Walk Across Texas! is an eight-week program to help people of all ages support one another to establish the habit of regular physical activity. Walk Across Texas! is recognized as a Best Practice Physical Activity Program by the Texas Department of State Health Services.

**Relevance**
- 30% of Texans are obese.
- 29% of American adults are not physically active at all.
- Only 25% of adults and 27% of high school students get regular, moderate exercise.
- Texas ranks 10th in the nation as the most physically inactive state.
- Texas ranks 15th as the state with the highest adult obesity rates.
- Texas ranks 10th as the state with the highest childhood overweight rates.
- Regular physical activity and controlling weight can significantly reduce the incidence and impact of chronic diseases like heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer, high blood pressure, and depression.
- Regular physical activity is also associated with fewer physician visits, hospitalizations, and medications.

**Response**
The Walk Across Texas! program was designed to help establish the habit of regular physical activity. For eight weeks, teams of eight people, school classes, or individuals walk 830 miles across a map of Texas.

- Visit [http://walkacrosstexas.tamu.edu](http://walkacrosstexas.tamu.edu).
- The program begins with a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service agent forming a community task force with members from targeted groups, such as schools, worksites, churches, etc.
- Plan Kick-Off, Half-Way, and Recognition activities.
- Train site managers, captains, teachers, and other volunteer helpers.
- Register participants online.
- Walk for eight weeks.
- Enter mileage online.
- Provide recognition for the team walking the most miles and the team reaching the “destination” (830 miles) first.
Results
Walk Across Texas! significantly increases participants’ physical activity.

- 116 Texas counties participated in 2014.
- 20,200 adults and youth registered statewide.
  - Average age of participants was 42 years old.
  - Participants increased mileage 4.85 miles from week 1 to week 8.
  - Approximately 10,500 youth participated in school teams, logging over 436,700 miles.

Economic Impact
- Medical research shows that exercise and weight loss can permanently or temporarily delay the onset of type 2 diabetes in 58% of people.
- Over the lifetime of the 2014 team participants, it is estimated that 1,317 could prevent the onset of diabetes through increased physical activity.
- Annual health-care costs for people without diabetes are estimated between $2,560 and $5,642 and at $13,243 for people with diabetes.
- Including the cost of lost wages, the total potential economic impact for the 2014 team participants is approximately $95 million.

Participants’ Comments
- “I would like to say this has been an amazing journey for me. The Walk Across Texas program gave me the ability to participate in a network for better health and fitness. During my journey, I have lost 12 pounds, and I feel good about myself. I will continue to strive for better health, not only for me, but for my family as well.” – Harris County
- “Walking has helped me mentally as well as physically. I was able to lose 14 pounds and have gained a fresh perspective on things. Walking has been a great stress reducer! It was great to be part of a team, and I have loved coaching others, too. I was glad to be able to help others feel as good as I feel!” – Kerr County
- “I did not lose a lot of weight, but I feel much better overall. The team participation against other friendly teams, all striving for the same victory – we all won! Thank you to AgriLife Extension for sponsoring this program.” – Gillespie County
- “I am very pleased to be captain of this team. Unlike any other, our team is comprised of individuals with Multiple Sclerosis and their caregivers, half of which need assistance to walk with canes and walkers. One of our team sayings is ‘MS is no reason to sit on the sidelines.’ Our team reached an unbelievable 1,858 miles by exercising and using the equivalents for swimming, gardening, and biking. Thank you Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service for the motivation with the Walk Across Texas program to improve the lives of so many!” – Ellis County