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Lancaster County Benefits from a Year-Round Farmer’s Market

Dave Smith
Extension Technologist

Farmer’s Markets have become an amazingly successful phenomenon nationwide. According to U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) statistics, farmer’s markets in the U.S. have increased from roughly 100 in 1980 to over 2,800 in 2000. Many people have visited a Farmer’s Market, but most people do not know the deeper benefits and role these markets play in their communities and in the local economy. Farmer's markets offer high-quality products, support the local economy and also support local farmers, with patrons visiting markets mainly for these specific reasons.

An important aspect of a farmer’s market is it allows people to produce goods in a value-added structure where they are marketed and sold directly to the public, providing an outlet for small producers and fostering the establishment of community relationships not found in large chain stores or supermarkets. Another benefit is money generated in the process stays in the local economy and lowers transportation and energy input costs. Farmer’s markets also play a significant role in the community at large with many participating in Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and state nutrition programs and programs to distribute fresh produce to needy families.

Lincoln’s Historic Haymarket Farmer’s Market operates on Saturdays from May to October and weekly has more than 100 vendors and over 2,000 people who visit from many communities in and around Lancaster County.

However, the farmer’s market closes during the fall and winter seasons and the public does not have a convenient meeting place where local products and produce can be purchased. Similarly, many local producers do not have a place to sell their products after the market season. Even during the traditional market season the farmer’s market is only open on Saturdays thus making a very limited amount of time the market is actually available to the community. These two limiting factors of time are being addressed at the Centerville Farmer’s Market at 808 Q Street in Lincoln’s Historic Haymarket. This farmer’s market is open six days a week, year-round and offers vendors and customers the farmer’s market structure in a permanent and indoor location.

John Ellis, founder and general manager of Centerville Farmer’s Market, has a unique perspective on farmer’s markets having participated in the Haymarket Farmer’s Market for years as an organic farmer in the York area. “I was interested in extending the positives I experienced at the farmer’s market beyond the summer season,” said Ellis.

According to Ellis those positives include filling the winter fresh produce gap, networking local communities, and supporting healthy lifestyles for people. Another vital component of the farmer’s market is the education and sense of community that occurs with locally produced goods. "People want to know who is producing their food and how it is produced, and that only happens with a locally supported agricultural system," commented Ellis.

Ellis views Centerville as a wheel, with the store as the hub and spokes extending out to producers and consumers at many levels. “I truly believe that this type of system could save agriculture,” states Ellis, “by adding value to local products and providing alternatives to our existing agricultural system.”

Currently, there are about 50 vendors at Centerville with room for another 50. The Centerville Farmer’s Market is set up like a traditional farmer’s market with vendors responsible for all aspects of producing and marketing their goods within the Centerville Farmer’s Market building, while the employ- ees of the market actually sell the products to customers. Ellis also plans to use the space as more entertainment and other community-based events.

Wide Variety of Local Products Offered

Currently there are about 50 vendors at Centerville offering a wide variety of products such as:

- fresh produce (in season)
- pies
- jams
- bread mix
cake/muffin mix
- organic popcorn
- organic grains
- flavored popcorn
- fresh milk/chocolate milk
- egg nog
- coffee
- hot chocolate/ cappuccino mix
- bottled water
- apple cider
- organic oil
- vitamin/mineral supplements
- soaps
- lotions
- peanut butter
- fish imports
- books
- various crafts
- bath and body care products
- nuts/seeds
- sauces
- salsas
- spices
- BBQ sauce
- ostrich meat
- elk meat
- organic beef
- eggs
- cheese

Located at 808 Q St. in Lincoln, Centerville Farmer’s Market is open six days a week.
Cooperative Extension will once again present Computerized Financial Record Keeping Workshops in 2004. Each workshop series began in 1998 and has been offered in 16 locations, training representatives of 239 farming operations in computerized financial record-keeping principles to date. Surveys of past participants show well over 80 percent believe they have learned to keep a more complete set of financial records and nearly 90 percent believe they learned to keep a more accurate set of records as a result of attending the training. Furthermore, 94 percent have indicated they would recommend the workshop to others and had the same level of experience as prior to attending the workshop. Workshops will be offered in four locations in 2004. See the bottom of this article for specific dates and locations.

All instruction will be presented in a hands-on teaching style with participants sitting at computers, practicing the principles being demonstrated. Participants, therefore, should have a basic familiarity with using a computer and typing on a keyboard.

Workshops will begin with the basics, no prior computerized recordkeeping experience is necessary. However, some prior experience with a hand-kept single entry accounting system such as the extension blue book would be useful. At a minimum, participants should have experience with keeping a check ledger. (preferably one that is periodically reconciled with bank statements).

To save time, much of the instruction on generating reports will be done using sample files that have been created to represent a typical crop and livestock farming operation. Preregistration is required. Participants will receive written instruction on:

• Setting up and starting your records
• Developing a chart of income and expense accounts (classification)
• Entering transactions into the ledger (single transactions and income or expenses that should be split between multiple accounts)
• Retrieving information in the form of various reports.
• Dealing with farm taxes, such as a farm loan, within the workshop.
• Reconciling the ledger with the bank statement.
• Electronic banking and other time-saving information.

The workshop schedule will be augmented by the use of a number of inexpensive computerized record-keeping programs, with slight modifications in procedure. This workshop will be taught at the UNL Cooperative Extension Center, 303 N. 14th Street, in the classroom. Registration will be limited due to space and computer availability on a first-come first-served basis. After the class is filled, a waiting list will be developed in case of a cancellation. If you are interested, please contact the extension office for the location you wish to attend and ask to have a brochure sent to you. You can download a brochure from lancaster.unl.edu/ag/recordingkeep.pdf.

