The NEBLINE, September 2008

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Establishing and Maintaining
LAWNS IN LOW LIGHT

Don Janssen
UNL Extension Educator

Shady conditions in combination with other plant stresses contribute to the difficulty of growing grasses under trees.

Trees and shade create a pleasing environment in the landscape. However, it is difficult to grow grass under trees because the quantity and quality of the light changes in the shade. In full sun, light is in the “near red” range of wavelengths; in the shade it shifts to the “far red,” which is less effective in photosynthesis. Dense canopies, particularly those of conifers, filter out the blue component of sunlight, which is critical for plant growth. The result of these changes is a reduction in photosynthesis and its products, including carbohydrates needed for plant growth. Leaves, leaf cuticles and stems of plants are thinner in shade. Rhizome and stolon numbers decrease. Plant tissues are succulent and there is an increase in susceptibility to environmental stresses and disease. Transpired moisture from trees and grass and moisture from dew forming under trees, take longer to dissipate, and the additional moisture may contribute to an increase in disease.

Shady conditions in combination with other plant stresses contribute to the difficulty of growing grasses under trees. For example, tree roots compete with turf for water and nutrients and this competition can further weaken turf growing in shade. Allelopathic effects, such as the inhibitory effect of silver maple upon Kentucky bluegrass, are important between certain species of plants. Excessive organic matter from leaf litter will also inhibit grass. One or more of these factors make it particularly difficult to grow grass under maple and unpruned pin oak. On the other hand, grass is easier to grow under deciduous trees.

Success with growing grass in shade can be increased if the tree canopy is thinned and branches from the lower third of the tree are selectively removed. Prune trees with dense canopies, such as maples, to allow additional light to pass through to the turfgrass. Prune lower branches to a height of six feet and all the way back to the trunk or a main leader so the area under the canopy is clear. Also, trees can sometimes be removed without disrupting the harmony and function of the landscape. Thinning shrubs in the landscape will improve air circulation and lower humidity.

Select and use grasses that have improved shade tolerance. Most of the fine fescues have very good shade tolerance. The hard, sheep and Chewsings fescues are usually preferred over the other fine fescues when using a monoculture in shady locations. Turf-type tall fescues have good shade tolerance, while Kentucky bluegrass is the least shade tolerant of the cool-season grasses. Zoysiagrass and buffalograss should not be used in shady locations. In areas where shade-tolerant grasses fail, consider shade-tolerant groundcovers or mulched beds instead of grass.

Avoid excessive nitrogen fertilization, which promotes shoot growth at the expense of roots, lowers carbohydrates and promotes soft, succulent tissue that is more susceptible to disease. Shade-tolerant grasses such as the fine fescues should receive no more than 2 pounds of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet per year. Apply fertilizer in shady areas in the fall just as leaves begin to drop. Rake and remove leaves before they accumulate on turf. If fall fertilization was missed, fertilize in late winter or early spring, about a month before trees begin to leaf. Mow turf at 2-1/2 to 3 inches to allow maximum interception of reduced light by the thin turfgrass. Avoid scalping turf. Decline of turf in shade often begins after a single episode of scalping.

Irrigate only enough to avoid droughty soil conditions in shady locations during summer months. When moisture is needed, water infrequently and deeply. Avoid frequent irrigation that will lead to increased humidity and disease. Irrigate in the early morning to allow maximum time for drying. Do not water in the evening; turf may remain wet and ambient humidity may remain high throughout the night, thus increasing the chance of disease. Above all, do not overwater turf in shade. Dry conditions are always preferable to wet conditions for fescues growing in shade.

Limit traffic. Core aerify compacted areas that receive heavy traffic.

Avoid using herbicides in shady areas if weed problems do not exist. Many weeds, especially crabgrass, will not grow in shade.

Some allelopathic trees, the chemicals they produce and the plants they affect.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ALLELOPATHIC SPECIES</th>
<th>TYPE OF CHEMICAL</th>
<th>AFFECTED SPECIES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sugar Maple</td>
<td>Phenolics</td>
<td>Yellow Birch, White Spruce</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hackberry</td>
<td>Coumarins</td>
<td>Herbs, grasses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black Walnut</td>
<td>Juglone (Quinone)</td>
<td>Pinus (Austrian, Scots, red, white), Apple, Birch, Black Alder, Hackberry, Basswood, Azelios, et al.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Juniper</td>
<td>Phenolics</td>
<td>Grasses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sycamore (Planetree)</td>
<td>Coumarins</td>
<td>Yellow Birch, herbs, grasses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Cherry</td>
<td>Cyanogenic glycosides</td>
<td>Red Maple, Red Pine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oaks</td>
<td>Coumarins</td>
<td>Herbs, grasses</td>
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UNL Water Web Site

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln long has been known for its expertise on all things related to water. Now, we’re gathering much of that knowledge at one, easy-to-remember site—http://lancaster.unl.edu.

UNL research and extension experts from many water-related disciplines are working together to develop the Web site. You’ll find all kinds of information you can use in your daily life, whether you’re an ag producer, homeowner, or in some profession that requires the latest water-related expertise; whether you live in the city, in a small town or in the country.

UNL experts created and provided content for the site in such areas as soil science, horticulture, landscaping, lake and pond management, irrigation, drinking water, wastewater treatment, crop production, watershed protection, storm pond management, irrigation, drinking water, wastewater such areas as soil science, horticulture, landscaping, lake and pond management. Additional areas are being developed, including climatology, fish and wildlife, remote sensing and GIS, toxicology, economics and water law and policy.

Fending Off Asian Lady Beetles

Susan Mahr
University of Wisconsin–Madison

The multicolored Asian lady beetle is a nuisance (or worse) when they move into people’s homes or businesses in the fall and winter. The beetles often congregate on the sunnier or warmer sides of buildings in the afternoon or prominent, exposed, light-colored buildings, looking for suitable overwintering sites (in the walls or interior of the building itself). While they use visual cues to find a place initially, once at the chosen site, they then resort to chemical cues to locate the exact crevice they want to inhabit within the structure. The source of these chemical cues may be beetle feces from the previous winter, the odor of beetles that died at the site, or an attractant pheromone.

USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) scientists have found both camphor and menthol are irritants to the beetle’s chemosensory organs. These organs—like little taste buds—are so sensitive the vapors from the two compounds are enough to repel the lady beetles. Multicolored Asian lady beetles could potentially be controlled using a “push-pull” strategy. They could be “pushed” from their overwintering sites by the camphor repellent and “pulled” into traps—using chemicals that mimic the natural cues they use to identify sites—without harming them.

Landscaping for Energy

Northwesterly winter winds

When landscaping for energy efficiency, choose evergreens for the north and northwest sides of the house where they will block winter winds without limiting winter sun. Block early morning and late afternoon summer sun by planting deciduous trees to the direct south of the house where sun is so high in the sky it will shine onto the house overall but the tallest trees would block cooling, southerly breezes.

Planting B&B Plants

Many balled and burlapped (B&B) trees and shrubs are now sold wrapped in synthetic burlap that will not rot in the ground, resulting in a rootbound plant that doesn’t grow well if the burlap is left in place. Some of this material strongly resembles cotton burlap; if in doubt about the burlap’s makeup, cut it away from the root ball once the plant is in place.

Planting Peonies

Plant roots of both garden and tree peonies in September or early October so they will have time to become established in the soil before winter. Dig a hole 18 inches across and 18 inches deep for each tuber. Space the holes so the plants will be at least 3 feet apart. Make sure the roots are buried only 1 to 2 inches below ground level. Deeper planting keeps the plants from blooming.

Well Abandonments

At one time, the term “abandoned well” was used to refer to wells not being used and in a state of disrepair. Today these wells are called “illegal wells.” Illegal wells represent one of the greatest threats to groundwater and are a serious liability.

Groundwater normally is provided with some protection by a natural filter of soil, sand and gravel. Illegal wells are holes in the filter that can allow contaminants to flow directly into our groundwater supply. After contaminants enter the groundwater supply they can move with the natural ground-water flow and may show up in public or private wells used to provide drinking water.

In addition, illegal wells are a safety hazard to humans and animals. A child can easily fall into a large diameter illegal well. To reduce or eliminate these risks, Nebraska regulations require all illegal wells be decommissioned. All illegal water wells must be decommissioned following requirements of the Nebraska Health and Human Services System and must be carried out or supervised by an individual with a valid Nebraska Water Well Standards and Contractors’ license.

The decommissioning process will include removal of well equipment, disinfection, filling and sealing, capping and reporting. The price for decommissioning a well will depend on several factors including accessibility, construction technique and materials, depth and condition. Financial resources to help defray the cost of well decommissioning may be available from the Natural Resources District (NRD) serving your area.

Scrap Tire Collection

Sept. 27 & 28
9 a.m.—9 p.m.
South parking lot, Shoemakers Truckstop
NW 48 & West O Streets, Lincoln, NE
We will accept tires of all shapes and sizes with no limit, free of charge!
Sponsored by: Sanitary Improvement District (SID) #6, Emerald, NE
Misusing Mothballs

Shirley and Jack have a wildlife problem. They have mice in their garage, kitchen, and basement. Their neighbor told them he heard that mothballs will mice away. So, they bought three containers of mothballs and spread them in the garage and basement. In the kitchen, they dropped moth balls under the stove, where they had seen mouse droppings.

The next day, their 10-year-old daughter, Amanda, was coughing and wheezing. Her asthma was acting up.

Shirley wondered if Amanda’s breathing problems were related to the mothballs. She looked at the label on the mothballs and found out that mothballs should only be used in airtight containers, such as cheese or apple storage bags. The label also gave the National Pesticide Information Center (NPIC) number (1-800-858-7378) for emergency medical treatment information. She called the NPIC. The NPIC specialist told her mothballs are pesticides that come in a solid form, but, over time, volatilize and slowly go into a gas. Inhaling mothballs can result in headache, nausea, vomiting and disorientation. She also learned people like her daughter Amanda, who have previous impaired respiratory function, may be more susceptible to the adverse effects of mothballs.

What a nightmare! The next step was to remove the mothballs. The mothball label directs users to avoid skin contact so Shirley and Jack wore gloves when removing them. After all the mothballs were collected, they opened doors and windows to ventilate the house. In the kitchen, they turned on the hood fan to increase air circulation and block kitchen air outdoors.

Misunderstanding Boric Acid

Marla hates the ants, spiders and boxelder bugs that invade her house. She has been told her boric acid is a safe way to kill insects so she thinks it would be smart to put a barrier of boric acid around the outside of her home to prevent bugs from entering.

At the hardware store, she finds boric acid costs about $5 for a 12 oz. container, but she knows she will need to buy a lot of boric acid to treat the whole perimeter. She decided to call the extension office to find out where to buy boric acid in bulk.

From her local extension educator, Marla learns boric acid probably isn’t going to be effective as an outdoor barrier treatment and will likely be a waste of time and money. The boric acid label says it can be applied inside, behind appliances, in cupboards corners and in cracks and crevices. Powder visible after application must be brushed into cracks and crevices and removed. The product does not mention outdoor use.

How boric acid works.

When cockroaches walk through a dusting of boric acid, it attaches to spines on their legs and body. Cockroaches ingest boric acid as they groom themselves. It is primarily a slow-acting stomach poison. Boric acid is not very effective against spiders or insects, like boxelder bugs, which do not groom as often. An outdoor barrier of boric acid would not be effective against spiders and boxelder bugs, which are two pests Marla wants to control. In addition, humidity and rain would quickly reduce the effectiveness of boric acid outdoors. Marla was encouraged to use boric acid outdoors. She was told that sealing cracks and crevices, and preventing insects from coming indoors would be time well spent.

