

# Extension At A Glance - Lubbock County

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service-Lubbock County • (806) 775-1740 • Fax (806) 775-1758 • <http://lubbock.agrilife.org/>  
 Physical Address: 916 Main, Suite 201 • Lubbock, TX 79401 • Mailing Address: P.O. Box 10536 • Lubbock, TX 79408

Agriculture & Natural Resources / 4-H and Youth Development / Family and Consumer Sciences / Community Development

## MISSION

**Improving the lives of people, businesses, and communities across Texas and beyond  
 through high-quality, relevant education.**

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Issue I

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### Agriculture and Natural Resources

#### Cover Crops Education Efforts in Lubbock County

Mark Brown, County Extension Agent - Ag and Natural Resources  
 Robert Scott, County Extension Agent - Ag and Natural Resources  
 Vikram Baliga, County Extension Agent - Horticulture

During February, 2014, Lubbock County Extension Agent Mark Brown attended the National Cover Crops and Soil Health Conference conducted in Omaha, NE by Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE). According to speakers at this conference, approximately 14 million acres of prime soil have been lost in the United States. Currently, there are an estimated 2-3 million acres of cover crops utilized in the U.S. The goal by these conference organizers is to have 20 million acres of cover crops in the U.S. by 2020.

There are definite advantages for cover crops. However, the use of these cover crops needs to be validated in the High Plains area to determine economic feasibility as well as environmental benefits. We do have producers in the South Plains that utilize cover crops or who manage crop residue from a previous crop for cover.

The following educational programming efforts have been conducted this year in order to address the national initiative:

- Radio programs addressing cover crops on January 7, 14, 29 and February 27.



Prairie Dogs by Angela Holland, Wildcat 4-H Club  
 1<sup>st</sup> Place Animals - Wildlife

- Two presentations regarding Cover Crops were included at the 2015 Hub of the Plains Ag Conference (71 participants).
- A Cover Crops Listening Session was held (by invitation) for 13 participants who have local experience with cover crops to explore practical application for the South Plains.
- On March 6<sup>th</sup>, a regional Cover Cropping/Soil Health Workshop was conducted by Dr. Calvin Trostle, Extension Agronomist at Lubbock and the Lubbock County Ag Agents. This event was attended by 65 participants, including: producers, consultants, researchers, and NRCS employees.

*Issues Addressed: Soil Nutrition and Health; Soil Conservation*

### **Lubbock County Agricultural Increment Estimates Completed**

Mark Brown, County Extension Agent - Ag and Natural Resources  
Robert Scott, County Extension Agent - Ag and Natural Resources

Each year, Extension agents in each county office complete an annual Agricultural Increment Report that provides an estimate of gross farm level receipts from agricultural-related commodities produced in that county. The Lubbock County staff completed this report with the assistance of the Lubbock County Ag Committee and various agri-business representatives. Lubbock County's gross farm receipts were estimated at \$178.8 million for 2014. This was considerably higher than the 4-year average of \$133.68 million, which includes the epic drought of 2011.

Although the 2014 estimate indicates the highest gross returns since 2011, that unfortunately does not reveal the whole story. A rough start in 2014, coupled with widespread problems with weed resistance and continued high input prices made 2014 a year of very low or negative net returns for most of our South Plains producers

*Issues Addressed: Public Education/Awareness about Agriculture*

### **Hub of the Plains Ag Conference Held in Lubbock**

Mark Brown, County Extension Agent - Ag and Natural Resources  
Robert Scott, County Extension Agent - Ag and Natural Resources  
Vikram Baliga, County Extension Agent - Horticulture

The Hub of the Plains Ag Conference was conducted with the assistance of Lubbock County Ag Committee members on February 4 in Lubbock. A total of 71 participants attended this event. The primary topics of discussion included:

- new cotton trait technologies and strategies for managing herbicide - resistant weeds.
- revised irrigation pumping restrictions as set through the local groundwater conservation district.

