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## 2000-2001 Annual Report

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# University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County

## 2000–2001 ANNUAL REPORT



A REPORT TO THE RESIDENTS OF LANCASTER COUNTY



### Greetings,

University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County is a relevant, responsive and credible educational resource in our community.

In our mission of “Putting Knowledge to Work,” we’ve collaborated with more than 240 agencies, organizations, businesses and schools to develop and deliver educational programs that impact individuals, their families, businesses, farms and local communities.

Here are some examples:

- Our youth education programs reached more than 28,000 youth.
- Lancaster Extension’s Web site received 1,000,000+ hits.
- Lancaster Extension responded to nearly 30,000 phone calls from the public requesting information.
- 2,223 volunteers contributed 32,877 hours through Lancaster Extension programs.
- The biosolids program saved the county \$425,000 by keeping waste out of the landfill.
- A Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) partnership to develop a Head Lice Policy and educational package resulted in a 70% reduction in head lice cases in LPS.
- 76% of Nutrition Education Program (NEP) graduates adopted better nutrition habits and learned better ways to spend their food dollars.

I am pleased to share this annual report and hope you will note the value Cooperative Extension brings to the community.

Gary C. Bergman,  
Extension Educator and  
Unit Leader

## Your Local Experts

University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension provides research-based information and extends the university’s resources to urban and rural residents for use in everyday life in the areas of:

- **Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability**
- **Children, Youth and Families**
- **Food Safety and Quality**
- **Health and Wellness**
- **Strengthening Nebraska Communities**
- **Water Quality and Environment**

Cooperative Extension has 83 offices throughout the state providing counties with a locally available resource for individualized information and expert advice.

One recent caller to the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County commented that extension was helpful to him in many areas of his life and he could call about everything from “bugs to bananas!”

Cooperative Extension has extensive diagnostics capabilities. Residents are able to bring in plant or insect samples for identification and receive specific information for care, treatment or control methods.

Community groups and organizations often ask extension staff to present educational programs customized for their groups.

Because extension staff are locally based, they are able to be responsive to specific community needs and concerns.



University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County fulfills its mission of “Putting Knowledge to Work” through a wide variety of outreach programs and methods. Volunteer Master Gardeners such as Cindy Gabelhouse (above right) and Susan Fertig (above left) are available by phone during the growing season. Residents can bring in insects for identification (at left, Extension Associate Soni Cochran examines a millipede on a digital microscope). Extension professionals present countless programs, workshops and demonstrations, such as Alice Henneman’s “Nutrition and Osteoporosis” presentation.



## How Much is Expert Advice Worth?

University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County prides itself on being a reliable source of research-based information.

How much can this information be worth? For one Lancaster County farmer, the answer is \$8,000.

Larry Geiger, a part-time farmer, had been raising llamas on a Kentucky 31 tall fescue pasture for two years without any successful live births. A heartbreaking string of stillborns indicated a serious problem.

Geiger sought advice from other llama breeders, both locally and nationally. He even tore down his old barn and built a new one to eliminate any chance his llamas might be ingesting lead-based paint.

Geiger eventually contacted Extension Educator Tom Dorn, an expert in agriculture.

After hearing the llamas’ symptoms, Dorn suspected the problem was related to the grass in the pasture. He recommended immediately removing the herd from the fescue pasture and feeding alternative forage. He also suggested a sample of fescue from the pasture be sent to a lab to test for fescue endophyte, which can be toxic to livestock. The tests came back positive.

Geiger killed the old pasture grass and replanted with a grass mixture that did not include Kentucky 31 fescue. Roughly one month after removing the herd from the fescue, the females began producing offspring. After one year, Geiger’s herd has produced



Extension Educator Tom Dorn (right) inspects Larry Geiger’s (left) pasture for fescue, which could contain a fungal endophyte toxic to livestock.

eight young llamas, now almost ready for sale.

Geiger told Dorn “I was getting so discouraged before you came out I was considering selling the herd. Now they are producing babies right and left. These babies will bring \$750 to \$3,000 each when we sell them. Your advice has made us at least \$8,000 in the first year.”

Dorn has done much education about endophyte infested fescue in the past year, including working with UNL’s Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources to develop a news release that went to Nebraska media.

This is just one example of the impact, economic and otherwise, that Cooperative Extension has in our communities.





**Scott Young of the Food Bank of Lincoln inspects an Indian meal moth pheromone trap, which Lancaster Extension helped set up.**

## Extension Helps Food Bank Pinpoint Source of Moths

Last year, the Food Bank of Lincoln had a serious Indian meal moth infestation in their warehouse. They contacted Lancaster Extension for information, which led to an on-site inspection by Extension Educator Barb Ogg. She recommended the purchase of nontoxic Indian meal moth pheromone traps and showed food bank staff how to locate infestations using a triangulation method. Two separate infestations were eventually located and controlled.

The Lincoln Food Bank now routinely uses pheromone traps as a monitoring tool for early detection of moth infestations. Executive Director Scott Young says, "We monitor the traps weekly to prevent future infestations, thanks to extension. What great use of a resource — to the benefit of everyone."



**This image of a varied carpet beetle larva was taken with extension's new digital microscope for an in-house fact sheet and the Web site.**

# The Buzz on Controlling Insects and Other Pests

Who are you going to call when you have a pest in your home or yard? Animal Control? Except for a few select animals such as dogs, cats, skunks or bats, Animal Control refers callers to University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County!

Lancaster residents access extension's extensive pest management resources via the phone, the Web site, workshops, various publications or by bringing specimens to the office for identification.

This past year, Lancaster Extension purchased a digital microscope to assist with insect identification and for use in developing publications.

Lancaster Extension works increasingly with community organizations and professionals in disseminating pest control resources and assistance. Some of these agencies are Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department, Lincoln Public Schools and Lincoln Housing Authority.

