April 2012

Frontier Extension District # 11

Family Nutrition Program

Approximately 3,000 lives have been touched in the past six months by the Family and Consumer Sciences Agents and Assistants in the Frontier Extension District, through the Family Nutrition Program. The goal of the Family Nutrition Program is to improve the likelihood that individuals who are eligible to receive food assistance make healthy food choices within a limited budget.

An additional staff member was added to the program this year to provide programming to an increasing number of individuals who qualify for food assistance. Much of the programming is done in the public schools with over 70 classrooms participating in the program this year. Students report that they are eating more fruits and vegetables, being more physically active and reading labels. Students enjoy the taste-testing portion of the lessons and many of them take the recipes home and make them for their family. Many parents state that “We love the recipes and try them at home. More would be great.”

4-H and Youth Development

By teaching “life skills,” the 4-H and Youth Development program in the Frontier Extension District is helping prepare youth to thrive in a global society and in all aspects of life.

The annual spring 4-H Club Day event helps teach young people the important skill of public speaking. The 2012 district event provided the opportunity for 145 4-Hers to give talks, demonstrations, impromptu speeches, oral interpretive readings, and other presentations. The 4-Hers also learn to “think on their feet” and have self confidence in public speaking.

The results of a recent survey show that 4-Hers who participated in 4-H Club Day practiced or learned how to:

- Research a topic before writing the public presentation
- Write an outline before giving the speech
- Improve on public speaking (gestures, eye contact)
- Gain confidence in self each time they gave their speech or demonstration
- Improve their relationship with the adult who helped them prepare the speech or demonstration
- Give a speech in front of their 4-H club/parents
Frontier Extension District
Beef Cattle Education Programs

Situation: Cow/calf stocker calf operations make up a large portion of production agriculture in the Frontier Extension District. In 2011, beef cattle on hand totaled 72,500 head with an estimated value of over $67,000,000. To stay competitive, producers need up-to-date information on grazing, feedstuffs, water quality, and animal health. Continued research and education programs are critical to the long term efficiency, profitability, and sustainability of producers in both segments of the Kansas Livestock Industry.

Program Development: The Frontier Extension District Extension Agriculture Agents and Program Development Committee members met to determine the needs of livestock producers in the district. Meetings suggested were: animal health for both stockers and for the breeding herd, grass management for both native and cool season grasses, calving difficulties, water quality, and ways to keep cattle out of ponds.

Beef Programs Offered

Eastern Kansas Grazing Schools. Extension partnered with the Natural Resource Conservation Service, the Kansas Rural Center, and the local Soil Conservation District. Over two years, 105 producers have attended these schools, and 95% have indicated that they plan to make changes in their operations based on the information they received. The producers that attended the 2011 school owned or managed over 5700 acres. Highlights of the school included hands-on demonstrations and seeing local producer’s management of intensive grazing systems. A producer who attended the first school came back to the second and brought three friends. He has developed a rotational grazing system and now raises grass fed beef for a specialized market.

Beef Cattle: Feed, Water, and Health. A meeting was held at the Franklin County Fairgrounds in Ottawa, sponsored by the Frontier Extension District, Franklin County Conservation District, and the Marais des Cygnes WRAPS Livestock Grant. The event attracted 107 producers who came to see a tire tank demonstration and to hear the presentations on Reducing Cow Wintering Feed Costs, Pond Management, and Tips for Cow Herd Health and Stocker Health Programs.

Calving School. The school was held at the Grace Community Church in Overbrook. Featured speaker was Larry Hollis, Extension Beef Veterinarian. DVM Hollis talked about the importance of Body Condition Scores (BCS) of the cow prior to calving, how to manipulate the timing of calving, the three stages of parturition, when to intervene and assist the birthing process, and preparing to pull the calf. The 114 producers in attendance stayed well after the program to get questions answered.

Cool Season Grass Management. Extension Specialists Doug Shoup and Stu Duncan were featured presenters at this meeting which was held at the Pomona Community Building. Producers were especially interested in the fertility discussions and the effects that last year’s drought would have on this year’s brome hay crop. The rising costs of fertilizer also had several producers asking questions about interseeding legumes into their cool season grass pastures and hay meadows. The 64 producers that attended the meeting gained a better understanding of fertility, how drought, grazing, and cutting height affects root and tiller development, and the impact legumes can have during summer grazing.

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service
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