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Nebraska Communities—
Quality of Life
We're Serving You

The Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources exists to serve the people of Nebraska through research, service and teaching activities. The Institute's main teaching component, the College of Agriculture, prepares men and women for careers in all areas of agriculture and agribusiness. One of the college's programs is designed to specifically meet the needs of Nebraska for technically trained employees.

The Institute's School of Technical Agriculture, located at Curtis, Nebraska, has as its mission the training of students in technical knowledge and occupational skills.

The school's six programs, which conform to the technical education guidelines of HEW, lead to associate degrees. There is also a transfer agreement between the school and the College of Agriculture that permits Curtis graduates to pursue bachelor degrees in general agriculture if they choose. Annually, about 5 percent of the Curtis graduates go on to the University in Lincoln.

Ag Machinery Mechanics Technology graduates are usually employed by farm equipment dealerships across the state, with titles ranging from parts men and general mechanics to managers and owners.

Commercial Horticulture Technology graduates are generally employed by Nebraska horticulture enterprises, many in management positions. Opportunities in this field have been increasing rapidly.

Production Agriculture Technology graduates—over 85 percent of them—become directly involved in production agriculture on the state's farms and ranches. The other 15 percent are employed by agribusiness firms.

Ag Business Technology trains students for positions with agribusiness firms ranging from sales to management. Some of the graduates of this program have used their management training to improve home, farm and ranch incomes.

Ag Land and Water Technology graduates are usually employed by agricultural service organizations in positions ranging from engineering technicians to soil conservation contractors to managers of natural resource districts.

Veterinary Technology students are prepared to assist the state's veterinarians. This program has 70 percent female graduates—a rarity in agriculture—and is one of the first in the country to be accredited for animal technician training by the American Veterinary Medical Association.

The School of Technical Agriculture at Curtis is an integral part of the University of Nebraska, meeting as it does the needs for technical skills by Nebraska agribusiness.

On the cover:
Hundreds of rural towns such as this one dot the Nebraska countryside. How satisfied are the people who live here? How satisfied are their counterparts in the city? One of a series of articles on the quality of life in Nebraska—this one dealing with the community—begins on page 18. (Aerial photo by Bart Stewart.)

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QUARTERLY

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Youth County
Juniors Find Action in County Government

By Marilyn Fox

Is it possible to take 55 high school juniors to a camp, have them role-play citizens in county government, study problems and arrive at decisions similar to those of an actual County Board of Supervisors? In Adams County it is!

Youth County—as it is called—was sponsored by the Adams County Cooperative Extension Service. It was an educational conference designed to give high school juniors practical experience in environmental and governmental problems solving at the county level. The conference, conducted last spring, was one of the first of its kind in Nebraska. It will be continued in the county this year. If enthusiasm and encouragement from participants, the County Board of Supervisors and agencies involved continues to be as high as it is now—it could become an annual event.

At present, a county government day is held for high school students. It was felt the Youth County program would not detract from this, but would add to it, and help provide students with even more workable knowledge through actual participation in a mock county government situation. The local governmental processes were experienced through playing roles of county and city officials and local citizenry as well as the solving of problems related to local county situations.

Before the actual conference, four areas of interest were selected by extension personnel and representatives of different areas of the county. The four areas of study were: South Central Community Mental Health Center (SCCMHC), Midland Area Agency on Aging, Planning and Zoning, and the proposed Comprehensive Emergency Services. With help from these agencies and some additional work on their own, students learned about the services, current programs, new program needs and budgets of these groups.

Junior Social Studies

Each of the five area high schools were asked to select students from their junior social studies classes. The selection number was based on the population of the junior class of that school. After their selection, students attended three orientation meetings. At the first meeting, each student was given a role to play.

Roles ranged from county supervisors, mayors, farmers, working women, welfare recipients, small businesspeople to senior citizens. Students were to find their counterparts in real life and ask about how local government affected them, about their personal participation in local government, and about their knowledge of the four selected interest areas. The remaining orientation meetings were attended by representatives of the four agencies and the board of supervisors to better inform the students about their goals and workings.

A three-day conference was conducted in the spring at the Nebraska Youth Leadership and Development Camp at Aurora. At this time, students who were playing their selected roles, were told that Youth County was to receive a federal grant for $25,000 and that the Youth County Board of Supervisors would make a decision in three days on which agency would receive the money. Each of the students had previously been assigned to one of the interest groups representing each of the four agencies. They began work, meeting not only in their interest groups, but in supervisor district meetings, town-area meetings and in general sessions.

Within their special interest groups they worked to formulate a program for their agency and to develop a budget for that program. In

(Continued on next page)
Youth

other meetings they worked to convince others of the merit of their agency's proposals. Informal politicking was also taking place with members of interest groups talking to county supervisors and others trying to convey to them the values in their proposals.

On the final day of the conference, each agency representative whose role was played by a student presented its proposal and budget to a general session of the Youth County Board of Supervisors. The Supervisors then went into closed session and made a final decision on what agencies would receive a share of the money, and the amount.

As in real life situations, there were leaders and those who made decisions and there were followers who sat back and let others make decisions for them. All participants had an equal opportunity to become involved in some of the decision-making processes and many of them did.

In a final evaluation from the students, the agencies involved, and other interested persons, it was reported that the students had learned much about local government and how they, as private citizens, could get involved. As a result of the Youth County program, two of the students were asked to serve as youth advisors on the advisory council of the SCCMHC. Their research into the agency and the council's feeling that a student's viewpoint could be quite helpful led to this decision. Several students who had very little interest in county government before the conference have since become quite enthusiastic and closely follow news about what is happening in "their" agency and in local government.

Young people who were involved in Youth County programs have benefited through the promotion and development of leadership and decision-making skills. They also became more aware of county government operation and of each individual citizen's responsibilities and opportunities.

Farmer's Market—From Farm to Fork

By Dale Lindgren and Larry Benner

The concept of using a Farmer's Market to sell fresh produce has been increasingly popular in Nebraska the last few years. Some Nebraska farmers now use this type of marketing system to supplement their normal incomes by selling small amounts of alternative crops.

Farmer's Markets encourage a direct exchange between producers and consumers, and get rid of the middleman. A properly organized market cannot only lower the cost of food for consumers, but it can benefit communities, businesspeople and farmers, too.

In eastern Nebraska, Omaha and Lincoln Farmer's Markets have operated for several years, while Fremont and Columbus Farmer's Markets have started operation more recently. Two Farmer's Markets are presently operating in Western Nebraska. One was established at North Platte in 1977 and another at Benkelman in 1978.