Educators in other counties, states

and universities are using materials developed by Lancaster Extension staff. *The Cockroach Control Manual* was written as a reference for the Cockroach Combat Workshop, but more than 786 copies have been sold and thousands of people have accessed the information free on the Internet. K Sharpe of Cornell University wrote, "I examined your manual on the Web and find it to be one of the best references on cockroach control ever done. I was a professional pest control operator for five years and have never seen such a clear and concise presentation of cockroach control information."

Real estate licensees can receive continuing education credits from the Nebraska Real Estate Commission by attending termite workshops led by Lancaster Extension staff and held in cities throughout eastern Nebraska. Termite in-service trainings are also held across the state

for other Extension Educators. A manual, *Subterranean Termites: A Handbook for Homeowners*, was updated this past year for use by homeowners.

Lancaster Extension's entomology staff also provides workshops to farmers and agribusiness professionals regarding crop insect pests.

In addition to insects, Lancaster Extension provides pest management education on wildlife and other animals.



## Head Lice Video Gains Attention

*Removing Head Lice*

*Safely* is an 8-minute video developed last year by Lancaster Extension staff in cooperation with other partners. This video is available free on the Web and is the most requested video on 5 City-TV. It has aired on Lincoln Cable Channel more than 20 times per month. 1,000 copies of the video have been sold to educators, health care workers, cosmetologists and parents. Lincoln Public Schools have asked to have the video translated into other languages — translations into Spanish and Arabic are underway.

Lincoln Public Schools reports a 70 percent reduction in head lice cases and Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department reports a 57.7 percent reduction in public health cases.



**A still from the educational video, *Turf Establishment and Renovation*, developed by Lancaster Extension Educator Don Janssen (left) and Douglas Extension Educator John Fech (right).**

# Horticulture Programs Growing in Depth and Outreach

Cooperative Extension plays a vital role in teaching the community about horticulture issues customized for local weather, water, soil and pest conditions.

In 2001, Cooperative Extension in Lancaster horticulture staff:

- Answered more than 6,500 telephone calls
- Presented 86 educational programs to groups and through other venues such as home and garden shows
- Disseminated information through the media, such as

"Garden Gossip," a weekly column in the *Lincoln Journal Star*; *Backyard Farmer* on Nebraska ETV; *Lincoln Live* on KFOR radio; and Lancaster Extension's Horticulture Web pages

- Diagnosed problems via samples brought to the extension office or on-site

Lancaster Extension Educator Don Janssen teams with Douglas County Extension Educator John Fech to provide

Commercial Horticulture Clinics to educate employees in the horticulture industry about plant identification, problems and care of those plants. These employees are then able to pass this knowledge on to customers.

This year, Janssen and Fech developed two educational videos, *Turf Establishment & Renovation* and *Rose Culture and Care*. These videos will be used as training tools for the commercial horticulture industry and will be available for use at conferences and television broadcasts.



**Darren Binder demonstrates screening compost through a 1/2-inch screen.**

## Composting Demonstrations Teach Community to Recycle Yard Waste

Lancaster Extension collaborated with the City of Lincoln Recycling Office to develop, establish and maintain a composting demonstration site at University Place Park, 50th and Colby Streets.

Last year 18 hands-on composting presentations were

conducted throughout Lincoln to teach citizens how to successfully compost yard waste in their own backyards. 920 residents attended these presentations.

The demonstration site has an informal, self-guided tour which an estimated 5,000 residents participated in.

Lancaster Extension also educates the public on the benefits of mulching through a "Bag-No-More" grass clippings campaign.

The City of Lincoln Recycling Office estimates these educational programs will extend the life of the present landfill by 3 to 5 years over the next 25 years.

## Volunteers Tend To Master Gardener Program

The Master Gardener Training Program is a volunteer program where people are given training by University of Nebraska personnel and then in return provide 40 hours of volunteer time to educational extension programs such as:

- Answering horticulture phone calls
- Presenting educational

- programs and workshops
- Assisting in 4-H and other youth programs
- Establishing and maintaining community beautification projects

Extension Associate Mary Jane Frogge coordinates the Master Gardener program for Lancaster Extension.

The City of Lincoln Parks and

Recreation Department offer support to the Master Gardener trainings and in return, Master Gardeners provide educational information at public gardens.

In 2001, 40 Lancaster County volunteer hours and had 9,693 Master Gardeners logged 1,868 direct clientele contacts.



**Master Gardeners receive training (above) in exchange for volunteering their time to extension programs.**





Farmer Brad Moser (left) is one of many participants Extension Educator Corey Brubaker (right) works with on the Olive Creek Watershed Project (areal view below superimposed with graphic detailing land use in the watershed).

**“Lancaster County Extension has nationally recognized programs and staff. We are fortunate to have such a high caliber at the local level.”**

—Wayne Heyen, president of Lancaster County Extension Board



## Salt Valley Clean Lakes Project

University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County collaborates with 12 partners on the Salt Valley Clean Lakes Project, initiated in 1993.

The primary focus this year was on the Olive Creek Lake Watershed Project. Seven landowners in the watershed area have completed 10 conservation projects, with eight more projects pending. These projects include water and sediment control basins, tile outlet terrace systems, farm ponds and grass filter strips adjacent to stream channels.

The process is currently underway to begin similar conservation projects for the watershed above Wagon Train Lake.



## Agricultural Programs Remain Essential Part of Extension

Lancaster County has more farms than any other county in Nebraska according to the United States Department of Agriculture, with farm products bringing in more than \$82 million dollars.

University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension continues to make agricultural profitability and sustainability a priority issue.

Lancaster Extension fulfills this goal in part through several educational activities, including: private and commercial pesticide applicator certification training sessions, a chemigation certification training/testing session, a Crop Protection Clinic, an Irrigation Management Home Study Course and Computerized Financial Record-Keeping workshops. One participant of the latter said, “The income reports let me know how much I am actually making compared to my expenses. This lets me see if I need to budget my money better.”

Following the 2000 drought,



Farmers learn better methods of record-keeping at two-day Computerized Financial Record-Keeping workshops.

there was increased interest in irrigation development. Lancaster Extension developed a spreadsheet called IRRIGCOST to assist farmers in estimating annualized costs of owning and operating an irrigation system.

