

TEXAS A&M
AGRILIFE
EXTENSION



Extension Education in Clay County
Making a Difference

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Without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran status.*

THE TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE HAS long been dedicated to educating Texans. Extension education evolved nationwide under the 1914 federal Smith-Lever Act, which sought to extend university knowledge and agricultural research findings directly to the people. Ever since, Extension programs have addressed the emerging issues of the day, reaching diverse rural and urban populations.

In Texas, all 254 counties are served by a well-organized network of professional Extension educators and some 100,000 trained volunteers. Extension expertise and educational outreach pertain to the food and fiber industry, natural resources, family and consumer sciences, nutrition and health, and community economic development.

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE *Providing Solutions*

Among those served are hundreds of thousands of young people who benefit annually from Extension's 4-H and youth development programs.

Texans turn to Extension education for solutions. Extension agents and specialists respond not only with answers, but also with resources and services that result in significant returns on the public's investment. Extension programs are custom-designed for each region of the state, with residents providing input and help with program delivery. Here are just a few highlights of Extension impacts on this county and its people.

Clay County – 2019 Summaries of Programs

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Making a Difference

Welcome to the Real World Clay Youth Indepth Plan I - 2019

Summary developed by Sherri Hulsell and William Holcombe, County Extension Agents, Clay County

Relevance

Welcome to the Real World! is an experiential learning program that allows young people the opportunity to learn about personal finance through real-life learning experiences without the real-world consequences. This interactive, hands-on, real-life simulation gives senior high school youth the opportunity to explore career opportunities and make lifestyle and budget choices similar to those adults face on a daily basis.

In today's world, financial education is crucial, but many young people are leaving high school lacking in the basic fundamentals of financial literacy, including such things as managing a simple checking account to buying a car or a home and even dealing with personal taxes. Numerous studies conducted on American youths' understanding of basic financial concepts consistently reveal that young people don't possess adequate financial knowledge to be financially proficient in adulthood.

According to a survey from the Hartford Financial Services Group, less than one-quarter of students, about 24%, and only 20% of parents say students are prepared to deal with the financial challenges that await them in the adult world. More than three-quarters of students, about 76%, report that they wish they had more help preparing for managing their personal finances. Only 21% of students between the ages of 16 and 22 report having taken a personal finance course at school.

When youth enter the workforce without a basic understanding of financial literacy, they face a magnitude of troubles ranging from excessive credit card debt, to little or no savings, to an insufficient retirement plan. The financial choices young adults make have a lasting effect on their lives. Their choices can lead to a lifetime of debt and financial stress or economic stability.

Response

After reviewing the *Clay County Issue ID list* the Clay 4H Development & Youth Board chose to adopt the *Welcome to the Real World!* program as the in-depth plan to promote fiscal knowledge for the youth of Clay County. A task force was created to support the implementation of *Welcome to the Real World!*; members included LAB members, FCH members, Youth Board members, teachers, business owners and bankers. Task force members participated by presenting financial literacy lessons to the four high schools in the county and assisted Extension agents with planning, marketing, simulation booths, data collection, and procurement of supplies for the simulation.

The *Welcome to the Real World!* program consists of two parts: financial education and a real-world expenditure decision-making opportunity. *Welcome to the Real World!* is an active, hands-on activity that includes career and money management fact sheets and gives young people the opportunity to explore careers and make lifestyle and spending choices similar to those faced by adults.

In the *Welcome to the Real World!* simulation, students assume they have completed basic educational requirements for their chosen career, are single, 25 years of age, and independent with no financial support from family or others.

During the simulation, students gain an understanding of the expenses and incomes associated with daily adult living. They make lifestyle and budget choices similar to those adults face on a daily basis. At the conclusion of the activities, students evaluate how well they spent/saved their money. They consider the choices they made and discuss what alternatives might be taken in the real world.

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Welcome to the Real World

- Task Force met 3 times to plan the *Welcome to the Real World!* This was the first year for the program. Made **modification** to include charitable giving booth to encourage youth that giving back helps the community.
- Stefanie Forester and Kami Weatherly of Wells Fargo Bank presented 4 lessons to each of the four high schools in the county between January and April 2019 reaching **114** students.
- *Welcome to the Real World!* Challenge simulation was presented on April 30, 2019 at the Holman Center in Henrietta, Texas. The simulation incorporates hands on learning experiences.
- **109** 12th grade students and **8** staff from Henrietta, Petrolia, Midway and Bellevue High Schools attended the program. **39** volunteers helped. Volunteers represented LAB, FCH and AG Committees, 4H Development & Youth Board, local bankers, business owners, insurance companies and school board members.

Results

Welcome to the Real World! results are shown below. 109 youth attended the program along with 39 volunteers and 11 school personnel. 109 evaluations distributed with 107 returned.

- 109 youth participated in 2019; 2 were African American, 4 Hispanic/Latino, 1 Native American, 87 Caucasian, 7 multiracial, 5 other, and 1 did not report.
- Following the simulation, 44 (42.3 % of) participants increased their knowledge of the relationship between education-careers and potential earnings.
- 46 (43%) participants reported an increase in knowledge of the effects of student loan debt on their future budget.
- 53 (51 %) currently have a savings account in their name, and 36 (34.6%) plan to open an account after participating in the simulation.
- 67 (62.6 %) participants reported that they will definitely complete their education so they can reach their career goals.
- Prior to the simulation, 27 (26 %) were familiar with the concept of balancing income and expenses compared to 64 (61.5%) following the simulation - a(n) 51 % increase.
- Prior to the simulation, 25 (24.3%) were familiar with how to create and follow a spending plan (budget) compared to 63 (61.2%) following the simulation - a(n) 56.3% increase.

