

EXTENSION CONNECTION

JANUARY-MARCH 2021

HIDALGO COUNTY

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

Helping Texans
Better Their Lives



What We Do

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service is a unique education agency that provides research based community education, tools, and resources on a local and statewide level that teach people how to improve agriculture and food production, advance health practices, protect the environment, strengthen the economy, and enrich youth.

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Extension Staff

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*County Extension Agent- Family & Community Health
Extension County Administrator*

Vidal Saenz

County Extension Agent- Agriculture & Natural Resources

Joanne Ureste-Armijo

County Extension Agent- Family & Community Health

Ashley Gregory

County Extension Agent- Horticulture

Melissa DeLeon

Extension Agent

Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program

Andrea Torres-Barragan & Karen Cantu

Extension Agents

Better Living for Texans Program

Stephanie Bowman

*Cooperative Extension Agent-Prairie View A&M
Family & Community Health*

Romeo Ozuna

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Agriculture & Natural Resources
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@HidalgoAgriLifeExtension



Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Hidalgo County

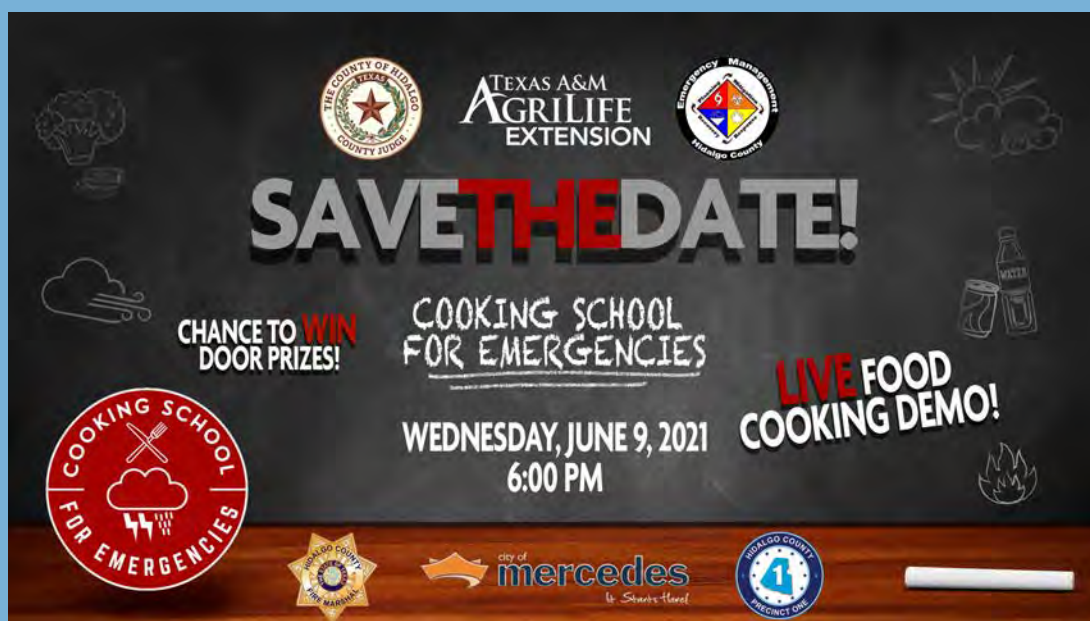
A Note from the Extension Team:

As we reflect on a most historic year and in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Hidalgo County Agents and staff continue to educate the community through various media. As we work to our new normal, we have many great events and programs coming up in 2021! Our 4-H program is gearing up for a busy summer with new leadership trainings for our youth leadership groups! We are happy to partner with Hidalgo County Judge Richard Cortez on the Cooking School for Emergencies events that will help educate our community on the importance of emergency preparedness as well as how to feed families during storms. We would like to thank Hidalgo County Judge Richard Cortez, Hidalgo County Commissioners Court, and all officials for all your support of our Extension educational programs for the community. Enjoy our newsletter and please visit our webpage for program information.

Please stay safe and well!

Visit
<http://hidalgo.agrilife.org>
for more events!

Subscribe to our YouTube
channel "Texas A&M AgriLife
Extension Hidalgo County"
for educational videos





Family & Community Health

Andrea Valdez, M.P.H.

@AgrilifeExtensionHidalgoFCH



FAMILY AND
COMMUNITY HEALTH

Stress Less



with Mindfulness
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Community members and McAllen Housing Authority residents attended the Stress Less with Mindfulness 5-session course in March 2021.

We learned about:

Mindful Breathing

Mindful Walking

Mindful Eating

How to Cope with Thoughts

Inaugural

11

GRADUATES



Cooking Well

Partnering with PSJA ISD Parental Involvement on Bowie and McAllen Housing Authority produced graduates who learned how to balance their nutrition and their diabetes.

