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**Spending YOUR Calorie Salary**

**Tips for Using MyPyramid**

Alice Hennenman, MS, RD
University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County

USA Today’s MyPyramid symbolizes a simple, personalized approach to remind consumers to make healthy food choices and to be active every day.

Think of MyPyramid recommendations as a “calorie-salary.” Plan calories the same as major expenses—a car, house, vacation, etc. Five “budgeting” steps follow...

**Step 1. Stay Within Your Budget**

100 extra calories per day can add up to a 10 pound weight gain in one year! Learn how much and what to eat for YOUR calorie level at MyPyramid.gov — calculation results are personalized.

Balance food calories with physical activity level. Physical activity is recommended for MOST days of the week. Adult recommendations vary by goal:

- Reduce risk of chronic disease: 30 minutes of moderate intensity.
- Manage weight and prevent weight gain: 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity.
- Sustain a weight loss: 60 to 90 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity.

Children and teen recommendations are at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity a day or most days.

**Step 2. Consider “True Cost” of Poor Nutrition**

Foods that do little to meet nutrient needs — even if they’re within your calorie salary — can put our health AND MONEY at risk. “Each year, over $33 billion in medical costs and $9 billion in lost productivity due to heart disease, cancer, stroke and diabetes are attributed to diet.”

Healthy diets may help eliminate cost of medications for some people. Foods may contain additional substances and provide benefits not available from fortified foods, nutrient supplements and vitamin/mineral pills. Many interactions occur among food constituents (such as fiber, nutrients and phytochemicals) that affect disease risk.

The “Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension” clinical study (DASH Eating Plan) showed:

- Fruit and vegetable consumption lowers blood pressure...
- Adding low-fat, high-calcium foods to a diet high in fruits and vegetables further lowers blood pressure, and...

**Step 3. Choose the Most Value for Calorie Salary**

Make certain you get enough of these food groups:

- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Whole grains
- Dairy products

**Fruits**

Eat 2 cups of fruits per day (for a 2,000 calorie diet). Select fresh, frozen, canned or dried fruit, rather than drinking fruit juice, for most of your fruit choices.

Note this equivalent: ½ cup dried fruit = ½ cup fruit

**Vegetables**

Eat 2½ cups of raw or cooked vegetables per day (for a 2,000 calorie diet). Select from all five vegetable SUB-GROUPS several times a week:

- Dark green vegetables
- Orange vegetables
- Legumes
- Starchy vegetables
- Other vegetables

Note this equivalent: 2 cups raw leafy greens = 1 cup of vegetables.

**Grains**

Eat six “ounce-equivalents” of grain products daily (for a 2,000 calorie diet):

- Make at least half of grains whole grain.
- The rest of grains should come from enriched or whole grain products.

In the grains food group, a “1 ounce-equivalent” is the amount of a food counted as equal to a 1 ounce slice of bread. Ounce-equivalents:

- 1 slice bread
- 1 cup ready-to-eat cereal
- ½ cup cooked pasta, rice or cereal

**Dairy Products**

Consume 3 cups per day of fat-free or low-fat milk or equivalent milk products. For children ages 2 to 8, it’s 2 cups per day.

Equivalent:

- 6 ounces milk (1 cup)
- 1 cup yogurt
- ½ ounce natural or 2 ounces process cheese

**Other Food Groups**

Meat & Beans. Choose lean meats and poultry. Bake, broil or grill it. And vary your protein choices — with more fish, beans, peas, nuts, and seeds. Eat 5½ ounces (or equivalent) of lean meat, poultry or fish (for a 2,000 calorie diet).

Ounce-equivalents:

- ½ oz. meat, poultry or fish
- ¼ cup cooked dry beans or peas
- 1 tablespoon peanut butter
- 1 egg
- ½ oz. nuts or seeds

**Step 4. Spend on “Extras” After the Necessities are Purchased**

Depending on the foods you choose, you may be able to spend more calories than the amount required to meet your nutrient needs. These calories are the “extras” that can be used on luxuries like added fats, added sugars and alcohol; on more food from any food group. They are your “extra” or “discretionary” calories.

Total “extra” calories range from about 100 to 700 calories. YOUR level depends on age, gender and activity level. Learn more on eating for YOUR calorie & activity level at MyPyramid.gov.

MyPyramid’s recommended foods have the least amount of fat (especially solid fat) and no added sugar. Most solid fats and all added sugar are “extra” or “discretionary.” Added sugars are sugars and syrups added to foods during processing or preparation. Added sugars do not include naturally occurring sugars such as those which occur in milk and fruits.

For many people, their “extra” or “discretionary” calorie allowance is totally used by the foods they choose in each food group, such as higher fat forms of foods or sweetened products.

**Step 5. Plan a Budget for YOU**

Fine-tune what you’re already eating to meet MyPyramid guidelines. As you “budget,” choose foods that taste good as well as are good for you! Spend your “calorie salary” wisely!


For more information visit the MyPyramid website at MyPyramid.gov.
The Nebraska Horticulture Newsletter

Sign Up for Free E-mail Horticulture Newsletter

HortUpdate is a FREE e-mail newsletter from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension which provides timely information to the lawn and landscape industry. This e-mail includes current lawn and landscape problems with control recommendations and a seasonal ‘To Do’ list. To subscribe, go to http://extensionhorticulture.unl.edu and submit request.

Celosia ‘Fresh Look Gold’

Correctly named, these plants look fresh in September as they did when planted in the spring. ‘Fresh Look Gold’ plants are characterized with bright golden plumes that remain colorful all season, not “browning” with maturity. Since the plumes remain attractive, there is no reason to deadhead and no pest problems are expected, thus ‘Fresh Look Gold’ needs little maintenance in a sunny garden. It is a care-free annual useful in formal or informal gardens. The golden plumes can be woven into a garden border like a living tapestry because the plumes have a soft-layered texture. ‘Fresh Look Gold’ proved to be heat, humidity and rain tolerant in AAS Trials across North America. Plants will grow to a height of 7 to 8 feet. This celosia is one of the best annuals for season-long performance.

Petunia ‘Opera Supreme Pink Morn’

Iridescent pink blooms are the unique feature of this vigorous trailing petunia. A silvery shine causes blooms to shimmer, capturing an admirer's attention from a distance. The 2.5-inch flowers are pink, shading to creamy white in the center, with a yellow throat. ‘Opera Supreme Pink Morn’ plants have many qualities that every gardener wants to find. Plants are continuous blooming. Gardeners can relax and let the plants do what comes naturally, flower! The hybrid plants are capable of spreading three feet in sunny locations. Plants attain a height of only 4 to 6 inches. ‘Opera Supreme Pink Morn’ can be relied on for exceptional garden performance without pruning or deadheading. Less work enables gardeners more leisure time in the garden.

Vinca ‘Pacifica Burgundy Halo’

‘Pacifica Burgundy Halo’ is the first vinca with a burgundy halo surrounding a large white center. This bicolor bloom is a vivid contrast, exceptionally visible in an annual garden. Early flowering with a well balanced plant form, ‘Pacifica Burgundy Halo’ is highly recommended for spring or summer plantings. With proven heat and drought tolerance, the garden performance of ‘Pacifica Burgundy Halo’ is assured. In a full sun garden location, these vinca plants will reach a foot tall and wide when mature. Due to the ease of growing and continuous flowering, ‘Pacifica Burgundy Halo’ is perfectly suitable for any garden or patio planters that receive sun. Because Vinca needs less water than other annuals, planting ‘Pacifica Burgundy Halo’ in containers makes fewer trips with the hose to water. Gardeners can rely on ‘Pacifica Burgundy Halo’ to provide color all summer without pinching or tending to plant maintenance.

Pepper ‘Holy Mole’

‘Holy Mole’ is a memorable name and the plant will provide a memorable harvest of peppers. It is the first hybrid pasilla-type pepper, which is used to make the famous mole sauce. ‘Holy Mole’ showed improved vigor, earliness and considerably higher yield than the comparisons in side-by-side trials. A reason for the higher yield is the virus resistances bred into the variety. ‘Holy Mole’ is resistant to two common viruses that stunt plants and reduce pepper production. The immature green peppers are 2 to 3 inches long and can be harvested in about 85 days from transplanting. If fruit is left on the plant, they will mature to a dark brownish color. The pepper flavor is nutty and tangy. Mature plants are 3 feet tall; a perfect size for container planters. ‘Holy Mole’ is easily grown in a sunny location and thrives on summer heat.

