

4-H Science Matters

Situation

Youth from Johnson County 4-H Youth Development aimed to inspire young people to become tomorrow's science leaders by participating in a national program called 4-H Science Matters, created by Bayer and National 4-H Council. Many have uninformed perceptions of agriculture and the impact of the advancements in science in this field. By bringing together urban and rural youth in partnership with adult mentors and professionals from Bayer, Johnson County 4-H empowered youth to understand how agriculture affects their daily lives and make a difference in their own community.

What We Did

First, the Science Matters participants worked with adult mentors from Bayer to identify needs in the community through surveys and interviews. Once they had an idea of the need in the community, groups of 4-6 youth addressed real-world issues:

Need in the community	How the team addressed the need
Food insecurity in Johnson County	Worked with an assisted living community to grow their own food in container gardens. The team presented their findings to the Food Policy Council.
Lack of awareness regarding zoonotic diseases and prevention	Spread the word about zoonotic diseases to visitors at Tractor Supply using self-made brochures and distributed the brochures to local veterinarian offices.
Lack of water conservation knowledge in elementary age youth	Created hands-on activities to teach elementary classes the value of water quality and conservation.

Outcomes

The Science Matters teen participants used the knowledge and skills they learned through 4-H to make a difference in their community and to give back. They were exposed to a variety of science practices that go beyond traditional farming through interactions with experts in the field and learned about new areas of study and career opportunities that they did not consider previously.

Post Participation Survey	“Strongly Agree”	“Agree”	“Disagree”	“Strongly Disagree”
“Do you think about how your choices affect others?”	67%	33%	0%	0%
“I would like a job that involves using science”	67%	33%	0%	0%
“I would like to study science after high school”	73%	27%	0%	0%
Gender	Female = 73%	Male = 27%		

Success Story

“[Science Matters] is such a unique opportunity because it allows young people to make a difference in their area using their own original ideas. Spreading information to educate people about progress in agriculture and how it will affect the future of the world has opened my eyes to the value of agricultural literacy and how important it is for further improvements.” – Samantha, 16

“I learned things about agriculture that I would have never learned about....dressed weight of an animal, precision farming equipment, and more about common problems I face in my community including food deserts, water conservation, and zoonotic diseases.” – Theresa, 16

“I think that any time we’re able to expose students to career opportunities at science-based companies, it’s a good day,” said Kerry Johnson, communications manager at Bayer U.S. Animal Health.



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