Plant and Pest Diagnostic Services Can Help You!

Barb Ogg
Extension Educator

Throughout the year, Lancaster County residents bring sick plant parts and an assortment of insects and wildlife “signs” to the Lancaster County Extension Office. A free service,horticulturists (Don Jansen, Mary Jane Frogge and Master Gardeners) and entomologists (Barb Ogg and Soni Cochran) identify insects, weeds and diseases in and around the home and garden and make recommendations about the best way to help you manage these problems. The original extension office lab was so small (about five foot by seven foot) we were always tripping over each other, and there wasn’t enough room to store reference materials or specimens. A couple years ago, the tiny lab was remodeled and expanded to help us better handle the needs of Lancaster County residents. We now have a multipurpose lab with two lab spaces, enough storage space for reference materials and lab supplies and a table to sit down with clients. The increased space has also allowed us to organize a reference collection of insects, most of which the public has brought to the extension office over the last 10 years. Insects from this collection are used to show clients what specific pests look like and are used to help teach children and adults in various settings.

We use microscopes to identify small insects and plant diseases. The lab is also equipped with a computer connected to the Internet, in the event we need information from our Web site. About two years ago, we were able to purchase a digital microscope which is similar to a digital camera. With this digital microscope, we can take pictures of small insects and use them to enhance articles in the Nebline and on the Internet.

Properly diagnosing plant disease and insect pests is important because safe and effective treatment depends on the specific problem. It is exactly like going to the doctor when you have a health problem—a correct diagnosis will determine the most appropriate treatment.

Folks can save money, protect trees and ornamentals and their home, eliminate nuisance pests—often with less pesticides—by having a correct diagnosis and using extension recommendations.

How can you take advantage of the diagnostic capability at the Lancaster County Extension Office? Drop your sick plants and pest specimens at our office between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. each working day. We’ll examine your specimens and give you a call and/or send you information to help you make the best decisions about treatment if one is needed. This service is free for Lancaster County residents!

Visit Egg Cam!

View chicks hatching, photos of embryos as they develop, and educational resources for youth, parents and teachers on the 4-H Embryology Web site at www.lancaster.unl.edu

The Value of the Correct Diagnosis

Extension helps thousands of people each year. Here are some examples of how Lancaster County residents have used their extension resources:

• A large windbreak was thought by the owner’s friend to have spider mites and was sprayed with an insecticide. After a couple years, the trees were still showing damage, so the owner brought samples of damaged foliage to the extension office. Extension horticulturists diagnosed the trees to have a needle cast disease. The property owner sprayed the trees according to recommendations given by extension—three years later, little to no damage was found in the windbreak. The value of the windbreak was set at $20,000 with an annual savings to the dwelling estimated at $600.

• A beginning organic market gardener was trying to grow his own transplants. Each time the seedlings would get started they would wither and die. Samples were diagnosed with a damping off fungal disease. A series of cultural practices were recommended and the seedling survived to be transplanted. Growing his own transplants saved him approximately $3,000.

• A homeowner found small, hard, black, seed-like objects under a basement sofa cushion. The cushion also had a hole in it. She called a pest control company and the service technician told her that this was a serious carpet beetle infestation. He said the whole house needed a monthly insecticide treatment for the next year—total cost of $462! This didn’t sound quite right, so she brought the seed debris and the sofa cushion to the extension office. The seed-like debris was identified to be the hells of wildflower seeds. The hole in the cushion was about one-inch long—much too large for a target beetle damage. The seeds and hole were diagnosed as evidence of mouse activity. The mouse stored the seeds under the sofa cushion, ate them and left the hulls behind and chewed a hole in the cushion, perhaps to build a nest. By knowing the correct problem, this homeowner saved money and eliminated a potential unnecessary pesticide exposure.

• In the fall, a homeowner found tiny black insects flying around in her newly built home. She contacted three pest control companies and received three different answers as to her pest problem. Extension identified these tiny insects as foreign grain beetles. They are often found in late summer and early fall in brand new homes (we don’t really understand why). Because foreign grain beetles cannot reproduce in dry, indoor environments, a “no treatment” approach was recommended. After these beetles died a natural death, the problem disappeared and did not recur.

• In early February, a homeowner found hundreds of small insects in the basement family room jumping everywhere. She brought several live specimens to the extension office for identification. They were identified as grasshopper nymphs. It seems that a female grasshopper laid egg pods in the pots of hanging plants on the porch the previous fall. Before the eggs hatched, these plants were brought indoors and located in the basement family room. Because of the warmer temperatures indoors, the grasshopper eggs hatched much earlier than if they were outside. She was advised not to use an insecticide, but to vacuum them with a vacuum cleaner to get rid of the tiny grasshoppers. This solution cost nothing and did not expose family members to an unnecessary pesticide exposure.

• A homeowner reported a problem with moths in a bedroom. He tried a number of insecticides and they didn’t really work. He brought the moths into the extension office for identification, he learned they were Indian meal moths—a common pantry pest. After learning about the moths, the homeowner headed home to look for the source of the infestation. After a few more calls to the extension office and after ruling out his see DIAGNOSIS on page 11
**Horticulture**

### What is Arbor Day?

Arbor Day, the Tree Planter’s Holiday, started more than a century ago in Nebraska, is still going strong today. In January 1872, J. Sterling Morton proposed to the State Board of Agriculture a tree planting holiday be observed in Nebraska on April 10, 1872. He proposed the holiday be named Arbor Day and its purpose, “to urge upon the people of the state the vital importance of tree planting.” His efforts were successful and more than a million trees were planted in Nebraska on the first Arbor Day.

In 1885, Arbor Day became a legal holiday in Nebraska, to be observed on Morton's birthday, April 22. Since 1989, Nebraska has celebrated Arbor Day on the last Friday in April. Tree planting is as important now as it was to our grandparent. In fact, it is even more important now since many trees must be planted to keep up with the loss of trees and forests to land clearing, fire and urban development. By replacing these trees, we can see we will always have forests and trees for our future. Trees provide shade, storage from the wind and sun, wood products, wildlife habitat and much more valuable services and activities. Many rural families have always planted trees each year around their ranch or farm to protect soil, livestock and family.

Perhaps the most important aspect of Arbor Day is to emphasize the future. In the words of J. Sterling Morton, “Other holidays propose on the past. Arbor Day proposes for the future.” We learn to plant trees to show our hope for the future and our concern for those who will come after us.

**Why is Arbor Day so important to Nebraskans?**

Certainly the holiday’s origin in our state contributes to our enthusiasm. But even more important is the scarcity of trees and forests in Nebraska. We appreciate trees because we can easily see what life would be like without them.

Nebraskans should be proud of their tree planting heritage. We can feel satisfied in knowing this state is a more beautiful place to live and a better place for the future.

To celebrate Arbor Day this year, consider planting a tree in your yard, neighborhood, schoolyard, local park or city square. To find out more about Arbor Day, visit this web site at [www.arborday.org](http://www.arborday.org) (MIF)

### Planning to Plant a Tree? Read This First!

Properly planted and cared for trees add beauty and value to almost any property, whether they are planted in a park, in front of your house, or along a street or highway.

#### Selecting Planting Location

Selecting planting locations is one of the most critical decisions in the tree planting process. If the plant must eventually be removed because the site is unsuitable, then the planting was a failure.

To avoid failure, consider the tree’s growth requirements, grow at the site, and the mature size of the plant. Trees often have to be removed because they have grown too large for the site. Large landscape-sized trees must be planted a minimum of 20 to 25 feet away from buildings or other obstructions. Tree roots and underground utilities must be considered in order to avoid potential conflicts.

Large trees should be planted a minimum of 20 to 25 feet from overhead power lines.

