

TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION



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Making a Difference In Tarrant County Congratulations



Cover page: Congratulations!

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Tarrant County Extension Agent -Commercial Horticulture Laura Miller, was the **Texas State winner of the National Association of County Agricultural Agents 2014 Communication Award: Publication.** Presenting award to Laura is Wade Hibler, TCAAA president.



Tarrant County Extension Agent-4H Cindy Bryant, received the **Distin-guished Service Award** at the state level from TAE4-HA & national level from NAE4-HA.

Tarrant County Extension Agent-Family and Consumer Sciences Marian Ross, received the following awards:

Texas Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences – TEAFCS

- State Awards: Mary M. Wells Diversity Program Award and Human Development/Family Relationships Program Award



National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences - NEAFCS

- Southern Region: 1st Place Human Development/Family Relationships Program Award
- National 3rd Place Winner – Human Development/Family Relationships Program Award

Save The Date EXTENSION CENTENNIAL EVENT



TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION



PRAIRIE VIEW
A&M UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
AND HUMAN SCIENCES
Cooperative Extension Program

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25
STOCKYARDS STATION STAMPEDE ROOM
DURING RED STEAGALL COWBOY
GATHERING WEEKEND
10 A.M. TO 2 P.M.

INTERACTIVE DISPLAYS FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!

Tarrant County Extension's Leadership Advisory Board



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*Individuals with disabilities who require an auxiliary aid, service, or accommodation in order to participate in any of our meetings are encouraged to contact our office at 817.884.1945 for assistance.



Make Sure You Are Covered, Even for That!

Marian Ross, M. S.
County Extension Agent
Family and Consumer Sciences

It's not uncommon to purchase insurance and not really review the policy every year, unless you have a life changing event. What you purchased at the time was a good fit for you. Then perhaps you have a life changing event, purchase an additional insurance policy a couple of years later and in the end, you haven't completed an inventory of what is and isn't insured. So you may find yourself (and your family) either over insured in some areas and underinsured in others areas. To help prevent this from happening, consider this tips:

Review all policies every couple of years. Make sure that you have adequate coverage in all major areas, while also evaluating whether revisions are needed due to changes in your personal circumstances. For instance, as you get older, you should investigate long-term care insurance, if you see that you might need this type of coverage, the younger you are in age, the more affordable it may be to purchase. Have you reviewed your homeowners' policy to make sure that the limits are sufficient to pay for rebuilding your home? Or has your need for life insurance changed? Do you have dependents that rely on your income and support? Has your lifestyle changed? Do you have disability insurance? The amount of disability income insurance is likely to change as your income changes.

Purchase insurance wisely. The primary purpose of insurance is to protect you and your loved ones from financially devastating losses, not from every minor loss that you might incur. Know what the riders and options that are in your policy and that are available to you, and only retain the ones that are important to you. Check if you qualify for discounts offered by your insurance company. Consider increasing your deductible periodically – this is typically a good strategy for reducing insurance premiums.

Avoid insurance you don't need. Extended warranties might be a good idea for your expensive technology, however, your small household appliances are not worthy of this type of insurance, because replacing with a brand new items might be more affordable than going through the process of a claim on your microwave. Check your policies for duplicate coverage. For example, you may have disability insurance at work and through a personal policy. Review the policy limits on both to ensure you aren't paying for benefits that can't be collected because you've exceeded the policy limits.

A few final reminders:

- ✓ Make sure you have insurance in all key areas for your situation: life, health, disability, homeowners and renters, automobile, personal liability, and professional liability and malpractice insurance.
- ✓ Read your insurance contracts carefully. Ask about provisions you don't understand.
- ✓ Check your insurance companies' financial rating to make sure that their financial status has weakened.
- ✓ Do you have family heirlooms or expensive jewelry? Check with your homeowners' and/or renters' policy to see if they have a rider for those types of addendums or riders and know what the dollar amount maximum coverage you are able to purchase.
- ✓ Insure you and your family to preserve peace of mind and future security. This could also be a legacy that you pass on to your children and their children.

