University of Nebraska - Lincoln
DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

The NEBLINE Newsletter Archive from UNL Extension in Lancaster County

Extension

1-1-1999

The NEBLINE, January 1999

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/neblines

Part of the Agriculture Commons

"The NEBLINE, January 1999" (1999). *The NEBLINE Newsletter Archive from UNL Extension in Lancaster County.* Paper 127.
http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/neblines/127

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Extension at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in The NEBLINE Newsletter Archive from UNL Extension in Lancaster County by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

The NEBLINE

University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension
Lancaster County

January 1999
Vol. XII, No. 1

"Helping Nebraskans enhance their lives through research-based education."

This year I resolve...

LaDeane Jha
Lorene Bartos
Extension Educators

This year I resolve—to visit nursing homes, pick up trash in a park, lead a 4-H club, maybe even take part in community government or my neighborhood association. Good for you. Please do all of them.

While all of these are vital and important roles, how about taking those resolutions a step further. Resolve to care for all youth in the community by being a role model and mentor. Being a parent is not a criteria. Grandparents, uncles, aunts, next-door neighbors, teachers, youth group leaders, retirees, single college students—in other words—everyone can make a difference.

Think back to your favorite memories of people, places, events, traditions and moments of caring. They probably don't include time spent in front of a computer or TV. The best memories invariably include interactions with people you loved, admired or looked to for support.

In his book, *7 Things Kids Never Forget*, Don Rose offers some hints on how we might reach out to youth in significant ways during the coming year. Here is his list of seven things kids never forget.

1. Kids never forget people who care.

Do you remember the special times when a parent or teacher helped you with a science project, when a favorite aunt took you to a concert; when you built a dog house with your adopted "grandfather" from next door; or perhaps when you worked with others on a community service project. These are all instances of people reaching out and caring.

2. Kids never forget the stories they hear.

An aunt's or uncle's tale of growing up, or even a story told around a camp fire with a 4-H or Boy Scout leader can bring back good memories and chuckles. Stories read to children in daycare centers or at school can be extra special because of the person doing the reading. Encourage kids to tell you their favorite story.

3. Kids never forget failure.

Every broken promise, every "I told-you-so," and every personal failure has an upside down pain. Helping children learn how to fail and to learn from failure is best accomplished with few words and without questions. Instead of criticism, use your heart, ears and eyes and even a hug. Plan a "we messed up" celebration where everybody shares one "messed-up" memory. Serve a "messed up" cake!

4. Kids never forget crisis time.

Kids need parents and other caring adults to coach them through crisis situations. They do not need to be rescued. Listen while they discuss possible solutions and encourage them as they make good decisions and take action.

5. Kids never forget rules.

Kids may stretch, bend or twist the rules while learning about growing up, but the most valuable time as a caring adult is spent doing three things: teaching the rules, enforcing them and modeling expected behavior.

6. Kids never forget the milestones of growing up.

With each milestone, kids get closer to adulthood and life gets more complex. Celebrate those milestones along the way. Celebrate the first day of....., the first overnight away from home, the first lost tooth, birthdays, special religious traditions, etc. Make your own "good news" headlines to celebrate accomplishments. Keep snapshots, make scrapbooks, write notes and keep journals as a way of remembering important events, then share them with kids.

7. Kids never forget the traditions of home.

Celebrating special times like birthdays, holidays, and vacations all have symbolic content. If children you know don't typically have special opportunities, invite their families to join yours, ask other children to share vacations with you. Recognize things in each family that are special and unique for their family. These traditions are the glue that holds families together from generation to generation and extended family can help keep those traditions alive in families experiencing distress.

Remind all kids that you appreciate them, praise them when they do things well, recognize the good things they do. Have you ever written a note to youth featured in a newspaper article congratulating them on a job well-done? Volunteer to read to children in school, at daycares, in after-school programs. Become a mentor for Teammates or a leader for a 4-H club or other youth organization, learn about Character Counts! and help at camps and other activities. Support kids by attending their plays, dance recitals, concerts, sports events. Talk to them, listen to them, be their friend.

Always behave as if you are being watched by a young person. You are. At the end of a lengthy discussion on how adults could best help youth avoid risky behaviors, Dr. Carol Cassell, director of the Teen Pregnancy Program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said that her best answer to that question was easily summed up in one word, "love." Show kids, all kids, that you love them and value them.

This year I resolve—to be a great role model, to be involved in my community, to mentor a child in my neighborhood. Remember actions speak louder than words. When you remember others, you will be remembered and your community will be enriched.

Happy New Year!

In this issue...

NEBLINE articles may be reprinted without special permission if the source is acknowledged as "University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County NEBLINE." If the article contains a byline, please include the author's name and title.

Horticulture —page 2
Environmental Focus —page 3
Farm Views —page 4
Acreage Insights —page 5
Food & Fitness —page 6
Family Living —page 7
4-H & Youth —pages 8-9
Community Focus —page 10

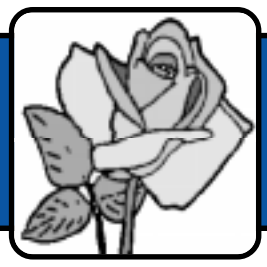
Lancaster County 4-H Council
University of Nebraska
Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County
444 Cherrycreek Road
Lincoln, Nebraska 68528-1507

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 537
Lincoln, Nebraska

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Kenneth R. Bolen, Director of Cooperative Extension, University of Nebraska, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources.
University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension educational programs abide with the nondiscrimination policies of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the United States Department of Agriculture.

We assure reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act; for assistance contact Lancaster County Extension, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln, Nebraska 68528-1507, 402-441-7180. TDD capability available.



Horticulture

Lilac renewal

The common purple lilac is a tough, reliable shrub that may reach a height of 10 to 15 feet. Unfortunately, as lilacs mature, the shaded lower portions of the shrubs usually lose their leaves. As a result, large, overgrown specimens are often leggy and unattractive. Old, neglected lilacs can be renewed or rejuvenated by pruning. Home gardeners can choose between two different pruning methods.

One way to renew a large, overgrown lilac is to cut the entire plant back to within 6 to 8 inches of the ground in late winter (March or early April). This severe pruning will induce a large number of shoots to develop during the growing season. In late winter of the following year, select and retain several strong, healthy shoots to form the shrub framework and remove all the others at ground level. Head (cut) back the retained shoots to just above a bud to encourage branching.

A second way to prune old lilacs is to cut back the overgrown shrubs over a three-year period. Begin the procedure by removing one-third of the large, old stems at ground level in late winter. The following year (again in late winter), prune out one-half of the remaining old stems. Also, thin out some of the new growth. Retain several well-spaced, vigorous stems and remove all the others. Finally, remove all of the remaining old wood in late winter of the third year. Additional thinning of the new shoots should also be done. Since lilac wood needs to be 3 or more years of age before it blooms, this pruning method should allow you to enjoy flowers every spring.

When properly pruned, an old, overgrown lilac can be transformed into a vigorous attractive shrub within a few years. Once rejuvenated, pruning should be a regular part of the maintenance program for lilacs. The shrub can be kept healthy and vigorous by removing a few of the oldest branches every 3 to 5 years. (DJ)

Protect trees from animal damage

Domestic and wild animals can cause severe damage in tree plantings, but trees can be protected and damage kept to a minimum if a few precautions are taken.

For young plantings, remove vegetation or piled debris to reduce the chance of rodent damage. Thick grass will attract mice; weed and brush piles attract cottontails. Organize a hunt if an area is overpopulated with rabbits.

Heavy concentrations of deer can cause considerable damage to the larger tree plantings. They will browse young, succulent growth and damage trees by "rubbing" their velveted antlers on the trees. Rubbing is most noticeable on evergreen trees, which will have broken branches and stripped bark. Repellents will minimize the browsing damage. Allow hunters in the area to help control deer numbers.

Livestock must be fenced away from all young tree plantings. Cattle and sheep eat off bottom branch tips and rub off the lower branches. Pigs dig up and eat the trees' roots, and horses will eat the bark off the trees when their diets are not complete. But worst of all, the livestock will compact the soil in the root area, cutting off good infiltration of moisture and blocking root respiration. (DJ)

Horticulture information center

—24 hours a day—

Check it out!

The Lancaster County Horticulture Web Page

New look. New information.
http://www.ianr.unl.edu/ianr/lanco/hort/
New feature: Youth Garden Page

NUFACTS

NUFACTS offers fast, convenient information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In the Lincoln area call 441-7188; for the rest of Nebraska call 1-800-832-5441. When directed, enter the 3-digit number of the message you wish to hear.

210 Amaryllis
215 Cyclamens
222 Winter Houseplant Care
124 Wood for Fireplace
137 Deicing Salt Injury

Ten steps to good gardening

A good garden just does not happen, it has to be planned. The following suggestions should help you establish an attractive and productive garden. An understanding of crop needs and cultural practices will also help assure gardening success this coming season.

1. Garden site. Choose a sunny location with good air and water drainage. At least 8 hours of sunlight will produce the best vegetables. Leaf and cole crops may get by with slightly less sun in partial shaded areas. Good air circulation will keep the foliage dry and help reduce chances of disease. Water drainage is essential for strong root growth. Avoid windy locations that can damage and dry plants. Never plant a garden near a black walnut tree, it produces naturally occurring chemicals to inhibit growth of nearby plants.

2. Crop rotation. Try to rotate crops around the garden plot. Some soil borne diseases and insects are most serious when the same or related crops are grown in the same area or row each year.

3. Soil fertility and pH. Fertilize the soil according to soil test results. A soil pH between 6.2 and 6.8 will support most vegetable crops. Over fertilization can be as harmful as under treatment. Too much nitrogen will produce leaf and stem growth at the expense of flowers and fruit production. Weak or stressed plants are more susceptible to insect and disease attack.

4. Resistant varieties. Use resistant varieties when available and when they suit specific gardening needs. Information on resistance is often printed on the seed packet.

5. Good quality seed and transplants. Buy seed from a reputable seed company. When transplants are used make certain they are in good health and grown from disease free seed. Also check transplants for evidence of insects or disease.

6. Water. Drip or trickle irrigation is highly recommended. It reduces the amount of water that could be wasted using sprinklers or overhead watering. Drip irrigation also keeps the water off of the plant's foliage, which reduces disease problems. Try to water in the morning instead of in the evening.

continued on page 11

January/February Garden Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7 Avoid walking on frozen lawn	8	9
10	11 Review last years garden journal	12 Make garden plan	13 Check stored vegetables for signs of rot	14 Make list of new plants to try	15 Make list of seeds needed	16
17	18 Check landscape plants for snow damage	19	20 Check bird feeders	21	22 Check amaryllis bulbs	23
24	25	26	27 Check plants for rodent, rabbit or deer damage	28	29 Order seeds	30
31	1	2 Check houseplants for insects	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10 Do a germination test on saved seeds	11	12	13
14	15 Air layer leggy house-plants, like rubber plant	16	17 Cut flowering shrub branches for forcing	18 Check bird feeders	19	20
21	22	23	24 Start perennial flower seeds indoors	25	26 Prune fruit trees	27
28						

Many of us need reminders. That is the purpose of this calendar. Check the calendar each month and follow the recommendations if they are necessary in your landscape situation. (MJM)

Winter care of houseplants

Winter weather adversely affects growing conditions for houseplants. Proper care during the winter months can help insure the health of houseplants. Most houseplants grow well with daytime temperatures of 65 to 75°F and night temperatures of 60 to 65°F. Temperatures below 50°F or rapid temperature fluctuations may damage some plants. Keep houseplants away from cold drafts and hot air vents. Also make sure houseplant foliage doesn't touch cold windows.

