Community-wide Fire Ant Management

In 2002, Riggs et al showed that community wide fire ant management programs can help reduce red imported fire ant populations and reduce pesticide costs for community residents. By forming community wide programs for neighborhoods, fire ant reinestation can be reduced or delayed. Two community wide fire ant programs were continued in 2014. These programs cover over 1,800 acres and include over 1,400 homes. 81% of respondents said the program has moderately to greatly reduced risks to human health within the community while 85% said the program has moderately to greatly improved their family’s quality of life.

Pesticide Applicator Licensing

Learning how to use pesticides safely and effectively, with minimal effect on the environment is important. Pesticide applicator licensing is regulated by the Texas Department of Agriculture. AgriLife Extension partners extensively with the TDA in providing educational programs for individuals wishing to obtain their pesticide applicator license. In 2014, Extension provided the four-hour required training program to 93 participants.

Supporting Our Agriculture

Supporting our farmers and ranchers has always been a high priority for AgriLife Extension. In 2014, 227 participants attended beef cattle programming to learn the importance of nutrition, reproduction, and herd health. Ninety-two percent of individuals surveyed showed an increase in skills needed for managing their herd.

Last year AgriLife Extension also took a role in education about the move of the yellow sugarcane aphid into the central Texas area. A multicounty program hosted by 5 counties educated 82 farmers on how to tell the difference between the white and the yellow sugarcane aphid, signs of infestation and the treatment methods for each type. Educational programming also included a farm tour to view damage from corn ear worms. Farmers in attendance at both programs said they were “pleased to see row crop education provided in this area.”

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Ensuring Our Health

Financial Literacy

The Financial Literacy Coalition of Central Texas (FLCCT) works in partnership with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension to be a leading, trusted, unbiased and credible source of personal financial education. The FLCCT uses nationally recognized curriculum, Money Smart, to assist instructors in providing financial literacy education to clientele. During 2014, 107 FLCCT programs were conducted, with 770 clientele participating.

2014 Educational Outreach

Educational Programs Presented: 6,780
Attendance at Educational Programs: 97,923
Individual Contacts: 426,695
Volunteers Involved: 1,786
47,967 Volunteer Hours
Valued at $1,081,656*

*Hourly value of volunteer time, provided by Independent Sector

Strengthening Our Families

Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program

EFNEP offers practical lessons in basic nutrition, food preparation, food budget management and food safety to young families and youth most at risk from hunger and food insecurity. During 2014, EFNEP staff enrolled 618 families and 4,711 youth in a series of classes. Upon completion, 96% increased consumption of at least one food group; and 90% improved one or more nutrition practices such as using the “Nutrition Facts” on food labels to make healthier food choices.

Studies have shown that for every $1 spent on EFNEP, $10 was estimated to be saved in health care costs and $2 saved in food costs by participants. For Travis County, this is $4 million in estimated health care cost savings and almost $806,000 in food costs.

Heroes 4 Health

Teen leaders at LBJS High School were selected and trained to teach their peers about nutrition/physical activity education. 107 programs were conducted reaching 1,401 youth. 207 surveys were completed with 89% reporting they had learned how to make healthier food choices.
Better Living for Texans  
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program  
248 programs were conducted in 2014, with 6,338 SNAP eligible individuals and families participating. Using “hands-on” experiences, BLT participants completed a series of lessons focusing on meal planning, stretching food dollars, and decreasing fat and sodium consumption. As a result of participating in BLT programs, the following behavior changes were achieved: 
- 84% reported using the information about FAT on the food label when shopping, a 46% increase over pre-test results. 
- 83% reported using the information about SODIUM on the food label, a 50% increase. 
- 81% used the information about SERVING SIZE on the food label, a 56% increase over pre-test results. 

Step Up, Scale Down  
Step Up and Scale Down is a 12-week weight management program designed to address two factors behind the obesity issue: physical activity and diet. Thirty people enrolled and twenty completed the program. Evaluation included a pre, post, and 30-day follow-up survey with the following behavior changes reported: 
- 75% use calorie information at fast food restaurants, a 40% increase over pre-test. 
- 50% always plan meals and snacks, a 40% increase. 
- 50% fill two-thirds of their lunch and dinner plates with fruits and vegetables, a 25% increase. 
- On average, participants lost 7.5 pounds during the 12-week period, for a total of 165 pounds. 

