

DENTON COUNTY AGRILIFE UPDATE

FEBRUARY 2021

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

4-H & YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Multiple 4-H members were out exhibiting their projects at statewide shows this month. Even though some shows are canceling fair events, many are still letting 4-H and FFA students compete with their projects. Members recently competed with steer, sheep, and goat projects at the San Angelo Stock Show. Evan Sylvester had a second-place heavyweight Dorper lamb. In addition to livestock projects, multiple Denton County members participated in public speaking this year.

A new contest for steer exhibitors, "The Patriot Livestock Show" was held in Abilene. Five 4-H members showed steers at this show. Taylor Grubbs placed her Hereford steer at the event. Denton County Livestock Ambassadors, Grace and Kyle Real, were involved in the Flag Ceremony at the San Antonio Livestock Show. Three steer exhibitors and one goat exhibitor participated at the event. Stockton James placed first with his market goat and Dresden James and Taylor Grubbs placed their Hereford steers 4th and 5th.

Back here at the county, we were finally able to host our County Food Challenge event for local members. The event was held on Feb 29th and we had seven junior/intermediate teams participating. Six of those teams will advance to the District Contest in March. The event was held at the North Texas Fairgrounds. Master Wellness volunteers helped judged the event that promotes food and nutrition, health, teamwork, and public speaking.

Members are given forty minutes to prepare a dish from scratch without the instructions found in a recipe. Teams must be adaptable, creative and quick thinking in this contest.



HORTICULTURE

Agent Laminack partnered with Tarrant County AgriLife Extension, Upper Trinity Regional Water District, and Tarrant Regional Water District to host a virtual Green Professionals course with two in-person site visits. Topics covered included “Water Conservation and Water Efficient Landscapes,” “All About Turfgrass,” “Low Impact Design in Landscapes,” “Irrigation Technology and Scheduling,” and “Low Water Use Plants.” This course is designed for landscape professionals to enhance their knowledge of sustainable landscape practices and lower their environmental impact.

Master Gardeners helped the Denton County Soil and Water Conservation District distribute 555 trees to 61 citizens. This annual event provides county residents the opportunity to buy trees at an affordable price. Proceeds benefit the Cool Shade for Third Grade program in Denton County schools. They also presented virtually for their annual Flower Mound Public Library Series. Topics covered included “Organic from the Ground Up,” “Beyond a Sprig of Parsley,” “Trees Please,” and “The Pleasures and Pitfalls of Perennial Plants.”

The Master Gardener Help Desk answered 63 calls in February. Many residents sought information on protecting plants before Winter Storm Uri and advice on what to do about freeze-damaged plants.

Our Master Gardener intern class continued with three class days in February covering “Plant Development,” “The Soil Environment & Prepping and Earth Kind Garden,” and “Plant Pathology.”

The Master Naturalists led bird hikes at Lewisville Lake Environmental Learning Area and Clear Creek Natural Heritage Center, educating 21 youth and adults. They also answered 43 calls through the DFW Wildlife Coalition’s Wildlife Hotline.

Master Naturalist applications are now being accepted through April 30th. Classes will be each Tuesday starting August 17th through November 2nd. Class size is limited. For more information or to print off an application, visit <https://txmn.org/elmfork/join-our-chapter/training/>.



AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Winter storm Uri, which devastated most of Texas, is estimated to have caused 600 million in damages to Texas agriculture, according to AgriLife Extension Economists.

Our state director recently discussed the storm and its impact. Jeff Hyde, Ph.D., AgriLife Extension Director, Bryan-College Station said, “Freezing temperatures and ice killed or harmed many of their crops and livestock as well as causing financial hardships and operational setbacks. And the residual costs from the disaster could plague many producers for years to come.”

Specifically in Denton County, farmers had trouble finding fuel and fuel additives to keep diesel generators and tractors running. Cattle and livestock suffered extremely low temperatures.

USDA Farm Service Agency has setup multiple programs that provide support for loss from the storm.

Monty Dozier, Ph.D., AgriLife Extension Program Director for disaster assessment and recovery, said the data related to agricultural losses was acquired through the agency’s extensive statewide network of agents and specialists.

Statewide damage estimates are separated into three different groups of agriculture crops across the state: citrus crops, livestock, and vegetable crops. Citrus crops are estimated to have suffered \$230 million in damages, \$228 million for livestock, and \$150 million for vegetable crops.



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BETTER LIVING FOR TEXANS

ADULT PROGRAMS

TEXAS A&M
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EXTENSION

CREATING OPPORTUNITY,
CHANGING LIVES

The USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. This material was funded by the USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - SNAP.

ABOUT BLT

WE PROVIDE RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE-BASED NUTRITION, HEALTH AND WELLNESS KNOWLEDGE TO EMPOWER INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, AND COMMUNITIES TO MAKE POSITIVE CHANGES FOR HEALTHIER LIVES

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

WALK ACROSS TEXAS! (WAT!)

- This 8-week program encourages increased physical activity. Within teams and leagues, participants track their mileage aiming for a team goal of 832 total miles.
- WAT! is a fun, health-promoting competition for a work place, community, or anywhere where teams can be formed

WALK N TALK

- This program is set up like WAT! but includes nutrition messages.
- There are two version of this series:
 - Rethink Your Drink – focuses on staying hydrated and reducing sugar sweetened beverage intake
 - Fruit & Vegetable – each week participants learn about a different fruit or vegetable.



IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL DELIVERY OPTIONS AVAILABLE FOR ALL PROGRAMS
EACH PROGRAM USES SURVEYS TO COLLECT IMPACT DATA.
IN-PERSON PROGRAM SESSIONS ARE APPROXIMATELY **45-60 MINUTES** IN LENGTH.

GARDENING

GROWING AND NOURISHING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES - GARDEN COURSE

- This 6-session series teaches participants how to grow fruits and vegetables, thus improving their access to fresh produce.
- Participant survey data:
 - 20% of participants reported an increase of vegetables available in their home.
 - Over 8,000 pounds of produce harvested in one year.

OTHER SINGLE SESSION/ TOPIC PROGRAMS AVAILABLE

NUTRITION

A FRESH START TO A HEALTHIER YOU!

- This 4-session series promotes healthy living by teaching about balanced/nutritious meals and snacks, food safety, saving money on food, and daily physical activity.
- Participant survey data shows:
 - 15% increase in eating fruits and vegetables.
 - An increase in planning meals, using a grocery list, and comparing prices while grocery shopping.

A FRESH START TO A HEALTHIER YOU! ONLINE

- In the online version of this series, participants can view the sessions on any device with internet connection.
- This series consists of 4 short sessions that participants can take at any time that works best for them!

BE WELL, LIVE WELL

- This 5-session series promotes healthy aging for adults over age 50.
- Participant survey data revealed:
 - 15% increase in fruit/vegetable intake.
 - 15% increase in the average number of days participants were physically active for at least 30 minutes/day.

GET THE FACTS

- This 4-session series helps participants learn how to use the Nutrition Facts panel to make healthy food choices.
- The sessions provide a better understanding of sodium, fats, added sugars, and portion size.

HEALTHY CARBOHYDRATES

- This 4-session series focuses on healthy types and portions of carbohydrates to help reduce chronic disease risk.
- Through engaging activities, participants learn about creating a healthy plate, carbohydrate counting, and physical activity.