On a side note, have you written your will? Seen it in the last 5 years? Is it updated? Signed? In a safe place where your executor/executrix knows where to find it? Prior military, do you have your DD214's?

Eating Right to Boost Your Memory

Darlene Myatt
Extension Agent -
Expanded Food & Nutrition
Education Program



Have you been feeling forgetful lately? It could be due to lack of sleep or for any number of other reasons, including genetics, level of physical activity, and lifestyle as well as environmental factors. There is however no doubt, diet plays a major role in brain health.

The best menu for boosting memory and brain function encourages good blood flow to the brain – much like what you should eat to nourish and protect your heart. Research suggests a Mediterranean-style eating pattern, abundant in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, olive oil and lean sources of protein (especially fish and poultry rather than red meat containing more saturated fat) helps keep aging brains sharp with better cognitive function, memory and level of alertness.

With that *in mind* take a closer look at foods to help serve a more healthy plate ...

- ▶ **Eat your veggies.** You aren't likely to forget this message! Getting adequate servings of vegetables, especially cruciferous ones like broccoli, cabbage and dark leafy greens. Try a kale salad or substitute collard greens for the tortilla in your next sandwich wrap. Broccoli stir-fry is also an excellent option for lunch or dinner.
- ▶ **Be sweet on berries and cherries.** Berries, especially dark ones like blackberries, blueberries and cherries are a rich source of anthocyanins and other flavonoids. Enjoy a handful of berries for a snack, mixed into cereal or baked into an antioxidant-rich dessert. You can reap these benefits from fresh, frozen or dried berries and cherries.
- ▶ **Get adequate omega-3 fatty acids.** Seafood and fatty fish like salmon, bluefin tuna, sardines and herring are some of the best sources of omega-3 acids. Docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) in particular may help improve memory in young healthy adults. Based on current USDA recommendations, substitute fish (grill, bake or broil) for meat a couple of times each week to get a healthy dose. Be adventurous and try salmon tacos with red cabbage slaw, snack on sardines or enjoy seared tuna on salad greens for dinner.
- ▶ **Work in walnuts.** Well known for a positive impact on heart health, walnuts also may improve working memory. Snack on a handful of walnuts to satisfy mid-day hunger, and then to oatmeal or salad for crunch or mix them into a vegetable stir-fry for extra protein.

All of these foods aren't just good for the brain, they also sustain a healthy heart and all parts of the body. While there's no guarantee they will help you remember where you put your keys tomorrow, over time they can support lifelong good health.

Reference: Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

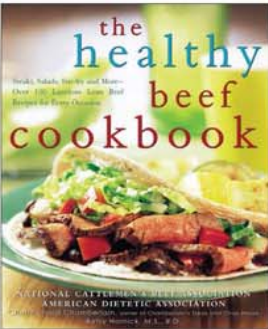


Eating Lean Beef Daily Can Help Lower Cholesterol
As Part of a Heart-Healthy Diet and Lifestyle

Markena Minikon
County Extension Agent -
Nutrition & Health

The latest research on heart health and lean beef presents a new way of thinking: lean beef can be part of a solution to one of America's greatest health challenges - eating for a healthy heart. A study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* found that participants in the BOLD (Beef in an Optimal Lean Diet) study experienced a 10% decrease in LDL cholesterol from baseline when they ate lean beef daily as part of a heart-healthy diet and lifestyle containing less than 7% of calories from saturated fat.^{1*}

The BOLD clinical study substituted lean beef for white meat as part of an overall heart-healthy diet and found the improvements in LDL cholesterol seen on the beef-containing diets were just as effective as the gold standard heart-healthy diet (DASH, Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension).¹ The BOLD diet contained 4.0 oz. of lean beef and the BOLD-PLUS diet contained 5.4 oz. (weights before cooking) of lean beef daily with both diets providing less than 7% of calories from saturated fat. After five weeks, there were significant reductions in total and LDL cholesterol.¹ Many of the BOLD and BOLD-PLUS diet menu plans incorporated recipes from *The Healthy Beef Cookbook*.