When selecting your planting location, consider the plant’s requirements for growth and survival, such as exposure to sunlight and soil drainage needs.

**Selecting the Tree**

Once you have selected the desired location, choose a tree that fits your needs. Consider the size and height of the tree when you are selecting your plant. Smaller trees will establish better than larger trees. If the tree is too large, it may grow into tree transplant shock and never fully recover.

When to Grow

Container-grown stock may be declined in the fall, winter, and some spring. The best time for planting container-grown stock is in the spring between March 15 and May 30 if weather and soil conditions permit. Fall planting should be done between Sept. 15 and Oct. 30. All plant material should be planted as soon as possible after receipt.

The size and height of the tree determine the size of the root ball. The root ball also should be watered to facilitate root penetration into the adjacent soil.

Plant the tree back at the same depth it was originally grown. Make sure all the roots are covered with soil, but do not plant too deep. Soil should not be up around the trunk.

The soil used for backfill should be neither too wet nor too dry and all large stones or clods should be removed. Backfill with the existing soil. Do not use soil amendments.

Remove all labels and wires to prevent girdling.

**Staking and Guying**

The purpose of staking and guying is to prevent a newly planted tree from tipping over in the wind. Excessive movement can dislodge the small, fibrous roots from their new footling of soil before they are firmly established. However, many trees are lost because gaging materials are not removed or are improperly installed.

If all is possible, staking and guyning systems should not be used. If plants are staked and guyed, the material used should have a broad surface at the point of contact with the tree to prevent damage from rubbing. Supports should allow for some free movement of the plant. Do not use wire and hose.

To prevent girdling, remove all gaging material at the end of the first growing season.

**Wrapping**

Tree wrap should not be used on newly planted trees. Tree wraps may not always protect trunks from damage and, in fact, can cause, hide and increase problems. In addition, tree wrap covers the photosynthetic tissues of the trunk, preventing the production of food that is needed by the young tree.

Tree wraps should be used during the time that the tree is being transported and needs protection from mechanical damage.

Some wraps are claimed to be important postplanting practice that you can do to improve the health and vigor of your land¬scape plant. Studies have shown that cloth Mickey can nearly double plant growth in the first few years after planting. Mulching conserves moisture, reduces weed competition, and insulates roots from temperature extremes.

Mulch with a two to three inch layer of organic material. The minimum diameter of the mulched area should be at least two feet

---

**Easter Lily Care**

If you have an Easter lily do not throw it away after it is done blooming. You can save the bulb and plant it outdoors. Easter lilies can be replanted outside after the blooms are gone. Plant the Easter lily outdoors as soon as the ground can be worked. Select a sunny site with well-drained soil. Set the top of the bulb six inches below the soil surface. Do not remove the flower stalk until it dries, then cut it off at the soil surface. After the soil surface freezes in the fall, mulch the soil and do not remove the mulch until new growth begins in the spring. (MIF)
Summary of 2002 Nebraska West Nile Virus Surveillance Results

Last summer, Nebraskans were asked to report dead birds to local health authorities. Nebraska Health and Human Services System collected and tested 866 birds for West Nile Virus. Of the birds collected, 511 tested positive. Seventy-two counties in Nebraska reported at least one positive dead bird.

Fifty-four species of birds were tested, with 27 different species positive for West Nile Virus. The surveillance focused on two groups of birds: Corvids (crows, blue jays and magpies) and Raptors (hawks, owls, and falcons). Corvids represented 67% of the total birds tested in the study and 78% of the positive results. Raptors made up 19% of the total birds tested and 17% of the positive results.

Of 1,100 documented West Nile Virus cases of equines representing 92 of Nebraska’s 93 counties, 93% of the total ranked Nebraska third among all states behind Texas and Illinois. HUMANS: A total of 174 human West Nile Virus cases were reported, including eight fatalities, ranking Nebraska eighth highest of all states. Most people infected with the West Nile Virus will not show any symptoms. Rarely, up to 30% may develop “flu-like” symptoms, or, more rarely, an infection of the central nervous system. In the Nebraska cases, 44 people were diagnosed with meningitis and 44 diagnosed with encephalitis. Eight of the eight deaths were related to encephalitis and three related to meningitis. Eighty-six of the total cases showed viral symptoms, 67 people diagnosed, were diagnosed with West Nile fever (flu-like symptoms). The remaining 19 of the 86 viral syndrome cases showed positive test results but had less serious symptoms. The first Nebraska case was reported Aug. 4, 2002. Cases rose until the week of Sept. 8, when there were 39 cases. The last case of the year was reported Oct. 15.

Of the 174 human cases, 98 were males and 76 were females. The age of patients varied widely with amounts of sand. You may also see deer, coyotes, badgers, pocket gophers, beaver, snapping turtles, yellow-billed racers and other animals.

Audubon Spring Creek Prairie is also special because the Nebraska City-Fort Kearney Cutoff to the Oregon Trail Audubon ran right through the prairie and 140-year-old trail ruts are visible. These trail ruts — imprints of the passage west of freight wagons, oxen and bullwhackers — were officially listed on the National Register of Historic Places in July 2002. The wagon ruts are among the oldest (1860 to 1864) of the major alignments of the Trail. The Spring Creek Prairie Trail Ruts are the longest contiguous sequence of ruts still in existence.

Spring Creek Prairie is located three miles south of Denton, 15 minutes southwest of Lincoln. From Lincoln, take O’Street (Highway 63) west out of town to Emerald. At the flashing light, turn south and travel 5 miles to Denton. Follow the road through town as it turns west and comes to SW 98th St. Spring weekend hours are Sundays, April 27–29, 8–1 p.m. This is in addition to regular weekday hours: Monday–Friday, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

Upcoming Family Programs at Spring Creek Prairie:

April 26 — John James Audubon Birthday Party & Birdwalk.
June 7 — Firefly Picnic
July 19 — Spring Creek Prairie Bird Walk. For more information on educational programs, volunteer opportunities or making a contribution to support these programs, call Marrian Langan at 797-2301. (BPO)
Security Concerns for Pesticides or Fertilizers

Recent terrorist events have created the need for people handling pesticides and fertilizers to re-evaluate the security of those materials. There are a number of security concerns about poisonous or explosive materials ending up in the wrong hands. Consider:

- How easy do you make it for an unauthorized person to gain access to the pesticide or fertilizer? Can your vehicles or buildings be entered during times when employees are not present? Are locks and doors secure enough to deter a casual theft?

- If you are a pesticide dealer, how easy is it for an unfamiliar person to buy pesticides or fertilizer with cash? Do all of your employees who sell pesticides or fertilizers know all of the customers and/or the people designated to pick up these products? Does your staff ask for identification of unfamiliar customers? Does your staff ask where these products will be used?

- Do you or your staff know what a "sentinel event" is? A sentinel event is a situation or specific occurrence that may indicate someone is testing their plans or your security. Sentinel events could be obvious or unnoticeable. Sentinel events could be things such as unexplained forced entry marks on locks or doors, unusual or curious tire marks near pesticide or fertilizer storage facilities, dead animals found in unexpected areas (not road kill), unexplained spills or stains in or near pesticide or fertilizer storage areas, unexpected discovery of tools stolen or left in storage areas or unusual telephone calls requesting the availability of fertilizer or pesticides.

The Nebraska Department of Agriculture and University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension Service wants the public to avoid developing unneeded paranoia about their security. However, we feel it is prudent to raise your awareness of the issues impacting all of us in today’s world. If you would like further information on security issues or sentinel events call Tim Creger or Rich Reiman at the Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) at 471-2394.

