10-1999

The NEBLINE, October 1999

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The holiday season will soon be here. Many of us will be hosting family gatherings or preparing food to take to holiday events. Before you start mixing, stirring, cooking and baking, consider if any of your recipes need a food safety update. For example:

- Do you have favorite recipes that have been passed down through your family?
- Are you using food preparation techniques you saw others use as you grew up?
- Is your cookbook more than a few years old?

We wouldn’t use the instruction book that came with the original Model T car for the most recent auto we purchased. Why is it different with food? Unknowingly, we may use outdated recipe directions inconsistent with what is now known about food safety.

New bacteria have emerged and others have gotten stronger in part from U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recommendations.

**Checkpoint 1: Oven Temperatures**

Use a minimum oven temperature of 325 degrees F for cooks—tried and conning.

Lower temperatures may not heat the food fast enough to prevent bacterial growth.

**Checkpoint 2: Eggs**

One hundred years ago, an 1898 “Receipt Book” by B. J. Kendall, M.D., offered a “recipe for egg water to cure vomiting.” Today we’d no longer consider giving a sick family member a glass of egg white mixed with water. However, without thinking, we may still follow the unsafe practices of:

- Licking the cake batter from the bowl;
- Tasting raw cookie dough;
- Making ice cream with raw eggs.

Consider the following when cooking with eggs:

- **Cook eggs**—whether scrambled, fried, poached, soft cooked, made into an omelet, etc.—until the yolks and white are firm, not runny.
- Avoid recipes in which eggs remain raw or are only partially cooked.

Examples could include Caesar’s salad dressing; mousse, trifles; homemade ice cream, mayonnaise or hollandaise sauce.

- **Heat cooked egg bases for recipes, such as custard (baked and stirred) and quiche to an internal temperature of 160 degrees F.** At this temperature, a knife inserted near the center of a quiche or custard comes out clean. For a stirred custard, the mixture will coat a metal spoon.

- Egg noodles and homemade ice creams can be safely made using a stirred custard base.

- Chill the cooked custard base thoroughly before freezing for ice cream to assure it rapidly reaches a safe temperature.

- **Chill cooked custard in a shallow pan on the top shelf of the refrigerator.** For thicker foods such as custard sauces, limit depth to 2 inches. Loosely cover to allow heat to escape and to protect from accidental contamination during cooling. Stir occasionally to help it cool; use a clean spoon each time. Cover tightly when cooled.

- **Although commercial pasteurized egg products can be used in place of raw eggs in recipes such as homemade ice cream, for optimal safety it’s safest to start with a cooked base that has been heated to an internal temperature of 160 degrees F.** When serving people at high risk for food-borne illness such as young children, older individuals, people with an illness and pregnant women, it’s best to use a cooked egg base.

**Checkpoint 3: Marinades**

Marinades help flavor meat and poultry. They DO NOT kill bacteria. Here are some general guidelines for safely using marinades:

- **Marinate** in a covered container in the refrigerator—not on the counter. A glass container is a safe choice for marinating. Acidic ingredients in some marinades such as wine, vinegar and lemon juice could react with certain metallic or glazed ceramic containers and leach into the food being marinated.

- **Marinating time in the refrigerator shouldn’t exceed the recommended storage time for that type and cut of fresh meat or poultry.**

- **If you’re not certain how long to marinate a particular food—for best safety AND quality—limit time to 24 hours or less.**

- **If some of the marinade is to be used for basting during cooking or as a sauce on the cooked food, reserve a portion of the marinade and store in the refrigerator until ready to use.**

- **Do not put raw meat or poultry in it.**

- **When basting, don’t recontaminate fully cooked meat or poultry by adding sauce with a brush that has been used on raw or undercooked foods.**

- **For greatest safety, don’t re-use leftover marinade that has been in contact with raw meat or poultry.**

**Model T or Latest Model?**

Henry Ford, the person behind the Model T car, is quoted as saying, “Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young. The greatest thing in life is to keep your mind young.”