Many agriculture producers access information from Lancaster Extension via the phone, Web site, in-house fact sheets and other publications.



Students at Norris learn water sampling techniques.

Local youth learn about Nebraska agriculture through programs such as the Agricultural Awareness Festival, the Ag Awareness Program and precision ag classes.

## LANCASTER COUNTY EXTENSION 2000-01 HONORS AND AWARDS

**Computerized Financial Record-Keeping Workshop** — National Association of Agricultural Agents’ Search for Excellence in Farm and Ranch Financial Management, national finalist

earth wellness festival — Lincoln Public Schools’ Volunteer Program Award, 4000 hour club

**Nebraska Nutrition Education Program** — National Health and Human Services’ Food and Nutrition Programs, recognition award

**THE NEBLINE** (monthly newsletter) — National Association of Agricultural Agents’ Team Newsletter, national winner

**Removing Head Lice Safely video** (developed by Barb Ogg and Soni Cochran) — national Telly Awards, finalist

**Lorene Bartos, Deanna Karmazin, and Tracy Kulm** — Nebraska Cooperative Extension Association’s 4-H Section Team Award for 4-H marketing piece (county fair insert in THE NEBLINE)



**Soni Cochran** — University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension’s Distinguished Associate Award

**Lance Cummins-Brown** — National Association of County Agricultural Agents’ Search for Excellence in 4-H and Youth, regional winner and national finalist

**Tom Dorn** — National Association of Agricultural Agents’ Distinguished Service Award

**Arlene Hanna** — Lincoln Public Schools Ventures in Partnerships’ Pioneer Award

**LaDeane Jha** — University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension’s Distinguished Educator Award

**Deanna Karmazin** — UNL Collegiate 4-H’s Friend of 4-H; and Nebraska Cooperative Extension Association’s 4-H Section Communicator Award for safety curriculum on fire safety

**Virginia Piening** — UNL Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources’ Outstanding Employee Award

## Pesticide Container Recycling

Lancaster Extension Educator Tom Dorn manages the Pesticide Container Recycling program for a 10-county area. In this program, pesticide containers are collected, ground into small chips to be recycled into parking lot tire bumpers, fence posts, traffic lane markers and more.

In Lancaster County last year, more than 3,600



A farmer returns empty pesticide containers for recycling.

pesticide containers were collected. Overall the program has diverted about 52 tons of plastic from area landfills.

## Biosolids Program Merges Precision Ag With Waste Recycling

While most of extension’s programs are educational in nature, the Biosolids Management Program is a program in which University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County coordinates distribution and application of biosolids to agricultural cropland for the City of Lincoln Wastewater and Solid Waste Division.

Biosolids are an excellent source of organic fertilizer for crops not in the human food chain.

Lancaster Extension makes use of the latest technologies in precision agriculture to ensure biosolids are applied in an environmentally sound method:

- Global Positioning System (GPS) measures exact field area and record soil sample and



City of Lincoln “digesters” (above) process sewage into a suitable organic fertilizer for crops. Extension Technologist Dave Smith (right) takes soil samples to determine the amount of biosolids to apply per field. After transport to the fields (right center), the biosolids are applied to the fields (far right).



storage sites.

- Soil samples are taken to test existing levels of nitrates, which determine how many loads to apply per acre.
- Application equipment is

calibrated to ensure appropriate application rates.

- A computer database, Geographical Information System (GIS), is used to keep records of the entire process.

Last year, more than 25,000 tons of biosolids were delivered and applied to 29 fields. This saved taxpayers \$425,000 by keeping this recyclable waste out of the landfill.

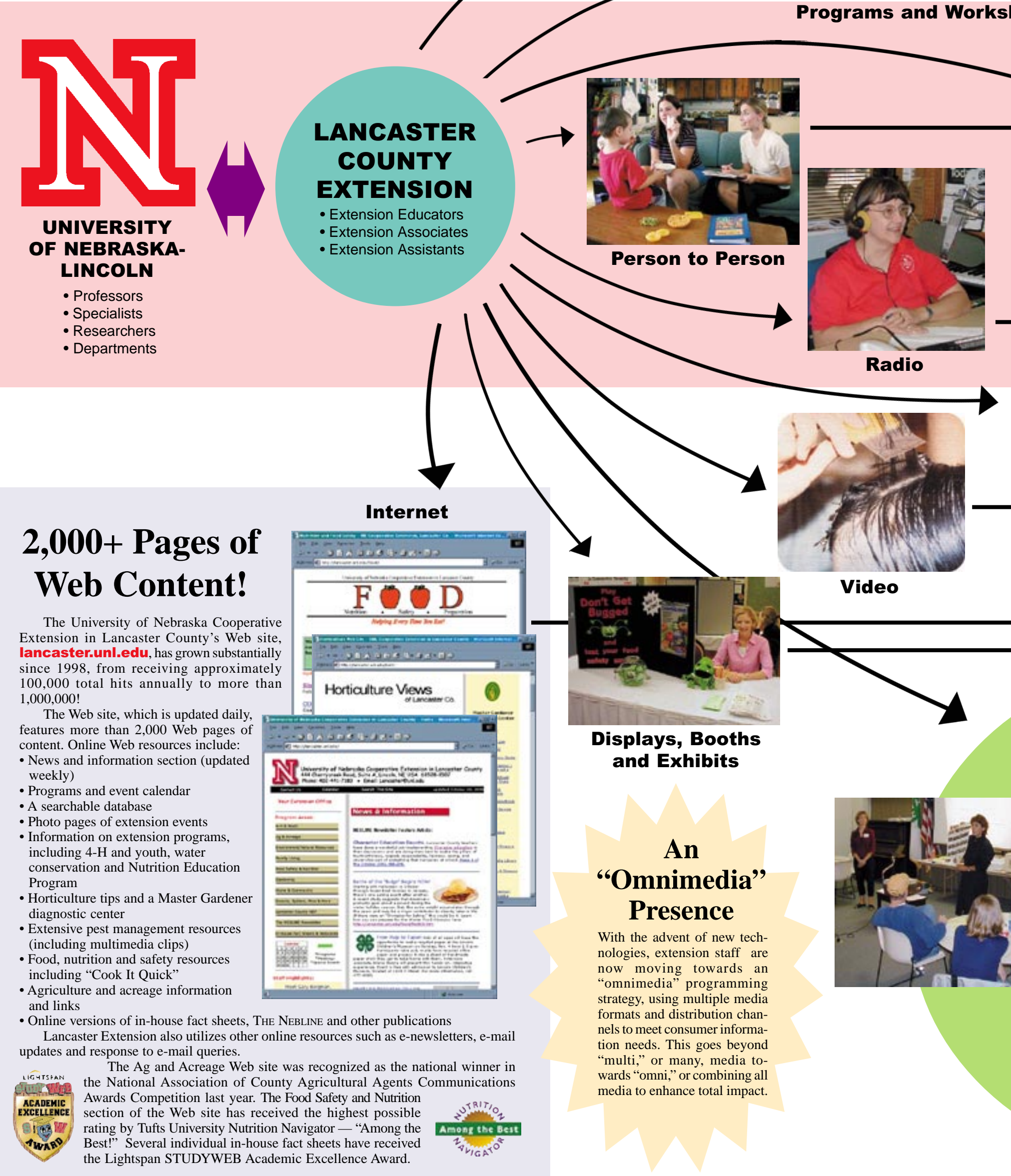
The City of Fremont is planning to use Lincoln’s model of having extension coordinate the Biosolids Program for their wastewater treatment facility currently under construction.



