11-2009

The NEBLINE, November-December 2009

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4-H SCHOLARSHIPS
More than $5,000 in college scholarships are available to Lancaster County 4-H’ers! Applications are due Jan. 2 —see page 8

4-H AWARDS
Lancaster County 4-H awards a variety of honors to members, volunteers and supporters. Applications are due Jan. 2 —see page 8

MyPyramid Pizza Snacks

- Whole Wheat English Muffins
- Pizza Sauce
- Shredded Mozzarella Cheese
- Turkey Pepperoni slices
- Crushed Pineapple
- Chopped Green Pepper

Preheat the oven to the broiler setting.

Put each ingredient into a separate bowl or container and line up on a table with measuring spoons in each bowl or container.

Start with a half of an English muffin and then move down the table and create an individual pizza — in an assembly line fashion — in the order above.

Bake in the oven under the broiler for 3–5 minutes, or until cheese is melted and golden brown. (Watch the pizzas towards the back of the oven — they tend to brown faster and can burn; rotate the baking sheet mid-way, if needed.)

Black Bean Salsa

- 1 can (15 ounces) black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 (11 ounces) whole kernel corn with peppers, drained
- 1 medium mango, peeled and seeded, or frozen mango chunks, cut in cubes
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin

In a medium bowl, combine all ingredients. Serve with Baked Pita Chips.

Baked Pita Chips

- 1 large pita bread, split and cut into wedges

Spray pita wedges with olive oil spray. Sprinkle with garlic powder, oregano and parmesan cheese. Bake 8–10 minutes at 350°F.

The recipes below are demonstrated in middle school classrooms.

Middle School Youth on a “Nutrition Mission”

Karen Wobig
UNL Extension Educator

Empowering youth with the knowledge of how to lead healthy lifestyles — including good nutrition — carries into their adulthood. The outcome can result in fewer health issues and lower health care costs.

For several years, University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County Nutrition Education Program (NEP) has offered 4-H School Enrichment nutrition kits for grades K–5 to income-eligible elementary schools. Developed by NEP staff, these supplemental kits of hands-on educational experiences are designed to enhance the Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) health curriculum.

Since 2000, 2,957 students have participated in NEP’s school enrichment program and teachers have recorded 15,235 hours of teaching nutrition using the kits. During these nine years, the USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly Food Stamps) has matched the value of teacher hours, bringing more than $680,000 into the Lincoln community.

With the goal of providing continuity for youth nutrition education, NEP staff recently developed curriculum and nutrition kits for grades 6–8 titled “Nutrition: Mission Possible.” Kit materials include:

- Teacher curriculum
- Experiments
- Interactive games
- Video
- Posters
- Worksheets and handouts

Family and Consumer Science (FCS) or Health teachers at qualifying middle schools can request a kit, which is delivered see NUTRITION MISSION on next page

The Nutrition Education Program (NEP) school enrichment kit for grades 6–8, titled “Nutrition: Mission Possible,” contains curriculum and materials to teach hands-on, nutrition educational experiences.
Roasts – Easy to Make for the Holidays and Any Other Time, Too!

Sit-down dinners and special occasions aren’t only about turkey! There are many other types of roasts that become the stars of the dinner table. Use these guidelines to “make the most of your roast”…safely.

Cooking Your Roast
Roasting is the recommended method for cooking tender meats. To roast, meat is placed on a rack in a shallow, uncovered pan and is cooked by the indirect, dry heat of an oven. To keep the meat tender and minimize shrinkage due to the evaporation of moisture, an oven temperature of 325°F should be used. 

• Boned and rolled meats require more cooking time per pound than bone-in cuts because it takes longer for the heat to penetrate through the solid meat. Rolled, tenderized or scored cuts of meat should be cooked to 160°F.

• USDA does not recommend cooking meat and poultry at oven temperatures lower than 325°F. This can cause food to remain in the “Danger Zone” (temperatures 40°F–140°F) too long, allowing bacteria to multiply rapidly.

Watch Temperatures Closely
Fat content (or a lack of it) affects the cooking times of a variety of meats — so keep a close eye on your roast to avoid overcooking, and use a food thermometer. Remember — regardless of the size of the roast, it still must be cooked to a safe internal temperature. Use a food thermometer to assure a safe temperature!


Turkey Roasting Chart: Approximate Times
Fresh or Thawed Turkey — Set oven at 325°F — Cook to 165°F Internal Temperature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Turkey</th>
<th>Unstuffed</th>
<th>Stuffed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 to 6 pounds (breast)</td>
<td>1½ to 2½ hours</td>
<td>2½ to 3½ hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 8 pounds (breast)</td>
<td>2½ to 3½ hours</td>
<td>3½ to 4½ hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 to 10 pounds</td>
<td>2½ to 3 hours</td>
<td>3½ to 4½ hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 12 pounds</td>
<td>3 to 3½ hours</td>
<td>4 to 4½ hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 to 14 pounds</td>
<td>3½ to 4½ hours</td>
<td>4 to 4½ hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 to 18 pounds</td>
<td>4 to 7½ hours</td>
<td>5 to 6½ hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 to 20 pounds</td>
<td>5 to 6½ hours</td>
<td>6 to 7½ hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Turkeys over 20 pounds require additional cooking time.

Nutrition Mission
continued from page 1 at the beginning of the school year and remains with the teacher throughout the year. Teachers have the option of having NEC staff present an interactive nutrition lesson on topics such as MyPyramid or portion/distortion. At the conclusion of a class session, NEC staff lead a healthy snack demonstration which students help prepare and then sample.

The 2008–09 school year was the initial year for NEC’s middle school enrichment program. All five qualifying LPS middle schools requested kits, serving 64 classrooms and reaching 1,381 students.

Teachers recorded 683 hours of classroom instruction time, averaging 41 hours/classroom of direct nutrition education.

One teacher says, “The nutrition lessons and activities we received by extension have suplimented the curriculum that I teach in 6th, 7th and 8th grade Family and Consumer Science. The lessons are very well written and many contain visual demonstrations that help students grasp the concept. The NEC staff members are very knowledgeable and work well with the students. The students especially enjoy the food items which they get to sample. Recently, a staff member made nutritious pizzas with my 6th grade students. I asked a student what she liked best about the pizza. Her reply was everything. Pineapple and green peppers were included in the toppings. These may not be typical toppings for students, but they were accepted and sampled by everyone.”