Many houseplants prefer a humidity level of 40 to 50%.Unfortunately, the relative humidity found in many homes during the winter months may be only 10 to 20%, a level too low for many houseplants. Humidifiers are an excellent way to increase the relative humidity in a single room or throughout the entire home. Simple cultural procedures can also increase the relative humidity around houseplants. Group plants together. The water evaporating from the potting soil, plus water lost through the plant foliage or transpiration, will increase the relative humidity in the immediate vicinity of the houseplants. Another method is to place the houseplants on trays or saucers filled with pebbles or gravel and water. The bottoms of the pots should be above the water level. Misting houseplants is not an effective method to raise relative humidity. Misting would have to be done several times daily to appreciably raise the humidity level and is simply not practical.

Houseplants require less watering during the winter months than in spring and summer. Actively growing plants need more water than those at rest during the winter months. Plant species also affects water-

continued on page 11

Dispersal of blackbirds, crows and starlings from urban roosts

Ron Johnson
Extension Wildlife Specialist
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Large bird roosts can cause:
- Odor, noise, filth
- Droppings deface equipment
- Damage to trees
- Health concerns–Histoplasmosis: The soil in older roosts may harbor fungal spores of this human respiratory disease. Exposure is most likely when dry roost substrate is disturbed.

Prevention and Control:

Vegetation management:

Street trees: When roosts occur in landscape trees near homes or along streets, thinning side branches from the trees used by birds will usually disperse them. This method was developed from blackbird roost studies in Texas and appears to be an effective approach. Consultation with a professional arborist will help maintain the trees aesthetic qualities.

Woodlot or grove of trees: Thin out about of the trees. Generally, such roosts occur in dense, overcrowded stands of young trees; thinning improves tree growth and makes the site unsuitable for roosting. Such thinning successfully dispersed roosts from research woodlots in Ohio and Kentucky, and from at least two problem roost situations in Nebraska. In dense cedar thickets, bulldozing strips through the roost to remove of the habitat has also been successful in dispersing birds. Soil disturbance with heavy equipment, however, may be hazardous if soils harbor fungal spores of histoplasmosis.

Tree Selection: If planting trees in an area with a history of bird roost problems, avoid trees that have a more closed or dense canopy. For example, fall blackbird/starling roosts appear more likely to occur in trees such as maples, Bradford pear in protected spots, and, to a lesser extent, pin oak. Roosting flocks generally choose dense trees that offer ample perch sites for the large flock and protection from adverse weather. Another point to consider in a landscape plan is that a mix of tree types is less likely to be suitable as a roost site, compared to use of a single species grouping.

Frightening:

• Begin early before birds form a strong attachment to the site.

• Be persistent until the problem is solved.

• Dispersing a roost by frightening will likely require three or more consecutive evenings to be successful.

• Frightening devices include recorded distress or alarm calls, gas-operated exploders, battery- operated alarms, pyrotechnics (shellcrackers, bird bombs–*contact a professional pest control operator and city ordinances for regulations/permits/restrictions*), lights (for roosting sites at night), bright objects and other stimuli. Spraying birds with water from a hose or from sprinklers mounted in the roost trees has helped in some situations. Beating on tin sheets or barrelsalso scares birds.

• A combination of several scare techniques used together works better than a single technique. Vary the location, intensity and type of scare device to increase effectiveness.

• Prior to dispersal efforts, consider alerting public officials and neighbors as appropriate about the possible disturbance and about the purpose of the dispersal. Consider also where dispersing birds might go.

AMERICAN CROW
Dispersal:

A tape recorded crow call successfully dispersed crows from individual urban roosts in a recent California study. Crows took flight, circled overhead giving assembly and scolding calls. Crows from nearby roosts flew in and joined. At the end, all crows flew away and left the roosts empty. Study details: The tape was played –30 seconds on and –30 seconds off for 4 to 5 times within a 5 minute period. Test 1: 4 roosts; tape played for 3 consecutive nights; roost observed for next 5 nights. Test 2: 1 roost; tape played for 3 nights plus as needed (3 additional nights) to prevent crow return; roost observed for 31 days. Test 3: all roosts in town (20 roosts); tape played for 5 days; roosts observed for 5 more days. Commercially available tape used: "Death Cry of a Crow" (Johnny Stewart, Box 7594, Waco, TX 76710; 817-772-3261). This is the "squalling call" and is also available as "distress call" from Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Library of Natural Sounds, 159 Sapsucker Woods Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850; 607-254-2406. Before such dispersal is attempted, consider where roosting crows might go.

For further information: Gorenzel, W. P. and T. P. Salmon. 1993. Tape-recorded calls disperse American Crows from urban roosts. Wildl. Soc. Bull. 21:334-338. (SC)

Tips to enhance the art of using snap-traps for mice:

• Tying the bait securely to the trigger prevents the rodent from licking or nibbling the bait without setting off the trigger. If a bait is used that cannot be tied (e.g., peanut butter), it is best to use small amounts.

• Sensitivity of the trap is adjusted by bending the long, narrow metal prong that touches the trigger. In areas where vibrations are a problem, the trap must be made less sensitive.

• The bait can be food for the rodent or small pieces of cotton. Cotton does not spoil, and the mice pull at it for possible nesting material.

• Use of a small piece of cardboard to expand the trigger greatly increases the "catching surface", but take care not to expand the trigger too far. If the cardboard expands over the edge of the trap, the rodent can release the trigger without getting caught. Commercial models with expanded triggers also are available.

• The actual bait used on the trap can be varied. The success of any material depends upon how much other food is available and what the mouse is accustomed to eating. Peanut butter (crunchy style mixed with rolled oats), salami, freshly fried bacon and peanuts are a few of the items that have proven successful.

Source: Handbook of Pest Control, Mallis, 7th Edition

For more information on controlling house mice, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to "Controlling House Mice G-1105", Lancaster County Extension, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln, NE 68528-1507. (SC)

Treasures in the trash

• American consumers and industry throw away enough aluminum to rebuild our entire commercial airfleet every three months.
• Each week more than 500,000 trees are used to produce the two-thirds of newspapers that aren't recycled.
• We throw away enough glass bottles and jars to fill the 1,350-foot twin towers of New York's World Trade Center every two weeks.
• Americans go through 2.5 million plastic bottles every hour, only a small percentage of which are recycled.
• Every year we dispose of 24 million tons of leaves and grass clippings, which could be composted to conserve landfill space.
• We throw away enough iron and steel to continuously supply all the nation's automakers.
• We throw away enough office and writing paper annually to build a wall twelve feet high stretching from Los Angeles to New York City.

Source: Environmental Defense Fund, http://www.edf.org/issues/Recycling.html (SC)

Environmental Focus

Environmental book review for kids

Oliver and the Oil Spill
by Aruna Chandrasekhar

Using an otter pup as the central character, *Oliver and the Oil Spill* is a touching story about a major oil spill. We become endeared to Oliver as he leads a happy life of learning from his mother about diving for food and keeping his fur clean. But tragedy strikes as the animals notice the water feels strange one day, and they see other birds and animals dying all around them. The Wildlife Rescue Center steps in to help Oliver, but it is too late for his mother.

This sensitive and beautiful book is made even more special by the fact that Aruna Chandrasekhar was only nine years old when she wrote and illustrated it. She has done a superb job of helping children look at a terrible tragedy through the eyes of a baby animal. Her report on the Exxon Valdez spill at the conclusion of the book helps answer many questions for children who want to know if the story is true.

The Moonlight Hide & Seek Club
by Rosamund Elwin and Michele Paulse

The Moonlight Hide & Seek Club sends a strong message about pollution and what to do about it. A group of children notice that the moon is sick because of what people are doing to the Earth. Using non-toxic materials, they work as hard as they can to clean up Moon. When the moon rises only part way into the sky, the children devise ways to help clean up Earth so that Moon can become stronger. They think of things such as riding bicycles, cleaning up sooty mufflers, protesting against polluting factories and not using dangerous cleansers.

Elwin and Paulse have created a book with the tone of a native legend which, enhanced by Henhaske's beautiful illustrations, gives readers a story for retelling and some ideas for action. All of the suggestions can be acted upon by children of any age. (ALH)

Beginning beekeeping training

Everything you need to know to get started in apiculture

This multi-session program will teach persons interested in keeping bees all the information they will need to start and care for a honey bee colony. In two evening sessions, you will learn basic bee biology, behavior and handling techniques. In a subsequent hands-on session, you will assemble your hive, open and examine colonies, learn how to install packaged bees and see how honey and beeswax are harvested. These workshops are designed to give new beekeepers the skills to successfully start and care for a honey bee colony. Presenter: Marion Ellis, UNL extension bee specialist.

What: 2 three-hour classroom sessions and a six-hour hands-on lab.
When: Two evening sessions: March 15 &16, 1999. 6:30-9:30 p.m.
Where: Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln
Hands-On Lab: April 10, 1999. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at UNL's ARDC Apiary Lab (Ithaca, NE).
NOTE: You must have hive supplies and protective equipment to fully participate in the April 10 lab session. We will order the supplies and protective gear you will need. Questions? Call (402) 441-7180.
Cost: $15–Includes reference materials. (Additional family members who will share reference materials can attend for $8.00)
How to Register: Detach and return this registration form with payment ($15) by March 1, 1999 so reference materials can be ordered. Make checks payable to Lancaster County Cooperative Extension. Send to: Beginning Beekeeping Workshop, 444 Cherrycreek Rd., Lincoln, NE 68528-1507. (BO)

Beginning Beekeeping Training Registration

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone (Home): _____ Work: _____

Farm Views

1999 integrated crop management winter programs

The Integrated Crop Management Winter Programs are workshops that target agribusiness professionals, crop consultants, certified crop advisors and crop producers who want more in-depth training than they often receive at many crop management workshops. This year, there will be 17 workshops conducted at five locations across Nebraska.

One-day workshops will have approximately six hours of training and will begin at 9 a.m. and end about 4 p.m. The two-day *Managing Alfalfa for Quality and Profit* workshop will include nine hours of training. Registration fees include refreshments, lunch, and reference materials. Organizers are requesting crop consulting advisors continuing education unit's for all workshops.

