

Hands-on Ag Day 2015

“I’ve never been on a farm before,” says a very excited Serenity Carpenter, a 5th grader at Central Elementary School in Marshall County.

She and 366 other 5th graders from throughout the county took a trip down on the farm September 17 and 18 as part of Marshall County’s Hands-on Ag Day. The event involves 9 schools, public and private. The goal according to Katie Fitzsimmons, the District Conservationist for the Northern Panhandle with the National Resources Conservation Service, is to give each child a chance to learn about agriculture up close and personal.

“They learn about the different layers of soil. They learn grass grows on that. The cows eat it. She’ll produce milk,” explains Fitzsimmons.

She says about half of the students who attend Hands-on Ag Day at the Marshall County Fairgrounds have never even visited a farm.

“That’s one of my favorite parts, watching these kids get to pet or feed a goat!”

Lisa Ingram, the WVU 4-H Extension Agent says the students get a little taste of agriculture and they take what they learn with them.

“Food just doesn’t come from a package at Krogers. The kids can see what these animals are used for, where the products they buy in the store actually come from,” says Ingram.

Whether it’s making butter, getting a lesson in beekeeping or grinding corn, Fitzsimmons says the 5th graders seem to soak up the farm facts.

“It’s an age where they’re more receptive to learning and they remember coming here to Hands-on Ag Day.”

She hopes these students will want to continue learning by joining 4-H or FFA.



Marshall County 5th graders watch a sheep shearing demonstration and ask WVU 4-H Extension Agent Lisa Ingram questions.



Washington Lands Elementary students learn about soil by conducting hands-on experiments.