1-1-2004

2003-2004 Annual Report

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Extending the University’s Research-Based Resources to You

University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension accomplishes the University’s land-grant mission by delivering reliable, research-based information that you can use every day. We develop and deliver educational programs which strengthen individuals, families, businesses and communities:

- Nutrition & Food Safety
- Pets & Wildlife
- 4-H & Youth Development
- Yard & Garden
- Farms & Acreages
- Home Environment
- Community & Leadership Development

Storm Recovery Resources

On May 22, 2004, severe storms—including tornadoes—damaged or destroyed many homes, businesses and farmsteads in Nebraska, including Lancaster County.

The next day, UNL Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County created a storm recovery section on its Web site, which continues to be updated with resources on:

- inspecting homes for structural damage
- evaluating damage to trees;
- pruning tips
- assessing hail, wind and flood damage to crops
- clean-up guidelines and tips
- weather safety information
- links to other University of Nebraska resources, local government Web sites, local agencies and national resources

These resources have received 17,920 hits. Extension staff and university specialists also sent relevant information to local media and responded to many storm-related inquiries from residents.

In June, extension joined the Nebraska Disaster Recovery Organization which was created to help people with unmet needs.

Itch Mite Epidemic Hits Lincoln

UNL Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County staff, health department officials and university specialists worked together to identify the mite and solve this year’s epidemic of mystery bites in Lincoln.

In early September, Lancaster County Extension began receiving phone calls about unusual itchy bug bites. Staff identified a pattern to these calls and contacted UNL’s Entomology Department and the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department—who confirmed they were also receiving similar calls.

Extension sent out a media release and collected information from callers. Within a couple weeks, university specialists identified the source of the bites as microscopic mites, *Pyemotes herfisi*—also called “itch mites”—which prey on the small fly maggots causing “leaf edge” galls on pine oak leaves. This mite species was new in the United States, previously known to exist only in Europe.

New in 2004 Ant Identification Resources

Lancaster County Extension staff developed the following ant identification resources of the most common household ant pests in Nebraska:

- Detailed color illustrations
- Actual size
- Description of workers
- Habits
- Control methods

These resources have received more than 56,778 hits since being posted on the Web site at lancaster.unl.edu/ants in January. Identification of Structure-Invading Ants in Nebraska was recently published as an Extension Circular (EC04-1570).

Handwashing Bean Bag Toss Game

(L-R) Joyce Jerose, LLCHD, and Alice Hennessem, Extension Educator

Lancaster County Extension and the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department (LLCHD) developed a bean bag toss game, “Sink Those Germs,” to promote handwashing to youth. This educational game can be used in schools, child care centers, homes and events such as health fairs.

Game materials—including a poster and coloring sheets—are free online at lancaster.unl.edu/food/sinkgerms.htm and have been downloaded more than 5,000 times.

NEP Lessons at Camp Abbott, Clinton CLC

Nutrition Education Program staff present a healthy snack experience at Clinton Community Learning Center.

The Lancaster County Nutrition Education Program (NEP) created two new partnerships to present nutrition lessons at after-school and summer programs: Clinton Community Learning Center (CLC) and Clinton Community Learning Center (CLC) and continued on page 3

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Elbert C. Dickey, Director of Cooperative Extension, University of Nebraska, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources. University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension educational programs abide with the nondiscrimination policies of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the United States Department of Agriculture.
From NU to You

NU Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County contributes to the University of Nebraska’s land-grant mission by extending reliable research-based information to the public for use in everyday life.

Considering today’s fast-paced society, extension engages residents in Lancaster County and beyond, 24-hours a day, by utilizing multiple delivery methods:

• Programs and workshops
• Publications
• Phone calls
• Person-to-person
• Content-rich Web site
• Internet e-mail
• Radio/TV/Video/Satellite
• Displays and exhibits
• Youth groups, activities and schools

In addition to direct outreach, extension trains individuals who, in turn, impact or teach others. This includes business professionals, service industry workers, health professionals, teachers, childcare providers, government employees, master gardeners and volunteers.

