Providing Equipment to Rural Fire Departments Through Federal Excess Property Program

by Becky Erdkamp, Education and Outreach Specialist, Nebraska Forest Service

When certain types of vehicles are no longer needed by the Federal government, it becomes available at military and other Federal installations across the country. Through the Federal Excess Property Program (FEPP), Nebraska Forest Service (NFS), in cooperation with the United States Forest Service, is able to acquire some of these vehicles, which are reconditioned and loaned to cooperating rural fire departments. Currently, there are almost 400 pieces of FEPP equipment in use by rural fire departments across Nebraska.

The program is coordinated out of the NFS Fire Shop. Formerly located at Lincoln's Air Park West, the NFS Fire Shop moved to the Agricultural Research and Development Center following completion of the Army Corps of Engineers' cleanup at ARDC.

NFS is responsible for screening, retrieving, reconditioning, inventorying, and assigning Federal excess property. While in use by rural fire districts, the equipment remains Federal property. When no longer needed, the equipment is returned to NFS; it is then either reassigned or sold, with sale proceeds returned to the Federal treasury.

Upon arrival at the Fire Shop, mechanics inspect each vehicle to determine its condition. Next, repairs are made to bring the vehicle up to current safety standards. Additional safety devices are often added to each vehicle, making them suitable for use by rural fire departments. Mechanics at the Fire Shop also provide routine vehicle maintenance at the facility. In early 2005, the Fire Shop developed a Mobile Repair Program.

“There was a general attitude among us at the shop that this would be useful,” says Lew Steber, FEPP manager.

This 2 ½ ton 6x6 tanker was supplied by NFS to a fire department through the Federal Excess Property Program. The Fire Shop made repairs and brought the tanker up to safety standards and the cooperating fire department (Dannebrog) did the finish work on the vehicle.

This 5 ton 6x6 tanker with cannon is another vehicle that came through the Fire Shop through the FEPP. The cooperating fire department (Cedar Bluffs) did the finish work.

ARDC Feature Unit

NFS FIRE SHOP

Growing America’s Future!

The eighth annual Soybean Management Field Days is set for August 15-18. “Growing America’s Future” is the theme of this year’s event that will offer producers unbiased and research-based information to improve their soybean profitability.

The field days are held at four different producer’s farms each year. And this year, the August 18th stop is close to home at Krumel Farms (Larry and Howie Krumel) near Wahoo.

The event consists of four field stops across the state, each with demonstration plots, lunch and time for questions. Producers can obtain ideas and insight about the challenges they face in producing a quality crop at a profitable price in today’s global economy.

Topics include: Ten Steps to Finding Answers to Your Soybean Production Questions, Management Update, Late Season Crop Management Diagnostic Clinic at the ARDC, Preventing the Meal Time Blues: Dealing with a Picky Eater, Summer Brings Uncertainty and Progress, ARDC Director’s Comments, Solution Days Moves to New Location, ARDC FEATUE UNIT - NFS Fire Shop, University of Nebraska-Lincoln * Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources

ARDC Director’s Comments

I have recently traveled to several areas of Nebraska for meetings. Some of these areas include Scottsbluff, Hastings, Paxton, Brule and all points in between. If you think it is dry in eastern Nebraska, drive west and you will see a garden. In mid-May I witnessed people laying gated pipe and irrigating crops so it will come up. I witnessed dying wheat fields and brown pastures in the Sandhills. It is sad to see our great State in such dire condition. At the ARDC, we have a great crop started…how it will finish remains to be determined.

We have several projects in various stages at the ARDC. We are installing over 11 miles of fiber optic line that will enable high-speed voice and data transmission to all major locations on the ARDC. This project should be concluded by the time you read this article.

We have two building projects that will start soon. One project will build equipment storage in the Agriculture area to replace several smaller buildings that were damaged in recent storms. The other project will provide a new home for the general farm and facilities operations. This building will have office and shop space.

The prawn project has moved into another phase. We have constructed an outdoor pond for summer prawn culture. The indoor phase will continue, supplying prawns for the outdoor pond and continuing research.
As part of the Fire Shop's goal of becoming more service-oriented, two mobile repair units are available to respond to the maintenance needs of cooperating fire departments. Additionally, Sieber says that the units will be available to provide on-site support for cooperating districts in the event of catastrophic fires. Sieber also says that beginning in 2006, each vehicle will receive a complimentary inspection by the Fire Shop. This inspection will take place during NF's inventory visits. Based on this inspection, the fire department will receive a report letting them know what maintenance the vehicle needs to keep it in proper working order. Sieber says this will allow local fire departments to make good maintenance decisions and extend the usable life of the vehicle.

For more information about the Federal Excess Property Program or to inquire about equipment availability, contact the NF's Fire Shop at (402) 624-0861.

**NF's Rural Fire Protection Program provides rural fire districts with tools, training and equipment**

By Becky Erdkamp, Education and Outreach Specialist, Nebraska Forest Service

In addition to helping rural fire districts meet their equipment needs, the Nebraska Forest Service (NF) Rural Fire Protection Program provides service in the areas of fire prevention, wildfire suppression training, planning and aerial fire suppression to rural fire departments across the state. The goal of these programs is to maximize the impact of Nebraska’s existing (predominantly volunteer) force of local firefighters. Combined, Nebraska’s 476 rural fire districts have more than 14,000 firefighters.

