

Agriculture is Cool

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Over a two day period in July 2013 I went to the Ohio State Fair with my family. We visited the Agriculture is Cool stations and I learned many things about agriculture.

First stop, Sheep Barn! At the sheep barn I learned about many things sheep contribute to. Such as clothing, tennis balls, chewing gum and yarn. I raised lambs for a 4H project and didn't know this stuff. While I was there I saw people spinning wool. One lady was making stockings and another lady made a wall hanging out of felt. At home I have wool clothing like my warm winter jacket.

The next place we visited was the swine barn. I was able to see a pig with baby piglets. I never knew pigs had so many babies! There was also another pig who was ready to have babies, but we didn't get to see that. Pigs can die easily so you have to keep them out of extreme weather so they can grow and be healthy. I got to see an example of a type of barn that they can be raised in. I learned that piglets can grow really fast and can get over 200 pounds in 6 months. Pigs can give us bacon, sausage, ham, and even sweets, shampoos and candles.

We then visited the Agriculture- Horticulture building and visited the station about corn and wheat. I learned an ear of corn has about 800 kernels of corn and one silk for each kernel. Corn and wheat are important because they provide food for animals and people. I know this is important for Ohio because many farmers around where I live grow corn and wheat, even my Great Grandparents. I also got to see baby chicks hatching and we got to plant our own corn and sunflowers.

The next station was the soybean station. I learned that you can make soybean soap and chapstick. My sisters and I each got to make our own soy soap and chapstick with the help of some FFA students. It was fun and easy to do because they helped us. I also got to take home a cleaner for our grill. I didn't know that soy beans could be used as a cleaner.

Another station was the Ohio Farm Bureau. My county is Union and I learned that Marysville was a big part of the Underground Railroad. Stephen F. Kinney's barn was a hiding place for freedom seekers. They can help farmers in all counties.

The second day we visited the fair I went to the ODA display. I learned that Ohio grows and raises 200 different types of crops and livestock. That's a lot! I got to compare the amount of food that I eat each day with someone in Africa. I had to make a guess how much rice someone in Africa gets to eat each day. I almost got the exact amount. I learned that they don't get a lot to eat and that I sometimes get way too much. Ohio even sends food to other countries. I got to see different animals and even climb on a big combine.

We then went and stopped at the Beef barn. I learned that beef has a lot of by products such as chewing gum, also leather for sports equipment. My family and I put together a puzzle on a cow body that told us where the by products came from. I always thought we only got meat from cows. These cows also eat a lot of corn so if we didn't have farmers, then they might not get enough corn to eat.

At the Dairy barn I learned that cows drink 30-50 gallons of water a day! I was surprised by that. The cows get milked and provide milk that can be used for people. Milk gives us butter, ice cream and cheese. My Great Grandparents have a dairy farm and I know that they milk their cows with a machine not their hands like at the fair. If we didn't have dairy cows we would not get milk to make our bones and teeth stronger.

And last but not least we visited the poultry barn. I learned that Ohio's poultry farmers are #2 in the USA for producing so many eggs. I also saw so many different breeds of chickens. Chickens are important because Kentucky Fried Chicken wouldn't exist! Poultry farmers give us chicken and eggs to eat and they can even make pillows and blankets out of feathers.

These are some of the things I learned in the Agriculture is Cool program at the Ohio State Fair.