Extended Visions, March/April 2009

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University of Nebraska-Lincoln — Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources

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Extension - Your Front Door To University Resources

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension is the people’s “front door” to the vast array of Nebraska Extension resources. Teaching, research and extension are the three major components that represent a rich and successful history of the Land Grant University System.

Today, Extension provides the technology transfer of new research findings to local citizens in more ways than ever before in history. Distance education (web, satellite, and home-study-based program delivery) have made University faculty and educational programs available to citizens in their homes, at their work or via community learning centers.

Extension is the vital outreach arm of the University that has made the Land Grant system a phenomenal, time-tested successful institution in the United States. Extension began in 1914 helping lives of Nebraskans. Addressing the social, economic and environmental issues of our communities is what Extension is doing every day via individual consultations, workshops, clinics, on-farm research, mass media, e-mail, websites and programs, and direct teaching.

Your local Extension staff serves the Saunders County area as part of a statewide team of Extension professionals who work and share their talents across the state to meet individual, family and community needs in an efficient and effective manner.

In this issue of Extended Visions, we take a closer look at some of Extension’s outreach efforts. If you have questions or have an interest in participating in the many programs that our office provides, feel free to call 800-529-8030, visit our office at the ARDC or the website at www.saunders.unl.edu.

Ankersen Selected as 2008 Employee of the Year

Sharron Ankersen has been selected as the recipient of the 2008 Employee of the Year Award at the ARDC. Sponsoring the ARDC/UNL Extension in Saunders County Social Committee, fellow employees nominate candidates and supervisors, employees and the social committee then submit scoring forms. Sharron is a 4-H secretary for UNL Extension in Saunders County. Also nominated were Mike Zoubek and Robert Weatherly.

A nominator for Sharron stated, “Sharron is extremely committed to the 4-H program. It is truly her passion. Over her tenure with Saunders County Extension, Sharron has served in many roles from her support staff duties to helping at the various shows and fairs. Her high energy level about what she does and about the 4-H program help our families maintain a level of excitement.”

Sharron has worked with the 4-H program for over 12 years and was a 4-H leader for 31 years. In addition to receiving a plaque, Ankersen was also honored with prizes solicited and organized by the ARDC/UNL Extension in Saunders County Social Committee. Prize donors included the Champions Club, Behlen Manufacturing, and the Hitchcock Country Club. Ankersen will also be recognized on a plaque displayed indefinitely at the ARDC August N. Christenson Research and Education Building.

This is the seventh year the award has been presented. Past winners can be viewed at http://ardc.unl.edu/oy.shtml.

Moravec Receives IANR Outstanding Employee Award

Lisa Moravec, Husker Genetics Staff Assistant, was named as the recipient of the UNL IANR Outstanding Employee Award for Office/Service Staff for January 2009. This high honor recognizes outstanding achievement by office/service staff within the UNL’s Institute of Agriculture & Natural Resources.

A nominator stated, “The rapport Lisa has built with the public, staff, and peers is due to her patience, friendliness, and consideration for those around her. It is through these actions that she is able to win the confidence and respect of others. Her integrity, trust-worthiness, and personal standards are the qualities that make Lisa an outstanding employee.”

Another commented, “Lisa’s commitment to excellence is her best quality.” Lisa is responsible for the business office functions of Husker Genetics since 2000, such as taking orders, accounting, and other duties. She possesses a bachelor’s degree in Agriculture with a major in Ag Education from UNL. She and her husband, Kent, live near Ithaca and have a son and daughter. Husker Genetics provides quality research facilities and business office support at the ARDC.

Bob Weatherly’s (ARDC Farm Operations) and Mike Zoubek (Husker Genetics) were also nominated for the award. They are pictured with Mark Schroeder, ARDC Director.

Basics of Small Wind Turbines Rescheduled - March 17

Get Your Free Radon Kit Now...