Workshop Dates and Locations

Prewregistrations for all workshops due March 1. March 5 — Lancaster County Extension office. Contact: Tom Dorn, Lancaster County Extension, 444 Cherry Creek Road, Lincoln, NE 68528, phone: 402-441-7180.


March 9 — First State Bank, 1005 E. 23rd Street, Fremont, NE, contact: Dave Varner, Dodge County Extension, 2206 W 31st Street, Fremont, NE 68025, phone: 402-727-2775.

March 10 — NU ARDC - near Mead, NE, contact: Lance Brown, Saunders County Extension, 1071 County Road G, Elkhorn, NE 68020, phone: 402-624-8400.

Check Condition of Stored Grain

Nebraska experienced one of the nicest falls in recent memory in 2003. Most dryland grain dried well in the field and required little additional drying to reach normal storage moisture content of 15 to 16 percent. One should not forget moisture content is not the only consideration for safe, long-term storage. The temperature of the stored grain is important as well.

Maintaining grain temperature below 50°F reduces insect activity. Insects become dormant at temperatures below 50°F and nearly stops at temperatures below 40°F. When grain temperature is significantly lower than the air temperature, convection currents can occur in a grain bin. Air contacts with the cooler grain near the bin wall and rise through the warmer grain in the center. Grain is then moved out of the farm air moving up through the center carries moisture with it. When the grain finally reaches the cold grain at the top surface, some of the moisture can condense on the surface of the grain. Condensed, moldy grain, sometimes with active storage insect activity. If this condition is not discovered early and corrected by breaking up the crust and running aeration.

To reduce convection currents in the grain, one should aerate whenever the average outdoor temperature is 20 degrees cooler than the grain temperature in the center of the bin. Typically, grain is aerated shortly after harvest in early fall and again in late fall as outdoor temperatures cool into the 30's and 40's. When cooling grain, be certain that the cooling front is pushed all the way through the grain mass before discontinuing the aeration. A cooling front pushed part way through the grain can result in moisture condensation in the zone where the two meet. This is especially important if temperature is being lowered more than 20 degrees in one step. Pruning of trees.

The amount of time required for an aeration cooling below a specific rate. The cooling time can be estimated by dividing 15 by the airflow rate. For example, 75 hours is needed with an airflow rate of 0.2 cfm/bu. Check grain temperature at several locations to determine when the cooling front has been pushed completely through the grain. Grain temperature changes about 50 times faster than the moisture content, so the air’s relative humidity is of little concern.

cfm/bu = Cubic feet of air per minute per bushel of grain in the bin

The airflow rate produced by a fan is a function of the fan size and the static pressure the fan must overcome. The static pressure requires dehumidification of the air delivery system, the type of grain and depth of grain. The static pressure varies by the type and depth of grain is known, the airflow can be estimated using a formula that requires data for the fan. The cubic feet of air per minute produced by the fan divided by the total bushels in the bin, results in cfm/bu.

The Dream of Country Living

Country living... for many people the very notion of living in the country conjures up mental images of peaceful hours sitting in the shade looking for the hoot of insects and the chirping of birds while watching a mother deer and her fawns roam through the grass in a picture book setting they had imagined. Many acreage owners soon discover they are working on a farm and the dream of recreating the country so they can raise animals for the freezer or as companion animals such as birds, dogs or llamas. Others might simply be interested in raising meat animals for the freezer or as 4-H projects. Most new animal owners soon discover they don’t know everything they should about nutrition, breeding, feeding, housing, space requirements, fence construc-
Attracting Birds with Proper Habitat

Birds can be an important aspect of our backyard environment. In many cases, the quality of our environment is perceived to be directly related to the population of birds. The bird population in your yard or neighborhood park can be increased with the proper selection and arrangement of ornamental trees and shrubs. The selection of food-producing plants can ensure the presence of birds year-round.

To attract and maintain a bird population, a habitat should provide food, cover, nesting areas, and water. Ornamental trees and shrubs can supply the necessary cover (shelter) and nesting areas. Many ornamental plants can satisfy more than one habitat requirement. For instance, multi-stem plants that form a dense canopy will satisfy the needs for nesting and also provide cover.

The food source for birds should be supplied, as much as possible, by the trees and shrubs in the yard. To maximize the natural food source, select plants to ensure an available food source year-round. The use of trees and shrubs native to your locale will help ensure that

Appropriate fruits and berries are available for the local bird population. If the landscape does not supply food during certain periods, you can supplement with commercial mixes of bird seed. This will help keep birds in the vicinity of your yard. Some birds eat a wide variety of seeds while others prefer one or two types. The seeds that appeal to the majority of birds are sunflower, proso millet and peanut kernels.

Birds require a place of cover or shelter if they are to become long-term residents. They require protection from inclement weather (sun, heat, wind and rain) and natural predators. This is why the multi-stem plants that form a dense canopy are preferred by birds.

The dense canopy also provides an ideal environment for nesting. Since birds require shelter year-round, the yard should have a mix of deciduous and evergreen plants. Evergreen plants include broadleaf evergreens (such as holly) and conifers (such as red cedar). Several references suggest that at least 25 percent of the trees and shrubs should be evergreen.

A source of fresh water is also necessary to maintain your bird population. The water source should be shallow (no more than two to three inches deep) and replaced on a regular basis. Running water, such as a shallow fountain, is the ideal water source. The water source should be elevated or in the middle of an open area to minimize predation by cats and other animals. An elevated bird bath or fountain is ideal. (DJ)

For more information on attracting birds to your yard, refer to “Birds’ and Songbirds” and NebGuide (G84-671) available for free in various locations.

Urban Agriculture

Urban agriculture’s overall nature makes the concept difficult to define. Treated literally, urban agriculture means “to establish and perform an agricultural practice in or near an urban or city-like setting.” This is an over-simplified and somewhat open-ended definition at defining what is a much broader and more complex system of dynamic values. Despite the lack of a proper definition, urban agriculture has experienced a recent surge in worldwide popularity.

