

# Making A Difference

HARRIS COUNTY  
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



TEXAS A&M  
AGRI LIFE  
EXTENSION



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

Cooperative Extension Program



# Extension Education in Harris County

*Howdy and Welcome to Harris County!*

**OUR WORK MAKES  
A DIFFERENCE.**  
IN THE LIVES OF TEXANS AND  
ON THE ECONOMY.

## **MISSION STATEMENT:**

“Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service works daily to make Texas better by providing innovative solutions at the intersection of agriculture, natural resources, youth, and health, thereby improving the well-being of individuals, families, businesses, and communities through education and service.”

## **VISION STATEMENT:**

“Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service will be the leader in providing science-based information and solutions in agriculture and health to every Texan.”

## **SHARED VALUES:**

“We value People, Programs, and Partnerships.”



## Norman Borlaug Youth in Agriculture Program

*by Katherine Hamilton, Harris County 4-H/Imagine Science Program Assistant*

In March, Harris County 4-H staff Katherine Hamilton and Steven Frederick accompanied 18 Harris County youth as they attended the second phase of the Norman Borlaug Youth in Agriculture Program (NBYP), "The Growing Season" sessions held in Houston. During "The Growing Season", students kicked off the weekend rising to the challenges of agriculture with Dr. Andre Thomas, Associate Professor of the Practice, Texas A&M University, through game-based learning. Students worked together to design games centered around "wicked" problems agriculture faces today, including food insecurity, the impact of methane, water insecurity, and land fragmentation. Participants then had the opportunity to meet with program sponsor and President of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, Dr. Chris Boleman. Dr. Boleman spoke with students on the relevance and importance of the wicked problems they continue to investigate during the course of the program. This session allowed participants to see firsthand that agriculture goes beyond the farmer or rancher, out in the field, as they heard from Ms. Clancy Harrison, Founder, Food Dignity Movement, and Ms. Michelle Van Pelt, Business Development Manager, Dairy MAX, on food insecurity. Harrison and Van Pelt provided students with an experiential learning opportunity to change the perspective and stigma associated with food insecurity. The Growing Cycle session wrapped with Trevor Ragan, founder of The Learner Lab, who motivated and challenged youth to learn through struggles and mistakes, embrace fear, enjoy the challenge, and grow.



The Norman Borlaug Youth in Agriculture Program sows the seeds of collaborative relationships in Texas communities by creating the next generation of leaders and sharing their stories.



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# 4-H & Youth Development



*by Zachary Giblin, Harris County Extension Agent, 4-H & Youth Development*

Our Harris County 4-H Members started off the new year by preparing for and competing in the Harris County 4-H Round-Up, a two-weekend event where members compete in their project areas. This year, we had 76 total participants in Public Speaking, Food Challenge, Food Show, Talent Show, Consumer Decision Making, Fashion Show, Robotics, and Educational Presentation. Next up, these 4-H members will compete at the District level Contest April 27th- April 29th.





# Livestock Update

by Steven Frederick, Harris County 4-H Livestock Coordinator



Hats and boots off to the Harris County 4-H and FFA Youth! Over the past couple months they have had amazing success at the major livestock shows in Texas. Please help pay special tribute to the hard work and dedication to these fine students in and around Harris County!





## Wisdom, Power, Control Diabetes Series

BY SONJA DAVIS, HARRIS COUNTY FAMILY & COMMUNITY HEALTH AGENT

Agent Davis implemented Wisdom, Power, Control diabetes educational series with seniors attending the Dancy Memorial Center. Wisdom, Power, Control is an evidence-informed, educational program targeting Type 2 diabetics, pre-diabetics, and their family members who provide care or prepare meals. The program was implemented in 4 weekly sessions of 1.5 hours. During the weekly sessions, participants were taught the definition of diabetes, how to understand carbohydrates and the impact that certain foods have on blood sugar, how to check their blood glucose and interpret the readings, the healthy plate method, stress management, and steps that help to avoid diabetes complications.

Each week participants were assigned homework related to the topic and set personal goals to better manage their diabetes or improve their lifestyle.

Approximately 30 seniors attended the weekly sessions with fifteen completing matched pre- and post-surveys. Overall participants were “confident” in their ability to control their diabetes.

Qualitative data from surveys showed participants learned how and what to eat to keep their blood sugar levels within healthy ranges, and gained a better understanding of their blood sugar readings. Other behavioral data captured on the surveys indicated that participants are reading the food nutrition facts labels on foods to monitor the number of carbohydrate servings they consume.