The North Platte Farmer's Market was started under the combined efforts of the Cooperative Extension Service, North Platte Downtown Merchants Association and local vegetable growers. It was initially established so local growers and consumers could meet to sell and buy excess produce. However, this is only one of the reasons people participate in the market.

The North Platte market operates on Saturday mornings from mid-July through September, with a special fall market held in late October. It is located in a parking lot centered in the downtown business district of North Platte. Reservations for selling stalls, which consist of one parking stall, are made at the North Platte Chamber of Commerce. A charge of

Marilyn Fox is Adams County extension aide.
$1.50 is assessed on stalls reserved in advance. Stalls can be rented on Saturday mornings for $2. Income from the stall rental fees pays for market advertising, insurance and other miscellaneous expenses.

It was set up so there would be a congenial atmosphere and as little red tape and regulations as possible. The regulations which exist enhance the efficient operation of the market and protect the consumers and the sellers. The basic rules are as follows:

1) All items offered for sale must be homemade or home-grown.
2) All produce, vehicles and vendors in the selling area must be clean.
3) The market must abide by local and state health departments regulations.
4) All vendors are expected to conduct themselves properly.
5) Persons selling produce must sign an "Application-Waiver of Responsibility" form and a "Pesticide Affidavit" form.
6) Products offered for sale must be priced individually, per number or per volume and not be weighed unless a state certified scale is used.

The average number of sellers present at a market averages 15 to 18 per day. Some come from distances up to 90 miles (145 km) to sell their products. The sellers use the market as a way to supplement their normal income and not as a sole source of income. These sellers include farmers, ranchers, homemakers, railroad workers, hospital personnel and retired people, to name a few.

The amount of produce sold varies depending on the amount available, number of buyers, and the time of season. Early season produce sells for premium prices. Several sellers have sold $300 worth of vegetables in two or three hours and could have sold more if the produce was available. On most Saturdays, fresh produce sold out, often within an hour after the market opened.

Commonly sold vegetables include tomatoes, sweet corn, onions, potatoes, peppers, melons and squash. Less common vegetables, including celery and okra, and herbs are occasionally offered for sale. All vegetables and fresh fruit sell well. The demand for such produce as popcorn, dry beans and black walnuts generally exceeded the supply. Homemade crafts are also offered for sale, along with dried flowers, pine cones, ornamental grass and some houseplants.

Advantages

Obvious advantages associated with a Farmer's Market are the added income and increased prices for the seller and lower prices and fresh produce for the buyer. Other advantages are not always apparent until one takes part in the market activities. The produce is locally grown and has no preservatives added. Some people will pay extra for this trait. A market of this type often introduces vegetables not always available in stores and can improve the family's diet. The market also brings in more customers for the local businesses.

There are other positive aspects which probably have no financial advantage to persons involved. It is an opportunity to renew old acquaintances and visit with friends. Some use the market to introduce their children to some basic knowledge of business operations. Several sell as a hobby to help pass the time.

There are several disadvantages to the North Platte Farmer's Market.

First of all the market functions on Saturday mornings only, and produce ripens throughout the week. This could be remedied by conducting a second market during the week. Most of the sellers have avoided this problem by taking names of customers on Saturday mornings and selling produce to them during the week. Quite often a Farmer's Market seller will sell too much during the week and have little left for the market on Saturday mornings.

Another disadvantage is weather. Because the Farmer's Market at North Platte is outside there is little protection from Mother Nature.

The Lincoln County Cooperative Extension Service uses the Farmer's Market as a means of getting information to the general public. The home agents distribute information on different recipes and give demonstrations on freezing, canning and solar drying of food. At the special fall market in late October, home agents demonstrate different uses for pumpkins and squash. They also have displays on fall type decoration made of gourds, corn, ornamental grasses and similar material. Local 4-H members give demonstrations on cooking and baking.

Style Show

In addition, the local merchants sponsor a style show consisting of women's, children's and men's clothes. Music adds to the festive atmosphere. Over a thousand people attended the fall market in 1978.

A Farmer's Market is only one method of direct marketing and has advantages and disadvantages over other marketing systems, such as roadside stands and pick-your-own operations. Farmer's Markets are operating successfully in several Nebraska cities. With the increasing costs of transportation and energy, Nebraskans should be seeing more Farmer's Markets in operation and the availability of more locally grown produce in the future.

Dale Lindgren is assistant professor of Horticulture, University of Nebraska, North Platte Station. Larry Benner is assistant agricultural extension agent, Lincoln County, Nebraska.
Dog Owners Beware—
Mosquitoes Spread Heartworm in Nebraska

By Susan E. Moos and Donald L. Ferguson

Nebraska dog owners should be on the lookout for heartworm disease in their pets.

Heartworm disease is rapidly becoming one of the most serious canine diseases in the United States. Five to 10 years ago, the disease was confined to a relatively small geographic area. This included the Atlantic and Gulf coasts through Texas and north into the Great Lakes region. Florida had the highest incidence, probably because of the large number of mosquitoes. However, in recent years heartworm disease has spread across most of the states east of the Mississippi River and into Canada (Figure 1), and it is becoming more and more common in Nebraska.

In the Heart

The canine heartworm, *Dirofilaria immitis*, is a nematode or roundworm parasite of dogs. Adult heartworms live in the right side of the heart, sometimes migrating into the pulmonary artery and lungs. Adults are long, white, threadlike worms 5 to 12 inches (12.5-30 cm) long (Figure 2).

Fertilized eggs develop and hatch within the uterus of the female worms. These small larvae, known as microfilaria, are discharged into the blood stream of the dog. An average of 30,000 microfilaria are produced by a female worm each day. They can remain active for a year or more, but cannot develop further until eaten by the intermediate host: various species of mosquitoes.

Mosquitoes Spread

When a mosquito bites an infected dog, it draws many microfilaria in with its blood meal. Inside the mosquito, larvae grow and develop to third stage infective larvae in about 14 days. Then the larvae migrate to the mouth parts of the mosquito and enter other dogs when the mosquito feeds.

Once inside the dog's body, the third stage larvae migrate first to the fat and muscle tissues beneath the skin. Following a period of two to four months for growth and development, larvae enter the blood stream. They are carried to the heart where development continues. The adult worm stage is reached in about four months and production of microfilaria begins. Thus, the microfilaria first appear in the peripheral circulation of the dog about eight months after being infected by the mosquito. Adult heartworms may produce microfilaria for several years.

Development of microfilaria in the mosquito is highly dependent on temperature (68 to 70°F or 20 to 21°C) and humidity. There was evidence that the 14-day cycle in the mosquito required a constant 24-hour temperature above 70°F (21°C). This no longer appears to be true in the North and it may account for the increase of heartworm disease in the temperate climates of the U.S. It has been suggested that through genetic selection a strain of microfilaria has evolved which is capable of developing and/or remaining dormant and infectious in the mosquito at temperatures below 68 to 70°F (20-21°C). If this is true, heartworm disease can be expected to continue to spread.