GRADUATES

30



154

TOTAL
MULTI-COUNTY
PARTICIPANTS



DINNER
TONIGHT
TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

The Hidalgo, Webb, Brooks, and Kleberg-Kenedy Family & Community Health Agents came together in February 2021 to offer the Virtual Dinner Tonight Healthy Cooking School! With the "Trip to the Mediterranean" theme, Facebook Group members were treated to a different Mediterranean recipe every day for one week.

Our own Andrea Valdez made a Rustic Vegetable Pizza from scratch!



Family & Community Health

Joanne Ureste-Armijo, M.S.

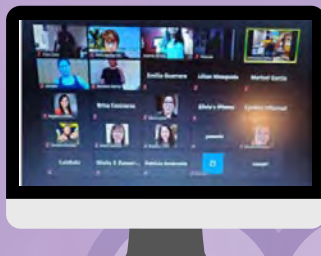
@AgrilifeExtensionFamilyResourcesHidalgoCounty



FAMILY AND
COMMUNITY HEALTH



STEP UP
SCALE DOWN



35

MULTI-COUNTY
GRADUATES

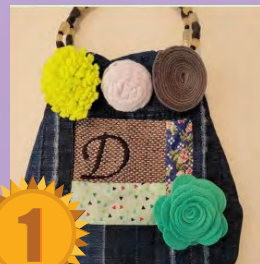
The Step Up, Scale Down (SUSD) and Walk Across Texas programs were held in the Fall of 2020. SUSD is a 12 week program that aims to help participants choose a helpful eating plan to maintain a healthy weight. Walk Across Texas is a 8 week program aimed at helping participants establish the habit of regular physical activity.



The Master Clothing Volunteers



The Master Clothing Volunteers are putting denim to the challenge. The "Denim Challenge" is an effort to promote recycling of used denim items.





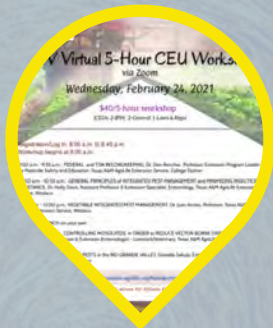
Agriculture & Natural Resources

Vidal Saenz, M.S.



23rd Annual RGV BIA Bull Gain Test & Heifer Development

In February 2021, the 23rd Annual Bull Gain test was held in Linn, Texas. There were **85** bulls and **4** heifers consigned to the program. After the test, **21** bulls were consigned to sell and were featured in Cattle in Motion magazine in March 2021.



RGV Virtual 5-Hour CEU Workshop

The RGV Virtual 5 Hour CEU Workshop was held in February 2021 with **67** pesticide license holders able to obtain CEU's towards their pesticide licenses. This workshop included topics such as citrus pests and Federal and TDA Recordkeeping.



2021 Cotton & Grain Pre-Plant Conference

The 27th Annual Cotton & Grain Pre-Plant Conference was held in January 2021 and educated **108** participants on weed competition, herbicide tolerant traits in grain sorghum, and pest management strategies in row crops and an Auxin training.



4-H & Youth Development

@HidalgoCounty4H



Our Senior Food Challenge & Duds to Dazzle teams are headed to State Round-Up competition! Good Luck to all!



Scholarships



STAR and the Hidalgo County 4-H Foundation presented our 4-H Seniors with scholarships to continue their education. Thank you all for your support of our Hidalgo County 4-H program!

404

Active 4-H members

25

Hidalgo County 4-H clubs

54

Adult & Youth Volunteers



Many of our 4-Hers participated in the Rio Grande Valley Livestock show to present their livestock, shop, horticulture, photography and public speaking projects! Congrats to all that made the Sale of Champions and for all your hard work this year!



Horticulture

Ashley Gregory, M.S.



Master

In the first quarter, the Horticulture program kicked off the 2021 Master Gardener Volunteer Training with 15 new interns eager to learn about gardening. The Master Gardeners participated in the RGV Coastal Expo that reached over 4,500 students through their new virtual platform.

Gardeners



MG Sylvia Casselman and CEA Ashley Gregory filming a video on how to make a paper pot



Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service partnered with Forester Bill Green of the Texas A&M Forest Service to host a Landscape Maintenance training for Hidalgo County Grounds Crew



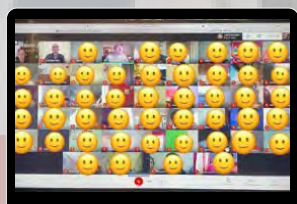
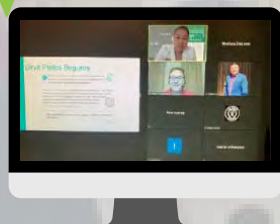
Expanded Food & Nutrition Program (EFNEP)

Melissa De Leon, M.S.