Information may also be found on the NDA Web site at: http://www.drought.unl.edu/dm. A link to this information and other sentinel events found on the Crops/Pesticides page of the Lancaster County Web site may be found on the NDA Web site at: http://www.unl.edu/ag/crops/pesticid.htm.

Source: Tim Creger, Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Pesticide Program Manager (TD).

Managing Fertilizer Use in Dry Soils

With below-normal soil moisture prevalent in eastern Nebraska, producers may consider changing how they use fertilizer this spring. Dry soil influences how fertilizer can be applied and what happens to it after application.

Application Rates

Producers should carefully consider application rates this spring, particularly for nitrogen, which is usually based on expected yield. With low soil moisture in much of the area, the yield potential for dryland crops will be reduced compared to “normal” years. Farmers should be realistic when setting yield expectations this spring and consider fertilizing for lower yields than last year on dryland fields.

Anhydrous Ammonia

Many producers fall-applied anhydrous ammonia in the heavy soils in the eastern part of the state. If the anhydrous was applied after February, the soil temperature was below 50°F it would have taken most of the winter for all of it to convert to nitrate, which is the form of nitrogen subject to leaching. The other factor in leaching of nitrogen is temperature — the must be excess moisture that percolates below the root zone. Since nitrate is carried in the soil water, water that escapes below the root zone carries nitrate-nitrogen to the surface. Thus far, only the top 18 to 24 inches of soil has built significant soil moisture since harvest last fall. Even that zone is below field capacity (it could hold more moisture). An educated guess would be an additional six-inches of effective rainfall is needed to fill the root zone in most locations in the area. The good side is, the dry soil will have held all of the full-applied nitrogen and it will be in the root zone when the crop needs it this spring.

The primary concern with spring application of anhydrous ammonia into dry soil is reten-

tion of the fertilizer. Silt loam and heavier textured soils in eastern Nebraska generally contain adequate moisture to react with and retain ammonia even when seemingly very dry, as long as the injection depth is five to six inches below the soil surface and application rates are not excessive, according to Richard Ferguson, extension soils specialist.

Of greater concern is the ability of soil to seal the injection slot. If the soil is very dry and cloddy, the farmer may observe white “smoke” behind the applicator. This “smoke” is actually water vapor condensed from the air by escaping ammonia. Although it takes a lot of “smoke” to add up to any significant fertilizer loss, it’s still best to try to minimize fertilizer loss. If vapor loss cannot be minimized by 1) going to a deeper injection depth; 2) slowing down; or 3) reducing

the application rate, it may be advisable to wait for better soil conditions or switch to a different form of nitrogen fertilizer.

Broadcast Fertilizers

Both dry and liquid fertilizers broadcast on the soil surface will be influenced by large amounts of residue, which may not have decomposed significantly due to the dry winter. Urea (46-0-0) and nitrogen solutions containing urea (28-0-0) can lose nitrogen to the atmosphere through ammonia volatilization when surface applied unless incorporated by tillage or rainfall amounts over one-half inch. Liquid fertilizers may be lost more when the area is irrigated by crop residue which insulates it from contact with the soil.

The Knights of Ak-Sar-Ben Foundation and the Nebraska Association of Fair Managers welcome nominations for the 48th Annual Nebraska Pioneer Farm Awards Deadline May 1. Forms must be returned to the extension office, 84th & Havelock. Nomination forms are available at the extension office, 444 Cherrycreek Road. For more information, contact Deanna Karmazin at 414-7180. (DK)

For the most recent map, visit www.drought.unl.edu/dm
Preparing the Lawn for a Potential Drought

It is always difficult to predict the summer weather, but with precipitation 11 or more inches below normal over the last year, it is conceivable that water shortages and irrigation restrictions could occur. Following are a couple common questions and answers to consider when preparing turf for a drought.

How long will turf survive without water?

Generally, turf can survive five to eight weeks of dry conditions without substantial thinning or death. However, poor soils, traffic, excessive heat, low mowing and/or scalping and improper fertility (too much nitrogen fertilizer in spring, not enough in fall) reduces the survivability of turf during drought. Turf species will also affect drought survival, with warm-season grasses like zoysia and buffalo grass surviving the longest without water, followed by the cool-season grasses tall fescue, fine fescue, Kentucky bluegrass and perennial ryegrass in that order.

What can be done NOW to improve drought tolerance of the turf?

Mowing. Mow as often as needed (remove no more than one-third of the total blade length) and at the upper end of the optimum range of mowing heights for the particular species. Frequent mowing reduces scalping. Scalping depletes energy reserves in the plant, reducing its ability to withstand and/or recover from drought stress.

Fertilizer. Heavy spring nitrogen fertilizer applications increase shoot growth at the expense of root growth and will also deplete energy reserves. If you must fertilize, use low rates of nitrogen (0.5–0.75 pounds Nitrogen per 100 square feet) every four to eight weeks as needed to maintain health of the turf while limiting growth surges. Slow release Nitrogen sources will also limit growth surges. Though potassium is thought by some to encourage drought tolerance, it is not well documented and thus don’t overdo potassium fertilization.

Irrigation. Water deeply and infrequently, keeping the soil as dry as possible. Water thoroughly to wet the soil to the depth of the root zone and then don’t water again until areas of the turf turn a slight bluish-gray. Not only will this tend to encourage deeper rooting, it will also keep shoot growth at a minimum, and conserving energy reserves.

Water early in the morning (between 4 and 9 am) and avoid watering during the heat of the day because much of the water is lost to evaporation.

Aerification. Consider aggressive aeration to reduce soil compaction and improve rooting. Use the largest available hollow tines (not solid tines) and punch between 20 and 40 holes per square feet. (DJ)

Take Measures to Control Sphaeropsis Tip Blight

Sphaeropsis tip blight is a common serious disease on Austrian, ponderosa and mugo pine in Nebraska, and occurs less destructively on white and Scotch pines. It is caused by Sphaeropsis sapinea (Scots pine. It is caused by Sphaeropsis sapinea) (You can observe one small stage of this fungus in May and again four to six weeks later. Good coverage and correct timing of the applications are important. Be sure to read the label for rates. Other control measures include proper tree spacing and weed control to promote good air circulation, improving tree vigor through mulching and watering when needed, avoiding shearing trees when the foliage is wet, inspecting trees for disease before planting and avoiding planting susceptible trees next to infected trees. (DJ)

Watch for Pine Sawfly Damage

Now is the time to begin watching pine trees for feeding damage by clusters of European pine sawfly larvae. These gray-green larvae with the shiny white bodies are common on mugo, Scots and red pine and may be found on other pine species as well. Austrian pines are usually attacked if interplanted with the more susceptible species. The phenological indicator plants and their stage of development that coincide with the onset of European pine sawfly egg hatch and presence of small larvae are: Serviceberry in bloom

• Redbud beginning bloom

• Purpleleaf sand cherry in bloom

• Sawfly control is not difficult when the larvae are detected early. Mechanical control by pruning clusters containing twigs from the tree is possible. Vigorous shaking to dislodge the larvae and raking them up from the ground for discarding is also a possibility. Spot-spray treatment of infested trees can be done for control. Sevin, Diazinon and horticultural oil (at the “summer rate”) are suggested choices. Read and follow label directions. (DJ)

Needle Cast on Spruce

Rhizosphaera needle cast on blue spruce, caused by the fungus Rhizosphaera kalkhoffii, is the most common plant disease of Colorado spruce. This disease generally causes second-year needles to turn a purple-brown color and fall from the tree. Small black fruiting structures of the fungus can be seen in the small, porthole openings of infected needles. These fruiting bodies appear in rows along the length of the needle. A hand lens or magnifying glass is helpful in viewing these structures.

