

IMPACT

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4-H day camps positively influence Bingham County youth

The Situation

Bingham County has a strong 4-H program, with 4,657 youth participating in 4-H in 2010. Youth participate in traditional projects, school enrichment projects, and the yearly overnight camp project. Despite the great support for 4-H in Bingham County, it was noted several years ago that fewer families were participating in non-livestock, traditional 4-H projects. When interviewed, families said their children had competing demands for their time such as sports, music, academics, and work. Additionally, more mothers were working outside the home, resulting in less time to lead traditional 4-H clubs.

Our Response

Bingham County 4-H faculty and staff created a day camp program to provide youth a 4-H experience that did not require a large time commitment. The program is marketed to reach both traditional and new audiences through newspaper articles, newsletters, and brochures handed out at the local schools.

The day camp program has evolved over the years. Teaching formats have included:

- One-week projects – members attend class every day for one week
- Weekly projects – members attend class each week for several weeks
- One-day-only projects – members complete the project in one day

We have taught projects on early-release school days, and on days off from school during the school year, and in the summer. Table 1 shows the participation in 4-H day camps over the last three years.



Youth in Bingham County learn gardening skills from Advanced Master Gardener Pat Kolbet. Photo by Marnie Spencer.

Table 1: Bingham County 4-H Day Camp Participation by Type

Type of day camp project	2008	2009	2010
Early release from school	70	97	0
School year	0	0	137
Summer	183	248	268
TOTAL	253	345	405

Originally, most of the projects were led by county faculty and staff, but more volunteers are leading projects as the popularity of the program increases.

Program Outcomes

In 2009 and 2010, members were evaluated on their day camp experience. Results of the evaluation are in Table 2.

Table 2: Bingham County 4-H Day Camp Evaluation Results

Question	2009, n=192		2010, n=316	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1. Rated camp as good or very good	183	95	299	95
2. Learned something new	185	96	293	93
3. Will use the skills learned in the future	189	98	300	95

Between 93 and 96 percent of members reported learning something new, either content-related skills or leadership skills such as helping others. Ninety-five to ninety-eight percent of members reported the intention to use the skills they learned or practiced in the future.

As we look to the future, we are excited to continue offering 4-H day camps in Bingham County, recruiting additional adults and youth volunteers, and reaching diverse audiences.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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