

Teter Farm Camp

Final report for YENC19-143

Project Type: Youth Educator

Funds awarded in 2019: \$4,000.00

Projected End Date: 02/28/2021

Grant Recipient: Teter Organic Farm

Region: North Central

State: Indiana

Project Manager:

[MaryEllen St.Angelo](#)

Teter Organic Farm

Project Information

Summary:

Our goal was for kids in first through fifth grades to learn about sustainable agriculture through hands-on activities with Teter Organic Farm's farm manager, interviewing several agriculture professionals, and creating a farm to table meal for their families, all in a fun summer camp setting.

We used the following lesson plans:

Day 1: Getting to know the farm and each other

8:30am - 9:00am: Camper check-in (Lodge)

MaryEllen: Camper check-in table

Macy: Med check-in table

Courtney: Teter parking lot, welcoming, directing to lodge for

Check-in (8am-9:30am)

Alex & Brittany: Receiving campers after checked in. Make name tags (tags, yarn, paint

pens); start journal decorating

Offer snack for any hungry camper

9:00am-9:30am: Welcome (Grassy area between shelter & playground) (Rain location: Lodge)

1. Welcome everyone!

Introduce staff; we are so glad you are here

Celebrate: Cheer (repeat after me) Staff lead Day 1; then variations other days

Hey, hey, heeeeyy, let's celebrate another day

Woo, hoo, hooooo, let's grow together me and you

Bam bam baaaam, let's take care of this precious land
Teeeter Farm Camp, oh yeah!

1. Focus (be here, be now) Yoga: kid yoga- (3-5 min)
2. Overview of day (highlights)
3. Review expectations: quick counselor enactments
4. Connect (with each other): farm-hand shake (who wants to share their fancy handshake?) AND
5. Commit (how we grow): Today I am going to... (in head or with each other)
 1. Give examples to encompass everything: persevere through difficult tasks; focus on what is at hand; make a new friend, try something new, etc.
 2. Counselors check in at lunch and end of day: how are commitments going?

9:30am-11:30am: Hay wagon (or walking, if wet) tour with Jonah (learn names on hay wagon tour) ALL TOGETHER

While at greenhouse: pot up an herb to bring home. In field: harvest one of the crops. At hoop house: pick bitter re-growth lettuce to bring to compost



Campers examine soil before transplanting herbs.



Campers sort harvested lettuce.

WATER break

11:30am-noon: Interview questions for week's guests- Shelter(Brittany break)

Briefly talk about who will be visiting farm camp this week.

Create 4 questions to ask each guest (ones that they won't necessarily cover in their

chat with us) (color code paper for each guest)

Keith O'Dell (Worm Compost guy)

Girl Scout (Tara Boyd and sister Lena Boyd, chicken keepers)

Beekeepers (Barry and Ann McNulty)

Anita Hagen (Hamilton County Harvest Food Bank)

Conni Kolb (Farmer: cows)

12noon-12:30pm: LUNCH w/ counselors: (Shelter, playground)

Taste a new herb, camp songs. Commitment check-in



Campers taste basil from herb bed.

MESA: vlog: interview any camper who wants to share something new to them from Hayride

12:30-1:00pm: Safety walk / Severe weather drill (Alex break)

Show red-painted areas to keep out; poison ivy and Virginia creeper to the left of the Lodge; walk very short trail right there to practice our rule of staying on the trail (WHY), staying with group, and tell them they will be with an assigned counselor beginning Day 2)

1:00pm-1:30pm: Scavenger hunt to find items in morning hayride tour locales. (printout from Jonah-) Campers can use these items later to decorate journals.

1:30pm-2:30pm: Split campers into 2 groups; FLIP these 2 activities (30 minutes at each):

Owls and Crows from Nature Games doc. (Courtney break) (downhill from volleyball)

Use info from hayride tour with Jonah.

Greenhouse planting: each camper transplants an herb start into a 3 inch pot. Take home.