Urban agriculture, until recently, was considered an exclusively rural activity. Today, up to 30 percent of agricultural production in the United States originates from within metropolitan areas, and up to 15 percent on a global scale (Smit et al., 1996). In the U.S. and other developed parts of the world, urban agriculture is a convenient novelty full of potential. In contrast, it often serves as the sole means of personal and economic survival in the less-developed regions of the world. Agriculture has a long and outstanding history, but what many may not realize is that agriculture began as an activity within densely-populated areas.

Population growth in these areas increased demand for food and sustenance. As a result, urban human settlement became segregated from rural animal and crop production areas.

Unfortunately, in modern times, arable land acreage is decreasing due to soil and environmental degradation, surges in industrial development and the need to accommodate increasing urban populations. Urban sprawl causes annual cropland losses equivalent to an area one kilometer wide stretching from New York to San Francisco. These trends contribute greatly to concerns about natural resources and food security.

One solution to meeting urban food security demands, while protecting and conserving natural resources, is the conversion of unused parcels of land in the urban environment to sustainable food production areas. This transformation of urban areas is occurring worldwide at an ever increasing rate.

Urban agriculture is an alternative that can be labeled conventional agriculture. However, it should not be considered solely an alternative means of producing food; it also is a viable, adaptive function and response to urbanization. Urban agriculture is no substitute for existing agricultural systems as it is an established branch of modern sustainable agricultural systems. Ideally, urban agriculture incorporates various elements of modern sustainable agriculture to establish productive, research, self-contained waste and nutrient cycles.

Resource conservation and management, integrated pest management (IPM) and organic food production, for example, can contribute toward developing safe, non-polluting environments.

Power Tool Safety

• Before you use a power tool, take a minute to look it over for problems that might make it unsafe.
• Always wear proper safety attire, such as safety goggles or a face shield.
• Remove rings and other jewelry.
• Don’t wear loose-fitting clothing.
• If you have long hair, tie it back.
• Only use a power tool for the job it was engineered to do.
• Never remove safety guards. They are there for your protection.
• Make sure safety guards are in working order.
• Clear your workspace of any clutter.
• Disconnect it immediately when done, and store in a safe place.
• Do not wrap the electrical cord around the tool when storing. This can weaken or break the cord and possibly cause an electrical hazard. (DJ)
Add some Valentine “red” to a dish of low-fat ice cream or frozen yogurt with this quick and healthy homemade strawberry sauce.

Strawberry Sauce

1 1/2 cups fresh strawberries or partially thawed frozen strawberries
1 tablespoon lemon juice
3/4 cup confectioners sugar

In a blender, blend strawberries with lemon juice and sugar until smooth.


A hot dish of oatmeal is especially tasty on a cold winter day. Here’s a recipe offered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that includes not only heart-healthy oatmeal but also fruit.

Golden Apple Oatmeal

(Makes 1 cup serving)
1/2 cup (about 1/2 medium) diced Golden Delicious apple
1/3 cup each apple juice and water
1 1/8 teaspoons salt (optional)
2 tablespoons cornstarch
1/3 cup quick-cooking rolled oats, uncooked
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
2 tablespoons brown sugar

1) Mix all ingredients until smooth.
2) Blend strawberries with lemon juice and sugar until smooth.

A healthy plate is one serving from each of the five food groups. Each food item is considered one serving.

• GRAINS — 1 slice whole wheat bread, 1 roll, 1/2 cup rice, 1 waffle
• VEGETABLES — 1 1/2 cup raw vegetables, 1/2 cup cooked vegetables
• FRUIT — 1 small piece or 1/2 cup raw fruit, 1/2 cup canned fruit
• MEAT — 3 ounces cooked meat, 2 eggs
• DAIRY — 1 cup milk or yogurt

Your next meal, look at your plate and see if it fits the “Idaho Plate Method.” Are you eating something from all five food groups? Are the foods in healthy portion sizes? This simple visual plan could help you eat healthier.

No-Salt Sloppy Joe Seasoning Mix

1 1/4 teaspoon powdered garlic
1/2 teaspoon dry mustard
1/4 teaspoon chili powder
1/4 teaspoon black pepper

1) Mix all ingredients until well blended.
2) Adjust seasoning to taste. No more or less. Store in a cool dark place.

To make 4 servings of Sloppy Joes

1) Brown 1 pound of lean ground beef over medium heat 8 to 10 minutes in a large nonstick skillet or until beef is not pink, breaking beef up into small crumbs. Pour off drippings.
2) Add seasoning mix, 1/2 cup of water and 1 cup of no-salt-added ketchup.
3) Simmer for 10 minutes, reducing heat as needed to maintain a gentle simmer. Stir occasionally. Add more water if the mixture becomes too thick.

Cook’s Tips

• A large skillet is recommended for browning the meat. If the skillet is overcrowded, the meat will steam cook rather than brown properly. If you only have a small skillet, fry your meat in batches.
mood for warm idea exchanges. This year I plan to package some in an attractive container and visit a special person whose life has crossed mine. Each of us has some of those very unique and wonderful people in our lives who always make us feel happier for being alive. I’ve included the recipe for hot chocolate to get you started if you would like to do the same.

Hot Chocolate Mix
8 quart Carnation Instant Milk
1 1/4 cups Coaffeemate
1 15 (ounce) can Nestle’s Quick 2 cups sifted powdered sugar Mix all the ingredients well. Store in airtight container. For serving, fill cup, glass, etc. half full and fill with hot water. A couple of cookies could be an added bonus.

