9-1-2005

The NEBLINE, September 2005

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Now is a Good Time to Start a 4-H Club!

4-H offers a wide variety of opportunities for you to discover your world, your community and yourself. You can make your own choices and set your own goals. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension 4-H Youth Development Program is open to all youth aged 9-18. Through learning-by-doing, youth gain practical skills and develop life skills.

Families are encouraged to help organize a new club—which is a lot easier than you may think! Starting a 4-H club now gives plenty of time for members to work on projects for next year’s county and state fairs.

Club Organization
Clubs range from 4 to 60 members and are led (or co-led) by club leaders—often club members’ parents. Parents are encouraged to attend meetings. Volunteers are the heart of 4-H. Adult leaders partner with youth members to complete projects.

Club leaders—Also known as organizational leaders, club leaders coordinate meeting times and agendas. They also are responsible for challenging interest groups.

Project leaders—Clubs may or may not have project leaders who provide leadership for specific projects.

Parent Volunteers—Also known as assistant leaders, parent volunteers provide valuable guidance to youth.

Club officers—Youth members choose officers to run their meetings.

Over 150 Projects
Nebraska 4-H has more than 150 project areas. Age-appropriate project manuals are written by university experts. Most project manuals have accompanying leader guides. In most clubs, members complete several projects a year. Some 4-H clubs focus on one particular project area, such as rabbits. Many youth exhibit their projects at the county and state fairs.

4-H Staff Guidance
4-H staff provide guidelines and resources to club leaders. Here’s a look at Lancaster County 4-H staff and their areas of responsibilities:

- Tracy Kulm manages all non-animal project areas. This includes clothing, food, home environment, engineering and general areas.
- Deanna Karmazin runs the 4-H livestock project areas.
- Marty Cruickshank manages the 4-H horse, rabbit and poultry project areas.
- Mary Jane Frogge runs the horticulture and conservation project areas.
- Gary Bergman oversees the Lancaster County 4-H program.
- Karen Evasco provides support to all 4-H areas.

Other Resources
Resource materials available to leaders include:

- Regularly-scheduled leader trainings
- Tim Trial’s monthly newsletter—4-H pages
- Lancaster County 4-H Web site at http://lancaster.unl.edu
- Nebraska 4-H Web site at http://4h.unl.edu
- Mailings to club leaders
- County and State Fair can provide numerous ideas and inspirations for projects!

To Get Started
If you would like to help start a 4-H club, call Lancaster County 4-H at 441-7180.

Spotlight on a New 4-H Club: Happy Hearts
Leia Noel and her sister, Jill Greff, grew up in Lincoln County as members of the Sunflower 4-H club. Now they have families of their own in Lincoln. “I really appreciated the learning and social opportunities 4-H offered,” says Leia. “My sister and I talked about how we wanted to raise our kids and knew we wanted our kids to be in 4-H.

Leia says, “One thing I really like about 4-H is it forces people… in a good way — to do a project correctly and to finish it. My sister and I feel the 4-H manuals are really well written.

After asking around, they found four other families interested in starting a 4-H club. Leia contacted UNL Extension in Lancaster County, and 4-H staff member Tracy Kulm assisted Leia through the process of forming a club.

The Happy Hearts 4-H Club has 14 members ages 5 through 9. During their first meeting, members elected officers. All non-officers were randomly appointed duties such as flag holder, pledge holder, etc.

“Extension’s materials on how to hold a business meeting were very helpful,” says Leia. “I typed out a script for the club president to read. I think it helped her have confidence. Even the club secretary did a really good job taking minutes. I was really impressed seeing the kids conduct a meeting.”

Tracy attended the club’s third meeting and answered questions members and parents had. Leia says Tracy and 4-H staff have been very helpful. “As a new leader, I feel I’ve called Tracy regularly and she’s been extremely helpful. Next year, it will be easier so I won’t have to call her as much.”

For clubs with younger 4-H members, Tracy advises keeping meetings short—about an hour and a half. Happy Hearts club meetings are divided into:

- Business meeting which runs about 10 minutes
- Project time runs about 30 minutes
- Snack and game time runs about 30 minutes
- Meetings rotate among the families’ homes—if weather permits, meetings can be held outside. Prior to each meeting, Leia gives club members little assignments to demonstrate at the next meeting. “I want all members to get comfortable speaking in front of the club.”

Together, the club worked on the 4-H project, “Road to Good Cooking.” Additionally, each family completed other 4-H projects they were interested in. All members entered exhibits at the Lancaster County Fair.

“It was very easy to start the club,” says Leia. “We had motivated parents. 4-H really does take the support of parents. When you see what your children are learning and getting out of it, to me it’s worth the time.”
Horticulture

September 2005

Harvesting and Storing Apples
Harvesting apples at the proper stage of development is the first step toward ensuring that quality produce that tastes great and stores well. If picked prematurely, apples are likely to be sour, tough, and poorly colored; if picked overripe, they may develop internal breakdowns and store poorly.

To harvest apples correctly, you must be familiar with the term "ground color." Color of ground is the color of an apple’s skin as it responds to any area that have become red. In red-fruited cultivars, observe the portion of the apple facing the interior of the tree. When the ground color of red cultivars changes from leafy yellow, yellow-green or creamy, the apples are ready to harvest. In yellow cultivars, the ground color becomes golden.

Mature apples with a yellowish-green background color are suitable for storage. Apples that will be eaten immediately, may be ripened on the tree. Apples that are to be stored, should be picked when hard but mature, showing the mature skin color but with a hand flesh. Therefore, storage apples will be harvested before fresh eating apples.

Most apple cultivars have brown seeds when ready for harvest. However, seeds may become brown several weeks before proper picking maturity. When harvesting, do not remove the stems from apples that will be stored. Be sure to store only apples without bruises, insect or disease damage, cracks, splits or mechanical injury.

Many cultivars of apples store moderately well under home storage conditions for up to six months. Late-maturing varieties are best suited to storage. These apples can be stored in baskets or boxes lined with plastic or foil to help retain moisture. Always sort apples carefully and avoid bruising them. The saying ‘one bad apple spoils the barrel’ is true because apples give off ethylene gas which speeds ripening. When damaged, ethylene is given off more rapidly and will hasten the ripening of other apples in the container. Store apples at around 40°F. When stored at this temperature, apples may last for up to six months.

Apples often pass their odor or flavor to more delicately flavored produce and the ethylene given off by apples can accelerate ripening in other crops. When possible, store apples separately from other fruits and vegetables.

Garden Plants with Silver Foliage
Silver or gray is an interesting color in the landscape. Similar to white, silver has the ability to soothe and blend with other colors. There are many plants that will sparkle in your garden. As an added benefit, many silver foliage plants prefer full sun with well-drained soils, making them excellent excellent tolerant performers in the garden.

—Mary Jane Frogge, Extension Associate

Horticulture

Things to do this month

By Mary Jane Frogge, UNL Horticulture Extension Associate

Plants need rest now, but make sure the crops are burned only 1½ to 2 inches below ground level. Planting them deeper than two inches may keep them from blooming.

Root cuttings from annual bedding plants such as begonias, coleus, geraniums and impatiens. These plants can be overwintered in a sunny window and provide plants for next year’s garden.

Before the first frost, dig up caladiums. Allow them to dry and store them in a dry place for the winter. Perennial phlox can be divided about three fourths or third year. Divide big clumps of perennial phlox into thirds. Early fall or early spring are the best times to plant or transplant them.

Divide lilys-of-the-valley.

Select accent plants for your landscape that will provide autumn color. Trees that will fall into the yellow category include dogwood, maple, red, maple, sugar maples. Norway maple, red oak and scarlet oak. Shrubs with red foliage include sumac, viburnum, pyracantha, Euonymus and barberry.

Allow plants to finish the summer growth cycle in a normal manner. Never encourage growth with heavy applications of fertilizer or wetting the ground at this time. Plants will delay their dormancy process that has begun in anticipation of winter in the months ahead. New growth can be injured by an early freeze.

Tree wound paints used after pruning are no longer recommended. Tree wound paints containing growth substances can slow or stop the healing process and may promote decay.

For annuals, treat as a houseplant. They may be overwintered in a cool, dark greenhouse. After the threat of frost has passed in the spring, bring the plants into a warm house. Water lightly during this period of rest. The bulbs require a two to three month rest period before growth will begin again. Flower bulbs should appear several weeks after moving plants to a warm temperature and water is resumed. Bulbs with four or more healthy leaves should last the summer, should be large enough to flower; those with less foliage may not be able to bloom.

Holiday Plants, Will They Bloom Again?

Anyone with a green thumb who enjoys working with plants will no doubt be tempted to try to get re-bloom the following year. This is not difficult, but there are a few guidelines that need to be followed.

How to Re-bloom Poinsettia
Many poinsettia cultivars will keep their leaves and remain attractive even in summer. Often, the plants are kept as a houseplant through the remainder of the winter and might even be placed outside the following summer. If the temperature is generally cool, 55°F to 60°F, plant the poinsettia in a sunny location. Beginning approximately Sept. 25. poinsettias need complete darkness from 5 pm to 8 am daily. Put a cardboard box or basket over the plant to provide the “short day.” Lights from any lamps will prevent normal flowering of an uncovered plant. Continue this “short day” treatment until the plant buds show color in late November. Short days and 65 to 75°F night temperatures are essential for good rebloom development.

Christmas Cactus
This plant is very similar to the poinsettia that it needs short days and cool temperatures to induce blooming. From mid-September to mid-October, bring the plants inside and begin covering them at night with a box so that they only receive light for nine hours each day. Night temperatures of 55°F will also result in the development of flower buds. Reduce watering and withhold fertilizer during flowering bud development. Flower buds will soon begin to open and the plants will be in full bloom in approximately 2 to 3 months.