Feb. 8: Advanced Soil Fertility Workshop; Lifelong Learning Center, Norfolk; $65 prepaid/$75 at the door
Feb. 11: Identification of Nebraska Weeds; ARDC, near Mead; $50/$60
Feb. 12: More Information, More Control; ARDC near Mead; $109/$129
Feb. 15: Advanced Row Crop Sprayer School; Lifelong Learning Center, Norfolk; $50/$60
Feb. 17: Advanced Soybean Management; College Park, Grand Island; $65/$75
Feb. 17: Understanding Farm Level Mapping with GIS/GPS Technology;Lifelong Learning Center, Norfolk; $65/$75
Feb. 22: Herbicide Mode of Action; ARDC, near Mead; $65/$75
Feb. 24: Applications in Farm Level Mapping; ARDC, near Mead; $65/$75
Feb. 25: Understanding Genetically Engineered Crops; Lifelong Learning Center, Norfolk; $65/$75
Feb 26: Developing and Improving a Weed Management System; West Central Research and Extension Center; North Platte; $65/$75
March 2: Integrated Weed Management; Lifelong Learning Center, Norfolk; $65/$75
March 3: Why Silver Bullets Don't Last; College Park, Grand Island; $65 /$75
March 4: Understanding Genetically Engineered Crops; West Central Research and Extension Center; North Platte; $65/$75
March 4: Highlights of Recent Nebraska Irrigation Research; Nebraska Center for Continuing Education, UNL-East Campus; $65/$75
March 9: Introduction to Farm Level Mapping with GIS/GPS Technology; College Park, Grand Island; $65/$75
March 15-16: Managing Alfalfa for Quality & Profit; College Park, Grand Island; $95/$105
March 17: Fundamentals of Bacterial & Viral Pathogens; Plant Science/Keim Hall; UNL East Campus; $65/$75

For more information, contact Barb Ogg (441-7180) for a brochure detailing these workshops. (BPO)

Learn about soil fertility/ crop nutrient needs in your spare time

Farmers in Lancaster County now have an opportunity to study soils and soil fertility at home. The University of Nebraska Extension is offering a Soils Home Study Course to cover soil and fertilizer basics.

Producers who helped pilot the first draft praised the course for providing useful information to help them make informed fertilizer decisions.

Fertilizer needs of a crop depend upon many things. To help understand these interrelated requirements, the Soils Home Study Course covers ten major topics, beginning with the origin and development of soils that results in different soil types present in a field.

Lesson two deals with the physical properties of soil and the relationships between soil and water. Participants will learn about soil pH and soil organic matter.

Lesson five starts the study of plant nutrients covering major fertilizer components of nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, calcium, magnesium, sulfur, zinc and other micro nutrients.

The final lessons discuss the fundamentals of soil testing and the scientific basis for making fertilizer recommendations.

To take advantage of this opportunity to learn more about soils and plant nutrient relationships, contact the Lancaster County Extension Office, 441-7180. The cost of the manual and the ten lessons is $60. (BPO)

Attention land owners and renters

Lancaster County Extension will be hosting two workshops on January 13 especially designed for people involved in farm land rental arrangements. People may attend one or both sessions, as desired. Fees: $10 for one session or $17 for both sessions. Fees will cover costs of handout materials, refreshments, etc. Enrollment limited to the first 75 paid registrations. Call the extension office to register.

Leasing arrangements 9 a.m.-noon.

Extension farm management specialists will present information on various types of leasing arrangements used in Nebraska, the differences between the various types of leases, the relative risks involved, how leases have changed over the years to reflect differences in farming methods, and how to determine if a lease is fair to both parties. In addition, time will be devoted to a discussion of how landlords can attract and keep tenants who will be good stewards of the land, as well as, good producers and what tenants can do (other than being the highest bidder) to obtain land to farm. This session should be of interest to landowners and renters alike.

Agronomy 101 for landowners 1- 4 p.m.

People don't farm the way they used to. The development of new technology in farming has occurred at a dizzying rate in recent years. New herbicides, advanced genetics and reduced tillage methods have shifted some expenses that have traditionally been shared by landlords and tenants. On the positive side, crop yields continue to trend upward and the long-term productivity of the land is being preserved by utilizing better conservation methods.

Lancaster County Extension will be hosting two workshops on January 13 especially designed for people involved in farm land rental arrangements.

The trend, in recent years, has been to move away from crop share rental arrangements to cash rental of farm land. This shift has been partly because it has been difficult for landowners to keep up with changing technology. When bills come in for herbicides, fertilizers, etc., that are unfamiliar, some landowners are naturally concerned about the legitimacy of the expense or whether more economical methods could have been used to achieve the same result. In other cases, the original landowner may no longer be involved with managing the property and others, who are less familiar with farming, have taken over those duties. In many cases, it has become easier for landlords and tenants alike to go to a cash rent arrangement.

Cash rent has created a shift in the risk exposure by the two parties involved in the lease. With cash rent, the tenant bears all of the production and commodity price risk. Depressed commodity prices have created a cash shortage for many tenants. Lenders are requiring a change from cash rental to crop share rental arrangements to reduce risk exposure.

This workshop is geared for the landlord who is currently involved in (or considering) crop share rental arrangements. This session, taught by extension crop production specialists, will be presented at a very basic level to help landowners understand crop production expenses. Principles of soil fertility, herbicides, genetics (variety selection), and tillage methods will be discussed. Guidelines will be presented showing what to expect per acre as a normal or usual expense. Each participant will receive reference materials containing university recommendations and estimated costs of herbicides, seed and the importance of applying fertilizer according to university recommendations. (TD)

Grain stubble rental rates

Occasionally, we get a question about fair rental rates for grazing stubble fields. Several factors should be considered when setting a fair rental rate. One factor is what it costs the landowner to allow the stubble to be grazed. A second factor is that stubble has a value as a feed and could be considered a part of the income stream from the crop; just as the grain is a part of the same income stream. The landowner should therefore try to maximize his return from both the grain and the stubble.

Looking at the other side of the ledger, one needs to calculate what benefit the animal owner gains by grazing the stubble. Obviously, the rate the animal owner can pay should not exceed the cost he/she would incur if alternative feed sources were used, including any differences in labor and depreciation on vehicles and machinery. A "fair" rental rate, it would seem, is a rate that more than covers the land owner's costs (and therefore contributes to his income stream from the crop) without exceeding the value of the benefits to the animal owner.

Considering the cost to the land owner, the most obvious cost is associated with the loss of plant residues. Plant residues contain nutrients which otherwise would have been recycled by microorganisms in the soil and utilized by future crops. These nutrients therefore might need to be replaced with additional purchased fertilizer. A secondary consideration is whether residues are needed to control soil erosion. A benefit to the land owner is the reduction in voluntary crop plants next season which would require

continued on page 11

Farm tractor, combine fires cost millions annually

Tractor and combine fires cause more than $20 million in property loss each year and millions of dollars more because of lost time and downed crops. Fires also cause 40 or 50 serious injuries or deaths each year.

Now that harvest is over, take some time to reflect on the following suggestions to see whether your tractors and combines were operating safely.

Fires always are a major concern for people running farm machinery. There are two keys to preventing a disaster: prevention and preparation. Clean machinery each season. Pay special attention to the engine and engine compartment area where about 75 percent of all machinery fires start. Use a pressure washer to remove all caked-on grease, oil, and crop residue. A clean engine will run cooler, operate more efficiently and greatly reduce chances for fire. Be sure to frequently blow dry chaff, leaves or other materials off the machine with compressed air. Clear any wrapped plant materials from the bearings, belts and other moving parts.

Pay close attention to the machine operator manual and follow all instructions and schedules for lubrication and routine maintenance. Repair or replace any leaking fuel or oil hoses, fittings or metal lines.

Combine and tractor fires can be caused by several heat sources. The most common source is exhaust system surfaces that contact any flammable material. Make sure your exhaust system including the manifold, muffler and turbo charger are in good condition

continued on page 11

Controlling eastern redcedar

Many methods have been explored or used to control eastern redcedar. These include prescribed burn, herbicide application and cutting. All methods have some drawbacks when used alone.

Prescribed burn is inexpensive and effective against smaller trees. However, its effectiveness declines as tree size increases. Adequate fire fuel (usually last year's dead grass) is necessary for satisfactory results. Safety also is a concern since many property owners lack experience with fire and the equipment required to conduct burns.

Foliar sprays and broadcast soil applications of herbicides have been ineffective against eastern redcedar. The preferred treatment method is an application of undiluted Tordon 22K liquid to the soil under individual trees at a rate of three or four milliliters per three feet of tree height. This method minimizes the amount of herbicide used and the exposure to non-target species. However, it still is time consuming and expensive when used on dense infestations or large tracts. Effectiveness also varies on larger trees and label directions recommend against use on trees more than 15 feet tall.

Cutting is even more time consuming than herbicide application. It is effective because eastern redcedar is a non-sprouter. Trees cut below the lowest foliage will not regrow. Larger trees require a chain saw or tractor-mounted shears, but trees less than three feet tall can be quickly cut with hand shears. (DJ)

Acreage reply

Q. What is the best way to remove snow from a long driveway?

Suggestion A: Don't get a four-wheel drive pickup with a snowplow. The snowplow on the front of the truck does nothing but move a bit of snow, sag the front springs, require large outlays of cash for the hydraulics, tire chains, funky lights and finally requires you to get the kit for another truck in five years when you trade in the old model.

Suggestion B: An alternative is to acquire a small tractor (20 - 30 HP) with a PTO and 3 pt. hitch, and attach a 3pth snowblower. The blower lets you throw the snow (and avoid building banks that cause drifting). A 2000 tractor with a 5.5 foot snowblower to clear your driveway may be the answer. Plowing is only useful if you can avoid building banks that will drift in the next time the snow blows.

Suggestion C: A 3-point grader blade behind a tractor works pretty well, as long as the blade can be angled enough. With too much snowfall, you can run out of space to plow the snow to (due to the previously plowed snow), at which time you would either need a snowblower or a loader to move the excess plowed snow further off the road. (DJ)

Rural living clinics scheduled

Lancaster County Extension will be hosting a Rural Living Clinic for people who are considering a move to the country or have recently moved and are still learning about independent living. The clinic is scheduled for Saturday, January 30 at the Extension Conference Center from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Some of the topics covered in this clinic include: learning what motivates people to want to move to the country, what you need to know about the location (flood plain, access rights, building codes, security issues, etc.), waste management, water supply, costs of independent living (living with reduced public services) and freedoms and restrictions of rural living compared to living within a municipality. There will be a demonstration over the lunch hour showing how to access information at the Extension office–including: printed publications, and electronic information via web pages and the Nufacts audio information retrieval system.

Registration is limited. A registration fee of $15 per person is required to reserve a place in the meeting. Call the extension office (402) 441-7180, to request a registration form. Registration fee covers handout materials, refreshments and noon lunch.