Symptoms most commonly start on the lower branches of the tree and work upward. The symptoms, however, may first appear and spread on one side of the tree. Trees of any age may be affected, especially those that are stressed. The fungus can overwinter in infected needles. In the spring, spores are released during wet weather and infect newly emerging needles.

If the disease is present, control consists of using fungicides in the spring to protect these newly emerging needles. The tree should be sprayed with a product such as chlorothalonil (trade name Daconil 2787) or Bordeaux mixture in the last two weeks of May and again four to six weeks later. Good coverage and correct timing of the applications are important. Be sure to read the label for rates. Other control measures include proper tree spacing and weed control to promote good air circulation, improving tree vigor through mulching and watering when needed, avoiding shearing trees when the foliage is wet, inspecting trees for disease before planting and avoiding planting susceptible trees next to infected trees. (DJ)

Free Composting Workshops

Grass and leaves are banned from the Lincoln landfill from April 1 through Nov. 30 each year. Composting is a simple, practical and convenient way to transform yard wastes into a resource. By maintaining a compost pile or bin in your backyard, you can speed up nature’s process of decomposition to create usable compost within a few months. Compost can then be used to improve soil structure and return vital nutrients to the soil.

Learn how to successfully compost by attending free composting workshops or demonstrations sponsored by the City of Lincoln Recycling Office and UNL Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County. Attendees will receive a free compost bin or composting thermometer.

Composting Workshops (7–8 p.m.)

• April 15 — Belmont Recreation Ctr, 1234 Judson St.
• April 17 — Calvert Recreation Ctr, 4000 Stockwell St.
• April 22 — Eastar Recreation Ctr, 6130 Adams St.
• April 24 — Irving Recreation Ctr, 2010 Van Dorn St.

Composting Demonstrations

From May to October, composting workshops with hands-on demonstrations will be presented the third Saturday of each month at 8:30 a.m. at the City Yard Waste Composting Demonstration Site. 50th and Cobly.

For more information, call UNL Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County at 441-7180.
Eat Smart: How to Fill Up, Not Out!

Alice Henneman, MS, RD Extension Educator

We’ve all heard “What you don’t know can’t hurt you” but the truth is, lack of knowledge CAN be harmful.

When it comes to eating, we might as well say “What you don’t know CAN make us gain weight.” Following are six “Eat Smart” tips to help a person fill up, not out!

1. Don’t Let Tastes Go to Waist

It takes an excess of about 3,500 calories to gain a pound. One hundred extra calories a day can pack on 10 pounds a year. A bite here, a bite there and we’ve run up 100 (OR MORE)!

By making small changes in your diet, it’s easy to move from a healthy weight to being overweight. One way is to cut back on empty calories. A calorie that gives you the same number of calories as the others, but not the same benefits. A 100 calorie serving of apples, oranges, or a glass of skim milk gives you the same amount of calories, but not the same nutrients.

2. Avoid Portion Distortion

A “Journal of the American Medical Association” article (Jan. 22, 2003) reported with the exception of pizza, food portion sizes consumed in the United States for persons 2 years or older increased for all categories studied: home, restaurant and fast food locations.

The survey covered 1977 to 1996 and looked at these items: salty snacks, deep-fried foods, soft drinks, fruit drinks, french fries, hamburgers, cheeseburgers, pizza and Mexican food. Portion sizes tended to be largest at fast food places and smallest at home.

Lean young men ate more when offered larger portions in research by Dr. Barbara Rolls, Pennsylvania State University nutrition professor and author of “What to Eat and Why Calories.” Young men ate 10 ounces of a 16 ounce portion of macaroni. When the size was reduced to 25 ounces, they ate 15 ounces, a 50 percent increase.

Home and Away Portion Control Tips

Here are some commonly cited images to help visualize approximate portion sizes, whether at home or eating out.

- Hand-size illustrations are just guidelines—we don’t get to choose the largest hand in the group when dishing up ice cream!
- 3 ounces of meat—a deck of cards or the palm of your hand
- 1/2 cup of cereal, rice, pasta or ice cream
- 1/2 cup of natural cheese
- 9-volt battery or 3 dominers
- 1 teaspoon butter, margarine, mayonnaise or oil

3. Slow Down to Slim Down

It takes about 20 minutes after food enters our mouths before the brain starts perceiving we’re filling up.

Take time to sit down and savour food flavors. When eating in the run, we miss the full impact of the taste sensations that come through when food is more slowly eaten. At the very least, we should wait until we’ve swallowed our bite before we take the next one!

Part 2 of this article will be published in the May Newsletter.
Thank you to all who participated in the Cultural Arts Contest. We had some beautiful quits. Now is the time to start another project for next year’s contest. The categories will be painting, hand stitching, creative writing and glass.

If you have a quilt decided to put a basket together for the Raffle at State Convention? It’s not too late. Our goal is to have every club contribute a complete basket or at least items to complete a basket. The money raised from this project goes for scholarships on the state level.

The United States is at war. Many troops have been mobilized. The president has described military actions of the country with which we have concerns. Some people probably do not understand the politics of this situation. For many, especially the youngest, children, war is a distant event and they do not pay attention to it. But many others are likely to be confused. They see parents being deployed and leaving their children behind. Seeing children in the news attracts other children’s attention. They may wonder if their own parents will be called to go away. Older children may be confused when they hear differing opinions and recommendations. Many words are being used that are not familiar to children.

Some Parents are Being Deployed
For children whose parents are being deployed, there are special pressures. They need to deal with secrecy, uncertainty, separation and major changes in their lifestyle. They will need to adjust to living with other relatives or substitute parents. They will need to adjust again when the deployed family member returns home.

Children may be Confused
Most children are likely to be confused by the current events. Their confusion may vary depending on their age.

Younger children will hear a number of unfamiliar words and may not understand what they mean. Many children may confuse Afghanistan and Iraq. They may confuse Osama bin Laden with Saddam Hussein. There are good reasons for that confusion; many adults are confused as well. Children, especially younger ones, also confuse fantasy with reality and historic events and figures with current ones. They may connect unrelated current events, such as the assumption the Columbia shuttle disaster is related to the conflict with Iraq. They may be more related to war and conflict in general after the events of September 11, 2001. Children will hear about protests and peace marches, and they will hear about speeches and actions to support military action. They will probably want to know how their parents feel about it. Parents should explain how they feel. They can describe what action they are taking. They can also explain conversations with the children how the children can express their own opinions.

Children probably do not understand that the Iraqis are the enemy. They see pictures of soldiers and their families. They see parents being deployed and their families being used that are not familiar to them.

Tips and Cautions
Listen and talk. Let children know it is okay to talk about war and peace. Listen for misunderstandings. Let the children guide you in the discussions. Remember to be careful about painting the other side as the enemy. It is easier to talk about a topic makes it less threatening. It is easier to talk about something else than to talk about our own feelings. Be careful about painting the other side as the enemy. It is more helpful to children to talk about “bad actions” rather than “bad people.” Help them understand people can choose their behaviors. Even if they have done something bad in the past, they can choose to do something good in the future.

Help children understand the United States is not angry with the Iraq people. Explain the leaders of our country are upset with the decisions of the other government. Help children understand religious differences. Explain that Islam is a religion that is practiced by many people in the world. Help them understand that some peopleinsults you, you should insult him in return, because you can fight fire with fire. It may be hard to like someone who bullies and teases, but showing them respect and kindness may help them learn how people should be treated. Be positive and treat others with dignity. (BR)
2003 Lancaster County Fair
Discover the Fun!

July 30–August 3

The 2003 Lancaster County Fair Books have been mailed (or will be shortly) to 4-H families and past Open Class exhibitors. The 4-H & FFA version is online at lancaster.unl.edu/4H.