Damages Organs

The clinical signs of heartworm disease depend on the severity of the infection and condition of the dog. Heartworms can cause damage to the dog's lungs, heart, liver, kidneys and other organs. The signs usually appear eight to nine months after the dog has been bitten by an infected mosquito. At first, signs occur only after vigorous exercise, but later they may occur more frequently. Infected dogs may tire easily, gasp for breath and even collapse. However, after these dogs rest for a short time they usually recover and appear normal.

The number of heartworms in a dog determines the severity of infection. Dogs infected with an average of 25 worms usually do not exhibit signs of heartworm infection, but from 60 to 100 worms may cause death.

As the infection advances, chronic coughing, labored breathing, dry hair, and coarse-textured skin are evident. Abnormal heart sounds are not infrequent, and occasionally there may be moist coughing.

Diagnosis of heartworm disease
depends on recognizing clinical signs and on detecting the microfilaria in the blood. The veterinarian may use one of several methods to determine the presence of the microfilaria.

In the filtration method, 1 ml of blood is passed through a special (Millipore) filter. This concentrates the microfilaria. Then a dilute solution of methylene blue is passed through the filter to stain the microfilaria. The filter is examined under a light microscope. This method is useful for veterinarians who do not have an available centrifuge.

**Best Method**

The Knott’s test or centrifugation method is considered by most technicians to be the best method of concentrating the microfilaria. First, the blood is thoroughly mixed with 2 percent formalin in a 1:10 ratio. It is then centrifuged to concentrate the microfilaria. The pellet is resuspended in aqueous methylene blue solution and examined under a microscope.

Diagnosis of heartworm infection is sometimes hindered by the presence in the blood of microfilaria of Dipetalonema reconditum, a small worm that lives under the skins of dogs. This worm is much less harmful than *D. immitis*, so, differentiation between the two species is important. This can be accomplished by comparing the various characteristics of the microfilaria.

In about 5 to 10 percent of dogs with heartworm infection, microfilaria never appear in the blood. In these cases, diagnosis is made on the basis of clinical signs and chest X-ray examinations.

Treatment of the infection in dogs is a long process. The dog should be given a thorough physical and laboratory examination before treatment. Any other ailments of consequence should be corrected before heartworm treatment begins.

If the dog’s physical condition does not prevent chemotherapy, treatment can follow. First, the adult heartworms must be eliminated, then the microfilaria. After this, the dog may be put on preventive medication.

Thiacetarsamide is effective in destroying adult heartworms. It is administered intravenously at a rate of 0.1 ml per pound of body weight twice daily for two to three days. A few days after treatment, the heartworms die and are carried to the lungs where they lodge in small blood vessels. There they decompose and are absorbed by the body over a period of several months. After treatment, complete rest and reduced exercise is needed to prevent lung damage from the dead worms.

After eliminating the adult heartworms, the microfilaria must be destroyed. Dithiazanine iodide is the only drug currently approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for this use. It is administered orally at a rate of 2 to 10 mg per pound of body weight for 7 to 10 days.

**Number of Worms**

An important consideration in treating *D. immitis* is the number of adult worms present in the dog’s heart. If too many worms are killed in the heart and pulmonary arteries, dead worms and fragments, and toxic worm decomposition products enter the blood stream. The particles enter the circulation, lodge in the lung capillaries, and cause obstructions resulting in death of the tissues.

Dogs with disease conditions affecting the heart, liver and kidneys should not be treated for heartworm infections, or should be treated with extreme caution. Toxic reactions associated with treatment may include discharge of urine containing blood, inflammation of the cornea and conjunctiva, pulmonary congestion, edema and fever.

Heartworm can be prevented. Two methods are used. One is administration of a therapeutic dose of thiacetarsamide to the dog every six months. This eliminates the heartworms before they can reach numbers sufficient to cause problems.

The second, more commonly used method, is the oral administration of diethylcarbamazine each day during the mosquito season and continued for two months afterwards. Dogs must be tested before treatment with diethylcarbamazine, to ensure that they are not infected with heartworms. This should be done two months before mosquito season starts so positive heartworm dogs can be converted to a negative status before the mosquito season.

Prevention of heartworm infection depends on control or elimination of the worm’s intermediate host: the mosquito. House dogs can be given some measure of protection by keeping them in screened houses during the evening and night when mosquitoes feed most actively. In areas of high concentrations of mosquitoes, kennels should be screened at night and periodic control treatment should be used.

**Figure 2. Adult heartworms in a dog’s heart are white, threadlike worms 5 to 12 inches (12.5-30 cm) long. Infected dogs tire easily and may collapse. Severe infection may cause death.**
TAP and SAP

Making Maple Syrup in Nebraska

By Stan Wallen

History has not recorded who first made syrup or sugar from the sap of the maple tree. Legend has it, however, that an Indian squaw first discovered the secret when boiling venison in maple sap.

Both syrup and sugar were well-established items of barter among the Indians living in the area of the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River, even before the arrival of the white man. Later, French soldiers made a year's supply of sugar from maple sap and stored it in wooden casks or barrels.

Since early settlers could not afford cane sugar from Cuba, Puerto Rico, or Central America, they made maple sugar. It was cheaper than cane sugar and it was sold by sugar makers to other settlers. It was produced and processed entirely on the farm, principally in Vermont, New York, and other New England States, but also in Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota, Indiana, West Virginia and Virginia.

In 1860, a record crop of 4,132,000 gallons (15,701,600 l) was produced. In the years that followed, production declined as the price of cane sugar became cheaper. But during World War I production increased again to a figure slightly higher than in 1860 because of the shortage of cane sugar. Production was also high during World War II. Since then it has declined. In 1970 production was only 1,110,000 gallons (4,218,000 l).

Unfortunately, many pioneers who settled the Midwest were not exposed to New England culture or the joys of maple syrup. Even those who knew how to make maple syrup found no maple trees in the expansive grasslands of the Great Plains.

Since those early times, however, enough maple trees have been planted in Nebraska to permit making maple syrup. If you have one or more sugar maple, red maple or silver maple trees, you can make maple syrup.

Maple sugar is composed of 0-12% hexose sugar; 88 to 99 percent sucrose; and minute amounts of raffinose, a glycosyl sucrose; and three oligosaccharides which have not as yet been identified. It also contains organic acids, ash, and protein. Included in the acids are malic, citric, succinic, fumaric, and glycolic, as well as traces of seven other acids. Included in the ash are potassium, calcium, silicon oxide, manganese, sodium, and magnesium.

