2003 Accomplishment Report

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Cooperative Extension
Southeast Research & Extension District

2003 Accomplishment Report

Who We Are
The Southeast Research and Extension District is part of the Cooperative Extension Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR). The District is made up of 28 counties. This report reflects the accomplishments in 2003 and highlights a few of the many information packed extension websites.

The University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension specializes in developing and delivering educational programs that impact individuals, their families, their farms, ranches and businesses and their communities. The complexities of contemporary living and working are reflected in a constantly evolving extension program that focuses on priority areas of food production and natural resource systems, building strong families, nutrition, health and food safety, community and residential environment, community resource development, and 4-H and youth development.

What We Do
Extension helps Nebraskans put knowledge to work. It provides a variety of educational opportunities, delivered in a variety of ways, giving participants knowledge they can use to make sound decisions to better their lives. Extension educators and specialists teach, facilitate and collaborate in providing research-based information to urban and rural Nebraska residents.

A Nebraska mainstay since 1915, extension carries forward the land-grant university mission of taking the resources of the university to the people. As a source of factual information today, extension is vital as ever, and perhaps even more so, because the diverse and complex issues people encounter.

Partnerships
Extension’s work is carried out in accordance with state, federal and county laws and agreements. Funding for Cooperative Extension is from state funds, grants/contracts/fees, county funds and federal funds.

The federal funds are appropriated as specified by federal law. In addition, extension receives federal funds as a result of competitive grants.

State general funds are appropriated by the Nebraska Legislature as part of NU’s budget.

Local tax funds are appropriated by the county commissioner/supervisors for use by local extension boards according to Nebraska statutes.

Grants/contracts/fees come from business, industry and other agencies.

Volunteers also contribute considerable time and talents—$39 million of in-kind program support to extension’s work in Nebraska.
Food Production and Natural Resource Systems

Acreage Group:
240 acreage owners receive monthly E-newsletters with timely information for managing a rural living environment.

Alternative Crops/Tourism:
140 people participated in the first Rural Advantage: Profit Opportunities for Nebraska Conference, sponsored by the Southeast District Diverse Ag Committee. 66% of those surveyed indicated they would make use of the educational information.

On-Farm Research:
Over 90 farm operators and industry cooperators representing 16 Nebraska counties cooperated with 8 educators and 1 specialist to conduct on-farm research. 63% of participants surveyed at the Aurora Field Day indicated that on-farm research projects influenced their management decisions and evaluation data from the NSFGP project indicated that participating producers experienced an average annual benefit of $7,768.

Crop Consultant Education:
1,373 agribusiness professionals and producers attended Crop Management and Diagnostic Clinics, Winter Crop Management Programs, Soybean Management Field Days and Solution Days. Participants represented approximately 50% of Nebraska's row crop acres and valued the workshops at $7-9 per acre.

Agribusiness:
Extension educators and specialists developed media efforts to inform and educate farmers about the new farm bill. Efforts reached an estimated 195,434 persons. The Farmers & Ranchers College program was expanded with over 800 farmers, ranchers and industry representatives participating. Winning the Game was presented to 108 producers and Computerized Farm Financial Record Keeping workshops were conducted with 57 farm operations participating.

Building Strong Families

Financial Management:
1,075 high school students and 250 parents were able to identify sound practices for managing credit card debt and protecting personal identity through a new classroom program, Preventing the Credit Card Blues at 22. Credit Card Blues won two national awards in Family and Consumer Science and 4-H.

Family Communication:
More than 1,500 adults and children participated in programming on building positive communication skills to strengthen family relationships. 194 attended programming for families in divorce transition. Evaluations showed that parents learned of the potential effects of divorce on their children and gained positive parenting concepts.

Community Coalitions:
Educators worked with 8 community coalitions to author grants for juvenile justice and early childhood programming. $260,000 was granted to these communities for programming.

4-H and Youth Development

Out of School Programs:
Over 6,000 youth participated in experiential out-of-school educational programs on food safety, food production and natural resources. Programs were enriched with classroom activities.
The Southeast District reaches approximately 72,000 youth through the 4-H program. About half of those youth are being reached through a variety of school enrichment programs and special interest programs offered in 4-H.
The Southeast District 4-H programs are supported at the grassroots level by more than 8,000 volunteers.
Community and Residential Environment

IPM for Schools: Accomplishments included conducting a survey, creating a website, and writing a how-to manual. 1,700 School Integrated Pest Management manuals were distributed November 2003. In-service training was provided for 300. The Governor proclaimed the 2002-03 school year as 'Year of Pest Management.' Grants received totaled $82,500.

Water: Educators co-authored 8 NebGuides and 1 Extension Circular on water treatment systems. Make Every Drop Count water conservation publications were developed and delivered to over 600 public water utilities in Nebraska and posted on 11 state and national websites. Educators developed and delivered an erosion and sediment control seminar for building industry professionals related to new regulations for sites from 1-5 acres.

Lead Program: Lead programming reached 71 families in Omaha with Living Safely with Lead: Maintenance of Older Homes and Living Safely with Lead: Reducing the Risk. A follow-up survey four months later indicated 70% of families had implemented 2-3 changes to reduce lead poisoning.

Nutrition, Health and Food Safety

Nutrition Education: 8,158 limited resource adults and youth learned the importance of healthy eating. 5,300 clients were enrolled in in-depth nutrition education. 73% of participants showed positive changes in nutrition practices and 59% showed positive changes in safe food handling.

Food Safety: Over 2,750 individuals and over 300 food service professionals were educated in food safety and food handling. 5,000 youth and 2,586 pesticide applicators learned about hand washing. The FOOD website received 15,000 hits on food safety education materials.

Health and Wellness: 10,150 individuals participated in healthy lifestyle education programs. 1,327 children attended immunization clinics saving families over $250,000. 500 youth were educated in farm and tractor safety. 113,000 people accessed the website on head lice.

Community Resource Development

IT Training and Connectivity: Nebraska postmasters increased skills in web access at the League of Postmasters Convention. E-government skills assessments were done in 7 counties. Through partnerships with REAP (Rural Economic Assistance Program), 8 communities had businesses enhance their profits through Electronic Mainstreet.

Community Partnerships: Through the South Omaha Neighborhood Association over 20 leaders from neighborhood associations were presented with educational information on lead and Extension programs.
Extension Online

The following five websites are a few of the many information packed extension sites available. To find other great extension resources online, visit your county’s site. Need the address? Check out the district site at www.southeast.unl.edu and click on 28 county offices for a county directory.

Board Training Website

www.extension.unl.edu/ extension/ whatsyourjob.html

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