

## Plant Science School Enrichment



With school budgets becoming ever more tight, school enrichment programs offered by K-State Research and Extension are important now more than ever. During the 2015-2016 school year, plant science school enrichment programs were offered to elementary schools in Neosho, Bourbon and Allen Counties. These programs aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards for 4<sup>th</sup> grade and were designed to enhance classroom education. The programs were utilized by educators as either an introductory type program for a particular standard, or they used them as a culminating activity for that standard. The programs were a combination of individual classroom or group classroom visits.

In total, 70 classroom contacts were made. 567 students were reached, with many of these students participating in programs multiple times. Schools in the Southwind Extension District that used the programs include: Humboldt, St. Mary's Catholic School, Iola, Uniontown, Fort Scott, Erie, St. Patrick's Catholic School, St. Paul, Thayer, and Chanute. The enrichment programs that were presented included:

- ◆ **Soil Erosion Simulator** - two liter pop bottles made into an erosion simulator. Students learned how water erodes soil and how vegetative cover prevents most soil erosion.
- ◆ **Soil Types 101** - various soil types were presented to students to "feel" the sand, silt and clay composition in soil.
- ◆ **Earthworms** - students learned that worms are earth's ultimate recyclers. Live worms were explored in the classroom.
- ◆ **Hydroponics** - students used a plastic water bottle and a marigold plant to study hydroponic systems. Students gained an understanding that plants do not need soil to survive, but they must have nutrients.
- ◆ **Plant Structure** - students used a live Lily plant to learn plant parts and function.
- ◆ **Plant People** - students learned about plant growth from seeds by making their own "plant person" from a knee-high hose, seed, soil, and craft decorations. Students observed grass growth and root development right in the classroom.



The Merriam Webster Dictionary defines barbecue as a verb meaning "to roast or broil on a rack or revolving spit over or before a source of heat (as hot coals)". Barbecuing, in some sort, has been a popular pastime since the first caveman found that food tasted better when warmed with fire. Although this concept sounds simple, there are numerous ways to make barbecue taste great, and unfortunately, numerous ways to make barbecue taste terrible. To address this issue, and to help make barbecuing safe and fun, the Southwind Extension District partnered with the Kansas State University Animal Science Department and the Iola Rotary club to conduct Barbecue 101.



The all-day event was conducted at the Riverside Park Community Building in Iola, Kansas and taught more than 20 participants all the basics about barbecue, including the science of barbecue, meat selection, smoking wood types, spice rubs, barbecue sauces and food safety. Speakers included Kansas State University Professor of Meat Science, Kansas State University Meat Science graduate students, Southwind Extension District Agents, and representatives of the Kansas City Barbeque Society and Iola Rotary Club, and Andy Titus from Walton's Inc. Lunch was provided by the Kansas

State University Animal Science Department, Walton's Inc. and Dudley's Done Right BBQ of Iola, KS. A variety of smokers were also on display. This program is held in four locations across Kansas annually, and will likely take place in the Southwind District again, in upcoming years.

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## Southwind Radio

The Southwind Extension District realizes the need to better promote our programs, services, and educational materials to the public we serve. Therefore, a marketing line item was established in the budget to allow agents to create promotional materials and utilize local advertising resources such as newspapers, chamber email blasts, flyers and now local radio stations to get

the word out on what Extension offers. Being labeled as the “best kept secret” in Kansas is no longer acceptable. In 2016, a radio marketing campaign was initiated with each agent taking an assigned week to either promote an upcoming event, or remind listeners of services that are available in the Southwind Extension offices. One reason radio continues to be relevant for the advertiser is the actual ad format. Securing 30 seconds of dedicated user attention, is an amazing feat in a time when web page consumption may literally be a few seconds. Most importantly, the format is actively pushing content out to audiences, enabling a more complex sales message to be delivered. The current radio marketing campaign includes 7 radio stations, in all 3 district counties with over a 160 mile coverage area.



## Research Shows 4-H Helps Young People Excel Beyond Peers

With 486 4-H youth in the Southwind District, the value of youth development programs is clearly important to residents in Allen, Bourbon and Neosho Counties. Young people who participate in programs through 4-H, the nation's largest youth club, are less likely to do drugs, drink alcohol, and smoke cigarettes and are more likely to be civically active than kids who don't participate in its programs, according to a study by researchers at Tufts University. For more than a decade, youth development scholars, Drs. Richard M. Lerner and Jacqueline V. Lerner, and the team at the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University, Medford, MA, partnered with faculty at America's land-grant colleges and universities to conduct this groundbreaking research. The results are influencing research and practice around the world. *The Positive Development of Youth: Comprehensive Findings from the 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development* is a longitudinal study that began in 2002 and was repeated annually for eight years, surveying more than 7,000 adolescents from diverse backgrounds across 42 U.S. states. Compared to their peers, the report shows that youth involved in 4-H programs excel in several areas. 4-H'ers are about:

- **Four times** more likely to make *contributions to their communities* (Grades 7-12);
- **Two times** more likely to be *civically active* (Grades 8-12);
- **Two times** more likely to make *healthier choices* (Grade 7);
- **Two times** more likely to participate in *Science, Engineering and Computer Technology programs* during out-of-school time (Grades 10 - 12); and
- 4-H girls are **two times** more likely (Grade 10) and nearly **three times** more likely (Grade 12) to take part in *science programs* compared to girls in other out-of-school time activities.



The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that nearly 25% of Kansas's population will be over age 60 by the year 2030, an increase of 32% from 2012. The population of the nation and of the state will grow older as the Baby Boomer generation moves into later life. As older adults are more likely to experience

disability and chronic diseases, this demographic shift will have significant consequences in terms of health and wellness of the population. The Aging with Attitude Regional Expo promotes positive attitudes about aging and educates older Kansans on issues that support physical, mental, and financial health. The annual event includes breakout educational sessions, a keynote speaker, and resource fair. The Expo supports on-going local program priorities focused on health and community vitality and attracts more than 165 people from twelve southeast Kansas counties.

Survey results indicate the impact of the Expo includes:

92% indicated they have a better understanding of aging issues today as a result of their attendance.

62% indicated they had taken action or changed something in their life.

14% indicated they had made contact with a vendor following the Expo resource fair.

Six individuals indicated they have increased the amount of physical exercise they are doing since the Expo.

## Southwind Extension District

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