- the NRCS/SARE national cover crops initiative, and possible benefits of cover crops on the Texas High Plains.
- Farm Bill Decision Aid update and demonstration.

Based on evaluations completed by 42 participants, 76% anticipated to benefit economically from the information presented at this conference. Participants completing the surveys stated that they will manage 36,100 non-irrigated and 26,150 irrigated acres of cotton in 2015. In addition to presentations by Extension personnel, other presentations were given by representatives from Monsanto, Texas Department of Agriculture, and High Plains Underground Water Conservation District.

*Issues Addressed: Water Education; Farm Bill Implications; Soil Nutrition and Health; Management of Resistant Weeds; Pesticide Educations.*

### **February 6 Lubbock County Farm Bill Meetings**

Mark Brown, County Extension Agent - Ag and Natural Resources  
Robert Scott, County Extension Agent - Ag and Natural Resources  
Vikram Baliga, County Extension Agent - Horticulture

A total of 46 producers, landowners, and agribusiness men attended a Farm Bill Decision Aid update meeting at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research & Extension Center on February 6. This meeting was co-sponsored by AgriLife Extension and Farm Services Agency, with additional assistance from commodity association representatives.

The Lubbock County Extension Staff have assisted with 2 regional meetings, and have conducted 3 separate county-level meetings providing education about the 2014 Farm Bill. Total attendance at these meetings was 531 participants.

*Issues Addressed: Public Education/Awareness about Agriculture*

### **Lubbock Master Gardeners Interns**

Vikram Baliga, County Extension Agent - Horticulture

The Lubbock Master Gardener Association just finished its 2015 Master Gardener Intern class. These 29 interns are members of the community who are passionate about gardening, water conservation, education, and being a part of a great organization! They completed 50 hours of classroom

time and are currently working to finish 50 hours of volunteer service time within the next year. Once those criteria are met, the interns will be certified and will officially be members of the Lubbock chapter of the Texas Master Gardener association. If you are interested in taking



part in the 2016 LMG intern class, please call 806-775-1740 or e-mail Vikram Baliga at [Vikram.Baliga@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:Vikram.Baliga@ag.tamu.edu) with your phone number and e-mail address and you will be added to the contact list for next year's class.

*Issues Addressed: Base Programming*

**Commercial Turf and Ornamental Workshop**

Vikram Baliga, County Extension Agent - Horticulture  
 Mark Brown, County Extension Agent - Ag and Natural Resources

On January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015, 36 area landscapers, lawn care professionals, and homeowners braved the snow and ice to take part in the 2015 Commercial Turf and Ornamental Workshop. Attendees learned about horticulture and landscape-related topics including weed management, turfgrass selection, pesticide laws and regulations, urban tree care, and management of landscape diseases. Experts from the Texas Department of Agriculture, Texas Tech University, Texas A&M AgriLife Research, and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension were on hand to give presentations and answer questions for the public. Five Pesticide Applicator CEUs were offered at the annual program. Stay tuned throughout the year for information about the 2016 Turf and Ornamental Workshop. It is a great opportunity to pick up CEUs, spend some time with other industry professionals, and hear from some great speakers!

about lighting, focus, and backgrounds, as well as the 15 categories available for them to enter in the County Photography competition. This year 22 youth submitted 149 entries in the county photography contest, with 29 junior and intermediates advancing to the District competition and 14 senior entries advancing to the state photography contest. You may have noticed that for the past several years these winning photographs have been highlighted in the quarterly edition of the Extension At A Glance publication. We hope you enjoy seeing these highlighted photo's. All county entries are currently on display in the County Extension Office through April 20, if you would like to come by and see them.

*Issue Addressed: 4-H Work, programs and leadership development*

**4-H Program Assistant/Intern**

Ronda Alexander, County Extension Agent - 4-H and Youth

We are very pleased to announce a new addition to our office staff. In January, Chanie Barker joined the staff as a part-time 4-H Program Assistant and Intern. Chanie is a student at Texas Tech majoring in Agriculture Leadership and is from Coleman. Chanie is assisting with various 4-H projects and activities including leading the 4-H Photography project.