Sharing Meals Important to Building Family Unity
Family meals can be difficult to squeeze into busy days, but their importance for building strong families is crucial. Most families are caught in the time crunch between work, school, chores, homework, sports, music lessons or other community activities, but they also need to take time to eat together nightly, slow down and enjoy each other’s company. Family meals also can build strong family traditions, improve nutrition and reduce stress. If families aren’t used to eating together nightly, they may need to make the effort to prepare meals together daily and enjoy each other’s company at dinner.

• How to protect yourself from identity theft and fraud.
• What, when and why personal information should be given and to whom.
• To recognize the warning signs of fraud.
• How to protect yourself from these “cratify” thieves.

March Leader Training Lesson
“Fit and Healthy Kids,” the March leader training lesson will be presented, Tuesday, Feb. 24 at 1 p.m. at the Extension Education Center. Lorene Bartos, extension educator, will give the lesson. In the last 20 years the proportion of overweight children between the ages of 6 and 19 has tripled to nearly 20%. One of every three kids. The goal of this program is to understand the values of healthy food choices and physical activities for children. This program will help explore ways parents, caregivers and communities can help children become healthy and fit. Non-FCE members should call Pam at 441-7180 to register so materials can be prepared.

Part of growing up is learning to make decisions. Often, as children enter adolescence, they begin to push parents away. Although teens need to do some things for themselves, they still need their parents. It’s important to provide support and guidance without being overbearing. When conflicts arise, it’s important to practice respect. Children are expected to respect their parents, but parents need to remember to respect their children’s activities. When children are faced with dangers such as drugs and alcohol, respect and guidance are even more important. Children need to learn to resist these pressures.

At the same time, it’s important to set limits and provide structure. Set reasonable rules and be specific so teens understand what constitutes rule-breaking. If possible, set rules and talk about consequences ahead of time. This is important in maintaining the teen’s respect for his or her parents.

Many parents communicate with teens for an average of only 30 seconds a day. The rest is giving orders. In developing dialogue, ask questions that allow teens to elaborate on their responses not just give yes or no answers. Parents can express their concerns by using statements with “I” instead of “you,” such as “I’m concerned” or “I’m happy.” Saying things such as “You make me so mad” only puts more pressure on teens and builds resentment.

Parents also should try to be involved and interested in their children’s activities. When children are young, parents often are very involved, but participation decreases as children enter their teen years. Teens may tell parents it’s not necessary to attend their activities, but they also usually know their parents care. Little things, like making eye contact at events or getting parents to teacher conferences, help teens realize their parents really care. Remember, teens still need hugs and love, even when they don’t seem very lovable. (LB)

Therefore, while the calendar makers were freezing in the cold, I’m glad the February FCE & Community Leader Training Lesson will be presented, Tuesday, Jan. 27 at 1 p.m. “Don’t Be A Victim,” by Lorene Bartos, extension educator. It’s also important to talk to children instead of just ordering them to complete homework, chores or other tasks. Many parents communicate with teens for an average of only 30 seconds a day. The rest is giving orders. In developing dialogue, ask questions that allow teens to elaborate on their responses not just give yes or no answers. Parents can express their concerns by using statements with “I” instead of “you,” such as “I’m concerned” or “I’m happy.” Saying things such as “You make me so mad” only puts more pressure on teens and builds resentment.

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### 2004 All-America Rose Selections

Several new modern roses have been selected to be the All-America Winners for 2004. If you are planting roses this year, you may consider choosing one for your garden.

**Memorial Day**

Like the holiday of the same name, Memorial Day is truly worth celebrating. Expertly representing the most popular class of modern roses, a hybrid tea, this medium-tall, upright and bushy variety features very large, full, spiraled blooms with more than 50 petals per flower. Evolving from pointed and ovoid buds, Memorial Day’s clear pink flowers are accented with a lavender wash and grow to up to 5 inches in diameter. Its long cutting stems in a vase of water. Change the water every four days.

From pointed and shapely buds, its spiraled blooms grow to 4 inches in diameter, with 30 to 35 petals per flower, each nestled among dark, glossy green foliage on a plant that reaches a medium height.

Day Breaker is an awakening of the senses, not only for its exquisite beauty, but also for its sharp moderate tea fragrance. Day Breaker truly earns its floribunda classification with its brilliantly colorful, long-lasting clusters of flowers in a hardy, continuous bloom.

### Controlling Houseplant Insects

Order perennial plants and bulbs now for cut flowers this summer. Particularly good choices are phlox, daisies, coreopsis, asters and lilies.

Check stored bulbs, tubers and corms. Discard any that are soft or diseased.

Order gladious corms now for planting later in the spring after the last frost has passed. Locate in full sun in well-drained soil.

Branches of forsythia, pussy willow, quince, spirea and dogwood can be forced for indoor bloom. Make long, slanted cuts when collecting the branches and place the stems in a vase of water. Change the water every four days.

Check any vegetables you have in storage. Dispose of any that show signs of shriveling or rotting. This year plan to grow at least one new vegetable that you have never grown before; it may be better than what you are already growing. The new dwarf varieties on the market which use less space while producing more food per square foot may be just what you are looking for.

Send off seed orders early this month to take advantage of seasonal discounts. Some companies offer bonus seeds of new varieties to early buyers.

Do not start your vegetable transplants indoors too early. Six weeks ahead of the expected planting date is early enough for the fast-growth species such as tomatoes. Eight weeks allows enough time for the slower-growing types such as peppers.

Prune fruit trees and grapes in late February or early March after the worst of the winter cold is past but before spring growth begins.

Late February is a good time to air-layer such house plants as dracaena, dieffenbachia and rubber plant, especially if they have grown too tall and leggy.

Check all five growing factors if your house plants are not growing well. Light, temperature, nutrients, moisture and humidity must be favorable to provide good growth.

Repair and paint window boxes, lawn furniture, tools and other items in preparation for outdoor gardening and recreational use.

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**Honey Perfume**

Growing to about 3 feet high and 2 feet wide, Honey Perfume is a great, easy-to-grow addition to any garden. With its dark green, glossy foliage on a plant that reaches a medium height.