**Wildfire Suppression Training:** NF also has programs to train firefighters to suppress wildfires. NF’s Fire Shop provides training, equipment and technical assistance to cooperating rural fire departments across the state. This training helps ensure that rural firefighters are able to respond effectively to wildfires.

**Fire Prevention:** The greatest impact Nebraskans can have on fire protection is by preventing fires. NF's works with local fire departments to develop fire prevention programs that are tailored to meet each community’s needs. Don Westover, Nebraska Forest Service rural fire program leader, says that preventing fires not only saves losses to resources and materials, but also, potentially, to lives.

**Aerial Wildfire Suppression:** As an agricultural state, Nebraska has many aerial applicators who need to protect their equipment. NF works with aerial applicators to help ensure their equipment is in good working order. NF also has an aerial wildland fire training program to help aerial applicators prevent and respond to wildfires.

**Planning Assistance:** NF is able to assist rural fire districts with the development of Fire Protection Master Plans, as well as with coordinating Mutual Aid Districts.

**Preventing Meal Time Blues: Dealing with a Picky Eater**

By Casey Holstein, RD

Casey Holstein is a Registered Dietitian with the Nutrition Education Program in Dodge, Saunders and Washington Counties. The Nutrition Education Program (NEP) is sponsored by the University of Nebraska, Extension and the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. NEP is a program designed to teach nutrition education to those on food stamps or those who qualify. If you think you or your family may qualify for NEP and are interested in fire protection education, please call Casey at (402) 624-8022.

**Soybean Management Field Days**

For more information about the field days, visit the web site at http://arcd.unl.edu/soydays.htm or contact the Nebraska Soybean Board at (800) 852-5220 or University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension at 1-800-529-0305.

**A Pilot for the Mackay Project**

The Mackay Project is an initiative to assist and support experimental research in the area of crop production. The project is named after Dr. George Mackay, a long-time university employee known for his research in the area of crop production.

**UF/IFAS Extension's Soil Scientist**

UF/IFAS Extension's Soil Scientist is a program that helps farmers and landowners improve soil quality and productivity. The program provides education and support to farmers and landowners to help them make informed decisions about soil management.

**Nebraska Soybean Board**

The Nebraska Soybean Board is a non-profit organization that promotes the soybean industry in Nebraska. The Board works to increase the demand for soybeans in the marketplace and to improve the profitability of soybean production.

**Nebraska Department of Agriculture**

The Nebraska Department of Agriculture is a state agency responsible for regulating the state's agricultural industries. The department oversees the state's food safety, crop and livestock inspection, and animal health programs.

**Nebraska State Patrol**

The Nebraska State Patrol is an执法机构负责维护公共安全和交通秩序。该机构在州内执行法律，处理交通事故和犯罪事件，以及提供交通控制和紧急响应服务。

**Nebraska Emergency Management Agency**

The Nebraska Emergency Management Agency is a state agency responsible for coordinating and managing the state's emergency preparedness and response efforts. The agency works to protect lives and property during disasters and emergencies.

**Preventing the Meal Time Blues:**

As a dietitian, I hear parents express concern about their child’s eating habits. Many parents worry that their child won’t eat enough food or that they won’t eat anything! "Can you just make me something different?" They can say, "I don’t want the same thing every day."

**Responsibilities:**

In every household, roles must be established between the child and the parent. You can sigh when I say that the role of the child is to be hungry and the role of the parent is to provide food. If you think about it, it’s a simple concept, but it’s not always easy to implement.

**For Improving Crop Water Use:**

Weed Problems.

Managing New and Emerging Disease and Insect and Weed Problems.

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The preparation of a Fire Protection Master Plan is a proactive step that allows the Fire District / Community to determine what course(s) of action it will take to provide long-term fire protection to the district / community," says George Teixeira, Nebraska Forest Service fire resource manager. "The Master Plan is a key tool that should also be used to assist the Fire District / Community during its annual budgetary process."

Mutual Aid Districts: Large fires or emergencies may stress local resources and result in the need for help from neighboring fire departments. For this reason, NFS encourages fire departments to participate in Mutual Aid Districts. The 476 rural fire districts in Nebraska are organized into 58 Mutual Aid Districts. Each Mutual Aid District has a Mutual Aid Resource Directory that helps familiarize each rural fire district with the resources and problems of neighboring fire districts within their Mutual Aid District.

Through its rural fire protection program, NFS strives to strengthen rural fire departments, thus strengthening the communities they serve. "Whether it is through fire department planning, fire suppression actions or fire prevention activities, the local fire department makes a vital contribution to the sense of community felt by rural Nebraskans," Westover says. The Nebraska Forest Service is pleased to help strengthen rural Nebraska by working with local fire departments. For more information about services and assistance provided by the NFS Rural Fire Protection Program, contact the Nebraska Forest Service at (402) 472-2944 or trees@unl.edu.