2:30pm-3:15pm: (location: counselor's choice) Snack; Free play; Finish journal decorating and writing/drawing;

Circle time: reflecting in groups

(Use items from scavenger hunt to tape to front of journal if they like.) (Journals, colored pencils, markers, items from scavenger hunt, construction paper, tape)

3:15pm-3:30pm: (btwn shelter and playground) Whole group wrap up, cheer

3:30pm-3:45pm: (Lodge) Camper checkout. MaryEllen receives parents, Macy retrieves campers from Alex and Brittany's groups.

(see below for counselor discussion at end of day)

3:45pm-4:15pm: Counselors discuss campers and form groups for rest of week

What did you notice? Leaders, quieter campers, overbearing, doers, engagement, those holding back, direction followers, who needs more guidance?

Day 2: Soil and worms and chickens- oh my!

At Check in: Campers go to assigned counselor

9:00am-9:10am: Welcome/Overview all together but sitting in groups with assigned counselor (Lodge)

Welcome back!

Celebrate: Cheer

Hey, hey, heeeeyy, let's celebrate another day

Woo, hoo, hooooo, let's grow together me and you

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Teeeter Farm Camp, oh yeah!

Focus (be here, be now) kid yoga

Circle connection game

9:10am-9:30am: Morning connecting: in groups (counselors choose a spot close by)

Celebrations

Overview of day

Commitments

9:30am-10:00am: (shelter)

1. GUEST: Keith O'Dell, Castaway Compost. Presentation, kids interview.
2. HOOPHOUSE: pull bolted lettuce, put in boxes to compost

ALEX's group: FIRST: Keith O'Dell:

BRITTANY's and COURTNEY's group: FIRST: hoophouse.

10:00am-10:30am: SAME AS ABOVE, BUT SWAP

10:30am-11:00am: ALL: bring boxes of bolted lettuce to compost pile; toss onto pile. Then play or short hike. (Courtney break)

11:00am-11:30am: water + storytime: *Carl and the Meaning of Life* (story about a worm and how his purpose fits in with other creatures' purposes) (chapel area or Lodge, if rain) (Brittany break)

11:30am-12:00pm: (shelter/ playground/grass) LUNCH w/ counselors: camp songs. Commitment check-in (MESA: grab hand shovels from barn)

12:00pm-1:00pm: (start in shelter) GUEST: Andrew Fritz, HCSWCD: Soil and water investigation (All groups) (create path from field to wooded area, then close to river. Hand shovels)

Andrew Fritz's soil and water investigation:

He will bring samples of clay, sand, silt and humus for kids to see, feel. Will talk about them as components of soil. Then we will explore the soil onsite, dig, hands in ground, discuss. We will travel from grassy area/field to wooded area to toward the river and discover how the soil changes.



Campers investigate the farm's soil.

1:05pm-1:35pm: (Chicken area) Chicken Chat / water + storytime (2 groups)

1. Tara or Lina Boyd will give a chicken chat and demonstrate chicken chores



Campers learn how chickens contribute to the farm.



Campers learn how to care for chickens.

ON WAY TO CHICKEN TALK: pick up boxes of veggie scraps for chickens to eat. At end, bring surplus to compost pile.

1. MESA will read *Chicken Talk (humorous story about chickens)* at shelter + water break for kids.

ALEX's and COURTNEY's group: FIRST: Chicken Chat

BRITTANY's group: FIRST: water + storytime

1:40pm-2:10pm: SWAP above (ALEX break)

2:10pm-2:55pm: (begin at shelter) Prep for community meal: (Sun print materials, colored cardstock for poetry wall, vlog recording) (OR Free play, if needed!)

Kids go to each station for 15 minutes

Begin making sun prints for decoration

Begin poetry wall (possible here- poetry walk- in nature games doc)

vlogtime: what are the most important things we want to share with the world from Farm Camp today?