Honey Perfume is an upright and well-branched floribunda with apricot yellow blooms. Pointed, shapely buds open to reveal beautiful, four-inch blooms with petal counts of 25 to 30 nestled amongst dark green, glossy foliage that accentuates its color. Growing to about 3 feet high and 2 feet wide, Honey Perfume exhibits a great spicy scent and very good resistance to disease, including rust and powdery mildew. (MJF)

**Mealybugs**

Several species of scale insects, mealybugs and whiteflies are commonly found on plants in the home. All are sap-feeding insects that can weaken plants and cause poor, stunted growth. Death of infested plants occurs only in severe cases.

Houseplants may create an annoyance caused by large quantities of a sweet, sticky liquid waste product called honeydew that is excreted as the insects feed. Honeydew can make a sticky, shiny mess on the plant and nearby furniture and floors.

Scale insects have a tan to brown scale-like covering or scale that protects the insect’s body. Scales may be from one-sixteenth to one-fourth inch in diameter and are usually found on the stems and/or leaves. Some scales are hemispherical in shape, while others are oval and particularly for unfurling its lovely rose petals. It makes a great, easy-to-grow addition to any garden.

**Day Breaker**

Day Breaker is an upright, bushy floribunda with bright, multi-shade blooms in yellow, blending to pink and apricot.

From pointed and shapely buds, its spiraled blooms grow to 4 inches in diameter, with 30 to 35 petals per flower, each nestled among dark, glossy green foliage on a plant that reaches a medium height.

Day Breaker is an awakening of the senses, not only for its exquisite beauty, but also for its sharp moderate tea fragrance. Day Breaker truly earns its floribunda classification with its brilliantly colorful, long-lasting clusters of flowers in a hardy, continuous bloom.

**Chastity**

Chastity is a true floribunda with its multi-shade blooms in yellow, and apricot. It loves weather, and is exceptionally disease resistant and easy to grow.

Order perennial plants and bulbs now for cut flowers this summer. Particularly good choices are phlox, daisies, coreopsis, asters and lilies.

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**White flies**

Dabbing each insect with an alcohol-soaked cotton swab is another possibility on lightly infested plants. Sprays can be used for houseplant insect control. Success will depend upon thoroughness and persistence. Insecticides and sprays made just for houseplants are available at garden centers. Formulated active ingredients such as insecticidal soaps and pyrethrin are available. Insecticides must be applied thor-oughly, repeatedly and persis-tently, weekly for a month or more, to get good control.

Granular insecticides you add to the soil of infested houseplants seem to have very limited effectiveness and their use is discouraged because of toxicity concerns. Of the plants that regrow after pruning, removing the heavily infested stems and treating the remainder is a possibility. Finally, unless the plant is particularly valuable, many people find it best to throw away infested plants before the pests spread to other houseplants. (MIF)
Dealing with Woodpecker Damage to Houses

Woodpeckers are among the most recognized birds and are interesting to watch. They are beneficial to our natural environment, but they become a nuisance when they damage houses. Woodpeckers have a strong, pointed bill, used for chipping and digging into tree trunks for wood-boring insects. They nest in cavities that they chisel deep into a large branch or tree. Several species of woodpeckers are found in Nebraska, including hairy woodpecker, downy woodpecker, red-headed woodpecker, red-bellied woodpecker and the northern flicker. The yellow-bellied sapsucker overwinters in southeastern Nebraska, but is relatively uncommon.

Damage results when woodpeckers “hammer” on houses, peak holes in search of insect food or excavate a roosting or breeding cavity. In forested areas, these activities are on trees. A high percentage of homes damaged by woodpeckers have natural cedar siding. To a woodpecker, the natural cedar siding and the size of the house make these houses seem like a “super tree”, a huge tree that has no bark.

The most important thing to do when dealing with mold in a home is to find the source of the moisture causing the problem. After finding the problem, make the necessary repairs and then clean up the area. Areas that are porous such as wallboard, carpets and fabric items may be difficult to clean and have to be replaced. To clean a hard surface area, scrub mold off the hard surfaces with a detergent and water. Dry completely, then treat with a chlorine bleach.

Drumming

During courtship activities in the forest, woodpeckers advertise their territory by “drumming”, repeatedly hammering on their house. To a woodpecker, the bird finds a suitable location, then hammer completely on their house. The yellow-breasted woodpecker and the northern flicker are interesting to watch. They nest in cavities that they use for food.

Nesting/Roosting

Woodpeckers that use a building for feeding and drumming sometimes drill a hole in an attempt to excavate a winter roost or nesting cavity. Woodpeckers will hammer completely through the siding and may attempt another nesting hole until the bird finds a suitable location.

Control

The key to successful woodpecker control is to take action as soon as you notice the bird damaging the house to stop the behavior before it becomes a habit. If the woodpecker seems to be searching for insects, you can take action to control them. Attach visual scare devices for a few hours. If the bird drums on only one or a few locations on the house, either deaden those spots or muffle the noise as much as possible or cover them with a piece of sheet metal, hardware cloth or hang plastic netting four to five feet from the house to keep the bird away. If it seems to be trying to excavate a cavity, try putting a suitable nest box high on the house and maybe another one high in a nearby tree. To make your own nest box, refer to "NE Cooperative Extension" in Lancaster County Educational Resource (024-99).”Build a Nest Box to Attract Birds,” available at the Lancaster County Extension office.

If your house has natural cedar siding, use a water sealer to seal the small holes; the wood can then be painted. Some homeowners report painting their house helps reduce woodpecker damage.

Woodpeckers are migratory, not permanent residents for a foot-long bird. Woodpeckers have a large surface area, scrub mold off the hard surfaces with a detergent and water. Dry completely, then treat with a chlorine bleach.