Exploding Foggers

A family had a bad German cockroach infestation in their small two-bedroom house. They decided to use foggers to control their cockroach infestation because they are easy to buy and use. They bought 19 foggers from the hardware store and set them off all at the same time. Fortunately, they left the house, because the water heater pilot light ignited the vapors and the resulting explosion blew the house off its foundation.

This explosion could have been prevented if only they would have read and followed the label directions. On the product label, it clearly says “PUT OUT ALL FLAMES AND PILOT LIGHTS.” The label also says to use one fogger unit to treat 6,000 cubic feet of space—equivalent to a 25’ by 30’ room. Nineteen foggers was many more than should have been used in a small house.

Take Home Messages

These are true stories and actual examples of what can happen when pesticides are used inappropriately and thoughtlessly.

Reading, understanding and following label directions helps determine where the product can be used, what pests it will control and how to use it correctly and safely. If you use the product you have in mind isn’t the truth about hedge Apples

Household Hazardous Waste Collections

These collections are for household only; not for businesses. Only residents of Lincoln and Lancaster County can bring items to collections.

Saturday, Sept. 20, 9 a.m.–1 p.m. Veyance Technologies (Goodyear) 4021 North 56 St., includes Usable Latex Point Exchange

Friday, Oct. 17, 3–7 p.m. Waverly County Shop, 1125 North 141 St.

Saturday, Oct. 18, 9 a.m.–1 p.m. Lincoln Industries, 600 West E St.

Saturday, Nov. 15, 9 a.m.–1 p.m. State Fair Park (4-H Youth Complex)

Some items you can bring for disposal: Thermometers, thermostats containing mercury, solvents, oil-based paint, paint thinner, pesticides, (even banned products like DDT), items containing PCB’s (ballasts from fluorescent fixtures and capacitors from old appliances). Compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFL’s) contain mercury and will be accepted. On Sept. 20 only, you may bring Your State’s (Lincoln County) Hazardous Waste Drop Off

Do not bring: asbestos, tires, batteries, used oil, antifreeze, medicines, fertilizers, explosives and ammunition.

Still unsure what you have will be acceptable? Call the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department at 441-8040.
Freezing Sandwiches

This is some of the information people will receive at the free workshop on "Freezing Meals for Future Use" on Sept. 11 (see below for details).

Some common sandwich fillings that DO not freeze well include:
- Hard-cooked egg whites (freezing toughens them)
- Jellied or jam (soaks into bread and makes it soggy)
- Tomatoes, lettuce, pickles, onions, etc. become limp when thawed; they can be added to thawed sandwiches just before eating them.

IMPORTANT: "Salad dressings," such as Miracle Whip, work better as a binder in sandwich fillings than mayonnaise. Mayonnaise tends to separate on thawing. In comparison to mayonnaise, a Miracle Whip-type salad dressing tends to have a sweeter, tangier flavor, so experiment to see how you like the result before making a freezer full of sandwiches.

Basic steps in Assembling, Freezing and Thawing Sandwiches

1. For sandwiches where the filling might soak into the bread, spread a thin layer of soft butter or margarine to the edges of the sides of bread that will be the "insides" of the sandwich. DO NOT use melted margarine or butter. NOTE: Bread that is at least a day-old may be slightly firmer and easier to spread.

2. Make your sandwiches "assembly line" fashion, completing one step for all sandwiches before moving on to the next step.

3. A quick way to freeze sandwiches is to:
   a) Place them in self-sealing plastic sandwich bags, labeling the bag with the date and type of sandwich. Squish out as much air as possible before sealing them.
   b) Lay them in a single layer in the freezer on a cookie sheet or other flat surface and freeze them for about an hour until they hold their shape. Then place the sandwich bags in a larger freezer-quality bag, such as a gallon freezer bag. Squish out extra air before sealing. The thin sandwich bags aren't satisfactory for maintaining food quality during longer-term freezer storage.

4. Use frozen sandwiches within 1 to 3 months for best flavor and quality.

5. Thaw individual sandwiches in their sandwich bag or open wrapping in the refrigerator. Transfer them to the refrigerator the day before you plan to eat them.

6. To keep perishable sandwich foods like meats and cheeses cold, pack them in an insulated lunch bag or lunch box; include a small frozen gel pack. Or, if there's a refrigerator available, store perishable items there upon arrival.

7. Add tomato, onion slices, lettuce, a squirt or dab of horseradish, pickles, etc. before eating them. A small container or snack-size plastic bag of these add-ons can be packed with a sack lunch.

Some common sandwich fillings that DO freeze well include:
- Peanut butter and other nut butters
- Canned tuna and salmon
- Cooked roast beef, chicken and turkey (especially tasty when the meat is finely chopped and mixed with "salad dressing," such as Miracle Whip, to add flavor and moistness)
- Natural or processed hard and semi-hard cheeses, such as Swiss, Cheddar. NOTE: As frozen cheese may crumble more after thawing, you may be more satisfied with the result if you grate it before freezing it in sandwiches.

Other suggestions for make-ahead foods include:
- 2 slices bread
- 2 to 3 teaspoons salad dressing, such as Miracle Whip
- Soft butter or margarine (do not use melted form), about 2 teaspoons

Directions: Mix beef, chicken or turkey with Miracle Whip-type salad dressing. Spread a thin layer of soft butter or margarine to the edges of the sides of bread that will be the "insides" of the sandwich. Top one of each pair of sandwich bread slices with meat mixture; spread almost to the edges. Follow directions in previous section: "Basic steps in assembling and freezing sandwiches."

Ingredients for EACH sandwich:

Frozen Beef, Chicken or Turkey Sandwich

- The same basic recipe may be used for all these frozen meat sandwiches. Make extra beef roast, chicken or turkey or use leftovers of these foods for frozen sandwiches
- Use the leftovers within a day or two of preparing the original food. Then add your own toppings, such as lettuce, condiments, etc. just before eating the sandwich.