The study used rigorously designed research—a Randomized Controlled Clinical Intervention Trial—to investigate the effects of cholesterol-lowering diets with varying amounts of lean beef. In this study, 36 participants (adults ages 30-65 with moderately elevated cholesterol) were randomly assigned to a treatment order and in a cross-over design, consumed a total of four diets (BOLD, BOLD-PLUS, DASH and Healthy American Diet (HAD) as control) for five weeks each.

The BOLD study is the latest addition to a body of evidence that supports including lean beef in a heart-healthy diet. To learn more about this study, please visit BeefNutrition.org.

Nutritional Breakdown of Study Diets

	HAD	DASH	BOLD	BOLD-PLUS
Calories	2,097 kcal	2,106 kcal	2,100 kcal	2,104 kcal
Protein (% of total calories)	17%	18%	19%	27%
Carbohydrate (% of total calories)	50%	55%	54%	45%
Fat (% of total calories)	33%	27%	28%	28%
Saturated Fat (% of total calories)	12%	6%	6%	6%
Monounsaturated Fat (% of total calories)	11%	9%	11%	12%
Polyunsaturated Fat (% of total calories)	7%	8%	7%	7%
Lean Beef (oz./day**)	0.7	1.0	4.0	5.4

**Weight before cooking

- Healthy American Diet (HAD):**
Control diet, included more refined grains, full-fat dairy products, oil and butter to reflect current American dietary habits.
- Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH):**
Considered the “gold standard” heart-healthy diet, this eating plan featured vegetables, fruits and low-fat dairy and limited red meat and sweets.
- Beef in an Optimal Lean Diet (BOLD):**
Similar to the DASH diet (rich in vegetables, fruits, whole grains, nuts and beans) and protein amount, but used lean beef (4 oz./day) as the primary protein source, whereas the DASH diet used primarily white meat and plant protein sources.
- Beef in an Optimal Lean Diet Plus (BOLD-PLUS):**
Similar to the BOLD diet, but with higher protein and lean beef intake (5.4 oz./day).

¹ Roussell MA, Hill AM, Gaugler TL, West SG, Vanden Heuvel JP, Alaupovic P, Gillies PJ, Kris-Etherton PM. Beef in an Optimal Lean Diet study: effects on lipids, lipoproteins, and apolipoproteins. *Am J Clin Nutr* 2012; 95(1). Internet: [http://www.ajcn.org/content/early/2011/12/13/ajcn.111.016261] (accessed 14 December 2011).

* Subjects that consumed the BOLD diet experienced a 10.1% decrease in LDL cholesterol compared to baseline. In comparison to the Healthy American Diet, subjects experienced a 4.7% decrease in LDL cholesterol on the BOLD diet.

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Source: <http://www.beefitswhatsfordinner.com/CMDocs/BIWFD/Bold/BOLDFactSheet.pdf>

What's in Season?

Tiffany Traylor
Family & Consumer Sciences Extension Agent
Cooperative Extension Program



Fresh fruits and vegetables are available year round in most states across the US. due to the ability to transport and store foods. Although fresh fruits and veggies are available year round it is important to choose them at the peak of their freshness which is when they are season. Choosing produce that is in season will help in saving money and the produce will have the best quality and taste.

Quality is an important aspect when selecting fruits and vegetables. Fruits and vegetables should look healthy and smell fresh. Consumers should choose items with a good shape, color, and texture. Avoid bruised, damaged, decayed, or molded fruits and vegetables. These may carry harmful bacteria or viruses. Damaged fruits and vegetables will also spoil faster.

