For Immediate Release

School tours demonstrate importance of the North American International

By Regan Emkes

LOUISVILLE, KY – November 13, 2014 – More than 1,700 elementary students will visit the exhibits at the North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE) by the end of the two-week run. Exposition School Tour Administrator Susan Simmons says that in just the short month that she’s been in the position, school tours have been the most enjoyable aspect of her job.

Contact between the NAILE and teachers to set up the school tours starts in September. Forty schools have signed up to attend this year’s tours of the NAILE. Tours vary based on animals that are present each week, but the quality of the education stays top-notch no matter what the animal.

“Most of the kids that come here don’t have much exposure to the agricultural industry and how it shapes their lives,” Susan says. “It has been fun to see the kids learn about where their hamburgers and their sweaters come from, for instance.”

The first week of the NAILE, students came and learned about dairy cattle, horses, swine, chickens, llamas, alpacas, and ducks. They also learned about various poultry in the Children’s Barnyard.

“Children go on a brief tour of the barns where they learn about cattle,” Susan says. “They get to see the chutes and the washroom back there so that they already have an idea of what those things are when they come to the learning station.”

Susan says learning stations of school tours are all run by the Louisville Ag Club. These volunteers spend time visiting with the children in various locations to give them some background information on the animals. Members of the Henry County FFA and the Spencer County FFA chapters serve as tour guides for the children by leading them to learning stations on the tour.

A new aspect of this year’s round of school tours is the addition of a “corn maze” for the children. The corn maze is an inflatable obstacle course for children to navigate, and Susan says that children have really enjoyed having it on the tour.

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During the expo’s second week, children experience the meat aspect of the North American International, as opposed to the dairy scene that was the first week of the NAILE. They’ll spend time learning about beef cattle, sheep, and poultry. They’ll also continue learning about the horses at the NAILE.

Overall, the collaboration of various organizations makes for an interactive, hands-on learning experience for elementary children that would be difficult for them to obtain elsewhere.

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Photo Available: IMG_4105
Caption: Susan Simmons of the North American Livestock Exposition (NAILE) visits with intern Regan Emkes about the school tours at NAILE.