Re-blooming Amaranth
These plants are often kept after flowering is done and treated as a houseplant. They will do very well outside during the summer. As danger of frost approaches, bring the pots containing the bulbs inside and place them in a cool room. Water lightly during this period of rest. The bulbs require a two to three month rest period before growth will begin again. Flower buds should appear several weeks after moving plants to a warm temperature and water is resumed. Bulbs with four or more healthy leaves should last the summer, should be large enough to flower. Those with less foliage may not be able to bloom.
Itch Mites Increasing in Oak Galls

Be Prepared for a Possible Itch Mite Outbreak

Barb Ogg
UNL Extension Educator

As things look right now, populations of oak galls will increase rapidly. With a population doubling time of two days, mites can increase from a million to millions in the millions quickly. A few itch mites on one oak tree can attract many more itch mites to the tree. As things look right now, people should prepare to be exposed to itch mites. Itch mites are biting people on their exposed body parts. If you have oak trees lining your street or in your yard, check trees for leaf edge galls. This includes pin oaks, red and black oaks.

The best conditions, they are larvae for about four weeks and then they pupate for several days. They emerge from the water surface much like a mosquito. Larval mites are very beneficial because they are food for fish. Adult male mites gather in swarms at dusk. Clouds of these swarms can be found protected from wind. Mating occurs when females enter the swarms. Once mated, females can live about week. Over the winter, they survive in the larval stage. The larvae are scavengers, feeding on bottom debris. Under the right conditions, they can survive for several years. They become adult mites at the end of the next year's epidemic where thousands of Lincolnites reported suffering itchy red welts on their upper torsos, necks and arms. Most people were exposed to itch mites when spending leisure time outdoors or doing yard work. These mites dropped from oak leaves since unsuspecting victims. UNL and KSU have reported that the galls yield the scientific name Pyemotes herftsi. Itch mite bites are usually red, 1/4 to 3/4-inch in diameter, with a hard, "pimple" in the middle. The bites are usually found on the victim's neck and shoulders and on areas of the torso where clothing is tight. Stretching is actually painful. According to entomologist, the nearly invisible mites need to be in contact for several hours before biting. Because the bites do not itch or get painful for about 16 hours, many people do not know they’ve been bitten until the next day. Suggestions:

• If you have oak trees lining your street or in your yard, check trees for leaf edge galls. This includes pin oaks, red and black oaks.

Control

During swarming, adult mites are attracted to lights. Buildings with outside lighting attract large numbers of the insects. If these lights are around vent openings or air conditioning units or windows, the insects can find ways into the structure. The next day, dead mites can be found on window sills, possibly through the entire building.

Avoid using unnecessary lights until 45 minutes after sundown because 90 percent or more of mite flight activity takes place before that time. Keep curtains and drapes drawn on windows.

Conditions in the Capital Beach area should improve to more tolerable levels once the lake’s ecosystem is re-established with fish and aquatic plants. For more information on mites or other insect pests, visit http://lancaster.unl.edu.

Pollution Prevention Participation

Katie Milius
UNL Partners in Pollution Prevention Intern

Everyone can agree pollution is bad, but the question still lingers: What do we do about pollution? Unfortunately, sometimes the answer is nothing. We all know we should recycle our newspapers and clean up oil spills, but in the last ten years, there’s been a new kid on the block called Pollution Prevention. The idea of Pollution Prevention is simple. If we don’t create the pollution, we don’t have to worry about how to clean it up. Generally, pollution prevention is used to help businesses avoid costly environmental problems, but this idea has wide reaching benefits. Pollution prevention can benefit everyone by conserving our natural resources, improving health and safety and saving money.

Pollution prevention can be applied at home by: using landfills, surface hazardous waste, inspecting and maintaining appliances regularly; turning off lights when leaving a room; using low-flow shower heads and toilets; car pooling; closing the shades in the summer and opening them in the winter.

Pollution prevention is not the same as recycling. Recycling is a reactive approach which deals with waste after it is created, while pollution prevention is a proactive approach which focuses on producing less waste. It is not to say that recycling is any less important, but pollution prevention is a different way of managing waste.

Don’t forget whatever type of volume or waste you create, it costs you money! So for everyone concerned with the bottom line, you can save money by practicing pollution prevention.

Through Nebraska, University of Nebraska–Lincoln student interns are participating in a program called Partners in Pollution Prevention (P3). The interns help businesses avoid waste and pollution with technical assistance reports which detail ways to reduce waste.

Since 1997, interns have worked with 260 Nebraska businesses including farm cooperatives, drycleaners, auto body shops, printing companies and more. Business owners from 43 businesses participated, following intern recommendations has the potential to divert 3.7 million pounds of solid waste from landfills and save $561,000 annually.

For more information about the program, contact Bruce Dvorak at 472-3341 or go to http://www.ianr.unl.edu/p3.
Harvest Safety Reminders

Tom Doml  UNL Extension Educator

Harvest will soon be underway and we will be interested in the busiest times of the year for farmers. Long hours and dangerous working conditions are accepted as a normal part of the life of a farmer but no one should become a statistic for the sake of getting done a day early or a week early.

Some Safety Tips for Farmers

• Stay alert. Take breaks — get out of the cab and walk around every few hours.
• Shut down before working on a machine. If the combine becomes clogged, shut off the motor, not just the header, before attempting to unplug it by hand.
• Know where your co-workers are. Visibility is poor around large machinery. Many deaths are the result of bystanders being run over or crushed between machines.
• Never trust hydraulic systems when working under a machine. Always use a safety prop if you must work under a header or other heavy machinery.
• Never step over a rotating PTO. A few extra steps to walk around the tractor isn’t worth losing your life over.
• Never stand on grain that is being moved. Every piece of equipment is “down” in grain carts and grain bins that are being emptied.
• Keep new auger grates and shields in place.
• If you must move machinery on a road away from dark, have working headlights and flashing front and rear warning lights.

Safety Tips for Rural Residents

• Remember to be watchful on county roads during harvest. A car going 50 mph coming up behind a farm implement moving at 15 mph closes at a rate of over 50 feet per second.
• Don’t park out in front of farm vehicles. Heavily loaded trucks and grain trailers can’t stop as quickly as a passenger car.

• Watch out! Trucks and farm equipment may be entering the roadway from narrow lanes in which you wouldn’t normally expect them.
• Give them room. Eight-row headers are in a hurry and will pass you nearly all of the way around. When overtaking a combine, give the farmer time to see you. If the combine pulls over and gives you a place to pass, never try to pass a combine or other farm equipment in the road and never attempt to pass until the driver is aware of your presence. He probably has a deer crossing or dead deer causing them to be on the move during the day they are usually lying dead. Be especially alert for deer during harvest.

Prepare Bins Before Harvest to Maintain Grain Quality and Value

Tom Doml  UNL Extension Educator

With harvest quickly approaching, it’s time to think about cleaning grain storage equipment to limit insect problems and potential loss of crop value in storage. Grain harvesting equipment is essentially insect-free, but can become infested by storage insects, which originate in or on the equipment. New in 2005: A written fumigation application plan.

Clean and prep bins now can help ensure grain insects don’t diminish the value of your harvest.

Since new or recently fumigated bins can invade new grain from infested harvesting and handling equipment (combines, au- gers, etc.), it’s essential this equipment be well cleaned. Carefully remove all traces of old grain from combines, truck beds, grain carts, augers and any other equipment used for harvesting, transporting and handling grain. Even small amounts of moldy or insect-infested grain left in equipment can contaminate a bin of new grain. Then clean grain thoroughly, emptying spilled, cracked and broken grain and grain flour, along with the insects feeding on such material. A simple broom and shop vacuum are essential pieces of equipment in cleaning grain bins.

Remove old equipment, junk and clutter around grain bins, bins and rodents can hide. Make sure the bin is insect- and rodent-proofed by plugging holes, sealing bins, caulking and making general repairs. Grains spilled near the bin attracts insects and draws mice and rats. Clean up and dispose of any spilled grain several weeks before harvest if rats have tunneled under foundations, the wheat is at least one foot away from the building.

Tall weeds can harbor insects and provide cover for prey. Move the bin site to remove tall grass and weeds to reduce the potential for insect and rodent infestation. Move or re-grade the site so water readily drains away from bin foundations. One cannot always wait for the soil to dry before loading or unloading grain from bin sites. Make certain travel lanes have enough rock or gravel to bear the weight of heavy trucks or grain carts.

Landscaping should be maintained well away from grain storage facilities. If you carry over or buy old crop grain to mix with newly harvested grain for livestock feed, be sure to watch for insects in the incoming grain. If infested grain is purchased, store it away from the new crop and feed as soon as possible.

It is important to store sound, clean, dry grain. It may be advisable to screen out broken kernels, trash and fines to increase the quality of the final storage product. Eliminating trash will enhance fumigation, should this procedure be required later.

Stored grain insects cannot live on extremely dry grain (less than 10% moisture), however, it is impractical to reduce grain moisture much below minimum moisture levels necessary for long-term storage. Insect activity and reproduction are favored, by high grain moisture (14 percent or more), especial- ly when condensation and molds occur and fermentation raises temperature in the grain mass.

A bin of 19% moisture corn with a starting temperature of 75 F can lose a full market grade in about five days if the aeration system shuts down, allow- ing the grain to heat and deteriorate. Electrical system maintenance before harvest can prevent this from happening. Wiring for fans and other electrical components should be inspected for cor- rosion and cracked, frayed or broken insu- lation. Exposed wiring should be run through waterproof, dust-tight conduit. Avoid kinking or twisting and make sure all connections are secure.

Mice often nest in control boxes with their heated compartments. They can pull over in front of a combine, give the farmer time to see you. If the combine pulls over and gives you a place to pass, never try to pass a combine or other farm equipment in the road and never attempt to pass until the driver is aware of your presence. He probably has a deer crossing or dead deer causing them to be on the move during the day they are usually lying dead. Be especially alert for deer during harvest.