The guide below will help you select fresh fruits and vegetables in Texas:

Great Texas Produce is Available All Year Long

January	February	March	April	May	June
<ul style="list-style-type: none">BeetsBell PeppersBroccoliCabbageCarrotsCeleryGrapefruitGreensHerbsHoneydewMushroomsOrangesSpinachSquashSweet PotatoesTurnips	<ul style="list-style-type: none">BeetsBroccoliCabbageCarrotsCeleryGrapefruitGreensHerbsMushroomsOnionsOrangesSpinachSweet PotatoesTurnips	<ul style="list-style-type: none">BroccoliCabbageCarrotsCeleryGrapefruitGreensHerbsMushroomsOnionsOrangesPotatoesSpinachSquashStrawberriesSweet PotatoesTurnips	<ul style="list-style-type: none">BlackberriesBroccoliCabbageCarrotsCeleryCucumbersGrapefruitGreensHerbsMushroomsOnionsOrangesPeachesPotatoesSpinachSquash	<ul style="list-style-type: none">StrawberriesSweet PotatoesTomatoesTurnipsBell PeppersBlueberriesBroccoliCabbageCantaloupesCarrotsCeleryCucumbersGreensHerbsHoneydewMuscadine grapesMushroomsNew PotatoesOnionsSpinach	<ul style="list-style-type: none">SquashSweet PotatoesTomatoesTurnipsWatermelonYellow & Red PlumsBell PeppersBlackberriesCabbageCantaloupesCucumbersGreensHoneydewMushroomsOnionsPeachesPotatoesSquashTomatoesTurnipsWatermelon

July	August	September	October	November	December
<ul style="list-style-type: none">ApplesBlueberriesCabbageCucumbersGreensHerbsMushroomsOnionsPotatoesTomatoesTurnipsWatermelon	<ul style="list-style-type: none">ApplesBell PeppersCabbageCantaloupesCarrotsCucumbersGreensHerbsHoneydewMushroomsOnionsPeachesPotatoesSquashSweet PotatoesTurnipsWatermelon	<ul style="list-style-type: none">ApplesBell PeppersCabbageCantaloupesCarrotsCeleryCucumbersGreensHerbsHoneydewMushroomsOnionsOrangesPeachesSquashSweet PotatoesTomatoesTurnipsWatermelon	<ul style="list-style-type: none">ApplesBell PeppersBroccoliCabbageCantaloupesCarrotsCeleryCucumbersGrapefruitGreensHerbsHoneydewMushroomsOrangesPotatoesSquash	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sweet PotatoesTomatoesTurnipsWatermelonApplesBeetsBell PeppersBroccoliCabbageCantaloupesCarrotsCucumbersGrapefruitGreensHerbsHoneydewMushroomsOrangesSpinachSquash	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sweet PotatoesTomatoesTurnipsWatermelonBeetsBroccoliCabbageCantaloupesCarrotsCeleryCucumberGrapefruitGreensHerbsHoneydewMushroomsOrangesBell PeppersSpinachSquashSweet PotatoesTomatoesTurnips

Education programs of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age or national origin.

Source: Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

Fall into Gardening in North Central Texas

Steve Chaney
County Extension

Who says Texas doesn't have a fall season? Maybe there is no winter season in Texas, just an extended fall (certainly the "winter Texans" from the Midwest would agree). Realistically, fall in Texas lasts from the last 90 degree day until the first killing freeze. Depending on where you live, this period of time may be a couple of months or may never end before spring bursts forth! So for all practical purposes, fall in Texas is simply the period of time when you don't sweat as much.

Most Texans have experienced personally or through children the dilemma of creating a Halloween costume that can be adapted readily to be comfortable regardless of outdoor temperature. Either you are sweating and can't breathe under your gorilla mask or freezing to death in your grass skirt. Fall temperatures in Texas are widely variable and seldom land on the averages calculated by the national Weather service.

The increased frequency of cooler temperatures and decreased day length make fall an ideal time to garden. The fall beckons you outdoors from the air conditioned confines of Texas summers. Gardeners and yardeners alike migrate to nurseries and back home to plant flowers, vegetables, shrubs, and trees. Landscape remodeling or renovation projects abound everywhere. At a time when northern gardeners are closing up shop for the winter, Texans are beginning anew. Truly the fall may be the best season to plant, surpassing even the spring. What a truly wonderful time of the year.

The fall months of September through December have distinct advantages for planting compared to the spring months of March to May. Fall planting follows the heat of the summer and preceded cool to cold temperatures. Trees, shrubs, flowers and vegetables planted in fall use this to good measure.