In one seventh grade classroom, two boys really had to be encouraged to try the Black Bean Salsa with mango (see recipe page 1), but after they did, both said they were going to make it with their families. After making pizza, a sixth grade student said, “This is very good. Is it really healthy?”

Maintaining a healthy diet in the middle school years is truly a mission, but certainly not impossible. Teaching, encouraging and providing healthy foods during these years is indeed, “Nutrition: Mission Possible.”

Food & Fitness  
Nov./Dec. 2009

BEEF, FRESH
rib roast, bone-in — 4 to 6 pounds 325°F 22 to 25 minutes per lb. 145°F
rib roast, boneless, rolled — 4 to 6 pounds 325°F 28 to 33 minutes per lb. 145°F
round or tump roast — 7½ to 9 pounds 325°F 30 to 35 minutes per lb. 145°F
tenderloin, whole — 4 to 6 pounds 325°F 45 to 60 minutes total 145°F
LAMB, FRESH
leg, bone-in — 5 to 7 pounds 325°F 20 to 25 minutes per lb. 145°F
leg, bone-in — 7 to 9 pounds 325°F 25 to 30 minutes per lb. 145°F
leg, boneless, rolled — 4 to 7 pounds 325°F 25 to 30 minutes total 145°F
VEAL, FRESH
shoulder roast, boneless — 3 to 5 pounds 325°F 35 to 40 minutes per lb. 145°F
liners or round roast, boneless — 3 to 5 pounds 325°F 35 to 40 minutes per lb. 145°F
CHICKEN, FRESH
whole roasting hen — 5 to 7 pounds 350°F 2 to 2½ hours 165°F
breast, halves, bone-in — 6 to 8 ounces 350°F 30 to 40 minutes per lb. 165°F
breast, halves, boneless — 4 ounces 350°F 20 to 30 minutes per lb. 165°F
legs or thighs — 4 to 8 ounces 350°F 40 to 50 minutes per lb. 165°F
PORK, FRESH
(tip: When cooked to safe temperatures, fresh pork may still be pink inside — but it will be safe.)
loin roast, bone-in or boneless — 2 to 5 pounds 325°F 20 to 30 minutes per lb. 160°F
crown roast — 4 to 6 pounds 325°F 20 to 30 minutes per lb. 160°F	
tenderloin — ½ to 1½ pounds 325°F 30 to 40 minutes total 160°F
HAM, SMOKED
fresh, cooked-before-eating, bone-in — whole, 10 to 14 pounds 325°F 18 to 20 minutes per lb. 160°F
fresh, cook-before-eating, bone-in — half, 5 to 7 pounds 325°F 22 to 25 minutes per lb. 160°F
totally cooked, bone-in — whole, 10 to 14 pounds 325°F 15 to 18 minutes per lb. 160°F
totally cooked, bone-in — half, 5 to 7 pounds 325°F 18 to 24 minutes per lb. 160°F
totally cooked, spiral cut, whole or half — 7½ to 9 pounds 325°F 10 to 18 minutes per lb. 160°F
Country, dried, whole or half
Soak for 4 to 12 hours in refrigerator. Cover with water, then boil 20 to 25 minutes per pound. Drain, glaze and brown at 400°F for 15 minutes.

For reasons of personal preference, consumers may choose to cook meats and poultry to higher temperatures.

Minimum Safe Internal Temperature
Oven Temperature
Timing (Approximate)
Safe Minimum Internal Temperature

Roasting Chart
Meat | Oven Temperature | Timing (Approximate) | Safe Minimum Internal Temperature
---|---|---|---
BEEF, FRESH | rib roast, bone-in — 4 to 6 pounds | 325°F | 23 to 25 minutes per lb. | 145°F
rib roast, boneless, rolled — 4 to 6 pounds | 325°F | 28 to 33 minutes per lb. | 145°F
round or tump roast — 7½ to 9 pounds | 325°F | 30 to 35 minutes per lb. | 145°F
tenderloin, whole — 4 to 6 pounds | 325°F | 45 to 60 minutes total | 145°F
LAMB, FRESH | leg, bone-in — 5 to 7 pounds | 325°F | 20 to 25 minutes per lb. | 145°F
leg, bone-in — 7 to 9 pounds | 325°F | 25 to 30 minutes per lb. | 145°F
leg, boneless, rolled — 4 to 7 pounds | 325°F | 25 to 30 minutes total | 145°F
VEAL, FRESH | shoulder roast, boneless — 3 to 5 pounds | 325°F | 35 to 40 minutes per lb. | 145°F
liners or round roast, boneless — 3 to 5 pounds | 325°F | 35 to 40 minutes per lb. | 145°F
CHICKEN, FRESH | whole roasting hen — 5 to 7 pounds | 350°F | 2 to 2½ hours | 165°F
breast, halves, bone-in — 6 to 8 ounces | 350°F | 30 to 40 minutes per lb. | 165°F
breast, halves, boneless — 4 ounces | 350°F | 20 to 30 minutes per lb. | 165°F
legs or thighs — 4 to 8 ounces | 350°F | 40 to 50 minutes per lb. | 165°F
PORK, FRESH | loin roast, bone-in or boneless — 2 to 5 pounds | 325°F | 20 to 30 minutes per lb. | 160°F
crown roast — 4 to 6 pounds | 325°F | 20 to 30 minutes per lb. | 160°F	
tenderloin — ½ to 1½ pounds | 325°F | 30 to 40 minutes total | 160°F
HAM, SMOKED | fresh, cooked-before-eating, bone-in — whole, 10 to 14 pounds | 325°F | 18 to 20 minutes per lb. | 160°F
fresh, cook-before-eating, bone-in — half, 5 to 7 pounds | 325°F | 22 to 25 minutes per lb. | 160°F
totally cooked, bone-in — whole, 10 to 14 pounds | 325°F | 15 to 18 minutes per lb. | 160°F
totally cooked, bone-in — half, 5 to 7 pounds | 325°F | 18 to 24 minutes per lb. | 160°F
totally cooked, spiral cut, whole or half — 7½ to 9 pounds | 325°F | 10 to 18 minutes per lb. | 160°F
Country, dried, whole or half
Soak for 4 to 12 hours in refrigerator. Cover with water, then boil 20 to 25 minutes per pound. Drain, glaze and brown at 400°F for 15 minutes.