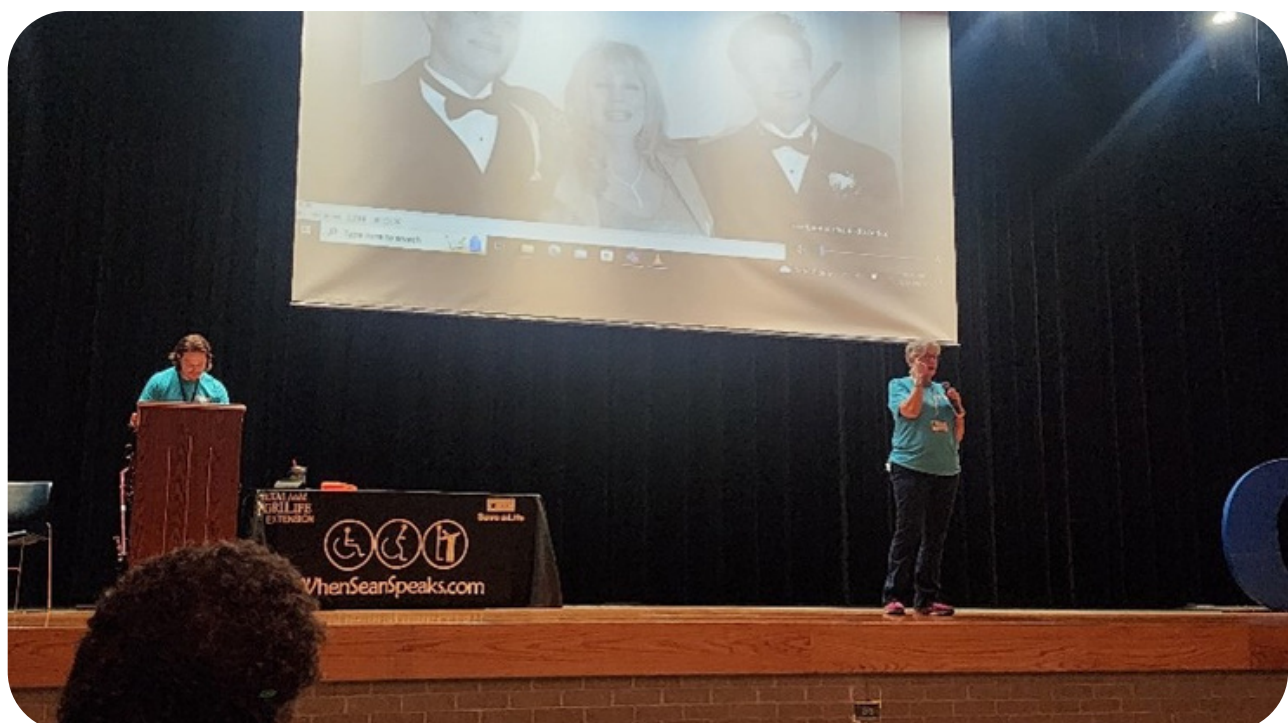
# Watch UR BAC- "When Sean Speaks"

*by Amanda Krippel, Harris County Family & Community Health Agent*

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FAMILY &  
COMMUNITY HEALTH

On Friday, March 24th, Houston ISD counselors were introduced to Sean and Jenny Carter. Sean Carter was in a drunk driving accident when he was just 22 years-old and suffered a severe brain injury along with additional limb trauma. While Sean was not driving he was in the back seat of a truck that lost control and slammed into a tree on the side where Sean was sitting. Now at the age of 40 he can no longer speak, and walking is limited to a walker. His story is one of resilience, courage, and above all the willingness to live. His mother Jenny Carter shares her story as well, from the moment she received that devastating phone call to ongoing support for her son. Sean and Jenny travel all over the state of Texas to deliver the message of drunk driving awareness to schools, civic groups, police officers, and much more. "When Sean Speaks" a is free program that is offered by the continued support of a TXDOT grant and Texas A&M University AgriLife Extension's Watch UR Bac program.





## Early Childhood Learn, Grow, Eat & Go!

The Harris County AgriLife Extension Better Living for Texans (BLT) Agents Jasmine Carey and Lora Jorgensen, Family and Community Health Agent Dr. Sonja Davis, volunteer Kristina Brown, Horticulture Agent Brandi Keller, three Master Gardeners from the Growing with Plants and Nature Committee, and Brazos County BLT Agent Katie Zender partnered with Wabash Feed and Garden to deliver the Early Childhood Learn, Grow, Eat & Go! (EC-LGEG) curriculum training. This was a train-the-trainer event for early childhood leaders to implement the EC-LGEG youth gardening curriculum. This curriculum introduces youth to gardening concepts to grow vegetables and also includes vegetable tasting experiences.



