2007-2008 Annual Report
Land-grant universities work with the people they serve. University of Nebraska–Lincoln teaches, discovers new knowledge through research, and extends this research-based information across the state through extension programs. UNL Extension in Lancaster County develops and delivers educational programs which strengthen individuals, families, businesses, and communities.

Extension is committed to helping Nebraskans know how—and know now.

15-to-1 Return on Investment

An independent study found the University of Nebraska–Lincoln’s Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (which includes extension) provides Nebraskans more than a 15-to-1 return on tax dollars invested. Here are some examples of the value extension brings to our community:

Last year, 279 residents attended one of 12 composting workshops presented by extension at Lincoln City Libraries or composting demonstrations at the Pioneers Park Nature Center’s new backyard composting demonstration area. Extension also educates the public how to use LinGro, the City of Lincoln’s Compost. An estimated 20,869 tons of yard waste was kept out of the landfill, saving taxpayers an estimated value of over $686,000.*

The 4-H youth development program reached 21,865 youth in Lancaster County:
• 1,789 youth participated in the 4-H club program.
• 1,231 youth participated in 4-H afterschool and summer programs.
• 17,119 youth participated in 4-H school enrichment programs.

“Supermarket Savings: 16 Tips that Total BIG Bucks!” was posted on the Web as an article and PowerPoint with a handout. It received 15,900 hits in five months. 94% of respondents to an online survey stated these tips will help them save money with an average savings of $17/week or nearly $900/year. The article was also distributed statewide as a media release.

Through search engines and browsing, hundreds of thousands of people access UNL Extension in Lancaster County’s Web site, http://lancaster.unl.edu, to find “Know How—Know Now” 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Visited by an average of 300,000 unique sites* each month, the Web site received more than 8 million hits (accesses) this past year!

The Web site contains thousands of pages of content—featuring extensive resources, educational publications, a searchable database, Egg Cam, YouTube videos, quizzes, Master Gardener Diagnostic Center, outstanding photos and much more. The site is updated daily. Not only do Lancaster County residents, Nebraskans and Americans use the site; the site has Web users from nearly 150 countries monthly.

*Recycling office bases this estimate on saving over 70,000 cubic yards of landfill space in FY 07–08.

*Unique site = IP address
15-to-1 Return on Investment
from preceding page

UNL Extension coordinates distribution and application of neonicotinoids to agricultural cropland for the City of Lincoln. Last year, more than 35,000 tons of neonicotinoids were delivered and applied to 1,331 acres of crop land, worth $470,000 to formers and saving taxpayers $350,000 by keeping this recyclable material out of the landfill.

``Neonicotinoids are organic nitriles expanded from water-soluble biocide. Insecticides to make them safe to use as an organic fertilizer for crops not on the human food chain."

Last year, 191 people attended Guardianship Training classes co-taught by UNL Extension and volunteer attorneys. Evaluations indicate:
- 81% rated course understanding Guardianship
- 92% better understand their responsibilities to the court and their ability to meet them.
- 75% better understand their financial responsibilities as a guardian.

For the fourth year in a row, UNL Extension organized a two-day, hands-on Termite Control School for Termite Applicators. Of the 112 participants to date, evaluations show:
- 84% would make changes in inspection and/or pesticide application techniques.
- 93% would more in compliance with termite pesticide label directions.
- 96% felt better able to calibrate pesticide equipment.

In March, 135 child care providers who care for approximately 1,143 youth participated in a child care conference organized by UNL Extension and other Lincoln agencies. Evaluations indicate:
- 42% have made changes in child discipline.
- 32% apply more safety guidelines & practices.
- 43% include more hands-on activities for youth.

Approximately 3,000 pounds of pesticide concentrate were burned last year in Lancaster County and recycled through the Pesticide Container Recycling Program, which is coordinated by UNL Extension. Since 1992, about 17.5 million pounds of plastic from pesticide containers have been removed from Nebraska’s landscape and recycled.