County Fair Plaques
Every year plaques are given to the “Top Exhibits” in the static exhibit areas. For example, plaques are given to the top poster exhibit, top baking exhibit (three levels), top child development exhibit, top safety exhibit, top woodworking exhibit, etc. 4-H'ers have expressed how much they look forward to seeing who receives these plaques, and it has become a highlight of the fair for them. This year, funding is no longer secured and in order for plaques to be presented at this year’s fair, we need sponsors to fund them. Please contact Tracy if you are willing to be on a committee to secure monies or if you are willing to help sponsor these plaques. Sponsors will be recognized on plaques and via signage. If monies are not secured, plaques will not be presented. Thanks. (TK)

Ruth Lantis
Lancaster County 4-H and 4-H Council are proud to announce Ruth Lantis as the winner of the April “Heart of 4-H Award” in recognition of outstanding volunteer service. Ruth has been the organizational leader of the Star City Kids since it formed six years ago. Star City Kids is Lancaster County’s largest 4-H club with 65 members. All of the members are homeschoolers. The mothers of the members are all very involved as project leaders and try to attend all the meetings. Ruth coordinates the meetings and project leaders.

Cathy Hurdle, Star City Kids parent and project leader, nominated Ruth, saying, “Ruth is the ‘heart’ of our 4-H group. Even though the group has grown to 22 families, she has managed to maintain order and a freshness to the group.”

“I love watching the kids learn and grow,” Ruth says of being a 4-H volunteer. “I also enjoy working with all the moms in our club.”

Her favorite experience as a 4-H volunteer was watching club members develop, practice and perform skits for last year’s Music Contest which they took to the State Fair. She attends the State 4-H Volunteer Leader Forum whenever possible. She says, “It’s a wonderful experience and opens my eyes to all the opportunities within 4-H.”

Ruth and her husband Tom homeschool their children: Julie (age 16), Katherine (age 15), Jordan (age 14), Tommy (age 13) and Josh (age 11).

Ruth also helps out at the annual 4-H Clover College (last year, Katherine, Jordan and Tommy also assisted). She works at Martin Luther Homes and is active in her church. Ruth and her children deliver Meals on Wheels.

Congratulations to Ruth Lantis. Volunteers like her are indeed, the heart of 4-H!

To nominate your favorite 4-H volunteer for the “Heart of 4-H Award”, visit online at lancaster.unl.edu/4H or visit the extension office for a registration form.

Speech Contest Winners
The 2003 Lancaster County Speech Contest was held March 16 at the State Capitol. More than 50 youth participated! Public speaking is an important skill that people use throughout their lifetime. Congratulations to the winners who will go on to the District Speech Contest, held April 12 at the UNL East Campus Union! New this year, Junior Division winners are able to advance to the District competition.

Speech Contest
Senior Division: Ian Badeer, Connie Lemke and Allison Hurdle. Alternate: Elizabeth Kalisch.
Intermediate Division: Sean Badeer, Karis Parker and Will Fox.

Public Service Announcements (PSA’s) Contest
Senior Division: Alyssa Fiala, Karen Clinic and Ian Badeer. Alternate: Nicole Pedersen.
Intermediate Division: Sean Badeer, Samantha Brandt and Will Fox. Alternate: Mary Hubbard.
Junior Division: Terra Thompson, Hannah Spencer and Ryan Keys. Alternate: Michelle Fry.

Lancaster County 4-H Rabbit Clinic & Show
The Lancaster County 4-H Rabbit VIPS Committee held their annual Spring Rabbit Clinic on Thursday, March 20 and show on Saturday, March 22. Presentations at the Thursday clinic were done by 4-H parents and current and former 4-H’ers. Thanks to Lindsay Brinson, Dawn Eggert, Desiree Bramhall, Kirstin Liljestrand and the Maahs and Calaback families who all participated in presenting at the clinic. Also, a huge thank you to the members of the 4-H Rabbit VIPS Committee who spend so much of their time and energy providing these free educational clinics. (EK)

Historical Society Opens Virtual 4-H Exhibit
You may remember the Nebraska State Historical Society planned to open a 4-H Centennial exhibit in 2002. Unfortunately, it could not be completed because of a museum air conditioning failure. Instead, the Society has put together a virtual exhibit entitled “One Hundred Years of 4-H in Nebraska” on its Web site at www.nebrakshistory.org/sites/mnh/4H/index.htm. It’s an interesting and well-done site with lots of information and pictures about Nebraska 4-H from across the entire state! Please visit when you have a chance! Thanks to the many of you who contributed items and made the site possible!

4-H Theme Night at Saltdogs June 20
Lancaster 4-H Council is sponsoring “Discover 4-H, Discover You” theme night at the Lincoln Saltdogs baseball home game on Friday, June 20! Ticket information will be published in upcoming Nebrlines.

2003 4-H State Horse Contests
The 2003 4-H State Horse Contests were held during the Nebraska Horse Expo at the Lancaster Event Center on Saturday, March 15. Contests held were Horse Bowl, Demonstration and Speech contests. The Lancaster County Horse Bowl team consisted of Victoria Kirilloff, Lindsay Kerns, Katy Cockerill and Melissa Raich. The team came in fourth out of 18 teams. Congratulations and thank you for representing Lancaster County so well! Victoria, Lindsay, Katy and Melissa.

2003 Pre-District Horse Show June 7
The Lancaster County 4-H Horse VIPS Committee will be sponsoring this year’s Pre-District Horse Show at 9 a.m., Saturday, June 7 at Capital City Horse and Pony Club, 12900 N. 14 Street. The show will be run in district format and will include the eight district classes which consist of Western Pleasure, Western Horsemanship, Western Pony Pleasure, English Pleasure, English Equitation, Reining, Pole Bending and Barrels. Any 4-H'er can participate.

To nominate your favorite 4-H volunteer for the “Heart of 4-H Award”, visit online at lancaster.unl.edu/4H or visit the extension office for a registration form.
CLOVER COLLEGE REGISTRATION FORM

To register, complete the registration form (one person per form) and return with payment (check or money order made payable to Lancaster County Extension). Registrations must be received by June 16. They will be handled on a “first come” basis and will only be accepted upon receipt of fees. Early registration is recommended. Telephone registration not accepted.

1. Name _______________________________ Age _____
2. Parent(s) Name(s) ____________________
3. Address _____________________________
   City ___________________ State __________ Zip ___________
4. Daytime Phone _______________________
5. Evening Phone _______________________
6. Special Needs (allergies, etc.) ___________________________
7. Workshops to attend: ____________ Fee ____________
   1. Workshops are non-refundable unless a class is filled to capacity or canceled.

INSTRUCTIONS: Deanna Karmazin, Extension Associate & Julia French, Extension Intern

---

4-Day Workshops

Clover Kids Camp

In this four day camp, children will participate in several hands-on activities while learning about animals, food fun, science, the outdoors and more. Refreshments will be provided for this workshop.

TUE-FRI, 8AM–12:15PM AGES: 8-10
FEE: $25
INSTRUCTORS: Multiple instructors

Bird Seed Feeder

Fly in and make a bird house or feeder! Learn basic woodworking skills, learn about bird habitats and feeders for backyard animals. All materials will be provided for this four-day workshop.

TUE, 10:15–12:15PM AGES: 8-10
FEE: $10
INSTRUCTOR: Ron Stug, 4-H volunteer

3-Day Workshop

Insect Collecting for Beginners

In this three day workshop, learn the most common insect orders and make your own starting kit. You will collect aquatic insects so come prepared and bring a change of clothes. This outdoor workshop is for youth who did not attend this workshop last year.

