

# Sustaining Agricultural Production THROUGH EDUCATION



## Challenges

- Livestock and poultry producers face serious threats from pervasive and invasive animal diseases such as bird influenza, Rift Valley fever, West Nile virus and tick-borne diseases.
- Changing global markets and managing agricultural production and price risk have farmers and ranchers seeking ways to maximize production efficiency to maintain competitiveness.
- Issues regarding Texas' water supply and demand balance have brought about the need for more efficient use of this vital resource.
- Rising input costs and various production-related challenges, including droughts, invasive species and other pests, have placed serious stress on farmers and ranchers across the state.

## AgriLife Extension Response

In agriculture, AgriLife Extension delivers wide-ranging educational programs focused on research-based production and management practices, evaluation of technologies, improved decision-making, water-use efficiency and job training. AgriLife Extension is at the forefront in responding to emerging issues such as drought, wildfires, and insect and disease outbreaks.

- **Crop production** programs cover variety testing, irrigation efficiency, disease, pest management and control, commodity marketing, financial risk management and farm bill education.
- **Livestock production** programs focus on improved reproduction strategies, animal health, feeds and nutrition, forage production, breeding stock replacement strategies and livestock marketing.
- Through **13,800 educational events**, planning meetings and workshops in 2024, AgriLife Extension achieved more than **5.8 million** educational and other contacts.
- AgriLife Extension often collaborates with industry groups and other government entities to deliver educational programs.

## Economic Impacts

Selected programs are highlighted below, where impacts were measured by the increase in net returns associated with adoption of certain management practices taught in 2024.

- Livestock and dairy production programs resulted in an economic gain of **\$90.1 million**, broiler production programs led to **\$674 million** in gains since 2000, and crop and livestock-related financial risk management and business planning programs resulted in estimated gains of **\$32.1 million**.
- Outreach related to cotton production led to an estimated increase in annual net returns of **\$68.8 million** and assisted cotton growers with variety selection valued at **\$25.5 million**.
- The **boll weevil eradication** program had estimated benefits of **\$418 million**, with cumulative benefits of **\$6 billion** since 1996.
- These crop and livestock-related impacts supported an additional **4,842 jobs** in agribusiness and retail sectors.
- Over the life of the 2018 Farm Bill, more than **500,000 farm units** were analyzed using the web-based Farm Bill Decision Aid, developed by the Agricultural and Food Policy Center (AFPC), with an estimated impact of improved decision-making was valued at **\$2.6 billion**.
- Provided required job training and continuing education related to pesticide safety, cotton ginning and beef cattle handling for 64,049 business owners and employees, with an annual wage base of **\$1.2 billion**.

## Contact

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