they can prevent wildfires in their areas and stay safe in the event of a disaster. The children then made homemade games and puzzles, drew pictures, and even donated gently used toys and books to accompany their letters. The letters were distributed to the children at Lost Pines Elementary school who lost their homes.

For National Youth Science Day, 257 4-H’ers participated in a nation-wide science experiment on wind energy. Students created their own wind turbines and meas-

The Extension program in Travis County is part of the statewide Texas AgriLife Extension Service and the Cooperative Extension Program at Prairie View A&M University. It is a member of The Texas A&M University System and is linked with Texas county governments and the national Cooperative Extension System. Extension values and promotes citizen and community involvement, scientifically-based education, lifelong learning and volunteerism.

Our Extension programs in Travis County provide residents with relevant, research-based information and services to improve individual health, wellness and family stability, promote agriculture, develop leadership life skills for youth, protect our natural resources, and develop strong communities. In the midst of challenging economic times, and drought related issues, Extension provides an outstanding return investment by leveraging funding through grants, strategic partnerships, and extensive use of volunteers. We are pleased to provide you with this 2011 annual report of our educational activities in Travis County as we respond to the unique needs of our dynamic urban area.

Dolores Sandmann
County Extension Director

2011 Annual Report of Travis County Extension Service

In 2011, this volunteer corps contributed almost $277,000 to Travis County (current per hour value of volunteer time was $21.36, from independentsector.org). Volunteer projects include answering phone, drop-in and email gardening questions, hosting educational booths at various community events, offering an educational garden tour, providing presentations upon request, offering twice-monthly free seminars on timely horticultural topics, providing consultations to schools and other community groups on establishing gardens, and many other valuable efforts.

Volunteers Involved:

Attendance at Educational Programs:

Volunteer Hours

Valued at $780.558*

Extension in Travis County

Making a Difference

Developing Our Youth

Get Ready Program—Youth Learn Leadership Skills

Get Ready is a new initiative proposed by Austin Independent School District for 6th graders from Harris, Winn and Pecan Springs Elementary schools. 15 youth from each of the three schools were selected to participate. Get Ready is designed as a preparatory program to help youth become more equipped to graduate high school, develop their leadership skills, and increase their understanding of county government and how it functions.

Space Camp

This summer 4-H CAPITAL instructors led Space-themed lessons at eleven Austin ISD and Del Valle ISD summer camp programs, reaching 536 youth. The program corresponded academically with the students Science TEKS standards for the school year.

National 4-H Week

The 4-H CAPITAL Project celebrated National 4-H Week (Oct. 3 – 7) in a big way! Our youth participated in One Day 4-H — the state-wide 4-H day of service, and National Youth Science Day.

During One Day 4-H our kids wrote 340 letters of support to the young victims of the Bastrop County fires. 4-Hers learned about the disaster and how it affected the Bastrop communities. They also worked with their instructors to learn about fire safety and how they can prevent wildfires in their areas and stay safe in the event of a disaster. The children then made homemade games and puzzles, drew pictures, and even donated gently used toys and books to accompany their letters. The letters were distributed to the children at Lost Pines Elementary school who lost their homes.

For National Youth Science Day, 257 4-H’ers participated in a nation-wide science experiment on wind energy. Students created their own wind turbines and meas-
have heightened consumer awareness of the need for financial literacy education. The Financial Literacy Coalition of Central Texas (FLCCT) was founded by Texas AgriLife Extension – Travis County to be a leading, trusted, unbiased and credible source of personal financial education. 118 programs were conducted by trained volunteer instructors in 2011, with 1,851 clientele participating.

\section*{Walk Across Texas! Increases Physical Activity}

Community-wide programs like Walk Across Texas! have been strongly associated with significant increases in physical activity. This program reached the following participants in Travis County during 2011...

\begin{itemize}
  \item 5,296 total adults participated on 313 teams.
  \item 16 agencies/groups participated.
  \item 3,520 adults finished the 8-week program logging 374,246.35 miles.
  \item Teams walked 451 times across Texas.
\end{itemize}

\section*{S$49,707,877 million dollars could be saved in potential lifetime health care costs and lost wages for 2011 Walk Across Texas! participants.}

Economic Impact of WAT—Medical research shows that exercise and weight loss can permanently or temporarily delay the onset of Type 2 diabetes in 58 percent of people. 751 WAT participants (22%) could prevent the onset of diabetes through increased physical activity over their lifetime.

