

Where does your food come from? EMPOWERED by AGRICULTURE!

PRESENTED BY

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SITUATION

Today's U.S. population includes less than two percent who live on farms and less than five percent living on farms in Nebraska. With the average person three generations removed from farming and one of four jobs in Nebraska focusing on agriculture, it's extremely important to educate youth about the various aspects of agriculture so they understand how it affects their daily lives as well as the global world. Nebraska Extension professionals understand the importance of educating youth about agriculture and developed a program to do so.

ABSTRACT & PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

"WHERE DOES YOUR FOOD COME FROM?" is a program developed by Extension Educators that focuses on teaching students where their food comes from. This farm to school program evolved as a result of a newly established plant science program in a local elementary school (K-6 students). This new plant science program was named "Cultivating Plants & Minds" and was created by a local Extension Educator who provides support to the school. The program outcomes focused on (1) Youth will know where their food comes from; (2) Youth will develop positive attitudes and interests regarding local agriculture; and (3) Youth will utilize scientific principles as they apply to plant science (agriculture).

While it was easy to observe the students utilizing scientific principles during visits to the Grow Lab, it was much harder to identify their increased knowledge of where their food comes from. Therefore, the Extension Educator who helped establish the Grow Lab called upon another local Extension Foods and Nutrition Educator for guidance with nutrition education. Together, with a core team of teachers, developed the "Where does your food come from" program. The program consisted of two school assemblies (K-3 grades and 4-6 grades) teaching students where their lunch originated.

A lunch menu was predetermined by the Extension Educators and was served by the lunch staff on the day of the assembly. The lunch included; hamburger (with or without cheese) on a bun, French fries, fresh green peppers, baked apples and milk to drink. The snack served immediately after the assembly was popcorn and milk. During the assembly, the Extension Educators discussed each lunch and snack item – tracing their origins back to the farm and providing its connection to Nebraska agriculture. Visuals for the assembly included a PowerPoint program, video clips, feed stuffs and milking equipment. The assembly started off using the "GrowIt-KnowIt" mobile app developed by the University of Nebraska's Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources. The lively free app gave students their first lessons in how agriculture produces the things they love to eat – and even their crayons.

The milk for the snack was donated by a local dairy that processes their own and an area business sold the popcorn at cost. As a result of the assembly, the local dairy now is the milk supplier for the entire school district. Truly – farm to school!



SCHOOL NEWSLETTER ANNOUNCEMENT

"FARM TO SCHOOL" ASSEMBLY
WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 2014
12:45-1:45 p.m. (Grades K-3)
1:45-2:45 p.m. (Grades 4-6)

Nebraska Extension Educators will be teaching students where their food comes from based on the school lunch served that day and how it relates to Nebraska agriculture. Students will also receive a snack of local foods that includes milk and popcorn.

With the support of Nebraska Extension, Heritage Elementary School received funds from the Douglas County Farm Bureau to start a plant science program. In January 2014, "Cultivating Plants & Minds" began with students planting lettuce, spinach and other salad greens. Heritage teachers are using our unique plant laboratory to teach students about plants and agriculture sciences through hands-on education. Beyond the sciences, students will be learning where their food comes from and how it connects to agriculture.

FARM TO SCHOOL is a program that connects K-12 schools and local farms with the objectives of serving healthy meals in schools, improving student nutrition, providing agriculture, health and nutrition opportunities, and supporting local and regional farmers.

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SNACK DONORS

Milk provided by
Prairieland Dairy – Firth NE
Popcorn provided by
Just Pop'd Popcorn – Omaha, NE

POWERPOINT SLIDES from SCHOOL ASSEMBLIES

FOR MORE INFORMATION, GO TO:
dodge.unl.edu/PosterSession



PROGRAM EVALUATION

"TASTING OPPORTUNITY"
Students were given the opportunity to taste (and evaluate) lettuce, radishes, carrots and tomatoes from the Grow Lab.

Heritage Elementary School GROW LAB - TASTING OPPORTUNITY (RESULTS 6/11/2015)

LETTUCE
YES - I ate fruit yesterday.
YES - I ate vegetables yesterday.
(17 STUDENTS)

LETTUCE
YES - I ate fruit yesterday.
NO - I ate vegetables yesterday.
(23 STUDENTS)

Heritage Elementary School GROW LAB - Tasting Opportunity (RESULTS 6/11/2015)

LETTUCE (245 Students)

VERY BAD - I will refuse to eat it again.
BAD - I really don't want to eat it again.
JUST OKAY - I might eat it again.
GOOD - I would like it again.
VERY GOOD - I would ask for it again.

Heritage Elementary School GROW LAB - Tasting Opportunity (RESULTS 6/11/2015)

LETTUCE (44 STUDENTS)

VERY GOOD - I would ask for it again.
GOOD - I would like it again.
JUST OKAY - I might eat it again.
BAD - I really don't want to eat it again.
VERY BAD - I will refuse to eat it again.

"CULTIVATING PLANTS & MINDS"
A pre- (October 2013) and post- (May 2014) survey was distributed to students that measured the impact of the newly implemented plant and agriculture sciences program. Three different surveys were distributed: K-1, 2-3 and 4-6 grades.

4th / 5th / 6th Grade Survey

What is pizza crust made of?

Where do hamburgers come from?

Which of these comes from a plant?

What is the largest industry in Nebraska?

Decomposers are important in a food chain.

"CULTIVATING PLANTS & MINDS"
4th/5th/6th grade students and parents of K-5 students were surveyed about their (child's) behavior change as a result of the Grow Lab programs; Tasting Opportunity, The Economics Project (Entrepreneurship), Science Club, Farm to School Assembly, and The Tomato Project.

Heritage Elementary School GROW LAB - 4th, 5th & 6th GRADE STUDENT SURVEYS
2014-2015 School Year

Response of the GROW LAB - WHAT I LEARNED ABOUT PLANTS & GARDENING	Yes	Kind of	No	Total	Average
I learned things I didn't know about plants and gardening.	43	26	14	83	2.2
I could teach someone else about plants and gardening.	40	23	16	83	2.28
I can grow about the environment.	40	20	8	83	2.48
I can grow about the environment.	40	20	8	83	2.2
Before the plant science lab, I helped with gardening.	36	23	20	83	2.06
After the plant science lab, I help to garden.	30	23	20	83	2.22

Heritage Elementary School GROW LAB - PARENT SURVEY
2014-2015 School Year

Response of the GROW LAB - WHAT PARENTS LEARNED ABOUT PLANTS & GARDENING	Yes	Kind of	No	Total	Average
I discovered and used new skills.	23	29	15	83	3.56
I could teach someone else about plants and gardening.	22	33	12	83	2.28
I can grow about the environment.	27	33	13	83	2.22
I can help with gardening.	26	43	12	83	2.1
I can help with gardening.	27	33	13	83	2.22
I can help with gardening.	26	34	12	83	2.22
I can help with gardening.	27	40	10	83	2.15