It might also be said that anyone who keeps learning about food safety stays healthy. The next time you make a recipe, check to see if you should do a food safety update.
Needle drop on evergreens

Contrary to popular belief, evergreens do not keep their needles indefinitely. Older, inner needles, discolor and drop off after one to several years, depending on the evergreen in question.

Sometimes the drop occurs slowly. On other occasions, many needles may turn yellow all at once in late summer or fall. Because weather triggers the condition, many evergreens are likely to show symptoms in the fall. If you are not familiar with this natural process, it could cause you a great deal of concern. Each species of evergreens usually keeps its needles for a definite length of time.

White pines are the most dramatically affected. They usually keep three years of needles in summer and two in winter. The three-year-old white pine needles turn yellow throughout the tree in fall. The tree will appear particularly unhealthy when these yellow needles outnumber the green ones.

Austrian and Scotch pines also keep their needles for three years and Norway pine keep theirs for four years. Needles on arborvitae, usually turn brown rather than yellow when they age. They often remain attached much longer than mature pine needles.

Japanese yew needles turn yellow and drop in late spring or early summer of their third year. Spruce and fir needles also yellow and drop with age. These evergreens retain needles for several years, so you may not see needle drop unless you look closely on inner branches. These needle drop patterns vary from tree to tree and from year to year. (MIM)

Answers to composting questions

What kinds of materials can be composted?

Yard and garden residues and other organic materials are suitable for composting. This includes leaves, grass clippings, straw, hay, sawdust and finely chopped or shredded tree and shrub prunings.

Can kitchen scraps be added to a compost pile?

Certain kitchen scraps can be added to the compost pile, such as fruit and vegetable trimmings, coffee grounds and eggshells. Bury them in the pile to prevent odors and flies. Do not add meat scraps, bones, grease, whole eggs or dairy products to the compost pile because they are slow to decompose, will cause odors and can attract rodents.

What is the optimum size for a compost pile?

The best size of an enclosed compost pile is 3' x 3' x 3'. If too small, it will dry out fast; if too large it will have poor air circulation and will be difficult to turn the pile.

How can I avoid problems with unpleasant odors from the compost pile?

Odors may arise either from the addition of excessive amounts of wet plant materials like fruits or grass clippings, overwatering the pile or not turning an actively decomposing pile periodically. A properly prepared and adequately turned pile periodically. A properly prepared and adequately turned pile will generate little, if any, objectionable odor. Good aeration, provided by regularly turning over the materials in the pile, is essential for good, rapid decomposition. Also, keeping the compost damp, but not waterlogged, will go along way towards preventing unpleasant odors.

How long does it take to reach a finished product?

Generally, a compost pile that contains a good mixture of finely chopped materials, is turned regularly and kept moist, will be ready in 2 to 4 months. A pile or bin left unattended or material not shredded may take a year or longer to decompose.

Piles prepared in the late fall will not be very well decomposed by the spring. When the compost is finished the pile will be about half its original size and have a pleasant, earthy smell.

Of what value or use is the finished compost product?

Compost is used as an organic amendment to improve the physical, chemical and biological properties of the soils. For example, adding compost to garden soil will increase the moisture holding ability of sandy soils and improve the drainage and aeration of heavy clay soils. Over time, yearly additions of compost will create desirable soil structure making the soil easier to work. (MIM)

Fall clean up in the orchard

Care for the home orchard does not stop when the harvest ends. A critical part of the pest control program remains, the fall orchard clean up. Cleaning up fallen fruits and leaves eliminates many insect pests and disease organisms that would overwinter in the orchard. They could be a problem for next year’s growing season.

Clean up is not strictly a fall chore. Fruits that drop and diseased leaves that fall at any time during the growing season should be cleaned up as soon as possible. The major clean up occurs in the fall after harvest is over and trees have lost their leaves. A fall clean up can reduce the incidence of fungal diseases, such as apple scab. It can also reduce the pressure on trees by pests such as apple maggot by reducing the overwintering population of insects.