Last year, UNL Extension in Lancaster County programs benefited from approximately 1,961 volunteers investing 27,138 hours of time for a total value of $529,462! Volunteers contributed to 4-H, Master Gardener, Nutrition Education Program (NEP), Family Community Education (FCE) and other extension programs. In addition, 4-H and FCE members often volunteer in community service projects.

Extension provides more than just information or knowledge. The goal of extension is to help Nebraskans transform knowledge into “know how”—having the confidence, skill and understanding to make better decisions about their businesses, their communities, their families and their personal lives.

Extension is a division of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln’s Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR), which also includes the Agricultural Research Division and the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. A 2007 study by an independent organization found IANR annually returns at least $515 in benefits to Nebraskans for every dollar of state support, making it a primary engine for economic and social sustainability (http://atworkfornebraska.unl.edu).

Expansion research and information, based in great part on issues, challenges and opportunities identified by Nebraskans themselves. While the university is certainly on the vanguard in terms of defining research and educational priorities, extension is also closely connected to the people, businesses and communities it serves. Many valuable and critical extension programs have been created in response to the grassroots needs communicated by Nebraskans through county extension boards and other advisory committees.

Over the years, University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension has evolved to meet the changing state’s challenges and opportunities. Still, the fundamental tenet for extension today is what it has always been—to quickly and effectively transfer university research and information to the people of the state.

To help Nebraskans know how—and know now.

Gary C. Bergman
Extension Educator & Unit Leader

Lancaster Extension Education Center
Conference Facilities
As part of extension’s commitment to community learning, the conference facilities at Lancaster Extension Education Center are made available to nonprofit and governmental organizations at a nominal cost. Last year, more than 4,150 hours of conferences and meetings were held at the Education Center.

In This Issue
Home & Family Living
Urban Agriculture
January 2008

Honors, Awards and Accomplishments

Extension Educator Lorene Bortox - national Distinguished Service Award presented by National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences

Extension Educator Gary Bergman - President of the Nebraska Great Plains Resource Conservation and Development - President of the Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center Site Board - Vice-President of Nebraska Resource Conservation & Development (BRACD) Association

Extension Educator Maureen Burson - member of team receiving Excellence in Team Programming honor presented by University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension for Parents Forever and Kids Talk About Divorce curriculum

Extension Associate Soni Cochran - 13 years of service with UNL

Extension Associate Marty Cruckshank - 5 years of service with UNL

Extension Educator Tom Dorm - site of fewer countywide annual family Holding Family Awards for Teaching Social Skills - Honored by University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources - Vice Chair of North Central Regional Search for Excellence Committee - President of Nebraska Cooperative Extension Association (NCEA)

Extension Educator Alise Henneson - member of team receiving 1st place statewide annual Family Food Safety Team Award presented by the National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences - member of team receiving for State Education Curriculum Team Award presented by the Nebraska Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences Nebraska Alliance

Extension Associate Troy Kulm - national Distinguished Service Award presented by National Association of Extension 4-H Agents, statewide Distinguished Managerial Professional Award presented by University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension

Extension Educator Barb Ogg - member of team receiving Extension Educational award presented by the Board Certified Entomologist of Mid-America for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Hand in Hand Termite School for Post Management Professionals

Tunessa Newsletter - 3rd place national and central regional winner Communications - Newsletter Team Award - Maria Boush, Allee Heyman, Lorene Bortox, Merid Memme, Jake Reamnass, Zahab Rale, Vicki Jeoffroy presented by National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences

"I believe that The NeBLINE, word for word, contains more useful information than any other publication of any kind I regularly read or receive. Congratulations to those responsible for always work product."

— Terry Schaaf, Lincoln (NeBLINE subscriber)

The UNL Extension in Lancaster County Top Nixeres newsletter is free to Lancaster County residents.