Interpretation

Stefanie Forester, Task Force member, presented an interpretation to the commissioners' court. The editor of Clay County Leader attended the *Welcome to the Real World!* Challenge to take photographs and printed them along with agent's news article in the county newspaper the same week.

Future Plans

After reviewing evaluations, the Youth Board and Task Forces plan to continue to provide the *Welcome to the Real World!* Program in the county through a variety of education methods in 2020.

Acknowledgements

Thanks are extended to the 4H Development & Youth Fair Board – Nala Chambers, Sheila Catron, Vicki Yurcho, Madeline Catron, Holt Chambers, Katie Yurcho, Kimberly Riddle and Ashley Riddle; Real World Task Force – Stefanie Forester, Kami Weatherly, and Johnny Reynolds; High School Principles – Cason Bennett, Bellevue, Michael Smiley, Henrietta, Shane Coker, Midway, and Clint Perkins, Petrolia; and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension specialist Jason Johnson for their role in support of the youth financial programs.

VALUE

Financial Literacy

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service financial literacy programs provide adults and youth with basic financial education and resources to help them set and reach financial goals and plan for the future. When Texans make better financial decisions and implement recommended financial management practices, they increase their ability to achieve financial security.

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE
Providing Solutions

Making a Difference

2019 Clay County Healthy Food Preparation

Prepared by Sherri Halsell, Clay County Family & Community Health Agent

Relevance

Approximately 29 percent of Texans report being diagnosed with hypertension. Individuals with hypertension are at greater risk of developing conditions associated with the heart, including heart failure and heart attack, as well as stroke, chronic kidney disease and type 2 diabetes. Clay County cardiovascular deaths are 5 per 1,000 adults compared to 4 per 1,000 adults in the state of Texas. During the past 20 years, there has been a dramatic increase in obesity in the United States and rates remain high. According to the Centers for Disease Control, in 2011-2014 more than one-third of U.S. adults 36% and approximately 17% of children and adolescents aged 2-19 years are obese. Some of the observed increase in caloric intake may be associated with the increase in eating out at restaurants and take out places. Data from the USDA Economic Research Service reports that in 1970, 25.9 percent of all food spending was on food away from home; by 2012, that share rose to its highest level of 43.1 percent. The data also suggest that, when eating out, people either eat more or eat higher calorie foods or both; and that this tendency appears to have been increasing over the years. Many people become overwhelmed when they think of menu planning and trying to prepare healthy, cost-effective meals for their families. Fortunately, AgriLife Extension agents have the knowledge and expertise to provide resources that will help encourage at-home family meals.

Response

After reviewing the results from the Clay County Issues Identification Process, the Clay County Family & Community Health Committee found that Healthy Meal Preparation and Basic 101 Nutrition were identified as top issues in the past three years. The FCH Committee elected Healthy Food Preparation programs as a main project for the year. The *Cooking Under Pressure* and *Cooking Well for Healthy Blood Pressure* programs would encourage individuals to eat healthy by providing lessons on quick, nutritious, cost-effective recipes. Our *goals* were to improve the diet quality of individuals by building and improving skills in meal planning, food shopping and food preparation. A secondary goal of this is to discuss the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) eating pattern and list the benefits to the plan as is related to hypertension. The *targeted audience* was the general public, with a focus on parents/caregivers, and was provided through Texas A&M AgriLife Extension programs that teach families healthy meal planning, food preparation techniques and promote healthy living in Clay County.

Cooking Under Pressure Program- fee based program

- The FCH Committee met 3 times as a group to plan programming.
- FCH Agent marketed the program by printing two news articles for local paper and marketing on FCH Facebook page.
- *Cooking Under Pressure* reached **32 people** (31 participants and 1 presenter). This cooking program was a hands-on class with individuals learning to cook with their own pressure cooker. Lesson included basic concepts, techniques, and parts of an electric pressure cooker. Programs were presented in Henrietta, Texas at St. Mary's Catholic Church on February 5th (14 attended) to the public; and November 19th (18 attended) to the Henrietta Clarion Club members.

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- Presenter included: Sara Holcombe, former 4H member, on preparing yogurt in the electric pressure cooker.
- 146 Facebook posts to encourage healthy eating were shared with 225 followers (32,850 total), 7 electronic newsletters were sent to email list of 99 subscribers (693 contacts)
- Four articles printed to encourage healthy eating and meal planning though out the year.
- 1 volunteer donated **12 volunteer hours** for an estimated value of **\$305.16** for their efforts.

Healthy Blood Pressure Program

- The FCH Committee met 3 times as a group to plan programming.
- Marketing efforts included news articles and posts on FCH Facebook Page.
- *Healthy Blood Pressure* program was presented to the Byers Women’s Club in Byers, Texas. Program was presented on October 8, 2019 at the Byers Community Center with 12 attending.
- Participants received a bungee band to help encourage them to exercise at home.
- 1 electronic newsletter was sent to email list of 99 subscribers on healthy blood pressure.

Results

Cooking Under Pressure standardized post retrospect evaluation was used and evaluation data was collected from 30 of the 32 participants, resulting in a response rate of 94%. The evaluations indicate the events were highly successful in impacting family nutrition. *65.6% were first time participants in a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Activity.*

Some of the event outcomes noted at the conclusion of the event includes:


- 73.3% increased their knowledge of the different brands of pressure cookers.
- 72.7% increased their knowledge of how to use the functions on the pressure cooker.
- 96.7% increased their knowledge of the difference between quick release and natural release when using the pressure cooker.
- 63.7% understand the safety precaution in using the electric pressure cooker.
- 77.7% increased their understanding of the safety precautions for the recommendation to Not use the electric pressure cooker for home canning.
- 63.7% changed their attitude and are confident in how to properly operate their electric pressure cooker.
- 69.3% increased their knowledge of how to clean the silicone sealing ring, condensation collector and additional lid parts after each use.
- 55.3% changed their habit of not putting food in pressure cooker over 1 hour before cooking food.

