Kids In The Kitchen Cooking Camps

K-State Research and Extension, Frontier Extension District youth had fun while learning fundamental culinary skills this past summer. A series of three-day cooking and baking camps was offered for boys and girls in third through fifth grade. Held in Garnett, Lyndon, and Ottawa, the classes were presented by district nutrition and food safety staff members, and assisted by 4-H junior leaders.

In the Oodles of Noodles classes, youth learned how to prepare homemade noodles from scratch by rolling and cutting the noodles by hand. The noodles were then used to make chicken noodle soup, as well as seven other noodle dishes. Likewise, youth in the Bread Making classes prepared yeast breads from scratch. The students prepared and tasted nine different yeast bread and roll recipes, while learning about the important functions of bread ingredients. Each participant also received a recipe book to take home.

During the classes, the district youth learned how to measure dry and wet ingredients, how to read and follow a recipe, and how to use kitchen tools such as a mixer, electric skillet, microwave oven, and regular oven. Other skills included learning about using a thermometer to show when noodle dishes were fully cooked and when water was at the proper temperature to add yeast. The students studied how to handle raw meat safely to avoid cross contamination, and also learned about the importance of good nutrition as recommended in the USDA Choose MyPlate materials. Overall, the youth learned to be comfortable in the kitchen, and that even when you are careful, accidents do happen! All participants got to take turns washing dishes and cleaning countertops.

One 4-H junior leader that made the dill bread recipe in the baking class won Reserve Grand Champion 4-H Foods at their local fair and sold her bread for $425. The Grand Champion 4-H Foods exhibit winner at a local fair has been attending the Frontier Extension District summer baking camps for the last two years. Watch for Kids In The Kitchen camp dates for 2016.
Growing Container Vegetables

It is currently “trendy” to grow your own food. Today, individuals are increasingly more interested in knowing where their food comes from and how it is grown. The Frontier Extension District Growing Container Vegetables program allowed participants to both learn techniques for successful container gardening, and to put learned skills to use at home. Program participants were provided a tub container, potting mix, fertilizer, a tomato, sweet bell pepper, oregano and parsley. Participants learned about selecting plants and varieties, crop rotation, soilless media, proper watering, and pest management.

A total of forty-nine individuals participated in workshops offered in Garnett, Lyndon, and Ottawa. The classes were attractive to participants interested in growing food in ways that could be manageable in terms of both physical and time constraints. Container vegetables can be grown at a convenient location near a home, and require limited soil preparation and weeding. These characteristics were beneficial to many, whether busy professionals or retired individuals.

Feedback received included questions about leaf disease due to wet weather. In addition, participants voiced an appreciation for information on using potting mix containers and how to properly water to ensure healthy roots. Excitement was expressed over the quantity and quality of produce raised, and the desire to grow container vegetables again next season.

Kansas Operation: Military Kids

A need to support the development of resilient school-aged youth of military connected families, especially those of Army Reserve and Army National Guard service members, was the purpose behind the Kansas Operation: Military Kids grant. When figures showed that nearly 300 military connected youth (ages 0-18) lived in the Frontier Extension District counties of Anderson, Franklin, and Osage, a grant was obtained to work with the youth.

The grant was designed to provide general awareness of issues facing military families and to offer programs for military families using 4-H Youth Development educational principles. The grant provided for a program assistant to work with an advisory group in accomplishing overall grant strategies. Targeted skill development included building effective communication, forming connections, contributing to the overall well-being of self and family, and other hands-on skill development.

As a result, nearly 400 youth and adults were reached district-wide with educational programs which included nine summer library reading programs, a youth day camp, a teen retreat, and a Little CHAMPS school enrichment program. In addition, news articles, fair booths, and library displays were held throughout the Frontier Extension District.

During the delivery of the summer educational programs, youth participants brought items to fill 59 care boxes that were sent to deployed military personnel from Kansas.

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service
K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension Work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, as amended. Kansas State University, County Extension Councils, Extension Districts, and United States Department of Agriculture Cooperating, John D. Floros, Director.