

# Extension Education

## Making a Difference in Denton County



### County Highlights

Extending Knowledge | Providing Solutions

Population  
**941,647**

Educational  
Contacts  
**42,417**

4-H Enrollment  
**330**

Club Members  
**11,394**  
Curriculum Enrichment

### Volunteer Hours



**49,583.5** » **\$1,415,113**  
Service Hours Value

\*All data from 2021

### County Extension Agents

**Steven Baringer**  
4-H & Youth Development

**Zach Davis**  
Agriculture & Natural Resources

**Dusty Fife**  
Better Living for Texans

**Chandani Kothari**  
Family & Community Health

**Janet Laminack**  
Horticulture

### County Administration

**Colleen Carpenter**  
4-H Program Coordinator

**Victoria Scott**  
4-H & Youth Development

**Katelynn Soltero**  
Family & Community Health

**Gina Steiner**  
Horticulture

### Contact

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### 4-H & YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Denton County 4-H membership was up 152% last year. These 4-H members represented Denton County well at various contests at the county, district, and state levels. Our most popular projects include Food & Nutrition (78 youth enrolled), Shooting Sports (76), and Livestock (96). Out of these youth 71 of them competed in contests. This variety provides youth the opportunity to participate based upon their personal interests, yet all project areas foster development of citizenship and leadership skills, as well as career exploration.

Denton County AgriLife & Denton County 4-H also has several outreach programs that help share life skills with the public. These programs include Horticulture, Hatching in the Classroom, Food & Nutrition, and more. In partnership with the Master Gardeners & Master Naturalists – 5,125 youth were reached through Clear Creek Days for Denton ISD and other educational programs. Another popular program is Hatching in the Classroom, where students learn about the lifecycle of poultry and hatch their own eggs. Last year 894 students participated in this program.

### AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

This year our equine committee was able to bring back our Red River Equine Summit. This event took place the first weekend in April. Over 60 citizens attended the event at Denton County Cowboy Church. The education featured hands on demonstrations along with in classroom programs. Partners for the event included the Cowboy Church, Mustang Heritage Foundation, NRS, and Farm Bureau.

Wheat farmers in Denton County participated in our annual Wheat Field Day in May. Farmers looked at new varieties in the field and reviewed research data in the classroom to identify the best drought tolerant and naturally pest resistant varieties. [www.tamu.edu/agrilife](http://www.tamu.edu/agrilife)



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### AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES (CONTINUED)

In June we held a Pond Management Workshop. The event was held at Rancho De La Roca in Aubrey. Over 75 participants were educated on aquatic habitats and fish species in North Texas by a wildlife biologist. Partners for the event included Capital Farm Credit, Farm Bureau, Pond Medic's, and Dennis' Farm Store.

We spent the summer educating new landowners with our 2022 Landowner 101 Workshop. This five-part series covered important topics to new landowners including, Ag property tax evaluation, pasture management, fencing, and insurance. This year the program consisted of a hybrid workshop, with over 100 in-person and virtual attendees.

This fall, we held our annual Denton County Hay Clinic. Over 60 attendees received pesticide CEUS for attending. Producers were able to submit hay samples for free testing provided by the Denton County Ag Committee. Along with an educational program, hay equipment was showcased for attendees to learn about new technology.

In December 2021 we hosted our annual Pesticide Applicator Training Recertification Course with ninety-five people attending. The event was held at the Global Spheres Event Center in Corinth. The course educated pesticide applicators on how to safely and judiciously use of pesticides.

### FAMILY & COMMUNITY HEALTH

The Denton County Family and Community Health unit recruited 3 new Master Wellness Volunteers in 2022. Denton County's 6 master wellness volunteers contributed a total of 185 volunteer hours and reached 500 Denton County residents by delivering 34 nutrition education programs.

Agent Chandani Kothari collaborated with Pilot Point Public library to host multiple programs. Agent Kothari presented on Stroke identification and delivered two Cooking Well series at Pilot Point Public library with 25 participants in attendance. Graduates from all of the AgriLife programs at Pilot Point Library were invited to a Dinner Tonight! Celebration event- a joint event with Better living of Texans Agent, Dusty Fife. Attendees enjoyed samples of four different recipes demonstrated by both the agents.

