

**Cooperative Agreement
Between
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Tyler County**

This Cooperative Agreement ("Agreement") between Tyler County and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service ("AgriLife Extension"), for the purpose of establishing a partnership between the county government representing the citizens of Texas residing in said county and AgriLife Extension.

Whereas, Chapter 43 of the Texas Agriculture Code authorizes and enables Texas counties, through their commissioners court, to employ any means as appropriate and expend money as necessary to establish and conduct cooperative demonstration work in agriculture and home economics in cooperation with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, a member of the Texas A&M University System and Chapter 791 of the Texas Government Code (the Interlocal Cooperation Act) authorizes agreements for services between a state agency and a county;

Whereas, the County has carefully analyzed the need for continuing cooperative demonstration work in agriculture and other continuing education programs and services for the citizens of Tyler County, it has been determined that a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service staffing and budget plan designed to develop and conduct educational programs in all phases of agriculture, family and consumer sciences, 4-H and youth, and economic development can effectively and efficiently serve the County of Tyler; and

Whereas, AgriLife Extension wishes to join in and cooperate with the County in furtherance of a County Extension Program.

Now therefore, County and AgriLife Extension agree as follows:

1. This Agreement is to be for the period beginning January 1, 2023 and ending August 31, 2028. AgriLife Extension and the County have had a long-standing relationship concerning extension educational work; therefore, this Agreement shall automatically renew annually, until terminated as provided in Paragraph 13 below, with the understanding that all terms and conditions remain unchanged unless this Agreement is specifically amended by mutual consent of the parties, documented in writing and signed by an authorized representative of each party.

2. The County through the Commissioners Court of Tyler County, Texas will annually allocate an amount of funds determined through the County's annual budgeting process in furtherance of the County Extension Program and the Extension county office. Allocations may provide county support of Extension agent salaries or other county support staff, and associated fringe benefits as required by federal and state law, telephone and internet service, office equipment, supplies, travel expenses, staff in-service training, etc. This Agreement does not require the payment of any funds to AgriLife Extension. The County will disburse funds to employees through the processes set forth in county procedures.

with county procedures. Extension faculty and support staff shall keep accurate and detailed records of expenses incurred in accordance with county fiscal procedures.

- b. The Coordinator shall manage and administer county-provided equipment in accordance with Tyler County policies and procedures.
- c. The Coordinator shall supervise the support staff employed by the County and assigned to the County Extension Program in accordance with county personnel policies and procedures. Such supervision authority includes, but is not limited to, hiring, training, duty assignments, scheduling, performance evaluation, and discipline subject to county policy. Recommendations for adverse personnel actions with regard to county employees will be coordinated with the Commissioners Court.
- d. The District Extension Administrator shall supervise any staff employed directly by AgriLife Extension in accordance with AgriLife Extension policies and procedures.

9. Extension agents shall be AgriLife Extension employees and subject to all Texas A&M University System ("TAMUS") policies, procedures, and guidelines. Extension agents shall adhere to both Extension and County policies and procedures where applicable in carrying out their duties and responsibilities. Extension agents are exempt employees and therefore not subject to the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. AgriLife Extension provides access to health insurance and retirement benefits. Both entities shall withhold and/or contribute towards workers' compensation insurance, unemployment compensation insurance, social security benefits, and Medicare benefits proportional to the salary paid by each. Leave will be administered based on each respective entity's policies and procedures.

10. Clerical and other administrative staff provided by the County shall be Tyler County employees and subject to Tyler County policies, procedures and guidelines. County employees shall also follow TAMUS policies and procedures where applicable in carrying out their duties and responsibilities.

11. AgriLife Extension will recruit and select County Extension Agents with the proper training and qualifications to fill vacant or new positions.

12. The annual budget, as certified by the County on the CB-5, will serve as the budget agreement and may be amended by Commissioners Court as the occasion warrants subject to availability of funds. This budget in no way alters the objectives and goals set forth in this Agreement. Upon county certification of its annual budget, a certified copy will be submitted to AgriLife Extension.

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR COUNTY OPERATIONS



**County Government
and Texas AgriLife Extension Service**

Partners in Education

**Employment Guide
for County Extension Agent Positions**

January 2019

The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating

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*Educational programs of the Texas A&M 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*

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the Cooperative Extension Program-Prairie View A&M University (CEP). This ongoing partnership enables the citizens of Texas to receive the assistance they need without regard to which organization happens to hold the expertise. Extension educators extend research-based information to the people of Texas in the areas of agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer sciences, 4-H and youth development, and community economic resource development.

County Extension Agents and Programs

Approximately 560 of the 980 professional Extension staff are County Extension Agents. County Agents are local resident educators with responsibilities for disseminating information and teaching clientele. County Extension Agents serve all counties in Texas through 250 different county Extension offices located in the county seats or other designated locations within the county. These county Extension programs are grouped geographically into 12 Extension Districts for administrative purposes (See Attachment).