Grain cooling can be particularly im- portant in reducing insect reproduction since insects are cold-blooded and not active much below 55 F. Condensa- tion of moisture in the grain mass is prevented by slow cooling and gradual reduction of the gradient between the grain mass temperature and the outside ambient temperature.

Fans, heaters and ducts should be used for cooling or corrosion damage. A temperature drop of 2 F is the maximum drop that can occur with a given amount of heat and dust that may reduce operating efficiency and be sure all connections are tight to prevent air leaks that can reduce operating efficiency.

Once empty bins have been thor- oughly cleaned, a residual treatment may be applied to bin surfaces to protect incoming grain from insect infestation. Follow label instructions carefully. The following materials can be applied as residual sprays to bin surfaces: Cythium- rin and Chlorpyrifos (many brand names), Cythrin (Tempo SC Ultra), premium- grade malathion EC, Diatomaceous Earth (many brand names) or (S)-Me- thionine (Diacon II).

Note: Malathion is not effective for stored grain insects due to resistance. Methoxychlor is no longer labeled as a residual spray in stored grain facilities in Nebraska.

For bins with false floors, which are inaccessible for cleaning, Chloropiricon (Clor-O-Pic) and Aluminum phosphide (Furaneol, Phosphin, Phostoxin, Wecwelicid) and others can be used as “clean-out” fumigants prior to binning the grain. Other fumigants could be used on empty bins include magnesium phosphide and methyl bromide.

Caution! Fumigants are dangerous, restricted-use pesticides and may require gas masks and safety equipment. They can strip insulation from wires for nest material and their urine sometimes causes corrosion in electrical components. If rodent dam- age is found, clean and repair or re- manage and apply residual fumigant to other electrical equipment. Open knockouts in control boxes provide easy access for mice. Snap-in knock-out plugs can be purchased at hardware and home supply stores.

Grain temperature can be manipu- lated by managing the aeration system.

Scrap Tire Collection

Sept. 24 & 25

Individuals will have an oppor- tunity to get rid of scrap tires that may have accumulated around your place. Tires (without the wheels) will be accepted Sept. 24 & 25 from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. at the Shoemakers Truck Stop, 48th and West O Street, Lincoln. Participants have to count the number of tires you are dropping off. Sorry, this opportunity is for residents only – the grant specifically prohibits tire dealers.

The program is funded through a grant from the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality, administered by the Emerald Sanitary Improvement District.

Number 6. For more informa- tion, call 476-3560.

Prepared by

Nebraska Farm Safety Program

http://lancaster.unl.edu
On-site Wastewater Certification Trainings

On-site wastewater treatment systems, such as septic systems, treat about 25 percent of the wastewater that is generated in Nebraska. Properly installed and maintained on-site systems are essential to protecting our water quality and the environment.

Certification of on-site wastewater professionals is an important part of ensuring these systems are correctly installed. Every on-site wastewater treatment professional in Nebraska must pass the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ) certification exam for specific categories by December 31, 2005.

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University of Nebraska–Lincoln (UNL) Extension. If you are not accustomed to taking written tests, if you are not routinely familiar with Title 124 (the on-site rules and regulations), or if you are interested in general industry practices and the basic reasons why those practices are necessary; if you just feel uncomfortable with the idea of taking a written test about your business and your technical skills knowledge; if you have employed someone independently on a job site then a certification training course is for you and your business.

One course is scheduled for each of the categories of "pumper," "installer," and "inspector" at five locations across the state. Each course will be one day long and will require preregistration and a fee of $100 per person. Training materials, breaks and lunch are included.

Courses are sponsored by the UNL Extension in partnership with the Nebraska On-site Wastewater Association and the NDEQ. For more information or a registration brochure, go to http://wastewater.unl.edu or contact Jan Hysingstrom at 472-9614.

For more information on the NDEQ exam process, contact Mary Wilson at 471-4285.

Upcoming Traingings

INSPECTOR

Sept. 1 — Grand Island
Sept. 29 — North Platte
Oct. 27 — Mead
Nov. 15 — Norfolk

PUMPER

Sept. 27 — North Platte
Oct. 25 — Mead
Nov. 15 — Norfolk

INSTALLER

Sept. 17 — North Platte
Oct. 26 — Mead
Nov. 16 — Norfolk

Grapes • Oct. 13

Steve Gamet, UNL Viticulture Technician, will discuss topics such as variety selection, the types of fencing and equipment needed for grapes, the economics of grape production, insect, disease and wildlife control for grapes, and the marketing of grapes to wineries. Steve will also answer your questions regarding grape production.

Woody Florals • Nov. 10

What are woody florals? Plants commonly grown in Nebraska with decorative stems, such as curly willow or redtwig dogwood, that are harvested for use in decorative arrangements. This workshop will cover:

1) What happens to wastewater when it goes down the drain — unless it’s backed up into your house or surfaced in your yard. This clinic will cover:
2) How your actions — operation (O) and maintenance (M) — affect your system’s performance. Lincoln clinic will cover:

The Nebraska Statewide Acreage, the Nebraska Forest Service and University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension are cooperating to conduct a series of tree and landscape maintenance workshops across the state, including one at the UNL Agricultural Research Center near Mead on Sept. 29 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Registration begins at 8 a.m.

The workshops are designed for anyone who helps plant or care for trees and important green spaces such as parks, school grounds, college campuses, fairgrounds, golf courses, cemeteries, acreages, etc. Professional CEUs offered for Certified Arborists, Foresters and others involved in tree management. Cost includes lunch and educational materials: $35 if received by Sept. 16, $50 after. For more information or registration form, call 472-2971 or go to http://www.nebguide.org.

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Chill for Food Safety

Eggplant Casserole

1 large eggplant, sliced into one-inch rounds
1 pound ground lean beef
1 large onion, sliced into one-inch rounds
1 teaspoon salt
1 pound ground lean beef
1 large onion, sliced into one-inch rounds
1 teaspoon salt
1 green bell pepper, sliced into one-inch rounds
1 large onion, sliced into one-inch rounds
1 teaspoon salt
1 large onion, sliced into one-inch rounds
1 teaspoon salt

DIRECTIONS
Roast eggplant slices or fry until golden brown (see roasting method below). Brown meat along with onions; season with salt. In a medium-sized glass baking dish, place half tomato slices in one layer, then half of eggplant slices in another layer. Top with browned meat mixture and a final layer of eggplant. Pour tomato sauce over casserole. Arrange remaining slices of tomato and bell pepper slices on top. Bake in a 350 F oven, between approximately 20 minutes or until bubbling and bell peppers on top are tender. Let cool before serving.

ROASTING EGGPLANT
Spray cookie sheet with nonstick cooking spray. Place eggplant slices in a single layer on a cooking sheet, broil 5 to 6 minutes until golden brown, turn on other side, spray with nonstick cooking spray again and broil another 5 minutes.

The Underappreciated “Mad Apple”

Eggplant is considered a vegetable, but it is, in fact, a fruit containing many valuable nutrients. USDA nutrition facts show one-cup of boiled, eggplant contains 35 calories and 2.5 grams of fiber. It also can be counted on to deliver plenty of vitamins and minerals such as vitamins A, C, K, and folate, and the minerals potassium, phosphorus, magnesium, calcium, and iron.

Eggplant has many medical benefits, according to the National Cancer Institute. It contains phenolics, which potentially aid in preventing heart disease and Alzheimer’s. Its low glycemic index might also slow down the aging process. Researchers also found consuming blue and purple fruits and vegetables such as eggplant may be beneficial in reducing the risk of cancer. These foods potentially prevent the oxidation of cells that lead to cancer growth.

Unlike many vegetables and fruits, eggplant is not harmed by cooking for long periods of time, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Therefore it can be cooked in various ways with or without skin, grilled, roasted, stuffed, marinated, baked, sautéed, braised, steamed, fried, in a casserole, in soups or on brochettes. Eggplants can be served cold or hot, as a main dish or as an appetizer, pickle or dessert. To get a delicious eggplant dish and to enhance its flavor, pair it with homegrown tomatoes, onion, garlic, lemon juice and herbs.

Eggplants are available all year in stores and are in season in Nebraska in July, August, September and October.

Keep it cool” — check your refrigerator temperature to keep bacteria away — that’s the message U.S. Department of Agriculture is broadcasting as part of its national campaign to spread the word about ways to reduce cases of foodborne illness.

The refrigerator temperature should be 40 F or below. Recent studies show the risk of listeriosis, caused by the bacteria Listeria monocytogenes, could be reduced by two-thirds if foods are chilled to a safe temperature.

Use an Appliance or Refrigerator Thermometer to Check the Temperature

Most people assume the internal refrigerator temperature control dial is good enough. Only 30 percent of consumers have heard they should use a separate tool — a refrigerator thermometer — to check the temperature and only 20 percent of consumers say they actually use one, according to a recent national study.

Relying on the “built-in” refrigerator temperature control dial is not effective. Instead, use a separate refrigerator thermometer to check the internal refrigerator temperature and help keep food safe. If the refrigerator thermometer shows a temperature too high — above 40 F. then adjust the refrigerator’s control dial.

You can buy a refrigerator thermometer at many grocery, hardware or kitchen specialty stores.

Using a separate appliance or refrigerator thermometer is especially critical during power outages. Checking the temperature is the only way to determine whether you are too close to this zone.

Source: Partnership for Food Safety Education at http://www.fightbac.org/chill_facts.cfm
Conserve Water with Proper Irrigation

A careful homeowner avoids under- or overwatering their landscape. Most people unintentionally overwater — which needlessly wastes water and can lead to fungal diseases. An estimated 75–85 percent of plant problems result from overwatering. An irrigation system applying 1 inch of water to an average size lawn* which has already received sufficient rain wastes more than 3,000 gallons of water — a year’s supply of drinking water for 17 people.

