

## SOIL AND PLANT SCIENCE DIVISION

# Technical Soil Services

## South Central Region

### Rosenberg Soil Survey Office (SSO)

## Rosenberg, Texas Soil Survey Office Delivers Soil Technical Presentation to Fort Bend County, Texas Master Gardeners

### Purpose

The Rosenberg SSO staff, consisting of MLRA Soil Survey office leader, Scott Cardenas, and soil scientist Stacey Kloesel, were asked to give a hands-on soils presentation to the Fort Bend Master Gardeners class on September 7, 2023, to help complete the training of the master gardeners.

### Background

As per the Fort Bend County Master Gardener's website, "Master Gardeners are volunteers who assist Extension in promoting research-based horticultural practices to help residents succeed in creating and maintaining their home landscapes. In Fort Bend County, classes begin with 60 hours of comprehensive training conducted by Texas A&M professors and Extension specialists and delivered over 12 weeks. That training is supplemented with Fort Bend County local classes to round out the training."

Soil scientists were asked to provide the soils portion of the Master Gardener training. Mr. Cardenas introduced the master gardeners to soil health concepts that the gardeners can use in gardens of any size. He stressed the importance of minimizing erosion and showed the impact that it could have if left unchecked. Live demonstrations were done to help the gardeners visualize the lessons. At the end of the lesson, Mr. Cardenas showed the gardeners how to check their own gardens soil textures and gave them advice on which plants were able to grow best at each of their homes.

### Key Outcomes

Members of the Fort Bend Master Gardeners gained increased knowledge of soil properties and soil health information, as well as strategies on how to implement the best practices in their home landscapes for healthy soil.



Figure 1.—Scott Cardenas and Stacey Kloesel gave a soil health talk to a master gardener audience.



Figure 2.—Soil scientist Scott Cardenas demonstrated the benefits of a cover crop versus barren ground using a tabletop rainfall simulator.



Figure 3.—Fort Bend Master Gardeners determined the textures of various soil samples.