For reasons of personal preference, consumers may choose to cook meats and poultry to higher temperatures.
President’s View — Bonnie’s Bits

Bonnie Krueger
PCE Council Chair

Hope everyone is ready to turn your clocks back and don’t forget to check the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

Nov. 11 is Veteran’s Day and we will celebrate the 70th anniversary of the World War I. Here in the United States it is celebrated as a National holiday and has been observed annually on this day since 1921.

Soon it will be Thanksgiving, November 26. We have lots of symbols for our Thanksgiving. • Turkey is an separable part of Thanksgiving. • Cranberry sauce is turkeys favorite feast partner. • Corn was a part of the first Thanksgiving feast and still popular. • Beans were regarded as a third favorite for Indians three sisters. • Pumpkins are a favorite, just couldn’t do without pumpkin pie. • Cornucopia the horn shaped basket filled with fruit and goodies.

Thank you for these benefits of radon mitigation system. • Short-term detectors (such as charcoal canisters) are used for two to seven days. They provide quick screening measurements indicating potential radon problems. Short-term detectors should be placed in the lowest lived-in level of the house, preferably during winter. Long-term detectors (such as alpha track detec tors) are left in place for three months to one year. They provide the advantage of averaging seasonal variations associated with radon levels. Long-term detectors generally are placed in main living areas. Radon monitors cost in dollars per liter of air (Ci/L), a measurement of radioactivity. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for Disease Control and Prevention recommend homes with radon levels 4 Ci/L, or greater, be fixed. Radon problems can be fixed by qualified contractors for a cost similar to many common home repairs such as painting or having a new water heater installed (approximately $500 to about $2,500).

A variety of methods can be used to reduce radon in homes. Sealing cracks and other openings in the foundation and basement part of most approaches to radon reduction. EPA does not recommend the use of sealing and caulk alone to reduce radon because, by itself, sealing has not been shown to lower radon levels significantly or consistently. In most cases sealing with pipes and fans are used to reduce radon. Such systems are called a sub-slab depressurization. These systems prevent radon gas from entering the home from below the concrete floor and the foundation. Similar systems can also be installed in homes with crawl spaces. Radon reduction contractors may use other methods that may also work in your home, depending on its design and other factors. Information on testing your home for radon and how to get a test kit is also available by calling 1-800-SOS-RADON or the State Radon Office at 471-1050.

Think about all the surfaces you touch in your home — railings, door handles, papers, and more. Washing your hands probably isn’t what you do before using the computer. Instead, you probably grab a cup of coffee and turn on your computer. If you power up before you clean and don’t clean your computer, you’re transferring from your hands to your computer. You should also be aware that if other family members sit down at the computer, you’ve got all the germs that tagged along with them, too.

Before you begin, remember the two golden rules of computer cleaning:

Be sure the computer is off before you clean any part of it — keyboard, monitor screen, mouse, printer or headphones.

Never spray cleaner directly onto any part of the computer. Spread it on a cloth, and then gently wipe.

Keyboard: Clean the keys with a cleaning wipe or a cloth sprayed with an all-purpose cleaner. Make this the first thing you do every morning before you turn on the computer. To remove the dirt, dust and other debris that gets caught between the keys, turn it upside down and shake gently to dislodge the particles. An air dust blower will do a great job in removing all the bits and pieces lodged inside the keyboard.

Mouse: It’s also a good idea to turn the mouse pad in so it’s not the start of the workday. Use a wipe or cloth spray with an all-purpose cleaner.

Monitor: Use a microfiber cloth, either dry or made with clean water, or a product specially formulated for computer screens. If you use anything else, you run the risk of damaging the screen. Clean the monitor several times a week, as a dirty monitor can cause eyestrain.

Surrounding surfaces (including computer furniture and desk tops): Since there are probably no more coffee and food stains lurking around your home than lurked amidst the dust, use an all-purpose cleaner with a disinfectant.

Printer: Consider how often you push the button on the printer and how seldom you think about cleaning it!

And don’t forget the tele phone: Even if you’re the only one using it, it’s still transmission central for germs and bacteria that cause ear, nose and eye infections. Clean it daily using a hard surface disinfectant cleaner or a wipe.

Source: Soap & Detergent Association
Musk thistle rosette

Did you have thistles this year? If so, walk out in the infected areas this week and look for thistle seedlings. Most thistle seedlings this fall will be small, in a flat, rosette growth form and they are very sensitive now to certain herbicides. Spray this fall if air temperatures are above 50°F and thistles will not be a big problem next year.

Several herbicides are effective and recommended for thistle control. Bruce Anderson thinks the most effective is a newer herbicide called Milestone. Milestone is a general-use pesticide so does not require a pesticide applicator license. Two other very effective herbicides are Tordon 22K and Grazon. But be careful with Tordon and Grazon, since they also can kill woody plants, including trees you might want to keep. Both Tordon 22K and Grazon are restricted-use herbicides. To buy and/or apply these products requires a private pesticide applicator or commercial pesticide applicator license. 2-A-D also works well while it’s warm (temperatures in the upper 50s) but you will get better thistle control by using a little less 2-A-D and adding a small amount of dicamba (Banvel, Clarity or Sterling) to the mix. Other herbicides also help control thistles in pastures — like Redbird, Ally and Curtail. No matter which weed killer you use, be sure to read and follow label instructions and be sure to spray soon while the plants are still growing.

Next year, avoid over-grazing your pastures so your grass stands get thicker and compete with any new thistle seedlings that germinate in spring or during the summer. Give some thought now to thistle control during October and November. Your pastures can be cleaner next year.

Source: Bruce Anderson

Flexible Cash Lease Provisions

Farmers face numerous business risks related to agricultural production, including commodity prices, input prices, technology, legal issues and interpersonal communications. One of the greatest expenses in an operation is often land rent and leasing fees; however, flexible cash lease provisions offer a means to, both manage business risks, while at the same time offering opportunity to improve farm profitability.