"At Work for Nebraska" in Lancaster County

Healthy Fighting Family Awards for Teaching Social Skills - Honored by University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources - Vice Chair of North Central Regional Search for Excellence Committee - President of Nebraska Cooperative Extension Association (NCEA)
Extension Helps You Put Knowledge to Work

UNL Extension in Lancaster County focuses educational efforts in the following program areas:

**Yard & Garden**

UNL Extension plays a vital role in teaching communities about horticulture issues customized for local weather, soil, and pest conditions. Extension helps property owners develop healthy, diverse, and functional landscapes that are energy efficient, as well as less dependent on pesticides. Extension Educator Don Jansen works with the City of Lincoln to educate the public about reducing yard waste through composting, mulching grass clippings, and proper grass management practices. This year, there was an educational campaign to teach homeowners to use no-low phosphorus fertilizer to keep phosphorus out of Lincoln’s area lakes and waterways.

**Nutrition & Food Safety**

To help people learn how to eat healthier, extension blends nutrition, food safety, and food preparation information into practical actions individuals can use in their daily lives. Educational materials developed by Extension Educator Alice Hennenman for use in local programs (such as news articles and fact sheets) are made available on the Internet for around-the-clock access, both locally and nationwide. Extension’s food Web site received more than 3 million hits last year, extending the outreach of our food and nutrition-related programs in a timely and cost-efficient manner. Two e-mail newsletters, “Food Reflections” and “Cook It Quick,” have more than 16,000 subscribers combined.

The Lancaster County Nutrition Education Program (NEP) helps limited-resource families learn to prepare nutritious and safe foods while stretching their food dollars. NEP receives funding from the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) through USDA and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program–Education (SNAP-Ed). NEP partners with more than 300 local agencies, classrooms, and coalitions.

**Home & Family Living**

Extension Educator Lorene Bartos disseminates information on home maintenance, indoor air quality, lead paint hazards, safety in the home, shopping smart and recycling through various columns in the “Lincoln Journal Star,” group presentations and other outreach methods. In a new partnership this year, Bartos helped Lincoln Housing Authority and other agencies present RentWise classes to renters.

**Farms & Acreages**

UNL Extension continues to make agricultural profitability and sustainability a priority issue. Extension Educator Tom Dorn fulfills this goal through numerous workshops and meetings, educational resources, and peer-to-peer contacts. In an up-to-date Web site. Some of the agricultural programs presented this year include Crop Protection Clinic, Private and Commercial Pesticide Applicator Trainings, Computerized Farm Financial Recordkeeping and Nitrogen Management Training.

Residential acreages are rapidly increasing in Lancaster County. Extension delivers information on a wide range of issues related to acreages such as proper management of septic tanks and wastewater lagoons; landscape management and alternative energy profitable for acreages. Extension offers an Acreage and Small Farms Insights Web site and monthly e-mail newsletter at http://acreage.unl.edu

**Plant and Pest Diagnostic Services**

Throughout the year, Lancaster County residents bring plant samples, insects, pests and wildlife “signs” to UNL Extension in Lancaster County. A free service, extension entomologists identify weeds, diseases and insects in and around the home and garden, and make recommendations about the best way to help manage these problems.

**Pests & Wildlife**

UNL Extension in Lancaster County has extensive resources to help identify pests and recommend control methods. Emphasis is on low-toxic pest control methods. Extension Educator Barb Ogg and Extension Associate Soni Cochran assist area residents via phone calls, walk-in requests, e-mail questions, publications, workshops and radio. Extension’s pest and wildlife Web site received nearly 2 million hits last year. This year, the Spanish version of the Cockroach Control Manual, “Manual Para el Control de Cucarachas,” was posted online.

Ogg often partners with community organizations and industry professionals in training and disseminating pest control resources and assistance. Now this year was an Insect Photography workshop presented with the help of Jim Kalsch from the UNL Entomology Department.

**Family & Community Education (FCE) Clubs**

Extension Educator Maureen Burson teaches Parents Forever and Guardianship Training classes in Lancaster County. She also organized a Strengthening Families: Daughter/Mother Camp this year.

UNL Extension is part of the Lancaster County Coalition to assist Children of Parents Experiencing Divorce (COPED), and co-presents Parents Forever and Kids Talk About Divorce classes. Extension Educator Maureen Burson teaches Parents Forever and Guardianship Training classes in Lancaster County. She also organized a Strengthening Families: Daughter/Mother Camp this year.

