Homeschooled Students’ Access to Participate in School-based Agricultural Education Programs

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Introduction

• Need to address grand challenges of agriculture (e.g. feed and clothe ~9 billion people by 2050) (Godfray et al., 2010)

• Demand for graduates with degrees in agricultural fields will continue to increase (Foster et al., 2015)

• One strategy is to expand secondary Agricultural Education (Doerfert, 2011)

• FFA realizes the need to expand (Crutchfield, 2013) and increase program accessibility
Homeschooling in the U.S.

• Recognized as potential growth market by Agricultural Education (Frick & Brennan, 1998; Weik, 2015)

• Continuing to grow (~8% per year, now over 2 million children) (Ray, 2011)

• High quality students with involved parents (Ice & Hoover-Dempsey, 2011)

Source: Clemmitt, 2014
Homeschoolers, Agricultural Education, and FFA

• Some SBAE programs have expanded to include the homeschooling community, but how?

• Observed program participation pathways (Johnson, 2012; Massey, 2015):
  • Homeschool Agricultural Education programs and FFA chapters
  • Part-time public school enrollment

• Limited research on the homeschooling community and Agricultural Education (i.e., Walls et al., 2001)
Current Program Accessibility

- Conceptually framed around three state-level policies.
Current Program Accessibility

- Qualitative policy analysis using evaluation coding (Saldaña, 2013)
Current Program Accessibility
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• Five states (AK, ID, IL, MI, NC) have high potential (green) (AK and NC have homeschool FFA chapters)

• Twenty-two states (AL, AZ, AR, CA, DE, IN, IA, KS, LA, ME, MS, MO, MT, NE, NV, NH, NJ, NM, TX, UT, WI, WY) have moderate potential (yellow)

• Nineteen states (CO, CT, FL, GA, KY, MA, MN, ND, OH, OR, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, VT, VA, WA, WV) have low potential (orange)

• Four states (HI, MD, NY, OK) have no potential (red)
Connection to Higher Education

• Relationship between FFA participation and undergraduate leadership at land grant colleges of agriculture (Park & Dyer, 2005)

• Former FFA members more engaged on campus (Balschweid & Talbert, 2000; Allen et al., 2007)

• Another way of actively recruiting homeschoolers (Romanowski, 2006)

• Potentially increase enrollment in colleges of agriculture
Future Research

• Survey of state FFA leadership
  • Gatekeepers at the state level with state policy
  • Perceptions of homeschooling, beliefs and values of increasing program access

• Three state survey of local FFA advisors
  • Gatekeepers at the local level with local policy
  • Importance of local access
References


Questions?