- Flexible cash lease provisions are not new to Nebraska or agricultural production. A 1996 research study from The Ohio State University showed that 52% of cash leases contained some form of flexible provision. Similar studies have shown producers using flexible leases have improved the net profit of their operations, better managed land input costs and improved their understanding of land economics. Land owners using flexible cash lease provisions have reported a marked improvement in understanding of land economics and improved returns, particularly in bumper crop years.

- Flexible leases are becoming so popular, the most recently adopted USDA Farm Bill includes favorable modifications to the very definition of a cash lease. So ask yourself, as a producer or land owner, can your agricultural business operation afford not to use flexible cash lease provisions?

—UNL Extension Educator Tim Lemmens

Flexible Lease Workshop, Dec. 16

In response to an overwhelming request for additional training in flexible lease preparation and use, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension will be holding a workshop: “Managing Risk and Making Money with Flexible Cash Lease Provisions.” on Wednesday, Dec. 16, 1–4 pm at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherry Creek Road. Fee of $10 per person covers materials and presentation fees. Pre-registration with payment is required. For more information, call 441-7180.

Past participants have indicated they wished they had their landlord or tenant with them, so use this as an opportunity to build a stronger business relationship and come together.

Use Season-Long Records to Assess Pumping Plant Performance

Tom Dorn
UNL Extension Educator

Irrigation season is over for 2009. Now is a good time to analyze the performance of your pumping plant before you lose your receipts for energy purchased and records of water pumped. Poor pump performance can be caused by poor pump design for the current pumping conditions; pumps with excessive wear or that are not properly adjusted, and/or inefficient power units. If you determine your pumping plant is not performing as you would like, running a season-long pumping plant analysis, you will have plenty of time to consider your options and schedule a well driller to make necessary repairs or replace worn or mismatched components before next irrigation season.

UNL Extension Educator Tom Dorn, developed an Excel worksheet named LongTermPump.xls. It is available on the UNL Web site at no cost. This worksheet can be found on the Irrigation page of the UNL Extension in Lancaster County Web site at http://lancaster.unl.edu/ag/crops/irrigate.shtml under the heading “What Can Be Done About Irrigation Energy Bills.” The user can run the worksheet online in most Internet browsers or save it to their computer and open it with Microsoft Excel.

Information necessary to run an analysis includes: the type of energy used for pumping, the price per unit of energy ($/Gal or $/Wh), the type of meter, and the beginning and ending water meter readings. If there is no water meter, the user selects "no meter" and estimates the acres irrigated and the gross inches of water applied. The user then reports the estimated average pumping water level and the average system pressure over the season. Finally, the user reports the total fuel (energy) consumption for the season.

The worksheet does all of the calculations necessary to analyze the performance rating of the pumping plant and reports the performance rating as a percentage of the Nebraska Pumping Plant Performance Criteria. It estimates the potential savings if a sub-par pumping plant were brought up to the criteria.

With high energy prices, it is vitally important for irrigators to identify those pumping plants with low efficiencies so you can take corrective action before the 2010 irrigation season. This handy performing calculator makes it easy to spot pumping plants that may require some attention so they can be repaired or redesigned to match the current pumping conditions. Locating and correcting inefficient pumping plants can literally save thousands of dollars per year in energy costs.

An Excel worksheet is available online to help analyze the performance rating of a pumping plant.
Provide Basic Needs to Attract Birds

Ron Johnson
Former UNL Wildlife Specialist

Attracting birds to acres or backyards can be a fun and educational experience for the whole family. There are several steps to take in order to provide the needs of birds and attract them to homes. Birds need food, shelter, water and space. Food can be seeds, fruits or insects.

Birdfeeders near homes bring the color and beauty of birds up close and personal. Use fresh seeds that birds like, such as a mixture of 50 percent of small, black oil-type sunflower seeds, 35 percent white proso millet and 15 percent finely cracked corn. Add suet, or hard beef fat, for winter energy and as a special treat for woodpeckers, chickadees, nuthatches and other insect eaters. Keep feeders clean to help keep birds healthy.

Water in a bird bath, small backyard pool or pond attracts birds where they can be seen and supplied water needed for drinking and bathing. As with bird feeders, keep the water fresh and the bath clean. Bird baths can be especially important to birds during the winter months. Animal birds may at times get water from snow, the snow is chilling and generally not the best. Bird bath heaters and heated bird baths come in all varieties and have an element that is thermostatically controlled to keep the water temperature above freezing. Heated pedestal bird baths have an extension cord running up out of sight through the center of the pedestal while mounted bird baths have the cord tucked under the bowl.

Space needs vary among birds but usually more space means more birds will be attracted. Many birds observed in backyards do fairly well with the moderate amount of space provided in a backyard setting. Others need more wide-open spaces. Acreages can provide both. Large grasslands will attract grassland birds such as meadowlarks, dickcissels, grasshopper sparrows and others, especially if other grassland habitat is nearby. If there are larger grassland or woodland areas on the acreage or nearby, be aware of the possibility of habitat for birds that prefer these habitat types. Wetland areas are special habitats that many interesting birds need. Ring-billed pheasants find protective cover in wetland vegetation, especially during cold winter snows.
Evergreen Colors for Winter

At this time of year, many of our landscapes lack interest, especially when it comes to color. Conifers fill a great void in this area because they aren’t restricted to just green. Several varieties of spruce, juniper and arborvitae possess colored foliage. These conifers differ in their ability to tolerate certain climatic growing conditions. Many are cold tolerant, but are unable to withstand extreme heat. Others are heat tolerant, but unable to take humidity or growing conditions. Make sure the conifer you select is appropriate for your site.

Most prefer well-drained soils with a neutral to slightly acid pH. While most conifers prefer full sun, some are able to grow in full shade. Exceptions to this are golden or light-colored conifers and blue-needled conifers. When choosing conifers, don’t restrict them to just green. Several color combinations are attractive as well. Blue-colored conifers function best when used as accents, masses in large beds or even woven as a band. Bi-colored conifer or flowering plants is an attractive combination. Other attractive combinations include orange flowers with blue colored conifers, or red flowers with green foliage. Other color combinations are as attractive as well. Instead of choosing bright green foliage for use with blue conifers, select green-gray foliage instead. This gives the blue area some life.