Horticulture Selections

All-America Flower Selections and Vegetable Award Winners for 2007

Planting Asparagus

Buy one-year-old, healthy, disease-free crowns from a reputable grower. A crown is the root system of a one-year-old asparagus plant grown from seed. Each crown can produce one-half pound of spears per year when fully established. Asparagus can be planted from seed. However, caring for the small seedlings until they become established can be time consuming. Also, because the seeds are sparse, 6 to 8 feet apart, the crowns will have to be dug and transplanted to their permanent, wider spaced location in the garden after one year. Thus, one year of potential spear production is lost due to transplanting.

Select the new all-male hybrid asparagus varieties such as Jersey Giant, Jersey Prince, and Jersey Knight. These varieties produce spears only on male plants. Seeds produced on female plants fall to the ground and become a seedling weed problem in the garden. The all-male hybrids out-yield the old Mary Washington varieties by 3 to 1.

Asparagus can be planted mid-April to late May after the soil has warmed up to about 50 degrees F. There is no advantage to planting the crowns in cold, wet soil. They will not grow until the soil warms and there is danger of the plants being more susceptible to disease. If the crown rot if crowns are exposed to cold, wet soils over a prolonged period. Plant the asparagus at the west or north side of the garden so it will shade the other vegetables and will not be damaged when the rest of the garden is tilled.

Dig a furrow no deeper than 3 to 6 inches. If you see the deeper asparagus crowns are planted, the more the total yield is reduced. Apply about 1 pound of 0-46-0 (triple superphosphate) or 2 pound of 0-20-0 (superphosphate) fertilizer per 50 feet of row in the bottom of the furrow before planting. This will make phos- phorus immediately available to the crowns. Omitting this procedure will result in decreased yields and the spear production will not be as vigorous.

Place the crowns into the furrow on top of the fertilizer. The fertilizer will not burn the crowns. Space the crowns 1 to 2 feet apart in the row. If more than one row is planted, space the rows five feet apart from center to center. Wide between-row spacing is necessary because the vigorously growing fern will fill in the space quickly. Wide spacing also promotes rapid drying of the fern to help prevent the onset of fungus diseases.

After planting, back fill the furrow to its original soil level. It is necessary to gradually grow in the crowns with a few inches of soil until the furrow is filled in. However, do not compact the soil. Allow for the newly filled furrow or the emergence of the asparagus will be severely reduced. Spears should emerge within one week in moist soil.

Do not harvest the asparagus during the planting year. Spears will be produced from expanded buds on the crown. As the spears elongate and reach a height of 8 to 9 inches, the tips will open. The spear will become woody to support the large fern that becomes fern. The ferns produce food for the plant and then move it down to the crown for next year’s spear production.

Asparagus is very drought tolerant and can usually grow without supplemental watering because it seems moisture deep in the soil. However, if rainfall is insufficient when planting or afterwards, it is beneficial to irrigate the crowns. Otherwise the plants will become stressed and vigorous growth will be impeded.

Vinca ‘Pacifica Burgundy Halo’ Source: All-America Selections

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Alternative Agriculture Provides Opportunities For Enthusiastic Entrepreneur

By Jim Peterson
UNL Extension Educator

Nebraska agriculture tends to revolve around conventional crops and livestock such as corn, soybeans, cattle, sheep and swine. However, a wide variety of alternative products can be successfully grown and marketed within the state. The span of alternative products in Nebraska cover a broad range. Pasture-raised poultry and vine-yard grapes are two such examples. However, alternative products do not need to be extreme. Garden fruits and vegetables are also an excellent choice that producers interested in alternative agriculture. Producers should be on the lookout for opportunities to sell their products. One of the easiest ways to begin selling a product is by taking part in a local farmer’s market. These events are fun, provide easy access to people who want to buy garden products and provide a starting point for gaining name recognition. Successful vendors must provide consumers with a reason to stop and look at the products they have to offer. This can be done by featuring a particularly unique product and providing customers with a wide variety of products to choose from.

Managing a roadside stand is another option for selling alternative products. Roadside stands are very convenient because the producer can work around his or her own schedule. However, constant hours of operation and diverse quality products are needed to satisfy customers and ensure future business. Some producers contact restaurants for possible sales. This is especially common in high-end restaurants where chefs are normally looking for locally grown products that can be featured in their menus. In these situations, it is a good idea to contact chefs to see what types of products they are most interested in. Local grocery stores may also be willing to sell alternative products. However, providing the store with a steady supply throughout the year is often difficult, if not impossible, to accomplish.

Nebraska recently began its own food co-op to provide a market for alternative products. In the organization, grower members provide the co-op with their products that are then sold directly to consumers, restaurants or the wholesale market. Community Supported Agriculture also is a growing trend in the Midwest. This option allows growers to sell shares to consumers who are interested in their product. For example, a shareholder may receive a bag full of vegetables each week during the growing season in return for his or her share. This method works well because the buyer and seller share in both the bounty and risk of gardening.

As with all aspects of the marketing world, communication is the key to success. Often times, the best marketing tool is word of mouth. In other words, make sure the product being sold is worth talking about.

Before getting started, producers should develop a marketing plan. There are six points to keep in mind when developing a strategy:

• Make sure the product can be sold to a variety of consumers. Without willing buyers, a product has little value.
• Understand the time involved. Many alternative enterprises require a lot of effort and commitment. This can be especially difficult when working another job at the same time.
• Think realistically when it comes to financing. Many enterprises won’t pay back right away.
• Keep in mind the problems that can occur. Disease and insects can occur. Disease and insects are two common pests that can hinder production. It is a good idea to consult another producer who can provide expertise on such issues.
• Understand the cultural practices involved. It is important to step back and look at the big picture. Without the proper resources, getting started isn’t worth the time and money.
• Keep the product’s market potential. Find out what consumers want and remember that some enterprises will sell better in certain areas than others.

Higher energy costs have given many people the incentive to cut their own firewood. However, users should review safety precautions before handling a chainsaw to avoid serious injury.

Operators should begin by reading the instruction manual. This is especially important in situations involving a first-time user or new model of chain saw. Reread instructions to obtain a clear understanding of the operation process.

While chain saws are more efficient than manual saws, they are more likely to be used incorrectly and cause injury. Most injuries are the result of kickback. Kickback occurs due to the fast rotation of the blade. When the tip of the blade makes contact with the tree, the high rpm’s of the chain may cause the saw to literally “kickback” out of the operator’s control. Uncontrolled kickback often results in injuries to the arms, legs or face.

It is also important to be aware of surroundings when harvesting firewood. An area clear of excess brush or other obstacles is most desirable. This provides an open area for the tree to land and an escape route for harvesters should the tree fall in an unexpected direction. Don’t forget to remain aware of what is occurring overhead. Falling branches, known as “widow makers,” can cause serious injury or death as well.

Once the tree is down, it is safest to use the bottom of the chain saw bar to cut the wood into sections. This will prevent kickback and make operating the chain saw less work. Most importantly, never operate a chain saw alone. Having another person present guarantees help is available should any problem or injury occur.
Collection of Unwanted Pesticides, March 23

The Nebraska Department of Agriculture, in cooperation with University of Nebraska Extension, the Environmental Trust Fund, the Nebraska Agri-Business Association and the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality, will be hosting a pesticide disposal collection day on Thursday, March 23 at the Farmers Department of Environmental Quality, will be holding a pesticide disposal collection day on Thursday, March 23 at the Farmers

Remember to protect yourself and your surroundings when handling waste pesticides. You may need to wear personal protective equipment or, as a minimum, unlined neoprene or nitrile gloves, when handling waste pesticides. If the pesticide container has been damaged, pack it in another container that will hold the product if the first container should rupture while being transported. Use a container that can be left at the collection site, if it becomes contaminated.

There are three main categories of pesticides accepted:

• Unused, unneeded, old or damaged pesticides (includes insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, rodenticides and fumigants).

• Pesticides of all types including crops, livestock, homes, lawns, gardens, structural, commercial, including those in aerosol containers.

• Farmer-supplied electrically-powered containers containing PCB's from renovated irrigation systems.

Since different wastes need to be handled and disposed of differently, products that fit in one of the categories above are the only ones being accepted. Products not accepted include:

• Pesticide products in pressurized cylinders.

