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In Local News....

4-H Youth Participate in Quality Animal Care Trainings

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The easiest way to become successful in raising and showing livestock is to take preventive measures to ensure your animals are healthy and well cared for. Furthering your education is one of the best tools in learning the preventative skills needed to succeed. Franklin county 4-H youth have been working over the past couple of months to further their knowledge in how to take quality care of their project animals.

Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA) is a national program designed for youth age 8-21 that focuses on food safety, animal well-being, and character skills across multiple species of animals. Youth are required to participate in a one-hour training course in order to be certified to YQCA's standards. YQCA works closely with FFA chapters and 4-H organizations since these two associations have the greatest number of youth involved working with livestock animals.

Throughout the course the youth learn how the animals' health effect the quality of food product that the animal is being raised for. Youth learn the skills on how to properly keep records of their project animals, like when vaccinations are given, if the animal gets sick, if they have ever been treated for an illness, and track the kind of feed the animal receives to maximize their productivity. Biosecurity is also of high importance especially when traveling from farm to farm or when animals enter the farm from being purchased or exhibited at a show. The key to a healthy animal is clean and comfortable shelter, high quality food and water, and a stress free handling environment.

Ethics and the general well-being of an animal is covered in length throughout the training, stressing the point that the youth themselves have the responsibility to not only treat their own animals with respect and the best care possible, but that they are also responsible to educate their peers and the public the very same thing. Youth also learn about the seven pillars of character that each person can work to develop to become a better leader and citizen.

I am very proud to report that by the start of the summer, almost every 4-H member who raises and shows livestock will have been trained and certified in the YQCA program. We see great value in educating our youth on becoming more responsible producers, owners, and caregivers of animals. Our youth are prepared and excited to show what they have learned and interact with the public and fellow producers this year at our many 4-H livestock events.



The 4-H club The Bombay Wildcats, recently took advantage of the YQCA training for the 4-H members of their club. The training was very interactive with lots of opportunity for discussion and questions from the youth

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