Learn More at Program on Mar. 17

Photo credit: Bob Weatherly and Bob Weatherly

The Basics of ‘Farm/Residential Small Wind Turbine’ program, presented by Tony Jimenez and sponsored by the High Plains Extension Energy Team for Community Development, has been rescheduled for March 17. This is a pre-recorded webinar program with an added presentation.

John Hay, UNL Extension Educator, will be on hand at the program to discuss net metering and other topics specific to Nebraska. He will also be available to answer questions.

The program is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. at the August N. Christenson Research and Education Building at the ARDC.

Topics include: applications, estimating small wind turbine production, policies & economics, the process for installing small wind turbines, small wind system components, and technology questions. This program gives participants the tools needed to determine if a wind system is appropriate to a particular application and to avoid common pitfalls encountered in analyzing and receiving small wind turbine projects.

Call (402)264-8030 to pre-register no later than March 16.

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- Summer Program Schedule

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Photo credit: Bob Weatherly

Radon is a radioactive gas that has been linked to an increased risk for the development of lung cancer.

Karna Dam, UNL Extension Educator says, “Saunders County has been identified as a ‘Zone 1’ county which means that indoor levels could be expected to exceed 4 pCi/L. In fact, about 67% of the homes in this county that have been tested have shown results that are above EPA’s action level. So, we felt this was an important program to pursue.”

A program will be held on Tuesday evening, March 17 to help homeowners interpret their test results and learn what measures can be taken to lower radon levels in homes. The session will be conducted at the Saunders County Extension office located at the ARDC beginning at 7:00 pm.

Kits can also be picked up at the Three Rivers District Health Department office in Wahoo and will also be available at the March 17 program.

For complete details about the program, contact UNL Extension at (402)264-8030.

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by Sarah Browning, U/glyph817L Extension Educator
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m echanical damage. This site will be used to demonstrate
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at the Saunders County Extension Office
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deciduous trees, and deciduous shrubs were used in the design. Evergreen tree species that have not been
http://acreage.unl.edu

Demonstration Windbreak Planting at the Saunders County Extension Office

by Sarah Browning. U/glyph817L Extension Educator

In 2007, the ARDC received a $25,000.00 grant from the Nebraska State Awardees to establish a demonstration windbreak planting. U/L Extension Educator Sarah Browning secured the funding. The planting will be used as a teaching and demonstration tool to help rural homeowners learn more about windbreak management. Homeowners lose windbreak trees to insect or disease problems, poor maintain-
nance practices, drought, hail, windstorms, wildlife and mechanical damage. This site will be used to demonstrate proper tree selection and to focus on proper maintenance techniques.

To avoid new pests, like Pine Wilt disease, have killed
many Scotch and Austrian pine trees in the last five years throughout Saunders County. Nebraska may also soon see infections of Emerald Ash Borer, a serious insect problem that will severely limit the usefulness of ash species in windbreak plantings. Education is necessary to teach landowners how to manage these new pests or, if a tree dies, what resistant replace-
ment trees can be used.

With a limited selection of evergreen trees well-adapted to Nebraska's growing conditions, and with good resistance to pine wilt, landowners need to embrace a new philosophy in windbreak design that increases the use of deciduous trees and shrubs in windbreak plantings. Because of their height, large deciduous trees provide a greater area of wind protection, while shrubs provide protection close to the ground. The use of several species within a strip of trees can also help to limit the horticulturists' risks of loss if a new pest develops that threatens a particul-
tree species.

This project was installed in 2008 and Phase II will be completed in 2009. A combination of evergreen and
deciduous trees, and deciduous shrubs were used in the design. Evergreen tree species that have not been widely
used in Nebraska are being trialed, so their performance and disease resistance can be assessed.

You can stop by and walk through the new planting, located along Highway 66, on the north side of the ARDC headquarters. These trees and shrubs will serve as a long-term demonstration planting for program participants and community members to watch as it matures and develops into a healthy windbreak.