A second clinic is planned for March 13, which will address the unique needs of people currently living in the country. Watch for agenda details in next month's newsletter. (TD)

Use information at hand for better marketing, more profit

Producers who can efficiently use market intelligence and strategically update the total farm or ranch marketing plan have a better chance of weathering low commodity prices.

Some producers have large amounts of data but lack the ability to use it strategically to make marketing decisions. Others have little data but seem to use it in their favor to turn larger profits.

What's right for one individual might not work for another, but knowing the numbers and distribution of finished livestock weights, can be used to assist in scheduling actual marketings and to monitor significant changes in breeding herd performance. In most situations, the producer will try to reduce variations among marketed livestock by weekly selection in order to increase returns. The quality and quantity of data will increase in the future as new techniques, technologies and means of inexpensive animal identification evolve. As farm/ranch planning and computing increases, so will the need for a total farm or ranch marketing management plan.

Management for marketing and for production may be independent, but should be considered jointly. The plans and methods for one could effect changes of another, such as rations and timing of marketing.

Most operations are somewhat inflexible with respect to changing schedules and the terminal marketing stage. However, in some situations, different genetics, changing rations, or shipping times, facility design or re-design will change the marketing pattern. Information on the effect of such changes can be very valuable in estimating the profit foregone by not making the changes.

A marketing management plan tailored for the individual producer or operation, along with improved production and management standards and better record keeping, can potentially lower costs and improve profitability.

Source: Allen Wellman, Ph.D., agricultural economist, NU/IANR (WS)

Acreage Insights

Tractor safety tips (part 1)

Tractors are one of the most important pieces of equipment on a farm, yet they are also among the most dangerous. More deaths are caused by tractors than by any other type of farm accident. It is, therefore, imperative that tractor owners routinely check their tractors and keep in mind the following safety guidelines:

• Make sure your tractor has a rollover protective structure (ROPS). Other than using safe operating procedures, having a ROPS is the most important thing you can do to ensure you don't become a farm fatality statistic.

• Make sure the power-take-off equipment is shielded. They are installed for your safety.

• Always shut off engine and be sure the implement motion has ceased before making any adjustments or repair.

• Make sure your tractor has rear-wheel and front-end weights that you can mount when needed. * Use rear-wheel weights to add stability for front-end loaders, and always lower the loader before transporting.

• Make sure the steps and platform of your tractor are free of loose tools, snow, ice, mud and other debris that might cause you to slip and fall.

• An ABC fire-extinguisher and a first-aid kit should always be readily available. Inspect fire extinguishers every six months to ensure your safety. (DJ)

University of Nebraska

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

24 hours a day
7 days a week

Information Center

1-800-832-5441 or 441-7188 (Lincoln area)

To listen to a NUFACTS message, call the number above on a touch-tone phone, then enter a three-digit number listed below.

Call 441-7180 to receive a brochure with all the message topics.

ACREAGE

330	Handling Eggs Safely
334	Storing Foods Safely in Your Refrigerator
802	Cleaning Brass and Copper
805	Fixing Burst or Frozen Pipes
810	Soap Scum Removal

...and more than 4oo additional topics.

Learn at your convenience

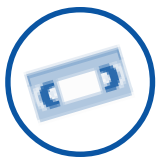
—24 hours a day, 7 days a week—

NUFACTS (audio) Information Center

NUFACTS audio message center offers fast, convenient information. In the Lincoln area call 441-7188; for the rest of Nebraska call 1-800-832-5441. When directed, enter the 3-digit number of the message you wish to hear.

Acreage & Small Farm Insights Web Site

Visit our Internet web site at: **http//www.ianr.unl.edu/ianr/dodge/acreage/index.htm** to learn about Extension programs, publications and links to other acreage and small farm information.



"Part-time Farming" video

"Part-time Farming" will help develop your country environment and improve your quality of life. Just one hour of ***"Part-time Farming"*** provides tips that will save you costly mistakes and precious time. Call 402-441-7180 to order your copy.

Food & Fitness

Healthy Eating
Enjoy Nebraska Foods!

Alice Henneman, RD, LMNT, Extension Educator

Over the past 20 years, the efforts of America's pork producers have resulted in pork with 31% less fat and 14% less calories, according to Jane Reeson, Demand Enhancement Director, Nebraska Pork Producers Association, Inc.

The National Pork Producers Council (NPPC) cites the following as the leanest cuts of pork. The tenderloin is the leanest cut of pork—a 3-ounce serving contains 139 calories and 4.1 grams of fat—comparable to a skinless chicken breast. Other lean cuts (based on a 3-ounce serving) include boneless loin roast with 165 calories and 6.1 grams of fat; boneless sirloin chops with 164 calories and 5.7 grams of fat; boneless loin chops with 173 calories and 6.6 grams of fat and boneless ham (extra lean) with 123 calories and 4.7 grams of fat. A 2-ounce serving of Canadian-style bacon contains 86 calories and 3.9 grams of fat.

Here's a low fat pork recipe from Jane. For additional recipes, call the Nebraska Pork Producers Association at 1-888-627-7675 or visit the NPPC web site at: http://www.nppc.org.

Pork Chops with Apple-Cranberry Glaze

4 servings

4 boneless pork chops, 3/4-inch thick
Nonstick spray coating
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
1/4 cup apple cider or juice
1/2 cup whole cranberry sauce
2 tablespoons honey
2 tablespoons frozen orange juice concentrate
1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg

Spray a large nonstick skillet with nonstick coating. Heat over medium-high heat. Sprinkle both sides of chops with pepper. Brown chops on each side in hot skillet. Add apple cider. Cover tightly; cook over low heat for 5-6 minutes or until chops are just done (160 degrees F internal temperature; pork will have a hint of pink). While chops are cooking, in a small bowl combine cranberry sauce, honey, orange juice concentrate, ginger and nutmeg. Remove chops from heat and keep warm. Add the cranberry glaze to the skillet and cook for 1 to 2 minutes until heated through. Pour over chops and serve.

Nutrition Information per Serving: 272 calories, 7 grams fat (AH)

Meal time—family time

Let ALL family members help!

What should we serve?
Who does the dishes?
Who will go shopping?
What groceries do we need?
Who sets the table?
Who cleans off the table?

Nutrition Education Program

Nutrition Education Program
for Limited Resource Families

Maureen Burson
Extension Educator

Quick Meal Ideas

- Cook and toss pasta with vegetables or leftover meat and canned spaghetti sauce.
- Bake potatoes and top with broccoli, cheese, chili or cottage cheese.
- Use leftover vegetables and meats in stir-frys, salad, omelets and sandwiches.
- Serve tortillas filled with canned black beans or refried beans, salsa and cheese.
- Stuff a pita pocket with tuna and vegetable salad.
- Cook oatmeal according to directions and stir in 1/2 cup applesauce.
- On top of warm cooked pancakes, thinly spread peanut butter and jelly and roll up.
- Make English muffin pizzas with cooked hamburger, veggies, sauce and cheese.

Source: Kansas State University Cooperative Extension, Family Nutrition Program. (MB)

Programs for your group

The following programs are available from our office for presentation to your group. Call Alice Henneman at 441-7180 for more information. (AH)

Cook It Quick!
Do you enjoy delicious home-cooked meals? But, by day's end, do you have little time and energy left for cooking? Learn about cooking techniques, kitchen equipment and time-saving strategies and recipe ideas that will help you enjoy tasty and nutritious home-cooking as well as being able to "cook it quick!"

Limitations: Minimum class size of 8; no maximum class size

Length: 45-60 minutes as desired by group

Cost: No charge; request that site provide small prize(s)

Clean Hands Campaign
Have fun using "glo-germ" to teach handwashing to youth and adults. Receive handouts for your group and a copy of reproduction ready handwashing activities.

Limitations: Can be used with any number. Call to schedule a time to check-out the Clean Hands Kit and receive your materials. Kit must be checked out and returned within the same week. Available on a first come, first served, basis.

Length: This activity takes about 20 or minutes, depending on the size and age of your group.

Cost: No charge.

Don't Get "Bugged" by a Foodborne Illness
Was it the flu or a foodborne illness? Many of the symptoms are the same. prevent "sick" days by playing a game that teaches about potentially harmful foods and food handling practices (you may be surprised!). "Don't Get 'Bugged' by a Foodborne Illness" is being used for food safety education in all 50 states, Canada and Australia and was recent winner of a national award from the National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences. ***A version for health fairs is also available.***

Limitations: Minimum class size of 8; no maximum

Length: 45-60 minutes as desired by group

Cost: No charge; request that site provide small prize(s)

Meet that 5 A Day resolution with these ideas for the new year...

A recent nationwide survey asked Americans what keeps them from eating more fruits and vegetables in the winter. *Responses showed:*

#1 A tendency to fill up on other types of food that are around the house during the holidays was the most frequent response (48 percent).

#2 Limited selection of fresh fruits and vegetables in the winter months (36 percent).

#3 Craving fruits and vegetables less during the winter (28 percent).

Here are some 5 A Day tips from the National Cancer Institute for easy, hearty winter dining:

For Everyday Meals:

• Roast 3 cups of your favorite winter vegetables with some minced garlic, one teaspoon of olive oil and a sprinkle of salt and pepper at 400 degrees F until tender. Serve hot, or serve cool with a shot of balsamic vinegar. This is an easy way to use winter root vegetables such as carrots, parsnips, potatoes and rutabaga.

continued on page 11

Focus on Food

Alice Henneman, RD, LMNT, Extension Educator

Q: Do you need to store honey in the refrigerator?

A: No. Store honey at room temperature. For best quality, plan to use in about a year.

Q: What can I do if my honey turns cloudy?

A: If honey turns cloudy or crystallizes, the National Honey Board (NHB) recommends that you place the jar in warm water and stir until the crystals dissolve.

Q: Is there any easy way to clean measuring cups when cooking with honey?

A: For easy removal, the NHB recommends coating the measuring cup with vegetable oil or non-stick cooking spray before measuring. (AH)

NEBLINE articles may be reprinted without special permission if the source is acknowledged as "University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County NEBLINE." If the article includes a byline, please acknowledge the author and their title.

YOUR information center... around the clock

NUFACTS

NUFACTS offers information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In the Lincoln area call 441-7188; for the rest of Nebraska call 1-800-832-5441. When directed, enter the 3-digit number of the message you wish to hear.

307 Reducing Sodium in Your Diet
356 The Vegetable Group
357 Using the "Nutrition Facts" Section on Food Labels

and many more...

Nutrition and Food Safety Web Site

Visit our internet web site at: **http//www.ianr.unl.edu/ianr/lanco/family/safety.htm**

FREE monthly FoodTalk e-mail newsletter

To be added to the mailing list, e-mail Alice Henneman at AHENNEMAN1@UNL.EDU

Diabetes Study Course

Call Alice Henneman (441-7180) for more information.

Jean's Journal

Jean Wheelock
FCE Council Chair

The new year has rung in and I wish health, peace and happiness for all.

Our January council meeting will be January 25. See article in this NEBLINE. We will meet for lunch, have our business meeting and browse through some of the lovely shops in the Haymarket. I do hope to see you there.