• Antifreeze.

• Paints, varnishes and thinners.

• Cleaners and solvents.

The Waverly site is one of 18 sites across Nebraska selected for this pesticide collection program in 2007. Don't miss the opportunity to dispose of unwanted pesticides!

Computerized Farm Financial Recordkeeping, March 19

Over the years, Computerized Farm Financial Recordkeeping workshops have been one of the most popular in-depth programs offered by University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension. Training, these workshops will be presented at six locations in southeast Nebraska. It will be held in Lincoln on Monday, March 19 from 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherry Creek Road. Please pre-register by March 15.

Other locations and dates are:

• March 21—Nemaha NRD Office, Tecumseh (402-335-3669)

• March 22—Richardson County Courthouse, Falls City (402-245-0324)

• March 26—Clay Center Community meeting room, Clay Center (402-762-3664)

• March 27—Seward County Extension Office, Seward (402-643-2981)

• March 28—Dodge County Extension Office, Fremont (402-727-2775)

A brochure with a registration form is available online at http://lancaster.unl.edu/ag/finance.pdf or by calling 471-7180.

All workshops will be presented in a hands-on teaching style with participants sitting at computers performing the tasks being demonstrated. One extension educator will lead the discussion and the image from the instructor’s computer will be projected on a screen. Other educators will circulate and give individual help as needed.

In addition to seeing the actions projects they'll do on their own, participants will also receive step-by-step written instructions for all tasks being demonstrated. These handouts are intended as a guide in the classroom and as references as participants set up their records at home.

Participation should have a basic familiarity with using a computer and typing on a keyboard. No prior computerized recordkeeping experience is necessary, however, some prior experience with a hand-held single entry accounting system (such as the extension blue book) would be useful.

The concepts taught in this workshop are applicable to any of several inexpensive computerized recordkeeping programs, with slight modifications in procedure. This workshop will be taught hands-on using Quicken® 2007 Basic in the classroom.

Reference materials, lunch and refreshments are all included in the registration fee. The registration fee for each workshop is $50. A second person sharing the same computer has permission to attend an additional $10 to cover lunch and refreshments.

A Chemigation training and test will be held on Tuesday, March 13 at the Lancaster Extension Education Center beginning at 6:30 p.m. This session meets the requirements for initial certification of chemigators and recertification of chemigators whose certification is expiring in 2007. The training fee for initial chemigators is $20 and includes the Chemigation notebook. The fee for recertification is $15. If you need a replacement Chemigation notebook, one can be purchased for $5. Studying the information contained in the notebook prior to the training session will increase the likelihood of passing the test. You may also check permitted chemigation sites to see if they are permitted for the extension office by preregistering for the training session and paying the training fee.

Note: The Nebraska Chemigation law also states each injection site must have a current permit issued by the NRD. New chemigation sites must be inspected to check for the presence of all required safety devices before the NRD will issue a permit. Permits are valid for one year and must be renewed annually at the NRD.

The NRD also conducts spot checks of permitted chemigation sites to check the condition of safety equipment. Contact the NRD office to obtain a permit for the site(s) you want the Chemigation in 2007. The NRD will collect a fee for each permit issued.
Use Pheromone Traps to Locate Indian Meal Moths Infestations

Barb Ogg  
UNL Extension Educator

The most common moth found in homes is the Indian meal moth. The moth is about 1/2-inch long and grayish in color. When not flying, it rests on the wall by sitting at an angle, with its wings folded. The larval stage of this moth primarily feeds on seeds and nuts and grain-based processed foods, including dry pet food. It is particularly fond of peanuts. Some of the more unusual food sources we have seen are not edible arrangements, Indian corn, dog biscuits or treats and hedge apples.

The moths lay eggs near the food sources. Eggs hatch into tiny larvae that feed under webbing at the surface of the food. After a couple weeks of feeding the larvae crawl away from the food to pupate in cracks and crevices. They emerge as adults to repeat the cycle. People can bring infestations home in bird seed and infested products from the grocery store. The Indian meal moth is the #1 stored product pest in warehouses and food to pupate in cracks and crevices.

Indian meal moth infestations can take place any time of the year because our homes are warm. The key to eliminating Indian meal moths is to locate and discard infested foods. Freezing or refrigerating infested food will prevent infestations.

One helpful tool is a pheromone trap which is available locally in many hardware and discount stores. (Safer Pantry Pest Trap is one brand.) It can also be found and purchased on the internet. This trap uses the female sex pheromone which attracts the male moths. Because this only captures male moths, it may not eliminate the infestation. It is best used as a monitoring device to alert you to a small infestation (or reinfection) before it spreads. These pantry pest traps are odorless (to humans) and last for several months. Because they can attract moths from 40–50 feet, only one is usually needed in a kitchen/pantry area. Place the trap on the top of the refrigerator or hang it in the middle of the kitchen, where slow moving air currents will carry the pheromone.

The Indian meal moth is the most common moth infesting stored foods, but there are many small grain and flour feeding beetles which infest your food.

Clothes Moths Not Common in Nebraska

When people see tiny moths flying around the house, they often think of clothes moths. But, in Nebraska, clothes moths do not seem to be very common because our climate is too dry. Clothes moths are more of a problem in more humid areas of the U.S.

The most common insect problem in more humid areas of Nebraska is carpet beetles. These oval beetles do most of their damage in the summertime, so laundering and protecting clothing during the summer is important.

Fertilizing Crop Land with Biosolids

Educational Workshop, March 6

To learn about Lincoln’s Biosolids program, attend an educational workshop. Fertilizing Crop Land with Biosolids, held Tuesday, March 6 from 3:30–8:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Educational Center, 444 Cherry Creek Road, Lincoln. Presented by extension and City of Lincoln personnel, the workshop is aimed at anyone who might want to participate in the Biosolids Land Application program, though anyone may attend. Please preregister by Friday, March 2 by calling 441-7180 and ask for Karen Wedding. If you have any questions, please call Barb Ogg or Dave Smit.

Workshop attendees will learn:
• how biosolids will reduce fertilizer costs and increase yields
• how organic matter improves soil health, especially on poor or eroded soil
• how biosolids increase organic matter and water holding capacity
• how wastewater is processed and made safe for application
• how regulations determine application rates and locations
• how GIS and technology is used in Lincoln’s Biosolids Program

Program will also include a tour of the Theresa Street Wastewater Facility.

Potential Benefits and Hazards of Bats

The bats found in Nebraska eat only insects. Where bats are plentiful, their foraging for insects can be a significant factor in controlling insect populations. Some insects are also deterred by bat echolocation. Echolocation is what bats use to find their prey.

Bats also present potential dangers. Bats increase the likelihood of human-bat encounters. Risks can be reduced by teaching children (and other adults) never to handle bats and by keeping vaccinations of pets current. Place fencing or ornamental plantings around the base of the bat house site to reduce access to the colony. If a human or pet comes in contact with a bat, even if it doesn’t appear to bite, contact a physician.

ewf needs volunteers

Volunteers are needed for earth wellness festival on Wednesday, March 21 and Thursday, March 22 at Southeast Community College in Lincoln. Approximately 3,000 fifth-graders participate in this annual event that involves students in creative and innovative environmental education activities.

Each year, over 250 volunteers take part in earth wellness festival activities. As classroom escorts, bus greeters, and presenter and registration assistants; volunteers are essential to the success of this event. You may choose to participate one or both days, either in the morning (8:30 a.m.–noon) or in the afternoon (1–4 p.m.). In return, you receive a festival T-shirt, a free lunch, an invitation to our celebration party following the event and an opportunity to participate in a rewarding volunteer experience.

Please contact Meghan Sittler at 472-2712 or via e-mail at msittler2@unl.edu for more information.

Build a Bat House

Soni Cochran

UNL Extension Associate

Bat house construction can be an environmentally friendly and rewarding activity. Putting up a bat house, however, doesn’t guarantee bats will use it.

In Nebraska, the big brown bat (Eptesicus fuscus) and little brown bat (Myotis lucifugus) are most likely to live in bat houses. Both species are commonly found in attics, barns and other structures.

If you are considering a bat house, be sure to site it in rural locations such as farms, acreages or in natural areas where habitat is already available. You are more likely to attract bats to a bat house if you put the houses in areas where bats already live. If you currently have problems with bats living in your home and plan to evict them, installing a bat house outdoors and nearby, may encourage them to move into your bat house and not another human dwelling.