Future Plans

Plans to present new Healthy Living programs in the Fall of 2020 as well as continuing one shot program requests from local organizations. These programs are direct efforts made by the FCH Committee and Task Force.

Acknowledgements

Thanks are extended to the Family & Community Health Program Area Committee - Shirley Visintainer, Howard Beeler, Jan Slagle, Sue Woodson, Connie Johnson, Scott Cleveland and Margo Grunseich.

VALUE	
Obesity Prevention and Reduction	
	The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service engages children and adults in programs that teach them how to eat nutritious foods and engage in regular physical activity to promote health and reduce their risk for obesity. The Texas public benefits through a healthier population, reduced health care costs, and increased productivity.

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE
Providing Solutions

Making a Difference

Clay School Youth Healthy Programs - 2019

Summary developed by Sherri Halsell, County Extension Agent, Clay County

Relevance

Texas youth continue to face health issues similar to those of adults. In fact, one-third (33.3%) of Texas youth ages 10 & under; 17 are considered overweight or obese, with Texas ranking 15th among other states in 2016 regarding youth overweight and obesity status (<https://stateofobesity.org>). In addition to obesity, the top causes of death for youth ages 10-19 include unintentional injuries, cancer, suicide, heart disease, respiratory disease, and influenza. Clay County has 19% of youth that are obese.

In response, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension has many resources that can be used in the classroom or as part of 4-H youth development project activities. These resources provided education and hands-on activities that encourage healthy food intake and best practices related to safety, mental health, and general health. In addition, there are opportunities for high school age youth to become trained Healthy Texas Youth Ambassadors which will equip them with the knowledge and skills to assist the County Extension Agent and adult volunteers in providing positive health educational activities for youth in the classroom and through the 4-H youth development program.

Response

After reviewing the data concerning children and adults, the Clay County Family Community Health (FCH) Program Area Committee chose to adopt programming to address the issues of health, physical activity and nutrition the committee adopted a variety of programming including: Healthy Food Choices, Promotion of Physical Activity and Proper Hand Washing.

- **Youth Health Fair** was planned and presented for the Henrietta Elementary 4 & 5th graders. The event was collaborated effort between the FCH Program Area Committee, Janet Holding, Henrietta School Nurse and the School Health Advisory Committee (S.H.A.C.).
 - FCH & S.H.A.C Committees met with FCH Agent 3 times to plan the Youth Health Fair.
 - FCH Committee members presented sessions at Health Fair and recruited volunteers to teach lessons.
 - **Clay Youth Health Fair** was conducted on April 25, 2019 at the Henrietta Elementary School with **160 students plus 8 teachers** attending.
 - Sessions included: Dental Hygiene, Bike Safety, Path to the Plate, Sugar Shockers, Alcohol & Stress, No Tobacco, Poison Control and Cyberbullying. FCH Agent Halsell presented the Sugar Shocker session, Ag Agent presented Path to the Plate and Extension Secretary presented No Tobacco.

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- **Proper Hand Washing Lesson** – Planned and presented to 455 Henrietta Head Start and Pre-K to 5th grade students.
 - When should you wash your hands?
 - Steps for correct hand washing
 - Hands-on exercise of washing hands correctly using a back light to check progress

- **Mass Media Method** –
 - After the Hand Washing event a parent newsletter was prepared and delivered on hand washing
 - News articles were planned to reinforce subjects taught
 - Facebook posts on healthy cooking were placed on FCH Facebook page

Results

Health Fair Evaluation Results – post evaluation of healthy lifestyles was designed by FCH Agent Halsell and conducted the classroom teachers of the Henrietta Elementary 4th & 5th grade students. Evaluation data was collected from 138 of the 160 participants, resulting in a response rate of 86%.

HEALTH FAIR - respondents stated	Percentage
That physical activity will become a healthy habit.	125 of 138
Walking will increase endurance and flexibility.	133 of 138
They plan changes in the things they normally do as a result of what they learned or participated in at the Health Fair.	128 of 138
They plan to share information received with family or friends.	134 of 138
They plan to choose healthier snacks.	130 of 138
They plan to decrease screen (tv/video game) time.	119 of 138
Their favorite activity at the Health Fair was...	Poison Control

Proper Hand Washing Method results from Henrietta Principle, Kendra Bennett, states that absentees are down by 8% from the year before after the hand washing lesson was presented.

Future Plans


Plans to present new programs in the Fall of 2020 as well as continuing the Hand Washing Program. These programs are direct efforts made by the FCH Committee and Task Force.

Acknowledgements

Thanks are extended to the Family & Community Health Program Area Committee - Shirley Visintainer, Howard Beeler, Jan Slagle, Sue Woodson and Margo Grunseich; Henrietta Elementary – Kendra Bennett, principle, Jeanette Holding, nurse, Chelsea Hoff, PE teacher and Pennie Clevenger, music teacher; Henrietta S.H.A.C.; and Henrietta Elementary Head Start Teacher.

VALUE

Obesity Prevention and Reduction



The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service engages children and adults in programs that teach them how to eat nutritious foods and engage in regular physical activity to promote health and reduce their risk for obesity. The Texas public benefits through a healthier population, reduced health care costs, and increased productivity.

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE
Providing Solutions

Making a Difference

Clay FCH Better Living for Texans (BLT) Programs - 2019

Summary developed by Sherri Halsell, County Extension Agent, Clay County

Relevance

According to Texas Health and Human Services 897 households in Clay county receive benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (source: http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us/research/TANF_FS.asp).