# Helping People Put Knowledge

University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension extends the university's research-based information to Nebraskans while engaging with people in putting this knowledge to work. As the front door to the university, extension is committed to being relevant and responsive to the evolving needs of local communities and their citizens.

Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County utilizes the newest technologies and multiple media avenues to be *your* source of information around the clock.



**UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN**

- Professors
- Specialists
- Researchers
- Departments

## 2,000+ Pages of Web Content!

The University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County's Web site, [lancaster.unl.edu](http://lancaster.unl.edu), has grown substantially since 1998, from receiving approximately 100,000 total hits annually to more than 1,000,000!

The Web site, which is updated daily, features more than 2,000 Web pages of content. Online Web resources include:

- News and information section (updated weekly)
- Programs and event calendar
- A searchable database
- Photo pages of extension events
- Information on extension programs, including 4-H and youth, water conservation and Nutrition Education Program
- Horticulture tips and a Master Gardener diagnostic center
- Extensive pest management resources (including multimedia clips)
- Food, nutrition and safety resources including “Cook It Quick”
- Agriculture and acreage information and links
- Online versions of in-house fact sheets, The NEBLINE and other publications

Lancaster Extension also utilizes other online resources such as e-newsletters, e-mail updates and response to e-mail queries.

The Ag and Acreage Web site was recognized as the national winner in the National Association of County Agricultural Agents Communications Awards Competition last year. The Food Safety and Nutrition section of the Web site has received the highest possible rating by Tufts University Nutrition Navigator — “Among the Best!” Several individual in-house fact sheets have received the Lightspan STUDYWEB Academic Excellence Award.



**“Thanks for having this information online. It really helped at 11 p.m. last night!!”**

—Lisa, [www.lancaster.unl.edu](http://www.lancaster.unl.edu) Web site user



# To Work

**“Extension leverages its resources and those of the Lincoln community through numerous local partnerships. This enhances educational opportunities for a broader audience.”**

—Shelia Kepler, member of Lancaster County Extension Board



## Information Flows Both Ways

Cooperative Extension listens, respects and responds to residents' needs and concerns

ations,  
hops



Phone



**Youth Groups,  
Activities,  
and Schools**



## TRAINING THE TRAINERS

In addition to direct outreach, University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension trains individuals who go out into the community and teach others. This includes teachers, business professionals and employees, food and other service industry workers, government employees, health professionals, day-care providers and community volunteers.



## VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are a vital part of Cooperative Extension, with Lancaster County benefitting last year from 2,223 volunteers investing 32,877 hours of volunteer time. Independent Sector values volunteer time at \$15.39/hour (for more information see [www.independentsector.org](http://www.independentsector.org)), which would put a total value of Lancaster Extension's volunteers at \$505,977.03.

LANCASTER COUNTY RESIDENTS

# Partnerships

Extension relies increasingly on partnerships. It is through collaboration and engagement that extension is able to reach thousands of Lancaster County residents. The following is a list of organizations, agencies, businesses, schools and more that University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County has partnered with in the past year:

