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News and features written by Pennsylvania 4-H Members.

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Speakers, Sessions and Smiles at Ag Progress Days

Annually, Ag Progress Days is the backdrop of agricultural development for the future. The Pennsylvania 4-H State Council was blessed to attend the 48th Ag Progress Days in August.

The three-day event showcases the latest innovations in agricultural technology and practices. Farmers, researchers and industry professionals come together to share their expertise and knowledge with attendees.

The event features educational seminars, equipment demonstrations and vendor exhibits — all of which the Pennsylvania 4-H State Council had the opportunity to explore.

Learning just how much our agricultural practices within the state have changed over the past 48 years is incredible and very inspiring. One of the highlights of our visit was the demonstrations and seminars.

In addition, we had the opportunity to meet and learn from representatives such as Congressman Glenn “GT” Thompson, Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture Russell Redding, Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Xochitl Torres-Small, Penn State President Neeli Bendapudi, and PSU Dean Troy Ott.

By attending all these demonstrations, seminars and meeting with special guests, the 4-H State Council recognized the greatest opportunity at Ag Progress Days was getting to spend time meeting the many different small operation



The Pennsylvania 4-H State Council with, from left, U.S. Deputy Ag Secretary Xochitl Torres Small, Sen. Elder Vogel, and Ag Secretary Russell Redding.

Submitted photos

farmers and those with various interests in agricultural.

Talking to everyone truly was a learning experience, and 4-H State Council could not have been more

grateful to hear about and appreciate everything everyone does for our communities, state, country and world. Here are a few takeaways:

Alyssa Horton
Secretary

“Our team’s experiences at Ag Progress days this year is definitely something I will never forget. From connecting with governmental officials, sitting in on informative sessions, visiting booths, businesses and organizations, to talking with youth, it was a phenomenal time. The event fosters new ideas and advancements within the agricultural industry and is an event everyone needs to experience.”

Reuben Knepper
Communications Committee

“Learning about how our representatives in the government aspect

help advocate for agriculture is very exciting. Seeing them work to strengthen our communities is always amazing. Learning about new procedures and legal matters that

are getting set in place is very insightful. Talking one-on-one to our state leaders was very eye opening. Being from an agricultural background, it’s very assuring to know we have such great people backing up the most important thing in the United States. I can’t thank everyone enough for our amazing trip to Ag Progress Days!”

Sammi Strouse
Events Committee

“Ag progress days was one of the best experiences I could have had. We got to meet so many amazing people like Dean Troy Ott of Penn State and one of my personal favorites, President Bendapudi of Penn State. We had personal one-on-one conversations with these individuals as well as so many others. Myself and the rest of the 2024 State Council walked around talking to many individuals who gave us opportunities to see what they were truly about, telling us about their amazing companies and what they are doing to support 4-H and ag. I truly wish many more individuals get to experience Ag Progress Days”

Reflecting on the experience, the Pennsylvania 4-H State Council could not help but feel inspired by everything we saw and learned at Ag Progress Days.

We were so grateful for the opportunity to be a part of such an impactful event and be surrounded by like-minded individuals who share a passion for innovation and making the best better.



4-H State Council with the 2024 Pennsylvania fair queen, Erica Teagarden, and queen alternate, Elise Honeycutt.



The 4-H State Council talks with Congressman Glenn “GT” Thompson.

Google Announces \$250,000 in Funding to Pennsylvania 4-H

Google.org, the company’s philanthropy, announced it will provide \$250,000 to Pennsylvania 4-H to support rural Pennsylvania students and educators as they learn to use AI effectively in the classroom and workplace.

As the demand for AI skills surges, 72% of K-12 students want guidance on how to use generative AI responsibly.

The funding, which will be subgranted by National 4-H Council, will go into the Pennsylvania 4-H Connected Communities AI and Agriculture Initiatives program.

The program is designed to introduce youths to the transformative applications of artificial intelligence across various industries, including specialized fields such as turf management.

Participants will collaborate with community innovators through engaging workshops, student summits and special interest projects to explore how AI can revolutionize future career opportunities. Along with Google.org funding, 4-H will incorporate Google AI learning resources into their training.

The organization will also offer

Generative AI for Educators, a two-hour, self-paced course designed to help educators save time and enhance student learning with generative AI tools.

The funding will support five education organizations — ISTE, 4-H, CodePath, aiEDU, and STEM From Dance — in their efforts to provide AI skills training to 500,000 educators and students across the country.

Organizations will use the funding to develop AI curriculum to support the needs of the teachers and students they serve, with a

focus on teaching foundational AI skills, how to use AI responsibly, and how to leverage the technology to boost productivity and learning.

“Mentorship and career training are essential for setting young people up for lifelong success,” said Jill Bramble, president and CEO, National 4-H Council. “The Pennsylvania 4-H Connected Communities AI and Agriculture Initiatives will expose youth to AI applications across different industries. This collaboration will help them discover exciting career paths that align with their interests

as they prepare for both work and life.”

This funding builds on Google’s commitment to provide digital skills training throughout the Keystone State.

Last summer, Gov. Josh Shapiro announced The Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education’s offering of the Google Career Certificates program to students across the state, allowing them to earn college credit and an industry-recognized certificate at the same time.

Administered in Pennsylvania by Penn State Extension, 4-H is a community of more than 6 million young people across America learning leadership, citizenship and life skills. Penn State Extension 4-H youth development educators in all 67 counties throughout the commonwealth administer local 4-H programs through non-formal education and outreach. To find your local program, visit the Penn State Extension website at <https://extension.psu.edu/programs/4-h>.



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