

Federally-Recognized Tribes Extension Program
2008 HIGHLIGHTS

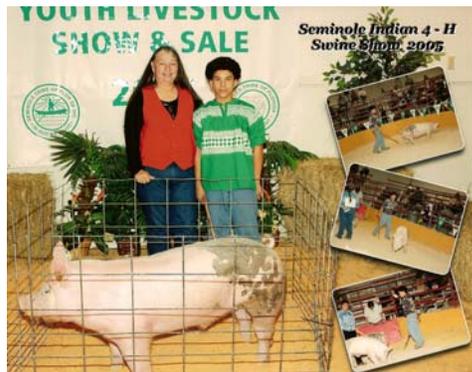
FRTEP UNIT: Florida

PROGRAM AREA (Ex. Agriculture, Youth at Risk etc.):

PROGRAM TITLE: 4-H Seminole Indian Youth Livestock and Youth at Risk

ISSUE(S) ADDRESSED: Native American youth are exposed to a number of “youth at risk” factors which may lead consequently to altercations with law enforcement. These problems are not only restricted to the reservations, but also has an effect on local non-tribal populations. The Seminole Tribe of Florida has a rich heritage in animal husbandry and is noted for having one of the nations leading cattle programs. This Tribe has worked on teaching youth many responsibilities in raising livestock. It is through these opportunities that 4-H and Extension has had the ability to reach out to these youth and gain their trust and convey an understanding of the ramifications of their actions. Further through tribal livestock projects and record keeping the youth gain an understanding of money management. Subsequently our youth are learning to be productive citizens in their local and non-local communities.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: The target audience for these programs are youth and young adults ages 5-18. The Seminole tribe consists of six different reservations. Four of the reservations are in urban areas and two are located in rural settings. We have been successful in having livestock projects at the Hollywood and Ft. Pierce reservations which are urban and the two rural reservations Brighton, and Big Cypress. The goals and focus of 4-H tribal animal livestock projects are 1) introduce the youth to their rich heritage in animal husbandry through increased numbers of participation in 4-H, 2) assist our youth to become constructive prominent citizens and help our kids to be less likely involved in illegal activities and, 3) how to care for and keep records in animal husbandry and see an increase of youth scoring in the 90 percentile range from 50% to 85% in record book scoring, 4) help strengthen family bonds through cooperation of parent involvement, essentially all parents helping.



PROGRAM IMPACT: In year 2007-2008 we had 85 animal livestock projects at the county level, and nine state level projects. In year 2008-2009 our numbers have increased, we currently have 105 participants at the county level and 15 students participating at the state level. 4-H animal clubs conduct monthly meetings. During these meetings attendance is significant and the youth are taught about caring for their animals and record keeping. At monthly meetings the youth are exposed to their roles as community members and what it means to be productive citizens. We have hosted county Judges and law enforcement officials at the monthly meetings to discuss the ramification of “what if” a youth gets in legal trouble or more importantly how to avoid these problems. In unofficial communications with the Seminole Police department and tribal family services it is suggested that “our” kids are less likely to have been involved in illegal activities. The 4-H children are required to keep record books of their livestock project. These record books are graded at the end of the project. We conduct record keeping classes for youth and their caregivers. It is evidenced through grading the record books that greater than 85% of participants are scoring in the 90 percentile range, which has gradually increased over the years from the 50% to 70% range. A successful animal project requires adults to be working with their children. The Extension agent makes home site visits periodically to check on projects and it is obvious that there is family involvement. Finally at our annual livestock show and sale the parents become directly involved as volunteers during this event. I have never had a parent say no I will not help. Currently we are working on improving strong citizenship and we look forward to a positive future.

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