Research suggests that:

- SNAP recipients and other limited resource audiences consume diets that are not in agreement with current dietary recommendations, potentially increasing their risk for the development of chronic disease.
- Food insecurity, obesity, and lack of access to healthy foods are other issues that impact this audience and have strong potential to negatively impact health.

Response

After reviewing the data concerning children and adults, the Clay County Family Community Health (FCH) Program Area Committee chose to adopt the *Better Living for Texans (BLT) Program* plan to promote better health and nutrition for adults and youth. To provide programming to address the issues of health, physical activity and nutrition the committee adopted a variety of programming including: Adult Education, Promotion of Physical Activity and Proper Hand Washing.

- **Be Well, Live Well Program** – Planned and presented five-part session to residents of the housing authority in Henrietta, Texas which consisted of the following lessons. 6 attended and graduated.
 - Be Independent, Eat Well
 - Be Able, Read the Label
 - Be Safe, Eat Safe
 - Be Creative, Plan Meals
 - Be Fit, Move More
- **Youth Health Fair** was planned and presented for the Henrietta Elementary 4 & 5th graders. The event was collaborated effort between the FCH Program Area Committee, Janet Holding, Henrietta School Nurse and the School Health Advisory Committee (S.H.A.C.).
 - FCH & S.H.A.C Committees met with FCH Agent 3 times to plan the Youth Health Fair.
 - FCH Committee members presented sessions at Health Fair and recruited volunteers to teach lessons.
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 - When should you wash your hands?
 - Steps for correct hand washing
 - Hands on exercise of washing hands correctly using a back light to check progress
- **Mass Media Method** -
 - A promotional news flier was sent to parents of Head Start children in Henrietta
 - After the Hand Washing event a parent newsletter was prepared and delivered on hand washing
 - News articles were planned to reinforce subjects taught
 - Facebook posts on healthy cooking were placed on FCH Facebook page

Results

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HEALTH FAIR - POST-EVENT EVALUATION	RESULTS
That physical activity will become a healthy habit.	125 of 138
Walking will increase endurance and flexibility.	133 of 138
They plan changes in the things they normally do as a result of what they learned or participated in at the Health Fair.	128 of 138
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Their favorite activity at the Health Fair was...	Poison Control

Proper Hand Washing Method results from Henrietta Principle, Kendra Bennett, states that absentees are down by 8% from the year before after the hand washing lesson was presented.

BLT Newsletters and Facebook Posts include 12 newsletters (156 individuals - 1,872 total), 7 electronic newsletters (99 individuals - 693 total) and 146 posts on Agent's FCH Facebook Page (225 individuals - 32,850 total) on healthy lifestyles, nutrition and healthy recipes.

Future Plans


Plans to present new BLT programs in the Fall of 2020 as well as continuing the Hand Washing Program. These programs are direct efforts made by the FCH Committee and Task Force.

Acknowledgements

Thanks are extended to the Family & Community Health Program Area Committee - Shirley Visintainer, Howard Beeler, Jan Slagle, Sue Woodson and Margo Grunseich; Henrietta Elementary - Kendra Bennett, principle, Jeanette Holding, nurse, Chelsea Hoff, PE teacher and Pennie Clevenger, music teacher; Henrietta S.H.A.C.; and Henrietta Elementary Head Start Teacher.

VALUE

Better Living for Texans



These nutrition programs teach low-income audiences to prepare nutritious meals, stretch their food resources, improve their food-safety practices, and participate in regular physical activity. This not only improves the quality of life and reduces the risk of chronic disease for participants, but also lowers public health care costs

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE
Providing Solutions

Making a Difference

4-H FCH Project Summary Clay County - 2019

Summary developed by Sherri Halsell, County Extension Agent, Clay County

Relevance

The Texas 4-H Youth Development Program exposes 4-H members to the academic discipline of family and community health (FCH) and helps youth gain valuable skills and knowledge that they can apply to daily life. The FCH program area represents many disciplines to which youth are exposed through projects such as clothing and textiles, food and nutrition, consumer education, health, housing and home environment, and safety. Through these projects youth also gain valuable citizenship and leadership skills.

Response

Clay County's 4-H FCH Project Coalition provides leadership to the 4-H FCH program at the local level, setting goals for the 4-H FCH projects, and planning and implementing educational activities for 4-H volunteers and members. Currently, six serve on the coalition that meets at least three times each year. Over that past year, the 4-H FCH Project Coalition has met on:

- February 7 – 6 attended
- April 30 – 3 attended
- September 29 – 5 attended

Summary of 4-H FCH Project Involvement:

Total number of youth and adults involved in 4-H FCH Projects:	Youth in Project	Contest Participation	Project Volunteers
Food and nutrition project:	13	20	15
Clothing and textiles project:	8	20	6
Consumer education project:	8	8	1
Youth Fair	60	114 entries	43
4-H FCH Leader Training (2/17/19)			5
4-H FCH Leader Training (4/1/19)			1
4-H FCH Leader Training (9/5/19)			5

**Youth may participate in more than one 4-H FCH project. Therefore, totals from each project may not match total number of youth involved in 4-H FCH Projects. Adapt as appropriate to include projects/trainings implemented in your county.*

4-H FCH Project Highlight:

4-H Foods and Nutrition

- I recruited the 2019 Clay County Youth Fair Foods Superintendent to present a workshop on preparing and presenting food for the Clay County Youth Fair food competition. Youth Fair had 60 individual participants with 114 items and 43 volunteers helping.
- By using emails and other technology, the 4-H FCH Program Committee was able to plan and organize FCH workshops, practices, leader trainings and contests and discussed the need to find ways to communicate using web-based group sites for meetings in the future.

