

Need for Research

- Agriculture and STEM fields report a shortage of skilled workers (Goeker, Smith, Fernandez, Ali, & Theller, 2015; U.S. Congress Joint Economic Committee, 2012)
- There is a lack of females pursuing degrees and careers in STEM fields (National Science Foundation, 2008, 2011)
- One function of the FFA Agriscience Fair is to expose students to STEM careers and help them develop skills and confidence in agricultural science
- There is little research explaining (1) how the FFA agriscience fair influences students' career and (2) what motivates students to participate in the agriscience fair and the influence of the agriscience fair on career choice.

Methods and Purpose

- This study sought to describe the motives for students participation in the agriscience fair and the influence of the agriscience fair on career choice
- Survey (Qualtrics)
- Sample of participants in the Utah Stat FFA agriscience Fair ($n = 132$)
- Response rate of 59% ($n = 78$)

Theoretical Framework

- The theoretical framework for this study was the Social Learning Theory of Career Decision Making (Krumboltz, Mitchell, & Jones, 1976; Mitchell, 1990).
- Based on 3 factors: personal factors, environmental conditions, and learning experiences.

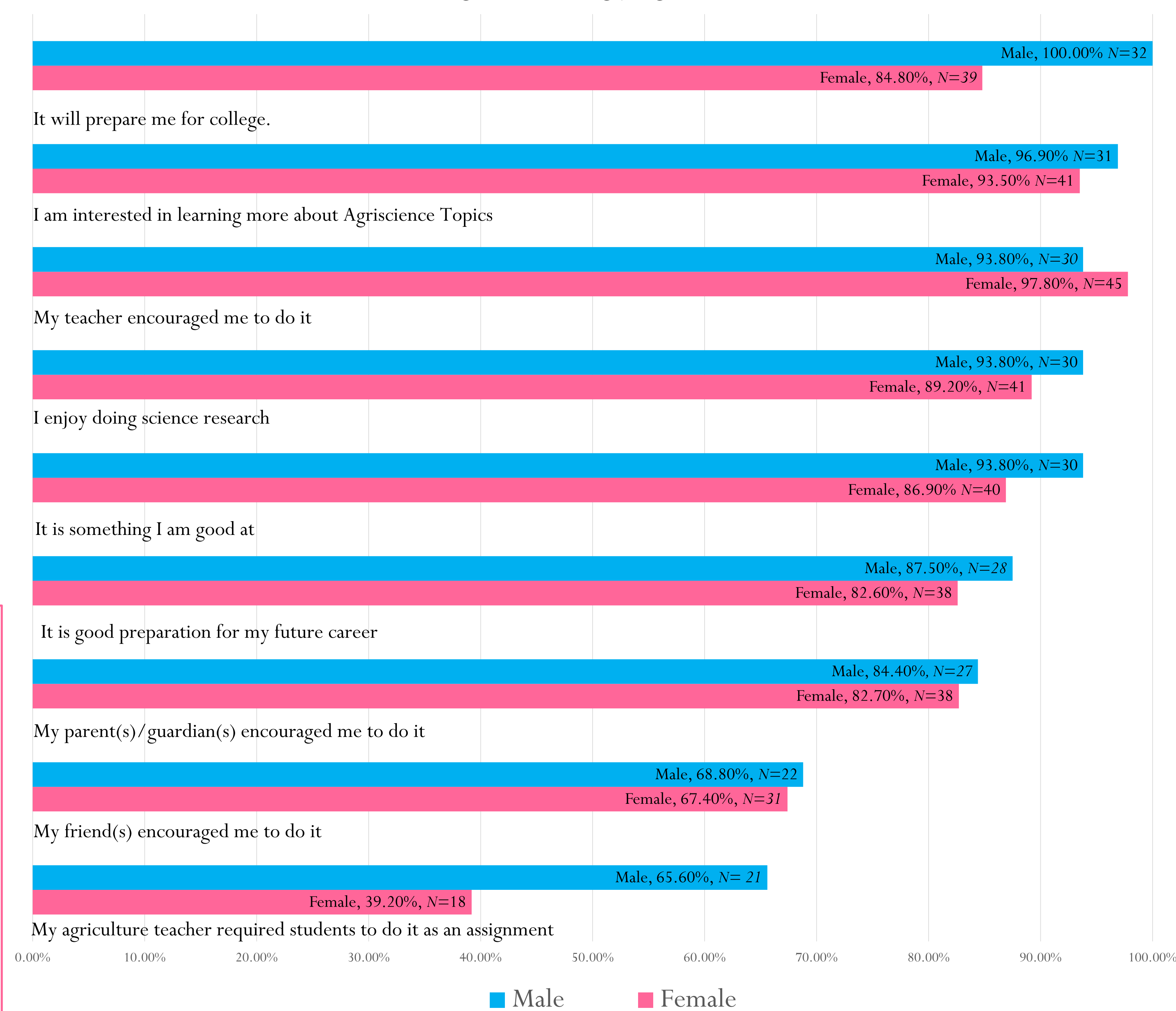


To the Fair!