*Issue Addressed: 4-H Work, programs and leadership development*

**Continuing to Provide Agriculture Awareness Education**

Ronda Alexander, County Extension Agent - 4-H and Youth

Agriculture awareness continues to be an important education topic for the Lubbock County Extension Staff to address. This year our May "Bringing Ag to YOUth" agriculture awareness program will be conducted in Shallowater with 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade students. This year, students will rotate through five individual sessions which will include: sheep and goats, gardening and horticulture, My Plate/food and nutrition, wheat and food science. Following the rotation sessions, students will then be able to observe the Mobile Dairy Classroom, where they will learn that milk comes from a cow – not a jug. The program will be held on Monday, May 4 from 8:15 am until 11:40 am on the Shallowater Campus.

Upcoming Event

Upcoming Events in 2015

- April 18 Regional Xeriscaping Program
- April 30 Mosquito (Vector Abatement) Management Program
- May 2 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Strawberry Festival at the Lubbock Downtown Farmers Market, 19<sup>th</sup> and Buddy Holly
- May 9 10:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Wolfforth Water Expo, Frenship High School
- July 13 Turfgrass Field day
- July ? Grape Field Day
- Oct ? South Plains Vet Symposium
- Dec 11 High Plains Ag Conference

**4-H and Youth Development**

**4-H Photography Project**

Ronda Alexander, County Extension Agent - 4-H and Youth

Lubbock County 4-H'ers have really expanded their photography skills! This year 4-H'ers had the opportunity to attend photography project meetings where they learned

**Family and Consumer Sciences**

**Building Strong Families Conference**

E. Kay Davis, County Extension Agent - Family & Consumer Sciences



The 2014 BSF Conference with approximately 500 participants was evaluated at the January BSF meeting. Results were also included in the annual report, located on the website.

The Building Strong Families Board meets monthly to plan the 2015 conference. The speakers committee has met and is working to identify and schedule speakers.

Upcoming Event

The 2015 Conference will be held on Thursday, October 22, 2015 at a location to be determined.

*Issue Addressed: Parenting*

**Better Living for Texans**

E. Kay Davis, County Extension Agent - Family & Consumer Sciences  
Mary Alice Roberts, BLT Extension Assistant



Participants of the Better Living for Texans (BLT) programs will acquire knowledge related to dietary quality, the importance of physical activity, food resource management, and food safety. Lubbock County participates in BLT at the Gold level (with a Full-time Extension Assistant). The county will contribute 520 hours of nutrition education for limited income families, 312 supervision hours, will have a minimum of 300 direct educational contacts and will graduate 100 adults from a 3-lesson series. On average, a full-time Extension Assistant should conduct a minimum of twelve to twenty-four (12-24) educational programs per month.

Three hundred fifty-four seniors are receiving monthly nutritional programs at BLT qualified centers by the County Extension Agent FCS or BLT Extension Assistant. First Quarter topics included: “H-A-P-P-Y N-E-W Y-E-A-R nutrition message, “Eat Smart to Prevent High Blood Pressure,” with a potassium food source handout; and “Eat Smart to Reduce Cholesterol.”

An exhibit on Hidden Sugars was presented at the Teen Summit Conference in January.

This quarter an orientation was presented to the Texas Tech University Dietetic Interns that will complete 32 hours each of Community rotation in our office. They each will contribute a great amount of time to preparing and teaching lessons during their respective rotation.

*Mary Alice Roberts, BLT Extension Assistant, reported:* Better Living for Texans (BLT) three lesson series Back to Basics was taught for clients of Catholic Charities, Managed Care Center for Men, Walker House for Women, Habitat for Humanity as well as Buckner Children’s Home of Lubbock. These lessons will be evaluated as a BLT series.