- Plant roots grow anytime the soil temperature is 40 degrees or higher, which may occur throughout the winter in all areas but the Panhandle. During the fall and winter months, the root systems of fall-planted plants grow and become well established. When spring arrives, this expanded root system can then support and take advantage of the full surge of spring growth.
- Rainfall is more common in fall months, thus a reduced need for irrigation which is so important in our times of water restrictions. Rainfall also helps dilute and flush salts from the soil that have accumulated during summer irrigation and the extended drought we are in.
- For vegetables, crops mature in the fall, as both daytime and nighttime temperatures are much cooler than in the summer. This results in less plant stress and higher quality, better tasting produce, whether it be fruits on bean, pepper, and tomato plants or edible plant parts, such as broccoli, cauliflower, leaf lettuce and spinach.

The most important reason to garden in the fall may be a selfish one, it feels good to humans! Working in the garden is more pleasant in the fall, as the heat of the summer is mostly in the past. The garden appears more vibrant and beautiful. The mosquitoes and other pest populations are retreating from the cooler weather. There is exuberant life in the garden and a heightened intensity due to pending dormancy. Thank goodness in Texas that winter dormancy is of such short durations. So, "fall into gardening" once again or for the very first time!!

Crape Myrtle Bark Scale

Laura M. Miller
County Extension Agent -
Horticulture

Driving around Texas in the summertime, Crape myrtles are sure to catch your eye with their brightly colored flowers when many plants look tired and wilted. Crape myrtles are widely planted all over North Texas and generally get the job done, earning their good reputation for being an excellent landscape choice for full sun in a wide variety of soils and situations. Texas plantsman Greg Grant once said that a crape myrtle does everything but mow the lawn for you.

No plant is completely without its problems, and lately there has been trouble brewing for one of our most useful landscape contributors. Back in 2004, Dr. Mike Merchant, Professor and Extension Urban Entomologist at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Education Center in north Dallas, received an inquiry from a landscape maintenance company concerning an unusual pest insect on crape myrtle that was exceptionally difficult to control. The infestation was located on a commercial property in Richardson. Initially this insect was identified as an Eriococcid scale (Hemiptera: Eriococcidae), most likely the azalea bark scale, *Eriococcus azaleae*.

Azalea bark scale has been a common pest on azalea in North Texas for years, but it had never before been found on crape myrtle. In fact, with the notable exception of the ubiquitous crape myrtle aphid, *Tinocallis kahawaluokalani*, which pretty much only feeds on crape myrtles, the mighty myrtle is generally regarded as a problem free landscape plant.

The scale continued to be a problem in Dallas and Collin Counties with populations rising and falling over the next few years.

In 2010, Dr. Merchant heard about a very similar species of scale that feeds on crape myrtle in China and Japan and submitted scale samples to Dr. Dug Miller, a systematic taxonomist for scale insects with the USDA in Washington, DC. He concluded that it was very likely that this scale insect is a new introduction of *Eriococcus lagerstroemia*, the scale previously known only from Asia.

The first out of state report came from Ardmore, OK in 2011, but it wasn't until August of 2012 that I found it in Tarrant County, when I visited at a small commercial nursery in Arlington at the owners' request. Where there are two or three scales, there will always be another and in early September 2012, I received some e-mailed photographs of the scale from a homeowner in Hurst. A few days after that I spotted the scale on some crape myrtles at the corner of Summit and Weatherford streets in downtown Fort Worth. At this date, no Tarrant County crape myrtle should be considered out of range. In fact, the traveling scale has now been reported in New Orleans and Shreveport, LA, Little Rock, AR and several sites in Tennessee.

Once a pest is identified, and the "what is this causing all this sooty mold?" question has been answered, most people want to know what they should do about it. One possible answer is nothing. Crape Murder by scale has yet to be reported in North Texas, and there are natural enemies of this pest present. Lady beetles seem to be the most significant natural enemy of the scale. In fact, at one time the lady beetles feasting on scale became so abundant in the Crape Myrtle Trails of McKinney that researchers (see next paragraph) had a hard time finding infested trees for insecticide trials, though that is certainly not true in 2014.

