

Extension Changes Lives



In Dallas County

Winter/Spring 2009 Newsletter

Dallas County Legislative Tour

Welcome to this issue of *Extension Changes Lives!* The purpose of this document is to keep our stakeholders informed of key educational activities conducted by faculty and staff members of Texas AgriLife Extension in Dallas County. It is by no means a comprehensive listing of all activities and events conducted during the first quarter of 2009. As 2009 continues to provide challenges related to the economy, the environment, family issues, health and wellness issues, youth development, and disaster preparedness and recovery, Extension stands ready to provide cutting-edge, research-based educational resources to all citizens of the county.

As advocates for Extension education, we are always adamant about the vital role of Extension volunteers.

These specialized volunteers serve as members of our Leadership Advisory Boards and various planning committees. The investment in AgriLife Extension by county, state, and national stakeholders earns an extra return, thanks to the impact of volunteers. As we observe National Volunteer Week—Celebrating People in Action, April 19-25, I want to commend the 2123 volunteers in Dallas County who donated 51,329 hours of service through Texas Agrilife Extension Service in 2008. This equals \$1,039,412.25 in value directly invested in the local community. This also is equivalent to approximately 30 full-time employees involved in extending the educational resources of Extension in Dallas County. I hope this document provides you with valuable insight to how Extension is changing lives in Dallas County!

On January 23, 2009 the Dallas County Extension faculty, staff and volunteers conducted a legislative briefing and tour for elected officials in Dallas County at the Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Center in Dallas. Nine Dallas County legislative representatives attended the program. The briefing and tour provided legislative staffers with a first hand look at effective urban Extension programs in the areas of natural resources, family and consumer sciences, youth development, horticulture, integrated pest management, and expanded nutrition. Legislative staffers learned more about the process of how new knowledge is discovered through Extension and research efforts and then transferred by county agents and

volunteers to those who can use it. The legislative staffers were briefed on the operation of Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Center- Dallas, how it was funded and how various research projects are conducted. They engaged in extensive discussion with agents, staffers and volunteers representing interdisciplinary programs (showcases). They toured two Extension project demonstration sites; Dallas County Youth Village and a Master Gardener demonstration site. At the Dallas County Youth Village they saw adjudicated youth programs designed to empower and provide vocational, therapeutic and educational training to engage youth in hands-on natural resource and horticultural education.

JMG Training Leader Training Workshop

On February 11, 24 teachers, Master Gardeners and other adult volunteers from 17 cities in 8 different counties traveled to the Dallas County AgriLife Extension office to take part in a day long Junior Master Gardener Leader (JMG) workshop. Intense, hands-on training and orientation was provided for this horticulture based youth gardening curriculum. JMG's mission is growing good kids and subsequently good leaders by igniting a passion for learning, success, and service. The training took place at the Texas AgriLife Extension Service's Dallas County office.



DEAP ~Diabetes Education and Awareness Prevention

On Friday, February 6, 2009, Dallas County CEP/FCS Extension Agent, Marvin Young, collaborated with Ms. Rose Washington, a registered dietician employed by the Grand Prairie YMCA, as they presented a diabetes and nutrition presentation to 21 residents of the Mabel Meshack White Manor (an affordable living facility for the elderly) in Dallas. Ms. Washington delivered information designed to raise the awareness of the relationship between diabetes and nutrition; the importance of and how to understand and read labels; and she concluded with the importance of understanding “portion control” as it relates to maintaining, losing, gaining weight, and meal planning. As a result of attending this program, 21 participants learned tips for better diabetes control. They received nutritional information that is important in maintaining and combating diabetes. The participants also learned how to use and received colored copies of the “Plate Method for Meal Planning” from the Idaho Plate Method. And, they got a better understanding of “My Pyramid” food guide. Several participants stated that they appreciated the new knowledge and liked receiving a copy of the “Plate Method” because they could actually *see* what a portion or serving of food looked like.



Welcome to Dallas County Dr. Wenhsing Cheng ~ FCS Agent

Welcome to Dallas County, Wenhsing Cheng! Wenhsing Cheng is native to Taiwan. She is fluent in Mandarin Chinese and Taiwanese. After graduating from high school, Wenhsing decided to study abroad in the U.S. She received a Bachelor’s degree in Child Development, a Master’s degree in Family Studies, and a Ph.D. degree in Family Studies; all from Texas Woman’s University. With a background in family studies, Wenhsing is also a Certified Family Life Educator and specializing in parenting and marriage education. Wenhsing joined Extension in June 2007 as CEA-FCS in Johnson County. She then moved to Dallas County as CEA-FCS on March 16, 2009. She will provide leadership for research-based educational programs that supports family life issues, including parenting, family financial management, and other related subjects.