Horticulture Extension in Saunders County

H orticulture professionals, vegetable growers, acreage owners and homemakers can find answers to their
questions through SummerCARE at the Saunders County Extension Office. She also serves as a par-
elist for the popular gardening program "Backyard Farmer" and is featured every Monday morning on
KHUB radio.

Sarah's office is in Fremont, but she is only a toll-free phone call away, at 1-800-830-4855. Some ques-
tions about plant problems can be answered over the phone; however, a sample of the problem is often need-
ed to diagnose insect or disease problems. Plant samples and a detailed description of the problem should be taken to the Saunders County Extension office.

Home visits are available for a minimal charge to diagnose difficult landscape problems, especially those involving
lawns or trees. A short home visit, 30 minutes or less, is $25 and a longer visit is $35. If necessary, a sample of the plant problem can also be submitted for further diagnosis to the UNL Plant & Pest Diagnostic Clinic for an additional $10.

Green industry professionals can subscribe to HortUpdate, a bimonthly email newsletter with informa-
tion on new pest and plant problems. For more information on important horticulture of Nebraska in the UNL Extension Horticulture web site, http://extensionhorticulture.unl.edu.

The Master Gardener Program is an important component of the horticulture outreach services provided by the Saunders County Extension Office. Participants take part in 40 hours of coursework and volunteer hours with the University to pass along their horticulture knowledge to beginning gardeners, helping them learn more about all aspects of horticulture. They can also be found volunteering throughout the county, including the Wahoo Library, Hanson House, Backyard Farmer and the Saunders County Historical Society.

Along with the acreage programming team, Sarah develops a monthly acreage email newsletter focusing on important issues to acreage owners. She created and maintains "Acreage Insights," a web site for Nebraska acreage owners. http://acreage.unl.edu

Nutrition Education Program

imagine not knowing if you have enough food this month to feed your family. Unfortunately, this is a reality for 28% of Nebraska families. On top of that, with a limited budget, as well as, a limited knowledge of nutrition, many of our families are consuming a diet that is inadequate in many of the essential nutrients that their bod-
ies need. This is where the Nutrition Education Program (NEP) can help. NEP offers free nutrition education to limited resource families in 42 Nebraska Counties.

Casey Campbell is the Extension Assistant who runs the Nutrition Education Program in Fremont and Washington Counties. Her goal is to help these limited resource families by teaching them about general nutrition, as well as, how to manage their food dollars wisely. Participants also have the resources to eat a healthy diet on a limited budget. Casey teaches NEP partic-

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days of your income to pay for the food we eat during the course of the year. The American Farmer is the envy of the world. Yet, collectively, we - as citizens of this country - take the above for granted. The foundation to food production is the American farm operator. This doesn’t suggest that all is fine on the farm. In fact, the opposite is true in many cases. But during the last century, food production in this country has become one of the great success stories of all mankind. Standing at the side of the American and Saunders County farmer has been the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension.

The Land Grant system has been viewed by many as a very successful change agent. All of the agriculture and natural resource educational programs that we provide are developed from unbiased research at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, an extended arm of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension.

Agriculture and Natural Resources
by Keith Glewen, UNL Extension Educator

Meet the Extension Staff
Sharron Ankeresen is a 4-H secretary for UNL Extension in Saunders County and is very familiar with many of the programs of 4-H. She is well-known in the community for her attendance at the program. She has worked as the 4-H secretary since 1996 and just recently shifted to part time status. She keeps records, works with the 4-H leaders and members, and helps at the fair. Sharron lives on an acreage near Colon. She has 4 grown children and 8 grandchildren. She enjoys horseshoe pitching and raising poaties.

As a UNL Extension Educator, Sarah Browning develops programming for horticulture professionals, vegetable growers and agreuse owners. She provides general horticulture information for homeowners and serves as a panelist for the popular gardening program “Rockyard farmer”. Sarah has created and maintains two web sites: UNL Extension Horticulture, http://extensionhorticulture.unl.edu, and Acreage Insights, http://acreage.unl.edu. Sarah began working with UNL Extension as an Extension Educator since 2003. She received a B.S. in Horticulture from Northwest Missouri State University and obtained her M.S. in Plant Breeding from UNL.

