

**Education of Best Management Practices in the Arroyo Colorado Watershed
FY 05 CWA 319(h)
TSSWCB Agreement No. 05-10**

Quarter no. 10 From 1/1/08 Through 3/31/08

I. Abstract

This quarter, 232 agricultural producers and more than 800 youths, residents and city officials from Cameron, Hidalgo and Willacy Counties were educated. The soil testing campaign continued through January 31, 2008. Total number of soil samples received through the campaign (includes only those that go through the Extension Office – does not include samples that go thru NRCS) was as follows: Cameron County – 44 participants - 201 samples; Hidalgo County – 289 samples received; Willacy County – 18 participants – 172 samples received. Total number of attendees who have benefited from the Arroyo Colorado Education Program is now 4,780.

II. Overall Progress and Results by Task

TASK 1: Project Coordination

Subtask 1.1: Conduct quarterly meetings as appropriate with project participants (TWRI, TCE, TSSWCB, SWCDs, NRCS, Arroyo-Colorado Watershed Coordinator, TAMU Kingsville, etc.) to discuss project schedule, completion of deliverables, outreach and participation strategies, communication needs and other requirements.

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. The AC Watershed Coordinator met with County Extension Agents, the Regional Program Director and the District Extension Administrator in February to discuss targeting educational efforts towards specific agricultural producers to make the greatest potential impact on the AC water quality.
- b. TWRI met with County Extension Agents on March 4 to discuss project activities related to the Arroyo Colorado.

80% Complete

Subtask 1.2: TWRI will submit project strategies / programs and project status as necessary to the Ag Issues Workgroup via TSSWCB for inclusion in the Watershed Protection Plan.

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. TWRI and Extension participated in the Arroyo Colorado Ag Issues Workgroup and Steering Committee meetings on January 24, 2008 and presented an update on the Arroyo Education Project at the meeting. This update included the submission of a proposal titled, “Integrated Farm Management Education Program,” submitted to the EPA Region 6 Strategic Ag Initiative Program.

80% Complete

Subtask 1.3: TWRI will prepare electronic quarterly reports and submit to TSSWCB

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. Submitted Year 3, Quarter 2 Progress Report to TSSWCB on April 14, 2008.

80% Complete

Subtask 1.4: TWRI and TCE will develop a final project report and submit to TSSWCB.

0% Complete

TASK 2: Conducting Local Educational Meetings

Subtask 2.1: Meetings will serve to educate individuals on specific crop production techniques. Each of the following meetings will be held on an annual basis.

- *2 cotton production meetings in Hidalgo, Cameron and Willacy Counties*
- *1 sorghum production meeting in Hidalgo, Cameron and Willacy Counties*
- *1 sugar cane production meeting in Hidalgo County*
- *1 citrus production meeting in Hidalgo County*
- *1 vegetable production meeting in Hidalgo County*
- *County / multi-county Pesticide Applicator Safety Training and Continuing Education*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

Date	Event	County	Description	Attendance
1/8/08	Training- City of San Juan Parks and Recreation	H	Native Plants, Compost and Mulch	5
1/11/08	Grow'n Growers Class	H	Educational Program on Organics, promotion, farmer's markets	15
1/15/08	Master Gardener Composting Workday	C	Master Gardeners learned the benefits and uses of compost in a landscape. Different types of compost materials were use at the MG Arboretum	12
1/16/08	Master Gardener Program	H	Organic products for insect control and identification and use of beneficial insects	23
1/17/08	Tour of organic garden	W	Organic Gardening	n/a