Monochromatic plantings create a natural color combination is possible using all blue-toned plant material. An effective way to use colored conifers is to select a monochromatic or single color scheme, such as using all blue-toned plant material. Monochromatic plantings create a restful atmosphere. More striking effects can be created by selecting contrasting colors. Conifers with gold or yellow foliage planted with purple foliaged or flowering plants is an attractive combination. Other attractive combinations include orange flowers with blue colored conifers, or red flowers with green foliage. Other color combinations are as attractive as well. Instead of choosing bright green foliage for use with blue conifers, select green-gray foliage instead. This gives the blue area some life.

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Winter Burn and Winter Drying

Winter burn and winter drying are two common injuries to trees caused by weather. Winter burn refers to the browning of the needles on coniferous trees during the winter months. It is caused by rapid temperature changes, particularly on the south sides of trees where there is more exposure to the sun. Rapid temperature changes, which occur most often during sunset and sunrise, damage or kill needle tissues. Injured trees will usually recover if damage is not too severe as new growth from healthy buds cover damaged areas.

Winter drying damages both evergreens and deciduous trees. The actual damage occurs in late winter or early spring, but the symptoms may not show up until growth begins in the spring. Winter drying is caused by the dessication of foliage and twigs by warm, dry winds, when water conduction is restricted by freezing of plant tissues or by frozen soil. All trees transpire, or lose water, even during the winter months. Sometimes this loss is greater than the roots can replace and drying damage results. Minor damage results in reddening or browning of foliage, which may later recover. Symptoms of more severe injury includes browning and subsequent death of branch tips or entire branches. The side of the tree facing prevailing winds is most susceptible to winter drying.

Often, a combination of winter burn and winter drying will occur, occasionally complicated by drought. If damage is severe enough, affected branches may die. Sometimes, the entire tree may be killed. Little can be done to control weather, but a few precautions can be taken to reduce the possibility of damage:

- Choose species which are hardly and best adapted to the area.
- Plant in well-drained, deep soils.
- Plant where trees may be protected from winds and sun.
- Water trees thoroughly in the fall and during the winter when water can be taken from the soil.
- Mulch around trees to prevent deep freezing.
- Maintain a fertile, well-aerated soil to encourage deep root growth.

Fall Vegetable Garden Clean Up

Before putting all your gardening tools away for the year, take an afternoon this fall and clean up the vegetable garden. Removing garden debris, including dead foliaged and rotted vegetables, will help to reduce disease and insect problems next year. The time spent now cleaning up the garden, will be well worth it next summer.

Most prefer well-drained soils with a neutral to slightly acid pH. While most conifers prefer full sun, many can tolerate partial shade. Exceptions to this are golden or light-colored conifers and blue-needled conifers. When choosing conifers, don’t restrict them to just green. Several color combinations are attractive as well. Blue-colored conifers function best when used as accents, masses in large beds or even woven as a band. Bi-colored conifer or flowering plants is an attractive combination. Other attractive combinations include orange flowers with blue colored conifers, or red flowers with green foliage. Other color combinations are as attractive as well. Instead of choosing bright green foliage for use with blue conifers, select green-gray foliage instead. This gives the blue area some life.
Gifts for the Gardener

Mary Jane Frogge
UNL Extension Associate

Need an original or unique gift idea? Here are some gift suggestions for the gardener in the family or someone who just appreciates the outdoors.

Holiday plants are always a welcome gift to any home. They add color and holiday accents to interior surroundings. The traditional red poinsettias are popular, as are the newer flower colors of pink, blue, white, and yellow. Other possibilities are Christmas cactus, red gloxinia and kalanchoe.

The outdoor gardener might like to see a certain tool to make the job of spring gardening easier. Soil working tools like rakes, hoes and spades may be difficult to wrap and still be a surprise, but they are always welcome. Pruning tools, like hand shears and small saws, are easier to wrap and may be needed later this winter.

Do not overlook the possibility of a gardening magazine or plant book as a gift. Many larger book stores have well stocked sections on these and related topics. Garden centers and nurseries offer a variety of titles on individual plants as well as cultural practices. Someone with a new home might like a book on plant selection and landscaping, while people with a well established garden and landscape might better use information on maintenance and pruning practices.

Children love to garden and be outside too. Child size tools and gloves are available for them to use. Other items to consider are children’s gardening books, flower press, garden box, worm composting bin, stepping stone kit and seeds of their favorite vegetables or flowers to plant in a garden just for them.

If you have a non-gardening friend or relative you want to introduce to gardening, consider a total package with plant, container and growing media, along with a book on plant care. Gardening kits are available too. A unique gift would be a Bonsai rock garden or a culinary herb garden kit.

There are many gift ideas for people who like to spend their time at the many state parks in the area. To make their adventure more enjoyable, offer a variety of titles on individual plants as well as cultural practices. Someone with a new home might like a book on plant selection and landscaping, while people with a well established garden and landscape might better use information on maintenance and pruning practices.

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://extensionhortupdate.unl.edu

Center for Grassland Studies Fall Seminar Series

The 15th annual fall seminar series offered by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln’s Center for Grassland Studies will feature faculty and guest lecturers. The seminars are free and open to the public. They are held most Mondays during the fall semester, 3–4 p.m., at the Nebraska East Union on East Campus — see kiosk for location.

Oct. 26 “Seed Production of Native Grasses”
Dave Stock, Owner, Stock Seed Farms
Nov. 9 “Nebraska Invasive Species Project: Monitoring, Mapping, Risk and Management”
Karin Decker, Coordinator, Invasive Species Project at the Nebraska Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit based at UNL.
Nov. 16 “Differential Responses of Western Chinch Bugs to Neonicotinoid Insecticides”
Mitchell Stamm, Graduate Student, Department of Entomology, UNL.
Nov. 23 “Role of Peroxidase in the Defense Response of Buffalograss to the Western Chinch Bug”
Anh Hoang, Graduate Student, Department of Entomology, UNL.
Nov. 30 “Functional and Demographic Tradeoffs Among Tree Species”
Sabrina Russo, Assistant Professor, School of Biological Sciences, UNL.
Dec. 7 “Eastern Red Cedar: Ecophysiology and Ramifications of Its Invasion on Ecosystem Processes in Nebraska”
Tala Awada, Associate Professor, School of Natural Resources, UNL.