**CHOOSE APPROPRIATE IRRIGATION SYSTEM** — Choose the appropriate irrigation system and then install and maintain it properly.

Drip and soaker hose irrigation systems best serve trees, shrubs and flowers. These systems place water on the soil surface in the immediate vicinity of a plant’s root system, reducing evaporation loss and irrigating only the desired plants. An added bonus of these systems is the reduction in foliar diseases which can accompany sprinklers. Sprinklers are generally used for turf. If you install a sprinkler system, the rate and uniformity of the application must be carefully designed. Plan emitter patterns to fit water output to the shape, soil infiltration rate and wind characteristics of your site. If you are using a conventional hose and sprinkler, remember the location and quality of the sprinkler head determines how efficiently water is delivered.

**ZONE WATERING** — Automatic irrigation systems can be designed to support zone watering. Zone watering means grouping plans with similar water and nutrient requirements in the same area of the landscape. Remember all shrubs, trees, flowers and turf in a given irrigation area or zone will receive the same amount of water. The water conserving value of buffalo grass will be defeated if it is in the same irrigation area as trees needing more water.

**AVOID RUN-OFF** — You want water on the plants, not down the gutter. Careful location of emitters may not be enough to minimize run-off. You may need to reshape land to reduce slopes that encourage water to move too quickly for soil to absorb it. The slope should direct water toward the plants that are high water users and away from hard surface areas such as driveways, walks and patios. Another way to reduce run-off is to incorporate compost into the soil to improve the infiltration rate and water-holding capacity of the soil.

**MINIMIZE EVAPORATION** — The best time to water is early morning between 4 and 10 a.m. Less water is lost by evaporation, and disease incidence is reduced when water is applied in the cooler parts of the day. Irrigation early in the day also allows the turf to cool down and maintain a consistently high soil moisture level. Avoid watering after midday and in hot weather when the water will be lost by evaporation, and disease incidence will increase. Irrigation at night may result in high rates of nitrogen in spring.

**AVOID OVERWATERING** — Closely observe landscape plants and the soil is the best way to determine whether watering is needed.

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### Estimated water requirement for maintained LAWNs in eastern Nebraska landscapes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Estimated inches per week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April/May</td>
<td>7.5-1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>1.0-1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>1.5-2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>1.0-1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept./Oct.</td>
<td>7.5-1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The low end of the range should be used for fine maintenance turf, while the upper end of the range reflects the amount of irrigation needed for high maintenance turf. High maintenance turf is defined as a lawn that is mowed at 2.5 inches or less and receives four or more fertilizer applications each year.

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### Estimated water requirement for WOODY PLANT and ANNUAL/PERENNIAL FLOWER BEDS in eastern Nebraska landscapes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Landscape zone</th>
<th>Types of plants associated with zone</th>
<th>Estimated inches per week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very low</td>
<td>Native and/or adapted plants with high drought-tolerance and minimal water use that require little or no supplemental water once established</td>
<td>0-0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Native and/or adapted plants with moderate drought-tolerance and moderate water use that require occasional supplemental water during periods of drought</td>
<td>0.25-0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Native/adapted or exotic plants with low drought-tolerance and moderate to high water use that require frequent supplemental water during and beyond drought periods</td>
<td>0.75-1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Mostly exotic plants with little or no drought tolerance that require consistently high soil moisture</td>
<td>1.25-2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Factors such as amount of sun/shade, wind protection, type of soil and amount of slope may require adjustments to estimated irrigation amounts.

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A healthy, dense stand of turf reduces weeds and recovers quickly from insect or disease injury. Cultural practices play a big role in the health of the lawn and need for pesticides. Lawns requiring frequent pesticide use — in particular herbicides — may have an underlying problem causing the repeated invasions of pests, such as weeds. Correcting the problem aids in a healthier lawn that can resist weed invasions and reduce the need for chemicals.

Good lawn care practices can also save water and prepare turf for dry summer months. Taller mowing and proper fertilization result in a deep and efficient root system which reduces the need for additional water.

**SOIL CONDITION** — Many lawns are growing on soils high in clay, compacted and poorly drained. Aerial and topdressing with organic matter or screened compost may improve these conditions. Another option is starting over and amending clay soils with compost. Thoroughly preparing soils before seeding or sodding is critical.

**GRASS SELECTION** — Make sure the proper grass species is used on the site. Full sun and sun/shade environments call for different grasses. Kentucky bluegrass is the primary species for lawns in full sun; in some cases mixed with perennial ryegrass and/or fine fescues. For shade areas, shade-tolerant Kentucky bluegrasses cultivars are commonly mixed with fine fescues.

**WATERING** — Proper watering includes irrigating as lawns need it and getting moisture down into the root zone. FERTILIZING — Proper fertilizing includes supplying adequate nutrients and proper soil pH. In particular, avoid excess or lack of nitrogen, fertilizer during cooler weather (especially early and late fall) and use controlled-release nitrogen fertilizers. Don’t apply high rates of nitrogen in spring. MOWING — Proper mowing has a major impact on lawn health. Many lawns are mowed too short, allowing weeds to invade and other problems to appear. Mow between 2- and 3-inches and mow often enough so no more than one-third of the leaf blade is removed in any one cutting. CORE AERATING — Manage lawn stress factors, such as thatch, shade and soil compaction. Core aerating on a regular basis is an excellent practice to consider, in particular for sodded lawns over clay soils. Spring and fall are good times to aerate. Top dressing the turf with screened compost after aerating will further help release these stress factors. Occasionally, problems will still come up requiring special management. Start by identifying the problem, then look at control options; both cultural and chemical. When using pesticides read, understand and follow all label directions.

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*Image by Ward Upham, K-State Research and Extension*
Tips to Reduce Yard Waste

Yard waste can account for 20 percent of the total waste stream. Nebraska regulations prohibit sending grass and leaves to landfills during the growing season, from April 1 to November 30. By reducing or removing this waste source, the Lancaster County landfill life will be extended by 3 to 5 years. Homeowners and grounds managers can reduce yard waste with these good landscape practices.

Appropriate Landscape Design

With appropriate landscape design and plant selection, the landscape waste stream can be significantly reduced, in turn reducing the overall waste stream. PLANT SELECTION — An ef- fective way to reduce yard waste by designing is by using landscape management based on anticipated use (turfs vs. shrubbbery), and becoming familiar with requiring less maintenance and water.

CHOOSE GROUNDCOVERS — The installation of perennial ground covers can be an attractive alternative to turf and result in a reduction in waste. TURF SELECTION — If turf is selected, choose dwarf or other slow growing varieties requiring less water. CHOOSE PERENNIALS — The use of perennials can give year-round color without the cost and waste of replacing annual plants.

MINIMIZE PRUNING NEEDS — Certain trees and shrubs, most often those slow growing or drought tolerant, need little or no pruning and produce less waste. Choose plants fitting the available space in order to minimize pruning needs.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
These University of Nebraska—Lincoln Extension Nebraska State University publications are available at the extension office or online at http://lancpubs.unl.edu:
• “Growing Annual Flowers” (G721)
• “Turf in the Landscape” (G1418)
• “Perennial Flowers for Water-Wise Gardeners” (G1214)
• “Woody Landscape Plants: Selection and Planting” (G1349)

Grasscycling Has Multiple Benefits

Grasscycling, or grass mulching, is the natural process of leaving clippings on the lawn when mowing. It is obvious how this practice can save resources such as landfill space, but there are additional benefits as well. The clippings quickly decompose, returning nutrients to the soil. Grasscycling, in conjunction with the practice of reducing lawn and fertilizer inputs, can reduce mowing time in addition to disposal costs. Grasscycling can be practiced on any healthy lawn as long as responsible turf management guidelines are followed. Proper mowing, watering, and fertilizing practices result in more moderate turf growth yet still produce a healthy, green lawn.

Grass clippings should be less than 30% of the leaf with each mowing. Recent trials confirmed that this practice saves one-third of the mowing time. Mowing more frequently is not as much extra work as you might think, because lawns mowed at the proper height cut more easily and quickly. Mowing infrequently damages the lawn by removing too much of the plant at one time. When mowed regularly, clippings filter down through the grass, decompose rapidly and recycle nutrients back into the soil.

The nitrogen contained in grass clippings removed from a lawn almost equals the recommended application rate for healthy turf (about five pounds of nitrogen per year per 1,000 square feet). While some of this nitrogen is lost through the decomposition of the clippings, leaving the clippings on the lawn by grasscycling can have the overall impact of reducing fertilization requirements by 15–25% or more. Similar savings on water use are possible.

Returning clippings to the lawn usually means mowing more than once a week during the few weeks of rapid growth in spring and early summer. Grass clippings should be less than one inch, or no more than one-third of the total plant height, to ensure rapid decomposition. Mowing more frequently is not as much extra work as you might think, because lawns mowed at the proper height cut more easily and quickly. Mowing infrequently damages the lawn by removing too much of the plant at one time. When mowed regularly, clippings filter down through the grass, decompose rapidly and recycle nutrients back into the soil.

The changing colors of Fall inevitably land in people’s yards. When there are many trees on the grounds, leaf clean-up can be a time-consuming chore. Composting leaves requires a home compost pile or the expense of collection and a means of transport to a compost center.