The basic methods used to make syrup have changed very little over the years. The goal in syrup-making is to concentrate the sap by boiling until you have only the sweet sugar syrup left. Here is a list of the necessary equipment and a step-by-step procedure used in making maple syrup.

Equipment needed

Hand drill with 7/16” (1.1 cm) bit—used for boring 3” (7.6 cm) deep holes in the maple trees.

Sap spouts—The standard metal sap spouts commonly used in New England are difficult to obtain in Nebraska. A good alternative is to make your own from a ½” (1.3 cm) dowel. Cut the dowel into a 3” (7.6 cm) length and drill a ¼” (0.6 cm) hole through its center. Taper one end so the ½” (1.3 cm) spout can be easily tapped into the 7/16” (1.1 cm)
diameter tap hole. Finally, notch the untapered end of the spout (or attach a hook) so a container for collecting the sap can be attached.

The number of spouts that can be placed in a given tree depends on the size of the tree:

- 1 for a tree with diameter (measured 4½ feet (1.4 m) above ground) greater than 10 inches (25 cm);
- 2 for a tree with diameter greater than 16 inches (40 cm);
- 3 for a tree with diameter greater than 22 inches (56 cm);

Hammer and block of wood are needed to tap the spouts into the tap holes.

Containers for collecting the sap (one container per tap). Buckets, No. 10 tin cans, etc., will do as long as they can be attached to the spouts and hold the sap. Large containers, three to four gallons (11 to 15 l) are recommended. Your sap containers should be covered to keep out rain, squirrels, birds, and other foreign bodies.

One or two new galvanized or plastic trash cans with covers for storing extra sap.

A deep pan for boiling down the sap—This may be almost any size, but should probably hold at least 5 gallons (19 l) and possibly 10, 15 or 20 gallons (38, 57 or 76 l). It should have high sides to keep the smoke from curling over into the boiling sap. A galvanized washtub or a porcelain canning container would be satisfactory.

Enough cement blocks or bricks to make a temporary fireplace to hold the kettle for boiling the sap. Build the fireplace so the boiling kettle can be set on the blocks or bricks. You need to construct a chimney with additional bricks or blocks in order to draw the smoke from the fire. If smoke or ashes come into contact with the boiling sap, the sap will darken and have a smoky taste.

A fireplace rather than a kitchen stove is recommended for boiling the sap because boiling the sap indoors results in a steam-filled house, steamed-over windows, no place to cook supper and a rather expensive energy bill. (Experience speaks!)

Approximately ½ cord of wood, preferably dry hardwood or dry pine. Dead trees are perfectly suitable as long as the wood is sound.

Candy thermometer—The temperature of the boiling sap must reach 219°F (103.9°C).

A piece of white felt approximately two feet square (.18 m²); also about 10 clothespins. The felt is used to strain sediment from the sap. The clothespins hold the felt tightly to the lip of the container into which the syrup is being strained.

Canning jars for the finished product.

When to tap the trees

The conditions necessary for sap to flow are cold nights (32°F-0°C or lower) followed by warm days (50°F-10°C or higher). In Nebraska these conditions occur during February, March and April.

How to tap the trees

Select your trees and drill the appropriate number of 7/16" (1.1 cm) diameter, 3" (7.6 cm) deep holes into each tree. Drill into the maple tree at a convenient height, slanting the hole slightly downward, toward the ground. To prevent microbial growth in the tap, you should sanitize the spouts in solution containing ¼ ounce (15 ml) of chlorine bleach per gallon (4 l) of water.

Next, tap the sap spout into the tree using a hammer and block of wood, and hang the collection container onto the tap. Remember to cover the collection container.

How to gather the sap

If you are gathering sap from trees near the fireplace, extra containers for storing the sap will not be needed, unless the sap collects faster than it boils away.

However, if you are gathering sap from trees a distance from where you are boiling, you will need to use the large trash cans or other containers to transport the sap.

Do not leave sap in buckets during warm weather. Sap may sour and spoil any new flow of sap that occurs. After the sap flow has ended, remove the sap spouts from the trees.

How to boil the sap

When several gallons of sap have been collected, pour the sap into the kettle but don’t fill the kettle so full it will boil over. Pour in fresh sap as some of the water boils away. It takes approximately 10 gallons (38 l) of maple sap to make a quart of maple syrup. When the temperature of the sap reaches 219°F (103.9°C) you have maple syrup. This may take several hours.

How to filter and can the syrup

Eliminate the sediment from the syrup by filtering it (while it is still hot) through the felt into a container. Next, place the syrup into canning jars; leave as little air space as possible. Cap the jars.

If you don’t have felt to strain your hot syrup let the syrup cool in a container. A sediment will form in the bottom. Pour off the cooled syrup, being careful not to pour the sediment, too. Now reheat the syrup and place in canning jars.

If the syrup is too thin, it will spoil easily; if it is too thick, it will crystallize. Syrup should be refrigerated to prevent spoilage. Crystallized syrup can be made into syrup by reheating.

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STAN WALLEN is extension specialist in food technology.
How Do Children Cope When Parents Break Up?

By John DeFrain and Patricia Welker

What goes through the mind of a child when parents break up?

That is an important question, because the U.S. divorce rate today is higher than at any other point in history. Each year the nation records about two million marriages—and one million divorces. Children are involved in about 60 percent of these divorces.

The effects of divorce on children have been a subject of continuous controversy for many years. Many, many research strategies have been devised to study these effects.

One reasonable approach, it seemed to us, would be to simply ask the kids themselves. To our surprise, we found after a thorough review of numerous studies that few other researchers had set out to do this.

Probably our biggest problem in conducting this research was finding a group of children to interview. We wanted contact with children who were right in the middle of the family crisis of marital separation. To interview children whose parents were already divorced would be inadequate—the children probably would have forgotten much of what had happened and how they felt about it.

Finding divorced parents in Nebraska is quite simple. Divorce is a matter of public record and a researcher easily can pick up the daily newspaper to obtain the names of the day's divorces. But marital separation—the point in time at which a spouse moves out of the home—is not a public event. There is no master list or register of separated couples.

In fact, the separated but not yet divorced individual is almost invisible in our society, we found quite quickly. Everyone we know can easily list a number of divorced people. The divorce rate for Lincoln each year is just as high as the national average: one divorce for each two marriages. But people who are separated usually are not willing to advertise this occurrence, and relatively few people know any separated individuals.

