



PHOTO BY ALLISON FRIESEN/VOICE

Above, left: Emerado Centennial School students Evelyn Franz and Talia Peters try to sort through a mixture of gravel, corn, and beans to fill their cup with vegetables before the timer ran out in an activity at the Food For All conference held in Morden last week. Above: The event brought students from across the region together to talk about food sustainability.

# Broadening students' global perspectives

By Allison Friesen

Regional Gr. 7 students got a simulated taste of farming in a developing country through the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation's annual youth conference held at the Access Event Centre in Morden last week.

The conference, entitled Generating Momentum For Our World: Food For All, brought together roughly 40 middle years students from Winkler, Morden, Plum Coulee, and Manitou on Dec. 4.

"Our Generation Momentum conferences engage middle [years] students in issues that are relevant for

making our world a better place," said public engagement coordinator Bequie Lake. "Each year we change the theme to a topic that we feel is really important for people's well-being around the world, so this year the topic is food and food security."

Students were taken through different presentations and activities on the topic of food and hunger issues around the globe, said Lake.

One of those activities included a simulation about the causes of hunger, demonstrated by students who hand-picked kernels of corn and beans from a mixture of gravel in a variety of situations such as on their own, with a partner, with less or more of the mixture, and so on.

In the afternoon, students learned skills related to taking action, such as public speaking and planning and promoting an awareness event, said Lake.

"We're hoping that they will, first of all, feel more motivated and more empowered to take action themselves, but, as well, each of the school groups has agreed to plan some sort of follow-up action," she said. "There's no

age that's too young to start thinking about our world and how we can be really active citizens in our world."

Students also made no-bake cookies from fair trade ingredients sugar and cocoa mixed in with ingredients such as oats and butter from within Manitoba.

"We used that as a way to explore how our own eating habits and our own choices can affect people's food security around the world," said Lake.

Emerado Centennial School student Eric Klassen said he was expecting the day to be pretty informative, but was surprised to find out they'd be doing so many different activities, as well.

"I'm enjoying it. I've learned quite a bit of information about food issues," he said. "I've learned that [in developing countries] the women are in poverty more than men...apparently the man does more work than the woman, so they get to eat first, then the children eat and the lady has to eat last."

Klassen said their class is currently working on a social studies project about a similar topic.

"It really helped out with this," he said. "I'm still learning more and I think it'll help in the future with school."

"I really like the part where we had buckets of corn and beans and stuff like that. We had some taken away at some times and [it] showed how farmers have to live sometimes. That was a really good example I think," said EMMS student Brendan Neufeld.

"It's cool, it's lots of fun and there's a lot of information I'm learning," said fellow student Talia Peters. "I learned that 870 million people are hungry every day and that's a lot of the population of the world. That's really sad because here everyone has enough to eat but just 'cause they live in a developing country they don't have enough food."

"It makes a good difference - the more you have in your head the more you can do and the more difference you can make," added Neufeld.

The Morden conference is the second event of a six-part series to be held throughout Manitoba between November and March, Lake said.

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