The partners involved contributed to planning and delivery of a 4-hour training that included presentations, hands-on craft activities, preparing recipes, and container garden activities. Topics that were presented included: an overview of the learn, grow, eat and go sections of the ECLGEG curriculum, cylinder gardening, container bucket drilling, food demonstrations, and parent/teacher resources. Wabash Feed & Garden contributed the space to hold the event, morning coffee, use of demonstration garden beds, seeds, fertilizer samples, and a tour of their facility for the AgriLife team and attendees during the event. Bluebell Creamery donated empty 5-gallon buckets so each participant had three buckets to practice drilling drainage holes in and could take them home to use as container gardens.



# EFNEP Success Stories Through Pictures

by Harris County EFNEP Agent Khadija Ghaffar

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EXPANDED FOOD AND NUTRITION  
EDUCATION PROGRAM



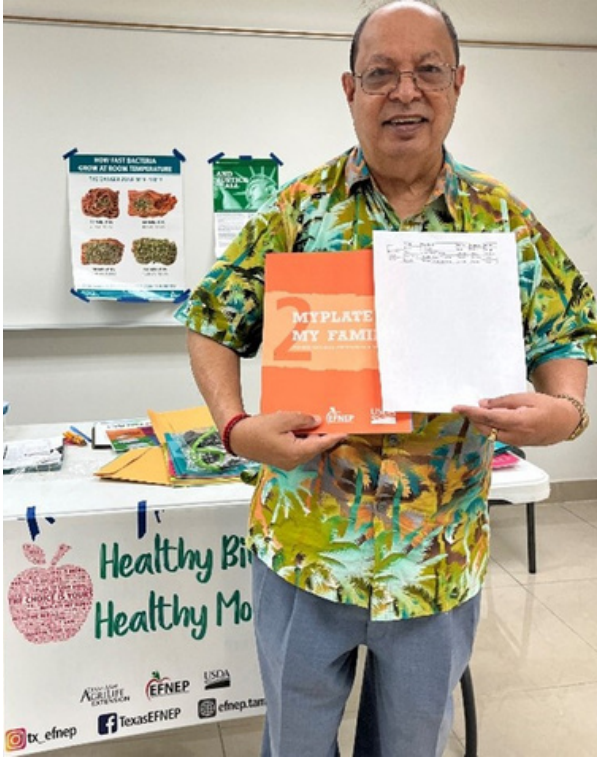
Participants graduated on March 28th from the Spring Branch Head Start Program. A lovely couple shared their experience "This class has brought us together as a family at dinner time. Not only do we cook more meals at dinner, but they have a variety of veggies and grains, etc. We used to eat sandwiches with a piece of lettuce or tomato and that would be the only vegetable for a day. Now we are eating more vegetables and fruits. Now we enjoy sitting together at table to eat and have conversations with our 3-year-old daughter."



Participants graduated on 3/29/2023 at KBC Head Start.



# EFNEP Success Stories Through Pictures, cont.



After session 2, Mr. Vaghela at “India House” created a balanced meal list for himself and brought to share at class.



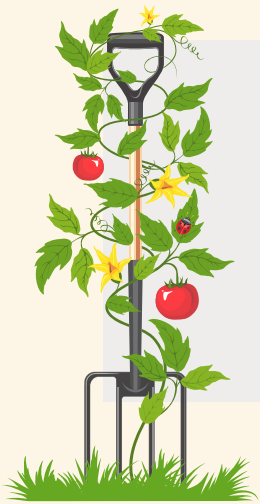
Participant received the fresh produce as raffle prize in class , and used the carrots to make carrot donuts for her kids .

A mother who attended our program learned to include her kids in family mealtime. She got plastic knives to encourage the children to participate which will have them excited about trying new fruits and vegetables.

# 2023 Master Gardener Programs

Contributed by Brandi Keller,  
Harris County Horticulture Agent

## Green Thumb Gardening Series January-March



112

Online participants  
through HCC  
and HCPL

Topics

Soil & Food Web  
Spring Vegetable Gardening  
Growing Native Plants



The monthly lecture series runs January through October, presented at no cost to anyone with internet access on a phone or computer. Programs are hosted in collaboration with Harris County Public Library(HCPL) and Houston Community College(HCC).

## Cylinder Garden Program Spring 2023 Semester

1295 Students  
Registered  
from 14 Schools



Educators register students each spring and fall to learn how to grow vegetables from seed to harvest in one semester. In 2022, a total of 6,552 students participated in the program from every precinct in Harris County.



# IN COOPERATION WITH ...

**Lina Hidalgo,  
Rodney Ellis,  
Adrian Garcia,  
Tom S. Ramsey,  
Lesley Briones**

**Harris County Judge  
Commissioner, Precinct 1  
Commissioner, Precinct 2  
Commissioner, Precinct 3  
Commissioner, Precinct 4**

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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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