Lancaster County extension collaborates with more than 125 agencies, organizations, businesses and school systems to develop and deliver educational programs. We value our community partnerships as a way to leverage our resources and reach even more people. To our partners, we say thank you.

And finally, a salute to the hundreds of volunteers who are essential to extension’s success. Your dedication to programs such as the 4-H youth development program, master gardeners, Nutrition Education Program (NEP) and the Earth Wellness Festival greatly add to our community and quality of life. We appreciate your important contributions.

Gary Bergman,
Extension Educator and Unit Leader
Youth in 4-H Program

The University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension 4-H youth development program is open to all youth ages 5–19. In the past year, 4-H reached 22,994 youth in Lancaster County.

Emphasis is on teaching practical skills and developing life skills through learning-by-doing. Lancaster County 4-H consists of several components:

• Organized clubs — Youth work closely with adults to complete projects.
• Projects — Youth can choose from more than 150 projects.
  Project manuals are written by university experts.
• School Enrichment — 4-H programs for classrooms include: Garbology, Vermicomposting, Embryology, Blue Sky Below My Feet, Earth Wellness Festival, Ag Awareness Festival, Nutrition Education Program and 4-H Water Riches.
• 4-H Embryology Web Site — EGG Cam and other resources online at lancaster.unl.edu/4h/Embryology
• Activities — 4-H staff organize several educational events each year, such as Clover College and County Fair activities.
• Leadership Opportunities — 4-H Teen Council, 4-H Council, Citizen Washington Focus (CWF) group and more.

“Our community is very fortunate to have a talented extension staff dedicated to extending the knowledge of our land-grant university. As an extension board, we collectively see the impact extension brings to Lancaster County and beyond.”

— Clarice Steffens, president
Lancaster County Extension Board

Lancaster County 4-H’er Nicole Pedersen qualified to attend the National 4-H Horticulture Judging Contest.

The Lancaster Extension Education Center Facilitates Community Programs

As part of extension’s commitment to community learning, the conference facilities at Lancaster Extension Education Center are made available to other nonprofit and governmental organizations at a nominal cost. Last year, more than 4,300 hours of conferences and meetings were held at the Education Center.
Discover Practical and Life Skills

This past year, $6,100 in 4-H

By next June, 51 CWF’ers will have
raised a total of $97,818 through
extension presentations. The Nebraska Cooperative Extension Association
presented by the Nebraska Cooperative Extension; Achievement in Service Award
standing Extension Associate Award presented by University of Nebraska Cooperative
extension; Educational Health Award presented by Lincoln-Lancaster County Board of
extension. Not only do Lancaster County residents, Nebras-
kans and Americans utilize the site, the site also has Web users from more than 100
countries monthly.

New in 2004
continued from page 1
Camp Abbott (a nine-week youth en-
richment program sponsored by the
Capitol Sports Foundation and The
Ethel S. Abbott Sports Complex).
More than 400 youth participated in
these nutrition lessons.

“The Plants for Problem Places” Video

Don Janssen discusses plants
with low-water needs suitable
for hot-dry places.

Extension Educators Don Janssen
(of Lancaster County) and John Fech
(of Douglas/Sarpy Counties) de-
veloped this sixth of UNL Cooperative
extension’s series of horticultural vid-
eos which can be used as training tools
for commercial horticulture pro-
cation or as educational tools for inter-
ested individuals. “Plants for Problem Places” and other videos (now avail-
able on DVD) can be ordered online
at lancaster.unl.edu/hort.

4-H Partnership With
Lincoln City Libraries

At the 4-H wildlife workshop, youth
made tracks with animal paw print
cards and learn how to identify the
different species in the area. The
participants also learned about the
benefits of using nontoxic, nonlethal
methods of pest control.

Horseless Horse
4-H Club

4-H presented two workshops, “Wild in Nebraska”
(with the help of the Nebraska Game & Parks Commission
and Pioneer Park Nature Center) and
“Paper-a-Plenty” as part of LCL’s summer reading
challenges.