A fall clean up probably will not eliminate the need to use pesticides to control these problems, but it should help make chemical controls more effective. (MIM)

What do they like to eat?

Are there certain birds you would like to attract to your urban landscape or acreage? You can do this by providing the foods they prefer to eat.

Cardinal: autumn-olive, dogwood, corn, sunflower, various berries.

Blue jay: acorns, cherry, sunflower, wild plum, cultivated grains.

Black-capped chickadee: sunflower, conifer tree seeds, blackberry, various berries.

American goldfinch: goldroenid, sunflower, mulberry, thistle seed, annual flower seeds.

Junco: millet, wheat, sunflower, grass seed. (MIM)

1999 October/November Garden Calendar

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<th>Sunday</th>
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<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 Pick last apples and pears.</td>
<td>12 Plant spring flowering bulbs</td>
<td>1 Pick squash, pumpkins and gourds before frost</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18 Clean up garden</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>29 Put up bird feeders</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>27 Clean up perennial flower beds</td>
<td>28 Prune and much roses</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Clean up fallen fruit</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11 Make wish list for next year</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17 Pick bag of from evergreens</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>23 Check house plants for overwintering pests</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>30 Check all stored bulbs and tubers for rot</td>
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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. (MIM)
Responsible hunting and landowner relations

Hunting in Nebraska is a time-honored tradition that has brought excitement, camaraderie and enjoyment to countless individuals throughout the years. Unfortunately, the hunting season is usually accompanied by rule violations, complaints and citations that come from a disregard for hunting regulations and a disrespect for the rights of landowners. According to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, the two biggest complaints associated with hunters every year are hunting on land without permission and shooting from roads. These problems can be caused from simple ignorance about Nebraska laws but are usually the result of a blatant contempt for the statutes meant to regulate hunting activities. So what is the solution to these problems? Simply put, it comes down to respect for the property owners and hunters. Respect for the laws of Nebraska, the rights of property owners and treating people with the courtesy you would expect from others. Hunting is a privilege for Nebraskans and many of the problems associated with hunting can be avoided if hunters would view their ability to hunt as a benefit and not a right. Both landowners and hunters need to understand the rights and responsibilities of each other to avoid possible confrontations and violations of Nebraska law. To clear up some possible misconceptions about landowner rights, here are the most common problems.

1. Land must be posted with signs that prohibit hunting/trapping. False. Nebraska law states that any person entering property for hunting/fishing/trapping without the express permission of the landowner/renter, is either trespassing or hunting without permission. Although “No Hunting” and “No Trespassing” signs help to discourage people from illegally entering private land, they are in no way required to keep people from hunting someone’s personal property.

2. Only the landowner can press charges against a trespassing hunter. False. Special sign stating, “Hunting by written permission only” can be posted on a landowner’s property. These signs notify law enforcement officers to contact hunters in the field and require them to produce written permission, by the owner, stating they are allowed to hunt the area. Failure to produce a document granting permission enables the law enforcement officer to issue a citation without the landowner being present.

3. A landowner cannot prove a person was on their land without permission. False. A landowner can take down a vehicle license plate number and write down a description of the individuals involved. This information, along with a signed affidavit by the landowner stating that the parties in question did not have permission to hunt, is often times enough for law enforcement (Game & Parks or sheriff) to cite a person for trespassing. The landowner is also not required to be present in court. Finally, as a safety issue for landowners, law enforcement should be left to the proper authorities. Landowners should never try to detain a hunter.

4. The landowner retains hunting privileges when the land is being rented. True. Nebraska law says that unless formally stated that the owner retains hunting privileges when the rental agreement is established, the operator has the hunting rights and ability to grant permission to hunters on land they rent. This situation is analogous to renting an apartment even though they do not own the property. Unfor- 2tunate situations of the land- owner and the renter granting hunting permission to different people at the same time, have undoubtedly occurred, but can be avoided by a simple agree- ment between the operator and owner as to who controls hunting on the property.

