

# Establishing a 4-H Facilitator Guide to Teaching Youth About Sustainability



## Need for Innovation

Nationally, 4-H does not currently have a curriculum that is focused on sustainability. It is important that adults teach youth about sustainability in order to provide the knowledge and skills future generations will need to ensure the longevity of natural resources.

## Methodology

- A logic model was used to develop a blueprint for building the program. A pilot of the activities was conducted at a local elementary school with an afterschool group of 4th graders (n=37).
- Qualitative feedback from the adult educators and youth informed a holistic approach to designing a facilitator guide.
- An expert panel at the University of Florida was asked to review the curriculum and provide feedback on the design, appropriateness of the activities, and ease of use for a classroom or other 4-H delivery mode; refinements were made accordingly.

## Results to Date

80% of youth who participated in the program changed some behavior that related to water conservation, energy conservation, or waste management. The pilot project has provided data that shows there is a need for a curriculum that adults can use to teach youth about sustainability from a systematic approach. This approach would provide the conceptual framework for the understanding of the interconnectedness of food, water, and energy. This curriculum also has the potential to inspire youth to pursue careers in disciplines relating to sustainability.

## Cost & Resources Needed

Once approved, the curriculum will be available for free online. Most of the items on the material list contains items that teachers and/or volunteers may already have at their disposal. The estimated total cost is \$250-300.

## Future Plans

- The curriculum is being reviewed with the state level action team to assist in developing a comprehensive evaluation tool, peer reviews, and submission for publication at the state level
- Members from the expert review panel will be using the curriculum in their 2020 summer programming

## Curriculum

The lessons include:

- What is sustainability
- Global food systems
- Renewable energy and conservation
- Consumerism and waste management
- Waste reduction, composting, & recycling
- Tying it all together- food, energy, & water
- Community/civic engagement - Making changes