2:55pm-3:20pm: (Counselors choose location) Afternoon circle time in groups: snack, journal time (ie: fave part of day)+ group connection / reflection (ideas for groups to bond / create something to share at meal: create farm handshakes, farm rap, farm chant, farm dance)

3:20pm-3:30pm: (between shelter and playground) Whole group wrap up, cheer

3:30pm: (lodge): Camper checkout: counselors with campers, Macy and MaryEllen checking out

Day 3: It takes a natural village to make a farm work

At Check in: Campers go to assigned counselor (campers work on journals and/or poetry while waiting for all to assemble)

9:00am-9:10am: Welcome/Overview all together but sitting in groups with assigned counselor (Lodge)

Welcome back!

Celebrate: Cheer

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Teeeter Farm Camp, oh yeah!

Focus (be here, be now) kid yoga

9:10am-9:30am: Morning connecting: in groups

Celebrations

Overview of day

Commitments

Macy & MaryEllen bring helpers to help load in

9:30am-10:00am: (2 groups)

1. GUEST: Beekeeper Barry or Ann McNulty (at shelter)
2. Plant herb starts in Peace Garden. (Week one: campers planted cover crop seeds including one that attracts pollinators)

ALEX: First: planting herbs

BRITTANY and COURTNEY: First: Beekeepers

(Depending on if Jonah has field work for kids, we may all do the beekeeper together and then field work together) Broadcast cover crop seeds and harvest kale (did this first week)



Campers broadcasting seeds for cover crop and pollinator-attracting plants.

10:00am-10:30am: SWAP above (Or all do field work together)

10:30am-11:10am: Long hike (mowed trail) (BRITTANY break)

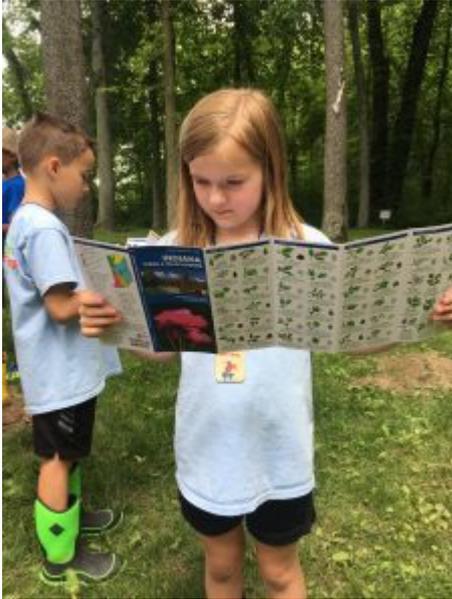
11:10am-12:00noon: LUNCH (shelter) camp songs. Commitment check-in

Introduced talent show concept for kids to plan.

Play outside: grass, sandbox, playground, peace garden

12:10pm-1:10pm: (location TBA) BIOBLITZ: Mark McCauley, Kim Gauen(wk 1)

CAMPERS BRING JOURNALS; ALL RECORD WHAT WE SEE/HEAR/ etc. Use foldable field guides: insects, trees, native flowers, butterflies and moths



Campers explore life on the farm.



Even toads help out on Teter Organic Farm.



Campers explore life on the farm.



Teter Organic Farm supports a diversity of life.

Bioblitz for 45 min hr and then 15 min for documenting/reflection/discussion.

1:15pm- 2:00pm: Wash hands, snack, play (Courtney break)

2:00pm-2:30pm: (chapel) Water break + Continue Sun prints / creative projects for Friday

(ALEX break until 2:30pm)

2:30pm-3:00pm: Outside play: 3 locations, 2 supervisors in addition to counselors.

3:00pm-3:25pm: (in lodge) Taste kohlrabi or kale from field. Group circle time.



Campers harvested and tasted kohlrabi.

3:30pm: (lodge) Camper checkout

Day 4: the cycle of giving

At Check in: Campers go to assigned counselor (While waiting, campers sign thank yous for all of the week's guests)

9:00am-9:10am: (Lodge) Welcome/Overview all together but sitting in groups with assigned counselor

Welcome back!

Celebrate: Cheer

Hey, hey, heeeeyy, let's celebrate another day

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Teeeter Farm Camp, oh yeah!

