

# Making a Difference 2011

## 2011 District 8 4-H Holiday Classic

### RELEVANCE

Texas 4-H and FFA members are raising more than 76,000 livestock projects annually, including beef cattle, lamb, swine, and meat goats. This results in almost 15 million pounds of carcass that are harvested each year. With the tremendous amount of product that 4-H and FFA members are contributing to the food supply, along comes the responsibility to produce a safe and wholesome product for consumers. The Quality Counts program provides an opportunity for young Texas producers to learn personal character attributes and acceptable livestock management practices associated with these projects.



### RESPONSE

The District 8 4-H Holiday Classic is annual educational event hosted by County Extension Agents in District 8. Families bring their cattle, lambs, swine, and goats to learn more about the responsibilities that are attributed to exhibiting livestock. During the two day program, experts in livestock and youth development provide educational, hands-on training for these families in both group and individual settings. After the group and one-on-one trainings, the youth have the opportunity to exhibit their projects for practice and receive advice on how to care for their projects. The Holiday Classic is unique because it is completely free to the families with all expenses being paid through local sponsorships. The Holiday Classic is open to all youth and specifically marketed to the 21 counties in District 8: Bell, Bosque, Comanche, Coryell, Eastland, Ellis, Erath, Falls, Freestone, Hamilton, Hill, Hood, Johnson, Leon, Limestone, McLennan, Milam, Navarro, Robertson, Somervell and Williamson. The 2010 District 8 Holiday Classic was held at the Bell County Expo Center in Belton, Texas on November 12-13, 2011. The event was attended by approximately 1200 persons.

### RESULTS

A retrospective-post evaluation was distributed to all youth in attendance. A specific evaluation was used at each specie training. A total of 374 completed evaluations were returned, including 71 beef, 79 lamb, 92 swine, and 132 goats. Each participant was asked questions regarding intended behavior changes, number animals on feed, average price paid per animal, other livestock-related activities, demographic questions, and suggestions for future topics.



#### *Intended Behavior Change*

- **329 of 373 (88.2%)** participants indicated they learned new skills to help show their animal better.
  - **34 participants (9.1%)** indicated they already do this.
- **259 of 372 (69.6%)** of participants indicated they will practice showing their animal at least three times per week.
  - **87 participants (23.4%)** indicated they already do this.
- **227 of 372 (61.0%)** participants indicated they will feed their animals at the same time every day.
  - **131 participants (35.2%)** indicated they already do this.
- **287 of 373 (76.9%)** participants will read their feed & medication labels to see if there is any withdrawal period.
  - **78 participants (20.9%)** indicated they already do this.
- **249 of 373 (66.8%)** participants indicated they would be a good sport both in and out of the show ring.
  - **122 participants (32.7%)** indicated they already do this.
- **240 of 373 (64.3%)** participants indicated they will check their animal everyday to look for signs of illness.
  - **130 participants (34.9%)** indicated they already do this.
- **266 of 373 (71.3%)** participants indicated they will follow Quality Counts practices both in and out of the show ring.
  - **93 participants (24.9%)** indicated they already do this.

*Educational programs of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating*

### Economic Impact

Of the 375 participants that responded to the evaluation, these 4-H members are producing an estimated value of \$528,803.72 that is impacting the livestock industry in Texas. In addition, an estimated 271,819 pounds of carcass are entering the food supply. The following chart indicates this information by species.

Species	Total respondents	Total head of animals on feed from workshop participants	Average # per 4-H member	Average weight at market	Average Market Value	\$ Value of Finished Market Product <sup>1</sup>	Average dressing percentage	Estimated # of pounds of carcass into food supply <sup>2</sup>
Beef	100	232	2.32	1256	\$1.20	\$349,670.40	61.20%	178,331.90
Swine	116	298	2.57	269	\$0.86	\$68,939.32	74.70%	59,881.01
Sheep	99	230	2.32	130	\$1.70	\$50,830.00	54.00%	16,146.00
Goats	160	388	2.43	90	\$1.70	\$59,364.00	50.00%	17,460.00
						<b>\$528,803.72</b>		<b>271,818.92</b>

<sup>1</sup>Value of Finished Market Product = Average weight at market x Average market value x Total head of animals on feed from workshop participants

<sup>2</sup>Estimated # of pounds of carcass into food supply = Average weight at market x Average dressing percentage x Total head of animals on feed from workshop participants

When purchasing their beef, swine, sheep, and goat projects, youth indicated they spent an average of \$884.31 for their beef animal, \$401.90 for a hog, \$439.04 for a lamb, and \$366.96 for a goat. Using these averages and multiplying by the number of head these youth have on feed, they are contributing an estimated **\$588,858.15 to the livestock industry** in the state of Texas when purchasing their animals. (Averages per species were calculated by multiplying by the midpoint of the price range respondents selected by the number of animals purchased at that price range. The total estimated contribution was calculated by multiplying the average price per animal by the total head of animals on feed by respondents.)

### Other Livestock-Related Activities

In addition to raising an animal through 4-H, youth are given the opportunity to participate in additional livestock-related activities that do not actually require owning an animal. Workshop attendees were asked if they participate in any of these additional livestock-related activities and responses are listed in the chart below.

Activity	#	%
Livestock Judging	88	23.47%
Recordbook	64	17.07%
Educational Presentation	57	15.20%
Livestock Camp	44	11.73%
Quiz Bowls	23	6.13%
Public Speaking at a Major Livestock Show	19	5.07%
Meat Judging	17	4.53%
Skillathon	12	3.20%



### Demographics

Years attended the Holiday Classic	Number of responses				Total	
	Beef	Lamb	Swine	Goats	#	%
1 year	37	43	49	73	202	54.6%
2 years	18	20	23	26	87	23.5%
3 years	5	7	11	7	30	8.1%
4 years	5	4	5	8	22	5.9%
5 years or more	6	5	4	13	28	7.6%

School Grade of participants	Number of responses				Total	
	Beef	Lamb	Swine	Goats	#	%
Elementary (Grades 3-5)	17	26	31	50	124	34.4%
Middle School (Grades 6-8)	10	22	26	38	96	26.7%
High School (Grade 9-12)	42	29	31	38	140	38.9%

## Significant Results

There are a few important items that instructors should keep in mind when planning for the future:



- Overall, over one-third of participants are attending the Holiday Classic as their only livestock project training.
- Overall, 68% of participants indicated they plan to make a change or take action based on the knowledge they learned at the Holiday Classic.
- Over half of the participants are first-time attendees. Additionally, when first-time attendees are combined with second-time attendees, it totals almost 80% of participants.
- Showmanship continues to be the most requested topic for future discussion, followed by exercise/handling, what to do at the show, and pre-show preparation.

## Future Plans

Results indicate that youth are adopting practices and gaining the knowledge that instructors have set out to teach. This project training is targeted at new feeders and since there are new feeders every year along with the high levels of intended behavior change, the District 8 County Extension Agents and leaders will continue to conduct the Holiday Classic utilizing the Quality Counts curriculum with the goal to continue to increase the knowledge level and behavior changes of participants so that a safe, wholesome product will enter the food supply. Results of this event and future events will be utilized to improve and modify the District 8 Holiday Classic.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks are given to the sponsors for their donations to allow the Holiday Classic to be free of charge to the youth and their families.

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McLennan County Master Gardeners  
Falls, Leon, Limestone, Milam, McLennan,  
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Bell County 4-H

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Tom & Jaye Meurer

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