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| Agrilience (Farmland and Cenex Land O'Lakes)          | Lancaster Event Center  | Northeast Family Center                           |
| Alltel Communications                                 | Lands for the Seventh Generation                              | Northwood Child Care                              |
| American Dairy Association/ Dairy Council of Nebraska | Lincoln Action Program  | Novartis Consumer Health, Inc.                    |
| American Heart Association - Lincoln Division         | Lincoln Center Kiwanis Club                                   | Oak Creek Valley Bank                             |
| Americorps/VISTA                                      | Lincoln Christian Schools #1 & #3                             | Oak Valley School                                 |
| Amigos, Inc   | Lincoln Community Development Block Grant Program             | Olsson Associates                                 |
| Arends Interiors                                      | Lincoln Council on Alcohol and Drugs                          | Otte Oil, Fertilizer, and Propane - Wahoo         |
| Asian Cultural and Community Center                   | Lincoln Housing Authority                                     | Omaha Agri-business Club                          |
| Asset Building Coalition                              | Lincoln Indian Center   | Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District   |
| Audubon Nebraska                                      | Lincoln Interfaith Council                                    | Paragon Sanitation                                |
| Bennet Public Schools                                 | Lincoln Lancaster County Food and Hunger Coalition            | Parent Aid Support Group                          |
| Blessed Sacrament School                              | Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department                    | Parkview Christian School                         |
| BryanLGH Medical Center                               | Lincoln-Lancaster Immunization and Vaccination Effort         | Partners For A Safer Community                    |
| Burden Sales, Inc.                                    | Lincoln Literacy Council                                      | People's City Mission                             |
| Burlington Northern Railroad                          | Lincoln Medical Education Foundation                          | Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company                       |
| Burke Plaza Senior Housing                            | Lincoln Pantry Network  | Pfizer Animal Health, Inc.                        |
| Cabin Realty & Ag Services                            | Lincoln Public Schools  | Pioneer HiBred International                      |
| Campbell's Nurseries & Garden Centers, Inc.           | Lincoln Solid Waste Management Association                    | Pioneers Park Nature Center                       |
| Capitol Aviation, Inc.                                | Lower Platte North Natural Resources District                 | Plymouth Coop - Fairbury, Odell, and Wilber       |
| Capitol Child Care                                    | Lower Platte South Natural Resources District                 | Preparation for Adult Living (PALS)               |
| Carol Yoakum Family Resource Center                   | Lutheran Family Service                                       | Professional Lawncare Association                 |
| Cathedral of the Risen Christ School                  | Mahoney Manor Mail Plus                                       | Providers Network                                 |
| Catholic Social Services                              | Malcolm Public Schools  | Psychotherapy Associates                          |
| Cedar Ridge Spraying - Ashland                        | March of Dimes  | Raymond Central School - Valparaiso               |
| Cedars Youth Services                                 | Matt Talbott Kitchen Life Skills                              | Re:Build Associates                               |
| CenterPointe  | McCullough-Landell Implement                                  | Real Estate Owners and Managers Association       |
| City of Lincoln Animal Control                        | Mediation Center  | Red Hawk Nursery                                  |
| City of Lincoln Citizen Information Center            | Mercy Housing   | Retired and Senior Volunteer Program              |
| City of Lincoln Parks and Recreation Department       | Messiah Lutheran School                                       | Rotary Club #14                                   |
| City of Lincoln Public Works and Utilities            | Milford Elementary School                                     | Sacred Heart School                               |
| City of Lincoln Recycling Office                      | Monsanto (DeKalb Genetics and ASGROW Seeds)                   | SAFE Kids Coalition                               |
| City of Lincoln Wastewater Division                   | NASA  | Salvation Army                                    |
| City of Lincoln Water System                          | National Recycles Day Association                             | St. Elizabeth's Regional Medical Center           |
| Clear Choice Water                                    | National Youth Sports Program                                 | St. Elizabeth Burn Center                         |
| Commodity Supplemental Food Program                   | NE Ag in the Classroom  | St. John's Catholic School                        |
| Council of Family Centers                             | NE Agribusiness Association                                   | St. Joseph's Catholic School                      |
| Crossroads Senior Housing                             | NE Beef Council   | St. Marks Church                                  |
| Doane College   | NE Beekeepers Association                                     | St. Mary's Catholic School                        |
| Eagle Elementary School                               | NE Cattleman's Association                                    | St. Patrick's Catholic School                     |
| Earl May Garden Centers                               | Lincoln/Seward County Affiliates                              | St. Peter Catholic School                         |
| Employment First                                      | NE Community Nutrition Partnership Council                    | St. Teresa's Catholic School                      |
| Environmental Health Systems, Inc.                    | NE Cooperative Development Center                             | Sandhills Publishing Company                      |
| Experian  | NE Corn Development, Utilization & Marketing Board            | School Districts #69, #152, #153, #158            |
| Faces of the Middle East                              | NE Corn Growers   | Square D  |
| Faith Lutheran School                                 | NE Corn Fed Beef  | Southeast Community College - Lincoln             |
| Family Service  | NE Credit Union League  | Southeast Nebraska Area Producers Cooperative     |
| Farm Credit Services of America                       | NE Department of Agriculture                                  | Southeast Nebraska Coop - Beatrice                |
| Farmers Cooperative Co. - Waverly and Bennet          | NE Department of Education                                    | Southpointe Family Center                         |
| Farmers National Company                              | NE Department of Environmental Quality                        | Southwood Lutheran Church                         |
| Farmers Union Coop - Gretna                           | NE Department of Health and Human Services                    | State Farm Insurance                              |
| First Plymouth Church                                 | NE Department of Natural Resources                            | State Fire Marshall's Office                      |
| Firth Coop - Princeton                                | NE Environmental Trust  | Tabitha Intergenerational Program                 |
| Folsom Children's Zoo and Botanical Gardens           | NE Farm Bureau - State Office and Lancaster County Chapter    | Taylor Productions                                |
| Food Bank of Lincoln                                  | NE Game and Parks Commission                                  | Teaching and Learning with Children (TLC)         |
| Food Net  | NE Home Builders Association                                  | Teen Pregnancy Prevention Council                 |
| The Fort  | NE Humanities Council   | Three Eagles Broadcasting                         |
| Frontier Coop - Mead and David City                   | NE LEAD Program   | Touchstones                                       |
| Giffard Farm  | NE Nurserymen Association                                     | Transitional Living Group - Cedars Youth Services |
| Good Neighbor Community Center                        | NE Pest Control Association Members                           | Trinity Lutheran School                           |
| Goodwill  | NE Pork Producers   | Trinity United Methodist Church                   |
| Goodyear Tire Company                                 | NE Real Estate Commission                                     | Turning Point - Cedars Youth Services             |
| Gordon Chapelle Hoof Trimming Inc.                    | NE Restaurant Association                                     | Union Bank and Trust Company                      |
| Great Plains Girl Scout Council                       | The NE Rural Development Commission                           | Urban Indian Center                               |
| The Groundwater Foundation                            | NE School Age Childcare Association                           | US Army Corps of Engineers                        |
| Hamlow Elementary School - Waverly                    | NE State Forester   | US Environmental Protection Agency                |
| Hanna Architects                                      | NE Statewide Arboretum  | USDA  |
| Helen Hyatt Elementary School                         | NE Soybean Board  | Valentino's Inc.                                  |
| Henry Doorly Zoo                                      | NE Water Environment Association                              | Ventures in Partnerships                          |
| Hispanic Community Center                             | NE Well Drillers Association                                  | Wachiska Audubon Society                          |
| Human Services Federation                             | NE Wheat Board  | WasteCap  |
| Hyline Hatchery                                       | Neighborhood Inc. Youth                                       | Water Environment Federation                      |
| INFORM  | Norris High School Vocational and Industrial Clubs of America | Wausau Insurance                                  |
| Iowa State University                                 | Norris Public Schools   | Waverly Public Schools                            |
| Indian Center JTPA                                    | North American Martyrs School                                 | Wells Fargo                                       |
| Keep America Beautiful                                |   | WIC Advisory Committee                            |
| Keep Lincoln-Lancaster County Beautiful               |   | Willard Community Center                          |
| Keep Nebraska Beautiful                               |   | Williams Garden Center                            |
| Kinko's   |   | Women Involved in Farm Economics                  |
| Lancaster County Red Cross                            |   | World Bird Sanctuary                              |
| Lancaster County Agricultural Society                 |   | Young Families Program - LMEF                     |
| Lancaster/Saunders School to Career                   |   | YWCA  |