4-H and LCL compiled two “4-H Discovery Bags,” one for
families and one for arts & crafts.

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Lancaster County 4-H and Lin-
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New in 2004
continued from page 3

4-H Kids Ag Discovery Zone at County Fair

New at the Lancaster County Fair was a free 4-H Kids Agricultural Discovery Zone. It featured hands-on activities and exhibits to help youth see, touch and smell agriculture. Activities included: climbing a tractor, “milk” a “cow,” touching unprocessed sheep wool and seeing a 1,000 pound boar!

A Look at Some Program Impact Numbers

of University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County programs from Oct. 1, 2003–Sept. 31, 2004

Extension responded to more than 33,300 phone calls, walk-ins and e-mails from the public requesting information.

34,300 tons of biosolids were delivered and applied to 1,169 acres of crop land, worth $850,000 to farmers and saving taxpayers $340,000 by keeping this recyclable material out of the landfill.

Biosolids are organic solids separated from wastewater and biologically processed. Extension coordinates distribution and application of biosolids to agricultural land in Lancaster County for the City of Lincoln Wastewater and Solid Waste Division. Studies have shown the nutrient value of biosolids worth at least $23 per acre for the first year’s crops.

An estimated 20,000 tons of yard waste were kept out of the landfill, saving taxpayers $556,749.

Extension educates residents on how to successfully compost yard waste in their own backyards and on the benefits of mulching grass clippings. More than 110 residents attended one of 19 composting workshops conducted by extension, and an estimated 2,000 people participated in an informal, self-guided tour of the composting demonstration site at University Place Park.

9,510 pounds of pesticide containers were collected and recycled through the Pesticide Container Recycling program.

Agricultural pesticide containers are collected and ground into small chips to be recycled into parking lot tire bumpers, fence posts, traffic lane markers, pallets and more.

Research shows for every dollar of NEP funding, there is a projected health care cost savings of $2.07–$5.29.

The Nutrition Education Program (NEP) helps limited-resource families learn to prepare nutritious and safe foods while stretching their food dollars. Last year, more than 4,300 adults, 2,289 youth and 100 seniors participated in NEP programs benefitted from $1.6 million in NEP funding.

Online termite resources received nearly 35,000 hits, 86 people (including 13 Real Estate agents) attended this year’s Termite Control workshops, hundreds of people requested information and articles were published in local media.

Crop producers taking the online Irrigation Home Study Course indicate an average savings of $4.22 per acre — an estimated total savings of $3.5 million. Of the attendees at Financial Record Keeping workshops, 82% expected to make better management decisions and 58% expected to save time and/or money.

Participants of the Crop Protection Clinic estimate the value of the program to be $3.57 per acre — a total benefit of $1.6 million.

Agricultural profitability and sustainability is an extension priority issue.

The average value of a termite treatment is more than $1,500. Extension’s termite control information could be worth more than $2 million to Lincoln homeowners.

Online termite resources received nearly 35,000 hits, 86 people (including 13 Real Estate agents) attended this year’s Termite Control workshops, hundreds of people requested information and articles were published in local media.

The 4-H youth development program reached 16,658 youth in Lancaster County. There were 4,262 4-H exhibits showcased at the 2004 Lancaster County Fair.

4-H is open to all youth ages 5–19. Youth can belong to a club, be an independent member, participate in 4-H activities such as Clover College, or participate in 4-H School Enrichment projects.

Last year, UNL Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County programs benefitted from 1,338 volunteers investing 51,925 hours of time for a total value of $892,590.*

Extension trains and supports, as well as coordinates the efforts of, a variety of volunteers: 4-H leaders and superintendents, Master Gardeners, Family Community Education (FCE) volunteers and Nutrition Education Program (NEP) volunteers. In addition, 4-H and FCE members often volunteers in community-related projects.

*Independent Sector values volunteer time at $17.79 per hour.