Is Mold a Problem in Your Home?

The question many have is whether mold exists. The key to mold control is moisture control. This time of year homes with high humidity and low air circulation may find mold problems in basements, around windows, and in closets with outside walls. To prevent damage in your home and with the furnishings as well as avoiding health problems, it’s important to control moisture. This will also eliminate mold growth.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) suggests places that are often or always damp can be hard to maintain completely free of mold. If there’s mold in the shower or elsewhere in the bathroom that seems to reappear, increasing the ventilation (running a fan or opening a window) and cleaning more frequently will usually prevent mold from recurring or at least keep the mold to a minimum.

The most important thing to do when dealing with mold in a home is to find the source of the moisture causing the problem. After finding the problem, make the necessary repairs and then clean up the area. Areas that are porous such as wallboard, carpets and fabric items may be difficult to clean and have to be replaced. To clean a hard surface area, scrub mold off the hard surfaces with a detergent and water. Dry completely, then treat with a chlorine bleach.

Drinking Water Q&A

Q. How do I know what is in my drinking water?
A. The Federal Safe Drinking Water Act requires communities to tell water consumers the source of drinking water and potential health effects if there are contaminants present. The Lincoln Water System prides itself in providing consumers of Lincoln exceptionally high quality water. Check out the report on their Web site: www.ci.lincoln.ne.us/city/pworks/water/safe_drinking_water.html. However, testing private water supplies is not required by current regulations. Owners of private water supplies are responsible to themselves for having their water supply tested to ensure it is safe.

Q. Can I tell if my drinking water is safe by looking at it, tasting it or smelling it?
A. No. In many cases, chemicals or microbes could make water unsafe to drink cannot be seen, tasted or smelled. The only way to know if water you use for drinking and cooking contains potentially harmful substances is for it to be tested. All Nebraska public water supplies are required by federal and state laws to be tested on a scheduled basis for potentially harmful contamination.

Q. Water often looks cloudy when first taken from a faucet and then it clears up. Why does this happen and is the water safe to drink?
A. The cloudy water is caused by tiny air bubbles in the water. After a while, the bubbles rise to the top and are gone. The air bubbles do not make the water unsafe to drink.

Water fact: Almost 80 percent of the earth’s surface is covered with water; but less than one percent is fresh water that can actually be used for drinking, irrigating crops, recreation, industrial uses and other purposes. Ninety-nine percent of the earth’s water is in oceans or frozen in polar ice caps. That’s why it is very important we conserve and protect our fresh water supplies.

Back to the Top
Swine & Sheep Superintendents Needed
Swine and sheep superintendents are needed for this year’s Lancaster County Fair. If interested, call Donna Karmazin at 441-7180.

4-H Photography Themes
The 2004 County and State Fair 4-H Photography themes have been announced: Unit II — "Perfectly Purple"; Unit III — "Mailboxes."

State Fair Age Changes
Based on input from several groups, the decision has been made to lower the age for in-person participation at the State Fair to 10 years of age (as of Jan. 1, 2004) for the 2004 State Fair. This change will effect all areas where a person must be physically present. This includes the demonstration contest, Fair to 10 years of age (as of Jan. 1, 2004) for the 2004 State Fair this year. This project will include identification and weighing of pigs in the spring. Judging at State Fair will include lean gain per day of age (which incorporates average daily gain and carcass characteristics), as well as a visual placing. (DK)

State Fair Swine Rule Change
The current rule regarding previous exhibition will be removed for 2004, i.e. it will be acceptable for a pig to be shown before coming to State Fair. Although this State Fair rule is changing, it is still recommended that swine shows be terminal.

A pilot “Production Pig” class will be introduced at State Fair this year. This project will include identification and weighing of pigs in the spring. Judging at State Fair will include lean gain per day of age (which incorporates average daily gain and carcass characteristics), as well as a visual placing. (DK)

2004 4-H Calendar
Events located at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherryrock Road, Lincoln unless otherwise noted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FEBRUARY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Horse Stampede Entries Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4-H Council Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Teen Council Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>15–21</td>
<td>Nebraska State 4-H Week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Achievement Night, East Campus Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Speech Workshop, Beginners-Intermediate Only</td>
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<tr>
<th>MARCH</th>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4-H Council Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Speech Contest Entries Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>4-H Horse Stampede, Lancaster Event Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Teen Council Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Speech Contest, State Capitol</td>
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<tr>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Rabbit Clinic, Event Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Spring Rabbit Show, Event Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>4-H Council Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Citizen Washington Focus (CWF) Etiquette Banquet</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Teen Council Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>4-H Leader Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Kiwanis Carnival, Event Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>4-H Officer Training (Everyone Welcome)</td>
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<th>MAY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4-H Council Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Leader Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>4-H/FFA Lamb Tagging &amp; Weigh-in (or call for appt.), Event Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Deadline for District/State Horse Show Entries, LD’s, Level Tests</td>
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<tr>
<th>JUNE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4-H Council Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>County Fair 4-H Horse Identifications Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>County Fair 4-H/FFA Sheep/Goats/Swine/Breeding Beef/Bucket Calves/Dairy/Poultry/Rabbits/Cats/Household Pet Identiﬁcations Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14–17</td>
<td>District Horse Shows, East (Fairbury, Elkhorn, Oakland, Albion)</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Discover 4-H Night at Saltdogs Baseball, Haymarket Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>21–24</td>
<td>District Horse Shows, West (O’Neill, Hemmingford, Grant, Broken Bow)</td>
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<tr>
<td>22–25</td>
<td>Clover College</td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>PASE/Life Challenge, UNL East Campus</td>
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<tr>
<th>JULY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<th>AUGUST</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>County Fair 4-H Horticulture/Tree/Grass-Weed Judging</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Citizen Washington Focus (CWF) Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>County Fair 4-H/FFA Animal Entries Due</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>County Fair 4-H Tablesetting/Bicycle Safety/Demonstration/Style Revue/Egg Preparation/Turkey Barbecue Contests Registrations Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Teen Council Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>11–15</td>
<td>State Horse Show, Grand Island</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>County Fair Demonstration Contest</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>County Fair 4-H Style Revue Judging, Event Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Entry Day for County Fair Static Exhibits, Event Center</td>
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<tr>
<th>SEPTEMBER</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Horse VIPS Committee Meeting, Event Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Rabbit VIPS Committee Meeting, Event Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Teen Council Meeting</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>4-H Council Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Open House, Location TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>21–26</td>
<td>AKSalben 4-H Livestock Exposition, Omaha, Event Center, Omaha</td>
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<tr>
<td>21–23</td>
<td>Leader Training</td>
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<tr>
<th>OCTOBER</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4-H Council Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>3–9</td>
<td>National 4-H Week</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Teen Council Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<th>NOVEMBER</th>
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<td>Teen Council Meeting</td>
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<table>
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<th>DECEMBER</th>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>4-H Council Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Teen Council Meeting</td>
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4-H Speech Workshop
Feb. 24
The speech workshop will be held Tuesday, Feb. 24, 6:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center. We will focus this year on beginning speakers. The workshop will teach youth how to pick out a topic and talk there through writing a speech.

