

# TEXAS FARM BUREAU 2024 COUNTY ACTIVITIES OF EXCELLENCE AWARD

The CAE awards recognize counties that have created unique, volunteer-driven programs at the local level.

The CAE program categorizes county activities into the following areas: education and ag promotion, member services, public relations and information, leadership development and policy implementation.

## Angelina County Farm Bureau

Angelina CFB hosted a teacher appreciation event and meal for elementary and primary school teachers at one of the largest school districts in the county.

The Farm Bureau leaders provided food and Ag in the Classroom resources and information to the teachers.

"We wanted to show our appreciation to the school district and the teachers who have brought agricultural literacy into their classrooms," said Cody Berry, Angelina CFB president. "It's important that county Farm Bureaus show appreciation to their teachers across the state because they do such an important job of educating our kids."

The event was hosted in conjunction with the school's in-service.

There were 75 teachers who attended the event, leaving with the reminder of how valued they are and information about resources Farm Bureau has to offer.

"During the appreciation meal, we also showcased the resources Farm Bureau has that make bringing agriculture into the classroom simple," Berry said. "We discussed why agriculture is important to our daily lives and provided the tools that we have available that are TEKS aligned. Those resources and lessons are the engine to deliver the message of agriculture to the students."

Angelina CFB also gave the teachers a small gift and highlighted funding opportunities for educational projects.



## Austin/Washington County Farm Bureaus

Austin and Washington CFB collaborated to host a meeting and invited farmers and ranchers to learn about managing feral hog populations and strategies for curbing their proliferation.

"Like most areas across the state, feral hogs are a major problem, and with Kaput being approved and released, we thought it was a good time to invite our producers in our county to come out and learn about the new bait and other options like traps," Allen Kaminski, Austin CFB president, said.

About 75 farmers and ranchers from both Austin and Washington counties were in attendance.

"Feral hogs are a problem everywhere, so we opened the meeting to everyone, members and non-members," Kaminski said. "As a grassroots organization, collaboration between counties helps events like this to become successful and show other resources Farm Bureau provides."

Conversations and presentations on feral hog management helped participants gain a better understanding of resources, and the meeting allowed farmers to connect and discuss options with others in the area who are facing damages from feral hogs, as well.

Trap demonstrations were part of the program, and resenterers also discussed disease and livestock health concerns.

"Feral hogs are very damaging to agriculture, but they're also causing damage to other properties in our communities," said Larry Winkleman, Washington CFB president. "Events like our feral hog meeting present an opportunity for farmers and ranchers to connect and learn together on how to manage this growing population."



## Mason County Farm Bureau

Mason CFB hosted the annual Mason County Ag Day and introduced agricultural information and experiences to young students.

About 180 students in kindergarten through second grade from public schools, a Christian school and homeschools across the county attended the Ag Day.

This year, the educational stations included a farrier demonstrating the horse shoeing process and a water conservation demonstration, as well as presentations on animal byproducts and nutrition. Farm equipment was also on display.

“Every year, we host an ag day for kids and do something different,” Jeff Grote, Mason CFB president, said. “This year, we hosted stations at the county fair. The children were able to learn from a farrier, a custom farming operator, county AgriLife Extension agents, a rancher, Hill Country Cattlewomen and the county volunteer fire department.”

TFB’s Ag on the Go trailer was also at the event, and 4-H and FFA members helped set up and worked several stations.

“Each year, the teachers express their appreciation for the event. They’re grateful,” Grote said. “Through the ag day, students take home valuable lessons about agriculture and are introduced to different facets of agriculture some may have not seen.”

The annual event helps highlight agriculture’s importance to the county and local communities.

“Ag Day highlighted some of the many forms of agricultural production in the county,” Grote said. “It’s a good opportunity to talk about what we do in agriculture as farmers and ranchers with the next generation.”



## Titus County Farm Bureau

Titus CFB connected classrooms with local farmers and ranchers to plant the seeds of agriculture through Farm to Classroom Storytime.

Titus CFB board members visited six elementary schools across three school districts and read the accurate ag book *Barn at Night* to kindergarten and first-grade students.

“We took a more hands-on approach than what we have done and met the kids where they were and read to their classes,” Kaci Temples, Titus CFB president, said. “We are in a pretty ag-friendly area, but there are still a lot of kids who aren’t familiar with agriculture. So, we try to do everything we can to let them know where their food comes from, what livestock we raise and just learn more about what farmers and ranchers do.”

The county leaders read the book to nearly 300 students. After they finished the story time, they donated the books to the school libraries to help provide more accurate agricultural books.

Through the program, connections with educators were established, allowing Titus CFB to promote additional Farm Bureau Ag in the Classroom resources and educational opportunities.

“It’s important to reach out wherever we can to promote agriculture, whether it’s by going to the classroom or through a personal relationship with teachers, principals or the head of administration,” Temples said. “Making those contacts can help bring agricultural literacy to schools, bridging the gap at a younger age.”

The students enjoyed the story time and asked many questions, Temples said.



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