Focus (be here, be now) kid yoga

9:10am-9:30am: (location: counselor choice) Morning connecting: in groups

Celebrations

Overview of day

Commitments

9:30am-10:00am: (shelter or lodge, depending on weather) 2 groups (half do A; half do B)

1. GUEST: Anita Hagen from Hamilton County Harvest Food Pantry
2. WEED in Peace Garden; PLANT thyme starts in the Peace Garden

ALEX's and COURTNEY's group: GUEST first (load in if anything)

BRITTANY's group: WEED/PLANT first (load out if anything)

10:00am-10:30am: SWAP above activities

10:30-11:00am: Meal prep: Campers harvest dill, lemon balm, chives, basil. Campers peel garlic. These will go toward lemonade, iced tea and pickles for Friday meal.

11:00am-11:30am: LUNCH

11:35am-12:05pm: (shelter) Long hike to gather flowers for tomorrow's party: hanging bouquet decorations for the Lodge(ALEX break)

12:10pm-12:40pm: Creative preparation for Friday celebration (ideas for groups to bond / create something to share at meal: create art, poetry, farm rap, farm chant, skit, farm dance)

Also have kids finish signing thank yous.

12:40pm-1:00pm: Connecting game (out on lawn)

1:05pm-1:55pm: Activity Choice (BRITTANY break until 1:40pm)

Outside: sand play, chalk play, tug of war, limbo, 3-legged races

Inside: friendship bracelets, games/puzzles

2:00pm-2:25pm: Wash hands, snack break (location weather dependent) (Courtney break)

2:30pm-2:50pm: (Meet on grass by Lodge parking lot) CSA Prep: Help Jonah carry things out to shelter for CSA Thursday evening.

2:50pm-3:20pm: (Location counselor choice) Afternoon circle time in groups: journal time + group connection / reflection

3:20pm-3:30pm: (Between shelter and playground) Whole group wrap up: celebrate day, camp song, cheer

3:30pm: (shelter) Camper check out

Day 5: farm hospitality

9:00am-9:10am: Welcome/Overview all together but sitting in groups with assigned counselor

Welcome back!

Celebrate: Cheer

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Teeeter Farm Camp, oh yeah!

Focus (be here, be now) kid yoga

9:10am-9:30am: Morning connecting: in groups (location: counselor choice)

Celebrations

Overview of day

Commitments

Macy/ME bring helpers to welcome, help load in

9:30am-10:00am: (shelter) GUEST: Conni Kolb, regional livestock farmer

10:00am-10:30am: Harvest kale with Jonah, farm manager

10:30am-11:00am: Kickball

11:00am-11:30am: LUNCH

FARM TO TABLE DINNER PREP 11:30am-3:15pm

This afternoon, we'll have small groups of kids rotate in and out of the kitchen to help Chef Chris with specific doable tasks, preparing food for the farm to table dinner. While this is happening, the rest of the campers will do:

11:30am: tables and chairs out

12noon-12:30pm: Hike

12:30pm-1:00pm: Pick flowers to make a living runner and bouquets for the food table

1:00pm-1:30pm: Favorite games from the week (Beastmaster, Owls and crows, relay races, etc)

1:30pm-2:15pm: Wash hands, snack break (Courtney break)

2:15pm-3:00pm: Hay wagon ride with Farmer Jonah? (Decide alternative if not possible: write up dinner menu for families?)

3:05pm-3:20pm: (Lodge) Before guests come, wash hands, celebrate the week and all we learned

3:30pm-5:00pm: WELCOME GUESTS! Serve meal, share skits, songs, poetry, art. Take home journals, plants, artwork and poetry.



Campers with Chef Chris before serving parents dinner.



Campers decorated the dinner table with flowers from the farm.



A true Farm to Table meal.

Registration lessons learned:

1. Camp registration: find out if parents want siblings together.
2. Special needs: Prior to registration, discern your capacity to provide adequate care and supervision for campers with special needs.
3. We ended up stretching the age range of campers we accepted, on a case by case basis. Some 6 year olds turned out to be mature enough, while others' lack of maturity demanded excessive counselor attention.
4. Upon retrospect, separating younger campers from older campers (if we had enough of each) would have been optimum for pacing and lessons.
5. Having a smaller group of campers the first week of camp helped us learn what needed to be adjusted for the larger group the following week.
6. Like any on farm enterprise, it was important to make sure that we had the correct number of campers and counselors both to deliver quality programming and have a realistic budget.