UNL Extension in Lancaster County has a lab for diagnostic services.

**Insects in Focus 2009 Calendar**

A calendar was created with submissions by attendees of an Insect Photography Workshop.

**Para el Control de Cucarachas**

This year, the Spanish version of the Cockroach Control Manual, “Manual Para el Control de Cucarachas,” was posted online.

**Insect Survey**

In April 2008, the Southeast District FCE meeting was held at the Lancaster Extension Education Center.
4-H Youth Learn Leadership, Citizenship and Life Skills

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension 4-H youth development program is open to all youth ages 5–18. Emphasis is on developing life skills through learning-by-doing. In the past year, 4-H reached more than 21,865 youth in Lancaster County. Lancaster County 4-H consists of:

- Organized Clubs—Lancaster County has around 120 4-H clubs. Each club ranges from 3 to 54 members and is led (or co-led) by adults. Youth choose officers to run meetings. Clubs usually participate in one or more projects together.
- Independent Members—With increasingly busy schedules, more and more youth are becoming independent 4-H members. Youth work on 4-H projects on their own.
- Projects—Youth can choose from more than 150 4-H projects. Project manuals are developed by university experts.
- School Enrichment—4-H programs for classrooms include: Garbollogy (for 2nd grade), Embryology (for 3rd grade), Ag Awareness Festival (for 4th grade), Earth Wellness Festival (for 5th grade) and Nutrition Education Program (for K–8th grade). These curricula meet Nebraska Curriculum Standards.
- After-School Programs—25 Lincoln after-school programs have incorporated 4-H projects into their activities. 4 sites have formed 4-H clubs and 21 summer sites participated in 4-H county fair exploration activities.
- 4-H Embryology Web Site—EGG Cam and other resources at http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/Embryology
- Educational Events—4-H staff organize educational events each year such as Clover College, speech workshops and leader training. The 2008 Lancaster County Fair showcased 4,467 4-H exhibits.
- Leadership Opportunities—4-H Teen Council, 4-H Council, Citizen Washington Focus group and more.

In June, the Lancaster County 4-H Citizenship Washington Focus [CWF] group—33 teens and 4 sponsors—traveled by bus on a 15-day itinerary to Washington D.C.

This was the second year a Special Needs Horse Show was held at the Lancaster County Fair.

In June, the Lancaster County 4-H Citizenship Washington Focus [CWF] group—33 teens and 4 sponsors—traveled by bus on a 15-day itinerary to Washington D.C. CWF is a citizenship and leadership program.

Lancaster 4-H partnered with many after-school summer sites to provide a county fair-related curriculum with hands-on activities which could be done before the Lancaster County Fair. The groups were then invited to experience the fair hands-on.

“UNL Extension has developed materials in numerous languages and continues to expand its educational and informational materials in additional languages to meet the growing needs of our community.”

—Kendra Penrod, member of Lancaster County Extension Board

“Extension is a Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln cooperating with the Counties and the United States Department of Agriculture. University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension educational programs abide with the nondiscrimination policies of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the United States Department of Agriculture.

“I know how to grow plants and to identify weeds, trees, plants and flowers.”

—Kyle Pedersen, 4-H member

I know how to maintain my yard. I know what and how to prune the trees and how to care for the perennial plants.”

—Laura Pales, homeowner

“I know how to do a lot of things, such as be thrifty and keep my family healthy.”

—Darleen Isley, Family & Community Education Clubs 55-year member

“I know how to use MyPyramid to make healthy meals and understand insects and the natural world.”

—Megan & Aidan Battuto, Nutrition Education Program participant

“I know how to use digital photography to better appreciate and understand insects and the natural world.”

—Pat Lopez, Insect Photography class participant

“I know how to use biosolids to improve my soil, increase crop yields and save on fertilizer costs.”

—Loren Neuhart, farmer and biosolids program cooperator

“I know how to better lead the younger kids in my 4-H club.”

—Emily Stoebach, 4-H Teen Council member