5. Most hunters are respectful, and seek permission and follow the regulations when they are hunting. False. Although the majority of hunters, this article will hopefully clear any misconceptions and help you to educate fellow hunters about the problems they are causing and hopefully change their actions. As the saying goes, “One rotten apple spoils the whole bunch,” and nothing more could be true than in hunting. A hundred good experiences between hunters and landowners can be destroyed by one bad experience. It is our responsibility, as ethical hunters, to represent the hunting commu- nity every time we enter the

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Environmental Focus

Jumpin’ jiminy crickets

Homeowners are reporting lots of crickets this fall. There are several species that may be a problem in the fall but the crickets that I have noticed are very large, black, field crickets. An annoying feature is that the male field cricket chirps loudly to attract a mate. If a male cricket accidently finds its way into your home, watch how many sleepless nights until he dies a lonely death.

Crickets become adults in the warmer months of the year. Their activities become their major focus. Because they typically inhabit cracks and crevices, they often find their way inside our houses by exploring around the foundations and exterior doorways of our houses. The warmth within is agreeable to them and, as a result, if a cricket is confined, the cricket will move back toward where there is a source of moisture. This is why you may hear them under a refriger- ator (drip pans provide water), under the sink (sweating pipes or leaky pipes) or in the basement (in drains).

What to do about crickets? Knowing the size, color and size of the cricket is important because the level of the cricket causes. If you ignore the cricket it will eventually die, having no food and being unable to breed inside the home. If you are really bothered by the chirping cricket you will be motivated to search for and destroy it. Remember, the cricket will be attracted to water and removing

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Head lice videotape available

An eight-minute videotape that discusses head lice management is now available at the Lancaster County Extension office. This tape shows live lice (highly magnified), nits (lice eggs) and provides tips on inspection, treatments and prevention. The video features a combing demonstration using a metal lice comb. Parents faced with head lice treatments will find this videotape helpful, but it may also be useful for daycare centers, schools and other health and childcare professionals who work with families. It can be purchased at the Lancaster County Extension office for $10. To view this video, call (402) 441-7180 and make an appointment with Barb Ogg or Soni Contreras. Lincoln residents can watch this videotape on cable access Channel 5 during the months of September and October at the following days and times:

Mondays: 6:00 p.m. and 10:30 p.m.
Tuesdays: 9 p.m.
Fridays: 10:30 a.m. and 9 p.m.
Sundays: 12:30 a.m.
Sundays: 10:30 a.m.

In addition to the videotape, written information about managing head lice management is also available at the Lancaster County Extension office. Call the extension office and request Head Lice Management, Fact Sheet 018-99 and Quick Guide for Removing Head Lice Safely, Fact Sheet 030-99 (BPO).
The value of composting

The University of Nebraska and the Nebraska Department of Agriculture have placed increased emphasis on environmental concerns has made composting a popular method to recycle organic material. The composting process, which involves the breakdown of organic matter by microorganisms, can produce a nutrient-rich soil amendment that can improve soil structure and fertility. Composting can be done in different ways, from home composting to large-scale commercial operations. Proper composting can reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills and help reduce pollution. Compost can be used as a soil amendment in gardens and in landscaping. For more information, please contact the Lancaster County Extension office for NebGuide G834.

Early spring

Leafy spurge is probably the worst weed we have in terms of being hard to kill and potential damage to pastures. Leafy spurge is a persistent, deep-rooted perennial which reproduces by both seeds and roots. It is found primarily on untillled land and is a noxious weed in Nebraska.

