

AG AWARENESS DAY

RESOURCES



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WHAT IS AN AG AWARENESS DAY

What is an Ag Awareness Day? This program is a great one to educate students on all of the different parts of agriculture. Ag Awareness days can take many shapes, sizes, and looks, however, they all ultimately convey the message of production agriculture. In this guide, you will find multiple resources on contacts to make, demonstrations to book, timelines, station ideas, and much more.



ULTIMATELY, DO WHAT BEST FITS YOUR COUNTY NEEDS.

TIMELINE

This is a general timeline of when to meet with your committee, book speakers, etc. All aspects of this timeline should be tweaked to fit the needs of your county.

1 YEAR BEFORE PROGRAM

- Identify Task Force/Planning Committee members (*one of your committee members should be your contact at the school-this helps with planning*) Go ahead and have your initial meeting
- Identify location-and book it.
- Identify program date (confirm with schools)
- Identify those "Big Ticket" demonstrations you will need and get those booked. (i.e, Southwest Dairy Farmers-Mobile Dairy Classroom, Farm Bureau, etc. These demonstrations tend to get booked very quickly).

6-8 MOS BEFORE PROGRAM

- Meet with Task Force/Planning Committee
- Identify any partners, sponsors, other groups that you may engage-these can be presenters, donors, etc.
- Lock down those partners
 - Will you serve lunch? Identify a lunch sponsor (and someone to cook)
 - Will you need tour guides? Reach out to the groups you identify for that (4-H members, FFA members)
- Identify Stations & invite speakers
 - This may seem like a lot of time in advance to ask speakers, but this allows them to get it on their calendar, and you to have identify multiple options in case something falls through. (i.e. volunteers have something come up and are not able to speak, you have a back up plan).



5-7 MOS BEFORE PROGRAM

- Contact the various commodity groups to get give-away items.
 - Texas Beef Council, Texas Corn Producers, Texas Wheat Producers, Texas Pork Producers, Texas Sheet & Goat Raisers, AQHA, Dairy Max, etc
- Meet with task force/committee to finalize all speakers, etc.
- If you are using any Path to the Plate resources, make sure those are booked.

3-4 MOS BEFORE PROGRAM

- Make sure all of your volunteers are secured and ready to go.
- Touch base with all speakers, demonstrations, etc.

2-3 WEEKS BEFORE PROGRAM

- Send all information to volunteers, speakers, and demonstrations-time to arrive, time that they will be finished, locations, schedule, lunch options, etc.
- Make sure all supplies are lined up
 - Do you need handouts?
 - Do you need livestock?
 - Do you need bags?
 - Print all handouts and put packs together for each class.
- Send all materials to schools-pre-tests, pre-program lessons, etc.



1 WEEK BEFORE PROGRAM

- Present all pre-program lessons
 - These help further establish those core principles and lessons.
- If serving lunch, make sure you have all supplies.
- Make sure all donations are collected
- Make sure all class packs are ready to go.

DAY OF PROGRAM

- Breathe! Your program is finally here!
- Make sure there are schedules for each speaker
- Make sure everyone knows the game plan for the day
- Test microphone and other equipment (before the day starts)
- Hang all sponsor banners
- Make sure to clean up facilities at the end of the program

1 WEEK POST PROGRAM

- Collect all post-test evaluations
- Follow up with task force/committee to find out pros and cons of the day
- Make a plan for next year
- Send thank you notes to all sponsors, speakers, and volunteers.



SESSION IDEAS

TRADITIONAL AG AWARENESS DAY

- Gardening
 - Let participants plant seeds
 - Materials: seeds, soil, cups, plants for demonstration
- Livestock
 - Can be broken up by species or lumped together as one session
 - Could talk about by-products, production, food and fiber.
 - Could do fiber demos with sheep & goats
 - Materials: animals, water buckets, feed, pens, trimming tables, etc.
- Poultry
 - Could focus on meat production, egg production, etc.
 - Could demonstration backyard poultry
 - Materials: chickens, chicken, eggs
- Commodities
 - Could do individual commodities-focus on those that grow in your county
 - Materials: Crop by-products, plants in growing seasons (good visual to see the actual plant), Path to the Plate posters are good here.
 - Could invite Farm Bureau to demonstrate their commodity trailer.

OTHER SESSIONS THAT COULD BE ADDED

- Bee Keeping
- Farm Safety
- Water (good to involve the water districts)
- Horses
- Health-good opportunity to connect Health & Ag (utilize Ambassadors, blender bike, etc)
- Electricity-good opportunity to include your electric coop
- Game Warden/Wildlife
- Non-traditional livestock (i.e. apalacas, llamas, turkeys, etc)
- Dairy
 - Utilize the mobile dairy classroom, Dairy Max, etc.

SESSION IDEAS



FARM SAFETY DAYS

- Farm Equipment Safety
 - Will need to coordinate with producers to bring in equipment **one thing to note is that spring Ag Days are often in the middle of wheat harvest/corn planting seasons.
- Electric Co-ops
 - Great to show how to be safe around electricity.
 - They often blow things up!
- Lawn Equipment Safety
 - Great opportunity to bring in an equipment dealer to show how to be safe around lawnmowers, shredders, etc.
- Water District
 - This is great how to be safe around water, get water tested, etc.
- NRCS
 - They are a good resource to have there in general.

