

## **Do kids know about agriculture?**

Written by Michael Fisher, Area Livestock Extension Agent, Golden Plains Area

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Do our kids know about agriculture? That may sound like an odd question to you. Unfortunately, to many it is a sad statement on the times. And I am not talking about only inner city youth.

Many of the children in rural communities have not learned about the importance of agriculture to our society.

It is important that society takes the time to teach today's kids about agriculture. They need to have an understanding of where their food, clothes, medicines, etc. come from. Furthermore, agriculture is based on the core fundamentals of science, another area in which many of our youth could use a little educational bolstering.

Many of the field staff with Colorado State University Extension are quite concerned with the current knowledge base that Colorado youth have regarding agriculture. As a result, a large group of us are working to develop AgFest 2010.

The concept is to host an educational event that schools could send their fifth and sixth grade students to for a day. Students would rotate through a series of interactive stations that would each teach a segment of agriculture. Each station would incorporate the STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) concept, so as to ensure the students can see how important a strong education is for agriculture.

We have a list of over 75 schools in Eastern Colorado from which we intend to invite the fifth and sixth grade classes to AgFest 2010.

Three separate sessions will be held during the week of April 19 with hopes that each of the invited schools can travel to one of the AgFest programs.

It is our hope that by holding these event in Brush, Seibert and Lamar that all of our Eastern Colorado schools will feel the travel to their closest AgFest location is warranted.

Here are a few questions for parents, teachers, community leaders and those involved in agriculture. Do you think that many of our kids understand agriculture in your community? Do

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kids know where their food, clothes and medicines come from? Do science, technologies, engineering and mathematics have enough emphasis and practical application in school curriculums? If you answered no to any of these questions we challenge you to step up with us today.

Ag businesses across Eastern Colorado have already begun stepping forward to help sponsor this educational experience. What we need from parents, community leaders and teachers is for you to visit with your school boards. Explain to them the importance of agriculture, science, technologies, engineering, mathematics and this program.

Encourage your schools to fund a day's travel so that your kids can be a part of this great educational experience.

Also, we want to be sure to include home schooled children at the fifth and sixth grade learning levels. So if you are home schooling age appropriate children let us know and we can get you some more information.