Childhood Obesity Prevention Program  
In Travis County, about two-thirds of adults and one-third of children are overweight or obese. To address this issue, 49 educational workshops were conducted, reaching 6,338 people. Health and wellness surveys addressed changes in behavior and knowledge were completed by 604 youth and adults. Health and wellness surveys addressed changes in behavior and knowledge were completed by 604 youth and adults. Health and wellness surveys addressing changes in behavior and knowledge were completed by 604 youth and adults. 

Dinner Tonight!  
Video Webcasts  
1,147 recipients have requested the weekly Dinner Tonight! email blasts that feature a video demonstrating a quick and healthy recipe, that is cost effective. An additional 39,000 are reached each week through TCTV, Channel 17, Travis Central, and external partners. Dinner Tonight! videos and recipes can be found at http://betterliving.tamu.edu.

Enhancing Our Horticulture  
Master Gardener Program  
With the critical need to address issues regarding natural resources, having a corps of well-trained volunteers is essential to the ability of Extension to make an impact in our communities. Community service and leadership is vitally important to educating the public on many environmental issues, including water conservation and the safe use of fertilizers and pesticides. To address this need, Extension in Travis County offers an annual 14 week training program. Thirty-one participants were accepted into the 2014 training cohort. At the completion of their training period, 100% of participants indicated that they would modify their soil to conserve water in the landscape and that they would decrease their use of pesticides; 95% indicated an intention to improve the management of their home irrigation systems; and 95% indicated that they would decrease their water use by more than half. 

Youth Learn Consumer Decision Making  
Consumer Decision Making (CDM) gives youth the opportunity to make wise decisions when shopping. CDM is a judging contest designed to teach kids to observe, compare and make consumer based decisions on facts. 4-Hers use their consumer knowledge to rank similarly based products to fit a given scenario. Kids learn to organize their thoughts and to defend their decisions in oral reasons. Four senior and junior teams were members of the 2014 team, devoting seven months to studying and practicing for the state contest; reading and writing scenarios, researching products, preparing and judging classes. The 2014 Travis County 4-H Senior Consumer Decision Making Team has had an outstanding year competing in contests. The team placed at all contests in which they competed and finished strong at Texas 4-H Roundup winning 1st place and advancing to Nationals in January 2015. The intermediate and junior teams also did very well, placing at most of the contests in which they competed. This was the first year for a county contest to be conducted and there were 20 youth who competed in the event. One senior earned a $10,000 scholarship from the San Antonio Livestock Show for placing first at the contest.

4-H CAPITAL Builds Character  
4-H CAPITAL strives to teach positive character development using the Connect with Character curriculum. All instructors teach the Six Pillars of Character: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship. In 2014, 3,825 contacts were made and 487 Character Counts sessions were led for a total of 822 hours of instruction. Across the board, the program positively impacted the youth's attitudes. The percentage of students who increased positive attitudes within each Pillar of Character are indicated in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Positive Attitudes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Civility</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairness</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4-H CAPITAL After-School Science Programs  
4-H CAPITAL engages youth in hands-on engineering and design to teach low-income youth 21st Century skills that they need to be successful. Programs focused on engineering and technology supplement learning during the school day by applying school day learning to real world experiences. This year student projects included using animal behavior with small mammals, computer programming for a 3-D printer, building their own city, and much more. 2,233 youth participated in 4-H CAPITAL after-school programs during 2014. Survey results from youth enrolled in the Fall indicated the following results:

- 55.5% of youth enrolled in 4-H CAPITAL programs at the trended program 30 days or more (613 youth). A standard measure set by the State of Texas to measure program impact on youth outcomes. 
- 71% of those who attended the program 30 days or more (337 youth out of 475 completed surveys) demonstrated an increase in science engagement. 
- 40% of those who attended the program 30 days or more (190 youth out of 475 completed surveys) demonstrated an increased interest in science.

Youth Science Experiment  
Travis County 4-H was the recipient of a $15,000 National 4-H Council Grant that was sponsored by the Philips Company through the Philips Cares Program. Travis County 4-H partnered with Hays and Guadalupe counties to offer workshops on the Magic of Electricity. Over 200 youth and adults participated in the hands on learning experience of how to wire a model house.

Youth Scholarships  
Ten Travis County 4-H members received $33,000 in scholarship monies to be applied to their college education.

Take A Stand  
Over 100 youth were reached through the efforts of Travis County Extension agents training teachers and conducting the TAKE A STAND Against Bullying lesson series at over 20 local elementary schools.

Photography Project  
One of the biggest projects in Travis County, had a 52% increase in submissions (over 2013) and related photo submissions for over 2014. A new contest was implemented this year called Pho- tography and an intermediate team from Travis County placed 1st at the District contest.