

# TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION

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## *Clover Connection*

By: Kate Pittack  
Extension 4-H Agent

This past week, we had a chance to celebrate the accomplishments of our Henderson County 4-Her's for the 2015-2016 4-H "year". Many hands worked together to coordinate a lovely awards ceremony held at the conference center of the Texas Freshwater Fisheries. I want to extend a huge thank you to all of our 4-H leaders, volunteers and parents. Without you, we wouldn't be able to have the amazing program that we do!

I eat, sleep and breathe 4-H. I feel blessed to have a job that on most days doesn't feel like "work". 4-H and the other information/programs that the Extension service provides have been a part of my life since I was 8 years old. While the name has changed some over the years (and varies a little from state to state) the core values of Land Grant Universities across the United States remain the same: Teaching, Research and Extension.

The job of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Agents is to educate their communities with research based knowledge from Texas A&M University (and other Extension resources from across the nation). Research based means that the information you receive is non-biased and based simply on facts. In today's world, full of pop-up "experts", trends and fads, it's refreshing to know that there is still reliable, factual information available to us. It is even available to us at a local level via an AgriLife Extension Office!

I recently made a trip back to Nebraska to see my mom and subsequently got "gifted" with a few totes full of childhood memorabilia. As I sifted through the mountains of pictures (you know, back when we got those rolls of film developed instead of posting them to Facebook or saving them online?) it started to click in my brain that the information and programs that the Extension service provides (especially 4-H) is deeply ingrained in my life.

I learned about animal husbandry and the ethics associated with raising livestock responsibly through my 4-H sheep project. I learned to stand up in front of adults and my peers through the 4-H public speaking project. I learned about the fiber industry through 4-H Clothing and Textiles. AND, I think my mom saved every picture to document my experience...even the ones with my neon colored sewing project (with matching hair bow).

Along with the 4-H program, Extension provided up to date resources on livestock management and crop production that assisted the operation of our family farm. The Extension integrated pest management division provided training on proper use of pesticides and certification for private applicator licenses. Extension's entrepreneurship programs/resources and information from the University of Nebraska's food processing center were also there when my family was trying to market our home-raised lamb products.

I am 4-H and Extension. I am a product of the resources provided from a Land Grant University and darn proud of it.

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