Another great partnership with Dallas & Northeast Texas chapter of Alzheimer's Association, led to a healthy recipe cooking demonstration with more than 100 participants in attendance.

Chandani Kothari, also taught about My Plate and nutrition to 4th and 5th grade students at Krum ISD during their 1st Krum AG Day. More than 300 students learned about different food groups and finished by making their own 'Almost My Plate Trail Mix'.

Agent Kothari, collaborated with Denton County Parks and Recreation to host a Farm to Table Camp in the summer. 20 youth learned about where food comes from in addition to My Plate and cooking delicious recipes that they can prepare by themselves. As a co-coach for A Matter of Balance (a nationally recognized fall prevention program), she delivered an eight-week series for seniors at Denia Parks and Recreation center along with coaches from North Texas Area Agency on Aging. 10 seniors learned to change fall-ty habits while also increasing activity levels through exercises that improve strength, balance, and flexibility.

### HORTICULTURE

In 2021, our Master Gardener program, made up of 303 volunteers, recorded nearly 21,000 hours of service throughout the county. Our 222 Master Naturalists volunteered more than 23,000 hours of their time. Our volunteers helped us reach more than 11,000 residents of Denton County. Fall 2021 Denton ISD School Days at Clear Creek engaged 1,880 4th graders in topics about erosion, bees, and wildlife. Volunteers also took the students on a nature hike.

In 2021, Agent Laminack along with office personnel, volunteers, and local teachers created a two day teacher training titled Growing Gardeners. This training offered 12 hours of credit to 36 Denton County teachers on starting and maintaining school gardens. Additionally, in a partnership with Tarrant County AgriLife Extension, Upper Trinity Regional Water District, and Tarrant Regional Water District, Agent Laminack hosted a virtual Green Professionals course designed for landscape professionals to enhance their knowledge of sustainable landscape practices and lower their environmental impact. We also held our largest Pesticide Applicator CEU class, with 77 landscape professionals in attendance.

Denton County continues to add innovative local horticultural enterprises such as Texas Green Star Hydroponics and a new strawberry farm in Justin that rely on our office for educational assistance.

# Extension Education

## *Making a Difference in Denton County*

### BETTER LIVING FOR TEXANS

Better Living for Texans (BLT) is a nutrition education program for adults and children who qualify for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or for people that are SNAP eligible. The BLT program helps people make healthy meals, improve physical fitness, save money at the grocery store, grow their own foods, and adopt better food safety habits. Agent Dusty Fife brought several programs to the Pilot Point Library and provided them to Denton County residents. One of the programs, called A Fresh Start to a Healthier You, was a four-week series that yielded 13 graduates.

In addition, the Walk N Talk program series was implemented over eight weeks and had 9 graduates. Fife established a significant partnership with the Denton Parks and Recreation Department, resulting in another Walk N Talk program with 9 graduates. She then connected with the Health and Human Services Foster Grandparents program, delivered the Fresh Start to a Healthier You curriculum, and had 23 graduates. Currently, she is offering over 26 participants the Healthy Carbohydrate course.

Likewise, Agent Fife teamed with the Denton Senior Center to bring Denton County Seniors BLT programming. The Be Well, Live Well five-week program provided 10 graduates, and the Healthy Carbohydrate five-week program produced 24 graduates. Fife also partnered with the Lewisville Public Library and Parks and Recreation Department to bring the program series Be Well, Live Well, which resulted in 6 graduates. She is proud of the Walk N Talk program's attendance, with over 25 participants attending each week.



*Denton County 4-H celebrated its members on August 13, 2022, at the annual Gold Star Banquet. We thank the Denton County Commissioner's Court for allowing us to use the 2020 Room in the new Denton County Administrative Courthouse!*



*Ninety-five citizens attended the pond management program and fish fry at Ranch De La Roca, which was organized by our Agriculture and Natural Resources department.*