WED-FRI, 1:30–3:30PM AGES: 10 and up
FEE: $20 (some supplies included)
INSTRUCTOR: Barb Ogg, Extension Educator

2-Day Workshops

Puppets on Parade

In this two day workshop, you will get creative in making several different kinds of puppets. Learn a little about the history of puppet performance and put on a performance of your own.

WED–THU, 10–11AM AGES: 8 and up
FEE: $10
INSTRUCTOR: Kitt Saathoff, owner of A Page in Time and 4-H volunteer

Say it with Posters

Learn how to visually tell a story with posters. Use lettering, graphics and color to communicate a clear message.

THU–FRI, 12:45–2:45PM AGES: 8 and up
FEE: $15
INSTRUCTOR: Vicki Jedlicka, Extension Educator

Under the Hood

Get a handle on what’s under the hood, learn how to change a flat tire, jump start a car and what to do in several emergency situations. Preventive maintenance, such as how to check tire pressure, filters, and fluids. AGES: 12 and up
FEE: $5
INSTRUCTOR: Robert Fox, 4-H volunteer

1-Day Workshop

Practice perfect pie crusts and even learn some decorative techniques in this hands-on workshop.

TUE, 10:15–12:15PM AGES: 10 and up
FEE: $5
INSTRUCTORS: Brenda Fiala and Cindy Fiala, 4-H volunteers

3 R’s—Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Learn about Shopping S.M.A.R.T. (Savvy Money and Reduce Trash) and make treasures from trash. AGES: 10-16
FEE: $10
INSTRUCTORS: Lorene Bartos, Extension Educator

Sensational Summertime Salad & Specialties

Come and explore your creative side in this summertime arts and crafts hands-on workshop. AGES: 8 and up
FEE: $5
INSTRUCTOR: Julie Lantis, 4-H volunteer

Fantastic Floral Fun

Do you want to learn how to make your own floral arrangement? Learn how to look your best by using the Pysanky eggs are an easy and fun art to learn. AGES: 8 and up
FEE: $5
INSTRUCTORS: Diane & Marie Spencer, 4-H volunteers

Style Revue

Style Revue will be here soon! Come to this workshop and learn new styling procedures and practice your modeling technique. AGES: 8 and up
FEE: $5
INSTRUCTORS: Sara King, Extension Educator

3-Day Workshop

Insect Collecting for Beginners

In this three day workshop, learn the most common insect orders and make your own starting kit. You will collect aquatic insects so come prepared and bring a change of clothes. This outdoor workshop is for youth who did not attend this workshop last year.

WED-FRI, 1:30–3:30PM AGES: 10 and up
FEE: $20 (some supplies included)
INSTRUCTOR: Barb Ogg, Extension Educator

2-Day Workshops

Puppets on Parade

In this two day workshop, you will get creative in making several different kinds of puppets. Learn a little about the history of puppet performance and put on a performance of your own.

WED–THU, 10–11AM AGES: 8 and up
FEE: $10
INSTRUCTOR: Kitt Saathoff, owner of A Page in Time and 4-H volunteer

Say it with Posters

Learn how to visually tell a story with posters. Use lettering, graphics and color to communicate a clear message.

THU–FRI, 12:45–2:45PM AGES: 8 and up
FEE: $15
INSTRUCTOR: Vicki Jedlicka, Extension Educator

Under the Hood

Get a handle on what’s under the hood, learn how to change a flat tire, jump start a car and what to do in several emergency situations. Preventive maintenance, such as how to check tire pressure, filters, and fluids. AGES: 12 and up
FEE: $5
INSTRUCTOR: Robert Fox, 4-H volunteer

1-Day Workshop

Practice perfect pie crusts and even learn some decorative techniques in this hands-on workshop.

TUE, 10:15–12:15PM AGES: 10 and up
FEE: $5
INSTRUCTORS: Brenda Fiala and Cindy Fiala, 4-H volunteers

3 R’s—Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Learn about Shopping S.M.A.R.T. (Savvy Money and Reduce Trash) and make treasures from trash. AGES: 10-16
FEE: $10
INSTRUCTORS: Lorene Bartos, Extension Educator

Sensational Summertime Salad & Specialties

Come and explore your creative side in this summertime arts and crafts hands-on workshop. AGES: 8 and up
FEE: $5
INSTRUCTOR: Julie Lantis, 4-H volunteer

Fantastic Floral Fun

Do you want to learn how to make your own floral arrangement? Learn how to look your best by using the Pysanky eggs are an easy and fun art to learn. AGES: 8 and up
FEE: $5
INSTRUCTORS: Diane & Marie Spencer, 4-H volunteers

Style Revue

Style Revue will be here soon! Come to this workshop and learn new styling procedures and practice your modeling technique. AGES: 8 and up
FEE: $5
INSTRUCTORS: Sara King, Extension Educator
Community & Home Living

Clean Your Files Week

The week of April 21–25 is designated “Clean Your Files” week to help support Earth Day and encourage recycling of office paper. Whether at your business or at home this is a great time to clean files or boxes of unneeded, duplicated, non-recorded materials and records that have exceeded their legal retention. Generally, all paper items in old files can be recycled.

For identity fraud safety it is important to shred or tear up papers that have personal information, such as name, address, account numbers, social security numbers, etc.

Remove carbon paper, plastic binders and transparencies.

For more information, sign your office business of up for this week contact the Lincoln Recycling Office at 441-8215. Individuals are encouraged to participate. Paper can be recycled in the “residential mixed paper bins” at the recycling drop sites. (LB)

Spotlight on a Neighborhood:
South Salt Creek

William Freitas
Graduate Student

Note: This article is part of a series spotlighting the various Neighborhoods Working Together (NIWT) neighborhoods. NIWT creates a supportive network facilitating leadership and collaboration among neighborhood and neighborhood-adjacent to both campuses of the University of Nebraska.

Much of South Salt Creek Neighborhood is located in the original plat of Lincoln set down in 1867, but because of the early uses of the area, land value and development lagged far behind the rest of the city. From the 1880s through the 1910s, the neighborhood remained isolated even as Lincoln grew substantially. However, the insensitive lots made the area more attractive to the Germans from Russia who came to live in Lincoln. In fact, by the 1920s, Germans from Russia inhabited 43.8% of Lincoln’s population, with 364 of them percent of them living on the flood plains with 18 Street. The Germans from Russia had a strong influence on the development character of this neighborhood. They built their homes in the American styles but modified with Russian custom. A custom makes prevalent in South Salt Creek was the use of a side door on the house as the main point of entry. Also of historical significance is one of the oldest Lutheran churches in the city, Friedens Evangelical German Church, located on the corner of 6 and D Streets. The church was built by Jacob Rohrig in 1867 to serve a small congregation of Germans from Russia. The church had no architect, but instead was based on a photo of a church that some of the members had attended in their village of Frank. The church is also home to the museum of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, 631 D Street.

Today, the neighborhood features a widely diverse area of single family homes, light industrial development along the rail lines in the north section and multifamily dwellings scattered throughout the neighborhood. The William Tyler House at 8th & D Streets is an impressive stone and brick example of the Richardsonian Romanesque style. It was built in 1890-91 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Cooper Park, founded in 1867, is Lincoln’s oldest park. Other parks include Sawyer, Snell, Schwartzkopf and Standing Bear Grounds.

Neighborhood skate park can enjoy Holiday Skate World and baseball players can run the bases at Sherman Field or Cooper Park. Soccer players can kick in comfort at Park Middle School or at the indoor soccer field at 606 Hill. Tennis enthusiasts can practice their serves at a tennis court at 606 Hill or in Cooper Park.

The South Salt Creek Community Organization is an active voice for neighborhood improvement. It sponsors an annual cleanup day and picnic, a potluck dinner, an Easter egg hunt and a quarterly newsletter. “The Unlimited Potential Program” creates basketball teams for kids ages 6-19. In exchange for basketball uniforms, etc., participants are expected to perform community service.