Ingredients for EACH sandwich:

Fried Cheese Sandwich (for grilling)

Use this basic recipe for your frozen tuna or salmon salad sandwiches. Then, just before serving the thawed sandwiches, pop in such additions as: tomato slices; pickle relish; lettuce; a slice of cheese; thin slice of your favorite onion; chopped red, green or yellow peppers or a few pepper rings; fresh basil leaves. NOTE: Check for water-packed versions of tuna and salmon. The same basic recipe may be used for all these frozen meat sandwiches. Make extra tuna or salmon salad mixture. Spread a thin layer of soft butter or margarine to the edges of the sides of bread that will be the "insides" of the sandwich. Top one of each pair of bread slices with tuna/salmon mixture; spread almost to the edges. Follow directions in previous section: "Basic steps in assembling and freezing sandwiches."

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Ingredients for EACH sandwich:

Freezing Meals for Future Use

Thursday, Sept. 11, 7–8:30 p.m.
Plaza Conference Center, BryanLGH Medical Center East, 1600 S. 48th Street, Lincoln

How would you like to come home and have most of your meal already prepared? Or, perhaps, you’d like to avoid staying up late or getting up early to fix food for a special event? Alice Henneman, extension educator and registered dietitian with UNL Extension in Lancaster County, will teach you how to freeze foods for future use.

You’ll receive an extensive booklet giving specific freezing directions for common foods. Plus, you’ll receive several recipe ideas for make-ahead foods. No cost to attend.

Register by calling BryanLGH at 481-8886.

Ingredients for EACH sandwich:

- Mayonnaise, a Miracle Whip-type salad dressing tends to have a sweeter, tangier flavor, so experiment to see how you like the result before making a freezer full of sandwiches.

Food & Fitness

September 2008

http://lancaster.unl.edu
Parents coaching young athletes to be good sports

As parents of athletes, we love to watch our children play in games and want to support them to achieve success in every play of each game. We sit on the edge of our seats waiting for the next moment in time when our child goes into the game and the team works together like a well oiled machine. At the same time, it’s hard for us to walk the fine line between being supportive and becoming over-involved.

Parenting tips:
1) Expect and reinforce sportsmanship with your child. Point out and reward good sportsmanship. Have a plan for dealing with poor sportsmanship.
2) Model sportsmanship. Describe how you personally show sportsmanship. As action plans, educational activities, training materials and more.
3) Help your child remember to play. Discuss both the competitive and fun parts of involvement. Discuss the fun that comes from doing their best, performing well and spending time with friends—regardless of the outcome of the event.
4) Discuss the headlines. When you watch TV or read the newspaper, point out actions related to sportsmanship. Ask your child what they think the athletes or competitors would say. Have a discussion about the messages.
5) Read books together with a sportsmanship theme. Particularly younger children, you can use this time to discuss examples of good sportsmanship and poor sportsmanship behaviors.
6) Reflect. Use the language of sportsmanship (respect, integrity, responsibility, fairness) with your child when discussing practice and games. Ask them to think about why they had a bad or good game and what role sportsmanship played.

Sportsmanship checklist
- I abide by the rules of the event.
- I try to avoid arguments.
- I share in the responsibilities of the team.
- I give everyone a chance to play according to the rules.
- I always play fair.
- I follow the directions of the coach/leader.
- I respect the other team’s effort.
- I offer encouragement to my teammates.
- I accept the judgment calls of the officials or judges.
- I end the competition smoothly and graciously—win or lose.

Sportsmanship is the ability to:
- Win without gloating (don’t rub it in)
- Lose without complaining (don’t make excuses)
- Treat your opponent, your teammates and the officials/judges with respect.

Great fans. Great sports.™ Sportsmanship checklist

FCE News & Events

Re-organizational Packets

Presidents of FCE clubs can pick up their packet to reorganize for 2009 after Aug. 22. The next FCE President deadline is Jan. 22, 7 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center. The membership meeting will follow the program. All FCE members are invited to attend.

Leader Training, Sept. 25

The FCE and community leader training lesson “Long Term Care: What Is It, Where Do You Pay For It?” will be Thursday, Sept. 25, 1 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center. Extension Educator Lori Bartos will present the lesson which will provide leaders with knowledge of care methods, cost of care, how services are financed, as well as who provides care to our nation’s elderly and disabled adult citizens. If you are not an FCE member and would like to attend call Pam at 441-7180 so informational packets can be prepared.

Achievement Night, Oct. 27

The 2008 FCE Achievement Night will be held at the Lancaster Extension Education Center on Monday, Oct. 27, starting with dessert at 6:30 p.m. Everyone is invited to bring canned food or paper products for the annual FCE Food Bank Campaign. Gloria Hall of Palmyra will present a program “Gramma’s Aprons.” Clubs and members will be recognized for years of membership. If you plan to attend, please call the extension office at 441-7180 and leave your name at the front desk.

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Choosing Small Grains for Early-Season Grazing in the Spring

Small grains commonly planted for use as forage are wheat, rye, and triticale. Let’s look at some of the characteristics of each crop to help you select the one that meets your needs.

**Rye** is your best choice for the earliest pasture possible. It also may be the best match for double cropping to another crop after the rye has been grazed out. Some varieties of rye provide quite a bit of fall growth, if planted early. Rye also may be the most reliable when planted under stressful conditions. But rye has some drawbacks. It turns stemmy and matures much earlier than wheat or triticale, losing feed value and palatability earlier in the spring. One caution is if the field is planted to wheat next spring. One caution is if the field is planted to wheat next year, there is a risk of volunteer rye contaminating the wheat crop.