The schedule is subject to revision. Any changes will be noted on the Fall 2009 seminar listing at http://www.grassland.unl.edu.
Livestock & Dog County Fair Review, Nov. 10

All Livestock exhibitors in the areas of beef, sheep, swine, goat, dairy, llama and dog are invited to attend the County Fair Livestock Review Meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 10, 7 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road. As the 2010 Super Fair approaches, we need several people working together to get the Super Thursday off on the right foot. This is your time to be heard, so please attend! Please RSVP to Danetta by Nov. 6 (call 441-7180 or e-mail dkarmanz@unl.edu).

Project Completion Certificates Available
If a 4-H member completed a project this past 4-H year, please give your member a project completion certificate. Certificates are available from the extension office at no cost.

4-H Award & Scholarship Forms Due Jan. 2

Lancaster County 4-H award forms and college scholarship applications are due by Jan. 2. Recipients will be announced at Lancaster County Achievement Night on Thursday, Jan. 28, 2010 at the Lancaster Extension Education Center. Forms are available at http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h and the extension office. The online forms are provided as fill-in pdfs, which anyone with Adobe Reader 7 or 8 can fill in, save and print.

Community Service Awards — all Lancaster County 4-H members are eligible to apply for this award which is based on the number of hours of community service through 4-H. There will be two categories: 14 years of age & over and 13 & under.

I Dare You Leadership Award — The award recognizes juniors and seniors who strive to be their personal best and make a positive difference in their schools, youth groups, 4-H clubs and communities. Anyone can make nominations.

Outstanding 4-H Member Award — presented to an individual 14 years of age or older who has excelled in their involvement with the 4-H program. The basis for selection appraises the variety and depth of 4-H activities. Anyone can make nominations.

Meritworthy Service Award — presented to individuals or organizations who have exhibited consistent and strong support of the Lancaster County 4-H program. 4-H members are not eligible. Anyone can make nominations.

Nebraska 4-H Diamond Clover Program — recognizes 4-H member accomplishment in 4-H. Youth can progress from Level 1 up to Level 6. At the beginning of the 4-H year, youth choose goals from a program planning form at the end of the 4-H year, they fill out a report which documents their accomplishments.

Nebraska 4-H Career Portfolios — are a record of a 4-H'er's career. Portfolios include a listing of personal growth and leadership experiences related to the knowledge learned, skills gained and community service/volunteer activities experienced through 4-H.

*Lancaster County deadline for these statewide awards is Jan. 2.

All 4-H Volunteers Must Submit Screening Form in 2009

All 4-H volunteers in the Southeast District counties who work with youth MUST submit a "Volunteer 4-H Volunteer Screening" form in 2009 if they have not already done so. Even if you have completed this form prior to 2009, please resubmit it. The form is online at http://lancaster.unl.edu/pdf/4H1004_pdf and at the extension office. Mail completed forms to the State 4-H Office address listed on the form. Deadline is Dec. 30.

4-H Clubs of Excellence Forms Due Jan. 2
Leaders: Don’t forget to complete your Nebraska 4-H Club of Excellence forms. 4-H club leaders received a form in their October reorganizational packet, but forms are also online. All clubs must meet the requirements and sending in the form will be recognized at Achievement Night and will receive a Nebraska 4-H Club of Excellence certificate. Seals will be awarded in subsequent years. Forms are due to the office by Jan. 2. Contact Tracy at 441-7180 if you have questions.

Note: Deadline for Lancaster County 4-H camp scholarships is May 1 — preference given to applicants submitted by March 1.
HORSE BITS

Horse Awards Night

The 2009 4-H Horse Awards Night was held Oct. 1. The evening recognized top achievements at the Lancaster County Fair and other events throughout the past year. 4-H volunteers Kala Ball was Master of Ceremonies. Here are some of the winners. Additional winners and photos are online at http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h

4-H Horse Project Advance Level Awards

Walk-Trot Award — Ethan Ang, Cassiel Davis, Mikaela Garner, Hayley Hula, Sarah Melton, Sarah Perkins, Lucy Polk, Sheldon Rags, Jessica Schere, Madison Sobotta, Jay Stander and Hannah Turner

Level I — Michael Anderson, Audrey Baldwin, Bailey Brunske, Emma Busing, Mikaela Carsten, Ashley Colburn, Tasha Double, Jamie Hanson, Rachel Huns, Mia Hermanson, Ashley Holm, Allie Kallhoff, Eunhye Kim, Katherine Kramer, Bryanna Louden, Victoria Malina, Apasia McBride, Nicole McDermott, Katie Miller, Ellin Neukuhk, Elizabeth Norton, Haylie Pointer, Cassi Pommel, Abigail Raasch, Michelle Rohman, Madison Sobotta, Gwyneth Talley, Mikayla Whaley, Alyia Whitehead, Paige Wilson, Jenna Wolfe, Emmaly Wright and Emma Zoller


Level III — Brittany Albers, Josie Ang, Blay Engel, Bailey Heidtbrink, Katie Lloyd, Maggie Moore, Samantha Moore, Kate Rawlinson and Hannah Romann

Horse Incentive Awards

4-H’ers logged the hours they spent working with or learning about horses. The more hours invested, the more valuable the award! Last year we had a total of 72 4-Hers participate this year, 104 4-Hers participated!!

Bronze Level (minimum of 100 hours) — Brooke Bennett, Ellis Blake, Jacob Chippis, Amanda Christner, Ashley Colburn, Kathleen Dunsay, Luxor Erickson, Nicole Finkner, Katharine Kramer, Victoria Malina, Kaylee Mayer, Nicole McConnell, Logan McDonald, Maggie Moore, Hayden Moss, Elizabeth Norton, Shane Ostransky, Spencer Petri, Kyle Rezne, Jacob Romann, Jay Stander, Bethany Wachtler, Mikayla Whaley, Emmaly Wright


Gold Level (minimum of 366 hours and completed horse record book) — Brittany Albers, Ashley Bradbury, Vanessa Butterfield, Ashley Dembringer, Kaitlyn Kimmen, Apasia McBride, Sierra Nelson, Kate Rawlinson, Joss Smith, Bailey Sobotta, Heather Welch, Paige Wilson

horsebits.jpg

Herdsmanship & Decoration Awards

Top Herdsmanship — Small Club — Flying Hoofs 4-H Club

Top Herdsmanship — Mid-Sized Club — Viken Riders 4-H Club

Top Herdsmanship — Large Club — Western Pride 4-H Club

Best Fair Decorations — Small Club — Star Spangled Saddles 4-H Club

Best Fair Decorations — Large Club — Rough Riders 4-H Club

Judging Awards

The Horse Judging Contest at the Lancaster County Fair emphasizes how much 4-H members know about horses as they judge four or more classes of horses. Senior division participants also give oral reasons.