When building a bat house design, bats prefer larger houses over small ones. The bat house should be at least 24” tall x 16” wide x 4” deep. The house should be multi-chambered and the wood should be rough cut. The wood used in construction should be free of arsenic-based wood preservatives.

Bat houses can be made of medium to dark tones (avoid black because bats are likely to attract and not another human dwelling.

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If you are considering a bat house, be sure to site it in rural locations such as farms, acreages or in natural areas where habitat is already available. You are more likely to attract bats to a bat house if you put the houses in areas where bats already live. If you currently have problems with bats living in your home and plan to evict them, installing a bat house outdoors and nearby, may encourage them to move into your bat house and not another human dwelling.

When building a bat house design, bats prefer larger houses over small ones. The bat house should be at least 24” tall x 16” wide x 4” deep. The house should be multi-chambered and the wood should be rough cut. The wood used in construction should be free of arsenic-based wood preservatives. The bats found in Nebraska eat only insects. Where bats are plentiful, their foraging for insects can be a significant factor in controlling insect populations. Some insects are also deterred by bat echolocation. Echolocation is what bats use to find their prey.

Bats also present potential dangers. Bats increase the likelihood of human-bat encounters. Risks can be reduced by teaching children (and other adults) never to handle bats and by keeping vaccinations of pets current. Place fencing or ornamental plantings around the base of the bat house site to reduce access to the colony. If a human or pet comes in contact with a bat, even if it doesn’t appear to bite, contact a physician.
Cooking Peas with Your Pasta

Add a helping of color (and veggies!) to your pasta by tossing in some frozen “petite” peas at the end of cooking. “Petite” peas will thaw and cook rapidly in the pasta water. Here’s how to do it:

Before grocery shopping, open your cupboards and check your refrigerator/freezer. Write down foods you already have on-hand. Maybe it’s a frozen piece of meat, a can of tuna, some frozen peas or some onions. Next, write those foods onto a menu for the week. Plan your meals to make complete/balanced meals. Place the items you don’t have on your grocery list. For example, if I found a can of tuna, some frozen peas and milk, I would plan for a tuna casserole on a specific day, adding noodles, cream of mushroom soup and apple slices to my grocery list to complete the meal. This balanced meal would include meat/protein (tuna), vegetable (peas), fruit (apples), grain (noodles) and milk.

Once you arrive at the store, only buy what is on your list (unless there is a sale on a product you know you’ll use). Shopping without a planned menu or list usually leads to buying items you may not use or buying prepared foods that cost more. To get the best value for your dollar, check the unit price. This will tell you how much an item costs per ounce or pound and is usually posted on the price labels on the shelves. The diagram below shows how to check unit price. When you get home, place items immediately in your freezer, refrigerator or cupboards and enjoy following your pre-planned menus throughout the week. Smart shopping is just a “plan” away!

FREE Fruit & Vegetable Fact Sheets

Whether you’re a teacher or a parent, this colorful set of fruit and vegetable fact sheets can help get kids excited about eating fruits and vegetables!

This set of 30 fruit & vegetable fact sheets includes information about: nutrition, uses, description, varieties, where first cultivated and whether they are grown in Nebraska. Color versions are color-coded to the five color groups (black & white versions could be printed on colored paper).

They may be downloaded free at http://lancaster.unl.edu/nep/FruitVeggie.shtml

Add Acidic Fruits to Salads to Keep Fruits from Turning Brown

For fresh fruit salads, mix apples, bananas or pears with acidic fruits like oranges, tangerines, grapefruit and other citrus fruit or pineapple to keep them from turning brown.

Add the acidic fruit(s) first. Then, cut the other fruits, mixing them in with the acidic fruit(s) as you prepare them.

Nutrition

Uses

Description

Varieties

Where

When

Do's

Don’ts

Use

Store

- Add a helping of color (and veggies!) to your pasta by tossing in some frozen “petite” peas at the end of cooking.

$hop $mart to $tretch Your Food Dollar

Fact 1: 1 cup cooked brown rice

Fact 2: It can take ½ hour to 9 weeks to become sick from unsafe foods.

Fact 3: You also can experience the following from a foodborne illness:

Food Safety: What You Don’t Know CAN Hurt You

Don’t be “Myth”-lead by these food safety myths:

MYTH 1: If it tastes O.K., it’s safe to eat.

MYTH 2: If you get sick from eating a food, it was from the last food you ate.

Fact 3: This soup is easy to increase or decrease in size. It also tastes good.

Fact 4: Some people have a greater risk for foodborne illness. A food you can safely eat may make others sick. People with a higher risk for foodborne illness include: infants, pregnant women, young children, older adults, people with weakened immune systems and individuals with certain chronic diseases.

MYTH 5: People never used to get sick from their food.

FACT 5: Many incidents of foodborne illness went undetected in the past.

Symptoms of nausea, vomiting and diarrhea were often and usually noted in minutes after eating and become sick later.

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The primary goal of the Weed Control Authority is to educate landowners county-wide of the benefits of preventing and controlling noxious weeds and landowners in the City of Lincoln of the desirability of keeping weeds and worthless vegetation cut. As more landowners and managers keep their weeds under control, less inspections and notifications are needed to achieve compliance with the Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Act and City of Lincoln’s Weed Abatement Ordinance.

The Weed Control Authority’s inspection program identifies properties that require some sort of notification and follow-up action to obtain compliance. Most landowners are responsible and do not require notification. Almost all of those who require notification respond favorably to a personal contact, card or letter. A legal notice is used in less than 25% of the notifications.

Inspection Activity
A total of 7,498 inspections were made of 2,147 sites during the year. There were 2,866 violations found on 4,425 acres. Inspections increased by 323 from last year, a 5% increase.

Lancaster County Noxious Weed Control Program — Infestations were found on 854 sites and 3,035 acres as a result of 2,003 inspections on 1,071 sites. The number of infestations found decreased by 150 from last year. There were 113 less purple loosestrife infestations found. This decrease was the result of less ornamental plants due to excellent cooperation from residential landowners. 172 of the noxious weed sites were controlled by landowners, and the Weed Control Authority controlled 15 sites.

City of Lincoln Weed Abatement Program — A total of 2,495 initial and follow-up inspections were made on 2,396 acres. The 2,011 violations were found as a result of 1,717 complaints and inspector observations. This was 223 more violations than in 2005. Legal notices had to be published in the paper for 171 properties under foreclosure because of unclear ownership. Of these, 72 resulted in force cuttings, almost 50% of the total forced cuttings. Forced cuttings had to be performed on 153 sites at the cost of $21,107. This was an increase of 46 sites and increased cost of $7,145 from last year. Of these, 117 sites had to be specially assessed for $16,530. Only about one-third of these sites receiving a bill for forced cutting make immediate payment, collections for past special assessments make up the difference.

Public Awareness
The major information efforts are maintaining and updating a Web site (www.lincoln.ne.gov/cnty/weeds) and publishing a four-page Weed Awareness insert in University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County’s Newsline newsletter. In 2006, there were 57,000 hits on the Web site and 11,000 copies of the Weed Awareness insert printed. Other informational efforts last year included over 1,000 special mailings, approximately 2,866 notifications of violations, several news articles and a state fair exhibit.

Other Activities
Other activities included making seven inspections for weed-free forage certification, participating with the Lower Platte Weed Management Area, attending required continuing education sessions and actively participating in the Nebraska Weed Control Association and the North American Weed Management Association.

Noxious Weed Control on Public Lands
The Weed Control Authority maintains contact with 30 different public land managers in a coordinated effort of noxious weed control. They represent the following agencies and departments:

City of Lincoln
• Airport Authority
• County/City Property Management
• Lincoln Electric System
• Lincoln Public Schools
• Parks and Recreation
• Public Works & Utilities

County
• County Engineer

State of Nebraska
• Air National Guard
• Army National Guard
• Education Lands & Funds
• UNL Landscape Services
• Department of Roads
• Department of Corrections
• Game & Parks Commission

Other
• Lower Platte South NRD
• NE Public Power District

Each of these land managers has committed significant resources to plan ongoing noxious weed control on property that they own or control. They maintain two-way communication with the Weed Control Authority throughout the year. When the Authority requests follow-up control work, the land managers provide immediate response. The efforts of these land managers are a key part of keeping noxious weeds under control in Lancaster County.

