

# Cameron County Extension Newsletter

January 2021 - March 2021

## *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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Agriculture & Natural Resources

Tony Reisinger  
County Extension Agent  
Coastal & Marine Resources

Lilian Mezquida  
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Family & Community Health

Jennifer Herrera  
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4-H & Youth Development

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### VISIT US AT:



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# 4-H & YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

*Klarissa Cantu, CEA - 4-H & Youth Development*



## NATIONAL - UTAH 4-H INVITATIONAL CONTEST

Bailey Helmer from Arroyo 4-H represented Cameron County 4-H at the Virtual 4-H Contest Invitational put on by Utah 4-H. This contest was put on in place of the Western National 4-H Roundup which was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This contest was a national contest and Bailey competed with 4-H kids from all over where she received Reserve Grand Champion in the Fashion Revue - Construction category.

Congrats Bailey!!

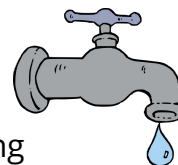


## PROGRAM - TEXAS 4-H WATER AMBASSADOR



Zachary Gray from Highland Hustlers 4-H was named the '4-H Water Ambassador of the Month' for January 2021.

He is being recognized for his outstanding leadership and commitment to educating others about water. Zachary has been doing an outstanding job in educating our County on the importance of water.



*Congratulations!*



Congratulations to everyone that participated in the Cameron County, Mercedes, Houston and San Antonio Livestock Show and represented Cameron County 4-H.

2021 Los Fresnos PRCA Rodeo Queen



Celeste Villareal Highland Hustlers 4-H



Cameron Co. 4-H Member  
Zachary Gray placed 4th at the San Antonio Livestock Show Swine Skillathon!



Cameron Co. 4-H Member Keaton Fohn won Supreme Champion Jr. Breeding Gilt with his Duroc at the San Antonio Livestock Show Jr Breeding Gilt Show.

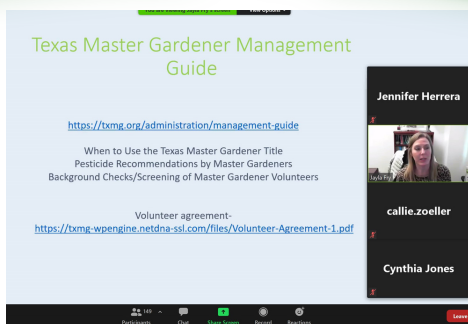




## Master Gardeners Training



**11 Interns - 8 Classes**



### Topics Include:

- Earth - Kind Landscaping
- Plant Growth & Development, Soils, Lawns, Water, and Irrigation, Insects, and Diseases.



**Freeze Damage Assessment Report with Cameron County Commercial Nursery Owners and Wholesalers Over \$1,632,895**

**Freeze damage assessment with Rio Grande Valley vineyard growers - 6 sites**



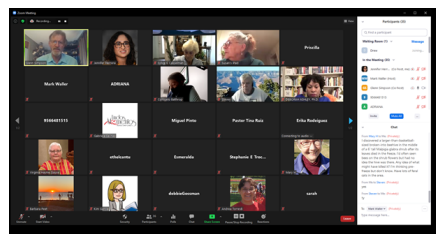
13 Newspaper articles have been published by: **Cameron County Master Gardener Volunteers**

Over 1200 lbs of produce was harvested and donated from the Cameron County Master Gardener Education Garden.



### RGV Small Acreage

*Emergency Bee Program:  
Supplemental food source after the freeze*



**SPI Dune Restoration  
Christmas Tree Recycling**



# COASTAL & MARINE

By: Tony Reisinger, County Extension Agent -Coastal & Marine Resources  
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service & Texas Sea Grant at Texas A&M University



## ASSOCIATION- SOUTH TEXAS BORDER AND RIO GRANDE VALLEY CHAPTERS TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST



over 500 members



value of volunteer service hours



Total:  
\$194,045



- Three educational programs with **247** attendees online and Facebook Live
- **24** classes and **10** field trips

For more information, please view the RGVTMN Newsletter "The Chachalaca" at: [rgvctmn.org](http://rgvctmn.org)

## TEXAS RED TIDE RANGERS - "EVERY BEACH-EVERY DAY"

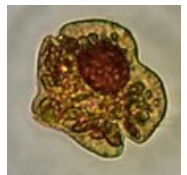


Sea Grant Red Tide Rangers began a new and exciting venture in conjunction with the NOAA HAB Work Group. *Every Beach-Every Day* is a Gulf-wide 3-year program funded with \$1.1 million from NASA.



