Kid's Korner

First-Graders Visit White Rock Farm

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KIRKWOOD (Lancaster Co.) — Did you know that vitamins, ball bearings, tires, crayons, shoes, and glue are made from cows?

That's what 25 first graders learned when they visited the farm of classmate Loren and his parents, Les and Lois Hershey, recently.

Brad Sommers does a cartwheel on the grass at the farm.

In fact, many more unusual items are made from parts of the cow. Les told the students that 98 percent of the cow is processed for use. That includes items made from the hide, hair, hooves, teeth, bones, body fat, and internal organs of a cow.

Students took turns drawing items from a box to learn about some of the articles that are made from the cow.

Baseball gloves, balls, rubberbands, and gummy bears were some of the children's favorite things that they found in the box. The students even got a gummy bear to eat and some homemade ice cream that they helped churn from the milk of a cow.

In order for the cow to make nutritious milk, cows need to eat a balanced diet and not junk food. The children got to mix feed for the cows. This included corn, corn silage, shelled corn, soybeans, and cotton seed. The children mixed it in a wheelbarrow and then dumped it in a hammer mill where it was grinded.

Every day, each cow eats 30 pounds silage, 15 pounds grain, 15 pounds hay, and nutrients such as calcium, magnesium, phosphorous, salt, and a vitamin pack are added. The nutrition of the feed varies depending on the soil and weather conditions, for this reason, the feed is analyzed at a lab every two weeks.

Each cow also drinks 30 gallons of water each day. If the cows are fed and taken care of properly, each cow will produce about 200 glasses of milk each day.

The farmer told the children how he grows hay for the cows. When he cuts the hay, he cannot see what is in the tall grass. Unfortunately, many people throw trash in the fields as they drive by in the car. The trash gets in the feed. Broken soda bottles and empty Coke cans can cut the cow's throat or tongue and can even kill a cow. The broken glass and sharp tin can also flatten tractor tires. It costs $600 to $1,000 to replace a tractor tire.

"If you litter a farmer's field, it is just like someone who would spit on your food or lay a cigarette on it," Les said.

The students petted the cows, puppies, bunnies, and the sheep on the farm. They climbed on the tractors and had a hay ride on the wagon. They made sun shots by placing leaves and flowers on a special piece of paper under glass that was placed in the sun for a few minutes. The paper was then dipped in water and the outline of the leaves and flowers made a pretty print picture for them to take home.

The students said that it was fun to see where food comes from. Before they visited the farm, they took a test to see how much they knew about farm life. Here is the quiz for you to take.

Les Hershey holds a special surprise — a cow pie that he made for the teacher's birthday. After it was baked in the sun, the cow pie was topped with birthday candles. Of course, the teacher and the children did not eat the pie, but they learned that cow pies are full of nutrition that helps crops grow when spread on the fields.

Grandpa Floyd oversees the ice cream churning as first graders from Bart Colerain took turns cranking the ice cream freezer.

1. Farmers are important to us because they: a) work hard, b) are intelligent, c) provide us with food, d) have a lot of land

2. An average farmer in U.S. feeds how many people: a) 5, b) 16, c) 52, d) 114

3. Farmers depend on a very important thing that they have no control of: a) kind of tractors they drive, b) the weather, c) how many cows they have

4. What plant or animal do the following foods come from:

milk-	bacon-	butter-
steaks-hamburgers-	cheese-	margarine-
french fries-	eggs-	spaghetti-
Cereal-	pancake syrup-	ice cream-
corn flakes-	ham-	peanut butter-
	mayonnaise-	

5. How many stomachs does a cow have? a) 1, b) 2, c)3, d)4

6. Circle the things a steer or cow might eat: a) grass, b) potatoes, c) chocolate candy, d) hay, e) apples, f) pretzels, g) grain, h.) potato chips

7. Circle the things people do not eat: a) potatoes, b) grass, c) strawberries, d) corn, e) hay

8. When riding in the car with your family, what is one very important thing you can do to help farmers? a) wave at them, b) do not litter or throw trash in field

9. What can you always do at mealtime that makes a farmer (and your parents) happy? a) eat all the food on your plate, b) throw some food away

10. What do you like best about a farmer?

If I were a farmer I would....

1.c. provide us with food. 2.d.114. 3.b.the weather. 4.milk-cow; steaks, hamburgers-cows or steers; french fries-potato; corn flakes-corn; mayonnaise-soybean oil, eggs; bacon-pig; cheese-cow; eggs-chicken; pancake syrup-corn or maple syrup; ham-pig; butter-cow; margarine-corn; spaghetti-wheat; ice cream-cow; peanut butter-peanuts.
5.d.4.6.everything.7.b.grass and e.hay.8.b.do not litter or throw trash in the fields. 9. a. eat the food on your plate.

The 25 students were divided into groups and took turns playing with the floppy-ear bunnies.