# 27,676 Lancaster Youth Participated

Since the beginning 99 years ago, 4-H has been established on a community club model. However, 4-H also has organized activities which 4-H members and nonmembers can participate in, and in recent years, 4-H has expanded its outreach to a broader base of youth through School Enrichment programs. 4-H is part of University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension. While 4-H is still well rooted in the historic base of rural America, today's membership is increasingly urban youth. In the past year, 4-H programs reached 71 percent of the youth in Lancaster County — 27,676 — nearly double the state enrollment percentage.

## 4-H Clubs Remain Heart of the Organization

4-H clubs are open to youth ages 5–19, and members learn practical skills as well as life skills such as solving problems and communicating.

In traditional 4-H clubs, members complete several projects a year, choosing from more than 150 project areas available, including: aerospace, photography, flowers/gardening, cooking, clothing, cats, dogs, rabbits, horses, livestock, woodworking and small engines. There are also nontraditional 4-H clubs which focus on one particular area, such as small pets, rabbits, or chess (see story below). Members may also belong to more than one club or participate in projects individually.

In 2001, Lancaster County had 98 4-H clubs with 1,054 organized members. Shimmering Shamrocks is a typical example of these clubs. Started and led by Becky Vahle who had been a Lancaster 4-H'er in her youth, Shimmering Shamrocks has seven members and meets twice a month. Meetings are held at and rotated among the member's homes. At least one parent of each member attends the meetings with their children. Vahle attributes the support of the members' families as critical to the success of the club.

Shimmering Shamrocks has business meetings once a month in which the officers (currently all members hold an office) plan and decide what projects to work on and accomplish. Members focus on lessons and projects during the rest of the meetings. In the past year, members worked on a variety of projects including clothing units, cooking, rock-etry, woodworking, demonstrations and table setting.



A scrapbook page from Shimmering Shamrock member Carly Belz' Member's Record.

All of the Shimmering Shamrock members participated in the 2001 Lancaster County Fair, exhibiting a total of 63 projects combined.

For the holidays last year, members of the group went Christmas caroling at Lancaster Manor and gave residents door decorations they had made. The club also made gifts to send to families of the September 11th tragedy.

Vahle says "It has been amazing to watch these talented young people learn life skills which they use to better themselves, their families and our community."

## 4-H Activities Offer Hands-On Learning by Doing

4-H offers members and sometimes nonmembers a variety of activities and opportunities outside the club level.

The largest activity of the 4-H year is the Lancaster County Fair (see story below). However, there are events throughout the year, such as the annual Speech Contest, Music Contest and Demonstration Contest.

4-H livestock exhibitors have several opportunities to participate in activities across the state, including progress shows, the District Horse Show, State Fair, and the Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Livestock Exposition.

Connie Lemke, a member of 4-H Ambassadors and 4-H Teen Council said, "Since I've been in 4-H I have accomplished many goals, one of my favorite was the Song Contest. There are many other fun opportunities 4-H has to offer, from learning to cook, first aid, livestock, 4-H camps, to meeting people all over the country."

Non-4-H youth can participate in 4-H Clover College, an annual four-day series of workshops, or State 4-H summer camps.

4-H also offers a wide variety of leadership possibilities, through awards, scholarships, 4-H Ambassadors, Citizen Washington Focus (CWF), 4-H Teen Council and 4-H Council.

Each year, 4-H Teen Council plans, organizes and leads a 5th and 6th grade overnight Lock-In. This year's Lock-In featured a jungle theme, educa-



Bug catching (above) and paper maché (right) are two of 18 workshops kids can choose from when attending the four-day camp, Clover College.



tional activities, food and crafts. Jacob Messick, a member of the 4-H Teen Council, said that organizing the Lock-In was "a lot of fun, and seeing participants come to it shows that kids are interested in 4-H activities and have fun attending them."



JoHanna Madsen

Last year, Lancaster County 4-H'er JoHanna Madsen was selected through the 4-H Record Book Awards Program as one of four 4-H'ers from Nebraska to attend the National 4-H Conference.

Madsen said of the conference, "Through visiting the Department of Agriculture and meeting 4-H'ers from across the nation, national delegates learned the uniqueness of the 4-H program's grassroots structure. At the conclusion of the conference, I felt I had indeed built 'a global community,' as the theme emphasized."



Members of the new Checkmates club challenge each other to a match during a 4-H club meeting.

### New Chess 4-H Club

The Checkmates 4-H chess club is a pilot project started in January 2001 by James Walla and Julie Thomson. These parents were already involved in 4-H with their daughter Terra.

James had the idea of a chess club because "chess is objectively a means to help the young mind develop." Julie organized the club with Lancaster Extension 4-H staff and James developed the materials for the program. Nebraska 4-H did not previously have a chess project.