**Triticale** holds on to its feed value into late spring. This makes it well suited for hay and silage, or for stretching grazing well into June if you don’t mind starting the grazing season two or three weeks later than rye. Triticale also tends to be a bit more susceptible to winter injury than rye.

**Winter wheat** has been the small grain of choice for winter and spring grazing in the southern plains where higher winter temperatures allow some growth to continue all winter long. In Nebraska where wheat goes dormant, though, its carrying capacity is not as high as triticale or rye. But the forage value is top quality before stems develop. And it’s the clear choice if you want the double use of pasturing early then letting it grow and produce grain.

There it is. Rye for early pasture, triticale for hay, silage and later grazing and wheat for forage plus grain. You may have other factors affecting your choice, but in general, these guidelines work well.

Tom Dorn
UNL Extension Educator
Aster Yellows on Purple Coneflower

Do the flowers on your purple coneflower look weird? If yes, your coneflowers may be suffering from a common disease called aster yellows. Aster yellows causes chlorosis or yellowing of the plant, stunting of irregular growth, and distortion of the flower head. This unusual growth is often mis-diagnosed as herbicide damage. Aster yellows is a disease that is carried from plant to plant by insects and survives winter in infected plant material. To manage aster yellows, all infected plants should be removed from the garden and destroyed. There are no chemical treatments available for aster yellows. Since the disease can also survive in neighboring weeds, it is important to maintain good weed control in and around your garden.

Among the “What’s wrong with my tree?” calls, some of the most interesting deal with a phenomenon called reversion. When a conifer or hardwood tree with an unusual ornamental characteristic begins to send out shoots with normal foliage or growth for the species, the new growth is said to have reverted. How does a reversion take place? Many ornamental cultivars begin when an alert plantperson notices a tree or part of a tree with a unique growth characteristic, like unusual leaf color or weeping growth habit. These atypical plants or shoots arise through genetic mutation. Buds or cuttings from the plants are then grafted onto standard trees and, if they remain true to form and have horticultural merit, they ultimately make their way into the nursery trade, just as the original genetic mutation occurred to produce the unique character. Occasionally a reverse mutation occurs and portions of the plant ‘revert’ back the species’ normal growth. Some of the more common examples of reversion occur in dwarf spruces and variegated plants such as Harlequin maple. In the case of dwarf spruces, homeowners will often report “a tree growing out of my tree.” When a reversion occurs, it is time to follow the advice of Harlequin maple coloration. When a reversion occurs, it is time to follow the advice of “a tree growing out of my tree.” When a reversion occurs, it is time to follow the advice of the wise TV sage, Barney Fife, and “Nip it, nip it in the bud!”

American Hophornbeam

The Great Plants program is a joint effort of the Nebraska Nursery & Landscape Association and the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum that selects and promotes exceptional plants. These plants are reliably hardy, easy to care for and ornamental.

2008 Great Plants

Ostrya virginiana, American Hophornbeam. A graceful, medium-sized native tree with horizontal branches forming an interesting zig-zag pattern. Hops-like fruits in summer; heart-shaped leaves are soft to the touch and change to a mild yellow in the fall. It is slow-growing until established and resistant to snow, ice, insects and disease. It occurs naturally as an under story tree along the Mississippi River and up into the Niobrara river valley and grows best in part shade away from hot, wind swept areas and salted winter roads but can also be grown in full sun. Grows to 40 feet high and 20 to 25 feet wide.

2008 Shrub

Eumonymus alatus, The Wahoo. This native shrub is also referred to as a burning bush with its orange/ red fall color and attractive rosy-pink fruit capsules that persist into winter. But do not confuse this plant with the common winged euonymus, Horned maple frequently reverts from white-edged foliage back to normal Norway maple coloration. Dwarf Alberta spruce occasionally revert to normal white spruce.

Trees Reverting

The Nebraska Statewide Arboretum that selects and promotes exceptional plants. These plants are reliably hardy, easy to care for and ornamental.

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September

Harry Muhlbach

Lancaster County 4-H is proud to announce Harry Muhlbach as winner of September’s “Heart of 4-H Award” in recognition of outstanding volunteer service.

Harry joined 4-H 50 years ago and has volunteered with 4-H for more than 40 years. He started volunteering in Buffalo County and has been a Lancaster County 4-H volunteer for 27 years. He is currently swine project leader with the Rock Creek Ranchers 4-H club and 4-H Swiss Superintendent at the Lancaster County Fair.

Harry says, “I like being a 4-H volunteer because it’s a very good organization which helps kids build a good background for their future in society. They learn what can be done if they want it. My favorite experience was at the county fair, watching the next generation of family members start to show animals.”

His eight children and some of his step-children are 4-H alumni. Two of Harry’s grandchildren are members of the Rock Creek Ranchers. In addition to volunteering for 4-H, Harry works with the Raymond Volunteer Department.

Congratulations to Harry. Volunteers like him are indeed the heart of 4-H! Nominate your favorite 4-H volunteer by submitting the form available online at http://lancaster.unl.edu or at the extension office. Nominations of co-volunteers welcome.

4-H Leader Update, Oct. 2

Leaders, parents and interested volunteers are encouraged to attend a 4-H Leader Update on Thursday, Oct. 2 at 9:30 a.m. or 7 p.m. Discover all the opportunities available for your 4-H members and prepare for the next 4-H year. Awards, project completion/selection, club reorganization, the Diamond Clover Program and Career Portfolio will be covered. Bring your questions and ideas! You must RSVP by calling 441-7180 by Sept. 30.

2010 4-H Washington Group Forming

Any Lancaster County youth age 14-18 can join 4-H Citizenship Washington Focus (CWF), a summer citizenship program which culminates in a nine-day, intensive trip to Washington D.C. in June 2010. CWF delegates learn about the democratic process and their role as citizens. We will also take a few more days to discover the wonders of New York City. Youth who sign up now are able to start earning funds through organized fund-raising. A $100 deposit is needed to reserve your spot. For more information, contact Deanna Karmazin at 441-7180.