Another means of disposal is simply mowing the leaves with a rotary mower often enough to pulverize the leaves so they fall into the turf. Returning the leaves to the turf is not harmful to the grass if the mulching/mowing is done at appropriate times. It is useful to know when leaves are “mowed” regularly, not allowing them to lie on the turf more than three or four days. When oak leaves are predominant, it will be necessary to mow them into the turf later in the fall because they are held on the trees longer than most other trees. It is important to use a rotary mower that pulverizes the leaves well and that the leaves are dry when mowed. Leave the mower at the same height as you have been mowing the turf. Sharpening the mower blades and a slow movement with the mower will help to grind the leaves finer. It may be necessary to make as many as three or four passes over the area to grind the leaves fine enough. The finer the leaf particles, the more easily they fall into the turf, leaving grass blades exposed to the sunlight. The pulverized leaves will settle into the turf within a day or two, particularly if followed by rain. Take care that the pulverized leaves do not cover the grass blades entirely. Fall is a very important time for the turf to photosyn- thesize. Grass leaves can be carbohydrates, particularly under trees where the turf receives limited sunlight during the summer. It is suggested to add 1/2 pound nitrogen per 1,000 square feet in addition to the normal fall nitrogen fertilization to enhance decomposition of the tree leaves.

Mulching Tree Leaves into Lawns

The City of Lincoln Recycling Office
Phone: 441-8215
Web site: www.lincoln.ne.gov—keyword “compost”
Recycling Hotline: Information on Managing Yard Waste, backyard composting, and much more; LinGro compost and wood chip availability.

UNL Extension in Lancaster County
Web site: lancaster.unl.edu
Educational resources on backyard composting, grasscycling, lawn chemical use, and much more.

Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department
Phone: 441-8040
Disposal of Lawn Clippings, Complaints on Backyard Composting

e-mail: ravelmo@lancaster.ne.gov

Lincoln Solid Waste Management Association
Phone: 475-8376
Yard Waste Collection

Nebraska Department of Agriculture
Phone: 471-2394
Information on certification for private and commercial pesticide applicators

The Water Center
472-3305
Water Conservation

Yard Waste Disposal Options

Garden waste, weeds, brush and trees up to 1 inch in diameter can be deposited in the regular trash throughout the year. The following sources are available to Lincoln residents for grass and leaf materials.

39TH STREET TRANSFER STATION — For a fee, residents may dispose of grass and leaves at the 39th Street Transfer Station located approximately 1 mile north of 48th & Superior Streets. Grass and leaves must be free of garbage, litter and tree trimmings over 1-inch in diameter. Grass and leaves must be removed from plastic bags at the transfer station. Call 441-7738 for more information.

HIRING A LAWN CARE SERVICE — Include yard waste management in your lawn care package.

HIRING A PRIVATE HAUL-ER — Lincoln refuse haulers offer a separate weekly pick up of yard waste to be taken to a city-operated compost site for a fee. Contact your hauler for more information. Use approved paper lawn bags available from retailers, a cart provided by the hauler, or a clean, 32-gallon trash can with a lid. Grass and leaves in plastic bags are NOT allowed at the city’s compost site (plastic will not decompose in the compost mixture).

Grasscycling Saves Lawn Care Costs
• Fertilizer — Grass clippings can supply up to one-third of a lawn’s nitrogen fertilizer needs.
• Time — Recent trials confirmed leaving grass clippings on the lawn saves one-third of the mowing time.
• Water use — Clippings shade grass roots, cool the soil, return moisture, add moisture holding organic matter, and thereby reduce lawn watering needs.
• Soil health — Clippings decompose rapidly, feeding soil organisms that keep soil healthy and help prevent turf diseases.
• Thatch — Studies prove grass clippings do not cause thatch build-up.
Composting Turns Yard “Waste” Into Useful Material

Compost is a mixture of partially decomposed plant material and other organic wastes. It is used in the garden to amend soil and fertilize plants. Making and using compost recycles yard wastes and reduces the burden of organic trash on our landfills.

Make Your Own Compost

Almost all organic materials will decompose when returned to the soil. Composting the natural process by creating conditions conducive to decomposition.

Composting Materials

Yard wastes, such as leaves, grass clippings, straw and non-woody plant trimmings can be composted. The predominant organic waste in most backyard compost piles is leaves. Grass clippings can be composted, however, with proper lawn management, clippings do not need to be removed from the lawn (see article on opposite page). If clippings are used for compost, it is advisable to mix them with other yard wastes.

Branches, logs and twigs greater than 1/4 inch in diameter should be put through a shredder/chipper or cut up prior to placement in the compost pile. Kitchen wastes such as vegetable scraps, coffee grounds and eggshells may also be added. Certain organic materials should not be composted because they may pose a health hazard or create a nuisance. Do not add pet feces since they may transmit disease. Meat, bones, grease, whole eggs and dairy products should not be added because they can attract rodents. Large amounts of weeds with seeds or diseased plants may create problems.

Building the Compost Pile

A compost pile should be large enough to hold heat and small enough to admit air to its center. As a rule of thumb, the height or diameter of a pile should be three feet by three feet (one cubic yard) to hold heat. The maximum to allow to the center of the pile is five feet tall by five feet wide and as long as needed. The compost pile can initially be prepared in layers. This will facilitate decomposition by insuring proper mixing. To build a compost pile, start with a four to six inch layer of chopped brush or other coarse material set on top of the soil. This will let air circulate under the base of the pile.

Next, add a three to four inch layer of low carbon organic material such as grass clippings. This material should be damp when added to the pile. On top of this, add a four to six inch layer of high carbon organic material (leaves or garden waste) which should also be damp. On top of this, add a one-inch layer of garden soil or finished compost. This layer will introduce the microorganisms needed to break down the organic matter.

Mix the layers of high carbon organic matter, low carbon organic matter, and soil before adding another layer to the pile. This will ensure a speedy and even composting of the organic matter. Repeat the “layering” process until the composting bin is filled. Microorganisms can only use organic molecules dissolved in water. A moisture content of 40–60 percent provides adequate water without limiting aeration. The “squeeze” test is an easy way to gauge the moisture content of composting materials. The material should feel damp to the touch, with just a drop or two of liquid being released when the material is tightly squeezed in the hand.

Making a Compost Bin

To save space, hasten decomposition and keep the yard looking neat, contents of the compost pique in some sort of structure. Composting structures can be made from a variety of materials. Yard wastes can be composted either in simple holding units, where they will sit undisturbed for slow decomposition, or in turning bins which speeds up decomposition.

HOLDING UNITS — Holding units are simple containers used to store garden waste in an organized way until these materials break down. It only requires placing wastes into a pile or bin as they are generated. Decomposition can take from six months to two years. Since yard and garden wastes will be added continuously, the stage of decomposition will vary from the top to the bottom of each compost pile. Generally, the more finished compost will be found near the bottom of a pile and partially decomposed materials near the top.

TURNING UNITS — Turning units are typically a series of bins used for building and turning active compost piles. A turning unit allows wastes to be conveniently mixed for aeration on a regular basis. Turning systems require frequent maintenance and preparation of the wastes to be composted. Composting in these units is most efficiently done in batches. Materials should be stockpiled until there is enough to fill the bin. These bins should be monitored and turned after temperatures have peaked (90°–140°F) and begun to fall. This occurs four to seven days after pile construction. Turn a second time when the temperature peaks again, four to seven days later. Compost processed this way will be ready in six to eight weeks.

Location

The compost pile should be located close to where it will be used and yet not offend neighbors. The pile will do best where it is protected from drying winds.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension WebGuide “Garden Compost” (G810) publication is available at the Extension office or online at http://ianrpubs.unl.edu/horticulture/g810.htm

The City’s Composting Operation

The City of Lincoln maintains a 16-acre yard waste compost facility next to the Bluff Road Sanitary landfill (at Highway 77 and Bluff Road). This site receives about 20,000 tons of grass, leaves and brush each year. This is equivalent to about 2,000 garbage trucks dumping an eight month period.

Grass is mixed with leaves and wood chips to form windrows roughly six feet high and 12 feet wide. It takes about 12 months to complete the composting process. The material is screened to remove any debris and wood chips and placed in a curing pile. This finished material is then available to the public as LinGro Compost.

Since the program began in October 1992, the city has composted an estimated 171,300 tons of grass and leaves and wood chipped 201,865 tons of tree debris. For an average year the compost facility grinds about 5,000 tons of debris and accepts a new approximately 35,000 tons.

The diversion of grass, leaves and brush by the city for 12 years, has added almost 3½ years to the life of the sanitary landfill. If the program was discontinued and the grass waste was buried in the landfill, it would close in 2022 instead of the current projection date of 2026. Partial funding for the city’s composting program was provided by the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality, Waste Reduction and Recycling Program.

TO GET LINGRO COMPOST
A list of locations to pick up or purchase LinGro compost are listed on the next page.

Avoid Clopyralid Products in Compost

City officials urge residents to check to see if the herbicides used on their lawn contain clopyralid. If it does, the City would like residents to mulch their grass clippings rather than compost them. Alternative products are available that will kill undesirable weeds and not affect compost. Clopyralid has been discovered in compost operations in several states, including at The City of Lincoln’s composting facility. Testing of the City of Lincoln’s LinGro samples has found levels of clopyralid as high as 87 (ppb). Levels of clopyralid of 10 (ppb) or less can damage some plants. It is unlikely that damage will occur to sensitive plants if the compost is properly applied and mixed thoroughly with the soil (1” of compost into 6” of soil). “The clopyralid levels found in Lincoln’s compost are not known to present health risks to people or animals,” said Scott Holmes, Environmental Health Division Manager for the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department.

Additional information regarding clopyralid in compost can be obtained by contacting Gene Hanson with the City of Lincoln 441-7043 or checking the City’s Web site at www.lincoln.ne.gov – key word “compost.”
Using Compost and Wood Chips

In addition, to the multiple benefits to using compost and wood chips, doing so recycles yard wastes and reduces the burden of organic trash on our landfills.