A reminder that our FCE clubs are collecting embroidery floss that we will send to India where the women will use the floss in creating beautiful stitchery they can sell to help support themselves and their family. Contributions will be accepted either through your local FCE club or you can drop it off at the extension office.

It's time for our members to plan on submitting entries in our Cultural Arts Contest. The themes this year are photography, quilting and original heritage skills, which is an article made using early day skills not found in other categories such as quilling, scrimshaw, leather craft, tin punch, wheat weaving, basketry, dyeing, lacemaking or other. Items need to be submitted by March 22.

Let's make our goal for this year to increase our membership, get involved with our organization, make new friends and help our community. I know we can.

Happy New Year's! (JW)

FCE News

The February FCE club and community leader training lesson is scheduled for Tuesday, January 26, 1 or 7 p.m. "Boning Up for Health: Reducing the Risk of Osteoporosis" will be presented by Alice Henneman, Extension Educator.

This lesson will identify factors that affect bone health throughout the life span. By identifying food sources of calcium and assessing other potential risk factors, participants will be able to plan ways to build bone health.

Anyone interested is invited to attend. Non-FCE members or groups should call Pam at 441-7180 to preregister so lesson packets can be prepared. (LB)

The January FCE Council Meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 25, 1999, 1 p.m. at Old Chicago Restaurant, 826 P Street, in the Haymarket.

We will have lunch (dutch treat, order from the menu) followed by the business meeting. This will give members a chance to hear about the Haymarket area and shop in the speciality stores.

All FCE members are invited to attend. Make reservations by calling the extension office, 441-7180, by Friday, January 22. (LB)

Family Living

HOUSEHOLD HINTS

by Lorene Bartos, Extension Educator

Laundry Tips

For the best cleaning action, clothes need room to move freely. Plus, there must be enough free water to carry away the soil easily. Fill the tub loosely, not completely.

Cold rinse water saves energy, makes ironing easier and helps prevent permanent press fabrics from wrinkling.

To save energy, always wash a full load or match the water level setting to the amount of clothes being washed. When washing small loads, use a lower water setting. (LB)

Sign up for Money 2000+

The first edition of Money 2000+ News is out and will be sent to all who enroll in the Money 2000+ program. To enroll contact the Lancaster County Extension Office to get an enrollment packet. Return the enrollment form and the $15 annual enrollment fee. For more information contact LaDeane at 441-7180. (LJ)

Now's the time to organize

Winter can bring on blizzards of snow and of paper! When was the last time you went through your entire home filing system? How long would it take you to put your hands on a copy of your birth certificate? Taking time to organize can save you time and frustration later.

Getting Organized

Begin with a plan. Use the chart below to identify specific needs for organization.

Request the support of the entire household. Some members may be old enough to help sort, organize, label or arrange in chronological order.

Communicate. Let those involved help develop the most efficient and accessible system for all those needing to use the system.

Prioritize the area to be conquered first and work at one area at a time. (LJ)

	Yes	No	Some	Priority	Family Member Responsible
1. We have a family filing system that works for us					
2. My spouse/children (friend or relative) know the whereabouts of my life insurance/important papers.					
3. Family members know the content of storage boxes without looking inside.					
4. Everyone in the household can find pliers, hammer, screwdriver.					
5. We are prompt in sending birthday and anniversary cards.					
6. We have a system for handling incoming mail.					
7. Photographs (slides, videos) are identified by subject or date and in appropriate storage or albums.					
8. The oldest magazine in the house is 6 months old.					
9. We have two copies of a household inventory - one stored at home and one in safe deposit box.					
10. Our kitchen drawers are organized.					

When income drops and expenses keep coming

· Inventory what you have on hand for food and household supplies. Besides what you have on hand, you need to plan for emergency needs.

· Add any emergency needs such as clothing and personal supplies to your list—for example winter coat or shoes for a growing child.

continued on page 11

Parents forever

Three 2-hour workshops for divorced, separating and divorcing parents will be held March 11, 18 and 25. The purpose of the workshop is to support children experiencing conflict and divorce. Content includes:

- understanding how children experience grief and loss.
- understanding how loyalty conflicts hurt children.
- learning how to avoid putting your children in adult roles.
- establishing a business-like relationship with the other parent to care for your children.
- improving communication.
- understanding how to maintain a consistent environment between two homes.

This is a collaborative project of Lancaster County Extension, Lincoln/Lancaster Mediation Center and St. Elizabeth Regional Medical Center. Cost is $30 per person (includes manual). Call LaDeane at 441-7180 for information. (LJ)

CHARACTER COUNTS! Workshop

January 19, 1999

9:00 a.m.-12:00 Noon

Lancaster Extension Education Center
444 Cherrycreek Road

This workshop will qualify participants to use the Character Counts! curriculum, a program designed to emphasize the need for character and to teach respect, responsibility, fairness, citizenship, caring and trustworthiness. Open to any interested adult or teen.

TRUSTWORTHINESS • RESPECT • RESPONSIBILITY • FAIRNESS • CARING • CITIZENSHIP
Six Pillars of Character
JOSEPHSON INSTITUTE OF ETHICS
CHARACTER COUNTS!SM

Registration

Name _____

Organization/Club _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

E-mail _____

Registration fee of **$5.00** per person must be enclosed with registration. Make check(s) payable to Cooperative Extension.

Registration deadline is **Friday, January 15**.

Return to: University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County, LaDeane Jha, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln, NE 68528-1507

4-H & Youth

4-H Bulletin Board

- ✓ Lancaster County Cat Club Meeting—Thursday, January 14, 7 p.m. (ALH)
- ✓ Friday, January 15, 4-H Teen Council 4th and 5th grade Lock-In, 8 p.m.-8 a.m. (TK)
- ✓ Pet Pals Household Pets Club Meeting—Monday, January 25, 1999, 7 p.m. (ALH)
- ✓ Sunday, February 14, 4-H Teen Council Meeting, 3-5 p.m.. All interested teens are invited. (TK)

4-H Achievement/ Activities—what's it all about?

4-H members will be recognized for their achievements **Wednesday, February 2 at 7 p.m.** County awards, Outstanding 4-H Members, I Dare You and Meritorious Service awards will be presented.

There will also be presentations and displays of activities that have taken place throughout the year. Come see a demonstration, dance and song groups, judging, speeches and more!

This is an opportunity for all clubs, new or established, to see what opportunities 4-H has to offer and how members, leaders and parents can participate.

Come join the 4-H Council in recognizing 4-H members for a job well done. (TK)

4-H leader training

Monday, January 18 • 9:30 a.m. or 7 p.m.

New and reorganizing leaders are invited to attend this 4-H leader training to assist you in 4-H club management, activities and projects. Please bring your questions, concerns, success stories, frustrations and 4-H parents. (TK)

4-H club officer training

All 4-H members are encouraged to attend officer training. Everyone will discover how to conduct a meeting and use parliamentary procedure. 4-H members will also have an opportunity to participate in a mock meeting. (DL/TK)
Saturday, February 13 • 9:30-11 a.m.
444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln

Wanted! 4-H clubs

How is your 4-H club unique? The 4-H Ambassadors want to hear why your club is special, what sets your club apart from others and what makes 4-H a great experience. We will select a club to be featured each month in the NEBLINE. Club leaders—check your mailbox at the extension office for an application form. Return it as soon as possible. (LB)

Attention beef exhibitors

Deanna will need help setting up panels for the beef weigh-in on Friday, February 5. Help is also needed to nose print, tag and weigh on the 6th. If you are able to volunteer on either of these days, please call Deanna to set up a time. Your help will be greatly appreciated! (DK)

—1999 4-H Calendar—

(all events located at the Lancaster Extension Education Center unless otherwise noted)

January

5	4-H Council Meeting,	7 p.m.
10	4-H Ambassador Meeting,	1:45 p.m.
10	Teen Council Meeting,	3-5 p.m.
11	CWF Meeting,	7 p.m.
11	Extension Board Meeting,	7:30 p.m.
11	Shooting Sports Club Meeting,	7 p.m.
11	Speech VIPS Meeting,	7 p.m.
13	Horse VIPS Meeting,	7 p.m.
14	Rabbit VIPS Meeting,	7 p.m.
14	Cat Club Meeting,	7 p.m.
15-16	4-H Lock-in,	8 p.m.-8 a.m.
18	New 4-H Leader Training	
19	Adult Character Counts! Training,	9 a.m.-noon
19	Star City Rabbit Raisers Club Meeting,	7 p.m.
21	Fair Board Meeting,	7:30 p.m.
25	Pet Pals 4-H Club Meeting,	7 p.m.

February

2	4-H Achievement/Activities-What's It All About?	
6	4-H Cattle Weigh Day,	8-10 a.m.
8	4-H Shooting Sports Meeting,	7-9 p.m.
8	Extension Board Meeting,	7:30 p.m.
10	Horse VIPS Meeting,	7 p.m.
11	Cat Club Meeting,	7 p.m.
11	Rabbit VIPS Meeting,	7 p.m.
13	4-H Officer Training Workshop,	9:30-11 a.m.
14	Ambassador Meeting,	1:45 p.m.
14	Teen Council Meeting,	3-5 p.m.
16	Star City Rabbit Raisers Club Meeting,	7 p.m.
18	Fair Board Meeting,	7:30 p.m.
20	PAK 10 Rabbit Judging/Clinic—*Douglas County Extension Office, Omaha*	
21	Speech Workshop,	6-7:30 p.m.
22	New Leader Training,	9:30 a.m. or 7 p.m.