Neighbors seldom know what's going on in another family; often-time friends don't know either. And, it appears quite commonly, that relatives don't even know. The stigma of separation in our society is still great, leading the separated to be relatively circumspect about their marital status. Also, it should be noted that 60 to 75 percent of all marriages probably undergo separations at one time or another; but half of these marital separations end with reconciliation. Thus, separated folks may not wish to advertise the fact because there is still hope of getting back together.

Long Search

Anyway, we experienced great difficulty in finding separated parents. After seven months of searching across the state of Nebraska, literally hundreds of contacts by the authors and graduate students Kathy Jordan and Kendra Summers, 18 separated individuals with children ages 3 to 12 were found, all mothers. These women had 35 children in their care, and the results to be presented here focus on how these 35 children felt about marital separation.

The research will continue for a number of years, and anyone interested in finding out more about it or who wishes to participate is encouraged to contact us.

Marital separation is for most adults a traumatic experience. The notion of having a stranger look deeply into one's life at this time—even though he or she may be a trained university researcher—is particularly frightening to people, and we fully sympathize with them. The mothers naturally were reticent about the research, and felt most comfortable if they themselves interviewed the children about the separation. We wholeheartedly agreed to this approach.

All 18 mothers were sent 25 to 35 pages of forms to fill out, and all 18 mothers sat down with the children and did this. To do this was quite time consuming, we know; single parents have little time to spare, anyway, and we are indebted to the mothers for their kind cooperation.
Without them, the study could not have happened.

In capsule form, a few of the most interesting findings are reported below. This is a simplification of the study. In thesis form, the total study is 152 pages.

Most of the children (77 percent) were aware of why the parents separated. Common responses included: lack of affection, fighting, other male/female friends, drinking, physical abuse to the mother or children, or arguments over bills and money.

Parents are probably wise to talk with the children about these issues in ways the children can understand. Answering questions seems to be adequate. However, going into great or lurid detail may prove less useful. It seems most difficult to hide the situation from the children, and is probably harmful.

Most of the children (88 percent) want to get married in the future. Just because their parents’ relationship is going through rough times does not appear to deter the kids from thoughts of marriage.

**Bad Effects Assumed**

Most people assume, we believe, that children in the middle of marital conflict will experience adverse psychological or physiological reactions. The common belief is that a child may “act out,” becoming overly aggressive; or, the opposite reaction in other children may be to withdraw into a lonely, depressed world all his or her own. Also, it is a common notion that numerous psychosomatic illnesses may appear.

The children in this research were remarkable. In the vast majority of cases on various questions, they responded that no problems were occurring. For example, 79 percent did not report bad dreams; 89 percent did not report biting their fingernails; 73 percent were not more nervous; 77 percent did not have more stomachaches after the parents separated; 82 percent did not want to be alone more often; 88 percent did not report problems in school; 88 percent did not report more headaches; 55 percent were not sad more often after the separation; and 59 percent did not worry about being left alone.

These responses go against the common stereotypes of children experiencing separation. A person could question the accuracy of the responses—maybe the mothers doctored the questionnaires.

**Confidential**

Maybe. But all information is kept strictly confidential; and, we do not check to see who filled out each form, so the children’s anonymity is insured. We tend to believe that the answers are accurate. One question in another form asked if the parents fought in front of the children. A mother replied, “My husband tried to drown me twice in front of my preschool boys.”

The mothers were instructed to ask the children if they ever saw their parents hitting each other. Fully 22 percent replied “yes.”

In fact, it may be that because in many households things get so tense, the separation could be a good thing for the children. For example, one question asked, “How do you feel about mother now with father not living at home?” Most of the children replied positively (57 percent). One stated that, “You stopped yelling at me so much and you dance with me more and I like you more now.” Others responded, “We get to do a lot more with you,” “You spend more time with me,” and, “You don’t yell so much.”

Earlier studies have indicated that a stable single-parent home is better for children than an unstable two-parent home. The children’s responses in this research confirm this notion.

Feelings about father are generally positive (66 percent). Many replied that they still loved him and were sad he was gone. A third responded negatively, however, mentioning continuing hostilities as the prime reason. Most of the children appear to want to keep living with both parents, and a number mention unhappiness when they get caught in the middle of the combatants. It seems unfair for one parent to get the children to “take sides.” Because the marital relationship has cooled is not just cause to ask the children to terminate their good feelings about the other parent.

Most of the children continue to feel good about their brothers and sisters (65 percent).

A slight majority of the children (56 percent) want their parents to get back together; the rest see this as impossible. Half (50 percent) want the mother to remarry someone else. The yearning for a father in the home, whether he be the old one or a new one, seems strong.

Most of the children (70 percent) report that grandparents do not talk with them about the separation. Of those that do, the outcome often is not positive—most report sadness. “I wish they wouldn’t say anything,” one child noted. Another said, “I told Grandma I get upset so I can’t talk about it.” And another: “Grandma said Mom should let Dad come back home but I said Mom said no. Grandma got mad at Mom again. I told her I didn’t want to talk about it any more.” It seems that if grandparents wish to become involved, they must pick their words with care.

**Felt Good**

In many instances, the mother had begun dating. Most of the children (80 percent) felt good about this. “I hope you marry him,” one said.

Most of the children (61 percent) reported they did not get to see their father enough. This again underscores the notion that whatever parents may feel toward each other, in children’s minds a continuing relationship with both is important.

In general, we are amazed by how well the children appear to be doing. Many professionals argue that marital separation can be the most difficult family crisis of all. However, with the aid of thoughtful, understanding and patient parents, it may well be that the children will weather the storm relatively unscathed.

“Where there is life, there is conflict,” the adage goes. Children appear to be able to handle this conflict.

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John Defrain is assistant professor, and Patricia Welker is former instructor, Human Development and the Family.
Growing, Going, GONE!

Free-Wheeling Garden Is Edible, Educational

By Barbara Voigt-Boltes'

Perhaps sometime last summer when you were out driving, a garden pulled up beside you at a stoplight. You may have had thoughts of runaway radishes. What you were seeing was the Garden-on-the-Grow!

The Garden-on-the-Grow is a vegetable garden on wheels. The portable garden was developed by the home gardening coordinator at the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources as a unique approach to delivering vegetable garden information to home gardeners throughout Nebraska.

Leisure Activity

Home gardening is one of Nebraska’s most popular and productive leisure pursuits. The purpose of the Garden-on-the-Grow was to stimulate and encourage interest in home food production by demonstrating recommended practices and techniques that would assure home gardeners an abundance of high quality produce.