Within one year, the chess club has built up a membership of 30 registered youth ranging in age from 7–14 years. Parents are very supportive, with many attending meetings.

Meetings usually include 15–20 minutes of instruction and then members divide up for informal chess matches. For the county fair, members had a choice of six projects they could enter, including chess-related reports, interviews and posters.

Kyle Pederson, president of The Checkmates, explains his involvement, "I like chess. And I like to play chess with kids my own age because my dad always beats me at it."



**"Through this wonderful organization, I have learned how to be an individual and make my own safe/smart decisions. Through 4-H Council, I'm also learning to be a leader."**

—Bryce Lemke, member of 4-H Council, 4-H Teen Council and 4-H Ambassadors

## County Fair Commitment



Kevin Hajek competed in 16 horse classes at this year's county fair, including Halter (above). Lancaster County is a leading county in registered 4-H horse projects. Active participants learn equestrian skills, a high degree of self discipline and responsibility for care of their animals.



# in 4-H Programs Last Year

## 4-H School Enrichment Programs Head to Classrooms

School Enrichment programs have been a part of Nebraska's 4-H program since 1974 and have focused primarily on science. These programs include teacher guides, videos, books, posters, experiments, games and more. Extension staff develop the programs, train teachers on their use and go into the classrooms for hands-on activities with students.

Currently in Lancaster County, the projects available to teachers are:

- **EMBRYOLOGY** — through incubating and hatching baby chicks in the classroom, third graders study life-cycles
- **GARBOLOGY** — introduces second graders to solid waste management and the three R's: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle



*Extension Associate Arlene Hanna (above) teaches fifth graders how pollution affects aquifers as part of 4-H Water Riches.*

- **VERMICOMPOSTING** — second graders learn a new way to compost, with worms

turning garbage into compost

- **BLUE SKY BELOW MY FEET** — links space technology to the everyday interests of fourth grade students
  - **4-H WATER RICHES** — fifth graders determine ways to manage our water supply and commit to water preservation and conservation
- In the past year, 11,470 Lancaster county youth participated in these School Enrichment programs.



**“4-H programs are a solid investment in today’s youth. 4-H is a proven way to teach young Heads, Hearts and Hands Healthy ways of living.”**

—Keith Dey,  
4-H Council  
President and  
ex officio member  
of Lancaster County  
Extension Board

### Nutrition Education Programs for Youth



*First grade students at Lakeview make healthy “Yummy Bugs” snacks as part of Nutrition Education Program’s 4-H School Enrichment programs.*

Cooperative Extension’s Nutrition Education Program (NEP) offers several 4-H School Enrichment programs to qualifying limited resource schools.

NEP has developed supplemental kits of hands-on educational experiences designed to enhance first, fourth and fifth grade school health curriculum. Teachers may request these kits for three-week periods, and an extension staff member presents a handwashing and healthy snack food preparation activity in the classrooms as part of the program.

For grades kindergarten, second and third, NEP offers classroom presentations teaching proper handwashing and healthy

eating through the food guide pyramid.

In addition to NEP’s School Enrichment programs, NEP provides nutrition programs at a variety of community sites such as summer youth camps, preschool and school-age childcare centers and teen residential treatment programs.

During the 2000-2001 school year, 2,437 Lancaster County youth participated in NEP youth presentations.

Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County collaborates with 12 community partners to present the earth wellness festival, a yearlong school curriculum with a one-day festival offering 2,984 fifth graders hands-on experiences to discover the interdependency of land, water, air and living resources.



*Extension Associate Deanna Karmazin (left) assists a fifth-grade student making recycled paper at the annual earth wellness festival.*

### Character Counts! Youth Development Programs

More than 45 public, private and home schools in Lancaster County have implemented Character Counts! programs in their classrooms. Character Counts! is a character education project developed by the Josephson Institute of Ethics to teach youth the “Six Pillars of Character”: trustworthiness, fairness, caring, respect, responsibility and citizenship.

In Nebraska, Character Counts! is

part of the state’s 4-H program and is coordinated through Cooperative Extension. Extension staff, in cooperation with local schools and agencies, provides character education training to teachers, childcare providers and community professionals.

Workshops are also provided to parents to support their children’s character education.

Leading with Character Counts! camps are two-day workshops which extension staff lead for middle school youth.

Last year, 18,254 Lancaster County youth participated in Character Counts! programs.



*Extension Educator LaDeane Jha (above) teaches students in Real World — Real Decisions.*



*“The Wall” is part of the TRUST course used in Leading with Character Counts! camps.*

## Showcases 4-H Members to a Healthy Community

At the 2001 Lancaster County Fair, 3,841 exhibits were showcased by 633 4-H members.

This was the first county fair held at the new Lancaster Event Center. 4-H’ers, superintendents and other volunteers put in long hours prior to the fair making displays, setting up concession stands and preparing the new facilities.

New measures were implemented in the livestock areas to increase biosecurity. These included isolating the swine and disinfecting pens and arenas.

4-H Council managed and staffed the concession stands, raising money for funds which go back into 4-H programs.

The county fair marks the end of the activity year for 4-H members, who work the rest of the year on projects, many of which are exhibited.

Winners at the county level go on to State Fair.



*Participants in the 4-H Dog Show take their place before entering the arena.*

### Volunteers Make a Difference



*Extension Educator Lorene Bartos (left) applauds as Barb (center) and Ron (right) Suing are awarded County/City Volunteers of the Month.*

Volunteers donate their time and talents to University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County programs through a variety of ways: Master Gardeners, 4-H leaders and superintendents, NEP volunteers, earth wellness festival presenters and assistants, Character Counts! volunteers and Family Community Educational (FCE) Club members. 4-H members often volunteer in community-related projects. In November 2001, two extension volunteers, Barb and Ron Suing were recognized by the Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) and the Lancaster County Board of Commissioners as the County/City Volunteers of the Month. The Suings have served as 4-H leaders a combined 28 years. Lancaster Extension thanks all its volunteers for helping to make a difference!