The plants will grow two to three feet high with many long, narrow leaves on the stem. The top of the plant has specialized leaves called bracts which looks like a clover leaflet as opposed to the linear lower down on the plant. These bracts turn yellow in the spring and are frequently mistaken for flowers. The true flowers, which appear in late May, are small and not very showy. Being a spurge, the plant has a white milky sap that can be used to help identify it from other weeds. Because leafy spurge spreads by rhizomes, as well as seeds, it tends to grow in very dense stands and get fatter with each passing year. Not only does it tend to crowd out other forage plants, the plant is also mildly poisonous to cattle. It is rarely fatal but it does make the animal sick and they soon learn to avoid grazing near it. Therefore, the carrying capacity of pastures are essentially de-stroyed wherever leafy spurge is growing. For more information on how to identify leafy spurge, contact Lancaster County Extension office for NebGuide G834.

Musk thistle

We have been making a little headway on musk thistle in recent years through the introduction of biological controls, mainly a weevil that feeds on the seed in the head and other insects that attack the plant directly. In spite of the biological help we are receiving, musk thistle continues to be a big problem in pastures and along roadides. Unlike leafy spurge, which is a perennial, musk thistle is primarily a biennial, but may act as a winter annual or, less frequently, as an annual. It is a prolific seed producer as one plant can produce as many as 20,000 seeds.

The best time to control many perennial weeds is in the fall. This is because the weed begins the “dormant” stage of its life cycle, nutrients from the summer’s top growth are translocated into the root system. When this occurs, herbicides that have been applied this fall can actively move with the nutrients into the root system. Besides leafy spurge and musk thistle, Canada thistle, Russian thistle, and leafy spurge are all perennials and are more difficult to control at this time.

The most effective herbicides for controlling these perennial weeds include Tordon or a combination of 2,4-D and Tordon. Banvel and Roundup combinations with 2,4-D are useful on Canada thistle and field bindweed. Ally at 0.1 ounce and Curtail at 2-4 pints per acre also can be used for Canada thistle control. For leafy spurge, Tordon seems to work well, but even with rates of 2.4-2.8 pints per acre, repeat applications may be required over several years to bring the patches under control. Plateau herbicide is now cleared for use on the most sensitive grazing lands in which it is being used on pastures and shelterbelts. (See related article at bottom of page). Applications of Plateau herbicide provide long-term, consistent-95% or better–control of leafy spurge and reduces the total herbicide load on the environment.

We always should be taken to avoid spray drift when using any of these products, especially when used near valuable trees, water sources and other environmentally sensitive areas. Most suburban areas are frequently used near significant landscape areas. Be sure to read and follow the label directions for correct application, amounts and methods. Tordon use for perennial weeds is limited to non-crop areas. (TD)

Disclaimer: Use of trade names is for clarity only and not as an endorsement of products mentioned.

October is the best time to treat hard to control pasture weeds

Planteau herbicide cleared for use in Nebraska

In the ongoing effort to control leafy spurge, Nebraska has been granted an emergency exemption to use the herbicide Plateau to fight the damaging weed. The exemption is effective August 1, 1999 through July 1, 2000 on rangelands and pastures, as well as land enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program.

Nebraska Department of Agriculture petitioned for the exemption, because Plateau is the first herbicide that provides consistent, long-term control of leafy spurge and can be used in environmentally sensitive areas, such as near trees, along streams or bodies of water, on low-lying areas and in mixed pastures. Research trials conducted by the University of Nebraska and published by USDA, show that Plateau herbicide is a highly effective herbicide against leafy spurge. Plateau herbicide is known to also control other weeds such as field bindweed, thistles, crabgrass, downy brome and nute seed.

For the control of leafy spurge, Plateau herbicide should be applied in accordance with the use rates provided by the special weed control section of the leaflet label. A single application may be made in the fall at a maximum rate of 12 fluid ounces per acre, or 8 fluid ounces may be applied in the fall, followed by 4 fluid ounces in the spring. Applications in the fall are most effective if accomplished before the first freeze. Be sure to follow specific label instructions in any case. (WS)