Top Ten Judging Junior Division — Josie Ang

Top Ten Judging Senior Division — Abby Henesay, Morgan Chippis

All-Around 4-H Champion — McKenzie Beach

Horse Course Challenge Results

The Horse Course Challenge is a Lancaster County Fair 4-H contest.

Top Horse Course Challenge Elementary Division — Emily Clarke (Grand Champion), Bailey Sobotta (Reserve Champion), Morgan Chippis, Mia Hermanson, Sarah Perkins, Mikayla Whaley, Heather Welch, Samantha Stoppel, Bailey Kallhoff and Spencer Peters

Top 8 Horse Course Challenge Junior/Senior Division — Maria Lucidk (Champion), Elii Deasomt (Reserve Champion), Megan Lucidk (Reserve Champion), Brooke Bennett, Cory Peters, Erika Warner, Kate Rawlinson and Hannah Romann

All-Around Trail

Dick and Cookie Confer Top Trail Award for all-around champion of the Lancaster County Fair 4-H Trail obstacle class — Michael Anderson.

All-Around Barrels

Franklyn Menning Family Trophy for fastest time in the Lancaster County Fair 4-H Barrel racing competition — McKenzie Beach

All-Around Cowboy/Cowgirl Awards

Three age divisions for Lancaster County Fair All-Around Cowboy/Cowgirl are sponsored by Lomax Fine Farm/Miffany Ang Family

Elementary Division — Vanessa Butterfield

Junior Division — Josie Ang

Senior Division — Chelsea Beach

Wittstruck All-Around Champion

Wilhelmina Wittstruck Memorial Award for Lancaster County Fair All-Around 4-H Champion Individual — McKenzie Beach

Myron and Joni Ang presented the All-Around Cowboy/Cowgirl Awards

Dwayne Wittstruck presented the Wilhelmina Wittstruck Memorial Award for All-Around Champion
**National Extension Association Awards**

Two UNL Extension in Lancaster County staff received national awards at the recent National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (NEAFCS) annual meeting.

- **Maureen Burson** received the Distinguished Service Award for her outstanding contributions to UNL the past 24 years. The award recognizes members for leadership, educational program efforts and professional development.
- **Alice Henneman** received 1st Place Educational Technology Communications Award for her “Supermarket Savings: 16 Tips that Total BIG Bucks” PowerPoint and related materials. The award encourages excellence in communication through computer programs, web pages or computer generated presentations.

**2009 UNL Service Awards**

Recently, University of Nebraska–Lincoln staff reaching an anniversary year of employment were honored for their years of service to the university. The following UNL Extension in Lancaster County staff were recognized:

- **Karen Wobig** — 10 years of service
- **Mary Abbott** — 5 years of service
- **Dana Willeford** — 5 years of service

**EXTENSION NEWS**

**4-H Odyssey Course is Designed for Team Building**

The three Nebraska 4-H camp locations have long offered T.R.U.S.T. challenge courses which have been incorporated into youth camps, adult/family programs, group conferences, retreats and special events. Now, the Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center near Gretna also features a world-class high ropes challenge course named the Odyssey Course!

Unlike traditional courses, the unique design of the Odyssey Course allows teams to complete challenges 20–35 feet in the air as the group moves between elements and accomplishes goals together.

**Funded by Nebraska 4-H Foundation**

The Odyssey Course was funded by the Nebraska 4-H Foundation in recognition of their 50th anniversary. Nebraska 4-H Foundation Executive Director Kirk Jamison says, “The foundation funded the course to help keep the Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center a state-of-the-art facility and to offer Nebraskans the next generation in challenge course design. A trip to the Odyssey Course is a tremendous learning opportunity and may fit programming for youth groups as well as adult organizations and business groups.”

Established in 1958, Nebraska 4-H Foundation raises funds to support the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension Youth Development program.

**4-H Youth Camps**

This past summer, the Odyssey Course was introduced in the 4-H summer camp “Discovery - Boldly Bound & Beyond” for youth ages 11–15. Youth wanting to experience the Odyssey Course can watch for future camps featuring the course.

**Team Development Days**

The Odyssey Course is available to businesses, organizations, sports teams or any groups for a “Team Development Day.” Groups can range from as few as four to as many as 40 people. Your organization can choose from a full day (6–7 hours) or half day (3–4 hours).

The course provides an intense teambuilding experience which highlights the objectives of cooperation, trust, communication and adventure. Programs can be customized to desired outcomes such as:

- More confidence and trust between team members.
- Problem solving and practical knowledge of how the team works best.
- Adventure, recreation and fun in an outdoor environment ideally located between Omaha and Lincoln.
- Take back new ideas and motivation to your organization providing potential growth for your team.

For more information and pricing, contact Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center Camp Director Jared Parker at jpark5@unl.edu or (402) 332-4496.

**STRENGTHENING FAMILY TREASURES**

**Daughter/Mother Camp**

A retreat designed for 5th & 6th grade girls and their mothers (or grandmothers or other adult females)

**Friday, Feb. 19, 5 p.m. to Saturday, Feb. 20, 5 p.m.**

Gave the greatest gift to your daughter — your time! This camp is 2 days and 1 night of fun, educational and confidence-building activities. As middle school approaches, 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 Carol Joy Holling Center. Fee is $125 per pair (4 people per room) or $165 (3 people per room) — each room has two double beds. Carol Joy Holling is located at the end of Ranch Road off Highway 68 between Interstate 80 and Ashland.

Co-sponsored by UNL Extension, Sheridan Lutheran Church and Camp Carol Joy Holling.

