Grand Challenge: Developing Tomorrow’s Leaders

Title: 4-H Special Interest Clubs

Why is this issue important?
4-H is a research based youth development program. 4-H has shown to positively impact lifelong pathways of development. 4-H teaches youth how to belong to a group, learn mastery of a subject and how to be a leader.

The 4-H program is a large time commitment for youth and their parents or guardians. The traditional community club program requires attendance at monthly meetings, separate project lessons and county events. 4-H clubs also meet for an entire year and youth can re-enroll annually from ages 5 to 18.

How did Extension address this issue?
Kansas 4-H created Special Interest (SPIN) clubs for youth who cannot commit to the community club model of 4-H. SPIN clubs focus on one 4-H project for five to six sessions and are delivered in after school or summer programs. In this program model, 4-H comes to youth instead of youth having to travel to 4-H.

What was the impact?
In 2019 Shawnee County 4-H has hosted five SPIN Clubs in after school and summer programs. Because of that effort, 138 Shawnee County youth were able to have a 4-H experience.

Projects studied were as follows:

- Quincy After School Program—Photography and Art
- McCarter Kidquest Program—Entrepreneurship
- Family Service and Guidance Center—Photography
- Christ the King Summer Program—Photography
- Meadows Kidquest Summer Program—Kitchen Science

Youth learn about density by making a liquid tower in a Kitchen Science lesson.