

Roots Up – Kids

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Overview



Roots Up – Kids is an interactive program designed to educate youth on food systems related to production and consumption of local foods. Youth participants learned to incorporate healthy choices, food safety, and local agricultural sources. Youth interacted with local farmers to understand the journey of farm to table with products like fruits, vegetables, meat, milk, and eggs.

This program was delivered in six unique, 1-hour classes to youth ages 8-12. In each class, a different local commodity was featured, and participants were taught about the product from production to consumption. Each class included an opportunity for participants to prepare and sample recipes featuring the selected commodity, and participants left with recipe cards that they could replicate with their families at home.



Program Content

In 2021, Roots Up – Kids classes were delivered:

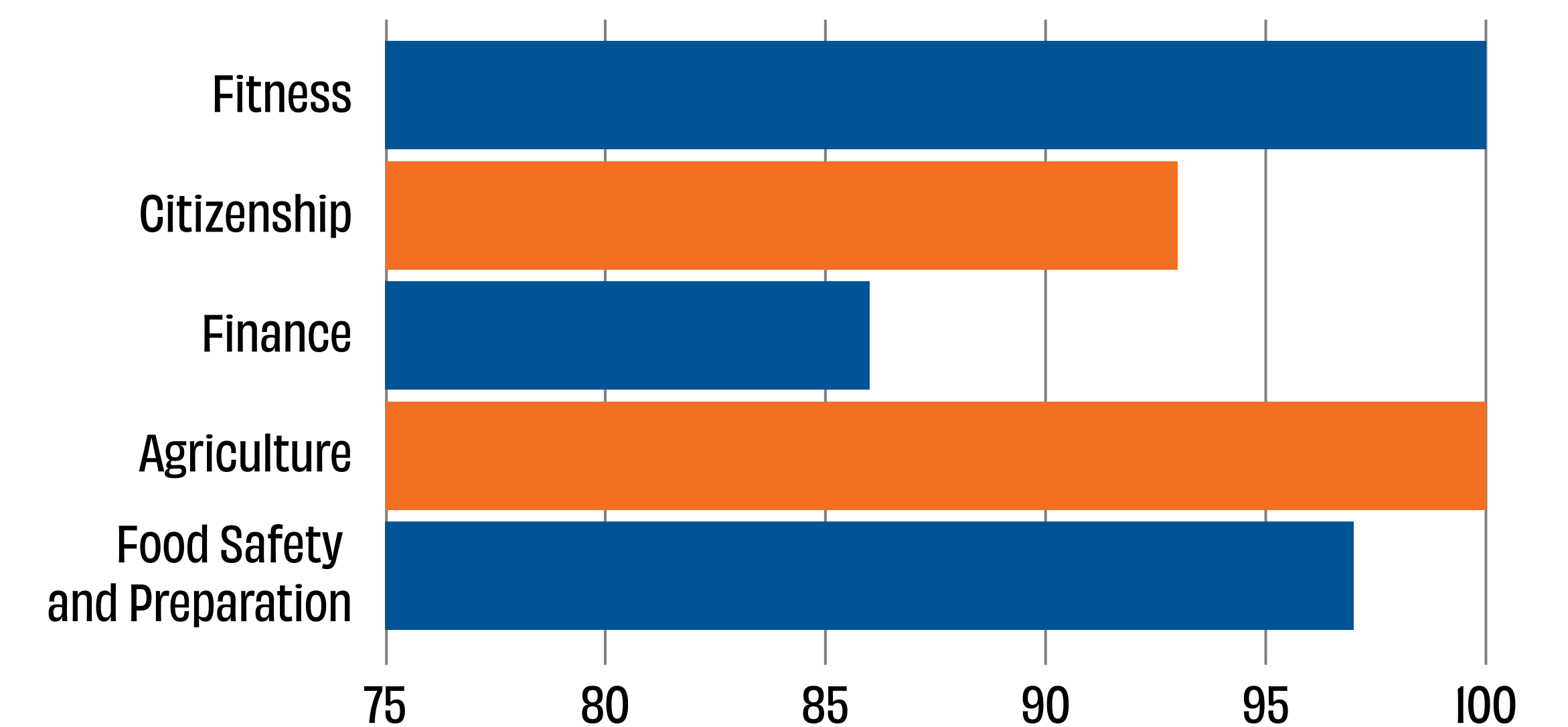
- Grow Your Own Whole Grain Pizza
 - » Learned how to plant herbs, tomatoes, peppers
 - » Prepared their own whole grain pizza
- Pumpkin Spice and Everything Nice
 - » Virtually visited a local U-Pick farm
 - » Learned how pumpkins grow
 - » Participated in a guided demonstration to prepare pumpkin spice dip
- Bring Your Etiquette and Thanks
 - » Local turkey farmer and talked about turkey husbandry
 - » Local farm provided beets, carrots, and sweet potatoes.
 - » Learned how to menu plan and do a cost analysis
 - » Learned to roast vegetables for thanksgiving
- Sharing Is Caring
 - » Visited U-Pick Citrus and Peach farm
 - » Learned about community service opportunities during the holidays
 - » Made gifts for the environment and family
- Can You Can?
 - » Visited local strawberry farm and learned about strawberry production
 - » Harvested strawberries.
 - » Learned how to make freezer strawberry jam
- Smart at Heart
 - » Learned about the importance of physical activity
 - Received workout cards, bands, and jump ropes
 - Participated in workout activities
 - Learned meals that are fit for a smart heart



Evaluation Methods

Evaluation data was collected utilizing surveys, participation comments, observations, and parent interviews three months after the last class. The collected data demonstrated that youth gained knowledge in making healthy choices, food safety, and identifying food sources. From participating in Roots Up – Kids, youth reported the following knowledge gain:

Participant Knowledge and Skill Gain (%)



Parents reported, 3 months after the program, that 93% of participants had revisited local farms and that they utilized the following skills from the Roots Up – Kids program:

- Knife skills
- Food preservation
- Measuring
- Mixing

Program Replication

This program is easily replicated as it provides a variety of program delivery opportunities and resources. This program can be modified for age-appropriate experiences and focus on any agricultural commodity available in your locality.