Hiring lessons learned:

1. We learned that calling references could have helped in our discernment of candidates.
2. Hiring a nurse who also supervised campers throughout the day (not as a counselor, although she stepped in when needed) strengthened our counseling staff and served our campers well.
3. We hired enough counselors to have a 7:1 ratio (campers to counselor). We did not count on counselors getting sick, though. After reflecting, we lean toward a 10:2 ratio with a co-counseling concept (10 campers to 2 counselors).
4. Counselor candidates planning to go into teaching, as well as candidates with 4-H and sustainable agriculture interests proved to be excellent counselors.
5. Two days of training counselors was sufficient, but an overnight together at the cabins could have provided more time to bond and connect with the farm and hiking trails before camp began.

Camp Days lessons learned:

1. Timing: We learned we had to be flexible with timing of activities. Some activities took longer than anticipated, while others took less time than anticipated. We found it useful to have some camp songs or games in our “back pocket” for the times when activities took less time.
2. Pacing: We learned that kids need “down time” during the camp day. Time for supervised, unstructured outdoor play was crucial for the kids and counselors.
3. Counselor breaks: Our counselors each took a 20 minute break every day. We discovered that it was more refreshing if it was not at lunch time.
4. Campers enthusiastically engaged in hands-on activities with farm manager each day. Flexibility enabled us to incorporate these activities into the schedule, as weather and farm manager duties varied.
5. Daily plan vs. flexibility: We learned that we needed to be in communication about the daily plan, sometimes switching times of activities or reducing activities, depending on weather* and campers’ energy levels.
6. Snacks: The second week, we offered a snack upon arrival for any camper who was hungry. This assured more engagement for those who had not eaten breakfast or who had gotten up early and were already hungry again.
7. Journals: This turned out to be an activity welcomed by campers. They enjoyed taping plants (herbs, flowers, etc) they found on the farm into their journals. They wrote about things they learned that day or drew pictures inspired by the farm. They were free to write or draw whatever they wanted and could choose to share it with counselors or not.
8. Lunch: we learned that campers got hungry earlier than we anticipated and pushed lunch earlier some days.
9. Allow time for applying sunscreen and insect repellent once or twice a day.
10. Activity locations: keep these in close proximity so that little ones’ legs don’t get too tired going from one activity to another.
11. The farm to table meal was made possible by a volunteer chef working with campers in small groups throughout the final day of camp. Campers proudly shared the food they had harvested and prepared with their families.
12. *Weather turned out to be an impactful variable this year. Cold temps and rain caused us to spend more time indoors than anticipated. We had to have backup indoor activities and then get outside when conditions allowed.

Project Objectives:

1. Teach sustainable agriculture practices through week-long hands-on activities with farmer Jonah and camp counselors on an organic farm.
2. Introduce youth to sustainable agriculture career opportunities via kids interviewing two farmers, a compost expert, and a beekeeper.
3. Give campers direct-marketing experience by harvesting and preparing for a CSA pickup.
4. Share the value of farm to table through the campers hosting a community meal for their families using vegetables they harvest on the farm.
5. Students share the week of learning through journals brought home at the end of the week, videos shown at farm to table dinner on the last day of camp, photos and

text on Teter Organic Farm's website and Facebook page, as well as Teter Organic Farm Camp's Instagram account.