**Adding Compost into Soil**

- The chief advantage of compost is its ability to improve soil structure. Good garden soil is loose and has a high water-holding capacity with adequate drainage. Adding compost to heavy clay soil improves drainage by improving soil structure. Compost also absorbs water and improves the water-holding capacity of sandy soils. To conserve moisture it is essential to have soil with good water-retention.
- In addition to improving soil structure, decomposing compost will slowly release plant nutrients. Compost will not provide all the nitrogen that highly productive soils require. Organic gardeners can supplement compost applications with manure to produce good yields without the addition of other fertilizers.
- Finished compost is dark brown, crumbly, and moist. Small pieces of leaves or other ingredients may be visible. If the compost contains many materials that have not broken down, it is only partly decomposed. Allow partly decomposed compost particles to break down further or separate them out before using compost around growing plants.
- Compost can be blended into soil mixes and is suitable for most outdoor planting projects. It is typically mixed with other ingredients such as peat moss, shredded bark, sand, or loamy topsoil when used as an outdoor planting mix. Mixing ratios vary; but 10 percent compost is considered to be a minimum, 30 percent optimum and 50 percent maximum in planting shrubs and trees.
- Compost has its greatest value when rotational directly into the soil. One cubic yard of compost covers 108 square feet at three inches, 216 at two inches, and 324 at one inch. The rule of thumb is to spread compost no more than one-third the depth of the rototiller. A one-inch layer of compost should be tilled in six inches. Making two or more passes with the tiller helps blend the compost with the topsoil and break up any clumps of material.

**Wood Chips as Mulch**

- Wood chip mulch is made from the chipping of tree and landscape vegetation trims. Mulch is material placed on the soil surface for the purpose of protecting the soil and plant roots. Not only do organic mulches add a decorative natural appearance to the landscape, they also provide many landscape benefits:
  - Helps retain soil moisture. Mulch helps soil retain moisture and reduce evaporation caused by wind and hot sun.
  - Reduces soil temperature extremes. An application of mulch acts as an insulating blanket to help avoid extreme temperature fluctuations.
  - Reduces weed growth. When the site has been properly prepared, mulching reduces weed growth.
  - Saves time in landscape maintenance. Place mulch under and between plants in tree and shrub beds, border plantings, hedges, rose beds and fruit orchards. By replacing grass with mulch, mowing and watering time is cut dramatically.

**Locations to Pick up or Purchase LinGro Compost**

- The City of Lincoln has limited quantities of organic compost, called LinGro, available to the public each spring at the N. 48th Street Transfer Station located at 5101 N. 48th Street. This material must be self-loaded and is available at no cost, on a first-come, first-serve basis. Information on loading pick-ups can be obtained by contacting the Lincoln Recycling Office, 441-8215.
- Delivery of compost within a 50-mile radius of the Bluff Road Landfill is available for a fee. Call the Lincoln Recycling Office at 441-8215 for more information.
- The following area firms have LinGro compost available for a fee: Campbell’s Nurseries and Garden Centers, General Excavation, Nebraska Nursery and Color Gardens, Pine Valley Nursery and Landscaping, PreCast Productions, Inc., Seeds of Life. Landscapers can obtain compost upon request.
- Information on LinGro Compost is also available through the City’s Web site: www.lincoln ne.gov – keyword “compost.”

**Free Woods Chips from City of Lincoln**

The City of Lincoln has limited quantities of wood chip mulch on a first-come, first-serve basis. Contact the Lincoln Recycling Office at 441-8215 for more information.
- Wood chip mulch is available at the N. 48th St. Transfer Station, located at 5101 N. 48th Street, (any vehicle) and the Bluff Road Landfill, located at Highway 77 and Bluff Road, (pickups and trailers only). There is a charge of $5 per cubic yard. City personnel will load woodchips into open pickups or trailers.
- Individuals may also self-load wood chips at no charge at the Recycling Drop-off Site (1/2 mile north of Superior Street on North 48th Street).
- Delivery of wood chips within a 50-mile radius of the Bluff Road Landfill is available for a fee.

**Compost Excellent Tool to Correct Soil Erosion**

- A recent study demonstrated the most effective approach to reduce storm water runoff and sediment erosion on slopes is to use a compost blanket approximately two inches thick.
- From April, 2004 through June 2005, the City of Lincoln and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) conducted an erosion study comparing compost to traditional approaches of straw blankets and silt fences.

**About the Study**

Six test plots were constructed on a slope of 3 to 1. This is a fairly steep slope that rises about 33 feet in a horizontal distance of one hundred feet. The amount of runoff during the study was tracked as well as the amount of run-off from each test plot during the period of the study.

Each test plot was seeded with a fescue-blend grass seed typically used by seeders contractors. The 36th and vigor of the established turf was greater in the compost amended plots than those with straw mats. The organic material in compost amended turf was almost five times more than it was for straw mat plots. This healthier turf is able to filter storm water and pollutants and hold soil better preventing sediment erosion.

**The Results**

This study demonstrated the use of compost as an effective approach to minimize soil erosion and stormwater run-off. In fact, the study showed applying a two-inch blanket of compost would reduce soil loss by 99.8% compared to bare soil. When compared to the traditional erosion control practice of using a straw mat and silt fence, the compost blanket decreased the amount of sediment runoff by 99% of the amount on the test plot by 81%. Use of the compost blanket increased water infiltration by up to 99.3% compared to a straw mat.

- In other words, only one percent of the rainfall ran off the compost blanket as opposed to 24% for the straw mat.
- Compost can also be incorporated into the soil. However, it is recommended a filter layer be established at the base of any slope to minimize soil erosion prior to grass seed germination. A silt fence can be used if incorporating the compost into the soil. To produce the healthiest soil possible, soil tests can be conducted to determine the optimum application of compost.

**How Compost Blankets Work**

When runoffs hit soil with the vegetation removed, they dislodge and detach soil particles. This is called “splash erosion.” If there is more rainfall than the ground can absorb, the resulting run-off carries the detached soil particles away. The compost blanket buffers the un-vegetated soil to help it receive moisture, increases water infiltration into the soil and prevents the runoff velocities that carry sediment away. After vegetation growth, the compost provides both nutrients and additional organic matter to hold moisture in the soil.

- An economic analysis conducted by UNL suggests a compost blanket would cost about five percent more than the traditional approach of using straw mats and silt fences. The cost analysis does not include additional seeding likely to be required in subsequent years for non-compost amended soils.

**For More Information**

To obtain more information on the use of compost for erosion control projects, contact the Lower Platte South Natural Resource District, 476-2729, or the City of Lincoln Watershed Management Division, 441-4959 or Solid Waste Operations, 441-7043.
President’s Notes — Janet’s Jargon

Fall is upon us, a colorful time of year. This year I am really looking forward to the season because we have a family reunion scheduled. At the moment, I am in chaos mode wondering if I will get all the summer chores removed.Fracture mode usually begins a week prior to the event. I am thankful each family will do their own accommodations since we have grown so numerous over the last few years. More youthful members have taken on activity planning for all ages to cover this three day long celebration. Attendance is about 90 percent, a strong indicator of how much fun we have. I look forward to seeing the little kids get to know each other better, the story telling, never-ending jokes and so much laughter we do together. Really, the dust I miss and the food I forget to wash makes a bit of difference. I hope each of you can experience a times like this with your family.

FCE State Convention is Sept. 19 and 20 in Burwell.

Bring collections of left over yarn, knitting needles, crochet hook and threads, simple hat and sweater patterns, school supplies. You may leave them at the extension office and we will get it delivered.

September is re-organization time for FCE clubs. If you recruit a new member your state and national dues are waived. I suggest a club goal to bring in two new members per club for the 2006-2007 year. Our county needs vice-president and treasurer offices to be filled for next year. The duties are easy and the people to work with are very helpful; it is a rewarding experience.

Our next council meeting is Sept. 26 at 1 p.m.

Busy Bees and 4-H'ers are hosts for the FCE community program.

Oct. 17 at 6:30 p.m. Salt Creek Circle and Emerald will have an annual FCE Achievement Night.

Ripley will talk about the annual raffle raised $300 for the FCE scholarship.

(Left) Retired Extension Educator Twyla Lindolph shared countless quilts, quilted pillows, quilted vests and more during her presentation “Fun with Quilting.”

(Right) Gaylen Hommes and UNL Culinary Science students demonstrated easy and elegant garnish ideas as part of “Fun with Garnishes.”

by Lorene Bates, UNT Extension Educator

Kids Learning from Mistakes Is Not Easy for Parents

Parents have only a few years to prepare their children for the big world they are going to have to face. Armoring parents have to understand the importance of teaching children the consequences of their actions, both positive and negative. While parents may sometimes feel frustrated because their children are making mistakes, it is important to remember that mistakes are a part of life and are expected.

FCE News & Events

FCE Achievement Night, Oct. 17

The 2005 FCE Achievement Night event will be Monday, Oct. 17 starting with dinner at 6:30 p.m. Everyone is asked to bring canned food or a donation for the food bank for FCE’s annual collection. The program will be on the Restoration of the State Capitol by Bob Ripley, architect with the State Building Division, Members will be recognized for years of membership. Call Pam at 441-7180 if you plan to attend.

Other Upcoming Fall Dates

• State FCE Council meeting, Sept. 19-20, Burwell
• FCE Dues to State Treasurer, Oct.
• National FCE Week, Oct. 9-15

Children are very helpful; it is a rewarding experience. I am thankful each family will do their own accommodations since we have grown so numerous over the last few years. More youthful members have taken on activity planning for all ages to cover this three day long celebration. Attendance is about 90 percent, a strong indicator of how much fun we have. I look forward to seeing the little kids get to know each other better, the story telling, never-ending jokes and so much laughter we do together. Really, the dust I miss and the food I forget to wash makes a bit of difference. I hope each of you can experience a times like this with your family.
John & Lori Bruss

Lancaster County 4-H is proud to announce John and Lori Bruss as co-leaders of this year’s August “Heart of 4-H Award” in recognition of outstanding volunteer service. The Bruss have been co-leaders of the Happy Go Lucky club, the largest 4-H club in Lancaster County (currently with 52 members), for three years. Prior to that, they were parent volunteers. They are also active on the Livestock VIPs Committee.

