

Making a Difference 2011

Fourth Grade Agriculture Fair

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Relevance: Many of today's youth are several generations removed from the agriculture experience. Agriculture continues to be a highly significant factor in the settlement, growth and economic success of the state. The Fourth Grade Ag Fair delivers first hand experiences to many youth that may or may not have the resources to experience the agriculture first hand. In addition, the Ag Fair directly supports the State of Texas' TEKS for Fourth Grade. The event supports the Fourth Graders' progress in analyzing information by categorizing, identifying cause and effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing and drawing inferences and conclusions. The Ag Fair also supports the TEKS requirements on

understanding the natural resources and environment that shape Texas' population distribution and economic implications of the natural resources.

Response: The Texas AgriLife Extension Services in Randall and Potter County join forces in planning and executing the event annually. Meetings are held monthly for six months prior to the event. The event allows us to collaborate with Texas Farm Bureau, Tri State Fair Grounds and Exposition, AQHA, Master Gardeners, Southwest Dairy Farmers Association, West Texas A&M University, Randall County Soil Conservation Service, Texas Department of Agriculture and many other organizations to support the foundations of success for our youth.

Marketing of the event is executed through the Director of Community Relationships – Denise Blanchard. With the Director's approval, we market the event to all 37 elementary schools in Amarillo ISD. Marketing efforts include a letter to principals and fourth grade teachers detailing the supportive nature of the event for their TEKS requirements. A collection of curriculum enrichment activities and a "goody" bag filled with agriculture based items are delivered to each participating teacher prior to the event. These items allow the teacher to utilize the Ag Fair experience in their daily lessons.





Results: The 2011 Fourth Grade Ag Fair enriched the experiences and learning for over 1,100 Fourth Graders during the two day event. Twelve educational stations were set up at the Rex Baxter Building located at the Tri State Fair and Exposition. The presentations included Grains, Cotton, Sheep, Equine, Plants and Grasses, Beef Cattle, Goats, Wildlife, Swine, Soil and Food Safety. The students attended each presentation for fifteen minutes with the Dairy Cattle presentation lasting thirty minutes. All students received education on the production, care and economic factors during each educational station. The event allowed all participants regardless of economic status to experience much of the agricultural activities that have shaped the region. These experiences directly supported the

TEKS requirements for Texas' Fourth Graders. Responses from the participating teachers included, "We were able to incorporate the Soil Presentation directly with the curriculum" and "a great way to put a real life experience to drive home the lessons".



Future Program Plans: The Amarillo ISD Fourth Grade Ag Fair is an annual event with strong support from the School District and the community. The event has simply become an important part of the Fourth Grade Curriculum structure for Amarillo ISD that positively impacts over 1,100 of our future leaders each year. Planning has begun with Canyon ISD to create a Fourth Grade Agriculture Fair with a inaugural event in the Spring of 2012. During our planning meetings, the Canyon ISD Curriculum Directors show strong support of the event and feel that it would be an excellent kick off to the Fourth Graders' school year. The Texas Farm Bureau, "Kids and Kows and More", Southwest Dairy Farmers Association and many other

partners have pledged their support to the program. The Canyon ISD Agriculture Fair will provide these important and curriculum supporting experiences to over 800 Fourth Graders regardless of their economic resources.



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