About the People

Lew Sieber is the Fire Equipment Manager at the NFS Fire Shop. He manages the day-to-day operations of the shop. Lew also oversees the placement of Federal Excess Property with Volunteer Fire Departments that participate in our program. He has been with the University since 2000. He started out as the shop supervisor but now has the additional duties of Fire Equipment manager.

Lew has an Associates Degree in Road Diesel Truck Technology from Southeast Community College. He also has served as a motor transport operator and wheeled vehicle mechanic with recovery specialist designee with the National Guard. He retired 2 yrs ago with 23 years of service.

He and his wife, Karen, have three sons and three daughters, and make their home in Lincoln. Lew is actively involved in the community with Boy Scout Venture Crew, Girl Scouts, and the Arnold Heights Neighborhood Association. And he also enjoys golfing.

Joseph Liberator and Richard Kapple are full-time mechanics at the Fire Shop. They rebuild and completely recondition federal excess property vehicles to be used for fire protection in rural fire departments. They also help maintain and repair University vehicles, such as tractors and trucks utilized by departments at the ARDC.

Joseph Liberator started with the Fire Shop in 2001. He completed the two year automotive course at Iowa Western College in 1973 and has taken various welding, body, etc. classes as well. He also received training on military equipment while in the Army Reserves during his 18 years in the Reserves.

He and his wife, Marian, live in Omaha. They have one daughter.

Richard Kapple and his wife, Michele, live near Wahoo and have three sons and a daughter. In his spare time, Richard enjoys hunting, fishing, and working on older vehicles.

Best Wishes to Connie Reimers-Hild

Connie Reimers-Hild has accepted an Extension Educator position at the Kimmel Education and Research Center (KERC) located in Nebraska City. Her last year as an Extension Educator in Saunders County was June 16. More information about KERC can be found at the web at: http://www.kimmelorchard.com/kerc.html.

We wish Connie the best!

Preventing Meal Time Blues

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About the Meal

Meal time is a social event for children. They are encouraged to be good eaters, but during meal time they may be fussy eaters. Your child may be more likely to eat new foods when he feels that meal is ‘his’... Children need to develop a positive relationship with food. Their early experiences during meal times and the quality interactions that occur during meal times can affect their long-term food choices and nutritional status.

The appropriate meal time environment means: Where and how the meal is provided. Give them the control they need. Give them a meal they will enjoy... What is provided. What do you say? What is being written and what is being done by the child. Is the meal appropriate for the child? Is the meal balanced?

About the People

About the Meal

Meal time is a social event for children. They are encouraged to be good eaters, but during meal time they may be fussy eaters. Your child may be more likely to eat new foods when he feels that meal is ‘his’... Children need to develop a positive relationship with food. Their early experiences during meal times and the quality interactions that occur during meal times can affect their long-term food choices and nutritional status. Lastly, try to introduce these new foods slow and separate. Sometimes, new foods can be scary to a child; it makes matters worse if all of the new foods are mixed together. Try serving one food with old favorites and remember, be patient.

As for your child, he, too, has responsibilities at the dinner table. Children are responsible for what and how much they eat of what is provided. Hence, the words “what is provided.” As stated earlier, YOU decided what will be provided at meal time. Let the child to decide what foods and how much of each food to eat. Trust me; a child will not starve himself to death because you want them to try green beans! For the first few days your child may complain, but don’t give in. As long as you have provided a balanced meal, you have done your job. Don’t offer substitutes and treats just to get your child to eat. For a few meals, your child may leave the table feeling hungry, but, trust me, he will be fine. You cannot judge your child’s nutrition off of one meal. By dinner, your child will let the hunger kick in and they are much more willing to try a new and healthy food. Your child is also responsible for learning how to politely refuse foods that do not tempt their taste buds. Explain to your child that it is okay to not like a food, but it is not okay to yell, spit or throw foods. It is important that you tell your child, and show your child, that it is impossible to know if they will like a new food unless they try it. Lastly, if they try it and don’t like it, don’t force the food. Just continue to offer it at another time.

Make It Fun: Another important tip is to make meal time fun. Coming to the dinner table should never feel like a punishment; for your child or for you. Children are extremely visual. They like color, shapes and variety. Try to include these at meal time. For instance, use small amounts of food coloring to make new and old foods fun. Or, use mini cookie cutters to make foods into fun shapes. It may even help to serve foods on colored plates or drink out of fun straws. Lastly, don’t forget about the idea of variety. The variety can come from the types of foods or from the colors of the foods being served. By eating a diet that is full of variety, they are also more likely to get the entire spectrum of nutrients that they need.

And give them control: One tip I offer many of my families is to involve the child in the meal planning process. Give them a “star meal” of their own. This may be Sunday breakfast or Wednesday dinner. It doesn’t matter. Just give him one meal that is all on his own. This means that your child will begin by designing a menu for that meal. Then he gets to help gather the ingredients at the grocery store and help prepare in the kitchen. Encourage your child to try to add new foods to their “star meal.” Have your child set the table and help serve the family. They will be so proud of their accomplishment, and you won’t have any trouble getting them to eat the new foods on the plate.
