



# 2026-2027 YOUTH ACADEMY



## Overview

We're on a mission to put more beef on kids' plates —and inspire the next generation of lifelong beef consumers.

Our program helps schools source local beef, increasing the amount of beef served in cafeterias while giving students a deeper understanding of how it's raised and its nutritional benefits.

Mo Beef Kids is a program of the Foundation for Food and Farm Connections, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to expanding beef in schools. The program is supported in part by the Missouri Beef Industry Council.



Our mission is to expand **beef in schools.**

## Youth Academy Mission

The Mo Beef Kids Youth Academy empowers students to become ambassadors for the program's mission in their own communities.

Through a newly redesigned experience, participants take part in a day-and-a-half, hands-on learning program focused on beef production, nutrition, and advocacy. Following the academy, students can optionally continue with a self-guided outreach plan to earn points toward scholarship consideration.



# 2026-2027 YOUTH ACADEMY

## Eligibility

Academy members must be a Junior or Senior for the 2026-2027 school year.

To be considered, applicants must submit the Youth Academy application by Midnight CST, **May 6, 2026**. Applications must include the following:

- Resume
- Letter of recommendation

Applications should be submitted to Luella Gregory, at [luella@beef.school](mailto:luella@beef.school).

## June 17-18, KC region

### Day 1 - Workshops

**Noon:** Lunch and welcome

**Let's Get to Know the Herd** activity

**12:30-1:30:** Sharing the Beef Story in the Cafeteria and Classroom

**2-2:45:** All About the Beef Checkoff

**3-4:00:** Leading the Conversation: Advocacy

**Skills for Emerging Beef Leaders**

**5:00:** Panel and discussion

**Dinner and fellowship**

*\*Overnight lodging provided*

### Day 2 - Tours

#### **From Farm to Lunch Tray**

Tours will include stops that share the story of beef from farm to lunch tray. Academy members will have the opportunity to learn from and network with beef industry leaders. Tour will conclude by 5 p.m. June 18.

## Timeline

- Application submission deadline: May 6, Midnight CST.
- A group of applicants will be notified for a virtual interview process.
- Academy will be announced by May 18.
- Applicants must be available to attend the June event.

**Our revamped Youth Academy consists of a two-day leadership experience.**

## Extended Academy Role

A detailed guide and point system will be provided during the June workshop session, along with a Q&A to discuss optional activities academy members can pursue for leadership development and scholarship consideration. Students who are most engaged and demonstrate the highest participation will be recognized. Opportunities include but not limited to:

- Completion of the Masters of Beef Advocacy
- Share Beef in Schools Foodservice Toolkit with school cafeteria staff and connect with Mo Beef Kids staff
- Share Pasture to Plate curriculum with 4-5th grade classroom, and complete post-survey
- Organize a Beef Day in a local school
- Attend Cattlemen's Convention Education Series in January
- Write a blog post about beef production or nutrition (minimum of 200 words)
- Partner with one other organization to share the beef story
  - Nutrition Month (March)
  - Farm to School (October)
  - Beef Month (May)

Beef Day details:

- Share outreach during a designated Beef Day when a beef menu item is served in partnership with school foodservice.

Please reach out to Luella Gregory, at [luella@beef.school](mailto:luella@beef.school), or 573-470-2144 if you have any questions.



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**beef in schools.**

**MO BEEF KIDS YOUTH ACADEMY APPLICATION**

**ABOUT (PLEASE TYPE ALL ANSWERS)**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

4-H CLUB: \_\_\_\_\_ FFA CHAPTER: \_\_\_\_\_

**ANSWERS (100 WORDS OR LESS PER ANSWER)**

WHY DO YOU WANT TO PARTICPATE IN THIS OPPORTUNITY?

WHY DO YOU WANT TO LEARN ABOUT THE BEEF INDUSTRY?

WHAT IS ONE OF THE GREATEST CHALLENGES FACED TODAY IN THE BEEF INDUSTRY?

WHY DO YOU THINK IT IS IMPORTANT TO GET MORE BEEF ON THE LUNCH TRAY?

*I have read and understand the qualification requirements and commitment, if selected. Parent or Guardian signature required for applicants under 18 years of age.*

**Signature of Applicant:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Parent or Guardian:** \_\_\_\_\_