State Horse Expo Results

Chelsea Beach earned Reserve Champion in Junior Western Horsemanship. Alex Scheideler earned Reserve Champion in Trail and Western Riding.

The 2008 Fonner Park State 4-H Horse Exposition was held July 13–17 at Grand Island. Below are the top Lancaster County 4-H placings. Complete results are online at http://4h.unl.edu/horseshow

Horse Awards Night, Oct 7

The annual Lancaster County 4-H Horse Awards Night will be Tuesday, Oct. 7, 7 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherry Creek Road, Lincoln. Awards presentation includes Incentive Awards, Horsemanship Levels, Horse Course Challenge, All-Around Awards, Heredity Award, Top County Fair Judging buckles and ribbons, and a few surprise awards! The evening includes a pot luck dinner. Please bring a meat dish and either a salad or dessert and your own table service. Drinks will be provided. Come help celebrate the outstanding accomplishments of the 2008 Lancaster County 4-H Horsemen!

District Horse Show Addition

The August NIBENTRY list Lancaster County 4-H purple ribbon winners and top awards in the District Horse Shows. The following 4-H’er should have been included:

Brooke Preston
Western Horsemanship 15 & Up Champion Trophy
Western Pleasure 15 & Up Medal Winner

Horse Level Testing, Sept.27

Attention all Lancaster County 4-H horse riders! All riding skills level tests must be done in group testing! All testing will be held at the Lancaster County Event Center (Pavilion 2 - Warm-up Arena). Last 2008 date is Saturday, Sept. 27 at 9 a.m. Please RSVP at least one week in advance of the test date to Marty at mcruickshank2@unl.edu or 441-7180.

Horse Bits

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The 2008 4-H Presentation Contest was held on July 19 at the Lancaster County Fair. Part of the Lancaster County Fair, the contest provides 4-Hers the opportunity to learn to express themselves clearly and convincingly, organize their ideas and present them in logical order, research subjects, have confidence in themselves & carry out the major points through the use of visuals or examples. Top winners were: Premier Presenter - Erika Warner; Junior Top Presenter - Jaime Stephenson; Senior Top Presenter - Jessica Stephenson. Congratulations to all who participated!

**Presentation Contest Top Winners**

- **4-H Static Exhibit Top Awards**
- **4-H Thanks Sponsors**
- **4-H and Youth**

**Lancaster County Fair**

Lancaster County Fair 4-H results and photos are on the web at http://lancaster.unl.edu

**4-H Static Exhibit Top Awards**

**GENERAL**
Poster: Jaime Stephenson
Runner: All American Kids
Quilt: Faith Leid

**PHOTOGRAPHY**
Photography Unit 1: Austin Lowell
Photography Unit 2: Cassie Galbe
Photography Unit 3: Grace Farley
Photography Entrant: Cassie Galbe
Photography-best Nebraska Theme: Grace Farley

**HOME ENVIRONMENT**
Home Environment: Josie Maucks, Carlie Reineke and Rebecca DeNell
Child Development: Rachel Hanigan

**CLOTHING**
Crochet: Helen Dowd
Knitting: Bethany Hope
Clothing Level 1: Caleb Nielsen
Clothing Level 2: Jaime Stephenson
Advanced Level: Jessica Stephenson
In memory of Your Dutte: Bailey Gardner

**FOOD AND NUTRITION**
Cakes and Pie: Jesse Smith
Fruit Preservation: Christina Mayer
Cookies/Bars: Ashlyn Cooper
Yeast Bread: Michelle Fry

**ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY**
Rocket: Don Cashburn
Woodworking: Andrew Cashburn
Safety: Caitlin Davis

**CONSERVATION & OUTDOOR EDUCATION**
Forestry: Grace Farley
Conservation and Wildlife: Koral Gumerson

**Presentation Contest Top Winners**

- **Premier Presenter**
- **Junior Top Presenter**
- **Senior Top Presenter**

**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 throughout the past year. This support enhances the educational experience of the 4-H youth.

**4-H Thanks Sponsors**

- **4-H Friends**
- **4-H Youth Development**
- **4-H Supportive Equipment**
- **4-H Volunteers**

**Schedule of Events**

TUESDAY, SEPT. 23
Horse Western & Speed Events: 8:30 a.m.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 24
Horse English Events: 8:30 a.m.

THURSDAY, SEPT. 25
Syringa Gift Show: 7:30 a.m.
Milk Goat Show: 7:30 a.m.

SUNDAY, SEPT. 27
Syringa Gift Show: 7:30 a.m.
Beekeeping: 7:30 a.m.
Purple Ribbon Auction: 6 p.m.

**Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Youth Expo, Sept. 23–28**
This is the 8th Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Youth Livestock Expo will be held Sept. 23–28 at the Qwest Center in Omaha. More than 2,000 4-H families from an eight-state area participate in this Expo. Categories of this 4-H only competition are dairy, feeder calf & breeding beef, horse, market beef, market broilers, meat goats, market lamb, market swine and breeding swine. For more information, go to http://aksarben.org/4-H

**Thank You to Volunteers**
University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County would thank all of the people who donate their time and talents to help enrich the lives of the youth in the Lancaster County 4-H youth development program.
September is National Preparedness Month

The summer storms highlight the importance of being prepared for an emergency. The Department of Homeland Security asks individuals to do three key things during National Preparedness Month:
1. Get an emergency supply kit;
2. Make a family emergency plan; and
3. Be informed about the different types of emergencies that could occur and their appropriate responses.

National Preparedness Month is a nationwide effort to encourage Americans to take simple steps to prepare for emergencies in their homes, businesses and schools.

A national survey conducted by The Ad Council in August 2007 found that 54% of households have an emergency kit and 37% have created a family emergency plan. Keep your family safe by implementing these suggestions.

