2011 Annual Report

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UNL Extension in Lancaster County develops and delivers educational programs which strengthen individuals, families, businesses, and communities.

BIG Connection
Extension is your local connection to university research-based information

BIG Outreach
UNL Extension in Lancaster County develops and delivers educational programs which strengthen individuals, families, businesses, and communities

BIG Community Value

“Barb Ogg has been a valuable resource in my work with child care facilities. Her willingness to provide pest management training and work individually with child care professionals has made a positive impact on our community.”

— Gina Eigenberger, Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department Children’s Environmental Health Educator

“4-H has done a wonderful job preparing me for college as an Animal Science major. Horse quiz bowl, hippology, and judging — paired with the work my 4-H leader and Extension staff have done — helped lay a strong foundation for my college education.”

— Cory Peters, 10-year 4-H member and UNL freshman majoring in Animal Science

“‘The Guardianship Training was invaluable with understanding the requirements for guardianship.’

— Range Shaw and Bowman Shaw, Guardianship Training participants

“After the Nutrition Education Program presented lessons to the Everett Elementary School’s parent group, my son and I have been eating less salt. Other parents report they are now aware of portion sizes and their families are eating more vegetables and fruits.”

— Elizabeth Montes, Nutrition Education Program graduate and Lincoln Public Schools Spanish Bilingual Liaison

“The Master Gardener program gave me an increased level of knowledge on horticultural subjects, and a new understanding of our community gardens. It has been great sharing my love of gardening with others through the program.”

— Elaine Booth, UNL Extension Master Gardener volunteer
Since 2000, the Nutrition Education Program (NEP) School Enrollment Kits have increased nutrition education in qualifying Lincoln classrooms from an average of 4 hours to 11 hours per classroom per year. To date, 43,089 students in 2,254 classrooms (grades K–8) have benefited from more than 23,000 total hours of teaching. Teachers have noticed students choosing healthier foods and improving their eating habits.

Extension Education Sarah Browning has helped present two-day Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) training at five locations in Nebraska, including Lincoln. A total 133 commercial fruit and vegetable growers received their training and used these practices in their production operations enabling them to maintain or improve the safety of their produce by preventing contamination with microbial pathogens. Three months after the program; 74% implemented a health and hygiene training program for all employees; 59% implemented a system to clean all harvest equipment on a scheduled basis.

Less than a week after USDA unveiled the new MyPlate icon in June, Extension Educator Alice Henneman created a PowerPoint and online slideshow of “Choose MyPlate: Selected Consumer Messages.” The webpage has received 18,595 pageviews. 238 visitors participating in evaluation, of which 92% indicated they plan to use it to reach potential of 48,077 people; 87% indicated they learned something new. The PowerPoint also was shared on SlideShare.net which has received more than 23,000 views and as a YouTube video which has received more than 7,300 views.

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Benefit to Youth

4-H Clover College is a four-day series of hands-on workshops held each June. This year’s Clover College featured 52 workshops and 734 total registrations.

Nearly 510 fourth graders from local schools attended the Ag Awareness Festival in April at the Lancaster Event Center. Extension Assistant Cole Meador also assisted at the Ag Awareness Festival in October at UNL’s Agricultural Research and Development Center near Mead.

In the past year, Lancaster County 4-H reached nearly:
- 1,237 club members
- 410 independent members
- 1,929 youth in after-school and summer programs which incorporated 4-H activities
- 18,643 youth in 4-H school enrichment programs

Several Lancaster County 4-H horse members represented Nebraska at the national All American Quarter Horse Youth Congress and 4-H & FFA Western National Roundup contests. Ell Dysmert and Hannah Ronnau earned national champions with their team demonstration “Gut Reaction.”

Garbology means the study of garbage. More than 3,100 second graders in 160 classrooms at 51 schools participate in the 4-H Garbology school enrichment program which includes hands-on experiments.

Volunteerism

Last year, UNL Extension in Lancaster County programs benefitted from approximately 1,743 volunteers investing 25,510 hours of time for a total value of $425,252! Volunteers contributed to 4-H, Master Gardener, Family Community Education (FCE), and other Extension programs. In addition, 4-H and FCE members often volunteer in community service projects.

Community Service

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 scholarship. Annually, FCE awards a $400 scholarship.

The Lancaster County 4-H consists of:
- **Organized Clubs** — 115 clubs ranging from 5 to 67 members and led (or co-led) by adults. Youth choose officers to run meetings. Clubs usually work on one or more projects together.
- **Independent Members** — With increasingly busy schedules, more and more youth are becoming independent 4-H members. Youth and families work independently on 4-H projects.
- **Projects** — Youth can choose from numerous 4-H projects. Project manuals are developed by experts and most project manuals have leader guides.
- **School Enrichment** — 4-H programs for classrooms include: Garbology (2nd grade), Embryology (3rd grade), Ag Awareness Festival (4th grade), Earth Wellness Festival (5th grade), and Nutrition Education Program (K-8th grades in qualifying schools). These curricula meet Nebraska Curriculum Standards.
- **After-School Programs** — 42 Lincoln after-school/summer site programs have incorporated 4-H projects and/or county fair exploration activities into their programs.
- **4-H Embryology Website** — EGG Cam and other resources at http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/embryology.

