

“Ag is Cool” Written Expression Scholarship Contest

By Alexa Mier, Age 10 (Going into 5th grade this year)

I went to the fair and learned about agriculture at all the different stations. My first stop was in the ODA Tent to get my passport. In this tent I learned the weights of most farm animals and the different kinds of things that were made in Ohio. Ohio’s foods and agriculture industries adds 96 billion dollars to our economy and employs 1 in 7 Ohioans. We went to the beef barn next. Beef is an excellent source of protein which is found in all living cells meaning it is found in all meat. If you had cattle grazing on your land and someone wanted to build a house on your land they probably could not because most spots where cattle graze are too hilly or steep for houses. The hooves of cattle loosen soil so you can grow crops on your land easily. In the poultry barn I learned that it takes twenty one days for a chicken egg under the correct conditions to hatch and when they do they have a tooth to pip out with. They never use that tooth again. At the chicken factory they use the chicken manure to make fertilizer. At the pig barn I learned about how barns protect pigs from extreme temperatures and predators. The barns have slat floors so manure can fall in. The pigs eat soy and corn ground together. In the sheep barn I learned about how 1 pound of wool can be used to make 1 mile of yarn, but it depends on the yarn. If it is thin yarn it can make 2 miles of yarn but if it is thick yarn it might only make 1 mile. In the corn and soy barn I learned that soy beans are a renewable resource, which means that they are a resource that can be used over and over again. Soy and corn make up most of our livestock food. Ohio’s livestock farms will eat more than 100,000,000 bushels of Ohio field corn this year.

In the end the one thing that I learned the most about from my “Ag Is Cool” passport was the lifecycle of agriculture. First the corn or soy is grown. Then it is made into grain for the farm animals. Then the healthy farm animals have babies and make milk for other things like ice cream. Then the farm animals make manure that is used to fertilize corn and soy and the lifecycle continues.