The grant is helping several Gulf organizations including the Red Tide Rangers, fine-tune current red tide forecasts, offering public health managers, coastal residents and visitors a forecast that better reflects coastal conditions on more localized scales.

Improved models and forecasts of red tide conditions will help the public make healthy choices about where to spend recreation time, increasing protections for public health and coastal economies.

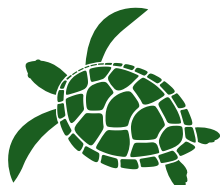


Red Tide can be spotty, and this new tool can direct us to local areas not impacted by the red tide. **Red Tide Cell**



Helped rescue 5,600 cold stunned sea turtles from the lower Laguna Madre in February.

Measured surf water temperatures to decide if sea turtles could be released from shore.



## TEXAS COASTAL NATURALISTS



Rescued hundreds of downed pelicans in northers at Highway 48 on the Bahia Grande.



Assisted with a Plastic Pollution Symposium on South Padre Island in March.





# FAMILY & COMMUNITY HEALTH

*By: Lilian Mezquida,  
CEA - Family & Community Health*

## Parenting Connections and Anger Management

4-week program and after completing  
the program participants will get a  
certificate.



## Walk & Talk and Walk Across Texas



**8-week physical activity program**

*This program helps to:*

- Keep track of your steps and physical activity
- Learn about vegetables and rethink your drink
- Healthy recipes each week



## **Future Programs** **Your Stress Your Plate**

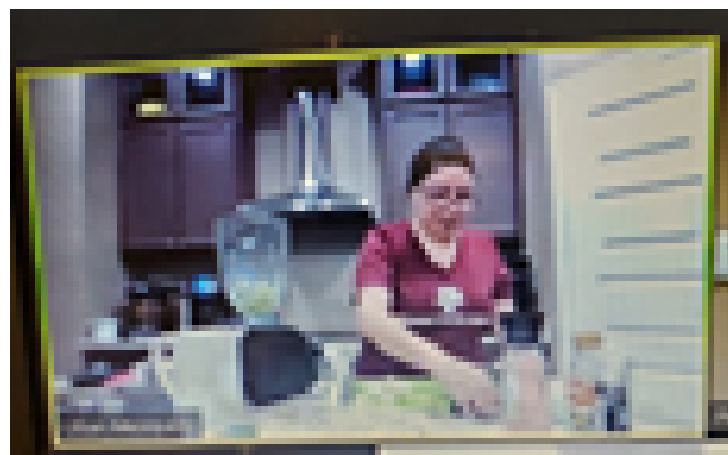
4-week virtual program.

Stress, good and bad, impacts the choices  
you make for your body and your plate.

## **Grow, Harvest N' Cook**

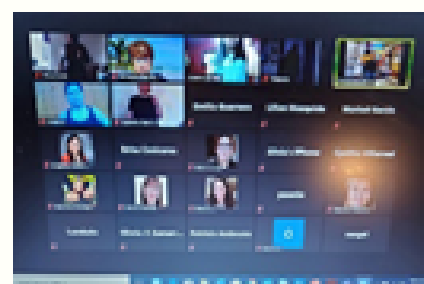
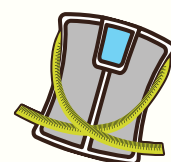
4-week virtual program.

Indoor Gardening N' Cooking  
with Herbs program



## **Step Up Scale Down**

A 12-week educational program based on the  
USDA Dietary Guidelines, that provides  
sound scientific information about how to  
proper dietary habits can promote health  
and reduce risk for major chronic diseases.  
We had one participant from Philippines, she  
did not miss any class and even though the  
frame time difference.



# AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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



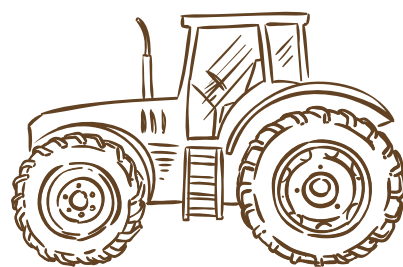
## **Cotton and Grain Pre-Plant Conference**

**Topics for this year's conference included:**

- Weed Competition
- Planting Rates and Variety Selection in Cotton
- Updates related to Corn
- Grain Sorghum
- Cotton

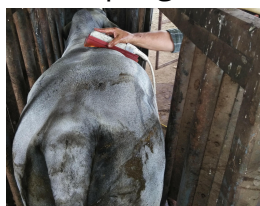


This years Rio Grande Valley Cotton and Grain Pre-Plant Conference was held online for viewers to attend from throughout the state. 3 CEU's were offered at this program along with many door prizes for participants.



