Things are beginning to pick up for our 4-H program. In March, members competed at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. Members made the premium sale with their sheep and steer projects. They also competed in livestock judging (8 Participants) and shooting sports (8 participants). Following the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, members competed in our Denton County Youth Fair the last full week of March. Due to the cancellation of the event last year, many families were thrilled to be able to hold the event in 2021. The schedule for this event was modified from years past to better social distance due to the pandemic. Participants came, checked in, and exhibited all in one day this year. 4-H members won multiple awards including Reserve Grand Champion Lamb, Grand Champion Goat, Reserve Grand Champion Goat, Grand Champion Steer, and Champion Junior Public Speaking.

During the week of the county youth fair, 4-H members were also competing at our District 4 Food Challenge event in Sulphur Springs, TX. We had 1 junior, 4 intermediate, and 1 senior team compete this year. Through the food challenge contest, members learn life skills like public speaking, food and nutrition, teamwork, and creativity. At the county level, we held a Duds to Dazzle competition (9 participants) and County Fashion Show (2 participants). The County Photography Contest was also held in the month of March, we had 8 members submit a total of 50 photographs, with 15 entries advancing to state.
Agent Laminack and Fred Burrell showed Green Pros class members around the Denton County Historical Park and the Courthouse on the Square. They talked about turfgrass, weeds, and irrigation for different situations.

Agent Laminack toured Texas Green Star in Sanger. This company is in the process of converting the old Color Spot Nursery into a hydroponics facility that will be producing organic leafy greens. Once the facility is complete and fully operational, it will be the largest leafy green producer in the nation. Laminack also met with Highland Village about training for their parks and recreation employees and recorded a video for the Aggie Horticulture Facebook page on bagworms. This video aired on March 24th and has received 1.7K views.

Our Master Gardener training class met 5 times virtually. The 32 interns learned about IPM/entomology, rainwater harvesting/irrigation, Earth-kind, turf, and propagation.

The Master Gardener Help Desk answered 121 questions in March (compared to the 52 they answered last March).

Two Master Gardeners presented virtually about Roses for the Greater Aubrey Area Gardening series with 64 viewers.

Our Master Naturalists answered 75 people’s questions for the DFW Wildlife Hotline.

One Master Naturalist was a trail guide for 18 7th grade students at Lewisville Lake Environmental Learning Area.

There were 30 horticulture entries and 10 floral arrangements at the Denton County Youth Fair. These were judged by Agent Laminack and a few of our Master Gardeners.

Our Better Living for Texans Agent, Jessica Small, stayed quite productive virtually. One program that she facilitated was our Walk N Talk program for adults. This is an 8-week program that focuses on walking each week as well as increasing fruits and vegetables in your diets. Ann Windle School for Young Children in Denton ISD participated and finished this awesome program with 44 graduates. How awesome! Teachers and Staff stayed consistent and several plan on continuing to increase their physical activity each day. It was an overall success!

In addition to the Walk N Talk program, our BLT Agent presented a One-Shot virtual session on Stress Eating, along with her colleague Kim Rahebi with Collin County. There were a total of 38 participants during the session and many people enjoyed the interactive presentation.

Over the next few months, our Agent will continue to provide nutrition education programs to limited income audiences. Stay up to date with us by following our Denton County Healthy Happenings Facebook page! There’s so much more to come!