Cooperators

- [Keith O'Dell](#)

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Compost Expert, owner

Castaway Compost (Commercial (farm/ranch/business))

- [Andrew Fritz](#) (Educator)

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Urban Agriculture Conservationist

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(317) 773-2181 (office)

- [Tara and Lina Boyd](#) (Educator)

Girl Scouts/chicken keepers at Teter Organic Farm

Teter Organic Farm (Nonprofit / non-governmental organization)

- [Barry McNulty](#) (Educator)

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Beekeeper

Teter Organic Farm (Nonprofit / non-governmental organization)

- [Anita Hagen](#) (Educator)

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Executive Director

Hamilton County Harvest Food Bank (Nonprofit / non-governmental organization)

- [Connie Kolb](#) (Educator)

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Farmer

Kolb Family Farm (Commercial (farm/ranch/business))

Educational & Outreach Activities

1 Curricula, factsheets or educational tools

PARTICIPATION SUMMARY:

4 Farmers/ranchers

36 Youth

60 Parents

10 Educators

7 Other adults

Education/outreach description:

1. We created a website for the Farm Camp to inform parents about farm camp and provide them with information about the curriculum.
2. We created a curriculum for the five days of camp. I plan to create a poster describing Teter Farm Camp to share at the 2020 Indiana Small Farms Conference.
3. We engaged with Soil and Water staff, a beekeeper, vegetable and livestock farmers, additional adults who helped lead the BioBlitz, a chef, and our counseling staff to make this camp happen. Thirty-six campers attended, and their parents attended the farm to table meal on the final day of their camp week.
4. We posted photos and excerpts about daily activities on our Teter Organic Farm Camp Instagram and Facebook page.

Learning Outcomes

36 Youth reporting change in knowledge, attitudes, skills and/or awareness

Results and discussion:

Outcomes for Youth:

We used journaling and games to informally measure changes in knowledge, attitude, skills and awareness in our campers. After each learning activity and special guest, campers wrote in their journals. Most campers demonstrated understanding in the sustainable agriculture topics that were covered in our curriculum. Campers engaged in conversations with their counselors and fellow campers each day during reflection time about things they had learned. They also enjoyed fun competition in Owls and Crows games that tested their learning recall. The Bioblitz was an activity that helped synthesize some of the concepts learned during the camp. At the end of the week, the farm to table dinner which campers created with a chef was a culmination of their new knowledge, skills and awareness.

Numerous campers expressed a desire to return to farm camp next year. To us this signifies an increase in interest in sustainable agriculture.

Outcomes for Farm / Farmer:

While the primary objective our Organic Farm Camp was to educate youth about sustainable agriculture, we also learned about how educational programming can fit in the context of a working farm. We found that having a coordinator and staff that are solely devoted to delivering the educational curriculum was crucial both in delivering high quality and safe experiences for youth and ensuring that the regular farm work could be done. We found hands-on activities (harvesting, weeding, planting) were the most interesting and engaging for the youth. It was important for the farmer to schedule in time to work with the youth as a way for youth to have concrete farm experiences that they can carry on with them.

From a broader perspective, educational on farm programming can serve as an additional revenue stream to help balance the risk inherent with crop production. Youth programming has helped us build broader community interest and support both in Teter Organic Farm and sustainable agriculture in general.

Project Outcomes

5 New working collaborations

Increased organizational support to explore and teach sustainable ag:

Yes

Success stories:

Each week, multiple campers told counselors that they wanted to return to Teter Organic Farm Camp next summer. During the second week, two eleven-year old girls who were formerly repulsed by worms held red wigglers after the compost guest speaker's talk and activity. That same week, more eleven-year old girls who did not like to get dirty reported enjoying harvesting and sorting lettuce, composting and learning about chickens.

Recommendations:

If you are planning programming for a certain population, try and gather data on the level of interest from that population to help accurately predict enrollment and how to best structure your programming. For example, some families might be most interested in after-school programming, while others might be more interested in full day summer programming. It can be difficult to gauge interest levels anecdotally. It was difficult to gauge whether we would meet our enrollment goals, largely in part because some families don't plan way in advance and also because we were introducing this camp for the first time. Work hard to offer incentives for early enrollment, and build those incentives into your budget.

-Do research on pricing, and if you need to, offer scholarships plan for this early on

-Insurance

-Support system of advisors (Safety, Child welfare / social worker, grade teacher, well connected parents)

Information Products

- [Teter Organic Farm Camp with MaryEllen St. Angelo \(Multimedia\)](#)

Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the U.S. Department of Agriculture or SARE.



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