Casey Campbell, UNL Extension Assistant, works with the Nutrition Education Program (NEP). NEP is sponsored by the UNL Extension and the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. The goal of the Nutrition Education Program is to provide nutrition education to those who currently receive or qualify for benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Casey has worked with NEP since 2005. She is a Registered Dietitian and a Licensed Medical Nutrition Therapist. Casey also is a certified fitness instructor. Casey completed her bachelors degree from Colorado State University in 2004 in the areas of Dietetics and Fitness. She then completed her Dietetic Internship from Iowa State University. Casey recently received her Masters Degree in Nutrition from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Casey and her husband, Chris, live in Lincoln.

Extension Educator, Karnataka Dam, works with 4-H programs and through her Extension experiences, she has developed a strong desire of working with youth and helping them to develop dynamic leadership skills.

Karnata and her husband, Dwight, live on a farm near Hooper where they are involved with crop row, feedlot and a cow/calf operation. They have two sons, Derek and Dylan. Karnataka enjoys sports, music and is extremely active with music through her church in Hooper.

Cheryl Dunbar serves as the Office Manager and is responsible for financial management and processing, database management, and general organization of office functions. She has served in this role since 1995. Cheryl also serves on the ARDC/UNL Extension in Saunders County safety committee. She and her husband, Kevin make their home in Walace with their two sons and two grandsons. Cheryl enjoys attending Nebraska baseball games and relaxing at the family cabin.

Sara Elliott is the newest Extension Educator to join UNL Extension in Saunders County. She began her position in July 2008. Her role is to work primarily with livestock producers in Saunders County and the surrounding area. Additionally, some of her responsibilities and time will overlap with youth development. Directly, she seeks to provide adult educational programming to livestock producers in response to identified livestock issues, acreage owners, value-added opportunities and the agro-environmental trailer at the ARDC. Sara grew up on a family farm operation in western Colorado. They have a cow/calf operation and produce corn

Meet the Extension Staff - Cont. on P. 4
Saunders County 4-H... Experience It!

by Karna Dam, UNL Extension Educator

Saunders County 4-H is a partnership effort of youth, adult volunteers and University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension Educators. Karna Dam has been the Extension Educator working directly with 4-H, Youth Education and Livestock programming since 2007. Sara Elliot joined the staff in July 2008 and focuses 25% of her appointment on youth education in livestock. In 2008, the Saunders County 4-H and youth education programs reached 695 young people. This was through the traditional 4-H program as well as special intent programs such as the Babysitting Basics class and after-school programs. Sara works with the young people involved in 4-H. Saunders County utilizes the expertise of many volunteers to help with clubs and a variety of other volunteer opportunities. One hundred forty-two adult volunteers helped make 2008 a success. 

Summer Program Schedule Provides Education and Opportunity

by Karna Dam, UNL Extension Educator

Don’t think, before you know it June will be here along with some fantastic youth opportunities through the summer education series. Summer workshops are offered to both 4-H and non-4-H youth. Registration fees include all workshop material and lunch (all-day workshops only). Complete details and registration information will be coming out soon, but grab your calendars and mark the dates, because this year, you won’t want to miss a thing! 

Week of June 1

- 9:00 – 12:00 Visual Arts Workshop @ ARDC
- Babysitting Basics @ ARDC (for youth 5 – 7 years old)
- Batik, B-Dazzle, B-Colorful @ ARDC
- Clover Kid Day Camp (for youth 5 – 7 years old) @ ARDC
- Pig and Poultry Showmanship Clinic @ Mead High School

Week of June 6

- 9:00 – 3:00 Fishing Clinic @ Two Rivers State Park
- Beef Cattle-Stockmanship Clinic @ Fairgrounds, Wahoo

Week of June 17

- 9:00 – 2:00 Rabbit and Poultry Showmanship Clinic @ Fairgrounds, Wahoo

Week of June 27

- 9:00 a.m. Wild Fowl Showmanship Clinic @ ARDC
- Beekeeping \& Honeybee Clinic @ ARDC
- 4-H Project... What is it? @ Fairgrounds, Wahoo

Extension Can Help...