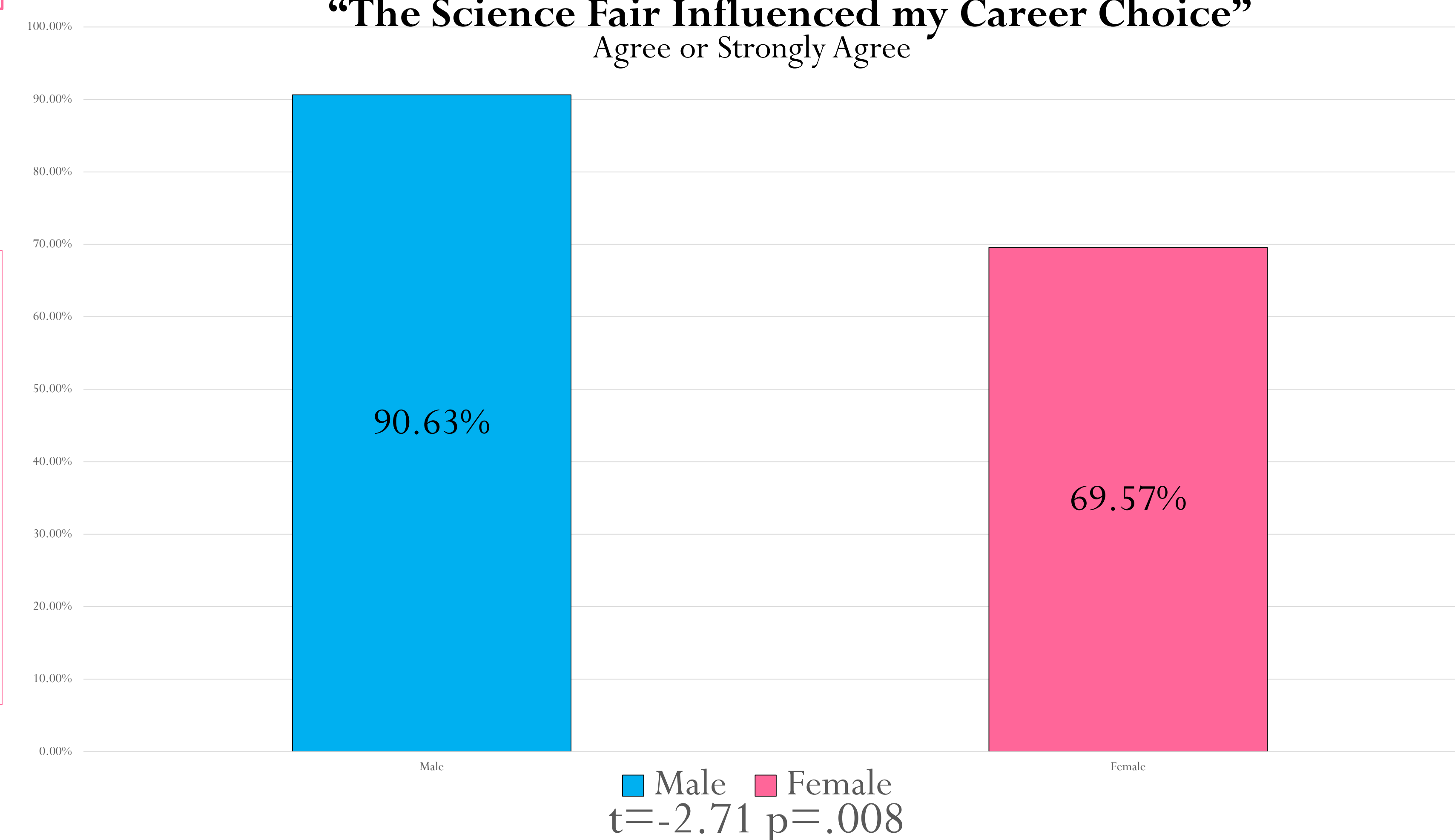
Exploring the Influence of the FFA Agriscience Fair on Career Aspirations

Cassidy Dutton & Tyson J. Sorensen - Utah State University

Why Do Students Participate in the Agriscience Fair? Agree or Strongly Agree



"The Science Fair Influenced my Career Choice" Agree or Strongly Agree



Conclusions

- Top reasons for participation in the agriscience fair was enjoyment of competition (personal factor), encouragement from teacher (social factor), and interest in science fair (personal factor)
- Males experienced more pressure from their teacher to participate, but felt the science fair influenced their career choice more than females and was statistically significant
- We recommend research explore this difference in males and females for other career development events
- We recommend teachers continue to encourage student participation, especially competitive students, and those interested in science

30 Second Summary

- There is little research explaining how the FFA Agriscience Fair influences student's career aspirations and their motivations to participate in the agriscience fair
- Study sought to describe the motives for participation and the influence the agriscience fair had on career choice
- Top reasons for participation were 1) competition, 2) encouragement from teacher and 3) Interest in science fair
- Males experienced more pressure from teachers to participate, but felt the science fair influenced their career choice more than females