# Nutrition & Food Safety Essential to Health of Community

## Nutrition Programs For Health's Sake

Dietary factors are associated with 4 of the 10 leading causes of death (coronary heart disease, some types of cancer, stroke and type 2 diabetes) and with osteoporosis, which affects 1 in 2 women over age 50.

University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County helps people eat healthier through a variety of educational and outreach methods.

"Nutrition and Osteoporosis" was developed as a workshop offered to worksites and community groups. Articles were also distributed via THE NEBLINE, the FOOD Web site, an e-mail newsletter and in-house fact sheets. Response was so positive the Power-Point presentation component was posted on the Internet and subse-

quently downloaded by more than 3,000 educators in Lancaster County and throughout the United States.

The "Cook It Quick" program was created for both onsite presentations and for access over the Internet. Materials stress quick and nutritious food preparation and food safety tips.

*Food Reflections* is an e-mail newsletter sent to more than 6,300 health professionals, educators and consumers. Each month, a nutrition or food safety topic is discussed in "how-to" language. One subscriber, Suzi, wrote, "Not only do you do creative, high-quality work, but you are generous and share it far and wide! Thank you



**Extension Educator Alice Henneman (left) and Mary Torell of the Nebraska Department of Agriculture combine nutrition education and food safety information in a presentation.**

for another terrific resource from University of Nebraska Extension."

The "Pyramid Power: the Food Guide Game," which Lancaster Extension staff developed in 1994, continues to be a useful educational tool, with more than 2,000 educators in all 50 states having purchased the game.



## Handling Food Safely

Food safety is a farm-to-table issue. Cooperative Extension is the lead agency in Lancaster County for educating consumers about food safety. Lancaster Extension also partners with community organizations in providing training to commercial food service establishments.

Consumers are reached through programs, presentations, booths, Web articles, e-newsletters and news releases through the media. Many consumers call the extension office with home food safety concerns.

Lancaster Extension developed a game, "Don't Get Bugged by a Foodborne Illness," for educators to teach consumers important food safety practices. The game has been recognized by an award from the National Extension Association of Family & Consumer Sciences. Approximately 3,000 copies of the game have been sold to educators nationally and internationally.

The ServSafe Program provides training on safe food handling practices to food service establishments. Lancaster Extension partners with UNL, Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department and the Nebraska Restaurant Association in this program.

Extension also provides yearly training for child care provider directors and cooks in cooperation with the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department and the State Department of Education.

## Lancaster Extension and County Benefit from AmeriCorps\*VISTA



**VISTA member Boshra Rida (left) assists a Norris student at a Leading With Character Counts! Camp**

AmeriCorps\*VISTA is a national program that places full-time volunteers in local organizations for one-year terms. University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County has two Volunteers In Service To America (VISTA), Ali Alkhazraji and Boshra Rida. Both of these VISTA members assist in developing ways to reach communities not previously covered by extension's programs, with a special focus on character education.

### TRANSLATION EFFORTS

With the help of Lancaster Extension Community Coordinator Sief Mahagoub, extension has begun translating educational materials into other languages including Arabic, Spanish, Russian and Vietnamese.

## Extension Builds Strong Families and Communities

Leadership and community development, as well as fostering family strengths, are by-products of most of Cooperative Extension programs. Extension also has programs specific to these areas.

Extension partners with a variety of community agencies to present workshops such as Strengthening Families, resource management and basic investing, Real World — Real Decisions, Parents Forever (for divorcing parents) and other Family Strengths programs.

Leadership, teamwork and a better understanding of self and others are developed through Real Colors Matrixx and Myers

Briggs Temperament Inventory (MBTI) Workshops delivered by Extension Educator LaDeane Jha. One participant commented: "Wow, this really opened my eyes. My boss isn't a jerk — he's just different than me."

In addition to direct outreach in these issues, extension provides staff development and training to educators, government officials, agency workers and community groups, both locally and regionally. Some of these workshops include leadership trainings, diversity issues, poverty simulations, Success Outcome Markers for Extension and character education trainings.

## Nutrition Education Programs for Limited Resource Families

University of Nebraska's Cooperative Extension's Nutrition Education Program (NEP) helps limited resource families learn to prepare nutritious and safe foods while stretching their food dollars.

In NEP, qualifying adults learn through small groups at agency or community sites, or individually through home visits, mail lessons or phone consultations.

"I've learned how to include dairy foods like cheese and yogurt in my diet to get calcium," says Michelle, a Lancaster County Early Head Start mother who can't drink milk.

This year, NEP teamed up with the Food Bank of Lincoln to educate families on how to use potatoes donated by the Idaho Potato Growers, and with community agencies to provide food preparation and safety information to families receiving holiday food baskets.

Lancaster Extension NEP partners with 87 agencies and coalitions and receives funding from the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) through USDA, the Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program (FSNEP) through Health and Human Services, Lincoln Housing Authority, Early Head Start through Lincoln Action Program, and other sources. Women, Infants and Children (WIC) continues to be a primary partner.

More than 2,426 Lancaster



**Nutrition advisors Sandy Phillips (above left) and Patrice Broussard (above right) demonstrate use of perishable foods at Lincoln Action Program.**



**Extension Assistant Karen Wobig presents "Who Wants to be a Milk-N-Aire" to Mahoney Manor residents.**

County residents received NEP education this past year. According to Extension Educator Maureen Burson, extension research shows 76 percent of NEP program graduates adopt better nutrition habits, 76 percent learn better ways to spend their food dollars and 57 percent make food safety improvements.

## Family and Community Education Clubs



**Longtime FCE members were honored at this year's Achievement Night in Lancaster County, including Donna Gill (above left), a member for 45 years.**

Family and Community Education (FCE) clubs are an educational, social and community-oriented program designed to meet the needs and interests of Nebraska homemakers.



**"Our local extension Office honors the land grant mission of the University of Nebraska. We have progressed as a people because of the educational opportunities and delivery of research-based knowledge through Cooperative Extension."**

—Alice Doane, member of Lancaster County Extension Board