

Challenges Facing Texas Crop Producers

- Rising input costs and various production-related challenges, including droughts, disease, invasive species and other pests have placed serious stress on farmers across the state.
- Changing global markets and the management of agricultural production and price risk have farmers seeking ways to maximize production efficiency to maintain competitiveness.
- Issues regarding the balance between Texas' water supply and demand have brought about the need for more efficient use of this vital resource.

AgriLife Extension's Response

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service delivers wide-ranging educational programs focused on research-based crop production and management practices, evaluation of technologies, improved decision making, water-use efficiency, and job training.

- Programs for crop producers cover variety testing, soil nutrient management, irrigation efficiency, disease and pest identification and control, commodity marketing, financial risk management, and farm bill education.
- AgriLife Extension is at the forefront in responding to emerging issues such as



drought, floods, wildfires, and insect and disease outbreaks.

- Through 5,600 educational events, planning meetings, and workshops in 2017, AgriLife Extension achieved more than 1.3 million educational and other contacts.
- AgriLife Extension often collaborates with industry groups and with other government entities to deliver educational programs.

Economic Impacts

Selected programs are highlighted below. Impacts were measured by the increase in net returns associated with adoption of certain management practices taught in 2017.

- The economic benefit resulting from the increase in net returns for boll weevil eradication was estimated at \$328 million, with cumulative benefits amounting to \$3.9 billion (since 1996).
- Outreach related to crops, floriculture, nursery production, and marketing led to an estimated increase in annual net returns of \$105.1 million, and assisted cotton growers with variety selection valued at \$22.9 million.
- Programs focusing on managing crop and livestock financial risk resulted in estimated gains of \$39 million.
- The impacts above support an additional 3,236 jobs in agribusiness and retail-related sectors.
- 75,000 Texas farmers used the web-based decision aid for the 2014 Farm Bill, developed by the Agricultural & Food Policy Center (AFPC), with an estimated impact of improved decision making valued at \$1.3 billion annually.
- Job training through continuing education related to pesticide safety and cotton ginning supports 65,514 Texas jobs, with an annual wage base of \$894.6 million.