Those who wish to treat the scale will be glad to know that in 2008 Dr. Merchant's lab received funding from the Texas Nursery and Landscape Association to evaluate different insecticide treatments for this scale. In addition to testing some newer neonicotinoid insecticides, they looked at applications of horticultural oil and of malathion. The latter two treatments provided no significant suppression of scale activity; however they did see significant control with acetamiprid, clothianidan, dinotefuran and imidacloprid, all commercially available insecticides. Two of these products, dinotefuran and imidacloprid, are available to consumers as *Merit® or Bayer Advanced™ Garden Tree and Shrub Insect Control and Greenlight Tree and Shrub Insect Control with Safari.* When applied as a drench treatment to the plant root zone, these products provide significant control of this scale, although additional work needs to be done concerning the longevity of control and consumer satisfaction associated with use of these products.

It is possible that these insecticides are already being used by homeowners and landscape maintenance companies to control Crape Myrtle aphid, so it is also quite possible that along with the lady beetles, insecticide applications have been keeping this pest in check.

There's no doubt that this sap sucking insect is stressing the plants, but the cause of most plant owner stress may be plant appearance. Dr. Jim Robbins in Arkansas has documented smaller flower panicles on infested vs. uninfested trees. The black sooty mold that grows on the honeydew the scales excrete is also unsightly. As with many scale insects, dead bodies can remain on the plant for some time even after they have been killed with a systemic insecticide. They look a bit like lichens and are often misidentified. One recommendation for heavily infested plants is to wash the trunk and reachable limbs with a soft brush and mild solution of dishwashing soap. This will remove many of the scales and egg masses and much of the black sooty mold.

There is a great deal we still don't know about managing this pest, but there is absolutely no doubt that the crape myrtle is a valuable part of our North Texas landscapes. Keep an eye out for scale, but don't forget that more Crape Murder is committed by men (and women) with loppers than insects with sucking mouth parts.



Building Trust

Shannon Johnson-Lackey
4-H Extension Agent
Cooperative Extension Program

Character Development is a source of concern for many educators and parents alike. Within the curriculum, “Character Counts!”, a mantra is introduced: *Character counts all the time and all the time character counts*. As a youth development professional, I often speak that mantra to groups of students who are struggling with the pillars of character. As I flip through the pages of the “Character Counts!” curriculum, I am energized with hope from the endless possibilities that come with introducing youth to the six pillars of character and having them recite the character mantra in unison with me. As the “Character Counts!” mantra still rings in my head, I set out to teach youth about Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship on a monthly basis. Lessons on Trustworthiness set the tone for the whole journey of character development and therefore it is where I begin.

According to “Character Counts!”, a project of the Josephson Institute, Trustworthiness is being honest and telling the truth. Trustworthy people do what they say they will do. They do what they know is right even if it is hard to do. A trustworthy person is a loyal friend. In preparing lessons on Trustworthiness, I often look for quotes that may spark interest with the youth and provide a solid backdrop for discussion. One of my favorite quotes is “A trustworthy friend is worth a mint” from an anonymous source. After explaining that the term “mint” refers to a vast sum we discuss the importance of being and having a trustworthy friend. I begin with the concept that a trustworthy person is a loyal friend because of the need to belong.

Focusing on the idea of a loyal friend is a component of trustworthiness, I’ve concentrated on the fact that sometimes the best way to teach a concept is by immersing oneself in a good book. A great example of a piece of children’s literature teaching the concept of trustworthiness is Hans Christian Anderson’s *The Emperor’s New Clothes*. As many may recall, the emperor entrusted two tailors to make him a beautiful set of new clothes. The hired tailors worked in secret until the emperor began sending his most trusted advisors to examine the work. The advisors examined the “work” that the tailors were doing and reported back to the emperor how lovely the garments were. In the end, there were no new clothes, just an emperor with too much pride and few people around him that would tell him the truth. This classic story is a great conversation piece about when we want something so bad that we overlook the obvious.

