

IMPACT

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Idaho Swine Camp – advanced session

The Situation

The 2007 and 2008 Idaho Swine Camps were a great success in the number of youth that participated and what skills were taken home to use. Many youth and adults from across the state participated, 105 and 70 respectively. The Idaho Pork Producers Board partnered with University of Idaho Extension to put on the annual event. Some board members expressed the need to include an Advanced Session for youth that grew up on a hog farm and those that needed more than basic information.

Our Response

The Advanced Session was planned, coordinated and conducted by Cindy Kinder, Valerie Pantone and Amanda Kent, University of Idaho Extension.

The objectives of the Advanced Session were to provide: 1) in-depth discussion concerning media relations and marketing of products, 2) tips on taking livestock photographs, and 3) methods to use those photos in making posters to publicize 4-H swine project events.

Youth were to attend the 2009 Idaho Swine Camp in the morning and the concurrent Advanced Session in the afternoon.

Ben Vainner, with the National Pork Board, and local educators provided youth with information about the media's effects on the pork industry, the importance of positive publicity, and how to communicate more effectively with peers and the media. After the classroom discussion, a more hands-on workshop allowed the older youth to go outside and practice their photography and positive pork publicity skills by taking pictures of the other camp activities. The State 4-H Afterschool computer lab, along with art software, was used to create posters.



Colton Ward in the Advanced Session at Idaho Swine Camp learns about media relations and marketing of livestock. Photo by Cindy Kinder.

Program Outcomes

Twelve youth with four years or more of swine experience signed up for the advanced session. Youth thoroughly enjoyed the session on working with the media. The teens were guided through a group discussion on positive industry images, discrediting radical activists, and the power of fundraising and public awareness.

When asked how they would respond to questions like, "Why do you show pigs?" answers ranged from: "cause I like pigs," to "it is easier, you can win a championship, it is something to do in the summer with friends," or "my brother wanted to, so I had to." Other statements referred to the fact that they were, "good eating" and one simply wrote, "STEAK!!"

These comments allowed the speakers to move the discussion toward how others viewed raising pigs for market. Youth were asked to rework their comments while taking time to consider how they might sound

to people who didn't have and an agricultural background or who might be vegetarians.

After looking at how these groups may misunderstand methods of raising animals for production, youth participants began to see the importance of media relations. Youth also understood the importance of taking time to use proper terminology and definitions to clearly describe the techniques they are using. They were also encouraged to turn to a 4-H leader, county Extension educator or other involved adult if situations became too intense or aggressive.

Youth practiced preparing statements that they could use during a media interview, answering the five w's: who, what, when, where, and why, for various circumstances. They presented some of these statements in front of the group for practice and discussed ways to organize and plan for an interview. Youth expressed that this was important due to their position representing 4-H and being part of the swine industry.

Focus was then directed toward using their new photography and poster design skills as additional techniques to grab media attention and create positive media coverage.

Idaho Swine Camp keynote speaker Mike Miller of High Point Genetics, Chrisman, IL sat in on the advanced session and was impressed with the quality of information given. Miller stated, "This is like being at a national youth swine event."

Surveys were conducted for the Advanced Session. They indicated that participants learned basic tips to improve picture taking. Also, one hundred percent of the surveys stated youth gained poster making skills. The Advanced Session of Swine Camp targeted more experienced youth. This session gave them media relation experiences and skills they can use whether at home, at the fair barn, or at work.



Teens practicing their photo taking skills. Photo by Cindy Kinder.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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