The Weed Control Authority has special arrangements regarding the sanitary landfills and county roads. The Authority makes inspections of the two landfill sites and arranges the contract with a contractor to do the noxious weed control. The Authority also makes inspections of and controls more than 150 leafy spurge infestations on county roadsides.

Learn to Recognize Nebraska’s Noxious Weeds
The Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Act states it is the duty of each person who owns or controls land to effectively control noxious weeds on such land. Pictured are Nebraska’s noxious weeds which can be found in Lancaster County.*

[Image of noxious weeds]
Prevention Tips

Musk Thistle Management Strategy

To successfully fight weeds, you need to know as much as possible about the weed and when to treat. Musk thistle (Carduus nutans) is a perennial weed that spreads by rosettes and seed. It is easily spread from one field to another by being blown away with the wind or by being carried in on shoes, animals or in farm equipment. The best time to control musk thistle is during the fall and winter when it is actively growing. The use of herbicides can be effective but should be used with caution.

Maintain Healthy Grass

Healthy stands of desirable vegetation make it difficult for weeds to get established. By selecting the right species and mixtures, it’s always good practice to request to see a Certificate of Seed Analysis, which details every seed (including weed seeds) contained in the bag. Even if your dealer says the seed is certified, he/she is required by law to provide the certificate on request. Replant bare areas and water if necessary. Do not overgraze pastures. If farming, practice conservation tillage to minimize soil disturbance.

Prevent Spreading Weed Seeds

Another basic principle of prevention of new sites becoming infected is not to spread weed seed in and around the area. This can be accomplished by being alert to activities that might spread existing infestations and not to import new sites with movement of noxious weed-contaminated articles or materials on your property. Noxious weeds may be disseminated by several methods or articles. Following are some treatments for articles capable of disseminating noxious weeds, when such articles are suspected to have noxious weed present.

Preventing the spread of weed seeds

1. Remove all loose material from the top and sides of the machine and all other places of seeds or seed oil (MSO) at one quart per acre. Seed oil (MSO) is available from late-August to mid-October, and is a good time to apply. Note label precautions.

2. Remove all noxious weeds from seed, seed oil, and/or seedlings and retreated.

3. Treat the seed with your herbicide of choice, plus the MSO. (Refer to the herbicide label for application rates.)

4. Scout these fall treated areas in March and April for escapes and new plants.

5. Provide control prior to bolting of the flower stem in May. Use 2,4-D in addition to a residual herbicide. The addition of 28 percent Urea Ammonium Nitrate (UAN) liquid fertilizer to Plateau plus the MSO has occasioned increased long-leafy-spurge control. Plateau is safe to use around a variety of trees, many wildflowers and legumes.

6. Scout these areas weekly and provide needed follow-up control until July. Be alert to the musk thistle plants acting as annuals due to a cool spring. Remember, the best approach to control musk thistle is to scout and treat areas with past infestations (these areas have built up a seed bank in the soil) in the fall and spring. Provide treatment in the spring to eliminate existing best scout treated areas for escaped plants.

Mechanical Control

Severing the root of musk thistle a couple of inches below the soil surface will kill the plant. The entire root does not have to be removed. Hand cutting or mowing has to be done at weekly intervals to be effective. Fire has not proven to be a reliable method. The use of herbicides varies significantly from year to year. Sprays that survive prescribed burning, but can easily be found and controlled by operators. Learn more about biological control at www. nysaes.cornell.edu/ent/biocontrol/ weedfeeding-wddf.html.

Biological Control

Musk thistle head weevil (Rhinocyllus conicus) is an introduced biocontrol species widespread in Lancaster County. They are reducing the number of seeds being produced, but do not provide complete control by themselves. Learn more about biological control at www. nysaes.cornell.edu/ent/biocontrol/ weedfeeding-wddf.html.

Reference


Leafy Spurge Management Strategy

Harvesting machinery and equipment:

- Remove all loose material from the top and sides of the machine and all other places of seeds or seed oil (MSO) at one quart per acre.
- Run the machine empty for at least five minutes, alternately increasing and decreasing the speed.
- Follow the manufacturer’s detailed instructions for cleaning the machine.
- Whenever possible, all noxious treatments should be performed while the article is still on the land on which it became infested. If this cannot be performed at this location, the location selected should be such as to minimize the movement of noxious weeds.

Trucks, RV’s, other vehicles and articles such as railroad ties, fence posts and fencing:

- Wash vehicles prior to moving from weeds to weed-free areas whenever possible.
- Treat by brushing, sweeping, forced air, forced water and/or physical removal of noxious weeds.

Livestock:

- Avoid moving livestock directly from weedy to weed-free areas.

Grain and seed suspected to contain noxious weeds should not be sold or transferred to another person:

- Treat by using a seed cleaner which is effective in removing the noxious weeds from the grain and seed.
- Screenings remaining following treatment should not be used for feed or grown to any other purpose which could result in the dissemination of noxious weeds.

Soil, sod, nursery stock, hay, straw, manure and other soil materials:

- No known acceptable method of treatment exists for these articles. Such articles should not be moved from the location at which they initially become infested, but may be utilized at that location.

Leafy spurge is easiest to kill during the rosette stage ( pictured).

To control all the small seedlings and rosettes and seedlings that have not emerged. Spot control of these areas typically results in a lot of escapes since not all the plants are observed and some plants germinate later. One way to add to the effectivness of killing the plants present, but also have residual that will control the plants for several years. Some of the herbicides that will provide residual control are Escort (www.dupont.com/ag/vm/products/ escort.html), Tordon 22K, Vanquish, Banvel and Telar (www.dupont.com/ag/vm/literature/b77267.pdf).

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1. Use 2,4-D as a contact herbicide along with a residual herbicide. This will add to the effectiveness of killing the plants present, but also have residual that will control the plants for several years. Some of the herbicides that will provide residual control are Escort (www.dupont.com/ag/vm/products/ escort.html), Tordon 22K, Vanquish, Banvel and Telar (www.dupont.com/ag/vm/literature/b77267.pdf).

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Leafy spurge is easiest to kill during the rosette stage ( pictured).
Wild infestation downstream from ornamental plantings. Found in many of the Lincoln streams downstream of the ornamental plantings. This includes Dead Man’s Run, Antelope Creek, Beul Slough and their tributaries. Wild plants have not been found in Salt Creek to date. Continued inspections will be made of the wild livestock sites to assure they are kept under control.
Weed Free Forage Certification Program

You can prevent potential noxious weed infestations by insisting on Certified Weed Free forage. As a buyer, you should be aware that noxious weed infested forage products can cost you hundreds or even thousands of dollars down the road. Ask your forage supplier to have their hay certified prior to harvest. Forage growers must call the Lancaster County Weed Control Authority one to two weeks prior to harvesting. There is no charge for the field inspections. There is a small charge for the cost of bale tags.

Certified weed-free forage products include: straw, alfalfa/grass hay, forage pellets/cubes, alfalfa hay, grain hay and grass hay. Weed free forage is required on many U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management lands, in National Parks, Bureau of Reclamation land, military locations, tribal lands as well as National Fish and Wildlife refuges. The Nebraska Department of Roads requires weed-free forage on highway projects. Restrictions may apply to other lands administered by provincial, county, state or federal agencies.

For More Information

If you have questions about certification regulations or weeds not allowed in certified forage, please see the North American Weed Management Association’s (NAWMA) Web site at http://www.nawma.org for a complete list of weeds and regulations.

Purple loosestrife is continuing to invade streams in and around the city of Lincoln. A total of 67 wild infestations of purple loosestrife have been found since 2001. The seed source for these wild plants is from the ornamental lythrum plantings that have been made in yards throughout the city. Since purple loosestrife was designated a noxious weed in Nebraska in 2001, almost all homeowners have removed these plantings from their yards. The Weed Control Authority has notified almost 1000 homeowners that they need to remove their ornamental purple loosestrife plantings. These homeowners, along with many others, have voluntarily done so. The wild plants need to be found and controlled before their populations explode and form solid dense stands of purple loosestrife in the Salt Creek System. This would severely reduce the wildlife habitat and other uses. Purple loosestrife is not desirable wildlife habitat and is not a good recreational use.

