**Expanding Farm Knowledge 2018**

**5/09/18**

**WHOEEEE -- "FARM DAYS" -- what a big two days that were busy and fun filled with Sevier County 4th grade students, teachers, parents and teen leaders. Some 57 groups with 18 to 20 students toured "Farm Days," a learning experience about agriculture, where american families foods originates and just how american agriculture affects our daily lives. "Farm Days" are sponsored by Sevier County Livestock Association.**

**Once that morning whistle sounds at 9:00 am, its wall to wall with many curious students, teachers and parents. The final whistle blows at 2:00 pm as students boards buses returning to their schools and many volunteer teachers at those learning stations breath a sigh of relief and smiles all around with their accomplishments for "Farm Days."**

**The many learning stations included are briefly described -- with pictures to follow at bottom of the page:**

**1- "Wow That Cow" related to many items we use daily that cattle influence, food items supplied and their nutritional values. Some 300 items such as: soaps, combs, toothpaste, candies, tape, glue, paper, paints, brushes are made from cattle. What do cattle eat ??? -- grass, peanut hulls, cottonseed, potato peals, wheat mids, and corn cobs are recycled into food items for humans. Plus, many items such as baseballs, footballs, softballs, basketballs, ball gloves, shoes and leather cloths that we use daily. The display was illustrated and discussed by Peyton Day, Tyler Schrick, Maverick Trent, Ivy Bales, Emily Hall, Shelby Moore and Melody Cody their leader.**

**2- The Vegetable Garden with plants -- cucumber, tomato, pepper, squash, sweet corn and potatoe. The Farm Bureau Women's group illustrated with seed to plants, to fruits, to final products such as: Tomato seed grows to tomato plants producing tomatoes for tomato ketchup for our fried potatoes.**

**3- The Dairy Cattle and Dairy Products discussed were: milk - whole and skimmed, cottage cheese, ice cream, yogurt and those nutrients supplied from these food items. Plus, what food nutrients our bodies need that are available from dairy cattle and dairy products.**

**4- The many seeds that farmers/ranchers use to raise food crops for american families and their livestock: corn, soybeans, oats, millet, buckwheat, clovers -- red and white, grass -- fescue and orchard grass, and sorghum. How these seed grow to plants and foods was discussed by John Delozier from Sevier Farmers Co-op.**

**5- Forestry: The display and discussion included many tree parts, leaves for identification, and seeds for growing new trees. Also, insect traps for insects effecting our native forest trees. Plus, how to build bird houses and feeders as birds around our homes eat many insects.**

**6- Sevier County Beekeepers displayed the kinds of honeybees and their work as our number one pollinators of vegetable and fruit crops. These bees are responsible for each "third bit of food" we have to eat. These honeybees are very important to our food cycle.**

**7- The "Barnyard Animals" on display were: cow and calf, sheep, pigs, goat, chicken, turkey, rabbits, horse, mule, and donkey. Each animal had "Barnyard Math" posted that was discussed and explained by teen leaders. Also, Roger Radel's incubator hatched five baby chicks during the "Farm Days."**

**8- Soil Conservation illustrated erosion control practices that farmers/ranchers use for protecting their soil while raising food crops for american families and their livestock.**

**9- Master Gardners illustrated and discussed many garden and landscape plants we use around our homes.**

**10- Tennessee Department of Forestry displayed and discussed their forest fire fighting and tree planting equipment.**

**11- Many antique tractors and modern, "Today's Tractors" and various farm implements were displayed to show students yesterday and today's farm implements.**

**Today one farmer/rancher provides Food, Fiber, Fuel and Shelter for 155 American family members.**

**Tennessee's "Top Ten" agriculture crops and livestock are: Cattle and Calves; Soybeans; Broilers ( chickens); Corn; Hay; Milk and Dairy Products; Wheat; Cotton; Tobacco; Fruits and Vegetables.​**