The garden was planted on a 6 foot x 12 foot (180x360 cm) utility trailer with 1 foot (30 cm) sideboards. The box was lined in heavy plastic and filled with 1½ tons (1.35 t) of soil mix. The mix may sound quite heavy but, in comparison, garden soil would have weighed even more. The growing media contained equal parts of peat moss, perlite and garden soil. Similar soil mixes are often suggested for container gardening. An overhead framework of electrical conduit was attached to support a fabric covering. This tarp prevented the plants from becoming wind-damaged when the garden was being transported.

Garden-on-the-Grow consisted of radishes, beets, carrots, bush beans, onions, swiss chard, green peppers, tomatoes and brussel sprouts. Muskmelon grew on a wire trellis up the back wall. This was to conserve and utilize space more efficiently. The melons were supported by cradling them in nylon hosiery tied to the trellis. Cucumbers grown in hanging baskets hung from the overhead framework beside baskets filled with mixtures of herbs and flowering annuals. The array looked good enough to eat! Scores of people wanted to uproot the vegetables and buy them. Now that’s a demand for fresh vegetables!

Visible Proof

This miniature “victory” garden was visible proof to the skeptics that a productive garden can be grown even when space is severely limited. Using space wisely was demonstrated by growing fast-maturing crops in succession. Planting a small amount of seed every two weeks extended the harvest over a longer period of time.

Intercropping was demonstrated by planting a slow-maturing crop (carrots) with a fast-maturing crop...
tomatoes while their parents inquired about wilt-resistant tomato varieties for the home garden. The Garden-on-the-Grow stimulated hundreds of questions. Specialists on hand explained why a gardener might have certain problems in the home garden. This exchange also aided the extension specialists. The questions asked gave them an indication of the type of insect and disease problems home gardeners were experiencing across the state.

At every location the Garden-on-the-Grow was greeted by disbelief followed by intrigue.

"That is the darndest thing I have ever laid eyes on, and I'm 83 years old!"

One young visitor enjoyed butterfly collecting. He pleasantly offered to catch any butterflies that might be bothering the garden. A young woman jogged by and stopped to nibble on the lettuce. A few minutes later she returned the favor and brought a jug of cold lemonade. A bunch of boys stopped long enough to help plant some radishes. An insurance agent made it his business to stop and explain the complications that would arise if the garden was involved in a traffic accident.

Fall Gardening

With the approach of fall the Garden-on-the-Grow continued to be an educational tool for home gardeners. Vegetables such as turnips, radishes, spinach, and lettuce were planted in the portable garden to demonstrate fall gardening. Gardening enthusiasts were encouraged to grow some of the spring crops again in the cooler days of the fall. When do I harvest my winter squash? How do you cure onions? Why is fall plowing recommended? These were questions that home gardeners wanted answers to as they completed the growing season.

The real test came when the garden was scheduled to be part of the Big Red Homecoming celebration. Could the Garden-on-the-Grow compete with the Cornhuskers? Fans proved to be nearly as interested in the garden as they were in football. Red-clad Huskers stopped at the garden to admire the cornucopia of fall vegetables and get last-minute gardening advice before kickoff and the first hard freeze of the season.

In spite of the possible problems a garden on wheels can present, it was always worth it. The Garden-on-the-Grow was successful in assisting hundreds of Nebraska's gardening families. It has been estimated that when the Garden-on-the-Grow was located at a public site, an average of 350 people per day responded to the display by asking questions pertaining to home food production. The adage "one picture is worth a thousand words" is not entirely accurate in the case of the Garden-on-the-Grow—rather, "seeing is believing!"

BARBARA VOIGHT-BOLTES is extension home gardening coordinator for the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

The IANR Garden-on-the-Grow, planted on a movable trailer, was a hit at many Nebraska events. It stimulated a great deal of interest in home gardening. Extension home gardening coordinator Barbara Voigt-Boltes' (right) chats with a visitor.
Citizenship Comes Alive—With Impact ’78

Citizenship? How dull! How can you make something like that "interesting"? Just ask the Extension Club women of Nebraska! Last year was the year of "Citizenship in Action—Impact ’78" for the 27,000-plus members of Home Extension Clubs in Nebraska. Every county was involved in some way in the state-wide program.

Activities ranged from "getting every club member and her husband to the polls to vote" to "working with state legislators in developing legislation and then campaigning to get it passed," to "reports at club meetings" to "establishing a town library and then operating it."

Such actions make it obvious that Nebraska Home Extension Club women are concerned and knowledgeable citizens and wish to become more so. One initial desire for the year’s program was to help members of Home Extension Clubs become active and knowledgeable citizens and to carry their concerns and activities to members of their communities, or counties, or both. A goal accomplished!

Many different paths were taken to accomplish these objectives. The most popular state-wide event was "Leap on Lincoln." It was probably the only activity to work toward all objectives at one time. All citizens were encouraged to participate. Each county or area home extension agent took responsibility for organizing registration, transportation and so forth. A Leap was planned for each of four days in January and February of 1978.

The planners thought that if 200 attended each of the four days, the event could be termed a success. Well, the first one had to be postponed because the legislature took recess (first time in history to take two weeks during the session for study), and later was cancelled because of a blizzard. The other three days certainly had weather problems, but more than 1700 made it to Lincoln to spend a day with their state legislators in the Capitol Building—observing, participating, questioning, learning. This was more than double the number expected. The day was crowded with activities and people! Then-Governor J. J. Exon termed it a "friendly invasion." The senators appeared impressed by the turnout and sincerity of those attending.

Each attendant had the opportunity:
- to be welcomed and addressed by Governor Exon and Speaker Roland Luedtke;
- to observe the Legislature during floor debate (from the balconies of the West Chamber);
- to tour the Capitol (it is a fact that one can repeat the tour many times and still see and learn something new);
- to tour the Governor’s Mansion and view the First Lady Doll Collection;
- to be encouraged to participate in the governmental process;
- to become involved in citizenship activities;
- to become aware of some consumer legislation.
• to have lunch with his/her Senator, to ask questions, discuss
issues;
• to attend a public hearing.

There were lots of tired people
who hit the road for home after their
long day with state government, but
reactions to the day were positive,
and enthusiastic.

So many wanted a repeat in 1979
that each county is being encour­
gaged to conduct its own Leap on
Lincoln. Another popular outgrowth
of the Leap is “Converge on
County.” This is a day spent with
county officials, learning more about
the process of county government
and issues facing the county.

You know that Nebraska citizens
are eager to be more involved with
their government when you hear
some of the stories about the dif­
ficulties in Leaping on Lincoln. A
group from the Panhandle spent
two days, many dollars, and a lot of
energy to make the trip. They even
used the time riding the 400-plus
miles in a bus—not for sleeping or
idle chatter—but to study the pro­
cess of lawmaking in Nebraska. That
is dedication!

