

Meat the Future

Jenilee Godsey, Youth Agriculture

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“4-H Garden”

Here is an article I would like to share with you written by fellow K-State Research and Extension Agent, Michelle Beran, from the Midway Extension District.

What’s in your garden?

Your mind is a garden,
Your thoughts are the seeds.
You can grow flowers or
You can grow weeds.

In 4-H, we spend a lot of time working on and talking about growth in our youth. Growth in community service, growth in critical thinking, growth in making good decisions.

Providing opportunities to learn by doing is an important goal of 4-H. Learning includes new skills, improving on existing skills, and evaluating our success or failures to adjust for the next learning opportunity.

We believe it’s always the perfect time to celebrate successes. Some are big successes such as accomplishing a Key Award, which is the highest achievement recognition awarded to a 4-H member.

It may involve smaller – but just as relevant – successes:

- Was a 4-H member able to look a judge in the eye and talk about their project this year?
- Did a recipe that they have practiced over and over pay off in a trip to the State Fair or was it time to reevaluate and work on a different recipe?
- Did a 4-H member discover that a project really wasn’t their focus, even if the rest of their family is involved with it?
- Did they step up and take on a role in their club? Did they make new friends at camp or an activity?

These are all important successes to celebrate!

We aren't going to be successful at everything we do every time. Learning to gracefully and graciously listen and learn to improve is an important life skill. It starts with an example set by adults and is the reason that volunteers are such an important part of 4-H.

As adults, are we examples of setting priorities, working hard, and listening fairly when given feedback? Do we set an example of perseverance when things don't go as smoothly as we'd like? Do we set an example of work ethic to be better tomorrow or an example of cutting corners with a singular focus to win?

In his blog, "Growing Leaders," author Tim Elmore addresses skills needed in the future for young people to be successful:

Strong work ethic will always be in vogue. As an employer myself, I will always hire a team member with a strong work ethic over a worker without one. I'll always hire a person with self-discipline over a person without it. I'll always hire a person with a passionate attitude for our mission vs. a person without it. Grit will always be great.

Work ethic supplies a person with a tenacity they'll need to complete a not-so-glitzy task. It provides a worker with a sense of responsibility they need to feel a sense of "ownership" on the job, serving over and above what the job description demanded. Work ethic offers the energy needed to finish what we start, just because it needs to be done, not because we want to post a pic on Instagram.

What seeds are we growing in our own life? What seeds are we nurturing in the heads, hearts and hands of the young people around us? Hopefully, we have planted some flowers and not weeds!

This is an article written by Michelle Beran with Kansas State University Research and Extension in the Midway District.

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