There are two additional invasive non-native plants that are of a concern to riparian areas. These are saltcedar and phragmites. A few plants of both have been found adjacent to water and in the saltcedar wetlands in and adjacent to Lincoln. Saltcedar has been planted as an ornamental in some yards in Lincoln. It was designated a noxious weed in Nebraska in 2004 and can no longer be sold or grown. It is a shrub or small tree with cedar like foliage with deep pink to almost white flowers that crowd in many slender spikes, forming dense masses at the top of the branches. The saltcedar’s bark is a reddish brown while the wood is soft and white. The smooth bark ridges and furrows with age. Common reed or phragmites, is a tall, perennial grass that can grow to over 15 feet in height. Once introduced phragmites can spread quickly after a wetland community, crowding out native plants, changing wetland hydrology, altering wildlife habitat and increasing fire potential. Its high biomass blocks light to other plants and occupies all the growing space below ground so plant communities can turn into a Phragmites monoculture very quickly.

These three invasive plants are a threat to the wetlands, streams and riparian areas in and adjacent to the City of Lincoln. It is taking a considerable effort to try and get purple loosestrife under control. It would be wise to deal with saltcedar and phragmites now before they advance further. We can deal with saltcedar since it has been designated a state noxious weed. In order to take immediate aggressive actions with phragmites, it would need to be petitioned to be brought under the county control program. Until phragmites becomes a designated noxious weed, its control and management will depend upon the voluntary cooperation of landowners.

The assistance of the public is requested in reporting any sightings of these three plants. All reports will be solicited. The locations will be mapped and the landowners contacted about control of the plants.

New Statewide Weed Mapping Program

The Nebraska Weed Control Association along with the Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) have been working on developing a statewide GIS mapping program to manage invasive plants. This system uses a popular GIS map interface known as ArcIMS from ESRI. ESRI provides industry-leading software to GIS professionals.

The Nebraska Weed Control Association has paid for the custome coding required to create this system, from the NDA’s invasive plant assistance fund, which was received from the Nebraska Environmental Trust invasive plant assistance fund.

Once the system is completed, the NDA and counties will be able to keep track on noxious and invasive weeds in Nebraska, as well as, track treatments and create online reporting in an easy to use interface. Some of the features include a user management system, add and modify record set, create map and GPS points of invasive plants and print off various records for each species.

The planning for this type of system has been discussed for two years. Nebraska Weed Control Association hopes to start testing the system in January of 2007 with training to begin in February 2007. The custom work is being done by an outside vendor, GIS Workshop of Lincoln, Nebraska.

The goal is to have one database for the whole state based on standards and creating a system of knowledge sharing and communication with everyone concerned about invasive plants. The county Weed Control Authorities will input and manage the program in their counties. Cooperating partners and other interested parties may provide locations, can quickly take over and county weed control authority for entry into the program. This program will serve as a tool for each of the counties in managing their programs. Not only will the system have information on location of infestations of invasive weeds, but it will also include inspection information, treatment information, and extent of infestations. The detailed information will only be available to the Weed Control Authorities and the Nebraska Department of Agriculture.

General information, location and extent of infestations will be available to the general public, state agencies and NRD’s for such things as developing plans on how to deal with water-depriving plants invading riparian areas. Landowners will able to access and print off maps to help in developing their weed control plans.

The project is expected be operational by March 1, 2007 at www.neweedmapper.org. Data will be entered throughout the 2007 inspection season. Any questions about the program should be directed to Chris Kelly at ekelly2@unl.edu or 472-9059.
President’s Notes — Alice’s Analysis

Alice Doane
FCE Council Chair

We had our Family and Community Education County Council meeting Jan. 22. We chose “Cesar’s Home” for one of our goals for 2007. The Environment Poster Contest was sponsored for grade students on the subject of “How Our Changing Environment Affects You.” The Creative Writing Contest is open to any fifth grade student on the title of “My Best Friend.” We will be hosting the Southeast District meeting on Thursday, March 29, 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center. Hopefully we will have a good turn out from Lancaster County.

We have a scholarship of $400 available to a college student majoring in Family and Consumer Science or Health Occupations. For more information or application call Pam at 441-7180. The categories of the Heritage Skills Contest for FCE members are Quilting, Ceramics, Original Heritage Skill and Glass.

These items are due at our June 25 Council meeting. Members are asked to keep records of their volunteer hours. These forms are due at the October Achievement Night.

We are asking our friends to mark their calendar for July 10 to enjoy the evening at the Sizzling Summer Sampler. I have just returned from the FCE Convention in Chad, Mo., clear as Gel with Wool Contest. I am happy to report that the participants came in fifth and our junior and adult students were honorable mention in their respective divisions. This is the 60th year for the national contest.

FCE News & Events

Council Meeting, March 26

The March FCE Council meeting will be Monday, March 26, 1 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center. Emerald and Live N Learn chair their planning the program. Business meeting will follow.

Southeast District Meeting, March 29

Lancaster County is hosting the Southeast District FCE meeting on Monday, March 29, 9:30 a.m.—2 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln, Jan Broer, Southeast District Director and a member of the Belline FCE in our county is organizing the event. Registration fee is $10 and includes lunch. Make checks payable to FCE District Number. Mail your registration by March 20 to Janet Broer, 2201 Cardwell Road, Lincoln, NE 68523.

“Quick and Easy Salads”

Leader Training, March 22

A leader training lesson, “Quick and Easy Salads” will be presented by Extension Educators Alice Henman and Lorene Bartos on Thursday, March 22, 1 p.m. Participants will learn ideas to make quick, healthy, nutritious salads to use as a main dish or a side. Non-FCE members or groups should call Pam at 441-7180 to register for this meeting.

Agenda

9:30-9:45 Registration
9:45-10:00 Welcome & Introductions
10:10-11:00 “Quick and Easy Salads”
11:20 Lunch
12:00 Afternoon program
1:15-1:45 Skit from Hearth Fire Series #7 skit titled “Poison Prevention
1:45-2 Closing Announcements

UNL Web Site Can Help You Reduce Your Debt

If your credit balance is $8,000 and you make minimum monthly payments at 18 percent interest, it will take you 25 years and 7 months to pay off the debt. Doing this, you would pay $15,432 in interest charges, (almost twice the beginning balance), bringing the total you pay to $23,452. Take steps now to reduce your debt.

A Web site called “Pay Down Debt” is available through University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension to help you follow the road to pay down debt. The Web site features FREE educational resources and worksheets to help you on your journey. Follow the following ten road signs of debt reduction:

• Make a savings plan. You need to get out of debt. You need to organize your finances. You need to find ways to increase your income. You need to make sacrifices to eliminate debt.

• Once you are out of debt. Stay out of debt and begin a savings plan. Make a savings plan and log in to the Web site to access an educator who will help you through this process and answer your question. All information is confidential and can be saved each time you work on your plan.

• Don’t be distracted when you are paying. Children act fast and can get hold of a product and swallow it in a surprisingly short time.

• Leave no cleaning products unattended. Besides the obvious dangers of spilling, slipping and sipping, there’s the fact toddlers are “top heavy.” If they topple into a bucket, they could drown, even in a very small amount of liquid.

• Never leave children unattended around cleaning products. If you need to answer the doorbell or the phone, take the child with you.

Call 1-800-222-1222 for poison-related emergencies. It’s the Poison Control Center’s nationwide, toll-free hotline.

Smart Storage

Close cleaning product caps securely. Products with more potential hazard, such as oven or drain cleaners, come with child-resistant packaging. But, they don’t come with a cap properly. It’s up to adults to provide a safe environment.

Lock product up. Store them in a location away from children, pets or food. Install child-proof locks on cabinets and doors.

Keep cleaning products in their original containers. If a child accidentally ingests or spills something on his or her self, the label provides information concerning the product’s contents and actions to take if immediate first-aid to perform. Carefully dispose of empty cleaning containers. To protect children, pets and garbage handlers, replace caps first, then discard in a sealed recycling bin or garbage container.

Tips for Refreshing Table Linens

Always check care labels and product labels before laundering. To get rid of wrinkles without ironing, you can use detergent with wrinkle-releasing agents. For washing more delicate or elaborate items, you can use an in-dryer kit. You use the product in your own clothes dryer to help get out wrinkles and help remove light stains. To remove wrinkles, put a damp cotton dish towel in the dryer with your tablecloth or napkins.

Strategies for Poison Prevention

March is National Poison Prevention Month

Cleaning products are used safely by millions of consumers on a daily basis. At the same time, proper product use, supervision and storage are essential in keeping your home safe and clean. National Poison Prevention Week is March 18-24 which makes it a good time to be reminded about safe use and smart storage of cleaning products, says The Soap and Detergent Association.

