

Federally-Recognized Tribes Extension Program
2008 HIGHLIGHTS

FRTEP UNIT: Warm Springs Indian Reservation, Oregon

PROGRAM AREA (Ex. Agriculture, Nutrition etc.): Agriculture

PROGRAM TITLE: Agriculture in the Classroom in Indian Country

ISSUE(S) ADDRESSED: Tribal youth are being challenged today by modern lifestyles that detach them from natural resources and traditional agricultural understanding. In addition, the Warm Springs Tribal Council is emphasizing tribal youth development especially with regards to natural resources. The Warm Springs Elementary School provides education from grades K – 5, and is a natural connection to tribal youth for FRTEP Extension youth programming. Their curriculum is very stringent, but in the spring months there is a little more “spare” time that teachers can utilize for other programs.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: Three years ago, FRTEP Extension at Warm Springs brought in the Agriculture in the Classroom program to the 4th. Grade at Warm Springs Elementary. This national program focuses on increasing youth learning skills while using agricultural concepts. The goal at Warm Springs was to link this program with a hands on project that the grade school youth could track and learn from. The first year, two hogs were raised in a small pen by the Extension office, a stone’s throw away from the school. The past two years have focused on growing a small garden that the youth have daily access to. Youth began the project by growing seedlings in their classroom, and then learning how to garden by planting their seedlings and tracking them to harvest. In addition, the tribal Culture and Heritage Department helps to teach some of the classes by explaining the harvest procedure for cultural foods. The produce from the garden is then utilized by our partnering Food and Community Development Extension program. This year, the school also allowed Extension staff to take the youth on a root digging field trip that was done in conjunction with the tribal Culture and Heritage Department

PROGRAM IMPACT: Prior evaluations by the 4th. Grade teachers have shown a positive impact by this program on youth learning skills. The school continues to partner with Extension in this program. This year, the school allowed a field trip as part of the program which indicates further support. In addition, this year the program expanded to include a week long summer session with active youth participation and hands on learning.

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