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- The **4-H Food & Nutrition Leader training** in September focused on the Food & Nutrition Guidelines and the Rules for the county and district food shows. 5 leaders attended.
- The **Cookie Decorating Workshop** in July with 9 attending.
- The **4-H Food & Nutrition Workshops** in September with 12 attending. Trained 4 junior/teen leaders on presentations for the workshop. Subjects taught by 4-H members included knife skills, measuring skills, how to make substitutions on a recipe, handwashing and interview tips.
- **4-H Food Show, Food Challenge and Nutrition Quiz Bowl Competitions** – as a result of all project meetings, 13 participated in the foods project, 20 participated in county and district Food Shows/Food Challenges.

4-H Consumer Life Skills

- I conducted **4-H Consumer Life Skills Leader training** for 1 leader. Leader was trained on preparation for the consumer decision making contest, oral reasons presentation as well as the appropriate procedure for completing scorecards. Study topic provided by the State 4-H staff and District 3 contest planning committee were reviewed.
- **4-H Consumer Life Skills project meetings** – approximately 4 per year began each March and continued through April in order to prepare for the district contest. This year ag agent worked with 8 participates that attended the district contest. Halsell was a member of the 2019 District Consumer Contest Committee.

4-H Clothing and Textiles

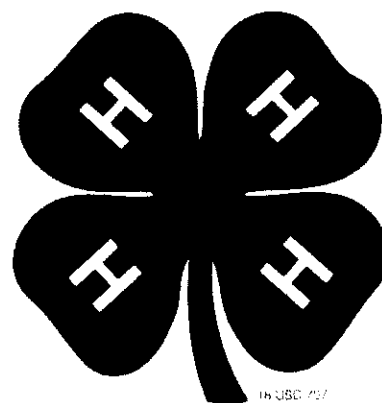
- **4-H Clothing Leader training** in February focused on the Clothing Guidelines and the Rules for the county and district fashion shows. Simple sewing projects were shared with leaders to use with small groups. 5 leaders attended.
- **4-H Clothing/Story Board Workshop** in February with 9 attending. Halsell trained 2 junior/teen leaders on presentations for the workshop. One 4H member organized/planned/taught the clothing workshop. Another 4H member planned and organized the clothing project community service project. Subjects taught included storyboard design, Duds to Dazzle, interview tips, sewing skills and characteristics of cotton.
- **4-H Fashion Show Contest** – as a result of all project meetings 8 participated in the clothing project, 5 participated in the county fashion show, 5 in the district fashion show and 2 in the state fashion show.
- **Duds to Dazzle** – as a result of clothing project meetings 3 participated in the district and state contest. Senior team won 2nd place at the state contest.
- **Story Board** – 2 participated in the district contest.

VALUE

Character and Leadership Development

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension's 4-H Youth Development Program teaches participants leadership skills and character traits. Participating youth become mentors, role models, and leaders in their schools and communities.

Fruitful Harvests
- Skoudfi
- mean person



EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE
Providing Solutions

Making a Difference

2019 Clay County 4-H Livestock plan

Developed by Bill Holcombe,

County Extension Agent – Ag and Natural Resources Clay County

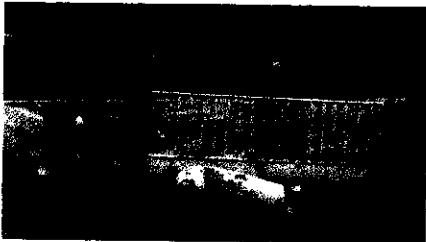
Relevance

The Livestock portion of the Clay County 4-H program has traditional been a large focal point of the Clay County 4-H Program. We have members that participate not only in the County Livestock Show, but also in most every major livestock show in the state. In addition, livestock projects are often the impetus for many 4-Hers joining the program to begin with. As 4-H enrollment continues to grow, it is important that the livestock program be managed not only for the current youth involved, but also to continue to encourage and develop new 4-Hers into the program.



Response

With the current price of steers in the cattle industry, many families are shying away from raising beef projects which have traditionally been a large segment of the show project area, in addition most of our families now live within the city limits of their communities and thus do not have the land or facilities that such a project would entail. Due to these changes we have seen a decrease in the number of beef projects, and a large increase in the number of swine, lamb, and goat projects. Poultry and rabbit projects have held about the same. Due to this shift, we not only have large numbers of new people who have never raised a project animal, but we have families who would traditionally be familiar with beef projects that are now going into projects they have little or no experience with. So we have had to tailor our educational programs to focus more on these areas with the burgeoning participation in. In addition, Clay County has a very large and passionate horse program which provides great educational and leadership experiences to its participants.



Results

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In 2017, we had 89 youth participate in the Clay County Jr. Livestock Show, in 2018, we had 84 participants in the show. In 2019, we had 95 youth participate. In addition, in 2017 we had 9 families participate in 4 major shows, whereas in 2018 we had 6 families entered into 5 major shows, in 2019 we had 11 families in 7 major livestock shows. In addition, on the horse side of things we had a successful County Horse show, District and State Horse Shows, and were successful in organizing several clinics and a 2 county Ranch Sorting event as a fund raiser and learning experience. In addition we had 4-Hers participate in District livestock judging, Horse Judging, Horse Quiz Bowl, NCHA Cutting Horse Judging, Livestock Skillathon, and Ag Product Id.



Acknowledgements: Special thanks to the following presenters for their time and expertise Josh Cox, Seth Hall, Dr. Ron Gill, Justin Rogers, Justin Hansard, Russel Harrison, Doug Vicars, LC Harrison, and Ed Cate. In addition, appreciation is expressed to the horse committee of Clay County and Clay County Farm Bureau for their guidance and support of Extension programming within the county.

Future Plans

We will continue to conduct our programming efforts to develop and enhance the knowledge and skill levels of our 4-Hers as well as to better prepare them for lives they will lead in the future.