@HidalgoCountyExpandedFoodandNutritionEducationProgram



EFNEP continues to deliver practical lessons such as building a healthy plate, eating the right number of calories, being active and keeping food safe virtually on a variety of social media platforms to continue to reach the Hidalgo County community.



Helping young families and youth with limited resources!

278 Adult Enrollment
140 Adult Graduates

13,168 Youth Enrollment
10,609 Youth Graduates

Nutrition! Food Prep! Food Budget Management! Food Safety!

Extension State Program Highlights

Better Living for Texans Program



Andrea Torres-Barragan, Ph.D.



Karen Cantu, B.S.



107

PARTICIPANTS IN THE
VIRTUAL GARDENING
SERIES

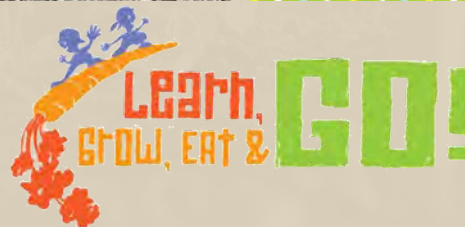
67

PARTICIPANTS IN THE
VIRTUAL PRESERVING
THE HARVEST SERIES

65

CHILDREN IN VIRTUAL LEARN,
GROW, EAT, GO SERIES WITH
MAYOR JOE V. SANCHEZ LIBRARY
& MALEE'S LEARNING ACADEMY

The Better Living for Texans program is happy to announce the addition of Karen Cantu as an Extension Agent for Better Living for Texans program in Hidalgo County. We welcome Karen in her new role serving Hidalgo County!



Growing & Nourishing Healthy Communities



Roy Custodio, M.P.H.



Ricardo Carranza, M.S.

New Highlights

- Safety guidelines implemented at the community gardens
- 7 NEW Hand Washing stations installed
- 10 community gardens planted with Spring vegetables throughout Hidalgo County
- **Greenhouse** built at the Educational Garden to grow seedlings that will be used by the community gardens and children's gardens



Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension Program




Cooperative Extension Program



Family & Community Health

Stephanie Bowman, M.S.

@PVAMUFamily&CommunityHealth-HidalgoCounty 



Balanced Living 247

Weslaco ISD ACE participants learned how to manage their time, stress, stay physically active and get quality sleep.



Storytime 112

Mayor Joe V. Sanchez Public Library participants tuned into Facebook for a Valentine's Day Storytime reading



MULTI-COUNTY COLLABORATION

In collaboration with Cameron, Bexar, Webb and Travis counties, CEP-FCH agents offered the Balanced Living program in English and Spanish.

Energy Drinks

Presented By: Stephanie Bowman, Extension Agent Family & Community Health, Weslaco ISD ACE (Community)

Prairie View A&M University

Cooperative Extension Program



For National Caffeine Awareness Month, **110** participants from MJVS Public Library teens learned about the negative effects of energy drinks.



Agriculture & Natural Resources

Serving Hidalgo/Starr County

Romeo Ozuna, B.S.

Romeo Ozuna has transitioned into the new role of Agriculture & Natural Resources agent for the Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension program as of February 1, 2021 serving Hidalgo and Starr Counties. This area of programming will focus on delivering practical research-based knowledge to small farm producers and families that have limited opportunities or communities with limited resources.

We welcome Romeo into his new role!



Hidalgo County Supported Program Staff



Community Outreach-
4-H Programs
Karen Cantu, B.S.



Assisted at the Hidalgo County Data Entry Center inputting data for individuals receiving the COVID-19 vaccines across Hidalgo County from January 19-February 19, 2021



Completed educational programs to be viewed during virtual sessions



Program Assistant-
Family & Consumer Sciences
Elzie Martinez, B.S.



282
Participants



Family & Community Health Programs

Donna ISD, McAllen ISD, Edinburg CISD, La Joya ISD, Weslaco ISD and Pharr Housing Authority hosted a variety of programs such as Budgeting, Study Skills, Goal Setting, Is Your Child at Risk for Diabetes? and Bullying



Program Coordinator
Linda Ramirez



17

Participants



READING IS FUN!

The Families Reading Every Day (FRED) program was implemented at multiple locations during the COVID-19 pandemic. Region One hosted families that made reading with their children every day a priority!

Hidalgo County Support Staff



Mayra Mendoza,
Administrative Assistant III
Luz Sena,
Administrative Assistant II
Elena Almendarez,
Administrative Assistant II
(L-R)

175
IN OFFICE
VISITORS