Horse Judging
Certification
Starting in 2004 there will be a new 4-H Judging certification program. Judges currently listed on the 4-H Judging list will be required to attend a certification seminar within the next two years and then once every three years after that. Prospective judges may attend a seminar and successfully complete a written test at the end of the seminar to be added to the list. The first seminar will be held March 12. More information can be found at animalscience.unl.edu/horse/judgingseminar.htm (MC)

Karnival Time is Near, Booths Needed
The Kiwanis Karnival is a free family event sponsored by Lincoln Center Kiwanis. It is scheduled for Saturday, April 17, 7-9 p.m. at the Lancaster Event Center in the Exhibit Hall. All 4-H families are invited to attend this fun and free activity.

4-H clubs or families are needed to provide carnival-type game booths for the evening. Each booth will have an area 4’ x 6’ to use. Prizes are provided. If your club or family would like to provide a booth, call the extension office to register by April 2. There will be bingo for the adults and treats for all. Plan now to attend this fun, family activity. For more information, call Lorene at 441-7180. (LB)

4-H Club Officer Training
Mark your calendars now for the upcoming April 19, 6:30 p.m. 4-H Club Officer Training. All 4-H members are encouraged to attend! Everyone will discover how to conduct a meeting and use parliamentary procedure.
4-H members will also have an opportunity to participate in a mock meeting. (TK/DK)

CWF Collecting Best Choice UPCs, Ink Jet Cartridges
The Lancaster County Citizen Washington Focus (CWF)’s group is collecting Best Choice UPC labels. CWF is also collecting used computer printer ink jet cartridges. CWF receives $3 per cartridge. The following types of ink cartridges are accepted: all Hewlett Packard, all Lexmark, all Compag, and Canon BC01/02/05, Be20 and BX3.

Help raise funds for their June 2005 trip by helping collect “Best Choice” brand UPC labels from products and ink jet cartridges. Both can be dropped off at the extension office. Thank you for your help!

Dine Out for CWF at Don & Millie’s Continue
On the second Sunday of each month, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Don & Millie’s continues to host Dine Out for 4-H Citizen Washington Focus (CWF). When people indicate they are eating for 4-H, Don & Millie’s donates 20 percent of the profits of those meals. Don & Millie’s is located at 2520 S. 56th Street.

4-H Horse Stampede Rounds Out 4-H Knowledge
The statewide 4-H Horse Stampede is scheduled for March 13. It is being held at the same time as the Horse Expo at the Lancaster County Event Center. 4-H participants can earn a fall rabbit clinic. Judy was most receptive to questions and Said Ken, “Judy is a friend to 4-H’ers. She gives many hours of her time to 4-H in the county. As a rabbit breeder (her rabbitry is J’s Jolly Jumpers), she provides many 4-H’ers with rabbits and extensive information about them. In addition to her work with Lancaster County 4-H, Judy also helps 4-H in nearby counties. She comes in for the big events and offers many topics for 4-H meetings. Judy has been honored with the “Outstanding Volunteer of the Year” award.”

Judy Fitzgerald
Lancaster County 4-H and 4-H Council are proud to announce Judy Fitzgerald as winner of February’s “Heart of 4-H” Award in recognition of outstanding volunteer service.

Judy has been involved in the 4-H rabbit program for about 15 years. She is a presenter at many workshops, seminars and clinics for 4-H’ers, 4-H clubs and extension staff. She judges rabbits, static exhibits and showmanship. As a rabbit breeder (her rabbitry is J’s Jolly Jumpers), she provides many 4-H’ers with rabbits and extensive information about their care. In addition to her work with Lancaster County 4-H, Judy also helps 4-H in nearby counties. Judy was nominated by her Majors (a member of the Rabbit VIPs committee) and Robert Dresser (a 4-H parent).

Judy and her family are active in their community and everyone enjoys Judy’s positive influence on 4-H’ers. Judy is a real individual. She oozes a natural love for 4-H and the youth. Judy is a great 4-H leader. Judy has been recognized by 4-H for her outstanding service and dedication.

Judy was honored with the “Outstanding Volunteer of the Year” award. Judy was honored with the “Outstanding Volunteer of the Year” award.

Judy’s vision for the future is to see more 4-H’ers and adults participating in 4-H. Judy is a strong supporter of 4-H and a leader in her community.

Judy is a true 4-H leader. Judy is a true 4-H leader.

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Judy is a true 4-H leader. Judy is a true 4-H leader.
Is Your Home Safe from Carbon Monoxide?