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

**The Odyssey Course is the only one of its kind in Nebraska.**

The course builds group cooperation, trust and communication.

Even the climb to the zip line is an adventure.
Holiday Gifts Needed for LPS Headstart

A good community service project for the holidays is helping the less fortunate by providing gifts for the Lincoln Public Schools Headstart Program. This program is in need of over 500 gifts for children birth to 5 years old. Literacy is being emphasized again this year, so books and items to encourage reading are suggested (such as puppets, puzzles, small toys, etc. relating to story books). The goal is to give each child a book. Gifts should be unwrapped and recommended cost is up to $5. Bring gifts to the extension office by Dec. 1. For more information, contact Lorene at 441-7180.

Public Notice

The Lancaster County Board of Commissioners seek members of the community to serve on the Lancaster County Extension Board. The vacancies will be filled with terms beginning in January 2010. Extension Board members represent and assist University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension staff in the county with priority issue areas including Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability; Children, 4-H, Youth and Families; Food Safety, Health and Wellness, Strengthening Nebraska Communities, and Water Quality and Environment. The Board meets monthly (usually the second Friday of the month at 8 a.m.). Registered Lancaster County voters interested in serving a three-year term should complete an application for an appointment by Nov. 1, 2009. Additional information and an application can be obtained from UNL Extension in Lancaster County, 441 Cherry Creek Road, Suite A, Lincoln, NE 68528-1507 or phone 441-7180. Applications are also available on the Internet at www.lancaster.ne.gov/cnty/commiss/boardapp.pdf.
Termite School Increases Hands-on Training Opportunities For Applicators

Barb Ogg
UNL Extension Educator

Eradication of termites from structures takes skill and knowledge about termites, how structures are constructed and how treatments must be safely applied to eradicate termite infestations. Because termite treatments are expensive, property owners expect competent termite technicians to solve their termite problem.

Every year since 2005, UNL Extension has offered a two-day termite school to provide in-depth training for applicators. This training is unique because the hands-on activities take place at a house with a real termite infestation.

This year’s training on Sept. 24–25 was at a home in Martell. The homeowners noticed termite mud tubes in early spring near the furnace in the basement and called the extension office for information about termites. In exchange for letting us use their house for training, we offered to solve their termite problem (at no cost to them). We chose their house because termite activity was visible and it was an interesting house from a teaching perspective.

Program participants learned about novel inspection equipment, house inspection techniques and what locations are most vulnerable to termite attack. Participants calculated the amount of termicide needed and discussed how different parts of the house should be treated, in accordance with label directions. Both barrier and bait treatments were covered, along with borate (green) treatments. Personal and environmental safety was also an important theme throughout the two-day program.

Forty participants attended this year’s workshop. This has become a regional program with applicators from Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri and Iowa attending.

One participant commented, “The training was excellent. I feel better prepared to move forward and offer treatments to my customers.”

This annual program has been a collaboration between UNL Extension, Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) and industry representatives. Presentations were given by Dennis Ferraro, Chrissy Ogg, Barb Ogg (UNL Extension), Tim Husen (UNL Department of Entomology), Buzz Vance and Clayton Haman (NDA). This year’s industry presentations were given by Jim Dotson (Bayer Environmental Sciences), Brian Manton (FMIC Corp.), Rob Davis and Jared Harris ( BASF), Jack Watkins ( Dow AgroSciences) and Eric Ham (Nisus Corporation).

For the most recent map, visit http://www.drought.unl.edu/dm

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Can You Guess It?

Did you guess it? Find out at http://lancaster.unl.edu
Did you guess it from the October Nausac?
The answer was American Bittersweet

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U.S. Drought Monitor Map

As of Oct. 13, Lancaster County was abnormally dry.

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4-H’er Recalls State Horse Show Experience

Kate Rawlinson
Lancaster County 4-H member

It was one of those hot July mornings that you felt like you were riding through micro-waved syrup. It had been a long haul from home in Lincoln to the state horse show in Grand Island. Head tilted back and eyes closed, I was inhaling the scent of summer, the hot, sticky, dry scent of summer. Sailor and I were walking along. He was always patient when I fumbled with the two reins on my Pelham bridle. Today was no different. Even after the long trailer ride, Sailor was flexible, supple and carring to go. “Final call, Hunter Hack.” My eyes popped open and I looked at Sailor. Hunter Hack was not supposed to start until 9:30, yet the final call came to us at 9:00. My head spun a mile a minute as I hurriedly got dressed and ready. Sailor stood patiently by me, commanding my brain to relax. It was really some magic power of his. Soon I was ready, and I felt cool, calm and collected. It was the feeling of melted butter; soft and squishy. While walking toward the in-gate, I mentally prepared myself for a 2-foot course, like that of the county fair. When I walked onto the course, my mouth dropped, eyes popped, brain exploded and stomach flip-flopped. This was no mediocre 2-foot course. This was the real deal. This course was 2 feet and 6 inches. Six inches does not seem like a lot from the binoculars in the grandstands, but it does when you are hurtling toward it on a 12-hundred-pound mammal.

True to his nature, Sailor launched over it like the angel he was born to be. I felt so bad not knowing what to do or how to do it. This class was up to Sailor, almost. We would have won if it was completely up to him, but it was not. I had a part in this ordeal too; I was supposed to steer. After our second jump, I was too busy rejoicing that my butt was in the saddle and not planted in the freshly plowed dirt that I completely forgot to back up after I stopped. I came out feeling like such an idiot. After the flat class, we stood in a line of experienced horses and riders who all did superbly. We ended up with a red because remembering your pattern is a pretty big deal. (Who would have thought?) But I was proud and discouraged all at the same time. I was discouraged because I had let my horse down. After all the great things he did for me, I could not even show him off to the best of my ability. However, I had a reason for being proud, too. I could have gotten a white. I could have been in an ambulance instead of on my beloved horse’s back, accepting the ribbon he won. I could have given up like the other 13 entrants who scratched. But no, I did not fall, and I did not give up. I believed in the horse I love, and our trust is worth more than any ribbon I will ever win. And, we will be right back there next year. Not falling, not quitting, but believing in each other.

4-H Horse Award Night Results are on p. 9.