Another example of true grit and
determination is the story of one
lady from north central Nebraska
who woke up the day she was to
Leap and found herself completely
“snowed in” in her farm home. She
was not to be discouraged however,
so made some phone calls and donned
all the snow gear she could put
her hands on—including a flashlight
and a whisk broom—and proceeded
towards the snow and drifts in the
predawn darkness to the road.
Then she plowed through by foot to
the highway where a four-wheel
drive vehicle took her to town to
meet her fellow travelers for the trip
to Lincoln.

Many stories could be told, and
have been. The enthusiasm gener­
ated during ’78 is spilling over into
’79. The Nebraska Home Extension
Club Women do not intend to put
aside their interest and concern for
citizenship—they will continue to
work for a high level of citizenship
for all citizens of Nebraska.

JANET WILSON is extension consumer educa­
tion specialist.

Citizenship IQ Was Boosted

Before and After

Evidence of Nebraska Extension
Club Women’s interest and in­
volve ment is clear from results of a
“before and after” quiz. A quiz
entitled “How Do YOU Rate as a
Citizen” was taken by 844 of those
attending District Meetings in the fall
of 1977. Eight meetings were held as
a “kickoff” for “Citizenship In Ac­
tion—Impact ’78”.

A year later, in fall 1978, the same
quiz was mailed to a random sam­
ple (150) of those who took it in
1977. 116 returned the quiz com­
plete (77%). Changes in behavior
over the year were noted from the
responses. Here are a few examples.

Have you ever attended a public
hearing or a legislative committee
meeting at the state or national
level?
1977 Yes 30% No 69%
1978 Yes 52% No 48%

Have you ever attended a session of
your state legislature or the U.S.
Congress?
1977 Yes 32% No 66%
1978 Yes 60% No 36%

Have you ever helped in a political
(partisan-nonpartisan) campaign?
1977 Yes 24% No 73%
1978 Yes 41% No 56%

Have you ever written a letter on
some political issue to a legislator?
1977 Yes 58% No 39%
1978 Yes 68% No 30%

Have you ever served on a jury
without trying to get out of it?
1977 Yes 21% No 72%
1978 Yes 88% No 6%

Do you know the names of both
your United States senators?
1977 Yes 67% No 24%
1978 Yes 85% No 12%

Can you give the first and last name
of your state senator?
1977 Yes 79% No 17%
1978 Yes 91% No 7%

Have you ever entertained the idea
of running for public office? (city,
county, state, etc.)
1977 Yes 11% No 87%
1978 Yes 25% No 75%

Can you identify one or more legis­
lative issues that affect you which is
now pending before a state or na­
tional legislative body?
1977 Yes 69% No 28%
1978 Yes 84% No 14%

Although some changes are more
dramatic than others, this shows a
keener awareness and appreciation
of citizen involvement.
"Let's see. Can this be bleached?" Such questions will be answered by the care label when new guidelines are adopted. A study of Nebraska homemakers was considered in drawing up new federal guidelines.

Nebraskans Play a Role in Care Labeling

By Joan Laughlin

Be on the lookout for major changes in the permanent care labels attached to your clothes and home furnishings.

A report was issued in May 1978 from the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) on weeks of testimony about care labeling, and input from a study of 212 members of home extension clubs in southeast Nebraska played an important part. The report included a proposed Trade Regulation Rule which, if accepted by the FTC commissioners, will mean new care labels on the clothing and textile products you buy.

Consumer input about problems with care label accuracy was specifically requested by the staff of the FTC's Bureau of Consumer Protection. The staff wanted consumers' opinions of care label instructions. Thus, 29 research studies and surveys were considered before recommending the Revised Care Labeling Rule. Among them was the study of Nebraska home extension club members. Because the Nebraska study focused on the appropriateness of symbols, the FTC staff was particularly interested in it.

This study was undertaken for three major reasons:

1. To evaluate several care labeling systems used for textile products;
2. To evaluate the amount of satisfaction with labels; and
3. To determine what kinds of help Nebraskans needed in understanding and using labels.

Many labeling systems existed before the one we now use. These varied from briefly worded instructions, to symbols conveying instructions, to letter codes and graphic symbols. The existence of these various systems, and the possible use of symbols in the United States, motivated this research.

In this study, the Nebraska homemakers viewed 20 slides of clothing and home furnishings items. Each slide was accompanied by five labels, one with brief instructions, one with extensive instructions, one with letter codes and brief instructions such as used by a major national retailer, one with symbols depicting care instruction, and one with the symbols along with briefly worded instructions.

When the findings were studied, Nebraska homemakers preferred briefly worded labels followed by symbols as the least effective system.

However, textiles that required special care, such as a hostess gown, or that were cleaned infrequently, such as draperies, caused participants to rank the extensively worded labels as most effective. Items that make up the weekly laundry basket, such as bed sheets or men's work shirts, elicited a preference for brief instructions.

Nebraska's was the only study done on the use of symbols for care labeling.

The FTC Staff Report to the commissioners concluded:

"The instructions expressed only in symbols were the least preferred . . . Labels with symbols plus words, on the other hand, were rated as 'less desirable' than the same instructions expressed only in 'brief words' or expressed in letters plus words."

Therefore, the FTC placed in the Revised Rule the statement that symbols may be used in addition to words, as long as the words fulfill the requirements. United States representatives to international technical committees are convinced that the European system of symbols and the
More than 200 Home Extension Club members were asked their opinions on use of symbols for care labels. The FTC used results of the survey in drawing up a new care labeling proposal.

"American system of words" can co-exist on the international market if the definitions attached to the words and symbols are consistent. Puzzled consumers have called for help with interpreting pictorially expressed care instructions. Some of these inquiries were motivated by concern for proper care and some were motivated by curiosity about what the labels meant. As a result of our study, we realized Nebraskans wanted more information about care instruction symbols. Such requests probably will increase as the symbols become more prevalent when the 1978 Revised Trade Regulation Rule on Care Labeling of Textile Products and Leather Wearing Apparel is put into effect.

Other important changes which may be contained in the new care labeling rule when published are changes in the extensiveness of the rule and meaning of terms. The proposed revised rules call for standardization of care terms. New definitions have been drawn up for terms in order to have the same interpretations by textile industry, by the refurbishment professionals and by consumers. Such terms include "machine wash," "hand wash," "home launder," and "separately." Bleaching instructions will become "bleach only when needed" or "no bleach," and where appropriate, will specify the type of bleach.

Options

Alternate care instructions are to be included, so the consumer can decide among options, such as when laundering is just as appropriate as dry cleaning. Consumers may see terms such as "cabinet dry cool," "reduced/low moisture," and "short cycle" on labels, in addition to instructions to have the item dry cleaned. These terms have been developed to guide the dry cleaner in the most appropriate care methods.

