

## WHAT WE DO:

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension is a unique education agency that provides programs, tools, and resources on a local and statewide level that teach people how to improve agriculture and food production, advance health practices, protect the environment, strengthen the economy, and enrich youth. In all 254 counties, County Extension Agents serve families, youth, communities and businesses throughout the state.

## EXTENSION STAFF

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Family & Community Health

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[www.cameron.agrilife.org](http://www.cameron.agrilife.org)



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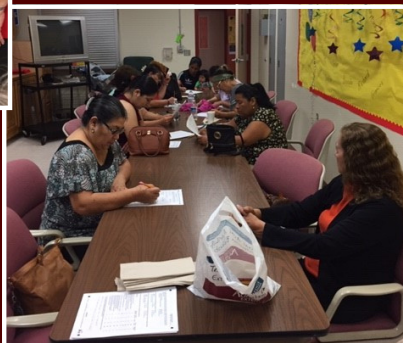
# Family & Community Health

By: Lilian Mezquida, CEA - Family & Community Health

## Mobile Cooking Class



**12** participants  
learned how to cook  
Cilantro-Lime  
Cauliflower Rice.



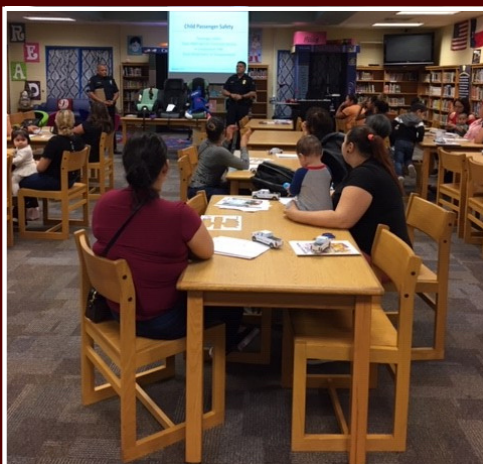
Participant Comments:  
"This recipe is so good.  
I really liked it and  
it's so easy to make."



**12**  
participants  
learned how to cook Healthy Tamales.

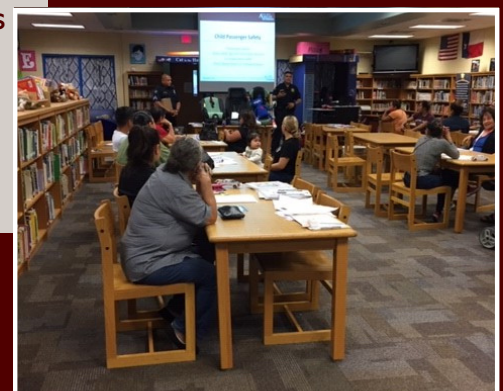


## Child Passenger Safety



The Passenger Safety Project at the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service works to reduce deaths and injuries from motor vehicle crashes by increasing the use of child restraints and safety belts. The project's emphasis is on increasing the correct use of child safety seats across Texas.

**30** participants  
Cavazos Elementary







PRAIRIE VIEW  
A&M UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE  
AND HUMAN SCIENCES

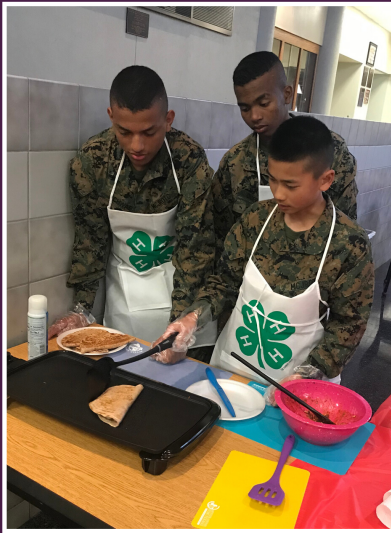


Cooperative Extension Program

# Cooperative Extension Family & Community Health

By: Gloria Carter, Cooperative Extension - Family & Community Health

## Marine Military Academy Heroes 4-Health



A new group of Marine Military Academy cadets learn to cook from the 4-H Explore Curriculum



## "I Cook" Heroes 4-Health

The "I Cook" cooking and nutrition classes consist of hands-on cooking skills, nutrition, how to set a table, and table manners.



Frank Roberts Graduation Class

The "I Cook" Classes were held at:

- Marine Military Academy
- SBCISD - Frank Roberts Elementary
- HCISD ACE Afterschool Program (District Wide & Memorial Middle School)





# Better Living for Texans

By: Nidia Garcia, Extension Agent - Better Living for Texans  
Esmeralda Avila, Nutrition Education Associate

## A Fresh Start to a Healthier You



97

Graduates



## Walk N Talk



17 Graduates

## Be Well, Live Well



13  
Graduates



## Growing & Nourishing Healthy Communities

By: Kristina Loreda, Extension Agent - Better Living for Texans

The Better Living for Texans Growing & Nourishing Healthy Communities Program kicked off 2020 with the thought of nourishing communities through-out Cameron County and we did just that! A variety of gardens started their growing process at schools and community centers through-out Cameron County, Oscar De La Fuente Elementary (San Benito) Rio Hondo Elementary (Rio Hondo), and Vermillion Elementary (Brownsville). They were able to build their gardens and plant their vegetables and herbs. GNHC (Growing & Nourishing Healthy Communities) classes started at Tropical Texas Behavioral Center in Harlingen. Cameron County Housing Authority in La Feria, and at the Salvation Army in Harlingen. Although, due to COVID-19 we had to post-pone further face to face classes, we hope to continue where we left off as soon as time permits.