Safe Use

Schedule routine cleaning around the kids’ routines, such as nap time or when they’re not around.

Don’t be distracted when you are paying. Children act fast and can get hold of a product and swallow it in a surprisingly short time.

Never leave cleaning buckets containing liquid unattended. Besides the obvious dangers of spilling, slipping and sipping, there’s the fact toddlers are “top heavy.” If they topple into a bucket, they could drown, even in a very small amount of liquid.

Never leave children unattended around cleaning products. If you need to answer the doorbell or the phone, take the child with you.

A conference for those who provide child care. In-service hours will be given for this conference.

Saturday, March 31
8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Lancaster Extension Education Center
444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln, NE

Speakers include:
• Pat Enslowold, Director of SCC Child Development Center
• Tracy Gorden, Special Project Coordinator/NACEC
• Vicky Hayen, Family Service and Sherri Tewes, Providers Network
• Kevin Mathen, Consultant/Trainer at Continuum
• Patt Harper, Motivational Humorist

Cost is $10

For a conference flyer call 441-7180
Pre-registration is due March 17
Linda Hanigan
Lancaster County 4-H is proud to announce Linda Hanigan as winner of March’s Heart of 4-H Award in recognition of outstanding volunteer service.

Linda has been a 4-H volunteer for eight years. She is organization leader for the Friends in 4-H Club and also helped with her kids’ activities in several other clubs, including The Checkmates, Rabbits R Us, Crazy Clovers and Shimmering Shamrocks. Linda has also volunteered at Kiwanis Karnival, with set up for the Lancaster County Fair and in the 4-H snack booth at County Fair.

“I have often learned as much as the kids,” says Linda. “4-H is a great way to get to know your kids friends and bring me up with something that is very unique and talented people. My favorite experience as a 4-H volunteer was being for the groups’ exhibits at the fair. A close second is helping with Karnival. The girls come up with such great ideas!”

In addition to her 4-H volunteer work, Linda is in charge of the high school and box top collection at the Cathedral of the Risen Christ School.

Linda will be on basic riding fundamentals held at the end of March. It will be planning two free spring clinics for 4-H'ers can log hours they have worked out. Watch for more information, call Marty at 441-7180.

Lancaster 4-H Horse Project<br>Program Runs March 1–June 30

The 2007 Horse Incentive Program will begin March 1 and ends June 30. 4-H'ers can log hours they have spent doing horse related activities and win awesome prizes! Forms are available online at http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h or available at the extension offices. Remember, you must use the log sheets provided by the 4-H office. If you have any questions, call Jessie at 441-7180.

Upcoming Spring 4-H Free Clinics

The 4-H Horse VIPS Committee is planning two free spring clinics for 4-H Members. The first clinic will be held at the end of March. It will be a two session clinic. The first session will be on basic riding fundamentals with Felice Rose as clinician. Riding space will be limited.

The second, a clinic on showmanship, will be held in early April with Marty Cruickshank as clinician. Details on both clinics have not yet been worked out. Watch for further announcements or call Marty at 441-7180.

4-H Horse Stampede, March 10

The 2007 4-H Horse Stampede will be held on Saturday, March 10 at the Animal Science Building on UNL East Campus. The stampede is the State 4-H art, public speaking, demonstration and horse bowl competitions. If you didn’t sign up to participate this year, please come and watch. Support the competing Lancaster County 4-H’ers and see if the competitors are something you might want to do next year? No cost to attend. For more information and schedule, go to http://animalscience.unl.edu/horse/stampedeschedule.htm or call Marty at 441-7180.

4-H Horse Leaders Workshop, March 31

The 2007 4-H Horse Project Leaders Workshop will be held on Thursday, March 8, 6–8 p.m. at the Hall County Extension office, College Park, Grand Island. Topics include “Teaching the Teachers,” “Bits and Equipment—Is it legal or not?” and “Careers in the Horse Industry.” Cost is $25/person and includes lunch. More information and registration form is online at http://animalscience.unl.edu/horse/leadertraining.htm

Nearly 150 Taking E-mail Horse Course

Since the Horse Knowledge club is on hiatus this year, Lancaster County 4-H staff member Marty Cruickshank decided to offer a virtual “Horse Course.” Nearly 150 4-H’ers and family members have signed up to receive weekly lessons. With help from 4-H intern Jessie Bauman, Marty has created lessons covering basic anatomy, saddles, bits and bridles. A fun Hippology Testing party was held in late January. Elizabeth Boender placed first in the senior division and Elli Dearmont and Megan Luedtke tied for first place in the elementary division.

To sign up for the remaining lessons, contact Marty at mcruickshank2@unl.edu or 441-7180.

Speech & PSA Workshop, March 8

The 4-H Speech and Public Service Announcement (PSA) workshop has been scheduled for Thursday, March 8, 7 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherry creek Road, Lincoln. Learn tips on how to write, practice and deliver a speech or PSA! The PSA Contest will be Thursday, April 12, 6:30 p.m. and the Speech Contest will be Sunday, April 15, 1 p.m.—both will be held at the Lancaster Extension Education Center.

Contests are open to all 4-H'ers ages 8–18, need not be enrolled in a specific project.

Jammie Jamboree, April 14
Join us at the Jammie Jamboree and make jammie bottoms on Saturday, April 14, 9 a.m. Bring your own pull-on pajama bottom pattern, prewashed flannel or 100% cotton fabric (no one-way design fabrics or plaids) and matching thread. Also bring your sewing machine, basic sewing equipment such as scissors, pins, measuring tape, etc. and a sack lunch. Open to all youth (need not be in 4-H). Adults are welcome. Sign up by April 11 by calling 441-7180. Jammie bottoms may be entered at the County Fair and styled in the Style Revue.

Spring Rabbit Show

Saturday, March 31, 9 a.m.
Lancaster Event Center, Pavilion 3 Exhibit Hall

Registations 7:30–9:00 a.m.
Trophies & ribbons will be awarded!

CLASS 1: Fancy Rabbis, Commercial Rabbis, Pet Class and Pee Wee Class. REGISTRATION FEE: $5.00 per rabbit or eavy, 1st first class $10.00. No Headship.

FREE CONTESTS: Quiz Bowl & Rabbit Breed ID

All rabbits must be tattooed in the left ear and brought with bottom clips.

For more information, call Rodney at 783-3186 or Marty at 441-7180.

Sponsored by Lancaster County 4-H Rabbit VIPS Committee and Rabbit R.B. 4-H Club

Free exhibit space courtesy of Lancaster Event Center

Excellent time to learn and practice your showmanship.
Lancaster County 4-H Achievement Night was held Feb. 6 at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln College of Journalism and Mass Communications. The evening was presented by 4-H Council with generous support from UNL 4-H’ers, 4-H clubs and 4-H leaders were recognized for their 2006 achievements. Lancaster County 4-H congratulates these youth who work throughout the year on their 4-H projects and commit themselves to excellence! We also thank the 4-H leaders who volunteer their time and talents to youth!

For a complete list of award, scholarship and pin recipients (as well as additional photos) visit online at http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h

Marian Hanigan was awarded OUTSTANDING 4-H MEMBER. She has been a 4-H member for 8 years and is involved in leadership activities such as 4-H Council (currently as secretary) and 4-H Teen Council (currently as president).

The 4-H MERITORIOUS SERVICE award was presented to Cindy Fiala, who has been a dedicated 4-H volunteer for over 17 years. She has served in a variety of roles including 4-H leader, 4-H Council president, fundraising chairman for the 4-H Citizenship Washington Focus group and much more.

Before the awards presentation, City of Lincoln Mayor Coleen J. Seng proclaimed February as “Nebraska 4-H Month”.

2006 Outstanding 4-H Club Awards

The Lincoln Center Kiwanis Club presents Outstanding 4-H Club Awards to the top 4-H clubs participating in the Lancaster County Fair. There are three categories based on number of club members. One category winner is awarded the Wayne C. Farmer memorial cup as the overall Outstanding 4-H Club for the year.