One recent neighborhood achievement came in the installation of a Dorothy/Toto statue — complete with an ancient brick walk — in Cooper Park at 8th & E Street. The neighborhood chose the characters of the Wizard of Oz because the story is an allegory for the populist movement led by the Lincolite William Jennings Bryan in 1896. Mr. and Mrs. Bryan were major contributors to Cooper Park in 1900.

The statue is a four-foot bronze statue sculpted by artist Niallson from Cambridge, Nebraska. The neighborhood raised funds for the statue, dug the 3-foot deep trench in which they collected the bricks. Several neighborhoods contributed with yellow bricks for the yellow brick road.

Future projects in the neighborhood is a bench and historic marker to go with the Dorothy/Toto statue, and the construction of a bridge over the 3rd Street railroad tracks which will help meet the long-term goal of improving access through the neighborhood.

The threat of flooding in the neighborhood is still a concern. However, some residents have found out an environmental friendly solution to reduce storm water runoff (see related article below).

4-H Camps

Open House May 4

Families are invited to a free Open House at the Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center in Schramm Park near Gretna on Sunday, May 4 from 1–4 p.m. This is a terrific opportunity to tour the facilities and gain a taste of various fun-filled camp activities. In addition, a representative from the Raptor Recovery Center will give families an up-close and personal look at some of Nebraska’s most majestic creatures. A raptor is a bird of prey, which includes eagles, owls, hawks and falcons. Reservations one week before the event are appreciated — contact Kelly Krambeck at (402) 332-4496.

For more information or registration form, call 472-0711.

The following camps are offered at the Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center:

- June 3–5: Discovery Camp Ages 6–10
- June 6–12: Take a Friend, Make a Friend Ages 8–10
- June 9–15: Biking Bound Ages 11–14
- June 12–20: Kids-N-Critters Ages 5–7
- June 16–24: Junior Leader Weekend Ages 15–18
- June 20–27: 2nd Discovery Camp Ages 11–14
- July 3–9: Splash Bash Ages 8–10
- July 6–12: Discovery Camp Ages 11–14
- July 9–15: Outdoor Skills Ages 11–14
- July 12–18: Kids-N-Water Ages 5–7
- July 26–31: Dismal River Trip Ages 15–19

For camp descriptions, registration forms and more information, visit on 4h.unl.edu or pick up a camp pamphlet at the Lancaster County Extension office.

Turf Blocks, Rain Gardens Reduce Threat of Flooding

Steve Larrick (right) and his wife, Janine Copple (left), point out their concrete turf block which is one half of their driveway.

There are some important things we can do to reduce the threat of flooding in our communities,” said Steve Larrick, District 5 representative to the Lower Platte South Natural Resources District (NWT). “Turf blocks, mono-slabs and other pervious driving surfaces — rooftops, driveways, roads and parking lots. Our traditional storm water tributaries like South Salt Creek, Antelope Creek can’t handle the increasing storm water runoff. Neighborhoods like South Salt Creek, and the North Bottoms have gone from being safely outside the 100-year flood plain to being in the 40-year flood plain.

Concern about potential flooding led a couple to their home, Janine Copple, to replace their 100-foot concrete driveway with a two-path drive. One path is patterned paving bricks. The other is concrete turf block that allows roots to grow through and plants to grow. A 100-foot strip of grass grows between the two lanes. “Paving the bricks are better to walk or bike on,” said Copple, “but turf blocks allow plants to grow through them. This helps retain more rain and reduces the amount of heat given back by a concrete drive in the summer.”

One improvement they are considering is the plant bird grass or other more drought-resistant ground covers within the turf block system. In the summer, turf blocks tend to heat up and dry out grasses growing through them.

Another storm water retention idea attracting interest among Lincoln residents is the rain garden,” said Larrick. Rain gardens are specially designed in yards that capture rain from rooftops and driveways. Rain gardens basically serve as green infrastructure that has been properly designed with a sandy base and aquatic plants, rain gardens can reduce the amount of downstream flooding and soil erosion,” said Larrick. “Rain gardens are designed to allow water to percolate into the ground within a few days, since the average rainfall is 4.1 inches per month during May, 2004. (WF)
were bat droppings. The ceiling for a roosting site. These stumped by the appearance of fibrous, slightly shiny droppings. The homeowner was able to solve the moth problem by removing the infestation source. We have also identified animal droppings: the soil around the patio, a homeowner noticed that animal droppings were appearing each morning in the same location of her covered patio. She was puzzled because she had never seen any animal, but the small, fibrous, slightly shiny droppings continued to show up. When she brought samples of the extension office, we told her to stop looking on the ground for the culprit, as they were storing the ceiling for a roosting site. These were bat droppings.

The homeowner consulted the backyard farmer, who informed her covered patio. She was puzzled because she had never seen any animal, but the small, fibrous, slightly shiny droppings continued to show up. When she brought samples of the extension office, we told her to stop looking on the ground for the culprit, as they were storing the ceiling for a roosting site. These were bat droppings.

The homeowner consulted the backyard farmer, who informed her covered patio. She was puzzled because she had never seen any animal, but the small, fibrous, slightly shiny droppings continued to show up. When she brought samples of the extension office, we told her to stop looking on the ground for the culprit, as they were storing the ceiling for a roosting site. These were bat droppings.

Backyard Farmer – 50 Years and Still Growing Strong on Nebraska ETV

"Backyard Farmer," the nation's longest-running locally-produced series, celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. The popular Nebraska-based yard and garden series airs live on Nebraska ETV Thursdays at 7 p.m. The program is rebroadcast on NETV2 Fridays at 9 a.m. and 2 p.m.

A new addition to the series, "Backyard Farmer Extra," will debut this year on Saturdays at 8 a.m. on Nebraska ETV, repeating Sundays at 9:30 a.m. on NETV2. "Backyard Farmer Extra" will focus specifically on viewers' e-mailed questions.

"Backyard Farmer Extra" yard and garden experts answer questions about everything from tomatoes and bugs to blossoms, guiding both rural and urban gardeners from seedtime to harvest and winterizing. A panel of Nebraska-based lawn and garden experts, led by "Backyard Farmer" host John Fech, University of Nebraska (NU) Extension educator for horticulture in Douglas/Sarpy County, also focuses on a new theme each month. April will feature seed and bulb selection; early season garden preparation and landscape design; researching active ingredients in pesticides; identifying and controlling "Pine Will," a relatively new disease of pines; looking at disease of pines; looking at pest control professionals for a full year following training. For more information, visit lancaster.unl.edu.

Approximately 100 individuals representing various Lincoln and area agencies have participated to date. For more information and to register, as early as possible, contact The Grantsmanship Center directly at (800) 421-9512 or visit online at www.tgc.org (GB).

PLANTING A TREE continued from page 2

Do not place mulch directly against the stem of the plant. Proper mulching provides a well-groomed appearance and designates an area where grass or weeds are eliminated, which results in lower damage rates from moles and weed trimmers. Mechanical damage is one of the leading causes of injury and death of landscape plants. Desirable mulching materials include wood chips, wood shavings, bark, compost, or equivalent materials. Organic mulch is preferred because it helps aerate the soil and replenish soil nutrients as it decomposes.

Fertilizer

Most soils contain sufficient levels of available nutrients to supply the requirements of newly planted landscape plants except where construction has either altered the soil or changed its composition. Fertilizer should not be applied during the first several growing seasons while the new roots are establishing themselves. After this period, determination of additional nutrient needs should be based upon the condition and vitality of the plants and analysis of soil samples. (MIF)

Backyard Farmer – 50 Years and Still Growing Strong on Nebraska ETV

"Backyard Farmer," the nation's longest-running locally-produced series, celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. The popular Nebraska-based yard and garden series airs live on Nebraska ETV Thursdays at 7 p.m. The program is rebroadcast on NETV2 Fridays at 9 a.m. and 2 p.m.