One time classes on Nutrition Topics were offered at Lubbock State Supported Living Center, and Play House Learning Center.

Maggie Trejo and 19th Senior Community Center, King’s Dominion and Emory Sr. Apartments all received Nutrition Education programs once a month this quarter. The topics in January were: In The Know About Nutrition-Wishing You a Healthy Happy New Year! February topics were: EAT SMART for Heart Health-Prevent High Blood Pressure! March topics were: EAT SMART for Heart Health-Reduce your Cholesterol.

Better Living for Texans marketing brochures were distributed at a My Plate Nutrition display table at the Teen Youth Summit, Garrison Center Health Fair and Wolffarth Elementary Health Fair.

In January Texas Tech University Dietetic Internship program requested a presentation for incoming students on the Better Living for Texans Nutrition program.

EAT SMART for Heart Health was the topic discussed on FOX Radio program West Texas Ag Life with Eddie Griffis in February, reaching 55,000 listeners.

Total contacts for January 836, February 55,103 and March 203.

*Issue Addressed: Nutrition and Health*

**Do Well, Be Well with diabetes™**

E. Kay Davis, County Extension Agent - Family & Consumer Sciences

Diabetes occurs when the body does not make enough insulin, or the insulin it makes does not work properly. While diabetes is not curable, it is manageable. Skills are needed to effectively manage diabetes, but education is not always available. Burdens of diabetes mismanagement are disproportionately borne by those with little or no



insurance coverage, lower literacy, poor or no English skills, lower educational and income levels, and poor access to transportation.

A Diabetes exhibit was shown at the Lubbock County Employees Health Fair on January 29<sup>th</sup> with 126 employees attending.

Do Well, Be Well with Diabetes™ and Cooking Well with Diabetes™ are combined into an 8-week series in Lubbock County partnering with the Community Health Center of Lubbock. The 2014 Annual Report is available on the website. For the first quarter of 2015, series were or are being held at Arnett Benson Community Health Center, Mae Simmons Community Center and The Bridge of Lubbock.. Twenty-five attended various classes for a total of 158 contacts.

Call the County Extension Office at 775-1740 for information.

*Issue Addressed: Nutrition and Health*

### Senior Nutrition Programs

E. Kay Davis, County Extension Agent - Family & Consumer Sciences

Each month, county extension agents present pertinent nutrition information for six of the nutrition sites serving senior adults in Lubbock County. Four senior centers are BLT sites and two are non-BLT sites. During the first quarter of 2015, approximately 354 BLT and 98 Non-BLT individuals were reminded monthly of healthy eating related to “H-A-P-P-Y N-E-W Y-E-A-R nutrition message, “Eat Smart to Prevent High Blood Pressure,” with a potassium food source handout; and “Eat Smart to Reduce Cholesterol.” In addition to demonstrations or “object lesson” presentations, seniors received a printed reference sheet for further study. Following the presentations, seniors always take the opportunity to discuss practical strategies for improving their health with nutrition. Approximately 60 homebound received the information with their Meals on Wheels delivery in Slaton monthly.

Programs for this next quarter are: “Eat Smart to Lower Cancer Risks: Facts for those over 50; Eat More Whole Grains, and Fruits and Vegetables the Color of Health.”

*Issue Addressed: Nutrition and Health*

### Food Protection Management

E. Kay Davis, County Extension Agent - Family & Consumer Sciences

The Food Protection Management program offered through Texas AgriLife Extension will be offered by Agents: Kay Davis and Deana Sageser as well as other FCS Agents in the South Plains district. This program is

offered to promote the service of safe food and assist food service managers to legally practice their trade.

One two-day class scheduled in Plainview in March was cancelled and 2 people were re-tested.

Hale and Lubbock counties plan to team teach classes May 6-7; July 21-22; and October 28-29. Cottage Food Industry and Food Handler’s classes will also be offered. A Food Handler’s class for WorkSource will be taught by Lubbock and Terry County agents on April 29.

