

MAKING A DIFFERENCE



Grand Challenges

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Grand Challenges: *Global Food Systems and Developing Tomorrow's Leaders*
Title: *Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA) teaches next generation about food safety, animal well-being, and life skills*

Why is this issue important?

Livestock are a unique and valuable component of providing food and fiber to people across the world. The significance of raising livestock goes beyond the physical products that are offered to society. While many people are aware of the economic contributions of the livestock industry, another aspect to livestock production that is worth noting is its cultural influence. Throughout the United States and the world, raising livestock is a lifestyle that shapes local societies and is deeply meaningful both to those who are directly involved in livestock production as well as those who benefit from their products.

Through time, scientific discovery and knowledge increase and societal values continue to develop and/or shift. As new generations become increasingly involved in agriculture, the continuity of livestock production and ongoing improvement within the industry depend on the investment of time and resources towards teaching young producers how to raise a safe food product, protect animal well-being, and develop life skills.

How did Extension address this issue?

Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA) is a program that provides education and certification to youth and young adults from the ages of 7-21 on topics in food safety, animal well-being, and life skills. The Shawnee County Extension Board has implemented a requirement that all youth who sell livestock through the Livestock Sale at the Shawnee County Fair must receive YQCA certification. In addition, any youth who wish to exhibit at the Kansas Junior Livestock Show or the Kansas State Fair Grand Drive are required to have YQCA certification.



Multiple opportunities and methods for a youth to become YQCA certified exist. At the local level in Shawnee County, Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Agent Abigail Gettinger taught an Instructor-Led Training on March 19th. Two more meetings will be offered (April 24th and May 11th) for youth who are interested in receiving the training and certification.

What was the impact?

Shawnee County youth are actively participating in and engaging with the training materials and discussions surrounding topics such as withdrawal time, how to report animal abuse, and ethical livestock production!

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service.
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