

Local Agriculture

USING FARMERS MARKETS TO HIGHLIGHT LOCAL AGRICULTURE

Situation

Agriculturists have dramatically improved their farming practices in recent decades. Whereas the United States could feed only 25 people from one acre of farmland in 1920, it can now feed more than 150. Recently, however, agriculturists have been getting a lot of negative publicity about some of the practices that have made them so successful today.

Sheridan County 4-H members and leaders were asked to help educate youth about 4-H and safe agricultural practices during the local Farmers Market in Sheridan. Members and adult leaders in each 4-H club created hands-on activities that youth could participate in while parents shopped. Youth who participated in the activities at the farmers market left with a tangible

item that promoted local agriculture and encouraged them to become local agriculturalists themselves.

Impact

The Farmers Market project was introduced three years ago, and each summer between 40 and 100 youth have participated in the weekly activities. Youth from Sheridan County learned about safe agriculture practices from their peers in the 4-H program.

Parents and youth who participated in the activities shared these comments:

“We had a great time learning about bum calves and how you can show them at county fair.”

—A parent who attended a bum calf feeding

“I had no idea a sugar beet looked like that and that they grew in Wyoming.”

—Sara, age 10

“Growing vegetables is really fun!”

—Carson, age 7

4-H members in Sheridan County also increased their leadership skills by being involved in the Farmers Market project. They learned how to plan and conduct an activity for community members, and they experienced the value of giving back to their local community.

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4-H'ers bring the farm to
Sheridan farmers markets.