For now, be sure to see our Facebook page for the latest updates!



Vermillion Elementary Parent Volunteers fill the garden beds with soil and plant jalapenos, cilantro, bell peppers, and tomatoes.





# Expanded Food & Nutrition Education Program

By: Melissa DeLeon, EFNEP Agent

## Vision:

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Expanded Food & Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) in Cameron County helps young families and youths with limited resources - those most at risk who suffer from hunger, food insecurity and the inability to connect with available support systems.

### EFNEP Offers practical lessons in:

- Basic Nutrition
- Food Budget Management
- Food Preparation
- Food Safety

All in settings convenient for the participants.

EFNEP also encourages a physical activity component for both adult & youth participants. Program graduates reflect significant, lasting improvement in eating behaviors and healthy food habits.

Our total EFNEP-Adult enrollment numbers for months of Mid-December thru April

388

of which

28

have graduated

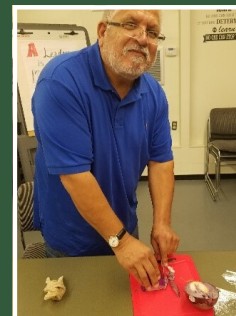
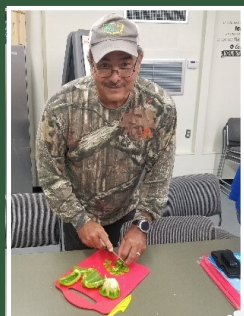
Our total EFNEP-Youth enrollment participation in Cameron County is

3,695

of which

3,259

have graduated





# Agriculture & Natural Resources

By: Marco Ponce, County Extension Agent - Agriculture & Natural Resources



## Cotton & Grain Pre-Plant Conference



Rio Grande Valley Agents hosted a Cotton & Grain Pre-Plant conference at Rio Farms. Over 160 people attended this conference which featured many quality speakers who discussed topics such as RGV cotton varieties, market updates, nutrient and weed management, and boll weevil eradication programs.

## Grain Sorghum Variety Trial

Cameron County Agriculture Agent planted a nine variety grain sorghum research demonstration plot in La Feria. Each of the 9 varieties were planted on 6 rows and replicated three times. Each variety will be measured for performance standards such as yield, bushel weight, and moisture content.



## Cotton Result Demonstration



Cameron County Agriculture Agent planted a 10 variety cotton research demonstration plot in Harlingen. Each of the 10 varieties were planted on 6 rows and replicated 3 times. Each of these varieties will be measured for performance standards such as yield and fiber quality.



# Coastal & Marine

By: Tony Reisinger, County Extension Agent - Coastal & Marine



## Oyster Aquaculture

Oyster Aquaculture is now allowed in Texas and Texas Parks & Wildlife is developing regulations. We held a meeting in January for stakeholders in conjunction with UTRGV, attended by 40 in person and online. The Laguna Madre is being considered a culture site for oysters and we are researching the feasibility with UTRGV.



## Texas Master Naturalists

Two Texas Master Naturalist chapters serve Cameron County, South Texas Border and Rio Grande Valley. They began classes in January for 50 trainees to become certified as Master Naturalists.

Trainees are required to take 40 hours of instruction, composed of classroom and advanced training, and complete a minimum of 40 hours of chapter approved volunteer service. The trainees are presently completing classes on line to respect social distancing. All chapter meetings are now conducted with Zoom. This quarter our chapter members reached 3,040 adults and 1,435 youth in educational programs. Over 400 Master Naturalist from the two chapters performed 4,200 hours of volunteer service valued at \$106,806!



## Recreational Fishing



Recreational fishing was active in March with a good run of sheephead around the jetty at Isla Blanca. After March 23, fishing was curtailed due to COVID-19. Bait shrimp production is down due to decreased demand. County and city public boat ramps and beaches are closed. Party boats and guides are not fishing to respect social distancing.

Economic impacts are currently being assessed. There is good news. The reduction in fishing pressure should result in a boom to fishing when restrictions are lifted!