A new addition to the series, "Backyard Farmer Extra," will debut this year on Saturdays at 8 a.m. on Nebraska ETV, repeating Sundays at 9:30 a.m. on NETV2. "Backyard Farmer Extra" will focus specifically on viewers' e-mailed questions.

"Backyard Farmer Extra" yard and garden experts answer questions about everything from trees to tomatoes and bugs to blossoms, guiding both rural and urban gardeners from seedtime to harvest and winterizing. A panel of Nebraska-based lawn and garden experts, led by "Backyard Farmer" host John Fech, University of Nebraska (NU) Extension educator for horticulture in Douglas/Sarpy County, also focuses on a new theme each month. April will feature seed and bulb selection; early season garden preparation and landscape design; researching active ingredients in pesticides; identifying and controlling "Pine Will," a relatively new disease of pines; looking at disease of pines; looking at
In “Trees to the Rescue!” staff from the USDA National Agroforestry Center explored the relationships and interdependencies of soil, water, and air. Students were encouraged to separate oil from water using cotton swabs covered with a thin layer of cornstarch. The cotton absorbed the oil, leaving the water clear. In “Whale of a Tale,” students discovered first hand the insulating effects of whale blubber by covering one hand in lard to simulate the blubber and then dipping both hands in cold water.

In “Farms, Feathers and Scales!” Estella Wolfe from the Folsom Children’s Zoo brought in live animals for the students to see and feel. Students got a close look at various animals that can help break down decaying material in “ Decomposers!”

The NEBLINE is published monthly by:
University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County
Main Office
444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A, Lincoln, NE 68528-1507
Satellite Office
Lancaster Event Center
4100 N. 84th St. (84th & Havelock Ave.), Lincoln, NE 68529
Phone: 441-7180
Web site: lancaster.unl.edu
NUFACTS Information Center: 441-7188
Composting Hotline: 441-7119

All programs and events listed in this newsletter will be held (unless noted otherwise) at:
Lancaster Extension Education Center
444 Cherrycreek Rd. (event rooms posted), Lincoln
Phony: 441-7170

Gary C. Bergman, Extension Educator—Unl Leader, gbergman1@unl.edu
Mary Abbott, Extension Assistant, mabbott1@unl.edu
Lorace Hartman, Extension Educator, lhartman1@unl.edu
Maureen Burson, Extension Educator, mburson1@unl.edu
Tom Dorsey, Extension Educator, tdorsey1@unl.edu
Soi Cochran, Extension Associate, scochr2@unl.edu
William Freitas, Graduate Assistant, wfreitas2@unl.edu
Mary Jane Frouge, Extension Associate, mmcfrouge1@unl.edu
Arlene Hanna, Extension Associate, ahanna1@unl.edu
Aller Henneman, Extension Educator, ahenneman1@unl.edu
Don Janssen, Extension Educator, djanssen2@unl.edu
Diana Karmazin, Extension Associate, dkarmazin2@unl.edu
Ellen Kraft, Extension Associate, ekraft1@unl.edu
Tracy Kulin, Extension Associate, tkulin1@unl.edu
Vicki Jellema, Publication & Media Assistant, vjellema2@unl.edu
Mardel Meinke, Extension Associate, mmmeinke2@unl.edu
Barb Ogg, Extension Educator, bog@unl.edu
Andrea Ohrich, Extension Assistant, aohrich2@unl.edu
Bobsha Rida, AmeriCorps*VISTA, brida2@unl.edu
Zainah Rida, Extension Assistant, zrida2@unl.edu
Kendra Schmidt, Extension Assistant, kschmidt2@unl.edu
David Smith, Extension Technologist, dsmith9@unl.edu
Jim Wyse, Extension Assistant, jwyse1@unl.edu
Dana Willford, Extension Assistant, dwillford2@unl.edu
Karen Wobig, Extension Assistant, kwozig2@unl.edu

Ten News articles may be reprinted without special permission if the source is acknowledged as “University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County.” If this article contains a byline, please include the author’s name and title.

Use of commercial and trade names does not imply approval or constitute endorsement by the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County.

In order to best serve our subscribers, this form will appear in every issue of The NEBLINE. You can use this form to:
1. Change your address or order a subscription (please print)
2. Submit general comments and/or story ideas

Name
Address
City Zip
✓ Order subscription (free—however, there is an annual $3 mailing and handling fee for zip codes other than 6828—, 6832—, 68403, 68017, and 68056)
✓ Change of Address

Comments
Story Idea(s)

Return to:
University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County
444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A+ Lincoln, Nebraska 68528-1507

Extension Calendar

APRIL

13 Dine Out for 4-H CFW, Don & Millie’s, 5200 S. 56th St. 11 a.m.–4 p.m.
13 4-H Teen Council Meeting 3 p.m.
13 4-H Horse VIPS Committee Meeting, Lancaster Event Center 7 p.m.
14 4-H Leader Training 9:30 a.m. & 7 p.m.
14 Composting Workshop, Belmont Recreation Center, 1234 Judson St. 7–8 p.m.
14-17 Composting Workshop, Calvert Recreation Center, 4500 Stockwell St. 7–8 p.m.
14-17 Composting Workshop, Eastern Recreation Center, 6110 Adams St. 7–8 p.m.
14 Composting Workshop, Irving Recreation Center, 2100 Van Dorn St. 7–8 p.m.
16 Child Care Providers Conference 8 a.m.–4 p.m.

MAY

3 4-H Chess Tournament 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
4 4-H Camp Open House, Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center near Gretna 1–4 p.m.
5 Guardianship Training Program
6–9 Grantsmanship Training Program 8 a.m.
6 4-H Camp Open House, Don & Millie’s, 5200 S. 56th St. 11 a.m.–4 p.m.
7 4-H Horse VIPS Committee Meeting, Lancaster Event Center 7 p.m.
7 4-H Rabbit VIPS Committee Meeting, Lancaster Event Center 7 p.m.
7 Deadline for 4-H District/State Horse Show Entries — LD’s & Level Tests
8–16 Household Hazardous Waste Collection, Hickman, 2nd & Main St. 1–3 p.m.
8–16 Household Hazardous Waste Collection, Pfizer Inc, 601 W. Cornhusker Hwy. 9 a.m.–3 p.m.
8–16 Composting Demonstration, City Yard Waste Composting Demonstration Site, Calvert 7th & Colby 8:30 a.m.

APRIL 2003 Page 12

Nearly 3,000 Lancaster County fifth graders from 47 schools attended the ninth annual Earth Wellness Festival on March 21 at Southeast Community College, Lincoln. Students discovered and explored the relationships and interdependencies of soil, water, air and living resources through hands-on activities. Classrooms attending the festival received pre-festival learning kits in October. New this year were several classroom sessions.

Hundreds of volunteers, area educators, environmentalists, government employees, as well as donations from local businesses, make this educational experience possible.

The Earth Wellness Festival steering committee is comprised of ten local educational resource agencies, including University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County.

In “Whale of a Tale,” students discovered first hand the insulating effects of whale blubber by covering one hand in lard to simulate whale blubber and then dipping both hands in cold water.

In “Trees to the Rescue!” staff from the USDA National Agroforestry Center demonstrated the benefits of windbreaks, including their effect on soil temperature.

In 4-H Fiber Fun, students turned pulp from used office paper into a new piece of paper they took home.

Students tried to separate oil from water in “Making Drinking Water,” a new session by Olson Associates.