\section*{Project DEAP (Diabetes Education Awareness Prevention)}

Diabetes was the sixth leading cause of death in Texas in 2002-2007. In 2007, 5,105 deaths were directly attributed to diabetes. In Travis County, diabetes is the leading cause of death for African Americans (47.2%), Hispanics (45.8%), and whites (15.1%).

Project DEAP outreach was conducted primarily in 78702 and 78723 zip codes. Educational programming focuses on awareness, prevention, and lifestyle changes. Diabetes classes and activities were conducted at senior activity centers, faith based institutions, apartments for seniors, and community centers. Respondents had a good understanding of diabetes (60%), awareness of family history and diabetes (58%), and inactivity (62%) as risk factors for diabetes. There was also an awareness of the connection to diet and blood sugar control (65%) and the need to use less salt, sugar, and fat (66%) when preparing food.

Whereas the literature is replete with the importance of physical activity and diabetes management, respondents had inactive lifestyles (79%). At least 50% of participants had a good understanding of damage to the body with uncontrolled diabetes. Actions to be taken as a result of outreach include: sharing information with family and friends (34%); reading food labels (38%); using portion control (44%); and eating more fruits and vegetables (49%). Comments include: “gave me a deeper understanding of the seriousness of complications associated with diabetes,” “good information, very helpful for people who are not diabetic to keep a check,” “started working out most days of the week and try to put a control on diet,” and “made me understand diabetes better and to be careful... helped me to talk about it more to other people.”

Additionally, outreach included newsletters, flyers, and public service announcements (1100); the annual St. Patrick’s Diabetes Dance (200 participants from five senior centers); health awareness symposiums (182 participants); and free health screenings for blood pressure and blood pressure (84).

\section*{Walk Across Texas!}

Walk Across Texas! is a series of lessons on improving eating habits for breakfast, dinner and snacking; and utilized the Nutrition Facts Label as a tool when buying food.

As a result of participating in BLT programs, the following dietary quality results were achieved:

\begin{itemize}
  \item 85% reported using the Nutrition Facts Label to determine fat content when shopping for food, a 53% increase over pre-test results.
  \item 85% reported using the Nutrition Facts Label to determine serving size or portion control, a 62% increase.
  \item 86% reported using the Nutrition Facts Label to determine sodium content when shopping for food, a 57% increase.
\end{itemize}

BLT Success Story:

“I buy more fresh products than products that are already made. I try to compare different brands by reading the labels and getting the one that is the healthiest and by me doing this I have been able to lose 10 pounds.” -Bentura A.

\section*{Walk Across Texas!}

Walk Across Texas! is a series of lessons on improving eating habits for breakfast, dinner and snacking; and utilized the Nutrition Facts Label as a tool when buying food.

As a result of participating in BLT programs, the following dietary quality results were achieved:

\begin{itemize}
  \item 85% reported using the Nutrition Facts Label to determine fat content when shopping for food, a 53% increase over pre-test results.
  \item 85% reported using the Nutrition Facts Label to determine serving size or portion control, a 62% increase.
  \item 86% reported using the Nutrition Facts Label to determine sodium content when shopping for food, a 57% increase.
\end{itemize}

BLT Success Story:

“I buy more fresh products than products that are already made. I try to compare different brands by reading the labels and getting the one that is the healthiest and by me doing this I have been able to lose 10 pounds.” -Bentura A.

\section*{Walk Across Texas!}

Walk Across Texas! is a series of lessons on improving eating habits for breakfast, dinner and snacking; and utilized the Nutrition Facts Label as a tool when buying food.

As a result of participating in BLT programs, the following dietary quality results were achieved:

\begin{itemize}
  \item 85% reported using the Nutrition Facts Label to determine fat content when shopping for food, a 53% increase over pre-test results.
  \item 85% reported using the Nutrition Facts Label to determine serving size or portion control, a 62% increase.
  \item 86% reported using the Nutrition Facts Label to determine sodium content when shopping for food, a 57% increase.
\end{itemize}

BLT Success Story:

“I buy more fresh products than products that are already made. I try to compare different brands by reading the labels and getting the one that is the healthiest and by me doing this I have been able to lose 10 pounds.” -Bentura A.