March

2	4-H Council Meeting,	7 p.m.
5	Small Animal VIPS Meeting,	7 p.m.
6	Rabbit Clinic	
7	Rabbit Show	
8	Shooting Sports Meeting,	7-9 p.m.
8	Extension Board Meeting,	7:30 p.m.
10	Horse VIPS Meeting,	7 p.m.
11	Cat Club Meeting,	7 p.m.
11	Rabbit VIPS Meeting,	7 p.m.
12	Speech Contest Entries Due	
12	Character Counts! Camp for 5-12 year olds	
13-14	Horsin' Around Clinic—*Lincoln*	
14	4-H Ambassador Meeting,	1:45 p.m.
14	Teen Council Meeting,	3-5 p.m.
15	Leader Training,	9:30 a.m. or 7 p.m.
16	Star City Rabbit Raisers Club Meeting,	7 p.m.
18-21	Kansas City Conference—*Kansas City, MO*	
18	Fair Board Meeting,	7 p.m.
20	4-H Record/Awards Books Workshop,	9:30 a.m.
21	Character Counts Training for Teens,	9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
21	State 4-H BB/Air Tournament,	8 a.m.-4 p.m.
21	4-H Speech Contest—*State Capitol*	1:30 p.m.
25	**earth wellness festival**—*Southeast Community College, Lincoln, NE,*	9 a.m.-4 p.m.
30	Be a Better Gardener Preregistration Deadline	
tba	Turkey Order Deadline	

April

1	4-H Action Team Applications Due	
1	Market Beef I.D.'s for State Fair, Ak-Sar-Ben & American Royal Due	
6	4-H Council Meeting,	7 p.m.
8	Rabbit VIPS Meeting,	7 p.m.
9	Character Counts! Workshop 9-12 year olds	8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.
11	4-H Ambassador Meeting,	1:45 p.m.
11	Teen Council Meeting,	3-5 p.m.
12	CWF Meeting,	7 p.m.
12	4-H Shooting Sports Club Meeting,	7-9 p.m.
12	Extension Board Meeting,	7:30 p.m.
14	Horse VIPS Meeting,	7 p.m.
15	Fair Board Meeting,	7:30 p.m.
17	Swine Weigh-in,	9-11 a.m.
17	Kiwanis Karnival—*State Fair Park,*	7 p.m.
17	PAK 10 Dairy Judging Contest—*ARDC, Mead, NE*	
17-18	Lancaster Event Center Benefit Horse Show	
19	4-H Leader Workshop	
24	Invitational Cat Workshop,	10 a.m.-4 p.m.
25	4-H Music Contest—*Dawes School,*	2 p.m.
tba	Turkey Delivery	

May

1	Biology Career Workshop Applications Due	
1-2	Hunters Pride Shaggy Horse Show	
4	4-H Council Meeting,	7 p.m.
10	Livestock Booster Club Meeting,	7 p.m.
10	Extension Board Meeting,	7:30 p.m.
11	How to Exhibit Leader Training,	9:30 a.m. or 7 p.m.
12	Horse VIPS Meeting,	7 p.m.
13	Cat Club Meeting,	7 p.m.
13	Rabbit VIPS Meeting,	7 p.m.
14	Cat VIPS Meeting,	6:30 p.m.
20	Fair Board Meeting,	7:30 p.m.
21	District & State Horse ID's & Entries Due to Office	
29	Performance Lamb Tagging Day,	8 a.m.-noon
tba	Market Broiler Deadline	

June

1	4-H Project Enrollment Deadline
1	4-H Council Meeting, ... 7 p.m.
5-6	Pre-District Horse Show—*State Fair Park*
8	PAK 10 Horse Judging Contest, ... 6:30 p.m.
9	Adult Character Counts! Training
9	Horse VIPS Meeting, ... 7 p.m.
10	Rabbit VIPS Meeting, ... 7 p.m.
11	Teen Character Counts! Training
13	CWF Leaves for Washington D.C, ... 8 a.m.
14	Extension Board Meeting, ... 7:30 p.m.
17	Fair Board Meeting, ... 7:30 p.m.
13	Teen Council Meeting, ... 3-5 p.m.
15	Beef, Swine, Dairy Cattle, Goat, Llama, Horse, Rabbit & Sheep I.D.'s Due
15-18	Clover College
22	Cat Workshop, ... 7 p.m.
23	Practice Family & Consumer Science Judging, ... 1 p.m.
23	Practice Demonstration, ... 2:30 p.m.
24	District Horse Show—*Beatrice*
tba	Market Broilers Pick-up

July

6	4-H Council Meeting, ... 7 p.m.
7	Horse VIPS Meeting, ... 7 p.m.
7	Livestock VIPS Meeting, ... 7 p.m.
8	Rabbit VIPS Meeting, ... 7 p.m.
7-9	ExpoVisions '99—*Lincoln*
9	All Animal Entries for Lancaster County Fair Due
11	4-H Ambassador Meeting, ... 1:45 p.m.
11	Teen Council Meeting, ... 3-5 p.m.
11-15	4-H State Horse Expo—*Grand Island*
12	Livestock Booster Club Meeting, ... 8 p.m.
12	Extension Board Meeting, ... 7:30 p.m.
14	Horticulture, Grass & Weed I.D., Tree I.D. Contests, ... 10 a.m.-noon
14	Lifetime Skills Contest, ... 1 p.m.
15	Fair Board Meeting, ... 7 p.m.
16	Demonstration Contest
19	How to Show Horticulture Exhibits at the Fair Workshop, ... 2-4 p.m.
19-23	Biology Career Workshop
22	PAK 10 Tractor Driving Contest—*Fremont County Fair*
28	Style Revue Judging
28	Fair Superintendent Meeting, ... 7 p.m.
29	4-H Food Booth Training—*State Fair Park,* ..... 6:30 p.m.

August

2	4-H Council Meeting—*State Fair Park,* ..... 7 p.m.
2-7	County Fair Horse Show
3	Entry Day for Lancaster County Fair Static Exhibits—*State Fair Park,* ..... 4-8 p.m.
4	County Fair Judging Day for Static Exhibits
4	County Fair Animal Check-in (4-H Sheep, Swine, Rabbits, Poultry, Angora Goats) —*State Fair Park,* ..... 4-8p.m.
4	Sheep Weigh-in—*State Fair Park,* ..... 4-8 p.m.
4	All Animals in Place—*State Fair Park,* ..... 8 p.m.
4	Lancaster County Fair Opens—*State Fair Park*
4-8	Lancaster County Fair—*State Fair Park*
5	Beef Weigh-in—*State Fair Park,* ..... noon
5	Performance Swine Weigh-in—*State Fair Park,* ..... 2:30 p.m.
6	Clover Kids Character Counts! Day Camp ..... 1-4 p.m.
8	All Animals Released—*State Fair Park,* ..... 4-6 p.m.
9	Extension Board Meeting, ... 7:30 p.m.
11	Horse VIPS Meeting, ... 7 p.m.
12	Superintendent's Dinner, ... 7 p.m.
12	Rabbit VIPS Meeting, ... 7 p.m.
13	Ak-Sar-Ben Entries Due
17	Livestock VIPS Meeting, ... 7 p.m.
19	Teachers Character Counts! Training
19	Fair Board Meeting, ... 7 p.m.
25	State Fair Entry Day—*State Fair Park, Lincoln, NE*
26	State Fair Judging Day—*State Fair Park, Lincoln*
August 27-September 6	Nebraska State Fair—*Lincoln*

September

7	4-H Council Meeting, ... 7 p.m.
8	Horse VIPS Meeting, ... 7 p.m.
9	Rabbit VIPS Meeting, ... 7 p.m.
12	4-H Ambassador Meeting, ... 1:45 p.m.
12	Teen Council Meeting, ... 3-5 p.m.
13	Extension Board Meeting, ... 7:30 p.m.
13	4-H Open House, ... 6:30-8:30 p.m.
16	Fair Board Meeting, ... 7:30 p.m.
21	Fair's Over-Now What? 4-H Leader Training, ... 9:30 a.m. or 7 p.m.
21-22	Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Horse Show—*Omaha*
22-27	Ak-Sar-Ben Livestock Exposition—*Omaha*
30	Record Books Due

October

3-9	National 4-H Week
5	Livestock Booster Club Meeting, ... 7:30 p.m.
5	4-H Council Meeting, ... 7 p.m.
10	4-H Ambassador Meeting, ... 1:45 p.m.
10	Teen Council Meeting, ... 3-5 p.m.
13	Horse VIPS Meeting, ... 7 p.m.
14-17	North Central Regional 4-H Forum
14	Rabbit VIPS Meeting, ... 7 p.m.
21	Fair Board Meeting, ... 7:30 p.m.

November

2	Livestock Booster Club Meeting, ... 7:30 p.m.
2	4-H Council Meeting, ... 7 p.m.
14	Teen Council Meeting, ... 3-5 p.m.
14	Extension Board Meeting, ... 7:30 p.m.
18	Fair Board Meeting, ... 7:30 p.m.

December

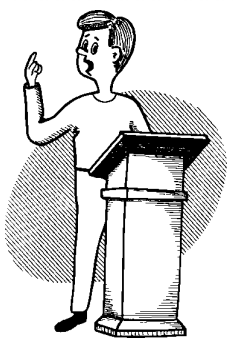
7	4-H Council Meeting, ... 7 p.m.
11	Fair Board Meeting, ... 7:30 p.m.
13	4-H Ambassador Meeting, ... 1:45 p.m.
13	Teen Council Meeting, ... 3-5 p.m.
14	Extension Board Meeting, ... 7:30 p.m.

4-H & Youth

Market beef weigh-in

The Lancaster County 4-H beef weigh-in will be Saturday, February 6 from 8 to 10 a.m. at Nebraska State Fair Park in the East arena. All 4-H market steers and heifers must come in on this date to get tagged, weighed and nose printed. If you have any questions, call Deanna at 441-7180. (DK)

4-H Speech Workshop

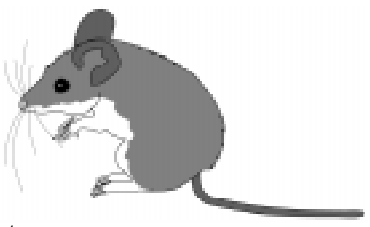


Plan on attending the 1999 4-H Speech Workshop. It will be Sunday, February 21, 6-7:30 p.m. The workshop will help all ages learn to write and deliver speeches and to gain self esteem. There will also be a special guest speaker to talk about the importance of public speaking. What better way to improve or learn the most important skills you have? Mark this date on your calendar and I will see you there! (DK)

Colgate Youth for America

Here's an opportunity for those 4-H clubs who have done wonderful things for their community. The Colgate Youth for America Campaign is awarding 240 local unit winners up to $1,000 in cash. If your club has done something terrific for the community and would like to have an opportunity to win a monetary grant, then fill out the entry form located in your 4-H mailbox at the extension office. Entries are due March 15. (TK)

Mice



Mice
I think mice
Are rather nice.
Their tails are long,
Their faces small,
They haven't any chins at all.
Their ears are pink,
Their teeth are white,
They run about the house all night.
They nibble things they shouldn't touch
And no one seems to like them much.
But I think mice are nice.

The history of the mouse can be traced back to 4000 B.C. They are rodents, very hardy and fertile, and easy to raise. Wild mice are pests but domesticated or "tame" mice are extremely valuable to humans in all kinds of research.

Mice should be kept in a good-sized wire cage because they will gnaw through a wooden one. Furnish the cage with branches, swings, perches and/or an exercise wheel. Line the bottom of the cage with sawdust, shredded newspaper or commercial cat litter and clean and disinfect the cage every other day. For a nest box, use an empty cottage cheese carton.

Mice will eat dry dog food, seeds, bread, breakfast cereals, rice, leafy foods and raw potatoes. Because mice are gnawing animals, you should provide a piece of wood to help keep their teeth in good condition. Supply fresh water in a gravity flow bottle.

To handle your mouse, place the animal carefully in one hand and stroke its head and back gently with the other hand. Never hold it too tightly. Once accustomed to you, a mouse will come to the front of the cage, climb on your hand or even explore your pocket.

