

idea corner

Roach Roundup: Fun, Easy, Inexpensive, Worthwhile

A group of EFNEP aides wanted a project that would: (1) interest children, (2) involve few materials, (3) require only about a week to complete, (4) be easy to do, and (5) be useful to the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program. I gave them "Roach Roundup," and I think it "fit the bill."

The objectives of "Roach Roundup" were to make children in the EFNEP families aware of the life history, feeding habits, and importance of controlling cockroaches; and to actually control (trap!) cockroaches in their homes. I prepared a simple, illustrated, 10-page project book to explain cockroaches and show how to make cockroach traps.

The five-day program for "Roach Roundup" went this way:

First day. The EFNEP aides met with the youngsters and handed out the project books. As the youngsters looked through the project books, the technician briefly discussed the feeding habits, life cycle, and methods of controlling cockroaches. A set of color slides related to these topics was available. At the end of this short meeting, each

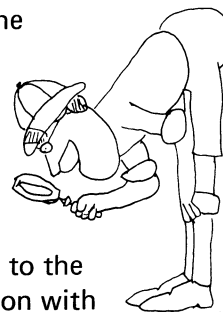
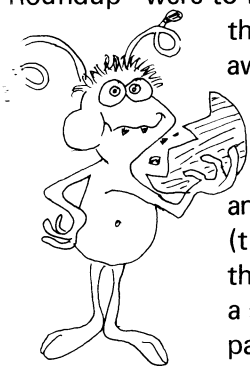
youngster was asked to bring an empty jar, rubberband, and a piece of newspaper to the next meeting.

Second day. The technicians opened the meeting by giving everyone a banana to eat (here's where we sneak in the nutrition!) and asked that the peels be saved. When everyone had a jar, newspaper, rubberband, and piece of banana peel, they were ready to make a cockroach trap. The project book explained, step-by-step, how to make a trap. After the traps were made, the technicians reviewed where to place them in the home for the next two days. The youngsters were asked to bring the traps (with the lids on) to the next meeting. The person with the most cockroaches would win a prize.

Fifth day. The technicians estimated which youngster had trapped the most cockroaches. Only a few won prizes, but everybody learned something about cockroach control. The jars were discarded (with the lids on).

Extension agents have found success and a variety of uses for the "Roach Roundup" program. Extension agent Janette Newhouse reported:

The "Roach Roundup" program was enjoyed by a group of 42 senior citizens during a "Food and Nutrition Program



for the Elderly" meeting in Tazewell County. The program was short enough to hold their attention, it addressed a problem which many of these people were experiencing, and a practical solution to the problem was suggested. These senior citizens, many of whom were from families with limited resources, particularly liked the booklet featuring directions for making a roach trap since the trap was made of things they were likely to have at home and did not involve the use of chemicals.

Low-and moderate-income families are sometimes not reached through the Extension programs and publications. Virginia Extension technicians working

with the Expanded Food and Nutrition Program have provided low-income families with other information and help with kitchen insect pests. Now, they have the opportunity to involve the



children of participating families in a worthwhile project "Roach Roundup" can function to strengthen an exist-

ing program on household clean-up and pest control or to generate an interest in such a program.



A group of cockroach trappers with their traps and prizes!