## **Rio Grande Valley Bull Gain Test**

Rio Grande Valley County Agents hosted the Bull Gain Test and Heifer Development Program at Rio Beef Feedyard. Producers who participated in this program were able to acquire data on their livestock such as Average Daily Gain, Hip Height, Scrotal Circumference, and a Sonogram was conducted to measure the Rib Eye Area. Top Performing Bulls were allowed to enter an online sale at the conclusion of the program.



## **Cotton Result Demonstration Trial**



Cameron County Agriculture Agent planted a 10 variety Cotton Research Demonstration Trial in La Feria. Each variety was planted on 6 rows with 40 inch spacing between the rows. The varieties were replicated three times to ensure data accuracy. Each variety will be harvested, weighed, and sampled for quality separately in order to accurately measure performance data in each variety.





BETTER LIVING  
FOR TEXANS

# BETTER LIVING FOR TEXANS

By: *Nidia Garcia, Extension Agent - Better Living for Texans*  
*Esmeralda Avila, Nutrition Educate Association*



## PROGRAM - WALK N TALK: RETHINK YOUR DRINK!



- 104 Adult Contacts → 17 Adult Graduates
- 43 Youth Contacts → 7 Youth Graduates



## PROGRAM - A FRESH START TO A HEALTHIER YOU!



# 167

167 Adult Contacts Reached

# GROWING & NOURISHING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES



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

## PROGRAM - GNHC!

- The Better Living for Texans Growing & Nourishing Healthy Communities (GNHC) Program continued to work on gardening videos for a collaborative multi county approach to virtual GNHC programming throughout the month of January. We started 2021 with a full GNHC virtual program with Brownsville Independent School District at Perez Elementary and had another successful virtual program at Rising Scholars Academy in San Benito.
- The BLT staff also participated in a Food Safety Conference in March as well as held a BLT committee meeting. The next quarter is sure to be filled with more virtual program locations and new community partners!

Thank you to Kristina Loreda, extension agent with Texas A & M Agrilife Extension Services in Cameron County, for providing gardening kits to the AIME gardening students at RSA. Pictured on the right is one of the gardening students, Katherine.



# COOPERATIVE EXTENSION FAMILY & COMMUNITY HEALTH

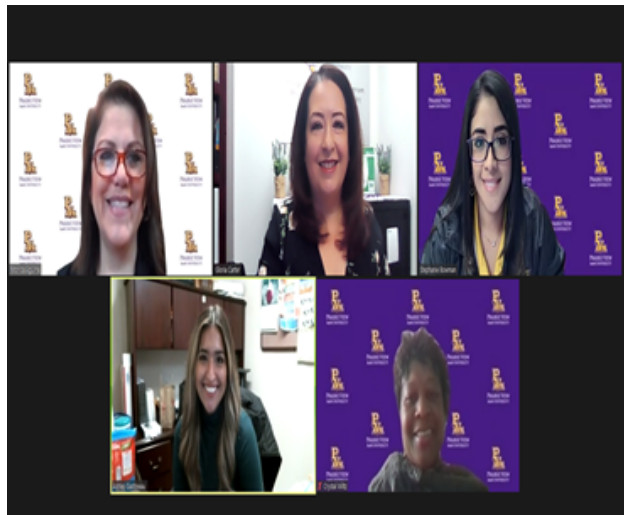


PRAIRIE VIEW  
A&M UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE  
AND HUMAN SCIENCES

Cooperative Extension Program



By: Gloria Carter CEP - Family & Community Health



## PROGRAM - BALANCED LIVING

"Balanced Living" Wellness Curriculum, authored by the University of Idaho Extension, is designed for busy adults and teaches a range of skills for balanced living.

During the months of January, February & March, Family & Community Health Agent Gloria Carter collaborated with Bexar County, Hidalgo County, Travis County and Webb County agents to facilitate the "Balanced Living" 5-week series.