Mice are great pocket pets. If they are kept under sanitary conditions, they will keep themselves spotlessly clean and well-groomed. They are friendly and sometimes you can teach them to do tricks. Think about getting a new pet! Mice are easy to care for and fun to have around. (ALH)

Community Focus

Dowding, Pugsley and Caha complete terms

Extension Board members Deborah Caha, Ron Dowding and Bill Pugsley recently completed their terms on the Lancaster County Extension Board. At the December board meeting they were recognized for dedicated service as members of the County Extension Board and thereby continuing and extending the educational programs of the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension Division and the United States Department of Agriculture. The extension staff are grateful for their personal contributions.

The County Extension Board is responsible for program direction of UNL Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County. Recent appointments to the board for three year terms are Dale J. Kabes, representing District 3 (City of Lincoln), Tom Messick, District 1(North District), and Gaylan L. Suhr, District 2 (South District). (GB)

1998 Farm Home Plat & Directories are available for purchase at the Lancaster County Extension Office. They are published by Farm & Home Publishers, LTD of Belmond, Iowa. Price for the directory is $19.50. They are available for pick-up at the reception desk during office hours. (GB)

Lancaster extension staff recognized

Recognized for length of service to Cooperative Extension at the Nebraska Cooperative Extension Annual Meeting in Scottsbluff, Nebraska were Extension Assistant, Soni Cochran (5 years) and Extension Educator, Lorene Bartos (25 years). Lorene Bartos was also recognized at the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents meeting for her 25 years of service. A North Central Regional Award recognition was also presented to Extension Assistant, Mary Jane McReynolds in the Promotional Package category. (GB)

"Who on Earth Cares" video available

To increase the awareness and understanding of today's dynamic Nebraska agricultural industry, the Nebraska AgRelations Council (NAC), with the support of the University of Nebraska Foundation, and in cooperation with the Nebraska Department of Agriculture and the UNL Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, has sponsored production of a 16-1/2 minute video.

Produced by Nebraska Educational Telecommunications (NETV), the video is designed for both rural and urban audiences. It takes viewers on a sweeping tour of Nebraska's diverse agricul-

continued on page 12

University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension presents *Learning to Lead*

Scheduled in two sessions, the 1999 Family Community Leadership Institute will be conducted January 21-23 and February 25-27, 1999. At the institute, important leadership skill development will be taught. Through a variety of workshop sessions, participants will discover effective strategies for influencing others and gaining an understanding of public policy. The importance of group dynamics and how to communicate effectively in varied situations is also addressed.

Cost of the six-day institute is $395. This includes four nights lodging, break snacks and four meals. The institute will be held at the Kearney, Nebraska Ramada Inn. Further information and registration forms are available by contacting this office. (GB)

Overview of Americans' finances

Three times each decade, the Federal Reserve system (in cooperation with the Department of Treasury) conducts a nationwide survey of Americans' personal finances. The 1998 survey is drawing to a close this month. Results will be published late next year or in early 2000.

You might be interested, however, in some key indicators from the previous survey taken in 1995. The 1995 data will be the primary basis for comparison when 1998 results start trickling in. All results are in 1995 dollars: Keep in mind that even with fairly modest inflation in recent years, it takes about six percent more dollars in 1998 to have the same purchasing power as in 1995.

In 1995, U.S. family income—under the definition here, we're really talking about households because single people are not excluded—averaged $44,300 before taxes. However, because of very high incomes at the top of the scale, the median income was much lower, only $30,800. (At the median, half have higher incomes and half have lower incomes.) In general, incomes, whether measured relative to the average or the median, tend to rise through age 54. After that, income slowly drops as workers retire. Households headed by a person over 75 years of age have less income than those headed by someone under 35.

Education is strongly linked to income. In 1995, average incomes ranged from $21,900 in households headed by a person without a high school diploma to $70,400 where the household head holds a college degree.

Nearly twice as many people own their housing (64.7 percent) as rent or have other living arrangements (35.3 percent). The relative share of ownership has been inching higher for many years.

Like incomes, net worth varies widely among Americans. Moreover, the difference between average and median is even more than stark than for income. In 1995, the average net worth was $205,900; the median, $56,400.

Just over one-quarter (25.8 percent) of all households had a net worth of $10,000 or less in 1995. However, at the other end of the scale, 14.4 percent had a net worth of $250,000 or more. Only 36 percent of those in the lowest net-worth category were savers. This compared to 78 percent in the top category.

Nonfinancial assets—real estate, vehicles, and businesses—continue to comprise most of the assets in a typical household. In 1995, the relative share for these assets was 65.9 percent. However, financial assets have been increasing in relative terms, from 27.9 percent of the total in 1989 to 34.1 percent in 1995. Most of the growth has been in retirement accounts, mutual funds and common stocks Together, these categories accounted for 56.3 percent of all financial assets in 1995. Meanwhile, less money is being left in checking accounts and in certificates of deposit. Between 1989 and 1995, the relative share of financial assets in the latter two categories declines from 30.1 percent to 19.0 percent.

Noticeably absent from the information presented above are cost of living comparisons. This is important. In Nebraska, our cost of living tends to be lower than the nation as a whole, mainly because of lower housing costs.

Source: Roy Frederick, Cooperative Extension Policy Brief, Vol. 1, No. 25. (GB)

Fittro to be honored at retirement party

Lenora Fittro, nutrition advisor with the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program will be honored, Wednesday, January 20. The celebration is from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., with a formal presentation at 11:30 a.m. Dr. Beth Birnstihl, Associate Dean of UN Cooperative Extension will honor Lenora for her EFNEP career and 25 years of service to the University.

Before Lenora started her career as a nutrition advisor, she served two years as a program volunteer. As a family, the Fittros gathered supplies and gave them to the EFNEP staff to distribute to their families.

When Lenora started in 1974 there was no formal curriculum. The teaching materials we have today make it much easier for families to understand the message we have to share. The most rewarding part of the job is the life-long learning she receives through extension. It's heart-warming to see families improve as a result of the lessons we teach.

She has been stopped in the grocery store many times by former clients who tell her they are still using the information she provided them years ago.

Through the years, EFNEP has taught families how to access services such as Food Stamps, WIC, TANF, Commodity Foods, Head Start, food pantries, etc. During those years, EFNEP was one of the few educational agencies delivering programs in homes.

Carol Yoakum Family Resource Center, Malone Center, Willard Center, People's City Mission, St. Monicas, and the Salvation Army are some of the sites which Lenora has served through the years. Agency directors and co-workers have appreciated her dependability and quality programs. She has worked with some sites since beginning in Lancaster County.

Lenora lives in Weston with her husband Frank. They have four boys and five grandchildren. Lenora looks forward to having more time with grandchildren, gardening, reading and working with horses. (MB)

Lenora teaches Carol Yoakum Center families how to save money by cutting and repackaging a whole uncooked turkey for future meals.

Ten steps to good gardening

continued from page 2

7. Mulch. Consider using black plastic to control moisture loss and weeds for warm season crops like tomatoes, peppers and vine crops. All porous mulches like straw, leaves, sawdust or compost will give the same mulching results as black plastic, except they will lower the soil temperature or at least prevent it from increasing as the days warm up in the spring. Such materials are best applied to warm season crops later in the season. They present no problem to the cool season crops after the seedlings emerge.

8. Compost. Work compost into the soil as soon as possible after the final harvest. This will promote decomposition of organic matter. If the plant material is diseased, it is better to discard it and not add it to the compost pile. This reduces the chance of disease carryover to the next seasons crop, especially with soil borne diseases. Composting plant material will produce a usable product for the next years gardening season. Elevated temperatures in the compost pile will kill many weed seeds and leaf diseases.

9. Control weeds. Perennial weeds near gardens often harbor insects, viruses and disease in the spring. Dense weeds in the garden also rob crops of moisture, light and nutrients. Eliminate young weeds with shallow cultivation. Never allow weeds to flower and set seed, because this will only keep the cycle going from generation to generation. Avoid using herbicides for weed control in the home garden.

10. Control disease and insects. There are many fungicides and insecticides available to control pests in the garden. The products may be purchased separately or combined as a general purpose mixture. It is very important to first accurately identify the problem and then select the correct pesticide to control that problem. Most materials are specific for what they will control and timing of the application in relation to the problem is also critical. (MJM)

❖ ❖ ❖

Grain stubble rental rates

continued from page 4

additional expense and management to control.

What is the value of the plant nutrients that are removed by grazing? If the land is being grazed, some of the carbon, nitrogen and other minerals contained in the leaves and shucks will be utilized for animal growth and maintenance and therefore are lost from the plant/soil system. An advantage to grazing over machine harvesting forage is that much of the nutrient content in the stover is returned to the field in the manure.

It is this author's opinion that when downed grain is present in the field, in general, the value of the nutrients lost is generally offset by the benefit of reducing volunteer plants next season. The value of the nutrients lost by grazing stubble is therefore not a big factor when setting a fair rental rate. The major consideration is the value of the stover as a marketable product to be sold as a part of the income from the crop. The "fair" rental rate therefore basically becomes whatever the market will bear.

A final consideration must be mentioned. Stubble fields can be quite variable in terms of pounds of stover per acre and in terms of the amount of grain left in the field. There can also be much variability on how well animals utilize the residues that are present in the fields due to weather factors. In addition, the condition of fences and the availability of water can vary greatly from field to field, making some fields more desirable than others from the renters point of view.

Given the variability between fields and weather conditions, probably the fairest way to rent stubble fields is to pay on a head-per-day basis. That way, the amount the renter pays is more or less based on the amount of feed that is available and on the openness of the weather.

Surveys have been conducted by university farm management specialists to determine the prevalent rental rates for stubble grazing. The latest survey was done five years ago. In the 1993 survey, the average rate for six southeast Nebraska counties was $0.27 per head per day. At $0.27 per head per day, the monthly rate would be $8.10 per full grown cow or the equivalent. This compares, quite favorably, with summer pasture rental rates of $21.70 per animal unit month (1000 lb cow with calf at side) making stubble grazing probably the least expensive feed source all year for the animal owner. (TD)

❖ ❖ ❖

Meet that 5 A Day resolution with these ideas...

continued from page 6

•Add a can of drained chickpeas or other beans to a green salad—easily done, even if you're short on time.

•Check out the ever-expanding frozen vegetable section of the supermarket for dinner ideas. Try baby peas or baby corncobs, or carrots with pearl onions.

•Add drained, canned fruit to flavored gelatin. It's a classic.

•Serve roasted vegetables on top of pasta, brown rice, or couscous, and add a sprinkle of Parmesan or low-fat feta cheese.

•Make an easy fruit sauce for meat by simmering fresh or canned apple or pear slices with low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth and sliced onion. When the mixture has reduced, the fruit slices are soft, and the onion slices are translucent, serve with baked pork or chicken.

•Toss steamed vegetables with some lemon or orange zest. To zest a lemon or an orange, grate it lightly, just to get the colored part of the peel. (Avoid the white pith, which tastes bitter.)

•Add fresh, frozen or canned vegetables to your favorite canned soups before heating to make them more of a meal. Or add canned beans, which also count as a 5 A Day serving.

