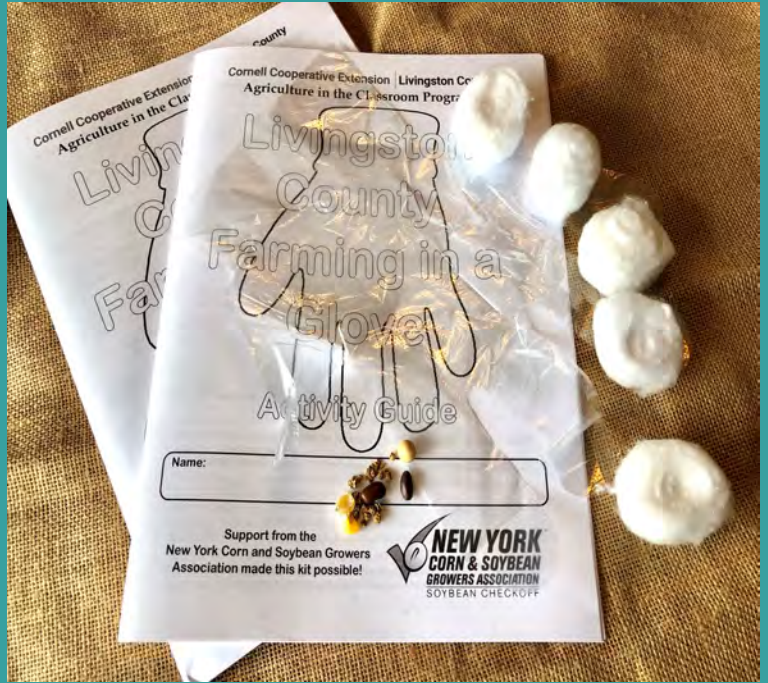


Grant Project FINAL Report

Cornell Cooperative Extension | Livingston County

AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM PROGRAM



Prepared for the New York Corn and Soybean Association-

Soybean Checkoff January 2021

Final Report for NY Corn and Soybean Association

Overview of the Soy-Sational Programming

Despite challenges brought on by a worldwide pandemic, our Soy-sational programming was a tremendous success. Starting with Quarter #1, our Cornell Cooperative Extension Livingston County Agriculture in the Classroom (AIRC) Program met nearly every goal set forth in the project proposal. Participant survey results clearly demonstrated that the project significantly improved the perception youth had towards soybean farmers and the soybean industry. Quarter #2 brought on NY PAUSE, instituted by the Governor, as a response to COVID-19 resulting in the closing of our schools. As an immediate response, the AIRC Program quickly adapted to the changing situation by focusing on how we, along with the NYS Corn and Soybean Growers Association, could be part of the solution to students and teachers who were overwhelmed by on screen learning. Educator response to reimagined delivery methods and materials that were created was a resounding success! By meeting the project goals set forth in the proposal, the project positively and significantly improved the perception of the soybean industry and soybean farmers among youth, as well as, created a comprehensive and long-lasting model for sharing the work of the NYS Corn and Soybean Growers Association and the state's soybean farmers.

The initial set of lessons developed for January to March reached youth in grades Kindergarten to 12th totaling 2,329 youth. The first lesson for grades Kindergarten to 3rd was titled "Soy-Sational Plastic" and included reading the book [Henry Ford Full of Beans](#) by Peggy Thomas to youth. The book and accompanying discussion demonstrated how many of the things around us, including plastics, are made with the use of soybeans. The results of the pre and post-survey demonstrated that students understood the content and gained a deeper understanding of soybean growth and utilization locally and in the State.

Next, we provided Livingston County educators the opportunity to sign up for a 4th-12th grade lesson called "Soy Many Uses". Students took part in a soybean scavenger hunt, looking for soy derived ingredients in foods and products they might use every day. Overwhelmingly, students seemed surprised by the versatility of the soybean and its impact on their everyday lives; from ice cream sandwiches, roofing materials, even face wash. This lesson also emphasized the work of New York State soybean farmers and their efforts in sustainably producing a quality product using the latest science and agricultural practices.