**Educational Events** — 4-H staff organize events such as Clover College, workshops, contests, and leader trainings.

**Leadership Opportunities** — 4-H Teen Council, 4-H Council, and more.

“Without the outreach provided by the Extension’s 4-H staff, a large number of youth in Lincoln would miss out on the BIG impact 4-H has on our community. As a Lincoln Parks & Recreation director of quality out-of-school programs called community learning centers, I see on a daily basis the value our youth receive through 4-H’s hands-on projects.”

— Ryan Mohling, Lancaster County Extension Board member and Community Learning Center Site Supervisor at Everett Elementary School

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The Lancaster County Extension office and staff are a crucial part of the Lincoln Public Schools science curriculum. The staff are valuable resources who are willing to share their expertise with LPS students and teachers — helping to create meaningful learning experiences for children of Lincoln.”

— Kirsten Smith, Lincoln Public Schools Curriculum Specialist for Science

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Food & Nutrition

To help people learn how to eat healthier, Extension blends nutrition, food safety, and food preparation information into practical actions people can use in their daily lives.

Educational materials developed by Extension Educator Alice Henneman for use in local programs (such as PowerPoints and handouts) are also made available on the Internet for around-the-clock access, both locally and nationwide. They are promoted and shared via various social media such as Vimeo, SlideShare, LinkedIn, Twitter, Flickr, and Facebook. As an example, a community program she delivered in cooperation with BryanLGH about healthy eating using master mixes, drew a live audience of over 400 persons and the materials on the Internet have received over 5,500 views. Alice chairs a committee of about 30 UNL staff to develop materials for Extension’s statewide Food website at http://food.unl.edu. Topics include food safety, local foods, meat products, home food preservation, food processing/business development, food allergies, and youth/4-H.

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 USDA through the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program—Education (SNAP-Ed). Last year, Lancaster County NEP reached:

- 819 enrolled program participants
- 26 schools and other teaching locations
- 8,034 teaching contacts (1,718 teaching contacts)
- 7,318 youth (13,121 teaching contacts) at 26 schools and other sites
- 78 older adults (357 teaching contacts) at six senior sites
- 184 individuals at family meal nights

Grant Addresses Childhood Obesity

In 2011, UNL Extension received an Agriculture and Food Research Initiative competitive grant to address the childhood obesity issue in the Lincoln community. The $947,093 grant will be used to replicate the highly successful Lancaster County Nutrition Education Program’s school enrichment kit program which is currently only available to income-qualifying schools. All Lincoln Public Schools will now have access to nutrition kits containing hands-on educational experiences designed to enhance the school health curriculum. Teachers will be trained on the usage of kits in their classrooms and the importance of healthy eating. The five-year “Growing Healthy Kids Thru Healthy Communities” also provides for parent/community involvement though a “Family Meal Night” component.

Home & Families

Extension Educator Maureen Burson presents Parents Forever and Guardianship Training classes in Lancaster County and Southeast Nebraska. She is also a part of Lincoln’s Children of Parents Experiencing Divorce (COPE/D) coalition.

In 2011, 33 Master Gardeners volunteered 1,466 hours.

UNL Extension plays a vital role in promoting human health by teaching Nebraskans how to create healthy, sustainable, and diverse landscapes that are energy and water efficient, as well as less dependant on pesticides. Fewer pesticide applications means less chance for human exposure, and reduced potential for chemecal residue to end up in lakes and streams. Extension Educator Sarah Brownning and Extension Associate Mary Jane Froge assist area residents and green industry professionals via phone calls, walk-in requests, email questions, publications, and Internet resources.

The Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program provides participants with 40 hours of classroom training on a core curriculum of horticulture topics, and in return they give back 40 hours of volunteer service to their community. Master Gardener volunteers extend the reach of Extension education by teaching yard waste composting, a program developed in partnership with the City of Lincoln Solid Waste Recycling program. Master Gardeners also assist in maintenance of demonstration landscapes, including the People’s City Mission vegetable garden where they teach residents how to care for and harvest garden crops.

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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 enlists 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.

Pests & Wildlife

UNL Extension in Lancaster County has extensive resources to help identify pests and recommend control methods. Emphasis is on low-toxic control methods, when ever possible. Extension Educator Barb Ogg and Extension Associate Soni Cochran assist area residents via phone calls, walk-in requests, email questions, publications, presentations, workshops, and radio. Extension’s popular pest and wildlife website reaches a global audience with research-based resources including videos. Ogg partners with community organizations and industry professionals in training and disseminating pest control resources and assistance. Bed bugs are a growing problem in Lincoln and other Nebraska communities, particularly in low income families who cannot afford professional treatments.

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 website. He is Extension’s statewide contact for grain storage questions. Some of the agricultural programs presented this year include: Private and Commercial Pesticide Applicator Trainings, Nutrient Management seminars, and a Farmland Leasing Arrangements workshop.

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 crops profitable for acreages. A new online resource offers an Acreage and Small Farms Insights website at http://acreage.unl.edu. Production ag and acreage resources are online at http://lancaster.unl.edu/ag.

Urban Agriculture

With the growing importance of urban agriculture, a statewide website at http://food.unl.edu/urbanag was created to focus on Extension’s many resources in this area. Extension’s statewide team members from Lancaster County are co-leaders Gary Brownning and Alice Henneman, as well as Alice Henneman and David Smith.

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