



Hidalgo County 4-H & Prevention
Free Little Library

EXTENSION CONNECTION

HIDALGO COUNTY
APRIL - JUNE 2022

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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 @HidalgoAgrilifeExtension

EXTENSION FACULTY

TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION

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Extension County Administrator*

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*County Extension Agent- Agriculture & Natural
Resources*

Joanne Ureste-Armijo

County Extension Agent- Family & Community Health

Ashley Gregory

County Extension Agent- Horticulture

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County Extension Agent-4-H & Youth Development

Melissa De Leon

*Extension Agent
Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program*

Andrea Torres-Barragan & Karen Cantu

*Extension Agents
Better Living for Texans Program*



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A&M UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
AND HUMAN SCIENCES

Cooperative Extension Program

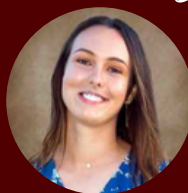
Rina Castillo

*Cooperative Extension Agent-Prairie View A&M
Community Economic Development*

A NOTE FROM EXTENSION:

In April, May and June 2022, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Hidalgo County hosted programs on mental health, car seat safety, youth literacy promotion, agriculture field days, Master Gardener workshops, and much more! We are launching into a busy Summer with numerous 4-H activities for our youth and some new programs beginning. Please contact our office to take advantage of these programs for your community!

Introducing **Kylene Richards**



Kylene Richards is serving as our Extension Summer Intern this Summer. She is a sophomore at Texas A&M University as an Ag Economics major. This Summer, Kylene is learning about how to plan and implement Extension programs.

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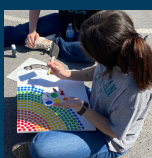
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[Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
Hidalgo County](https://www.youtube.com/HidalgoCountyAgriLife)



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT OF THE QUARTER

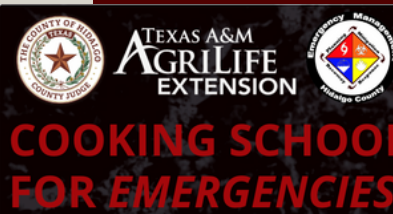
County Extension Agent: Kathy Rodriguez & Dr. Andrea Valdez
The Hidalgo County 4-H County Council and Ambassadors partnered with Hidalgo County Precinct 4 Commissioner Ellie Torres to build, paint, plan and introduce a Free Little Library at Linn-San Manuel Veterans Memorial Park. The Free Little Library is now stocked with donated books to promote literacy for all youth in that area. The Hidalgo County 4-H program would like to thank Precinct 4 Commissioner Ellie Torres for her support and partnership for this project!





Dr. Andréa A. Valdez, M.P.H. Family & Community Health

@AgrilifeExtensionHidalgoFCH  



Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
Dr. Andréa Valdez, County Extension Agent/Extension Coordinator

Office of Hidalgo County Judge Richard F. Cortez
Victor R. Garza, Economic Development Analyst
Chief Ricardo Saldaña, Emergency Management Coordinator
Andrea Salinas, Executive Assistant
Maria H. Salinas, Assistant Chief of Staff



Hidalgo County Judge Richard Cortez's office and Dr. Andréa Valdez presented on the Cooking School for Emergencies at the Texas Emergency Management Conference. Over **50 participants** enjoyed learning about the program and look forward to working with their County Extension office to implement this program in the future.

The Hidalgo County Wellness Ambassadors now have the opportunity to become Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Master Wellness Volunteers! Master Wellness Volunteers will be trained on nutrition, food safety and Extension programs to be able to deliver educational material in their county departments. Over **14 County Wellness Ambassadors are on their way to becoming certified Master Wellness Volunteers!**



Master Wellness Volunteer Training



Stress Less with Mindfulness

May 2022 Participant Testimonial

"Thank you so very much for this opportunity to participate in this program. I really did enjoy it and plan to utilize the info I learned."



Joanne Ureste-Armijo, M.S. Family & Community Health

@AgrilifeExtensionFamilyResourcesHidalgoCounty 

Motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of death for children under the age of 13. Car seat safety events encourage parents and caregivers to correctly buckle up their kids in the right seat for their age and size. This quarter, the **City of Mercedes** and partners distributed **18 car seats with 19 car seat inspections**. The Boys & Girls Club, Pharr PD and EFNEP hosted a Booster seat campaign with **15 booster seats distributed**.



The Master Clothing Volunteers (MCVs) participated in two craft fairs at Firemen's Park in McAllen selling their homemade craft pieces. The MCV's host weekly sewing classes where participants can learn how to alter and tailor clothes and how to make crafts to sell at craft fairs. The MCVs have many sewing camps planned for the Summer months.



Vidal Saenz, M.S. Agriculture & Natural Resources

2022 Fike Farms Field Day

The 2022 Field Day provided a corn and grain sorghum variety field tour, an integrated pest management update, and a soybean update. **32 participants** were provided with 3 CEUs for this educational presentation.

RGV Small Acreage Goat and Poultry Workshop

The RGV Small Acreage Goat and Poultry Workshop hosted **70 participants**. Small Acreage farmers learned about FSA Loan programs, egg production vs. broiler production, goat market outlook, avian influenza and goat management.

Beef Cattle Production Workshop

50 participants attended the Beef Cattle Production Workshop sponsored by Cargill and Nutrena feeds. Some of the topics presented included the importance of trace minerals for bulls & reproductions and the presentation of the bull gain test results.

Cotton Scout School

Multi-County Integrated Pest Management Agent, Danielle Sekula, hosted a **Cotton Scout School** for farmers in the RGV. She provided education on the identification of insect pests in cotton, cotton diseases, and pests in sorghum and sesame.



