

2007 University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff Combined Research and Extension Plan of Work

Arkansas Ag Adventures - Agricultural Awareness

V(B). Program Knowledge Area(s)

1. Program Knowledge Areas and Percentage

- 806 100% Youth Development

V(C). Planned Program (Situation and Scope)

1. Situation and priorities

Arkansas is a diverse state that depends on a strong agricultural industry. Agriculture is Arkansas' largest industry, providing over \$5 billion a year in farm income. Roughly one-half of the state's land is devoted to agriculture, and our climate and topography make it well suited for the production of a broad spectrum of commodities. Nationally, Arkansas ranks first in the production of rice and second in the production of broilers. Arkansas is also highly ranked in the production of catfish, turkey, cotton and soybeans.

Although Arkansas depends on agriculture, it is seldom taught in elementary or secondary schools. Along with the fact that most children are two to three generations away from the farm, there is an increasing need for agricultural awareness. Producer Focus Groups and results from the Farm Crisis Survey both identified a significant need, particularly with children and young people, for an increase in factual public information and education regarding production agriculture. In response, a center to teach youth about agriculture was established on the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff Small Farm Outreach and Water Management Center in Lonoke, Arkansas.

Children learn a variety of subjects through hands-on lessons at the center whether they come from rural or urban schools. The program also provides in-school visits to schools that may not be able to send children to the center due to cost or travel restraints.

V(D). Planned Program (Assumptions and Goals)

1. Assumptions made for the Program

Children in today's schools are the decision makers of tomorrow. As such they need to learn about the natural world that exists around them and about basic issues which will impact on their food supply and environmental quality. Receiving vibrant challenging hands-on instruction about agriculture and its importance is a relevant learning experience for these future decision makers, especially those in urban areas.

2. Ultimate goal(s) of this Program

To increase understanding of agriculture and ultimately encourage more youth to seek careers in the fields of agriculture, science, math, engineering, and technology.

To increase the understanding of agriculture and its benefits to the general public.

V(F). Planned Program (Activity)

1. Activity for the Program

Activities include field days at the UAPB Small farm Outreach and Water Management Center, camps at the Arkansas 4-H Center, exhibits at educational fairs, and community and classroom workshops.