## Commercial Fishing

In 2019, the Cameron County shrimp fleet based out of Brownsville and Port Isabel produced 10.4 million pounds valued at \$45 million, significantly down from the previous 5 year average of 13 million pounds valued at \$59 million. We have mixed news with the onset of COVID-19. H2B workers which crew our vessels during the Texas offshore shrimp season are in limbo about returning to the US. Currently, vessels fishing out of Brownsville and Port Isabel are reporting good catches. Shrimp prices are down and several of our vessels returning to port since March 23 were not able to sell their shrimp due to the decline in restaurant demand. Part of our fleet fishing pink shrimp in Florida report high demand and good prices! Shrimp vessel owners have been concerned about LNG tankers inhibiting ingress and egress in the Brownsville Ship Channel. The US Coast Guard announced they lifted the security zones for LNG tankers navigating the channel. Our shrimp vessels will be able to freely move in and out of port when LNG plants begin operations. Cameron County's blue crab fishery is booming in spite of COVID! Crab fishermen are selling most of their catch to Baltimore for \$1.75 to \$2.00/pound. Turtle Excluder Device and Bycatch Reduction Device, TED and BRD, compliance assistance will continue with shelter-in-place requirements abate.



## Shrimp Aquaculture



Shrimp aquaculture has a positive outlook in Cameron County for 2020. A large farm on the Arroyo Colorado currently has active shrimp hatchery and is stocking ponds for harvest in early summer. Owners believe the market will be strong at harvest time and have the potential to produce over three million pounds this year!



# Horticulture

By: Jennifer Herrera, County Extension Agent - Horticulture

## Cameron County Master Gardeners

### Master Gardener Meeting



### Master Gardener Education Garden Tuesday Workdays



### WOWE



Master Gardeners conducted 7 presentations & manned a booth reaching over 291 participants

### RGV Small Acreage



Grassfed Beef Farm Tour

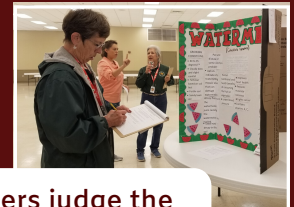


Vegetable Farm Visit



Bee Keeping Program Pt. 1  
29 Participants

### RGVLS Citrus & Vegetable Show



Master Gardeners judge the vegetable poster contest

### Rio Grande Valley Livestock Show Horticulture Division



### Attracting Birds to your Garden



32

Participants





# 4-H & Youth Development

By: Klarissa Cantu, CEA - 4-H & Youth Development

## Cameron County Council Chick-Fil-A Spirit Night



### 4-H County Council's First fundraiser of the year!

The kids did a great job promoting this event and are excited to raise more funds for our 4-H program

## Livestock Shows

San Antonio  
Livestock Show & Rodeo



San Antonio  
Livestock Judging Contest



Cameron County Fair & Livestock Show



## Career Day



Rio Hondo  
Middle School







# Cooperative Extension 4-H & Youth Development

By: Guadalupe Castro, Cooperative Extension - 4-H & Youth Development

## 4-H



### Future Leaders of Brownsville

Jan. 16



The Future Leaders of Brownsville did a park clean up for community service at Tony Gonzales Park in Brownsville

### 4-H Officers Retreat

Feb. 19



6 Officers Participated

### Junior Master Gardener Training

Feb. 24

Attended the Junior Master Gardener National Training with one Cameron County 4-H volunteer.

Presented at the training on how we structure our Family night in the 4-H Growing U program.

### 4-H Robotics Competition

Feb. 29



20 students competed

At Berta Cabaza Middle School

### Family Night



25

families attended

March 5

Sullivan Elementary Family Night

## COVID-19 Response

From March thru April assisted in creating videos in response to COVID-19





# Cameron AgriLife COVID-19 Response

Cameron County Agrilife and Prairie View Extension Agents have continued to provide educational programs through videos and live streams in response to the COVID 19 pandemic. Agents have adapted their educational approach in order to continue providing quality educational programs and to also meet the needs of our clientele.

Please visit our Cameron County Extension office website and our facebook pages for the latest educational videos and documents that are available to you.



[bit.ly/FB\\_AgriLifeCameron](https://bit.ly/FB_AgriLifeCameron)

Thank you.



[cameron.agrilife.org/](https://cameron.agrilife.org/)

## Upcoming Webinars, Trainings & Online Resources

### Expanded Food & Nutrition

- Healthy Bites, Healthy Moves - Telephone series
- Healthy Bites, Healthy Moves - Virtual Series
- Eat Smart, Move More - Online Series
- Healthy Teens, Healthy Future - Online Course

Register at:

[efnep.tamu.edu/distanceedu/](https://efnep.tamu.edu/distanceedu/)

### Horticulture

- Gardening 101: [bit.ly/Gardening\\_101](https://bit.ly/Gardening_101)
- Plant & Garden: [bit.ly/PlantandGarden](https://bit.ly/PlantandGarden)
- RGV Small Acreage Program Online: [bit.ly/RGVSmallAcreageOnline](https://bit.ly/RGVSmallAcreageOnline)
- Cameron County Master Gardener Facebook: [bit.ly/CCMG\\_Facebook](https://bit.ly/CCMG_Facebook)
- RGV Small Acreage Facebook: [bit.ly/RGVSmallAcreage\\_FB](https://bit.ly/RGVSmallAcreage_FB)

### Agriculture

#### Master Rancher - Zoom Meeting

April 23

Topics will include Beef Herd Health,  
Feeds and Feeding, and Beef Cattle Marketing

May 28

Topics will include weed and brush control, pasture establishment and  
management, and range and pasture ID