V A L U E

Character and Leadership Development

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension's 4-H Youth Development Program teaches participants leadership skills and character traits. Participating youth become mentors, role models, and leaders in their schools and communities.

FRUSTRATIONS

- Skunk
- new people

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE
Providing Solutions

Making a Difference

2019 Clay County Texas Quail Index

Developed by Bill Holcombe,

County Extension Agent – Ag and Natural Resources Clay County

Relevance: Quail have historically been an important species in Clay County. They have traditionally been important from a hunting perspective as well as a food source for predatory species living in the Rolling Plains area. Hunting is becoming a more and more important economic factor in Clay County and interest in a healthy quail population has increased as interest in hunting has increased. In addition there are many people who have grown up in the Clay County area that remember always seeing Quail until recently and have a strong interest in seeing the population return.

Response: In order to gauge health of Native Quail populations in Clay County a Texas Quail Index study was implemented. A TQI committee of volunteers was created to implement this plan. The committee was responsible for assisting the Agent with conducting 1) 3 spring Call Counts in May, 2) Creating and checking 28 dummy nest locations, over 2 and 4 week increments 3) Using 2 game camera's to survey predator populations 4) Conducting Roadside Counts of Quail populations and 5) Conducting Habitat evaluations along transects. The committee was especially invaluable this year as I was dealing with hearing loss and recovering from surgery at the time of most of the implementation of the study and had to lean heavily on them.

Methods

Texas Quail Index(TQI) participants must first establish a data collection transect: a series of 8 points (numbered 0-7) on the chosen study site where all subsequent demonstrations will be conducted. These points must be accessible, spaced at least a mile apart, and located away from distracting traffic or equipment noise. These data points were used to implement the entirety of the TQI program. From these points we were able to collect data ranging from Spring Call Counts, to Dummy Nest Survivability, to game camera's recording predators that were present, to habitat evaluation, and roadside bird counts.

Results

Spring Call Counts

The county's overall average in 2019 was 4.4 and ranged from 3.8 to 4.9 at individual mile markers. This year's overall average was higher than last year's 3.7 and put Clay County in the 82nd percentile in 2019 for bobwhites, meaning its call counts were higher than 82% of participants.

Dummy Nests

Four-week survival averaged 50% and ranged from 33% to 67% across 4 transects. This puts CLay County in the 30th percentile for nest survival in 2019. Nesting success was equal in both substrate types. The most frequently recorded nest predators were raccoons which accounted for 50% of depredation events. The average number of nesting clumps estimated per acre was 292 which is below the recommended threshold of 300 suitable nesting sites.

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Predator Surveys

In clay County, there were a total of 4 predators observed, with raccoon being the most common 50%. Some of the best game camera photos are included below

Habitat Evaluations

The average habitat evaluation value for Clay County in 2019 was .59 and ranged from .41 to .89 for individual mile markers. This places it in the 10th percentile statewide. The two greatest limiting factors in habitat quality were availability and interspersion. Figure 9 provides a comparison of Clay County's evaluation values this year versus 2018.

Roadside Counts

This year's roadside count values were once again quite low, with an average of 0.7 quail spotted per mile (combined bobwhite and scaled), compared to an average of 0.6 birds per mile in 2018. Bobwhites maintained record low averages with 0.37 birds spotted per mile this year (versus 0.38 last year). It appears that scaled quail fared better with 1.92 birds seen per mile (versus 1.36 last year), but the wide error bars in the graph below suggest that there was a lot of variation in the data set, due in part to a decrease in the number of cooperators relative to previous years. Many counties reported zeroes on their roadside counts this year as well.

The average number of quail recorded per mile in Clay County was .97, with the highest count being 1.5 quail per mile.

Discussion and Conclusions

Based on the results of the spring call counts, the average number of bobwhite roosters was fair which represents good breeding effort given the ongoing drought. Available nesting sites are there as Clay County is just below the threshold of 300 nesting sites per acre, which indicates quality nesting habitat. However, the Clay County site was lower the statewide average on dummy nest success rate. This may indicate that predation is a limiting factor for nesting quail on this site. While we ended up with typical rainfall for the year, our spring around nesting time was very dry as was the summer. 80% of our annual rainfall for the year came in the 6 weeks after labor day. This had a significantly adverse affect on quail populations and nest survivability. In addition, Mile Marker 3 was fairly close to a river which we feel increased the predator pressure which attributed to the lower nest success at this site. Raccoons and wild hogs are nest predators of quail and were numerous on this site; therefore, control of feral hogs and raccoons may also be warranted here. Many of the techniques employed during the Texas Quail Index are best used to evaluate a single property over time. This means collecting the same data from the same locations year after year for comparison. The conclusions we can draw using just one year's data are limited; however, it is our hope that the landowners and managers can see the value in collecting these types of data to monitor their quail populations and evaluate their management activities for the benefit of quail populations on their property. The forecast for winter 2018 through spring 2019 calls for above average rainfall. If this holds out the quail population could be poised to continue to recover from the droughts of the past years.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Dr. Dan Bolin for allowing us to utilize the Eagle Wind Ranch to run the Quail Index Study. I would also like to thank Holt and Conner for their many hours of help setting up the Quail Index Study and collecting data. Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Dale Rollins and Amanda Gobeli for their leadership in the program and their countless hours spent summarizing the data for the Quail Index Study.

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE
Providing Solutions

Making a Difference

2019 Clay County Beef Cattle Management Plan

Developed by Bill Holcombe,

County Extension Agent – Ag and Natural Resources Clay County

RELEVANCE: Cattle and livestock production is the primary economic factor in Clay County. Beef cattle production in 2019 accounted for \$51.925 million in the Clay County economy; in addition, milk cattle production provided another \$3.7 million to the county. Based on the high value of the Cattle Industry to Clay County, it is imperative that programing and education efforts target these producers to both maximize and build on the knowledge, education, and production practices of producers in Clay County.

