



EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE

Changing Lives

IN TODD COUNTY

Extension provides practical education you can trust by helping individuals, families, businesses, and communities solve problems, develop skills, and build a better future.



4th Grade Students learned about farm safety at Long Vue Farms

The Todd County Extension Service teamed up with community partners and Long Vue Farms to offer a Progressive Agriculture farm safety day to 160 fourth graders in Todd County. With only 30% of the students living on a farm in Todd County, it is more critical than ever to educate youth on farm safety practices to ensure their safety. Progressive Agriculture Safety advocates estimate farm accidents and other work-related health problems claim as many as 1,300 lives and cause 120,000 injuries a year, most of which are preventable.

This event exposed local children to the possible dangers of farm work, in a fun and interactive atmosphere, as an attempt to help keep them safe. The kids were engaged in 10 educational stations all about the farm: heavy equipment, rollovers, firearms, water, sun, and fire safety.

Students learned about livestock safety, lawn mower rollovers, electric power lines, understanding farm signs, and so much more. An end of program revealed that:

- 93% learned the importance of livestock safety.
- 94% gained facts about grain bin safety.
- 94% understood the importance of drinking water.
- 89% claimed they would be more cautious on the farm.

Priority Program Efforts

- 100 residents indicated a willingness to support local food markets as a result of awareness raised through Extension programming.
- 87 producers successfully completed Kentucky Pesticide Applicator Training.
- 60 producers implemented sustainable practices as a result of participating in Extension programs.
- 810 adults reached by volunteer-led Extension programs/activities.
- 997 people reported gaining knowledge about the benefits of spending time in physical activity.
- 258 people reported eating more of healthy foods.
- 48 individuals reported improved knowledge regarding energy conservation (such as the importance of energy conservation; energy saving practices, e.g. with natural lighting, home décor, landscaping; benefits of home energy efficiency; multiple costs of energy consuming products)
- 275 youth indicated having confidence speaking in front of groups
- 115 youth reported they can set and accomplish a goal.



Summer 4-H Camp

The Todd County Extension Service 4-H program provided a summer camping experience for 119 campers at West Kentucky 4-H Camp. Thirty-one adult & teen volunteers were an integral part of the camping week by demonstrating responsibility and leadership as part of the counselor team. Camp classes such as nature, shooting sports, canoeing, recreation, crafts, horse, and challenge course were offered to the campers. Over \$4,000 was given to youth through the 4-H camp scholarship program allowing 54% of Todd County low-income youth the opportunity to attend camp.

An end of camp survey revealed that:

- 95% helped others while at camp some, most, or all of the time
- 95% reported that they made new friends while at camp
- 81% reported that they tried something new at camp
- 83% claimed they learned something new at camp that would help them at home, school or other places
- Over 65% of the campers were returning campers

This large percentage of returning campers is a testament to the value and effectiveness of camp.

Two months after camp, a focus group of campers captured the following; 100% of those surveyed reported that because of camp, they were more independent, more confident to try new things, and can work better in a group.

FIT Together

The Todd County Extension Office and the Todd County Health Department offered two 16-week weight-loss classes called "Fit Together." The classes encouraged goal setting, team competition, physical activity, and provided nutrition education and taste testing. Baseline and final bloodwork screening were taken to determine changes in participants' health during the program. Twenty-eight people completed the classes, with a total weight loss of 240.3 pounds. The bloodwork showed that systolic blood pressure dropped 110 points, diastolic blood pressure fell 57 points, total cholesterol decreased 184 points, triglycerides went down 523 points, HDL (good cholesterol) increased 43 points, LDL (bad cholesterol) dropped 111 points, fasting blood glucose decreased 91 points, BMI went down 34.95, and waist sizes shrunk 43.25 inches.

One of the participants wrote, "This class has helped me so much to get the motivation to having a healthier life....Instead of being on a diet like I have been most of my life, I am now on a lifestyle change to a better and healthier person."

Ten participants completed a follow-up survey approximately 10 months after the first classes ended. Since completing the series of classes, 60% of the participants reported they had maintained or continued to lose weight.

LED Light Bulb Education

Home lighting is one of the simplest and least expensive ways for homeowners to save on their energy bills. Over the past year or two, a shift away from CFLs (Compact Fluorescent Lights) and toward LED (Light Emitting Diode) bulbs has occurred in the home lighting area. LEDs now occupy the majority of light bulb aisle space in major home improvement stores.



Because there is not a lot of readily available information on LED bulbs, the Extension Office conducted two classes this year to educate local

citizens about them, with 38 people attending. Surveys of participants revealed that one-third of respondents were not using any LED bulbs and less than 20% reported using LEDs in half or more of their light fixtures.

