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Extension Office**

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Agriculture and Natural Resources - As we closed the year on 2020, one of the opportunities we have is to estimate the value of agricultural production in the county for the year. This year the value was estimated at \$207.4 million and this does not include any government or insurance payments producers may have received. The \$52.1 million increase over last year is largely attributed to strong cotton yields across the county. On January 7th our Field Crop Symposium was presented virtually to 64 producers who collectively farmed over 115,000 acres. Surveys indicated 91.9% of participants intend to adopt at least one of the practices recommended during the symposium and anticipated an average economic benefit to their operations at \$18.47 per acre. The Nueces County Junior Livestock Show held its 3rd Annual Commercial Heifer Sale in early January as well. This year's sale grossed \$126,500 and has provided an excellent learning opportunity for youth.

Family and Community Health - The Growing and Nourishing Healthy Communities program continues to impact families during the fall planting season. There was a total of 4 garden sites with 90 garden beds. We had 180 adults participating and harvesting nearly six hundred and sixty pounds of vegetables. Participants attend a 6 lesson series and are taught how to build, maintain and harvest vegetables, and receive recipe demonstrations utilizing the vegetables grown in their gardens. The Better Living for Texans program continued reaching limited resource audiences through "A Fresh Start to a Healthier You!" series with 160 contacts and 3 graduates. December through January in person programming was canceled. The graduates in this quarter were taught virtually.

Healthy South Texas - The Family and Community Health unit, which includes Healthy South Texas and support staff have continued to support the Covid-19 task force with contact tracing full time. This has been identified as a priority for our county and requested by the County Judge and Corpus Christi Nueces County Health District. Contact tracing is an essential component in slowing the spread of COVID-19. Our role as contract tracers is to contact individuals that have tested positive, identifying close contacts, pertinent health information, possible locations of exposure, locations of travel, as well as assist with mitigation techniques and understanding of guidelines. Each individual is advised to isolate and notify contacts, advising them to quarantine per CDC recommendations. Additional reminders include restricting activities outside of the home except for getting medical care, coughing, and sneezing into the fold of the elbow, wash hands often with soap for at least 20 seconds, as well as cleaning "high touch" surface areas every day with a household disinfectant.

The Health Agent has also been involved in developing and planning a new pilot program with Walk Across Texas! In collaboration with Healthy South Texas and Extension specialists, as well as the Associate Director for Programs, we have been developing a Diabetes Edition for Walk Across Texas! The program is open to anyone interested in diabetes education, management, and prevention. We are partnering with the health science center and inviting all graduates from their eight-hour diabetes class to participate. Continued education, support, and interaction has been proven to positively affect health outcomes. Because of this we will continue to work together and encourage individuals to participate in a variety of programs to meet their health goals.

The FCH agent has resumed partnering with Nueces County to provide the Nueces County Employee Wellness Program participants with monthly programs. January kicked off with a New Year, New You program. Goal setting, resolutions, personal and professional improvements were discussed along with ideas on how to manage and set realistic goals for success.

Horticulture - Online Virtual trainings such as the Gulf Coast Gardening series and the Port Aransas Lecture series continued. Virtual Master Gardener and Master Naturalist meetings were held. South Texas Master Naturalists held a virtual Master naturalists jeopardy. Presentations were done by the agent for Ocean Drive Garden Club and South Texas Master Naturalists. The agent filmed "Winter Gardening in the Coastal Bend" for the Coastal Living program. Soil Testing campaigns began in Corpus Christi and Port Aransas.

4-H and Youth Development - The 4-H photography project is very popular, and this year we had 230 photos entered for the county contest. Over 3,154 projects were exhibited at this year's junior livestock show, with 530 participating in the premium auction which generated \$1.532 million in charitable contributions to local youth, with \$32,000 of the total going to the scholarship program offered by the junior livestock show. Several livestock project workshops were provided in fall 2020, including the Cotton Country Class which is locally hosted "practice" show that allows 4-H and FFA members to get some hands-on learning with their livestock project. Lastly, NCJLS continues to require all animal exhibitors to participate in the Quality Counts program which teaches livestock ethics.

Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program - This quarter we reached 58 Adults in 18 Zoom "Healthy Bites—Healthy Moves" classes. Our Youth Educators taught 8,590 students using our "Healthy Heroes Adventures" and "Healthy Teens - Healthy Futures" Virtual On-line curricula.