The 2016 Northwest Iowa Beef Bonanza was held on Saturday, February 13th at the Iowa Lakes Community College (ILCC) in Emmetsburg. A total of sixty youth attended from ten counties including Palo Alto, Dickinson, Kossuth, Emmet, Clay, Ida and Woodbury.

Participants dissected and handled different parts of the cow’s stomach. Youth learned about the rumen, and its four compartments. They discovered how feed travels through each part of the rumen and is converted from grass to manure.

In a rumen digestion session, the youth used tools and liquids to break down candies, simulating and identifying the process that occurs in a cow’s rumen to break down feed into absorbable nutrients. They discussed ethics and got to taste tripe, part of the cow’s rumen.

Youth tested feed samples for nutritional value and digestibility, factors important to a producer’s success.

Participants learned how to be advocates for the beef industry in a session on Speaking Out for Agriculture.

Youth searched for the source of glow germs in a biosecurity scavenger hunt. They identified modes of transfer and discussed the effects biosecurity can have on production and animal health.

Beef Bonanza also trained youth on Food Safety Quality Assurance practices and prepared them to become future producers and supporters of the industry, educating them on the science behind livestock production today.

Thank you to our sponsors: Spencer Ag Center, United Bank of Iowa, Pro Cooperative, Jack Links, Grove Trucking Ltd., Farm Credit Services of America, Palo Alto County Farm Bureau, Aden Trucking Inc., StateLine Cooperative, and the Emmet and Palo Alto Cattlemen.