RESPONSE: Through the leadership of the Clay County Beef Committee a series of educational programs were planned building off the feedback of 2017. The goal was to implement programs focusing on pasture management, weed control, market risk minimization, and pasture improvement. The Clay County Beef Committee met 3 times in 2019 planning programs and using feedback to improve overall programs.

- **Spring Ag Seminar** - Presented in an effort to promote local agriculture vendors as well as to educate producers on a variety of ag related issues. One hundred sixty five people attended the vendor session and 35 attended the evening seminar where topics such as Corteva Ag weed control, Cattle Market, and Cattle Fertility were presented. **88% said they would adopt something from the program and the economic impact was \$40,000.**
- **Clay County Brush Field Day - August 23, 2019** Topics: Mesquite, Prickly Pear, and locust control, weed and plant identification, economics of brush control, cool season grazing strategies and control were presented by three specialists, one volunteer, and the County Extension Agent. **The field day reached 42 producers. 88% indicated they would adopt a new practice and economic impact of \$338,371 was reported.**
- **Clay and Montague County Hay Show - October 21, 2019** Twenty-seven participants received information on topics including Hay Judging, Forage Types, Hay Testing Results, and Weed Control presented by one specialist and the county Extension agent.
- **Result Demonstrations** - Conducted three Livestock/Forage Related Result Demonstrations: Forage Trial on Coastal Bermuda, Crab Grass, Kline Grass, Little Bluestem, and B dahl; one Mesquite Basal Treatment Trial using Oil Based treatments; one Mesquite Basal Treatment using Water Based treatments. Also conducted a Native Plant Flower Bed Demonstration and Texas Quail Initiative. In Addition conducted a national earth kind rose trial.
- **Agricultural News Letter:** Emailed out every other month. Newsletter addresses current issues in crops, livestock and range, advertises upcoming educational programs and reports the results of the various Result Demonstrations and program feedback.
- **Ag E-mail News and Updates:** Sent to over 200 local producers 2-3 times per month as issues arise and news needs to be distributed.
- **Newspaper Article:** is provided 2 times a month to Clay County Paper addressing many issues in Agriculture.
- **Texoma Country Morning:** Recorded TV broadcast 4-5 times a year highlighting upcoming programs and giving Agriculture news and perspective.

The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife.

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RESULTS: A total of 250 producers attend the three major educational events detailed above. In 2019, producers were asked to provide information on their educational experience retrospective post evaluation and verbal surveys. The surveys were designed to measure knowledge or level of understanding concerning the various risk management practices before the programs as compared to after the programs. Verbal surveys were used to better understand how valuable the programs were to each individual. Verbal surveys allow producers a more comfortable atmosphere to provide testimonials

Below are the most significant results from all programs conducted this year

Program Content	Mean Before	Mean After	Percent Change
Application methods for herbicides.	2.43	3.32	29.7%
Brush and weed management practices.	2.47	3.40	31.0%
When and under what conditions to use herbicides.	2.32	3.26	31.3%
Effective timing and application of herbicides.	2.06	3.35	43.0%
Weed and brush id.	2.24	3.14	30.0%
Balancing the range ecosystem to benefit cattle and wildlife.	2.31	3.21	30.0%
Understanding pesticide labels.	2.57	3.20	21.0%
Benefits of early timing and application.	2.52	3.32	26.7%

Table: Pre Means, Post Means & Percent Change

Percent Change = ((Post Mean - Pre Mean) / 3) * 100

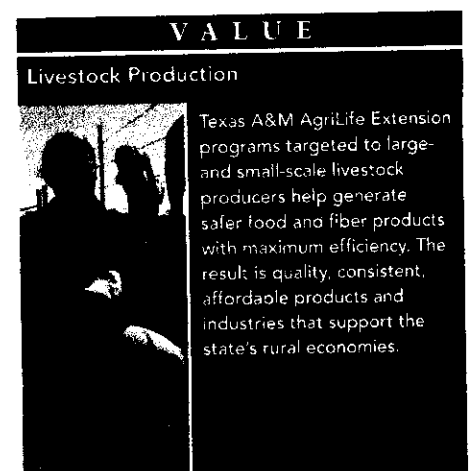
ECONOMIC IMPACT: Economic impacts by program ranged from \$40,000 total to an impact of \$338,371 for county programs. Total county Economic impact of Livestock and forage programs was \$378,971 based off of survey responses. 120 producers indicated an average economic impact of \$3,120. 88% of respondents indicated they would adopt at least 1 new practice.

SUMMARY: Educational programming directed toward Beef Cattle / Forage/Pasture Management yielded positive results in the minds and actions of producers. Survey results show that programming efforts did make a difference in increasing knowledge levels and understanding. Results also show positive anticipated dollars gained by producers. Feedback form participants expressed appreciation for the efforts providing means in dealing with the risk to production and the economic loss potential. Comments revealed that her numbers are holding steady in current cattle market and that pasture management, resource efficiency, and market risk minimization are playing a more important role than ever with producers.

INTERPRETATION: Results were interpreted by in person interpretations to stake holders directly such as Clay County Commissioner's Court, Clay County Farm Bureau Board, Texoma Cattle Raisers Association, Program Sponsors, Henrietta Kiwanis Club, Clay County Beef Committee, and Little Wichita Conservation District. Interpretation was also delivered to both producers and State and National Elected representatives through newsletter interpretations. Committee members assisted with interpretations to Farm Bureau Board, Little Wichita Conservation District, and elected officials.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: I would like to thank the following for their contributions and/or assistance: Beef Committee members, NRCS, FSA, Clay County Agribusinesses, Clay County Commissioners Court, Noble Foundation, and Texas A&M AgriLife Service Extension Specialists.

