



Lubbock County 2009 North Region 4-H/FFA Quality Counts Species Clinic

Relevance

Texas has the highest participation totals in 4-H and FFA livestock projects in the country. In 2006, there were over 89,000 market and breeding entries for cattle, sheep, swine, and goats across the state and (Coufal, 2007). These figures have continually climbed over the last decade and into the new millennium.

Quality Counts in Texas is a program for 4-H and FFA youth and adults across Texas that exhibit livestock projects. This includes such market and breeding projects as beef cattle, sheep, swine, and goats. The purpose of Quality Counts in Texas is to provide an opportunity for youth across Texas to learn personal character attributes and acceptable livestock management practices associated with these projects. This unique combination of subject matter should result in the exhibition of the highest quality livestock projects by youth with unsurpassed character and ethics. This will eventually lead to a safer, more wholesome nutritious product that is fed by responsible youth of Texas who are dedicated to providing the best meat products for consumers.

Response

The North Region Quality Counts Committee was formed in February to begin work on the “North Region 4-H/FFA Quality Counts Species Clinic.” Based on recommendations from the committee the program was organized in the following manner:

- The target audience would be 4-H/FFA livestock exhibitors and adults in the North Region .
- Flyers were sent by e-mail to county offices in Districts 1, 2 and 3 and placed on each district’s 4-H website.
- Donors would be secured so that the program could be offered free-of-charge.
- For the Quality Counts morning session, programs were planned separately for youth and adults.
- Afternoon specie sessions would be beef, swine, sheep and goat.

On December 12, 2009, the “North Region 4-H/FFA Quality Counts Species Clinic” was held in Plainview and was attended by seventh-five North Region 4-H and FFA exhibitors and their parents.

Program objectives were:

- Explain the importance of stock show rules and guidelines.
- Identify the six pillars of character and apply them to livestock projects.
- Explain why quality assurance is important in livestock production.
- Describe facilities and equipment, selection, nutrition, health, management and feeding, fitting and showmanship for various species.
- Identify and describe 4-H livestock project opportunities.
- Identify resources that help support t livestock projects.

For more information contact:

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Results

Youth attended a morning session that focused on Quality Counts. Five sessions were offered that brought “Texas Trails” to life for the fifty youth that attended. They were offered a pre-test and post-test. **Pre-test scores averaged 72%. Post-test scores averaged 90%.**

Adults attended a morning session relating to Quality Counts, livestock project resources, goal setting and opportunities with livestock beyond 4-H and FFA.

For each of the questions below, adults were instructed to rate their knowledge on a scale from **1 to 5** to best reflect their knowledge before and after attending the program.

Morning Session (25 adults attending)

Knowledge Scale 1 2 3 4 5

Question: Rate Your Knowledge of:	Pre Ave. Rating	Post Ave. Rating	Change in Knowledge
The 8 core concepts of Quality Counts	2.2	4.3	+2.1
The “Texas Trails” website	1.2	4.2	+3.0
Utilizing the internet to access livestock resources	2.2	4.4	+2.2
Parts of a 4-H project	3.1	4.5	+1.4
Available resources available throught your County Extension Office	2.7	4.4	+1.7
The many skills youth gain by exhibiting livestock	3.3	4.4	+1.1
The importance of goal setting	3.5	4.6	+1.1
The proper usage of drugs	3.3	4.3	+1.0
Life in the livestock realm after youth exit 4-H/FFA	3.0	4.4	+1.4
All Questions Combined	2.7	4.4	+1.7

Afternoon Sessions: Beef, Lamb, Goat and Swine Session Combined Results (75 evaluations)

Knowledge Scale 1 2 3 4 5

Question: Rate Your Knowledge of:	Pre Ave. Rating	Post Ave. Rating	Change in Knowledge
Health (parasite, ringwork, shots, etc	2.7	4.2	+1.5
Nutrition (feed, water, minerals and additives)	3.0	4.2	+.8
Management and Feeding	3.0	4.1	+1.1
Selection (structural correctness, muscle, balance	2.6	4.1	+1.5
Show Preparation	3.1	4.4	+1.3
Showmanship	3.5	4.4	+.9
All Questions Combined	3.0	4.2	+1.2

Average years of experience of exhibitors attending the training: **2.5 years**

Number of projects represented by attendees: **33 cattle, 62 lambs, 47 goats, 104 swine**

Percentage of attendees that will adopt new practices on what was learned: **92% yes; 8% no**

(the 8% do not have animals on feed; they were using the day to learn what species they would like to show)

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Comments

A few open ended comments included:

- “Please have again.”
- “We will have goals and they will be posted in the barn.”
- “Offer more clinics.”
- “Work hard, feed right and do what I have learned.”
- “Great program. Glad we came.”

Acknowledgements

Many persons were involved in the success of the North Region 4-H/FFA Quality Counts Species Clinic. Texas Agrilife Extension Service employees involved were: Galen Chandler, Tyler Hawthorne, Jeff Wyatt, Chris Bishop, Amber Parkinson, J.W. Wagner, Donald Kelm, Cindy Stephens, Andy Hart, Cody Hill, Todd Beyers, Juli Wyatt, Wendy Scott, Robert Scott and Chase McPhaul. Other persons providing their expertise were: Kayla Rathmann, Mike Johnson, Mark Standlee and Kent Lewis. Monetary and in-kind donations were secured from the District 2 4-H Leadership Committee, Lawrence Limousin Cattle Company and the Ollie Liner Center.

Future Program Actions

The North Region 4-H/FFA Quality Counts Species Clinic will be offered again in December 2010. Through the evaluations, it was evident that attendees want more information before the 2010 training. The committee will develop a user-friendly Quality Counts newsletter that will be e-mailed every other month to attendees and posted to the district 4-H websites. A session will be offered next year for youth and adults to develop livestock project goals as a family. Adults commented they would like more information on stock show rules and drug withdrawals. A lamb and goat jackpot was offered the following day. There was a small number of exhibitors, which allowed the judges time to speak individually with each child. The overall consensus of the group attending was to offer a practice show immediately following the species clinic while information was “fresh on their minds.”

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