Participants gain knowledge and skills for managing time and stress, eating mindfully, getting enough exercise, and sleeping well



Approximately 20 participants from the various counties attended the sessions.

## PROGRAM - HARLINGEN PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT PARENT SESSIONS



- 1/13/2021: "Stress: Friend or Foe"
- 1/19/2021: "Stress & Anger Management"
- 1/20/2021: "Problem & Negotiation Skills"
- 1/22/2021: "Power to Prevent Diabetes"
- 2/2/2021: "Communicate with Love & Understanding"
- 3/2/2021: "Problem & Negotiation Skills"
- 3/24/2021 "Stress & Anger Management Skills"



Parenting skills and health & wellness classes were facilitated to the parents of Harlingen CISD via collaboration with the HCISD Parental Involvement Department in January, February and March.

A total of 202 participants attended the sessions.



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202  
PARTICIPANTS





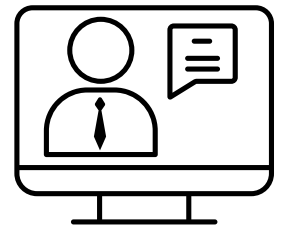
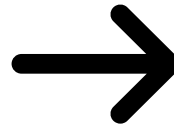
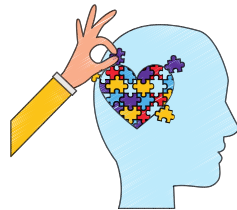
PRAIRIE VIEW  
A&M UNIVERSITY

# COOPERATIVE EXTENSION 4-H & YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

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

## MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID VIRTUAL TRAINING - YOUTH

From January through March there were Three Youth Mental Health First Aid virtual trainings.



23 Mental Health First Aiders Certified



23



of the Future Leaders of Brownsville 4-H  
Club met to complete their family cooking  
series project.



14

YOUTH



Learn Grow Eat Go Series -  
"Growing" U Program at Sullivan  
Elementary

# EXPANDED FOOD AND NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM (EFNEP)

*By: Melissa DeLeon, EFNEP Agent*

## ADULTS



Adults  
256

EFNEP Virtual Education-Adult enrollment numbers for months of January – March is 256 of which 101 have graduated.



101

Graduates

### TELEPHONE- HEALTHY BITES, HEALTHY MOVES

- 6 lesson series no more than 30 minutes ea.
- Taught one on one or with a small group at a convenient time for the participants
- Participants learn about healthy eating (MyPlate), family meal planning, budgeting at the store, food safety and the importance of physical activity

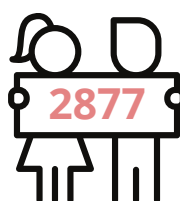
### VIRTUAL - HEALTHY BITES, HEALTHY MOVES

- 6 lesson series no more than 30 minutes ea.
- Taught one on one or with a small group at a convenient time for the participants
- Participants learn about healthy eating (MyPlate), family meal planning, budgeting at the store, food safety and the importance of physical activity

### ONLINE SELF-PACED - EAT SMART, MOVE MORE

- 6 lesson series – each lesson is 45-60 minutes in length
- Participants learn about healthy eating (MyPlate), family meal planning, budgeting at the store, food safety and the importance of physical activity
- Educators will conduct discussion interaction via a closed Facebook group that participants can choose to be a member

## YOUTH



2877

Youth

Youth enrollment participation in Cameron County is 2877 of which 1094 have graduated.



1094

Graduates

### PROGRAM - TEEN CUISINE

- 6 lesson series - lasting 30-60 minutes each
- Hands-on cooking program geared for 6th to 12th graders and aligned with PE, Health & Science TEKS
- Students learn about basic nutrition, MyPlate, making healthy food choices, food safety, basic culinary skills, and the importance of physical activity

### VIRTUAL OR ONLINE - HEALTHY TEENS, HEALTHY FUTURE

- 6 lesson series - lasting about 30 minutes each
- Program is geared towards 6th-12th grade
- Interactive lessons led by an EFNEP educator taught through a self-led online learning modules or virtually

### PROGRAM -HEALTHY HERO ADVENTURES

- 6 lesson series - lasting about 30 minutes each Program is geared towards K-5th grade and aligned with PE, Health & Science TEKS (virtual or in person)
- Students learn basic nutrition including: MyPlate, making healthy food choices, food safety, and the importance of physical activity
- Each session will include a short lesson and an optional recipe demonstration