Kathy Rodriguez, M.S. 4-H & Youth Development

@HidalgoCounty4H



Hidalgo County Precinct 4 & Hidalgo County 4-H Free Little Library

Our 4-H County Council and Ambassadors worked together with **Hidalgo County Precinct 4 Commissioner Ellie Torres** to build a Free Little Library for the Linn-San Manuel Veterans Memorial Park.

This Free Little Library will provide free books to share to the residents in the Linn-San Manuel area. It will also help promote literacy to kids, teens, and adults alike! This library was built, painted and stocked with books by the Hidalgo County 4-H youth members.



Representing Hidalgo County 4-H at State 4-H Roundup

The Hidalgo County 4-H Duds to Dazzle team placed **2nd** in the Non-Wearable Category out of 8 teams.

District 12 4-H Leadership Lab (Summer Camp)

17 Hidalgo County 4-Her's attended the District 12 Leadership Lab camp to expand their knowledge and learn new skills!





Ashley Gregory, M.S.
Horticulture

Master Gardener Workshops

The Hidalgo County Master Gardeners hosted many workshops this quarter ranging from air layering & propagation, worm composting, container gardening to a grafting desert rose class. The Master Gardeners participated in the RGV Home & Garden show showcasing their plants, knowledge, and other garden related items. In April, the Spring Plant Sale brought in a happy crowd and raised over \$4,000 to be used for future gardening programs.

100+
WORKSHOP
PARTICIPANTS



Melissa De Leon, M.S.
Expanded Food &
Nutrition Program (EFNEP)

@HidalgoCountyExpandedFoodandNutritionEducationProgram



The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Expanded Food & Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) in Hidalgo County helps families and youths with limited resources – those most at risk who suffer from hunger, food insecurity and the inability to connect with available support systems. EFNEP offers practical lessons in:

- Building a Healthy Plate
- Keeping Food Safe
- Meal Planning
- Shop on a Budget
- Being Active
- Encouraging Family Mealtime at Home

201 Adult Enrollment
122 Adult Graduates

2,760 Youth Enrollment
1,757 Youth Graduates

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





Better Living for Texans Program



Andrea Torres-Barragan, Ph.D.



Karen Cantu, B.S.

Ricardo Carranza & Roy Custodio, Program Assistants

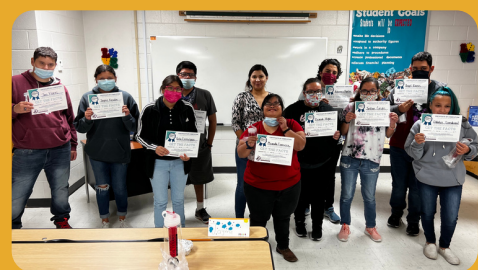


Gardening

The gardens yielded **1,000 seedlings** of melons and watermelons that were grown and distributed to community gardens and school gardens for the Summer season. The adult gardening class has **123 participants** and **102 children** participated in the gardening summer camps at ARISE Colonia Muniz, ARISE Hargill and Colonia Carmen Avila.

Nutrition

BLT nutrition programs partnered with ARISE Las Milpas, Edinburg CISD, Boys & Girls Club of Pharr, Las Palmas Community Center, and Los Naranjos Apartments to teach curricula such as **Get the Facts, A Fresh Start to a Healthier You**, and **Healthy Carbohydrates!** All these programs graduated **75 participants!**



Rina Castillo, M.P.A. Community Economic Development



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AND HUMAN SCIENCES

Cooperative Extension Program

BID Academy

In collaboration with the Texas Comptroller's Purchasing division, the BID Academy teaches the essential business skills and effective strategies for working, managing, and doing business with government agencies. This academy is a FREE 7-week curriculum that take business through the process of not only getting HUB certified but business planning, marketing, and developing a winning bid proposal! Classes include: Bookkeeping/Accounting, Taxes and Insurance, Business Planning/Marketing, Subcontracting, Nontraditional Financing, and Bid Proposals/Graduation.

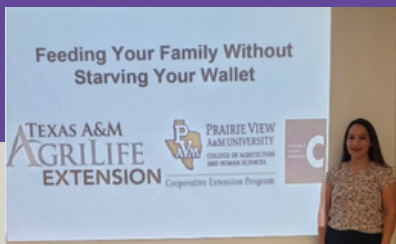
Program Promotion

This quarter, PVAM-CEP worked to promote programs throughout Hidalgo County, such as the USDA 504 and 502 Home Loan programs.



Financial Literacy

Food Budgeting is one of the top 5 requests for financial literacy. This session teaches participants how to budget for groceries, takeout, and how to maneuver coupon apps!



Hidalgo County Supported Staff



Elzie Martinez, B.S.

Program Assistant-
Family & Consumer Sciences

Community Programs

Our Family & Community Health Community Programs had multiple partnerships this quarter utilizing our many program topics such as **Budgeting, Medication Management, Goal Setting, and Women's Health.** Our partners included **Proyecto Desarrollo Humano, Alton Senior Citizen Center, La Joya ISD, Mission CISD, McAllen ISD, Edinburg CISD, Donna ISD and ARISE Las Milpas.**



Linda Ramirez

Program Coordinator

Leading into Summer, many community centers and housing authorities took advantage of our community outreach programs. The **Weslaco Housing Authority's 13 participants** and the **Las Palmas Community Center's 8 participants** learned about **Women's Health**; while the **Mercedes Housing Authority's 22 participants** and **ARISE's 25 participants** explored **Sun Safety**. **11 participants** learned about **Living Well with Less** hosted by **Mission CISD**.

Hidalgo County Support Staff



Elena Almendarez,
Administrative Assistant II
Luz Sena,
Administrative Assistant I
(L-R)

343

Office Visitors

April-June 2022

