

**AgriLife Extension to Honor County Governments
during Cooperative Extension Centennial**

NEWS RELEASE

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COLLEGE STATION—This May, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service joins other Cooperative Extension services around the United States in celebrating the 100th anniversary of the signing of the federal Smith-Lever Act on May 8, 1914. This act provides for cooperative agricultural extension work at the nation's land-grant colleges – and county governments are vital partners in that work. As part of the celebration, AgriLife Extension representatives will present Extension's Building a Better Texas Award to every County Commissioners Court in Texas for decades of cooperation and support. County Extension offices are located in 250 of Texas's 254 counties, and Extension serves every county.

[QUOTE FROM LOCAL EXTENSION AGENT] “We want our county government to know how much we appreciate the partnership we have developed over the years. Without their support, we would not have been able to serve the people of [COUNTY NAME] as well as we have, and many Texans would have missed opportunities to benefit from the practical, university-based information that Extension offers.”

AgriLife Extension provides dozens of popular programs, including Texas 4-H and Youth Development, Texas Master Gardeners and Junior Master Gardeners, Texas Superstar plants, Walk Across Texas, Do Well Be Well with Diabetes, Better Living for Texans, Texas Master Naturalists, the Passenger Safety Project and many more. It also works one on one with local farmers, ranchers and landowners; provides wildlife services; diagnoses plant diseases; tests soil, water and forage; trains food handlers and

pesticide applicators; and even trains county officials in the basics of serving their communities.

Headquartered at Texas A&M University in College Station, AgriLife Extension is a member of The Texas A&M University System. It is linked in a unique partnership with the nationwide Cooperative Extension System through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture and through Texas county governments. County governments help provide locations and funding for county Extension office facilities, oversee budgets and appropriations, and help AgriLife Extension staff identify program goals.

"As many Texans know, you can call on your county Extension agents for help with a wide variety of subjects," said Dr. Darrell Dromgoole, AgriLife Extension's associate director for county programs. "Extension strives to meet the needs of Texans by asking them what educational programs and services would help in their daily life. Our strong support from county governments allows us to develop those programs and deliver them directly to the people."

Dr. Douglas Steele, director of AgriLife Extension, said, "By building coalitions with county governments and collaborating with other public and private groups and organizations – and with the help of our more than 100,000 volunteers – AgriLife Extension conducts educational programs that address the diverse range of contemporary and emerging issues affecting the residents of our state. By presenting this award, we hope to show just how much the spirit of cooperation within each county means to us, and to all Texans, as we celebrate a century of success in Extension education and look forward to extending knowledge and providing solutions in the future."