*Issue Addressed: Nutrition and Health*

### Texas Extension Education Association

E. Kay Davis, County Extension Agent - Family & Consumer Sciences

This association works with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service to strengthen and enrich families through educational programs, leadership development and community service. The objectives include: strengthen, develop, coordinate, and extend adult researched-based education, to improve the quality of life for families and communities in cooperation with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service; promote family strengths and leadership development, serve as a medium for the expression of charitable and education interests, and award 4-H and TEEA adult scholarships on a nondiscriminatory basis to worthy applicants; offer a means by which members in cooperation with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service may interpret and provide programs of local, county, district, regional, state, national and international importance in preservation of the American home and the promotion of better international understanding; function exclusively for charitable, educational, and scientific purposes.

Programs for 2015 include: “To Toss or Not to Toss,” “iPad 101,” “Don’t Mess with Texas: Dispose of Medications Properly,” “Diversity: How Does it Make us See, Hear, Feel, Think and Act,” and “Chocolate Overload.”

Tours will be determined throughout the year but may include touring the South Plains Food Bank. The group attended the District 2 TEEA meeting in Levelland in March. Members receive the bi-monthly Family Network Newsletter in efforts to advertise programs.



**A Matter of Balance**

E. Kay Davis, County Extension Agent - Family & Consumer Sciences

E. Kay Davis, was trained to teach the 4-week Matter of Balance series for Senior Citizens to help prevent falls. Any group interested can contact the Lubbock County Extension Office.

**Other**

**Lubbock Preparedness Fair**

Vikram Baliga, County Extension Agent - Horticulture

Preparing for an emergency or natural disaster is not something necessarily on the forefront of many people’s minds, but it is something that should definitely be discussed and considered. With droughts and severe weather common in West Texas, residents should not wait until an emergency arises to make plans about what to do. The Lubbock County office of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and the Lubbock Master Gardeners were on hand to help out with the 2015 Lubbock Preparedness Fair. Between giving talks and handing out literature on making an emergency plan and clean water storage to handing out tomato plants and answering questions, these two groups directly educated more than 500 people on being ready for the unexpected. For more information about how to prepare yourself and your family for an emergency or natural disaster, contact the Lubbock County Extension Office at 806-775-1740 or visit <http://texashelp.tamu.edu>

**National Volunteer Week**

**April 12-18, 2015**


Ronda Alexander, County Extension Agent - 4-H and Youth Development  
 Mark Brown, County Extension Agent - Ag and Natural Resources  
 Vikram Baliga, County Extension Agent - Horticulture  
 Kay Davis, County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences  
 Robert Scott, County Extension Agent - Ag and Natural Resources

Volunteers are an integral part of Texas A&M AgriLife Extensions Service. They are utilized in all facets of our programs! From 4-H contests to 4-H Club meetings, committees providing direction to our programming efforts, and agriculture result demonstrators, just to name a few!

In 2014, approximately 1,503 volunteers contributed 14,312 volunteer hours in Lubbock County. The value of this service at \$22.55/hr was \$322,735.60 given back to you - the residents of Lubbock County.

Hat’s off to each of you who volunteer to “make the best, better.”

Lubbock County Extension Staff  
 P.O. Box 10536, Lubbock, TX 79408  
 916 Main, Suite 201, Lubbock TX 79401  
 (806) 775-1740 Fax: (806) 775-1758



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C. Mark Brown, CEA-Ag

Ronda D. Alexander, CEA-4-H  
 Robert Scott, CEA-Ag  
 Vikram Baliga, CEA-Horticulture  
 E. Kay Davis, CEA-FCS

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We will seek to provide reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities for any of our meetings. We request that you contact Texas AgriLife Extension Service - (806) 775-1740, as soon as possible to advise us of the auxiliary aid or service that you will require.