



Santa Fe County 4-H Youth Development

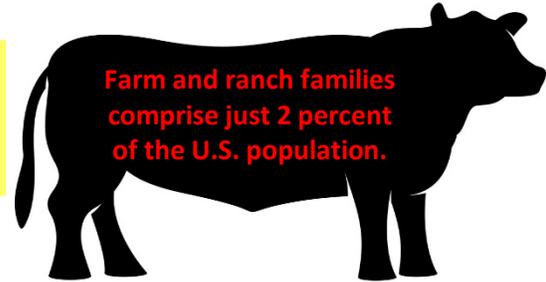
Science for Life- Agriculture Literacy

Situation

Americans enjoy a food supply that is **abundant, affordable overall and among the world's safest**, thanks in large part to the efficiency and productivity of America's farm and ranch families.

-AFBF Food and Farm Fact Book

However...



Farm and ranch families
comprise just 2 percent
of the U.S. population.

Extension's Response

Agriculture literacy is a main priority in youth programming in Santa Fe County. By participating in agriculture literacy programs students can engage in social conversations, evaluate the validity of the media, and pose and evaluate arguments based on scientific evidence related to agriculture.

The *Science for Life* program consists of classroom lessons delivered to students addressing topics such as livestock production, gardening, environmental stewardship, and food systems. Every lesson developed for the *Science for Life* series includes hands-on activities that the students use to explore the world of agriculture. The series is delivered over a six-week period.

The *Science for Life* series includes five main objectives:

- Clearly define the term "agriculture"
- Identify farming and ranching as the foundation of agriculture
- Identify the five pillars of agriculture- Food, Fiber, Forestry, Fuel, Flowers
Identify both food and non-food items that come from agriculture
- Identify animals that would be considered "livestock"

Results

After participation in the *Science for Life* series:

- 88 percent of students could define the term "agriculture"
- 86 percent of students could list both farming and ranching as the foundation of agriculture
- 75 percent of students could name all five pillars of agriculture
- 94 percent of students could list at least three animals that could be considered "livestock"
- 73 percent of students could list at least three items besides food that come from agriculture

Students were also given an essay question at the conclusion of the program asking them to describe to a friend what agriculture is. 81 percent of students could clearly define the term agriculture in their essay as well as describe it in detail in their own words.

One student wrote, "Agriculture should be very important to you. It's the reason you and me are able to sit here wearing these clothes, and eating this food! I believe strongly that agriculture is important and helps our economy."

*"Believe it or not, even chocolate comes from agriculture!
Farmers and ranchers are what makes this happen. Agriculture should be one of the most important things in your life.
Next time you see a farmer, thank them!"*

6th Grade Student,
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