Dallas County Master Gardener Achievement Awards



Volunteers are the life blood of Texas AgriLife Extension Service. This includes successes of the Dallas County Master Gardeners volunteer training and support program. At the annual DCMG program’s Volunteer Achievement event during February, this was never more truly represented. Examples of the program’s volunteer contributions during 2008 include the 2007 thirty-three member class which became certified November 2008 and contributed 6,488 hours at a value of \$265,161. There were 34 certified DCMG program members that contributed over 100 hours each for a minimum value of \$66,334. Ten volunteers have contributed over 500 hours each for a value of \$97,550. Seven members have contributed over 1,000 hours each for a value of \$136,570, two over 2,500 hours each and valued at \$97,550 and two volunteers have contributed over 5,000 hours each to the program for a value of \$195,100. Total represented dollar return to the citizens of Dallas County at this event was \$849,265. Volunteer longevity today averages less than two years nationwide, while the DCMG volunteers average over five years. Twenty-three DCMG volunteers received their five year badges, ten members received ten years-of-service, two members received 15 year badges and one member received a 20 year badge. Our DCMG program volunteers are why the Dallas County horticultural programming is successful. This event was held at the City of Dallas’ Farmers Market, one of our collaborating partners and we thank them for partnering with us.

Living Healthy Texas Style

On Tuesday, March 17 and Wednesday, March 18, 2009, Texas AgriLife Extension Service's Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program conducted a pilot workshop called *Living Healthy Texas Style*. The workshop was presented to fifty Head Start of Greater Dallas food service staff by Dallas and Tarrant County EFNEP agents, Tamra McGaughey and Sarah Holland and the Urban IPM Program Specialist, Kim Schofield. The purpose of Living Healthy Texas Style is to provide high quality hands-on learning for nutrition information and best practices to limited resource audiences. Participants received training in pantry pest management, "My Pyramid" learning activities for pre-school children, nutrition label reading, food safety, food resource management, and physical activities for families. In addition, participants learned tips for reducing sugar, fat and sodium in their eating plan and were introduced to common herbs and spices. Ninety percent of the participants were completely satisfied with the workshop and eighty-five percent of the participants plan to make changes based on the information from this workshop. Furthermore, ninety-eight percent of the participants would recommend this workshop to other people within the community and ninety-three percent of the participants anticipated benefiting economically as a direct result of what they learned from this Extension activity.

4-H Character Counts

The Just Say No to Drugs Club at Grand Prairie's DalWorth Recreation Center, under the tutelage of Mrs. Johnnie Stanton, stands as one of the longest running clubs of its sort in the nation. AgriLife Extension's Dallas 4-H has teamed up with the JSN kids to learn that *Character Counts!* -- an educational program which teaches personal ethics and character education. In addition, the JSN kids are taking part in Junior Master Gardener (JMG) classes after school in the Otis Luckett Community Garden. Meeting every other Thursday, twenty-four youth participate in planting, maintaining and harvesting vegetable gardens for donation to the local food bank. The kids will complete their Junior Master Gardener Golden Ray Certifications by the end of the school year. Through JMG's mission of "Igniting a passion for learning, success and service," the motto speaks for itself: Growing Good Kids. The DalWorth experience is proving just so.

Pesticide Re-Certification Training



On February 12, 2009 Dallas County Extension Agent, Fred D. Burrell Jr., in conjunction with the Texas Department of Agriculture partnered to conduct a pesticide re-certification training course at the Dallas County office of Texas AgriLife Extension Service. The pesticide re-certification course provided continued education units (CEUs) for twenty-four pesticide applicators who hold a certified private applicators, non-commercial or commercial applicators license with the Texas Department of Agriculture. Topics included: *protecting water resources from pesticide contamination, laws & regulations, insecticides for sap feeding insects and urban wildlife management*. The workshop provided pesticide applicators with research-based information and best practices that will assist them in making more informed decisions when applying pesticides in schools, homes, businesses, landscapes and on food crops to better protect human life and our natural resources to include water, soil, air and wildlife. **A customer satisfaction survey was administered to each participant upon completing the course to determine their level of satisfaction with the instruction given. Several participants stated, "I have attended several trainings and this was the best by far."**



International Taste Fair

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program hosted its 4th Annual International Taste Fair with Dallas Parks & Recreation on March 17, 2009. The event was held at Eloise Lundy Recreation Center in Dallas. This event is held every March during spring break in celebration of National Nutrition Month. The theme for this year was "Eating Right!" The youth that were involved with the fair had the opportunity to explore and enjoy different dishes from around the world. The youth also participated in physical activities, learned about key nutrients and the importance of eating healthy. Over 100 youth participated in the activities. Printed material and other healthy nutrition items were provided in goody bags for all participants.

☆☆

Health Fair at Galloway Elementary School

Three hundred adults and youth received information about the risks associated with tobacco use, tips for quitting, and information related to the positive physiological changes that take place as a result of quitting, by visiting the Extension tobacco cessation exhibit during the Annual Health Fair at Galloway Elementary School (Mesquite ISD). Informational handouts, provided by the American Cancer Society, were distributed to a diverse audience in both English and Spanish. Participants were surprised to learn that many health problems, in addition to pulmonary problems, can be attributed to tobacco use. Many participants indicated that they intended to stop using tobacco as a result of receiving this information.

