Multi-County 4-H Activity Day – Ward County

The Situation
4-H Agents in Northwest North Dakota have, for the past 30 years, offered their 4-H members and non-4-H members a chance to: 1) become acquainted with a variety of 4-H projects; 2) participate in hands-on learning experiences; 3) develop life skills; and 4) share experiences across county lines. The continued participation and anticipation for the annual event indicates that youth continue to appreciate the day’s activities and opportunities to learn.

Extension Response
Ward County has hosted the multi-county activity day since 1984. In 2014, participants came from Bottineau, Burke, McHenry, McKenzie, Mountrail, Pierce, Renville, Ward and Williams counties. With 174 pre-registered youth, 149 youth actually participated, both 4-H and none 4-H members. They chose from 20 classes, with most classes being offered in all four sessions. Next to Achievement Days, the multi-county 4-H Activity Day held at the North Dakota State Fair Center is the biggest event of the 4-H program year. This year, classes were taught by agents and volunteers from five area counties including Bottineau, McHenry, Mountrail, Renville, and Ward.

Impacts
Hands-on activities are one of the best ways to learn. In 4-H, we use the experiential learning model which stands behind “learn by doing.” Participants have the opportunity to choose between four different sessions. The wide variety of choices allow youth to develop skills in areas they have been working on or get a taste of something completely new. In addition, the Multi-County Activity Day allows youth to participate in activities which they may not have had an opportunity to explore. It is also a wonderful way for youth to interact with other youth outside of their normal clubs and county. The success of the Multi-County 4-H Activity Day is largely due to the volunteers who take the time to teach our youth a new skill.

Feedback
An evaluation box was set out for youth and parents to give us feedback. We had frustrated youth and parents who were unable to get their first choice selections. This is a good sign because this means we are offering choices that are popular to the youth. This year classes ranged from archery, boat safety, horsemanship, robotics, rockets, poultry, rabbits, and a variety of craft classes.

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