1/17/08	CEU Workshop	CH	Provide continuing education to pesticide license holders including BMP's associated with safe use of pesticides and protection of environment including water resources	101
1/18/08	Organic Kitchen Garden Tour	H	Organic Pest and Disease Controls	21
1/19/08	Sustainable Ag and Organic Gardening conference	HC	Organic Methods	137
1/23/08	Horticulture Society Annual Meeting	H	Organic Vegetable Gardening compost, organic pest and disease control, Organic prevention and Treatment of Chilli Thrips Organic Roses.	43
1/23/08	Cotton Pre-Plant Seminar	CHW	Conducted to provide timely educational information to cotton producers. Topics included: cotton varieties, cotton market outlook, boll weevil eradication, weed resistance in cotton, FSA reminders, Master Marketer Program, new developments from industry	60
1/25/08	Grow'n Growers	H	Compost Tea	12
1/26/08	"Gardening 101 Series"	H	Organic Vegetable Gardening	41
2/1/08	"Walk In the Park"	H	Native Trees and Mulch	37
2/2/08	Native Tree and Shrub Planting	H	Demonstration on proper planting, use of compost and mulch, use of organic fertilizer, native plant information	39
2/6/08	Organic Garden Tour	H	Organic Gardening	13

2/6/08	Pesticide Safety Training	CH	Topics included: the principles of integrated pest management, non-chemical alternatives, pest features, ground and surface water protection, laws and regulations, pesticide labels, endangered species protection, Worker Protection Standards, record keeping, personal protection, application equipment, calibration and continuing education units.	5
2/8/08	“Walk In the Park”	H	Organic Pest Control Program	37
2/12/08	Master Gardener Program	C	Educational Program: Landscape with Natives in the Master Gardener Arboretum.	30
2/13/08	Grow’n Growers	H	Organic Pest Control	13
2/13/08	CEU Workshop	CH	Provide continuing education to pesticide license holders including BMP’s associated with safe use of pesticides and protection of environment including water resources	66
2/15/08	Program on Compost	H	Tour of Baseball Field and Compost Study	33
2/20/08	Mission/McAllen Garden Club	H	Organic Vegetable Gardening	15
2/21/08	“Walk In the Park Class”	H	Native Shrubs	32
2/29/08	“Walk In the Park” Class	H	Organic Disease Control	33
3/11/08	Meeting	H	Organic Pecan Production Trials	27
3/12/08	Master Gardener Class	C	Uses of Compost in the Vegetable Garden.	28
3/18/08	Salsa Festival	H	Organic Vegetable Gardening	130
3/20/08	Master Gardener Class	H	Use of Compost, Use of Native Trees	12

3/26/08	Grow'n Growers	H	Organic Squash Production and Disease Control	12
3/26/08	Evening Program	H	Organic Vegetable Production	23
3/27/08	Master Gardener Class	H	Rain Water Collecting	13
3/31/08	Los Largos Country Club	H	Use of Native Plants	8
1/19/08	radio show	H	Benefits of Compost	
3/15/08	news article	H	Compost	

80% Complete

Subtask 2.2: Meetings, demonstrations and other educational activities will serve to educate individuals on nutrient management techniques. Specifically:

- *A soil testing campaign will be conducted within the 3 counties to promote proper use of fertilizers.*
- *When available, summarized data will be collected from TAMU-Kingsville and compiled into educational fact sheets or presented.*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

Date	Event	County	Description	Attendance
1/1/08 - 1/31/08	Soil Test Campaign	CHWS	Continued from previous quarter. Total number of soil samples received through the campaign (includes only those that go through the Extension Office – does not include samples that go thru NRCS) was as follows: Cameron County – 44 participants - 201 samples; Hidalgo County – 289 samples received; Willacy County – 18 participants – 172 samples received.	n/a

80% Complete

Subtask 2.3: Meetings and promotional events will serve to advertise and educate individuals on related programs addressing water quality. For example, TCE will:

- *Promote cost-share programs (319(h), EQIP, etc.).*
- *Educate producers or assist SWCDs in development of water quality management plans.*

- *Educate producers on involvement and development of the Watershed Protection Plan and the potential effects of its implementation.*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. None to report at this time.

72% Complete

III. Related Issues/Current Problems and Favorable of Unusual Developments

- Concerns regarding the education and outreach associated with the AC were expressed at the January Steering Committee and Ag Issues Workgroup meetings. Specifically, there were questions raised about the increase of cost share limits, how Extension and TSSWCB and NRCS are targeting specific ag producers to make the biggest impact and what data is available for the SWAT model. To address these concerns, TWRI anticipates hosting a special meeting with a select group of members of the Ag Monitoring Oversight Committee.

IV. Projected Work for Next Quarter

- Education efforts will continue.