

# Youth Access Local Produce Because of Extension

## COOPERATIVE EXTENSION



## Hardin County Extension Collaborates with Community Partners to Bring the "Power of Produce" to the Farmers' Market

*Youth apply nutrition/health knowledge and financial literacy skills when making decisions to purchase local food.*

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*It starts with us*



*Youth learned where their food comes from by participating in Extension activities.*



*Extension staff conducted the Farm to School activities at the Hardin County Farmers Market.*

The Power of Produce (POP) Club was designed to empower children to make healthy food choices, to expand the farmers market from a retail location into a place where children can try new foods and learn about healthy eating,

as well as, strengthen and sustain healthy communities through supporting farmers and cultivating future farmer market supporters.

**Hardin County** Extension was the first to pilot POP Club in Kentucky. Extension and the Farmers Market Board, increased attendance by youth (under 18) and their parents at the Hardin County Farmers Market. Over 600 youth attended one or more of the eight events in 2017 that allowed them to earn money to spend at the Farmers Market.

Extension staff conducted the POP Club Activity Station. Activities at the station allowed youth to taste a recipe that incorporated a local Kentucky Proud item and they learned how that food was produced. Ninety-four percent reported learning something new about where their food came from. By completing the food production activities and sampling a new food, youth earned \$2 or \$4 of market money to spend at the farmers market. The youth visited the Magnolia Bank booth to discuss their earnings and decide if they should spend the credit/money that day or deposit the money to spend on another day at the market. Youth earned \$3,000 by participating in POP Club activities in 2017.

Vendors reported that adult sales increased between 15% and 20% on POP Club Days. Seventy-five percent of parents reported that their children requested recipes they sampled to be prepared at home. Parents reported that their picky eaters looked forward to POP Club days and expanded the variety of foods that they eat.

A University of Kentucky Family and Consumer Sciences Mini-grant, and matching funds from Magnolia Bank funded the project. Farm Credit Mid America provided support for the Activity Station.

**Hardin County Farmers Market Vendors experiences 15% to 20% increase in sales on Power of Produce Club days.**

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