Part of this lesson shared all the careers that go into soybean production from plant breeding to product development. Youth were surprised to learn that farmers rely heavily on other agricultural professionals to help them better use their lands and improve crop yields, even going so far as to fund research and product development to produce greener technologies and high-oleic soybean oil, a healthier cooking oil. The results of this lesson were overwhelmingly positive. Results of pre and post-test surveys showed a positive shift in attitude toward the soybean industry and soybean farming. One area of additional need to be addressed in future lessons, identified from the survey results, is the science of food and product development and testing. We missed our goal of 50% by 2% on the question, "I feel confident that the soybean products used in our food and other products are safe." We have plans to further address this issue in future lessons this year.

During Quarter #2, new challenges arose in youth education but we willingly accepted the challenge and developed a solution based upon feedback from educators and parents. With school closures throughout New York; youth, parents and educators were overwhelmed with screen time and frustrated with unstable internet connections. We heard from middle and high school teachers that their students felt inundated with work and from elementary school teachers that their students were looking for off-screen learning opportunities. In response, our AITC Program developed the Livingston County Farming in a Glove Kit. This comprehensive science kit highlighted the five commonly grown crops in Livingston County. Students were provided with 5 seeds (soybean, corn, alfalfa, beets and green bean), a clear polyethylene glove and the instructional booklet developed by the AITC educator. One goal for this lesson was to engage students in farming by helping them understand that farmers grow more than just soybeans, soybeans have many uses and farmers are utilizing the latest science and technology to produce their crop. Each day, students were led through a section of the booklet and were provided with additional activities enabling them to make their own scientific observations of their plants.

As presented in our Quarter #2 Report, we received many positive responses to this kit lesson and even received requests to offer it during the 2020-2021 school year. Our AITC Program mailed out 2,438 Livingston County Farming in a Glove Kits. In an effort to reach older youth, the program utilized social media with additional learning content on the topics of soil health and conservation, as well as soybean utilization on New York dairy farms and animal operations. These posts reached over 3,000 people. The Cornell Cooperative Extension Livingston County AITC Program demonstrated tremendous resilience during COVID closures, met critical needs of local teachers and students and also expanded the reach of these soybean educational materials to youth and adults in 13 New York State counties and 6 states. This would not have been possible without the support of the New York Corn and Soybean Association and dedicated soybean farmers.

Overview of Financials

Due to the extreme popularity of the Livingston County Farming in a Glove Science Kit and increased cost of programming due to the NYS PAUSE the Livingston County Agriculture in the Classroom program, utilized Cornell Cooperative Extension of Livingston County resources to make sure that all youth that requested a kit received one. Costs included the translation of materials to Spanish for Rochester City Schools, the creation of materials in Adobe InDesign, mailing materials to individual homes and printing of the multi-page booklets. These additional costs included a drastic increase in staff time in March, April and May to create, print and mail these materials. The following is a breakdown of projected costs and the actual expenditures for this project.

Soy-sational Project Line Details	Approved Awarded Budget	Actual Expenses
Salary: Educator & Program Coordinator Hours	\$8,600	\$11,612.59
*Teaching Materials/Supplies	\$1,100	\$2,366.52
Transportation (Staff)	\$1,100	\$611.80
TOTAL	\$10,575	\$14,590.91

Expression of Gratitude

We sincerely want to thank the New York Corn and Soybean Association for your support of our work. Agriculture science education and literacy among youth throughout New York state is necessary, as our youth are further removed from the production of their food. Our goal is to provide our local youth with the knowledge and science literacy to understand what is happening right on our communities farms. In addition to this we are working to encourage and provide the knowledge for our youth to make future informed decisions regarding their food. We appreciate this opportunity to share the practices of our New York State soybean farms, the science & technology they are using and the positive strides they are making in sustainability and conservation. We also appreciate the opportunity to further help farms and farmers create a future in which the population is equipped with the knowledge and wisdom to both make healthy informed choices in the grocery store, as well as appreciate the impact of New York agriculture on individuals each and every day. Again, thank you!