Happy Go Lucky is mainly a livestock club, but in the past few years members have increased participation in horticulture and poultry projects. The club holds an annual club livestock show prior to the county fair to gain practice showing livestock. As a community service project, the club has adopted a section of Highway 43 near Bennet to pick up litter.

4-H staff member Deanna Karmazin says, “They bring a lot of enthusiasm and energy to the livestock program. Because of their tireless efforts and hard work ethic, the recent leadership transition of the Happy Go Lucky club went smoothly.”

“We like being 4-H volunteers because it is rewarding to see the kids show and exhibit there projects with pride and enthusiasm,” said Lori. “It is a great feeling to think that we see the kids show and exhibit there projects with pride and enthusiasm,” said Lori. “It is a great feeling to think that we indeed the heart of 4-H!”

Seth Davidson Attends Volunteer National 4-H Shooting Sports Invitational

Lancaster County 4-H member Seth Davidon (pictured second from right) was part of the Nebraska shotgun team which attended the National 4-H Shooting Sports Invitational held June 29-July 4 at Columbia, Mo. The team placed 5th overall (2nd in trap, 5th in sporting clays and 8th in skeet).

Individually, Seth placed 13th overall (8th in trap and 14th in sporting clays). Seth also participated in the Conshorus State Games High School Trap and received high overall medal.

Congratulations Seth!

4-H Strategic Plan Survey — Share Your Opinion!

Nebraska 4-H is now in the process of developing goals for the next five years. Please give your feedback about what’s important to you by filling out an online survey at http://4h.unl.edu. Lancaster County 4-H’ers are encouraged to share their input at http://4h.unl.edu.

The survey takes about 10 minutes to complete. If you have questions, please call the State 4-H Office at 472-2805, or e-mail: kldol@unl.edu.

The county fair would not be possible without the dedicated work of hundreds of volunteers. Lancaster County Agricultural Society and Lancaster County 4-H thank all of the people who donated their time and talents to help make this community event a success!

Thank You to Volunteers

COUNTY FAIR 4-H & FFA NEWS

NEBLINE
http://lancaster.unl.edu Page 8 September 2005

4-H & Youth

4-H Thanks Sponsors

Lancaster County 4-H would like to thank all of the businesses, organizations and individuals that sponsored 4-H events, activities, programs and trophies at this year’s county fair. This support enhances the educational experience of the 4-H youth who participate in the fair.

4-H Angus
4-H Citizenship Washington Focus Group
4-H Council
4-H Teen Council
A1 Insulation
Want-To-Own Anderson Ford
John Anderson Family Animal Haven Pet Hospital Anonymity
Jim & Cindy Bauman

For 4-H county fair results and photos, go to http://lancaster.unl.edu/4H/Fair. Congratulations to all participants!

4-H & Youth

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The 2005 Fonner Park State 4-H Horse Exposition was held July 17–21 at Grand Island. Below are the top Lancaster County 4-H placings. Complete results are online at http://unl.edu/4h.unl.edu/horseshow

4-H Award Nomination Due Oct. 31
Nominations are needed for the following awards. Application forms are available at the extension office.

4-H Meritorious Service — presented to individuals or organizations which have exhibited consistent and strong support of the 4-H program. 4-H members are not eligible.

Outstanding 4-H Member — presented to an individual who has excelled in their involvement with the 4-H program and are 1/4 years of age or older. The basis for selection apprises the variety and depth of 4-H activities.

1 Dare You Youth Leadership Award — awarded on behalf of the American Youth Foundation (AYF) to high school juniors or seniors who strive to achieve their personal best and make a positive difference in their community. Two 4-H members will be selected from Lancaster County. Lancaster County 4-H Council provides award recipients with a hardbound copy of William H. Danforth’s book, “1 Dare You.” Winners also receive a $300 scholarship to attend one of AYF’s national 7-day Leadership Conferences.

4-H Scholarships Due Oct. 31
The Lancaster County 4-H program offers a variety of scholarships. Deadline is Oct. 31. Information and applications are available at the extension office or online at http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h. If you have questions, contact Deanna Karmazin at 441-7180.

COLLEGE
The following college scholarships for the 2006-07 school year are available to high school seniors active in 4-H:

4-H Council — awards six $500 scholarships.
Lincoln Center Kiwanis — awards two $2,000 scholarships.
Teen Council — awards two scholarships to 4-H’ers who are active in Teen Council and help with at least one major fundraiser.
Lane Scholarship — awards one $200 scholarship to a 4-H’er attending Raymond Central High School.

4-H CAMP
The following scholarship goes toward attending 4-H summer camp(s): Joyce Vaile Memorial Scholarship — awards one $100 scholarship to a youth age 8-14. Applicants should currently be, or have been, enrolled in at least one sewing project.

State Horse Expo Results
The 78th Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Youth Livestock Exposition will be held Sept. 27-Oct. 2 at the Qwest Center in Omaha. More than 2,000 4-H families from an eight-state area participate in the Expo. For more information and complete schedule, go to http://www.akssarben.org.

**Change to Health Certificates**
Please note this year Ak-Sar-Ben will require 15-day health certificates for all animals!

**Partial Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sep. 25</td>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
<td>Sheep Showmanship, Exhibit Hall Arena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep. 26</td>
<td>9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Breeding Heifers Show, New Arena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12:00 noon</td>
<td>Dairy Show, Beef Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 p.m.</td>
<td>Market Sheep, Small Animal Pavilion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 p.m.</td>
<td>Market Goat, Market Lamb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 p.m.</td>
<td>First Round of Quiz Bowl Competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 p.m.</td>
<td>(Following Lamb Show) Market Swine Showmanship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Complete 4-H schedule, facts, and results, go to**
http://4h.unl.edu/programs/statefair

**NEBRASKA STATE FAIR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 25</td>
<td>7:30-10 a.m.</td>
<td>State Fair 4-H Static Entry Day, Exhibit Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 27</td>
<td>9 a.m.</td>
<td>4-H Exhibit Hall Opens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 30</td>
<td>9 a.m.</td>
<td>4-H Exhibit Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 31</td>
<td>12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Discover 4-H: Free Fun Activities for Kids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 p.m.</td>
<td>Showmanship, Exhibit Hall Arena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep. 7</td>
<td>9 a.m.</td>
<td>State Public Speaking Contest, Youth Complex Demo Rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep. 8</td>
<td>9 a.m.</td>
<td>Poultry Show, Small Animal Pavilion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep. 11</td>
<td>6 p.m.</td>
<td>Swine Showmanship, Swine Arena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 p.m.</td>
<td>Showmanship, Exhibit Hall Arena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep. 12</td>
<td>1 p.m.</td>
<td>State Public Speaking Contest, Youth Complex Demo Rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12:00 noon</td>
<td>Meat Goat Show</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 p.m.</td>
<td>4-H Alumni Event, Exhibit Hall</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 p.m.</td>
<td>Swine Showmanship, Swine Arena</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 p.m.</td>
<td>Governor’s Show, New Arena</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep. 13</td>
<td>9 a.m.</td>
<td>Breeding Heifers Show, New Arena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12:00 noon</td>
<td>Dairy Show, Beef Area</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>(Following Dairy Show) Feeder Calf Show</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 1</td>
<td>3 p.m.</td>
<td>Market Beef Show</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 2</td>
<td>6 p.m.</td>
<td>Market Lamb Show</td>
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<td></td>
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**Discount State Fair Advance Adult Gate tickets for 4-H’ers and their family members age 13 and up) are available at the extension office for $2.75 apiece. Gate price for children age 6-12 is $2 and free for children age 5 and under. Parking tickets are not available through extension.**

**Community Service Corner**
Havon Manor in Havelock and College View is re-requesting 4-H members to bring their fair exhibits to help celebrate Assisted Living Week, Sept. 11-17. The theme this year is “A Fair to Remember.” For more information, contact Betty Maguire at Havelock location at 464-4017 and for the College View location contact Mary Kenny at 484-7442. This is an excellent community service opportunity.
Volunteering is one of the most wide-spread activities in American society, one which has been a historical tradition. During the current era, over half of the American population regularly becomes involved in some sort of volunteer activity during the course of the year. According to U.S. Census, this amounts to over 100 million people donating time in excess of 19 billion hours a year, valued at over $15 billion per year.

Some people have argued volunteerism is dead, simply because people in modern time are busier with everyday tasks, because of the increased number of single-parent households and cross country mobility. But it’s not true. People still find time to volunteer. Volunteers come from all age groups, educational backgrounds, income levels, genders and type of employment. Almost everyone can be looked upon as a potential volunteer.

Understanding Why People Volunteer
Volunteers become involved for a variety of reasons. The ten most popular reasons are:
1. They desire to serve others.
2. They have a sense of pride in helping.
3. They want to make a difference.
4. They want to help someone in need.
5. They were asked to volunteer.
6. They want to share their special gifts and talents.
7. They want to feel good about themselves.
8. They are looking for a cause to believe in.
9. They get to make friends.
10. They volunteer because it is exciting for them.

Other reasons often cited include:
• Interest in the work or activity.
• Wanted to learn and gain experience.
• Had a lot of free time.
• Know someone who was involved.
• Religious concerns.

Why People Do Not Volunteer
Ever wonder why people don’t volunteer? Blue Moon Grant Consulting conducted a survey and came up with the following reasons:
• Because no one asked me.
• The work might be too physically demanding.
• I do not have enough time.
• They do not have child care.
• I might have to acquire some financial expenses, such as meals and parking fees.
• I am afraid I won’t know how to operate equipment.