Another good example of children’s literature teaching the concept of trustworthiness is *The Little Engine That Could* by Watty Piper. Most know this book because of the lessons on perseverance of the little train carrying all the toys for the boys and girls. They recount the words, I think I can I think I can I think I can. Before those words are spoken, the story illustrates what happens when “friends” are not loyal and no one does what’s right. The little train needs help getting up the hill and is passed by several engines who refuse to help. They are not interested in being friendly or doing the right thing in helping deliver the toys to the children. This classic provides the framework to discuss community and what it means to help another person.

Carbon Footprint

Cassius McAlister
4-H Extension Agent
Cooperative Extension Program



Carbon Footprint is defined as:

The total amount of gases that trap heat in our atmosphere, produced to directly and indirectly support human activities, usually expressed in equivalent tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂). CO₂ is the chemical symbol for carbon dioxide.

In other words, when you drive a car the engine burns fuel which creates a certain amount of CO₂, depending on its fuel consumption and the driving distance. When you heat your house with oil, gas or coal, then you also generate CO₂. Even if you heat your house with electricity, the generation of the electrical power may also have emitted a certain amount of CO₂. When you buy food and goods, the production of the food and goods also emitted some quantities of CO₂ (source is: <http://timeforchange.org/what-is-a-carbon-footprint-definition>)

Here are some ways to reduce your carbon footprint.

- Reduce your dependency on using automobiles or fossil fuel burning motorized vehicles by walking, riding your bike or by carpooling with a coworker or colleague.
- If your kids are meeting friends at a local hangout, how about one parent drop all of the kids at the destination and the other parent pick up the kids from the destination and return them home, thereby reducing the number of vehicles on the road at any given time.
- Recycling of products can also help reduce our carbon footprint because it helps reduce the amount of waste that needs to be disposed. Waste disposal also creates greenhouse gases.

Using mass transit systems, hybrid vehicles for travelling and other energy efficient appliances is another way to assist with reducing our carbon footprint.

If you are looking for an experiment to reinforce this information Google 2010 National Youth Science Day Experiment titled 4-H₂O. This is an experiment I have conducted for many Tarrant County youth.

Don't Forget the Vision Exam

During the twelve years of life, 80% of a child's learning comes through vision.

Cindy Bryant
County Extension Agent 4-H



A preschooler's world is full of excitement as he moves from one activity to another. Filled with giggles and enthusiasm, it is a world to be explored, with each experience providing an opportunity for growth and development. During the ages from 2 to 5, a child's visual abilities continue to fine-tune and develop. Stacking blocks, playing ball, and coloring are excellent activities to promote the development of visual skills. Such activities also help develop eye-hand coordination, fine motor skills, and visual perception, all of which are important for future school success.

The eyes and brain work together to produce vision. Light enters the eye, focuses on the retina, and sends an image through the optic nerve to the brain. Several factors can affect this process, resulting in reduced visual acuity.

Sometimes, people confuse the conditions commonly known as cross-eye and lazy eye. The medical term for cross-eye is strabismus. It is a condition in which the child cannot align both eyes simultaneously under normal conditions. In this condition, one or both eyes may turn in, out, up, or down. The turn of the eye may be constant or intermittent. Because the condition has a physical manifestation, parents notice and seek an evaluation by an ophthalmologist.

Lazy eye (medically known as amblyopia) refers to a situation in which the vision is reduced because the eye and brain are not working together properly. Typically, the brain is favoring the nerve signal from one eye over the other. While it can accompany strabismus, it sometimes does not. Because the eye structure is normal, this condition is sometimes overlooked.

Pediatric ophthalmic examinations can identify a variety of visual conditions, enabling the child to receive the proper treatment during the critical developmental stages. So, as you schedule your child's medical check-up, don't forget to schedule his vision examination as well.

Sources: National Eye Institute
NIH American Optometric Association



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- Chris Zimmer



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B. Glen Whitley, County Judge

- | | |
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Commissioner, Pct. 3 |
| Andy Nguyen
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