Clubs receive points based on all members’ total county fair exhibit and contest placings. The following clubs were recognized at a recent Lincoln Center Kiwanis meeting as well as at 4-H Achievement Night:

**Rabbits R Us 4-H Club of Lincoln is the Category III winner (clubs with 13 or more members). The club’s 34 members were enrolled in approximately 25 projects and entered 300 total exhibits at the Lancaster County Fair. The club is winning this award for the second time. Sara Morton was club leader and there were two assistant leaders (currently Kirk Gunnerson is club leader).**

**Shimmering Shamrocks 4-H Club of Lincoln is winner of Category I (7 members or less) — and winner of the Wayne C. Farmer trophy as overall Outstanding 4-H Club for the year. At the 2006 Lancaster County Fair, the club’s five members were enrolled in approximately 25 projects and entered 125 total exhibits. The club is winning this award for the fourth time. Becky McHenry is club leader and there are five assistant leaders.**

**Cool Clovers 4-H Club of Lincoln is winner of Category II (8–12 members). The club’s 10 members were enrolled in approximately 25 projects and entered 150 total exhibits at the County Fair. The club is winning this award for the second time. Joan Pedersen is club leader.**
Lincoln’s Free Tax Preparation Services

The Human Services Federation and the Lincoln Tax Assistance EITC Campaign will provide quality free tax preparation services at sites across Lincoln through April 16. Last year community volunteers and organizations filed taxes for more than 1,700 individuals and families and returned more than $3.7 million dollars back into Lincoln’s economy. While the service is open to all taxpayers with basic individual tax returns, the campaign is specifically focused on serving people eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a special tax benefit for working people who earn low to moderate incomes. Families making under $36,000 ($38,348 married filing jointly) may be eligible for a refund of up to $4,563.

What You Need to Bring to Tax Preparation Sites

- photo ID and Social Security Card (or Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers) for yourself, your spouse and dependents (children, etc.)
- wage and earnings statements
- interest & dividend statements
- photo ID and Social Security Card (or Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers)

Eligible for a refund of up to $4,563.

University of Nebraska–Lincoln has teamed up with The Human Services Federation and the Lincoln Tax Assistance EITC Campaign to provide free tax preparation. At their “Super Site,” free child care and parking will be available.

Lincoln’s VITA Program Tax Sites and Hours

All sites provide electronic filing unless noted. No appointment necessary!

ANDERSON LIBRARY 3635 Tousain Avenue
• Wednesdays 5-8 pm
• Sundays 1:30-4 pm (e-filing classes Mar 4)

ASIAN CENTER 2615 ‘O’ Street
• Mon-Fri by appointment only, call 477-3446

BENNETT MARTIN LIBRARY 14 & N Streets
• Tuesdays 1-3:30 pm & 5:30-8 pm
• Wednesdays 1-3:30 pm (e-filing through February only)
• Sundays 1:30-4 pm (e-filing classes Mar 4)

EISELEY LIBRARY 1520 Superior Street
• Mondays 5-8 pm
• Thursdays 1-3:30 pm & 5-30-8 pm

EL CENTRO DE LAS AMERICAS 2615 ‘O’ St., Suite D
• Monday-Friday

LINCOLN ACTION PROGRAM 210 ‘O’ Street
• Mondays 5:30-8 pm
• Tuesdays 1:30-4 pm
• Fridays 9 am-11:30 am

SALVATION ARMY 28
• Tuesday, Thursday 1:30-2:30 pm
• Thursday 12-2:30 pm

US BANK 56 & O Street (use east door)
• Tuesdays 10 am-1 pm
• Wednesdays 10 am-1 pm & 5:30-8 pm
• Thursdays 10 am-1 pm
• Saturdays 9-11:30 am

UNL Super Site Offers Free Child Care and Parking

University of Nebraska–Lincoln VITA Program at 28th and ‘O’ Streets offers free tax preparation, child care and parking.

EISELEY LIBRARY
• Thursdays 1-3:30 pm & 5:30-8 pm

SALVATION ARMY
• Tuesdays 1-3:30 pm & 5:30-8 pm

US BANK
• Tuesdays 10 am-1 pm
• Thursdays 10 am-1 pm
• Saturdays 9-11:30 am

Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County

The Nebraska Extension Board of Directors has announced their selection of Deb Arends as their outstanding volunteer award winner for 2006. The award recognizes outstanding service to the local extension program and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Deb Arends has volunteered over 13 years with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension in Lincoln County.

Arend Wins Statewide Extension Volunteer Award

Deb Arends of Lancaster County was recognized with a statewide Outstanding Volunteer Award presented by the Nebraska Association of County Extension Boards (NACEB) at their annual meeting in January. NACEB presents four awards each year, with only one presented to a volunteer.

Deb Arends was recognized for her outstanding service to the extension program. She was presented the Nebraska Association of County Extension Boards’ Volunteer Award at a ceremony, Clover College, held on Monday, March 12.

Arend Wins Statewide Extension Volunteer Award

Deb Arends (center) receives the Nebraska Association of County Extension Boards (NACEB) Outstanding Volunteer Award for 2006 from NACEB President Gordon Bradley (left) and State Senator Deb Fischer (right) of Valentine.

UNL Extension in Lancaster County welcomes its newest extension board appointments. Recently appointed to a three year term is George Boal. George is a long time farmer northwest of Lincoln. Reappointed to second, three year terms were Carra Pfeil and Clarice Steffens.

New and Outgoing Lancaster County Extension Board Members

Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County welcomes its newest extension board appointments. Recently appointed to a three year term is George Boal. George is a long time farmer northwest of Lincoln. Reappointed to second, three year terms were Carra Pfeil and Clarice Steffens.

Extension board members assist extension staff in establishing and accomplishing extension program goals and objectives. The work is in partnership with UNL Extension on priority issues through educational programs in agriculture, horticulture, pest management, nutrition and food safety, family living, home environment, and 4-H youth development.

Outgoing member of the board, Jay Wilkinson was recognized during the January board meeting for his dedication and service to UNL Extension in Lancaster County.

New and Outgoing Lancaster County Extension Board Members

George Boal joined the extension board

Outgoing board member Jay Wilkinson (center) was recognized for his outstanding service to extension. Also pictured is board president Clarice Steffens (left) and Extension Educator Gary C. Bergman (right).

AREND Wins Statewide Extension Volunteer Award

Deb Arends (center) receives the Nebraska Association of County Extension Boards (NACEB) Outstanding Volunteer Award for 2006 from NACEB President Gordon Bradley (left) and State Senator Deb Fischer (right) of Valentine.
Nearby 300 Attend Special 4-H Showing of “Charlotte’s Web”

Special thanks to Lancaster County 4-H Council and Douglas Theatres for making the recent 4-H showing of “Charlotte’s Web” a success! Nearly 300 4-H members, volunteers and families attended!

Pictured: Bailee Gunnerson brought her stuffed pig to the show.
Explore Career Options at Big Red Academic Camps

The 2007 Big Red Summer Academic Camps are a chance for high school youth to spend time investigating an interest or potential career, explore the UNL campus, meet people from across the state and have lots of fun. Held in June, Big Red Summer Academic Camps features 10 career exploration camps hosted by Nebraska 4-H and UNL faculty members. The camps are residence camps held on the University of Nebraska–Lincoln campus. Housing and food are provided. After spending several fun-filled days exploring a specific topic such as movie-making or fashion design, youth showcase their work at a special “capstone event” which family members are invited to attend. Brochures and registration forms are available at http://bigredcamps.unl.edu or at the extension office. For more information and registration forms — available online at http://4h.unl.edu/camp or at the extension office.

Save 10% on 4-H Camps by Registering Before April 1!

4-H Summer Camps & Trips are open to all youth ages 5–19 — need not be in 4-H. Specializing in leadership development and team building, 4-H summer camps create positive memories which last a lifetime.

With three unique Nebraska locations at Halsey, Gretna and Alma, there are more than 40 camps ranging from half day to four days/three nights. Some camp sessions offer a range of activities while others focus on a specific theme. Most camps include one to four overnight stays in comfortable cabins. Six camps aimed at youth ages 5–8 are one-day camps and adult chaperones are invited!

UNL Extension, through its 4-H Youth Development Program, has been operating 4-H Camps for over 40 years. The 4-H camps and centers all meet over 300 standards established by the American Camping Association.

Since the Eastern Nebraska 4-H Camp near Gretna is closest to Lincoln, many Lancaster County youth attend camps there, however local youth also attend camps at the other two locations. 2007 4-H Summer Camp brochures have complete information and registration forms — available online at http://4h.unl.edu/camp or at the extension office.

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