Source: “Managing A Nonprofit: How To Write Winning Grant Proposals, Work With Boards, and Build a Funding Program,” by John Reindle with Tom Dowd, 2002

Volunteer Program Design
In order to run a successful volunteer program, you must understand it requires the same type of managerial effort any other program operation would require. Before your agency starts recruiting volunteers, you have to realize why your agency wishes to utilize volunteers and what the benefits and problems are in the use of volunteer utilization.

Possible benefits include:
• Delivery of services at a reduced cost.
• Access to additional exper- tise and technical assistance.
• Better contact with the community/public recognition.
• Better assistance to clients.

Possible disadvantages:
• Lack of control and reliability of volunteers.
• Time demands of volunteer management and supervision.
• Potentially negative impact on paid jobs.
• Difficulty in recruiting enough qualified volunteers.

There are six basic strategies in the design and running of an effective volunteer program:

Job Development and Design
The work must be meaningful and significant, both to the agency and to the clientele. The work must be needed and will be interest- ing to someone. This means your volunteer job must have a good fit with the volun- teer can work to accomplish and can feel good about hav- ing achieved. Thus, volun- teers need clearly defined jobs that have been thoughtfully programmed.

The keys to recruiting, motivating and supervis- ing a volunteer are built into the job description. The job description is your planning tool to help your volunteers understand the results to be accomplished, what tasks are involved, what skills are required and other important details about the job.

Recruitment
The first rule of recruiting volunteers is to make every prospective volunteer feel special. When people feel wanted or needed, they are more likely to respond to your appeal for help, even when they are already busy. Be en- thusiastic when asking people to volunteer.

When your agency needs a large number of volunteers for a short period of time (as in a special event), you may need to use basic methods for dissemination of information about the program: brochures; posters; speaker’s bureaus; notices in periodic- al; word of mouth.

Sometimes your agency is attempting to recruit target groups of volunteers already familiar with your agency or with the problem you are addressing. One of the most effective recruitment tech- niques is having your staff or volunteers ask their friends and acquaintances to volun- teer.

Screening and Interviewing
Guiding the entire pro- cess as an interview must be an idea you are looking for the best qualified person to fill the job. The interview ques- tions should reflect the job for which you are conducting the interview. The interview could be an “oral test” or a “friendly chat” depending on the needs of the job. The main point in interview- ing is to listen to what the candidate has to say and allow him/her to answer questions free of interruption. Remember, the volun- teer is also checking you and your agency.

Orientation and Training
Orientation involves giving volunteers an adequate background on the agency, its operation and its procedures.
A good orientation program will provide the fol- lowing types of information: description and history of the organization; description of the overall programs and clientele of the organization; the sketch of organizational structure; orientation to the facilities; knowledge of gen- eral policies and procedures; description of volunteer management system.
On the other hand, training is the process of instructing volunteers in the specific job-related skills. It is designed to tell the volunteer: how they are supposed to do their job; what to do in an emergency or unforeseen situation arises.

Supervision
Supervision of volunteers is not only an absorp- tion of any other type of staff for an agency. It requires the same care and skills for inter- personal relations. Volunteers must be treated as individuals – their motivations are different and their styles are different. The supervisor must be able to accommodate individual variations.

Volunteers can suffer from burnout just like any staff member. Rotate volun- teer positions when time and conditions change.

Recognition
Volunteer recognition is a very important process of rewarding and motivating volunteers who contributed their time and energy to the organization. Remember to send a thank-you card or note, and not just when their job is completed. People need to hear how much they are ap- preciated at other times.

There are two basic types of volunteer recognition efforts: awards (certificates, pins, group photographs, T-shirts, caps, and other small gifts) and events (lunches and dinners, picnics, parties and celebrations, field trips, National Volunteer Week celebration, etc.).

Source: “Managing A Nonprofit” by John Reindle with Tom Dowd

The Grantsmanship Training Program will be offered to the Lincoln community Sept. 12-16 at The Lancaster Extension Education Center. The intensive, hands-on workshop covers all aspects of researching grants, writing proposals and negotiating with funding sources.

Designed for both novice and advanced grant seekers, the program participants are given follow-up services, including newsletters for a full year follow- ing training. To maximize personal attention, the group size for the five-day program is limited to 30 participants. The cost of the training program is $825.

Since 1997, University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension has Hosted The Grantsmanship Training Program. Approximately 150 individuals representing various Lincoln agencies, surrounding communities and states have participated.

To apply for a scholarship or register, contact The Grantsmanship Center at 800- 421-9512 or online at http://www.tgci.com. For local information, call Gary C. Bergman, University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension at 441-7180.

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Safety Course for Drivers 50 & Up, Sept. 7 & 8

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County is co-sponsoring a 55 Alive! Driver Safety Course on Wednesday, Sept. 7 and Thursday, Sept. 8, 12:30–4:30 p.m. Cost is $10 payable at the first class. Call 441-7180 to register.

The AARP Driver Safety Program is the nation’s first and largest classroom driver refresher course especially designed for motorists age 50 and older.

Drivers aged 55 and over, compared with drivers aged 30–54, are involved in more accidents per mile driven. The number of accidents per mile rises sharply at about age 75.

The eight-hour course is taught in two, 4-hour sessions spanning two days. The course helps drivers refine existing skills and develop safe, defensive driving techniques. AARP members and non-members alike may take the course.

There are no tests.

The AARP Driver Safety Program course covers the following topics:

- Vision and hearing changes
- Effects of medication
- Reaction time changes
- Left turns and other right-of-way situations
- New laws and how they affect you
- Hazardous driving situations

Research shows a direct relationship between the percentage of drivers involved in traffic accidents and the frequency of certain medical conditions. For example, the gradual failure of sensory acuity associated with aging reduces the quantity and accuracy of information capable of being processed. This reduces the ability of the individual to respond or react to his/her environment with speed and judgement current traffic often requires.

By being aware of these normal age-related changes and learning how they affect driving, older motorists can compensate for them and become better drivers.

“Make it Yourself with Wool” Entries Due Oct. 31

The 2005 “Make It Yourself with Wool” will feature one state contest instead of district changes that can occur in older motorists and the physiological problems experienced by many motorists alike may take the course.

There are no tests.

The AARP Driver Safety Program course covers the following topics:

- Vision and hearing changes
- Effects of medication
- Reaction time changes
- Left turns and other right-of-way situations
- New laws and how they affect you
- Hazardous driving situations

Research shows a direct link between the kinds of driving problems experienced by older motorists and the physical changes that can occur in all older persons. The loss of vision, hearing and physical strength is gradual and can go virtually unnoticed until older drivers are faced with a driving emergency they are no longer able to handle.

For example, the gradual failure of sensory acuity associated with aging reduces the quantity and accuracy of information capable of being processed. This reduces the ability of the individual to respond or react to his/her environment with speed and judgement current traffic often requires.

By being aware of these normal age-related changes and learning how they affect driving, older motorists can compensate for them and become better drivers.

This Nebraska Student Hails the Husker Experience

Jill Wieskamp, a junior majoring in Spanish and secondary education at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln and a Norris High graduate, lives and loves the Nebraska experience. She is involved in her sorority, she’s a leader in the Navigators program, and even studied abroad last summer. A future teacher, Wieskamp, gets it. “It’s a big campus involved – you can’t help but activity that fits you. And like till you are here – every

FOR EXPERIENCING MORE There is no place like Nebraska.
Lancaster County Fair Keeps Growing

The Lancaster County Fair has seen rapid growth since moving to the Lancaster Event Center in 2001. This year, the trend continued with increased exhibit entries and overall attendance.

- 4-H at the County Fair shares in the growth.
  - A total of 4,331 4-H exhibits were showcased at this year’s fair (includes static exhibits, animals and contest entries — does not include Clover Kids exhibits)
  - 4-H Horse Show -- entries in the five-day 4-H Horse Show were up significantly and more horse stalls were added to accommodate the increase.
  - 4-H Beef Cattle and Dairy Cattle Shows -- entries nearly doubled in past year and stalling space had to be reconfigured.
  - 4-H Poultry Show -- entries increased 21% in past year; 1,050% in five years!

Jay Wilkinson, member of the Fair Board and Extension Board helped construct more poultry pens.

“The increase in exhibits caused unexpected hassles, but it’s a good problem to have,” he said.

4-H staff member Tracy Kalm said, “I’m constantly amazed at the quality and creativity of the projects entered by 4-H youth.”

“Lancaster County 4-H would like to extend thanks to all the volunteers who help make the county fair a successful learning experience for youth,” said 4-H staff member Gary Bergman. “Adults and youth working together is a foundation of youth development.”

This year, a second exhibitors breakfast was added and nearly 1,000 meals served! Norm Nicholson of Countryside Energy said, “We just want to support the 4-H and FFA youth in every way we can. Every year, the breakfast just gets bigger and bigger.”

See page 8 for a complete list of 4-H sponsors.

Cotton Clover Candy at the 4-H Corner
Stop concession stand sold well.

Proper grooming is an essential part of showing animals.

Can You Guess It?

Did you guess it? Find out at http://lancaster.unl.edu

Prizes!
4-H'ers will share completed projects!

Q & A!

Tuesday, Sept. 20
6–7:30pm
Lancaster Extension Education Center
444 Cherry Creek Road, Lincoln

Lancaster County 4-H kicks off the 4-H year with an opportunity for youth and their families to discover 4-H!

Discover all the exciting opportunities 4-H can offer you!

4-H is open to all youth ages 5-18

Four ways to get involved:
• Join an existing 4-H club
• Help form a new 4-H club
• Be an independent member
• Participate in 4-H activities such as camps

Find out more about 4-H at http://lancaster.unl.edu/