Grand Challenge: Global Food Systems
Title: Youth Learn How Agriculture Impacts Them Every Day

Why is this issue important?
In 1950, approximately one in every four Kansans lived on a farm. Today, less than 2% of all individuals live on a farm. As Kansans become more removed from their rural heritage, Extension helps to bring awareness to youth and adults about how their food is produced on the farm to become a food product.

How did Extension address this issue?
Since 1991 Extension has led a one-day agricultural experience for Shawnee County second graders. "From Farm to You" teaches youth how agriculture touches their lives every day through the food they eat.

The event begins with a video developed by local extension educators that depicts how all the parts of a pizza are grown by Kansas farmers. Students visit eleven learning stations highlighting poultry, weather, beef, dairy, swine, vegetables, tractors, grains, animal health, physical activity and hands-on water conservation to connect the parts of a pizza to Kansas agriculture.

More than 75 volunteers provide expertise representing Shawnee County Farm Bureau, local FFA chapters, Natural Resource Conservation Service, 4-H, Master Gardeners and the Auburn Animal Clinic.

What was the impact?
More than 27,000 youth have participated in From Farm to You since 1991 and learned how agriculture touches their life on a daily basis. Teachers evaluations have shown positive impacts with much learned about producing food by the 2nd grade youth: Some of the knowledge gained includes:

* Food comes from plants, seeds, and animals on the farm.
* Soil and water are needed to grow plants, and plants and water are needed for people and animal food.
* Milking cows is hard. Milk has vitamins in it. It takes a lot of work to care for plants and animals.

Teachers repeatedly share that having live animals provides a great experience for the youth, and that every station is valuable with hands-on demonstrations or activities that enhance learning.