NATURAL RESOURCES DAY

- NRCS
 - Let this group come in and highlight what they do
- Nature Hike
 - If you have a place to coordinate groups to go on hikes, send them down with guides and a list of things to see. (i.e. eagle's nest, water erosion, random grasses, etc)
- Water Districts
 - They can demonstrate a whole host of things.
- Master Naturalists
 - Incorporate your other volunteer groups
- Game Warden/Wildlife
 - Let the Game Warden come in and talk about safety, laws, hunting, fishing, etc.
- Texas Parks and Wildlife
 - This group has a wealth of resources to share! Use them!



PIZZA RANCH

- Pizza Ranch is a great way to demonstrate where our food comes from.
- Crust
 - Talk about wheat and corn production.
- Sauce
 - Talk about growing tomatoes and herbs.
- Meat
 - Talk about the livestock that we raise and the by-products we get from them.
- Cheese
 - Talk about the dairy industry and how we get cheese from dairy cattle
- Other toppings
 - Use your discretion for what other toppings you want to discuss
- Pizza
 - It is always a neat touch to be able to add lunch in there after you talk about where their pizza comes from. Work with sponsors to secure funding.



SESSION IDEAS





PARTNERS

WHAT PARTNERS SHOULD YOU HAVE?

- Partners are great to have! These could be sponsors, other volunteer groups, schools, etc. A Partner is any group who is going in with you to host this program.

PARTNER GROUP EXAMPLES

- LoneStar Ag Credit (sponsor)
- Ag Texas (sponsor)
- Dairy Max (sponsor-could also donate milk-contact them online)
- Southwest Dairy Farmers (mobile dairy classroom-have to book this online)
- Farm Bureau (contact your local board, the insurance side may also want to be a sponsor)
- Other Insurance groups (good sponsors!)
- Hospitals (if you are offering a good health portion or focusing on connecting health & ag, they may want to sponsor part of it. They may also want to help with the health session)
- Commodity Groups (great for freebies!)
 - Texas Beef Council, Pork Producers, Corn Producers, Wheat Board, Sheep & Goat Raisers Association, AQHA
- School Districts (MUST put them in your planning group to make sure you have good communication with the district)
- Ag Teachers (you may need extra youth help and they are able to get more students there, oftentimes).
- Water Districts
- FSA Office (they have access to other resources and may want to volunteer)
- NRCS
- Other AgriLife Volunteer Groups
 - Master Wellness Volunteers
 - Master Gardeners
 - Master Naturalists
- Youth Ambassadors



EVALUATIONS

WHAT TYPE OF EVAL SHOULD I USE?

- Think about the result you want to convey. Do you want to show a knowledge-change? Do you want to show knowledge-gained? Once you know what result you are aiming for, you can determine which type of evaluation to use.

TYPES OF EVALUATIONS

- Pre-Test/Post-Test
 - This evaluation should be the same for the pre and post test. Distribute the pre-test about a week before your program. Collect the post-test at the program or a few days after the program (you will get better results if they complete them at the program).
- Retrospective
 - This evaluation can be distributed at the conclusion of your program. This will only give you results of the knowledge that was gained.
- Paper Evaluations
 - The most common method for conduction evaluations is with a paper evaluation, physically handed out to participants. Forms need to be printed out and then mailed to College Station (or put in by hand in your office) for results. Can take a while to get results back.
- Online
 - One method to use is to conduct and online evaluation. This allows teachers to post in their Google Classrooms. The results are instant. Google forms and Qualtrics are good tools to use.

PRE-LESSONS

WHAT IS A PRE-LESSON

- For your Ag Awareness Day to stand on it's own as an In-Depth program, you need to add in a few more lessons. These can be conducted by you, or given to the teachers to share. You will need a total of 6 learning experiences to include in your In-Depth program. Pre-Lessons are those lessons you complete before your Ag Awareness Day.

LESSON EXAMPLES

- Parts of a Plant
- Gardening 101
- Soil Profiles
- Water
 - Erosion
 - Conservation
 - Rain Water Harvesting
- Farm Safety
- Livestock Production
 - Types of Livestock
 - By-Products
 - Where does your food come from
- Natural Resources
 - What is a habitat?
 - Grass Identification
 - Plant ID
- Science of Agriculture Curriculum
- Cotton
- Commodities

PRE-LESSONS



VIRTUAL AG DAY

WHY A VIRTUAL AG DAY?

- With the state of our world, it is important to have a back-up plan for all programs, and Ag Awareness Days are no exception. Each of these ideas would work well as a stand-alone piece or part of a longer day. One idea is to choose 6 and use them as your 6 learning experiences.

VIRTUAL IDEAS

- Tour a Farmers' Market
 - Interview the producers that are there. These can be live or uploaded to view later
- Interviews with Producers
 - Interview a producer live or record it and play it later for students.
 - You can dive a little deeper and ask more in-depth questions. Have students ask the producers questions.
 - Ask the producers to give tours-of their barns, fields, equipment.
- Tour a processing facility
 - Tour a cotton gin
 - Tour a Co-op
 - Visit with the people that run those places. Where does their product go from there?
- Tour a farm/ranch
 - What does a farmer do everyday to care for his livestock?
 - Show what they eat
 - Do they have babies? Show those off.
- Have your speakers video their presentations and send those to you.
- Have your speakers join in at specific times to present what they would have presented in person.

A VIRTUAL AG DAY MAY REQUIRE A LITTLE MORE LEG WORK ON YOUR PART, BUT ULTIMATELY CAN BE JUST AS SUCCESSFUL!

VIRTUAL AG DAY

