Diabetes Programs Teach Healthy Lifestyle Changes

Economic Impacts of Extension Education

A Growing and Costly Issue

- Approximately 2.69 million people in Texas (10% of the population) have diabetes. Among them, an estimated 663,000 have diabetes but have not yet been diagnosed, which greatly increases their health risks.

- Another 6.8 million people have prediabetes, with blood glucose levels above the normal range but not yet high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes.

- The annual cost of diabetes and prediabetes in Texas is estimated at $23.7 billion.

- Texas is projected to have a higher diabetes incidence rate and increased health care costs in the future due to the growing population of Hispanics/Latinos, who are at greater risk for the disease.

AgriLife Extension’s Response

- Diabetes is not curable, but it is manageable. People can learn skills to effectively manage their diabetes when education is readily available.

- AgriLife Extension programs targeting diabetes include Do Well, Be Well with Diabetes; ¡Sí, Yo Puedo Controlar Mi Diabetes!; Cooking Well with Diabetes; and Wisdom, Power, Control.

- These programs teach participants the skills to effectively manage their diabetes, or reduce the risk of developing diabetes through better nutrition, exercise, and monitoring blood-sugar levels.

- Do Well, Be Well with Diabetes is a low-cost class series covering nine self-care and nutrition topics in five sessions.

- Recognizing the need for culturally relevant type 2 diabetes self-management education for Texas Hispanics/Latinos, AgriLife Extension developed ¡Sí, Yo Puedo Controlar Mi Diabetes! to address this gap in health programming.

- Cooking Well with Diabetes engages dietitians and diabetes educators to reinforce the practical nutritional applications of the self-care lesson series Do Well, Be Well with Diabetes.

- Wisdom, Power, Control was developed to address the need for an evidence-based, culturally relevant type 2 diabetes self-management education (DSME) program to help African Americans.

- Through Healthy South Texas, the pilot program of Healthy Texas, AgriLife Extension is working to reduce the highest impact diseases and their consequences throughout a 27-county region in South Texas. The goal is to focus on prevention by engaging families and communities, promoting healthy behaviors, encouraging preventive care, and improving disease outcomes.

Economic Impacts

- For people without diabetes, average annual health care costs range from $3,495 to $5,853. For those with diabetes, that amount soars to an average of $13,741 per year.

- Proper self-management of the disease enables people with diabetes to reduce their health care cost to levels closer to the non-diabetes level.

- For 2015, these diabetes education programs achieved more than 11,500 educational and other contacts, resulting in potential lifetime health care cost savings and improved productivity of $46 million.

- From a broader perspective, these programs reach communities and individuals lacking access to diabetes education, enabling a better quality of life and improved productivity for people with diabetes.