Get a Kit
When preparing for a possible emergency situation, it’s best to think first about what you’ll need to survive:
- fresh water, food, air, and warmth.

Recommended items to include in a basic emergency supply kit:
• Water, one gallon of water per person per day for at least 3 days, for drinking and sanitation
• Food, at least a 3-day supply of non-perishable food
• Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both
• Flashlight and extra batteries
• First aid kit
• Whistle to signal for help
• Battery-powered or hand crank radio
• Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each
• Households bleach and medicine dropper – when diluted nine parts household liquid bleach per gallon of water. Do not use scented, color safe or bleaches
• Infant formula and diapers
• Prescription medications and glasses
• Pets and their food and water

Emergency information: Find out what kinds of disasters, both natural and man-made, are most likely to occur in your area and how you will be notified. Methods of getting your attention vary from community to community.

Emergency plans: You may also want to inquire about emergency plans at places where your family spends time: work, daycare and school. If no plans exist, consider volunteering to help create one. Talk to your neighbors about how you can work together in the event of an emergency. You will be better prepared to safely reunite your family and loved ones during an emergency if you think ahead and communicate with others in advance.

Be Informed
Some of the things you can do to prepare for the unexpected, such as making an emergency supply kit and developing a family communications plan, are the same for both a natural or man-made emergency.

However, there are important differences among potential emergencies that will impact the decisions you make and the actions you take. Learn more about the potential emergencies that could happen where you live and the appropriate way to respond to them.

In addition, learn about the emergency plans that have been put into place in your area by your state and local government.

Emergency preparedness is no longer the sole concern of earthquake prone Californians and those who live in the path of the country known as “Tornado Alley.” For Americans, preparedness must now account for man-made disasters as well as natural disasters. Knowing what to do during an emergency is an important part of being prepared and may make all the difference when seconds count.

Individuals can visit www.ready.gov or call 1-800-BE-READY for information about emergency preparedness.

Get Involved
Get involved in preparing your community. Citizen Corps, Homeland Security’s grassroots effort, provides opportunities for citizens to get emergency response training; participate in community exercises; and volunteer to support local first responders. To learn more and to get involved contact www.citzenscorp.gov or contact Volunteer Partners at 435-2100 or director@volunteerpartners.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Go to the national Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN) on the Web at eden.lsu.edu/rpm — topic-specific resources include:
• Children and Youth
• Multi-cultural
• Resources and Collaborators
• Business Preparedness

Enter Disaster Preparedness Challenge to Win Prizes!
Get Points for Activities Done in September

Eligibility Information:
1. You must live, work or attend school in Lancaster County, Nebraska to participate and be eligible for prizes.
2. Individuals, families, classrooms, or workgroups are eligible to participate.
3. Only one entry per individual, family, classroom or workgroup.

Prizes will include:
• Weather Radio with batteries
• Carbon Monoxide Detector with batteries
• Snorkel Detector with batteries
• Drop Ladder (for fire escape from 2nd floor)
• Assembled Disaster Preparedness Kit
• First Aid kit
• First Extinguisher
• Car Disaster Preparedness Kit

Prize winners will be notified by mail or phone. Grand prize winners will be announced in Octo- ber. Grand prize winners will be invited to grand prize winners. Individuals need not be present to win. Please keep this portion of the scoreboard for information on prize drawing.

Directions:
1. Give yourself one point for each completed activity.
2. Total your points at the end of each week. (4 point maximum per week)
3. On September 28, 2008, add up the total points for the 3 weeks (12 point maximum).
4. If you have accumulated at least 8 points, return your scorable to be eligible for the 2008 Disaster Preparedness Challenge drawing.
5. You can use your scorable on the dotted line and mail to the address below. All scorecards must be postmarked or delivered by September 30, 2008. Be eligible for prize drawings. Mail to:
Lancaster County Extension
Arie: Lorene Burton
44 Cherrybrook Road, Suite A
Lincoln, NE 68526-1597

Scorecard:
Scorecard:

Name: __________________________ __________ __________ __________________________
Home Address: __________________________ __________ __________ __________________________
City: __________________________ __________ __________ __________________________
Zip Code: __________________________ __________ __________ __________________________
Phone Number: __________________________ __________ __________ __________________________
How did you participate: Individual Family Classroom Workgroup Other:
Number in your group: __________________________ __________ __________ __________________________
Total Points Scored: __________________________ __________ __________ __________________________

Activity (1 point per activity):
Week 1 (September 8 – September 14)
1. Start your Disaster Kit by purchasing a plastic tub and getting 2 items from the list above.
2. Make a sign for your refrigerator that identifies the difference between a tornado watch and warning and what you should do for each.
3. Discuss and review with your family what you will do in case of torn, tornado, flood, or other types of disaster.
4. Organize important documents and place in a safe location (i.e. safe deposit box, social security card, marriage license, passport, etc.).
5. Practice a mock tornado drill.
6. Put something fun to do in your Disaster Kit to do while taking shelter. i.e. board game, coloring book and crayons, card game, etc.

Week 2 (September 15 – September 21)
1. Add at least 3 more items from the list above to your Disaster Kit.
2. Set up a personal emergency plan and include 7 items from the list above.
3. Leave your personal emergency plan with all family members. A copy should be stored in your Disaster Kit.
4. Practice a mock tornado drill.

Week 3 (September 22 – September 28)
1. Add at least 3 more items from the list above to your Disaster Kit.
2. Practice a mock fire drill, making sure you have a designated spot to meet your family.

3. Check batteries in your smoke detectors or install a smoke detector or carbon monoxide detector.
4. Complete the disaster preparedness survey online at www.ready.gov/cps/ (click on “Are You Ready?” button)

Scorecards can be completed and mailed at any time throughout the month. Participants can earn points for activities done in September.
STRENGTHENING FAMILY TREASURES

Daughter/Mother Camp

A retreat designed for 6th grade girls and their mothers (or grandmothers or other adult females)

Friday, Oct. 10, 5 p.m. to Saturday, Oct. 11, 5 p.m.

