

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

NDSU EXTENSION SERVICE

NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

Strengthening farm-to-table related programs for youth, adults and urban communities 2017

The Situation

"While horticultural crops grow on only a fraction of U.S. agricultural lands, they represent nearly 40 percent of U.S. agricultural crop production. They diversify and enhance human diets and improve our living environment and personal well-being."

<https://nifa.usda.gov/program/horticulture-programs>

A survey conducted by the United States Farmers & Ranchers Alliance (USFRA) in 2011 revealed that 72 percent of consumers know nothing or very little about farming or ranching.

NDSU Extension Service 2015 Community Forums emphasized: education on food production, nutrition and healthful living, strengthening farm-to-table related programs for youth, adults and urban communities.

Extension Response

Agent Weinmann taught hour-long lessons to 86 youth in the 2nd grade weekly for seven weeks. The following topics were covered:

1. Identified the importance of: pollination in horticulture and agriculture, honey bee hives, pollination, and life in the hive.
2. Effective seed cultivation and macronutrients and taught the children how to: grow tomato plants from seed, use proper water, light, fertilizer, soil media, spacing and finally how to grow a container tomato plant.
3. Understanding tree health and transplantation methods for growing a successful apple tree.
4. Nutritious properties of home grown food including: less chemicals applied to food, decrease in the carbon foot-print of locally grown food, nutrition benefits of fresh, less handled and less processed food.

Impacts

Teaching youth about science is needed and important for their future. A post survey was done by the teachers after the summer. Results indicated:

- 98.8% learned about Macronutrients
- 73.3% kept their tomato alive and produced edible fruit
- 88.2% learned how a bee extracts nectar from a flower
- 15.3% reported the correct method for planting a tree
- 18.6% reported correctly on tomatoes being an excellent source of vitamin C and the importance of lycopen



Feedback

"I think the project showed the kids that you grow food. It isn't just at the grocery store. You can actually plant seeds and grow the food you eat. The hands on planting and being able to take home a plant was really fun for the kids." - Classroom teacher

Public Value Statement

Youth becoming more educated about horticulture can increase interest in agriculture, reduce the carbon footprint, and increase nutrition for youth and families and communities.

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