We hope you have found the articles about UNL Extension to be informative. If you would like to learn more about what Extension has to offer - please visit the Saunders County website www.sauders.unl.edu.

These are challenging times. UNL Extension and Extension can help answer questions about actions to help improve personal and family situations. Visit the UNL Extension website at www.extension.unl.edu to learn more. Individuals and families can find help with family budgeting, negotiating with creditors, problem solving, financial planning and reducing family stress by visiting the UNL Extension website.

And you can always contact us at (402)264-8030 or (800)529-8030 to speak with a professional about any of the programs or services you have read in this newsletter.

MEET THE EXTENSION STAFF - Cont. from P. 3

and alfalfa. Sara graduated from Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Colorado with a B.Sc. Degree in Animal Science and a Master’s in Agriculture, with a focus on Beef Industry Leadership. Sara and her husband, Matt, live near Waverly on an acreage. They enjoy spending time outdoors, working around their property, anything livestock related, and spending time with family and friends.

Keith Glewen is an Extension Educator for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. A native of Wisconsin, Keith received his B.Sc. degree at the University of Wisconsin - Platteville in Crop and Soil Science and M.S. degree from the University of Nebraska in Agronomy. His main area of focus is row crop production, degree at the University of Wisconsin - Platteville in Crop and Soil Science, and alfalfa. Sara graduated from Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Colorado with a B.Sc. Degree in Animal Science and a Master’s in Agriculture, with a focus on Beef Industry Leadership. Sara and her husband, Matt, live near Waverly on an acreage. They enjoy spending time outdoors, working around their property, anything livestock related, and spending time with family and friends.

Keith and his wife, Sherry, live in Wahoo. They have four sons and a daughter. Keith enjoys gardening, landscaping and growing corn and soybeans.

Amy Virgil joined the 4-H staff in February as a part-time 4-H secretary. Amy has been involved in a variety of youth programs in the community. She lives on an acreage near Wahoo with her husband, John. They have two sons, ages 9 and 12, and are involved in 4-H. In her spare time, Amy enjoys sharing family activities, watching her children in sports and school activities, gardening, cooking, and writing.

Zoo to You Geek on Loan

by Kori Jensen, Mead High School

There is a new face in the Companion Animals Class at Mead High School. “Athens” is a leopard gecko. She is visiting the Lincoln Children’s Zoo through the Zoo to you program and will stay until the end of June. The students in the class have learned about reptile care and have really grown to enjoy Athens.

The class takes turns caring for the gecko. They feed her five crickets three times a week. Give her fresh water and clean her cage each day. They monitor her weight and eating habits to share with the zoo. This ensures she stays healthy while in Mead. Athens has a heating pad on one side of her house that stays on all the time and a light that comes on during the day.

Leopard geckos are lizards native to Pakistan, India and Afghanistan where the terrain is very rocky. The geckos live on and under the ground and are nocturnal. They can live up to 20 years. Leopard geckos have claws rather than toe pads and are the only lizards that use vocalization to communicate within the species. Most gekkos eat their shed skin and have enlarged tails that store fat, much like a camel’s hump. Their tails can be dropped and grabbed by predators to escape.

The companion animal class is enjoying having Athens in class. Students hold her while working on assignments and have even taken her home for the weekend. Craig Thilliander said, “My favorite part of having Athens in class is watching her eat the crickets.”

Today’s 4-H projects teach youth about science, engineering and technology through hands-on participation - such as at GPS technology workshops.

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