This camp is 2 days and 1 night of fun, educational and confidence-building activities. As the teen years approach, this is an opportunity to:

- Enhance effective communication including expressing emotions
- Learn more about body image and sexuality
- Explore techniques to handle peer pressure and stress
- Discuss the importance of individual family values

Cost includes meals, snacks and lodging at Eastern 4-H Center near Gretna. Fee is $125 per pair.

Presented by UNL Extension. For more information or a registration form, go to http://lancaster.unl.edu/family/guf.shtml or call Extension Educator Maureen Burson at 441-7180.

4-H Foundation Trail Ride, Oct. 10–12

The 18th annual 4-H Foundation Charity Trail Ride will be held Oct. 10–12. Savor the outdoors riding trails in the Nebraska National Forest near Halsey. Enjoy meals, activities and entertainment at the Nebraska State 4-H Camp. Details are online at http://4h.unl.edu/foundation/trailride.htm

The Nebl ine

Tt Nblnke is published monthly (except December) and mailed to more than 11,000 households in Lancaster County. Tt Nblnke articles may be reprinted without special permission if the source is acknowledged as “University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County.” If the article contains a byline, please include the author’s name and title.

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EXPAND THE POWER OF N

All programs and events will be held at the Lancaster Extension Education Center unless otherwise noted.

August

Aug. 22–Sept. 1 NEBRASKA STATE FAIR, State Fair Park, Lincoln

September

2 4-H Council Meeting ................................................. 7 p.m.
11 Parents Forever/Kids Talk About Divorce ...................... 5:30–9:30 p.m.
11 Freezing Meals for Future Use Workshop, Plaza Conference Center, Bryan/LGH Medical Center East, 1600 S. 48th St., Lincoln . 7–8:30 p.m.
12 Extension Board Meeting ...................................... 8 a.m.
14 4-H Teen Council Meeting ..................................... 3 p.m.
22 Family & Community Education (FCE) Council Meeting ........... 7 p.m.
23 Guardian/Conservator Training ................................. 1:30–4:30 p.m.
23 55 ALIVE Driver Safety Course ......................... 12:30–4:30 p.m.
24 55 ALIVE Driver Safety Course ......................... 12:30–4:30 p.m.
25 Family & Community Education (FCE) & Community Leader Training Lesson: “What Is It, Where Do You Get It and How Do You Pay for It?” ............................................. 1 p.m.
25–28 Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Livestock Exposition, Qwest Center, Omaha

27 4-H Horse Level Testing, Lancaster Event Center Pavilion 2 - Warm-up Arena ......................... 9 a.m.
27 Composting Demonstration, Pioneers Park Nature Center’s Backyard Composting Demonstration Area ............ 10 a.m.–Noon

Make It With Wool Contest, Deadline Sept. 27

This contest offers both youth and adults the opportunity to promote the beauty and versatility of wool fabric and yarn. Personal creations in sewing, knitting, crocheting, spinning and weaving of wool fabric, yarn is encouraged. Categories and ages for this contest are: Preteen, 12 & under; Junior, 13–16; Senior, 17–24; Adult, 25 & over; Made for Others (any age). The District III contest will be held at the Nebraska National Forest near Halsey. Enjoy meals, activities and entertainment at the Nebraska State 4-H Camp. Details are online at http://4h.unl.edu/foundation/trailride.htm

Extension is a Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln cooperating with the Counties and the United States Department of Agriculture.

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Conference Facilities
444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln

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Make It with Wool Contest, Deadline Sept. 27.
4-H’ers Showcase Projects at Lancaster County Fair

The 2008 Lancaster County Fair was held Aug. 6–10 at the Lancaster Event Center. Total attendance was estimated at approximately 73,700—a seven percent increase from last year. A total 4,467 4-H/FFA exhibits were showcased (includes static exhibits, Clover Kids exhibits, animals and contest entries). Extension Associate Deanna Karmazin said, “It was inspiring to see that our largest classes of livestock were shown by junior members (8 to 10 years old).” This indicates our 4-H livestock program is in a growing trend.

This past year, the Lancaster Event Center’s Phase II Expansion plan has been underway. A new Pavilion 3 with large arena was completed in time for the county fair Open Class and 4-H Dressage horse shows to be held there, as well as the 4-H Roping/Working Ranch horse show. Construction continues on a building enclosing the Amy Countryman Arena.

“There is something wonderful,” said Extension Associate Marty Cruickshank, “it is large with high ceilings and great ventilation which makes it light and airy. The Event Center brought in Bob Keiser of Keiser Arena Specialists who designs arenas all over the country. He spent days working with staff and finding the right dirt. The Event Center also purchased a Kaiser laser level arena tool, so the footing in the arena is incredible, making it a pleasure to show in.”

Complete 4-H ribbon results, many more photographs and some videos are online at http://lancaster.unl.edu

The 4-H Dog Agility show utilized new equipment purchased with a recent 2008 Governor’s Agricultural Excellence Award.

U.S. Drought Monitor Map

As of August 12, Lancaster County was not in drought conditions.

Can You Guess It?

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

The answer was Eastern Cottontail Rabbit

Lancaster 4-H partnered with many afterschool summer sites to provide a county fair-related curriculum with hands-on activities which could be done before the fair. The groups were then invited to tour the county fair.

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension 4-H Youth Development program is open to all youth ages 5–18

Learn about 4-H!

4-H Kick Off

Thursday, Oct. 9

O&A! 6 p.m. Prizes!

Come Find Out How to Join 4-H!

Help form a new 4-H club
Be an independent member
Join an existing 4-H club (limited availability)
Participate in 4-H activities such as camps

4-H’ers will share completed projects!

4-H is a learn-by-doing program with more than 150 projects from which to choose. Youth learn practical skills and develop life skills!

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