☆☆

Spring Home Garden Show

Texas AgriLife Extension Service-Dallas County, the Dallas County Master Gardener program, the City of Dallas Water Utilities-Conservation Division and the City of Dallas Storm Water Management Division joined forces to provide educational programming on water conservation and proper landscaping techniques at the Spring Dallas Home & Garden Show. Attendees were supplied with information on EARTH-KIND™ and WaterWise best management practices, had their personal questions answered and had multiple opportunities to attend formal presentations by members of the Dallas County Master Gardener Speakers' Bureau. Thirty-five educational presentations were conducted as part of the on going conservation series of micro talks. There were over 800 visitors to the booth and 377 attended the presentations. As program participants adopt E-K/WW BMP they could save up to 75% potable water use in the landscape plus reduce storm water contamination.

☆☆

Master Naturalist Spring Training

On Tuesday, February 17, 2009 the North Texas Master Naturalist (NTMN) started their 2009 training classes. Classes are held every Tuesday night from 6-9 p.m. February 17 thru April 28, and three Saturday field trips. Fifty local residents are participating in the Master Naturalist training program. These participants will complete 40 hours of in-depth classroom training in natural resource conservation and management. They will learn basic ecological concepts, study the ecosystems of North Texas and explore what happens when an ecosystem is out of balance and solutions to educate our urban clientele to protect and to conserve our precious natural resource. Sessions are taught by local experts from the natural resource community, universities; state and federal agencies and nature center staff. In return, volunteers agree to return at least 40 hours of service in the form of community education and demonstration projects, while pursuing a minimum of 8 hours of advanced training in areas of special interest annually.

Natural Resources Urban Wildlife Workshop



On Tuesday, March 4, 2009, Dallas County Extension Agent-Natural Resources, Fred D. Burrell Jr., collaborated with Texas Parks & Wildlife, North Texas Master Naturalist chapter and 911 Wildlife to host the Urban Wildlife Workshop. The workshop was held at the Texas AgriLife Research & Extension Center in Dallas. The thrust of the Urban Wildlife workshop was to provide relevant and factual research-based information to successfully manage urban wildlife. Participants were city, county, school and municipal animal control employees working with urban wildlife issues. The workshop was attended by 159 participants. The conference included experts from Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, Texas Animal Health Commission, 911 Wildlife, Heard Museum and other local and state agencies. Special guest speaker, Dr. Stan Gehrt, assistant professor of environmental and natural resources at Ohio State University and author of urban ecology of coyotes in the Chicago metropolitan area was the featured speaker. Attending participants were instructed with factual research-based information and solutions to address the following wildlife urban challenges: coyotes, bobcats, bats, snakes, birds, media relations, beavers, opossums, and rabbits, raccoons, skunks, squirrels and zoonotic diseases. Attendees certificated with the Texas Animal Control Association, Texas Department of Agricultural and Structural Pest Control Service received eight hours of continuing education credits. Several participants stated that as a result of the workshop they are more equipped to handle urban wildlife issues where they work.

Green Industry Symposium

The 2009 'North Texas Mid Winter Green Industry Symposium' was conducted during Feb. at Texas AgriLife Extension Service's Dallas County Office Learning Center. The curriculum was a result of council from the Dallas County Horticulture Committee, a 10 member 'green industry' programming support group. Presenters and subject matter included; '*Surviving in Tough Times*', Dr. Charles Hall, Ellison Chair in International Floriculture, Dept. of Horticulture Sciences, TAMU, College Station, '*Economic Impact; Pests ID/Controls*', Dr. Scott Ludwig, Extension Program Specialist- IPM, Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Overton, '*Prevent/Control Economic Impact; Plant Diseases*', Dr. Kevin Ong, Associate Professor and Director-TX Plant Disease Diagnostic Lab., College Station and '*EARTH-KIND™, & How it Aids Bottom Lines*', Dr. Don Wilkerson, Professor and Extension Horticulturist, College Station. The goal was to provide researched based real world information to aid the industry in surviving our current economic situation. An Extension 'Participant Satisfaction Survey' was conducted and currently under-going evaluation by the Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communications unit of Extension in College Station. The event was sponsored by Texas AgriLife Extension Service-Dallas County, Dallas County Horticulture Committee and Dallas County Commissioners Court. Industry sponsors were Texas Nurseryman and Landscape Association (TNLA), Vital Earth/Carl Pool, Agricultural Workers Mutual Auto Insurance and Skinners' Nurseries.

For more information, contact:

Doug Andrews
County Extension Director
Texas AgriLife Extension Service
10056 Marsh Lane, Ste. B-101
Phone: 214-904-3050
Fax: 214-904-3080
Email: td-andrews@tamu.edu
Website: <http://dallas-tx.tamu.edu>

In cooperation with....

Dallas County Commissioners' Court

Jim Foster County Judge	John Wiley Price Commissioner, Pct. 3
Maurine Dickey Commissioner, Pct. 1	Kenneth A. Mayfield Commissioner, Pct. 4
Mike Cantrell Commissioner, Pct. 2	