The classes were designed to help homeowners understand the benefits of LEDs (long life, energy efficiency, instant full brightness, contain no mercury, available in many sizes, shapes, & colors, etc.) as well as their disadvantages (extreme directionality, sensitivity to heat, higher purchase prices, and higher short-term failure rates compared to incandescent and CFL bulbs). Participants completing program evaluation surveys shared the following:

- 96% said their next bulb purchase would be an LED.
- 100% understood they needed to select bulbs by lumen output, as opposed to the manufacturer's "watt-equivalent" rating shown on the package.
- 100% understood that LED's are the most energy efficient bulbs available for most home uses.
- 96% said they understood that new light bulb packages would soon have a federally-mandated standard label listing light output, color, expected life, and energy use.

4-H Fine Arts



The Todd County 4-H program offered performing arts opportunities to 4-H youth this year through the Kentucky 4-H Performing Arts Program. Four Todd County teens participated on the Kentucky 4-H Performing Arts Troupe and Leadership Board this year. These four youth attended a music camp, performed vocally across the state, led fine arts workshops for middle school students, and spent three days learning about careers in fine arts.

A focus group of these youth revealed that this performing arts troupe experience has enhanced their creativity by helping them to be able to think on their feet, approach tasks from different perspectives, and think "outside of the box". They have grown in confidence as they performed and led younger students. Recent research has also shown that participation in the arts improves children's abilities to concentrate and focus in other aspects of their lives.

Three of the members graduated from 4-H this year. All three have continued to pursue their passion for music. One of the troupe members achieved her 4-H Gold Status on the state level last year as well as the top 10 status for state. She attributes her involvement with the Performing Arts Troupe as one of the main reasons she was able to interview with such confidence and achieve the gold.

"The 4-H Performing Arts Troupe contributed to my success in receiving the State 4-H Gold Honor Top Ten" - Maci, 4-H Troupe Member

Todd County GMO Educational Efforts

Few people know much about Genetically Engineered (GE) or Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs); and what many people believe about them is often based on misinformation.

During the past year, a program explaining the basics of agricultural GMO's was developed and presented to 85 people in five meetings. Those participating included eight homemakers, 63 farmers, and 14 non-farm community leaders. Information presented was designed to help citizens understand that: most GMO foods can't be readily distinguished from non-GMO foods; that major scientific organizations and the federal government have determined that GMO foods are safe to eat; that many medicines are currently manufactured utilizing GE technologies; and that GE technologies are already being utilized in studying how human genes can be manipulated.

Participants surveyed showed that most people had almost no prior knowledge of GMOs. The only exception was grain producers who knew something of the GE "traits" that they were purchasing in their corn and soybean seed. Still, they didn't understand anything about the techniques used to get those traits into their seed,

they just knew they had to pay extra to get them.

After attending this class, 100% of attendees said that they knew more about GMOs than they did before participating in the class. Ninety-two percent of participants were able to name two GMO crops other than corn and soybeans (out of a total of eight commonly produced/available U.S. GMO crops). Eighty-eight percent learned that the production of drugs and other medically important compounds is one of the biggest uses of genetic engineering technology.

Cooking With Dads

The Todd County Extension Service's NEP (Nutrition Education Program) assistant and CYFAR program assistant provided an eight-week "Cooking with Dads" program for dads and their children. The families learned how to serve meals that are more nutritious, keep foods safe, and utilize local food resources effectively. Dads learned to let children get involved with food choices and kitchen duties to help promote better eating habits. Survey results showed that 100% of NEP /CYFAR families made an improvement in one or more nutrition practice. Also, 83% of NEP graduate families thought more often about healthy food choices when deciding what to feed their families, planned meals in advance, and followed recommended practices of not allowing meat and dairy foods to sit out for more than two hours. Additionally, 50% improvement was shown in food price comparison behavior while 67% used "Nutrition Facts" on food labels to make food choices.



Including Dads in a setting that is typically deemed as the mothers role allowed our families to spend quality time together that can reach

beyond our class. The bonds and lessons that the fathers and their children learned included teamwork as well as increased listening and communication skills for both the Parent and the child. It is our hope that the Fathers understand that quality time can be had within the kitchen, and that cooking healthy meals is something the entire family can do together.

Body Balance

Each day, people are exposed to environmental pollution, no matter where they live, work, or play. The level of their exposure varies, with some experiencing greater exposure than others. The Todd County Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Educator taught *The Body Balance: Protect Your Body from Pollution with a Healthy Lifestyle* curriculum to help participants learn to take action to reduce the health effects of their personal exposure to environmental pollution. Nine different people attended one or more of the classes, and six people completed eight of the nine classes.

Pre-and post-lesson evaluations showed all participants had an increase in knowledge and were highly likely or likely to make behavior changes as a result of attending the class. Analysis of the pre-and post-series evaluation showed 100% of the participants took steps to reduce environmental pollutants.

Five participants attended a focus group interview conducted three months after the classes ended. All of the participants who attended the focus group interview shared they had made changes to reduce their exposure to pollutants and improve their health.



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