2007-2008 Annual Report

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**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 after-school 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 13,900 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.

Extension presented nine Composted Farm Financial Recordkeeping workshops to 103 participants in eastern Nebraska last year. Evaluations revealed:
- 92% learned how to create complete set of financial records.
- 88% learned how to keep a more accurate set of financial records.
- 96% learned how to create reports to retrieve and organize financial information which will help them make better management decisions in the future.

For every $1 spent on the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program, a potential health care savings of $2 to $17 may result from the prevention or delayed onset of nutrition-related chronic diseases and conditions. Last year, Lancaster County NEP reached:
- 1,074 adults who care for 4,406 family members.
- 6,016 youth (316 groups) at 17 schools and other sites.
- 587 older adults at 6 senior sites.

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

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**From NU to You**

**Web Site is Your 24/7 Local University Extension Connection**

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. 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.

“Your Web site is quite informative and very well organized. Thanks for all the work that has gone into creating and maintaining it.”

—The Pearsons (Web site users)

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**15-TO-1 Return on Investment**

Person to

*unique site = IP address**
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).

Extension research and information, built on a strong tradition of 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 County 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 nonprofits and governmental organizations at a nominal cost. Last year, more than 4,150 hours of conferences and meetings were held at the Education Center.

Honors, Awards and Accomplishments

Extension Educator Lorene Barton - national Distinguished Service Award presented by National Association of Extension 4-H Agents, stated as Distinguished Professional Award presented by University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension

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

Extension Educator MacKenzie Burnell - member of test receiving Excellence in Team Programming honor presented by University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension for Parents Forever and Kids Talk About Divorce current member

Extension Associate Soni Cochran - 15 years of service with UNL

Extension Associate Marty Cruckshank - 5 years of service with UNL

Extension Educator Tom Dorn - recipient of the Outstanding Extension Faculty Award presented by Nebraska Cooperative Extension Association (NCEA)

Extension Educator Alice Henneorman - member of team receiving 1st place national and regional honor from National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences

Extension Associate Troy Kulm - national Distinguished Service Award presented by National Association of Extension 4-H Agents, stated as Distinguished Professional Management Award presented by University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension

Extension Educator Barb Ogg - member of team receiving Entomological Educational Program Project Award presented by the Board Certified Entomologist of Mid-America for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Handi-Om Termites School for Post Management Professionals

T תנסאש נניאסל - 3rd place national and central regional winner Communications- Newsletter Team Award Madeleine Stassen, Alice Henneorman, Lorene Barton, Markel Mattke, Julie Reamann, Zanith Bala, Vicki Jellifield presented by National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences

Extension Associate Troy Kulm - national Distinguished Service Award presented by National Association of Extension 4-H Agents, stated as Distinguished Professional Management Award presented by University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension

Lancaster County Fair 4-H - Hundred year celebration. Central regional winner Promotional Package Team Award (Gary Bergman, Marty Cruckshank, Vicki Jellifield, Donna Kazen & Tracy Kulm) presented by National Association of Extension 4-H Agents

Lancaster County Fair 4-H Egg Cam - Hundred year celebration. Central regional winner Promotional Package Team Award (Gary Bergman, Marty Cruckshank, Vicki Jellifield, Donna Kazen & Tracy Kulm) presented by National Association of Extension 4-H Agents

The UNL Extension in Lancaster County Tea Newsletter is a free newsletter to Lancaster County residents.

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

—Terry Schaaf, Lincoln (Newline subscriber)
UNL Extension plays a vital role in teaching community issues customized for local weather, water, 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 Janssen works with the City of Lincoln to educate the public about reducing yard waste through composting, mulching grass clippings and other yard 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.

The Master Gardener Training Program is a volunteer program where people are given training by UNL personnel and then in return, provide 40 hours of volunteer service to extension’s educational programs. Extension Associate Mary Jane Frogge coordinates the Master Gardener program for Lancaster County.

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

**Yard & Garden**

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 Henneman 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.

**Nutrition & Food Safety**

Nutrition Education Program teaches nutrition to youth, adults and seniors.

**Home & Family Living**

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

**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.

**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 horticulturists and 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.

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

The Family and Community Education (FCE) clubs are an educational, social and community-oriented program designed to meet the needs and interests of Nebraska homemakers. FCE members help strengthen communities and families through education, leadership and action. Lancaster County FCE’s emphasis is on community service and sponsoring a nursing scholarship. In the past 10 years, FCE has awarded $2,375 in total scholarships.

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

**In April 2008, the Southeast District FCE meeting was held at the Lancaster Extension Education Center.**

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

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

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**Nutrition & Food Safety**

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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 5 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: Garbology (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 grades). 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 trainings. The 2008 Lancaster County Fair showcased 4,467 4-H exhibits.

- **Leadership Opportunities**—4-H Teen Council, 4-H Council, Citizen Awareness Festival (for 4th grade), Ag Technology (for 5th grade), Earth Wellness Festival (for 5th grade).

- **Cooperating Agencies**—In addition to the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, other cooperating agencies include the State 4-H Council, Lancaster County Extension Board, Lancaster County 4-H club, Canine Companions, was a recipient of the 2008 Governor’s Agricultural Excellence Awards. These funds were matched by the Lancaster County Agricultural Society to purchase new dog agility equipment.

**“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

**“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 which and how to prune the trees and how to care for the perennial plants.”**

—Laura Pales, homeowner

**“I know how to fulfill my legal obligations to the court as a guardian.”**

—Cory Cooper, Guardianship Training attendee

**“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

**“We know how to use MyPyramid to make healthy meals and snacks.”**

—Megan & Aidan Battuta, 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 be a leader and to lead the younger kids in my 4-H club.”**

—Emily Steinbach, 4-H Teen Council member

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

—Loren Neuhoff, farmer and biosolids program cooperatort

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.