FUTURE PLANS: We will continue to conduct our programming efforts to develop and enhance the knowledge and skill levels of our producers as well as to better prepare them for market and environmental changes and fluctuations. With as big of an economic impact as the beef and forage production industries have in Clay County, it is imperative we continue to educate and work with these producers.



EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE
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Making a Difference

2019 Clay County Horticulture

Developed by Bill Holcombe,

County Extension Agent – Ag and Natural Resources Clay County

RELEVANCE: While Cattle and Wheat production are dominant agriculture areas in Clay County, there is also a large segment of the county that produces fruit and nut trees. Predominantly these growers grow either Pecan or Peach trees, with the recent history veering towards pecan production. A large number of pecan orchards have been planted on the north end of the county to go with the historical presence of peach orchards in that area. Also, there is a large area of farm to table produce production that is grown in Clay County and sold to both Wichita Falls and Dallas/Ft Worth. In addition, with the return of rainfall to the area, many home owners are once again taking an interest in ornamental plants and landscaping around their property.

RESPONSE: Through the leadership of the Clay County Horticulture Committee a series of educational programs were planned building off the feedback of 2017. The goal was to address the needs of not only the landscape growers, but also those who participate in commercial horticulture ventures. The Clay County Horticulture Committee met 2 times in 2019 planning programs and using feedback to improve overall programs.

- **Clay County Pecan Field Day**-May 3, 32 participants, 1 committee planning meetings. 1 volunteer presenter, 2 specialist, Agent also conducted presentation. Topics covered, Pecan Pests, Pecan Tree Maintenance, orchard establishment, and Fertilization rates.
- **Rose Program**- April 14, 9 participants, Agent conducted program on Types of Roses and how to grow them in our area.
- **Clay County Native Plant Bed Demonstration Trial**- Result Demonstration trial bed established in Dec 2016, and maintained by agent and committee throughout 2017, 2018, and 2019 demonstrating native plants that are capable of growing in both drought conditions and typical rainfall.
- **National Earthkind Rose Trial**- Established 2017, 15 committee members and Agent have maintained 48 rose bushes in trial bed during establishment year. Agent and Committee solicited in kind donations to maintain Trial Bed.
- **Horticulture E-mail News and Updates:** Sent to over 120 local producers and home owners 2 times per month as issues arise and news needs to be distributed.
- **Newspaper Article:** is provided once a month to Clay County Paper addressing many issues in Horticulture.
- **Texoma Country Morning:** Recorded TV broadcast once a year highlighting upcoming programs and giving Horticulture news and perspective.

RESULTS: A total of 41 producers and homeowners attended the two major educational events detailed above. In 2019, producers were asked to provide information on their educational experience retrospective post evaluation and verbal surveys. The surveys were designed to measure knowledge or level of understanding concerning the various practices before the programs as compared to after the programs. Verbal surveys were used to better understand how valuable the programs were to each individual. Verbal surveys allow producers a more comfortable atmosphere to

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provide testimonials. The primary program was the Pecan Field Day which had producers with a mean acreage of 246 acres and a maximum of 1100. 100% of all respondents indicated they probably will implement new practices.

Below are the most significant results from all programs conducted this year

Program Content	Mean Before	Mean After	Percent Change
Integrated pest management.	1.77	2.92	38.3%
Control measures for combating pecan nut case borer.	2.08	3.08	33.3%
Common pests of pecan and their control methods.	1.85	3.08	41.0%
Nutrition requirements for pecan orchards.	2.00	3.23	41.0%
Management strategies for pecan orchards.	1.77	2.92	38.3%
How nut quality and quantity relate.	1.77	3.23	48.7%
Importance of soil tests.	2.46	3.08	20.7%
Common pecan management strategies.	1.92	2.85	31.0%

Percent Change = ((Post Mean - Pre Mean) / 3) * 100

IMPACT: 92.1% of attendees indicated at intent to adopt new practices after attending program. Economic impacts by program ranged from \$390 total to an impact of nearly \$40,000 for county programs. Total county Economic impact of Horticulture programs was \$72,000 based off of survey responses. 8 producers indicated an average economic impact of \$9087.

SUMMARY: Educational programming directed toward Horticulture and production programs yielded positive results in the minds and actions of producers. Survey results show that programming efforts did make a difference in increasing knowledge levels and understanding. Results also show positive anticipated dollars gained by producers. Feedback from participants expressed appreciation for the efforts providing means in dealing with the risk to production and the economic loss potential. Comments revealed that her numbers are holding steady in current cattle market and that pasture management, resource efficiency, and market risk minimization are playing a more important role than ever with producers.

INTERPRETATION: Results were interpreted by in person interpretations to stake holders directly such as Clay County Commissioner's Court, Clay County Farm Bureau Board, Program Sponsors, Henrietta Kiwanis Club, Clay County Horticulture Committee, and Little Wichita Conservation District. Interpretation was also delivered to both producers and State and National Elected representatives through newsletter interpretations. Committee members assisted with interpretations to Farm Bureau Board and elected officials.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: I would like to thank the following for their contributions and/or assistance: Horticulture Committee members, FSA, Clay County Agribusinesses, Clay County Commissioners Court, Noble Foundation, and Texas A&M AgriLife Service Extension Specialists.

FUTURE PLANS: We will continue to conduct our programming efforts to develop and enhance the knowledge and skill levels of our producers as well as to continue to educate our home owners and those growing landscape plants. We hope to help increase the production side of the citrus, vegetable, and pecan growers in Clay County.

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