For Snacks and Drinks:

•Try some low-sodium vegetable juice with a shot of hot sauce, a sprig of celery, and a sprinkle of pepper for a non-alcoholic party alternative.

•Try a bowl of red and green apple slices (sprinkled with lemon juice to prevent browning), served alongside low-fat vanilla yogurt sprinkled with cinnamon, for dipping. It might help keep you away from high-fat holiday leftovers.

• Freeze grapefruit or pineapple juice in an ice-cube tray, and use these tangy cubes to add zip to a pitcher of orange juice. Or make cranberry cubes for a pitcher of apple juice.

For Dessert:

•Cozy up on a dark, winter evening by drinking warm apple cider with mulling spices. (Mulling spices are available in the spice section of your grocery store; otherwise, simply add cinnamon and nutmeg.)

•Make a quick, guilt-free 5 A Day Peach Melba. In the blender, puree a package of frozen raspberries with 2 teaspoons vanilla extract; strain seeds, if desired. Place canned peach halves in a bowl, warm in the microwave for 30 seconds, and serve in individual bowls with low-fat vanilla yogurt and the cold raspberry sauce.

• Alternate drained canned fruit and low-fat yogurt in a tall, iced glass for a low-fat parfait.

Source: Adapted from information provided by the National Cancer Institute (AH)

Miscellaneous

Winter care of houseplants

continued from page 2

ing frequency. Ferns prefer an evenly moist soil and should be watered frequently. Cacti and succulents, on the other hand, should not be watered until the potting soil is completely dry. The majority of houseplants fall between these two groups. Most houseplants should be watered when the soil is barely moist or almost dry to the touch. When watering houseplants, water them thoroughly. Water should freely drain out of the bottoms of the pots. If the excess water drains into a saucer, discard the water and replace the saucer beneath the pot.

Houseplants need to be fertilized periodically when actively growing in the spring and summer. Fertilization is generally not necessary during the winter months because most plants are growing very little or resting. Indoor gardeners can begin to fertilize houseplants in March or April as growing conditions improve and the plants resume growth. Fertilizers are available in numerous forms: liquids, water soluble powders, tablets, spikes, etc. Regardless of the fertilizer type, carefully read and follow label directions.

Dust and grease often accumulate on the leaves of houseplants. The dust and grease not only makes them unattractive, it may slow plant growth. Cleaning houseplants improves their appearance, stimulates growth, and may help control insects and mites. Large, firm-leafed plants may be cleaned with a moist soft sponge or cloth. Another method is to place the plants in the shower or tub and gently wash the leaves. Be sure to adjust the water temperature before placing the plants under the shower head. (MJM)

❖ ❖ ❖

Farm tractor, combine fires cost millions annually

continued from page 4

and free of leaks.

When checking the oil and performing daily maintenance, quickly scan any exposed electrical wiring for damage or signs of deterioration. Remove/replace any worn or malfunctioning electrical components with proper parts from your dealer. Fuses that are blowing, or circuits intermittently cutting out are good signs of a short or loose connection in the electrical system. The arcing electrical wires on farm machinery will generate extremely high temperatures.

Also watch for worn bearings, belts and chains. A badly worn bearing can glow red hot. Any rubber belts subjected to intense heat from a worn part can burst into flames.

The best source of property protection is a fully charged 10-pound ABC dry chemical fire extinguisher. Keep one mounted in the cab, and one where it can be reached from the ground. Check your extinguishers periodically, paying special attention to the pressure gauge.

There are fully automatic fire detection and extinguishing systems on the market that use sensors to detect the heat of a fire in the early stages of growth. These systems use specially placed nozzles to blanket the affected area with dry chemical.

If a fire does break out, quickly shut off the engine, grab the extinguisher, get out and get help. Shutting off the engine can sometimes help to reduce the size of the fire and subsequent damage. If you forget to grab the extinguisher, don't go back for it unless the fire is extremely small or confined to an area well away from the cab.

Approach any fire with extreme caution. Even a small fire can flare up dramatically as doors, hatches or other areas are opened. These types of fires are extremely dangerous when liquid fuels are involved. If possible, use the extinguisher's flexible hose to shoot the chemical from a safe distance at the base of any flames seen.

Source: Bobby Grisso, Ph.D., biological systems engineering specialist, NU/IANR (WS)

❖ ❖ ❖

When income drops and expenses keep coming

continued from page 7

· Develop a list of resources such as the food bank or clothing closet. Investigate eligibility requirements for public and private assistance such as food stamps, reduced school lunches and heating assistance. Be sure to add recycling and resale stores as potential places to help meet emergency needs.

· Write a list of ways to add income. Do you have assets to rent or sell? Do you have a skill you could sell? To sell or rent something, consider community bulletin boards, radio call-in shows, want ads in the "penny shopper," garage/yard sales and consignment shops.

· Arrange to continue health insurance coverage. In times of stress, health insurance is even more important.

· Negotiate to lower the cost of vehicle insurance. Drop unnecessary coverage. Arrange smaller but more frequent payments.

· Put the credit cards away. Try not to use them unless necessary.

· If you can't make the minimum payment on a credit card, call the company and arrange for reduced payments. Sending a reduced payment (as long as it's something) keeps you off the delinquent list of some credit card companies.

Your local Cooperative Extension office has additional information of cutting family living costs. Ask for the NebFact series on"Cutting Family Living Expenses." (LJ)

The NEBLINE

Nebraska Cooperative Extension Newsletter
Lancaster County

THE NEBLINE is published monthly by the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County, 444 Cherrycreek Rd., Lincoln, Nebraska, 68528-1507. Contact the extension office, (402) 441-7180 for more information.

Gary C. Bergman, Extension Educator–Unit Leader

NOTICE: All programs and events listed in this newsletter will be held at the Lancaster Extension Education Center unless noted otherwise. Use of commercial and trade names does not imply approval or constitute endorsement by the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County.

Mary Abbott, Extension Assistant
Lorene Bartos, Extension Educator
Tina Brown, AmeriCorps VISTA Volunteer
Corey Brubaker, Extension Educator
Maureen Burson, Extension Educator
Linda Detsauer, Nutrition Advisor
Tom Dorn, Extension Educator
Soni Cochran, Extension Assistant
Lenora Fittro, Nutrition Advisor
Arlene Hanna, Extension Associate
Alice Henneman, Extension Educator
Don Janssen, Extension Educator
LaDeane Jha, Extension Educator
Ellen Kraft, Extension Assistant
Tracy Kulm, Extension Assistant
Deanna Karmazin, Extension Assistant
Mary Jane McReynolds, Extension Assistant
Charlene Morris, Nutrition Advisor
Nobuko Nyman, Nutrition Advisor
Barb Ogg, Extension Educator
Sondra Phillips, Nutrition Advisor
Warder Shires, Extension Educator
David Smith, Extension Technologist
Marilyn Waldron, Nutrition Advisor
Karen Whitson, AmeriCorps VISTA
Jim Wies, Extension Assistant
Barb Yllescas, Extension Assistant

PRINTED WITH SOY INK™
Trademark of American Soybean Association

Phone numbers:

Office (leave message after hours) 441-7180
After hours 441-7170
FAX 441-7148
COMPOSTING HOTLINE 441-7139
NUFACTS INFORMATION CENTER 441-7188

OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday

Nebline Feedback

In order to best serve our subscribers, this form will appear in every issue of THE NEBLINE. You can use this form to:

1. Change your address or order a subscription *(please print)*
2. Submit general comments and/or story ideas

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

❏ Order subscription *(free—however, there is an annual $5 mailing and handling fee for zip codes other than 683—, 684—, 685—, 68003, 68017, and 68065)*
❏ Change of Address

Comments _____

_____

Story Idea(s) _____

_____

Return to:
University of Nebraska
Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County
444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln, Nebraska 68528-1507

Extension Calendar

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

January 11
CWF Meeting ..... 7 p.m.
Extension Board Meeting ..... 7:30 p.m.
Lancaster County 4-H Shooting Sports Club Meeting ..... 7 p.m.

January 12
4-H Speech VIPS Meeting ..... 7 p.m.

January 13
4-H Horse VIPS Meeting ..... 7 p.m.

January 14
4-H Rabbit VIPS Meeting ..... 7 p.m.
4-H Cat Club Meeting ..... 7 p.m.

January 15-16
4-H Lock-In ..... 8 p.m.-8 a.m.

January 19
Adult Character Counts! Training ..... 9 a.m.-noon
Star City Rabbit Raisers 4-H Club Meeting ..... 7 p.m.

January 25
Pet Pals 4-H Club Meeting ..... 7 p.m.
FCE Council Meeting ..... 1 p.m.

January 26
FCE Leader Training ..... 1 or 7 p.m.

January 26-27
Innovation for the Next Generation—*Omaha*

January 30
Rural Living Clinic ..... 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

February 2
4-H Achievement Night—What's It All About

February 6
4-H Beef Weigh-In—*State Fair Park* ..... 8-10 a.m.
Teen Council Meeting ..... 3 p.m.
Ambassador Meeting ..... 7 p.m.

February 8
Private Applicator Training ..... 9 a.m. or 1 p.m.
Lancaster County 4-H Shooting Sports Club Meeting ..... 7-9 p.m.
Extension Board Meeting ..... 7:30 p.m.

February 9
General Standards Commercial Re-certification ..... 9 a.m.-noon
Ornamental Turf & Fumigation Commercial Re-certification ..... 1 p.m.
Structural & Health Related Pest Control & Right of Way
Commercial Re-certification ..... 3 p.m.

February 10
General Standards Initial Commercial Certification ..... 9 a.m.-noon
Ornamental Turf & Fumigation Initial Commercial Certification ..... 1 p.m.
Ag Plant & Right of Way Initial Commercial Certification ..... 3 p.m.
4-H Horse VIPS Meeting ..... 7 p.m.
Private Applicator Training ..... 7-10 p.m.

February 11
4-H Cat Club Meeting ..... 7 p.m.

February 13
4-H Officer Training Workshop ..... 9:30-11 a.m.

"Who on Earth Cares" video available

continued from page 10

tural regions, from the irrigated valleys and high plateaus of the panhandle and southwestern Nebraska, through the unique Sandhill cattle country, and on to the productive rolling hills of eastern Nebraska. It takes you to fields, feedlots and to supermarkets where the vast output of Nebraska's farms and ranches fill the shelves.

In viewing the video, you will visit research labs where the next innovations in crop and livestock production are just around the corner. You will hear how farmers and ranchers use the latest technologies to improve production and care for their precious soil and water resources. You will see the processing of ag products and the increasing wide range of value added uses for farm and ranch products.

"Who On Earth Cares" is narrated by Jana McGuire, anchor for Nebraska ETV's weekly "Statewide" news program. The video can be obtained free of charge for viewing by any group, club or organization. Send requests to : Ag Video, Nebraska Ag Relations Council, 104 Ag Communications Building, P.O. Box 830918, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE 68583-0918. (GB)