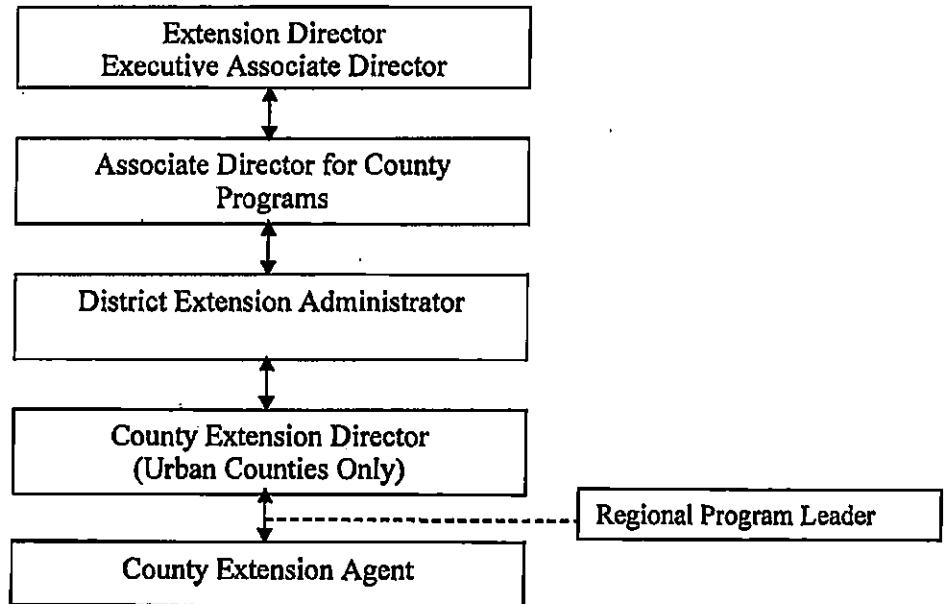
To enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the county Extension staff in planning, implementing, and evaluating the Extension program, one county Extension agent is appointed county coordinator. The basic duty of the county Extension agent in this role is to provide leadership for the personnel and programs in the county unit. The county coordinator is responsible for managing the Extension office and serves as a liaison with the County Commissioners' Court in matters relating to office operation, as delegated by the District Extension Administrator.

Supervision of Extension Agents

Direct supervision of County Extension Agents is the responsibility of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and begins with the District Extension Administrator. A District Extension Administrator is located at each of the 12 Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Centers across the State. The individuals are responsible for supervision, recruitment, orientation, staff development, and personnel management within an assigned district.

The District Extension Administrator serves as the official Extension liaison with County Commissioners Courts on all matters concerning Extension, including budgets and personnel. The District Extension Administrator annually conducts a performance appraisal of County Extension Agents under their supervision. Court members are extended the opportunity to provide formal feedback on an annual basis regarding the performance of the local County

Supervisory Relationships



Procedures for Employing Extension Agents

When a County Extension Agent position becomes vacant, specific procedures are followed to fill the vacancy. These procedures may vary somewhat depending on the type of position that is vacant. The procedures ensure fair and equitable treatment of each applicant and County Commissioners Court.

County Extension Agent

These are the primary positions in the county and are filled only by experienced, successful County Agents or those individuals with appropriate qualifications and experience. Bachelor's degrees are required for all county Extension agent positions; however, applicants with a Master's degree will have a higher starting salary. Agents who complete a Master's degree while working will also receive a salary increase upon completion of the degree. Basic qualifications have been preset for each county and are available for review through the District Extension Administrator. Generally, these positions are filled as soon as possible after they become vacant following the listed procedures:

1. After the supervisor (District Extension Administrator or County Extension Director) receives a written notice that an agent is retiring, transferring, or resigning and has responded to this notice, the County Judge is contacted to discuss the vacancy. In this discussion, an agreement must be reached to maintain the county salary contribution and other support before the position can be filled.

9. If the applicant accepts this conditional offer, the District Extension Administrator or County Extension Director contacts the County Judge to discuss the background and qualifications of the individual being recommended to fill the position and confirm the county salary and travel allocation. The District Extension Administrator or County Extension Director will request inclusion on the official agenda of the County Commissioners Court meeting to introduce and present the candidate for approval of the Court. If approved, a starting date for the new agent will be determined. The county portion of the salary and travel allocation will be so noted at this time and a copy of the court minutes showing acceptance of the applicant acknowledging salary and travel must be made available to the District Extension Administrator.

10. If the Court does not approve the recommended candidate, the District Extension Administrator or County Extension Director will present the second choice candidate (if available) after steps 6,7, and 8 are completed. The first candidate will no longer be considered for the position. An official copy of the minutes of the Commissioners Court meeting turning down the first candidate must be made available to the District Extension Administrator for Equal Employment Opportunity files.

V.G. Young Institute of County Government

The 61st Texas Legislature created the V.G. Young Institute of County Government to be administered by Texas AgriLife Extension Service. The primary role of the Institute is to provide educational assistance for all elected officials of County Government as they seek progressive ideas for improving efficiency in the operation of the many essential services provided for the benefit of the citizens of each county. This linkage provides another opportunity for Extension and County Government to be mutually supportive of county Extension programs.

An Equal Opportunity Employer

Texas AgriLife Extension Service is an equal opportunity employer. The agency recruits at most major colleges and universities in Texas as well as in many adjoining states. Position vacancy announcements are posted on-line for easy access of interested applicants. All persons may apply and will be considered for employment regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability or national origin.