Eastern Idaho swine camp provides youth with hands-on experience

AT A GLANCE
Youth apply hands-on practices in nutrition, daily care, showmanship and show ring preparation at Eastern Idaho Swine Camps.

The Situation
The youth swine project is the largest meat animal project in the state of Idaho. Many youth joining 4-H and participating in the youth swine program do not have a traditional agricultural background. As the demographic of youth participating in meat animal projects continues to move to youth, without an agricultural background knowledge about meat animals and how to care for them is a necessity.

Our Response
Four eastern district University of Idaho Extension educators obtained a grant from the Idaho Pork Producers to provide youth swine education to eastern Idaho youth. A three-hour swine camp was developed to meet the educational needs of youth swine producers. The Eastern Idaho Youth Swine Education Day was held in four locations: Grace, Rigby, Blackfoot and American Falls with 189 youth participating. Youth attended four classes, two on nutrition, one on showmanship and the last on show ring preparation.

The nutrition classes taught how to balance a ration and the importance of including high-quality amino acids in a swine ration. The classes included an educational lesson plus an activity where youth participants actually built their own rations and amino acid chains.

Youth were taught how to properly show their hogs and then given an opportunity to practice. Participants were also shown how to properly prepare their pigs for the show ring.

Program Outcomes
Youth participants were administered a post test at the end of the swine education day. Results indicate youth had increased knowledge on feeding a balanced ration, checking rations for quality amino acids, practicing proper showmanship techniques and preparing their pig for the show ring.

Ninety-percent of youth indicated they will feed a balanced ration with proper amino acid content. Ninety-five percent also indicated they will practice a minimum of five showmanship sessions at home before attending the fair. Additionally, 85 percent indicated they increased their knowledge on show ring preparation.
The Future
University of Idaho Extension educators will continue to provide swine education for 4-H youth and volunteers. The topics will be based on 4-H mission trends and participant needs.

Cooperators and Co-Sponsors
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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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