



Illinois 4-H Signature Program Overview

Agriculture Classroom Experiences

Extension Grand Challenge: Food - Food Production

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

Help students understand where their food comes from and develop an appreciation for farmers, producers, and families involved in the farm-to-table process. This program will support various ag-based educational activities delivered in an in-school setting. Educators can select the academic content that best fits their locality in consultation with Extension and school-based educators in your Unit, or you can borrow from existing 4-H resources. Each program site will also receive a budget to help cover costs for the program materials and curriculum which you determine will best suit your needs.

TARGET AUDIENCE:

Youth in grades from 3-8 in settings such as 4-H clubs, 4-H Federations, in-school and after-school programs and other positive youth development settings.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- Learn about plant science basics while increasing an appreciation of Illinois agriculture
- Engage students in the process of leading and teaching activities to younger audiences
- Promote an understanding of basic conservation principles and how they relate to food production
- Expose young people to new and nutritious food choices as well as college and career opportunities in Ag.
- Strengthen student understanding of where their food comes from through hands-on learning

TOOLKIT

Supported Curricular Resources –

Illinois 4-H has a variety of educational resources related to food production and agriculture that are available for your use. These can be found on the Shop 4-H site under Plants, Gardening, and Agriculture Curriculum: <https://shop4-h.org/collections/plants-gardening-agriculture-curriculum>

Alternatively, there are many good resources available from 4-H partner organizations that you can pull from based on your assessment of the learning needs in your area. Budgetary support will be available for whichever curricular approach you choose.

CROSS-EXTENSION, CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS

- Horticulture, Small Farms/Local Foods Educators and SNAP-Ed Educators
- Community and civic organizations
- In-School and After-School programs
- IL Farm Bureau
- Illinois Ag in the Classroom Coordinators

OPTIONAL PROGRAM ACTIVITIES/ EXPERIENCES

Many 4-H staff who work with this program will engage older audiences (high school) through the Teen-Teacher model by which the high-schoolers have an opportunity to gain leadership, communication, and classroom management skills by teaching IL-AITC lessons to younger audiences. Please indicate if you plan to pursue this in your registration so we can get you connected with a cohort of other 4-H staff taking this approach.





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REGISTRATION

Please register at the [signature program intent to participate form](#) distributed from the State 4-H Office.

FUNDING SUPPORT

The primary funding source made available through the State 4-H Office is to support the purchase of the curricular and material resources needed to achieve your programming goals. Groups should coordinate program expenses with their Unit Extension Office. Collaborations with local donors are also recommended where possible.

Additional funding to support programmatic costs is also available from the Food Advocacy Grants which are available several times a year through the State 4-H Office. See the following link for more information: [Gardening, Agriculture and Food Access Page](#)

Funding is also available in partnership with the Illinois Ag in the Classroom program directly. You can view their funding opportunities at their Teacher Grants webpage:

<https://www.agintheclassroom.org/programs-events/teacher-grants/>

EVALUATION TOOL

Youth Participants: You can find the evaluation for online through Qualtrics at this link:

https://illinois.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6GdU8QGWeBsoSYm

If you need a paper copy, please contact Mark Becker: mbbecker@illinois.edu