During winter months, the number of deaths and injuries from carbon monoxide poisoning increases with about 80 percent of deaths happening in the home. Consumers can take action to help prevent carbon monoxide poisoning. Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas produced by burning fossil fuel. Each year, a qualified professional should check all fuel-burning appliances for potential carbon monoxide problems. Water heaters and stoves that burn natural or propane gas, heating oil, wood, or other fuel should be checked for potential carbon monoxide leaks. Chimneys and flues should be checked for leakage and creosote or debris blockage. Also be aware of ice or other weather problems that could cause blockage in chimneys and flues.

Loose or disconnected vents from furnaces, water heaters, boilers or vented space heaters should also be checked. High temperature plastic venting pipes should be inspected for any separation of racks—especially on gas-fired, mid-efficiency furnaces or boilers installed between 1987-1990. Professionals should also check for the potential of downdrafting or spillage. Downdrafting can occur when other exhaust fans are in use and the natural drifting of a fuel-fired appliance is overpowered and the air in the home is at a lower pressure than outside. Downdrafts result when air flow reverses in a vent of a chimney pulling air and combustion gases back into the house. Anything that moves air out of a home and depressurizes the house can potentially downdraft the chimney. This includes exhaust fans, other ventilated appliances, fireplaces and holes in the ceiling. Tight homes can result in downdrafting when insufficient air is available for ample combustion. Consult an owner’s manual for recommendations. Heating systems may have poor combustion or poor venting. Defective installation of a vent, such as it being too small or large, insufficient height, too many elbows, will do more harm than good. (LB)

It’s also important to never use charcoal grills in enclosed spaces, such as a home, garage, vehicle, tent or partially enclosed patio. Avoid using ranges and ovens to heat the home. It is very important to have appliances and items inspected before they are used. Know the operating and safety procedures that should be followed. Generators, especially, require a complete understanding of how they are to be safely used. (LB)

Grantsmanship Training Scheduled for May 3–7

The Grantsmanship Training Program will again be offered to the Lincoln community May 3–7. The intensive, "hands-on" workshop covers all aspects of researching grants, writing proposals and negotiating with funding sources.

Designated for both novice and advanced grant seekers, the program participants are given follow-up services, including expert grant proposal reviews for a full year following training. To maximize personal attention, the group size for the workshop is limited. Since 1997, Lancaster County Extension has hosted the Grantsmanship Training Program. Approximately 120 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 at (800) 421-9512 or go to www.nesi.com. (GB)
MOLD
continued from page 7
solution (3/4 cup bleach to a gallon of water) and keep damp areas dry. Reduce the humidity in your home. It is recommended in the winter time the humidity in the home should be between 30-50 percent. Use air conditioners and/or dehumidifiers, when needed, in the summer. Run the fans in the bathroom and kitchen areas. Vent appliances that produce moisture, such as clothes dryers and stoves outside. Covering cold surfaces, such as cold water pipes, with insulation will help prevent condensation.

Remember, in order for mold to grow, the conditions have to be just right and mois- 
ture is the main cause of mold. (LB)

UNL Presents Equine 101 Course
University of Nebraska and Purina Mills present “Equine 101 — Introduction to the Horse.” This class meets Thursdays from 7-9:30 p.m. for six weeks. This is an educational opportunity in equine science for the professional or amateur horseperson. Classes meet at the UNL Animal Science Complex. People have the option to sign up for the entire course or attend a single session. Course Fee is $100, $60 for the whole course or $25 per session. Registration forms are available at the extension office or online at animalscience.unl.edu/horse/101.htm. For more information call Dr. Kathy Andersen at 472-4641.

ewf needs volunteers
Volunteers are needed for earth wellness festival on Friday, March 19 at Southeast Community College in Lincoln. Approximately 3,000 fifth- graders participate in this annual event that involves students in creative and innovative environmental education activities.

Each year, over 250 volun- teers take part in earth wellness festival activities. As classroom escorts, bus greeters, presenter and registration assistants; volunteers are essential to the success of this event. You may choose to volunteer all day (8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.) or morning only (8:30 a.m.-noon). In return, you receive a festival T-shirt, a free lunch, an invitation to our celebration party following the event and an opportunity to participate in a rewarding volun- teer experience.

Please contact Meghan Sittler at 472-8823 or via e-mail at mdsittler2@unlnotes.unl.edu for more information. (DS)

HEART OF 4-H
continued from page 9
responded with patience and valuable information. My daughter decided to join 4-H. We contacted Judy for a rabbit and our family quickly visited her rabbitary. Again, she showed rabbits and provided much information. Over the next year, Judy has continued to provide information whenever we have a question about the rabbits. Judy says, “I love doing workshops. There is something special about each one – answering questions, providing information and giving kids hands-on experiences with rabbits. “4-H is a great way for kids to find out who they are by exploring the world through directed activities. I am very grateful to be able to help youth learn about rabbits and learn to take responsibility for them.” Judy is also involved with the American Rabbit Breeders Association (serving on the membership committee and as chair of the election committee), the Nebraska Tower on the Plains Rabbit Breeders Association, (as Secretary/Treasurer) and the Husker Holland Rabbit Club (as Secretary). She lives in Martell with her husband Jay. Their daughter, Sarah, is a former 4-Her and rabbit breeder. Congratulations to Judy. Volunteers like her are indeed the heart of 4-H.

The eNebline is published monthly by:
University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County
Main Office
444 Cherry Creek 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
Fax: 441-7148 • TDD: 441-7180
Nebraska Extension Information Center: 441-7188
Composting Hotline: 441-7139

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

February 2004
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The eNebline
Lancaster Extension Education Center
The Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County
continued from page 7
As of Jan. 6, Lancaster County is in moderate drought conditions. Did you guess it? Find out at lancaster.unl.edu

Source: National Drought Mitigation Center, University of Nebraska.