In addition, manufacturers will be required to have reliable evidences of care traits of the item as a basis for care labeling. There is a clearer delineation of the responsibility for giving care instructions to the purchaser of piece goods.

Major changes in labels for apparel will not be the only changes in the revised rule. The proposal will extend mandatory care labeling to leather and suede apparel items, and to home furnishings products too. Care instructions for washable/dry cleanable items will be similar to garment labels, but such instructions are not appropriate for many upholstered products or carpets. The rule proposes requiring distribution of informative, complete and accurate care instructions to the consumer before the purchase, so a well-informed decision can be made.

Such changes in care instruction are especially exciting as solutions to the complex problems of consumers' satisfactions with textile products. We were aware of these problems, but this study crystallized our awareness, and confirmed statistically for the Federal Trade Commission that compliance with the present rule has not been satisfactory to the consumer.

Joan Laughlin is associate professor, Department of Textiles, Clothing and Design.

Homemakers may be seeing symbols—such as these—being used on labels for clothes and home furnishings. However, symbols would be used along with briefly worded statements.
Quality of Life in Nebraska

Town or City—There’s No Place Like HOME

By Florence S. Walker

Back in the late 1960s, when the standard of living of most American families was steadily increasing, some social economists began asking, “Why is it, that Americans—who have more material riches than nearly anyone in the world—are not happier?”

The use of money as an indication of happiness was questioned as there was increasing disillusionment with possessions, difficulties in obtaining satisfactory repairs, and scarcity that could not be overcome in spite of wealth.

Later on researchers tended to turn to developing social indicators—aspects of our lives beyond those involving money—to find what people associate with a satisfactory or happy life. Many of these studies of measures of well-being have been lumped under the title, “quality of life.” This article, focusing on the community, is based on information using what is called a subjective quality of life measure. In a subjective study, representative groups of persons living in an area are surveyed to determine how satisfied they are with various aspects of their lives.

Two hundred and eight usable personal interviews were obtained from summer 1977 through March 1978 from two locations in eastern Nebraska. One location was urban and the other was a rural town at least 50 miles from the urban center. The rural town’s population was between 2,500 and 5,000.

Questions about the person’s community were asked in two parts:

- the availability and satisfaction of a characteristic in the community, and
- how important the person thinks that characteristic is to the quality of his or her life.

Both questions are important because a person could be very dissatisfied with the legal and financial services in the community, for example, but that characteristic might be of very little importance to the person’s quality of life. General characteristics of the participants are given in Table 1.

Other questions were asked about the quality of the participant’s life, without reference to the community in which he lived. There was no difference, statistically, in how satisfied with the quality of their lives at present each group was. Both groups, on the average, said they were closer to being “satisfied” with their personal life in general, than to being somewhat satisfied.” The latter response was considered lower on the scale of satisfaction.

When asked to compare the present quality of their lives to what it was five years ago, the city people, on the average, said life today was
better for them than it was five years ago.

However, the rural-town people, on the average, indicated that the quality of their lives today was about the same as it was five years ago. Both groups were similar in their satisfaction with the progress they had made in the quality of their lives during the past five years.

If we consider a community a collection of services and facilities which offers regional variations, the aspects of comparison between urban centers and rural towns become clearer. This study considered community services dealing with health, protection, education and public transportation. Of these, significant differences in satisfaction were found between the city residents and the rural-town residents for:

- health services,
- schools and
- public transportation.

On the average, urban residents were more satisfied with their health services and public transportation, while the rural-town residents were more satisfied with the schools. The types of services city residents were more satisfied with may well be an expression of satisfaction with the availability of the service.

When asked how important these services were to the quality of their lives, both the city and rural-town people said police and fire protection were most important, while day care services for children were least important. On the average, rural-town people placed a lower level of importance on day care services for children and public transportation than did the urban people.

A second set of community services that were considered influential to the quality of residents' lives were: shopping facilities, repair services, and legal and financial services. The rural-town residents differed significantly from their urban counterparts by expressing greater satisfaction with legal and financial services. Differences in the satisfaction with and availability of the other types of commercial services were, on the average, minor. When asked how important each of these ser-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Characteristics of Urban and Rural-Town Residents Participating in the 1977 Nebraska Quality of Life Project</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Characteristic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Below 20 years old</td>
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<tr>
<td>21-30 years old</td>
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<td>41-50 years old</td>
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<td>Over 60 years old</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Three-five members</td>
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<td>Six or more members</td>
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<td>(4 years or more beyond high school)</td>
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(Continued on next page)
Quality . . .

services was to the quality of their lives, both urban and rural-town people said shopping facilities were the most important of the three.

Other types of services besides the marketing aspects of living in the two communities were questioned, such as: recreational activities, religious activities, employment opportunities and housing.

Urban people were more satisfied with adult recreational facilities than the rural-town people. They also considered recreation facilities more important to the quality of their lives than did the rural-town folks. In general, the people were more satisfied with the availability of religious activities, housing and employment opportunities than they were with recreational activities. However, residential location made no difference in this respect.

Environment

The natural environment, the climate, scenery, and so forth may lead to contentment with a region. For instance, many visitors to Nebraska admire the evidence of the fertility of the land. Others, comparing the average temperature in Nebraska (47°F or 8.3°C), with the temperature in the middle of January may find much to be desired. Questions were asked on the following environmental aspects relative to the resident’s community: climate, air, appearance of buildings and streets, scenery, the noise level, pedestrian safety and vehicle traffic as well as personal safety and safety of their property.

Both urban and rural-town residents, on the average, ranked the quality of their air as the most satisfactory. Least satisfactory for the urban group was the appearance of their buildings and streets, while the rural-town group was least satisfied with pedestrian safety and vehicle traffic.

In every instance, the rural-town people were more satisfied with their environment than the urban people, and this difference was statistically significant. Safety to themselves and their property was considered most important of these to the quality of life in both communities.

Rural areas enjoy a widely accepted reputation as a “good place to live and raise a family.” From the above appraisal of the satisfactions with various community factors and their importance to the residents’ quality of life, however, the overwhelming conclusion is that very few real differences exist between Nebraska urban cities and rural towns of 2,500 to 5,000.

Rural-town residents prize the natural aspects of their communities while the city residents were more satisfied with facilities available in a more densely populated region. In summarizing the information on the importance of the community aspects, inhabitants of both communities placed the highest level of importance on the same three items, all associated with some aspect of protection: 1) safety of themselves and their property, 2) police and fire protection, 3) health services.□