Grain storage information on the web

Low export demand and tight corn supplies have a direct effect on the grain market, combined with a better than normal yield for many dryland crops in eastern Nebraska, has resulted in grain stocks that exceed the available storage space in some areas. Even where on-farm storage is available, grain may need to be held on the farm longer than usual until demand will go through the “pipeline” and on to domestic and foreign markets. This grain must be kept in good condition, free of moulds, insect damage, etc. The University of Nebraska has a large number of NebGuides and extension circulars on grain storage, safety of grain storage and insect control. In addition, extension specialists have responded to grain storage shortages by developing a number of information sheets on grain storage dealing with converting existing structures to hold grain, piling grain outside as a last resort, engineering aeration systems, calculating

I have created a web page containing all of the available grain storage information from the University of Nebraska, as well as selected publications from other mid-western universities. It can be found on the Lancaster County Extension Nebraska Production Agriculture web pages under Crops. Most of this information can be downloaded by clicking on the reference indicated. The direct address of the Grain Storage page is: http://www.ianr.unl.edu/ iam/lanco/ag/crops/storage.htm (TD)

A REMINDER FOR INTERNET USERS: Lancaster County Extension Office has a new, shorter home page address: www.lanco.unl.edu
Some shortcuts: www.lanco.unl.edu/ag
www.lanco.unl.edu/food
www.lanco.unl.edu/evo
www.lanco.unl.edu/ianr
www.lanco.unl.edu/hort
www.lanco.unl.edu/family
www.lanco.unl.edu/wild
www.lanco.unl.edu/contact
Fall and winter care of water gardens

Many gardeners are enjoying a renewed interest in water gardening. Water adds a special effect to the landscape and fish are easy-to-care-for pets. A properly functioning water garden takes care of itself naturally throughout the growing season. Submerged plants and scavengers help keep algae populations from getting out of hand. Overall, water gardens do require some effort to help their survival.

In late summer and early fall, many aquatic plants should be harvested and stored to protect them for the winter. Keep falling leaves and twigs out of the pond to prevent injury to the fish. Prevention is also easier than having to clean the entire pool in the fall.

Netting stretched across the pool is an easy preventative to catch leaves or use a skimmer to remove leaves on a regular basis. If your pond contains fish, be sure to add them extra food beginning when temperatures cool and continue until the water temperature is maintained at 50 degrees F. This allows the fish to build up additional fat stores for winter. If you are unable to keep fish in the pond throughout the winter, it is necessary to keep an area free of ice throughout the winter. This allows the exchange of gases such as carbon dioxide, methane and hydrogen sulfide which are produced from decaying organic matter. The build up of these gases is toxic to fish. The plants can be kept in a large tank or even an aquarium in a greenhouse or under artificial lights. Plants need about 12 to 15 hours of light per day. The water temperature should be maintained at around 70 degrees F. Plants which grow well as tropical water lilies, can also be stored as a dormant tuber.

The peony has been a popular garden flower since the 1800’s. The peony is hardly, dependable, long-lived and easy to grow. Gardeners value the peony for its large, colorful flowers in spring and attractive, season-long foliage. Peonies can be left undisturbed in the garden for many years. Occasionally, however, it becomes necessary to move established plants. Peonies shaded by large trees or shrubs bloom poorly and should be moved to a sunny site. The redesign of a perennial bed or border may require moving the peony to a drier position. The peony will become overcrowded and flower poorly. Large, poorly blooming peonies should be dug, divided and transplanted to improve performance.

Moving established plants is a simple procedure. Cut the peony stems near ground level in September. Then carefully dig around and under each plant. Try to retain as much of the root system as possible. Promptly replant the peony in a well-drained site.

Division of large peony clumps requires a few additional steps. After digging up the plant, gently shake the clump to remove loose soil from the root.
Modified food guide pyramid for ages 70+

Older adults looking for some good advice about foods to meet their needs as they grow older soon may not need look much farther. A group of researchers at the U.S. Department of Agriculture Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging at Tufts University have developed a modified food guide pyramid especially for people over age 70.

The pyramid is designed for healthy, independent living adults looking for some guidance on food choices to help them stay healthy. As individuals grow older, they often find they can’t eat as they once did. Energy needs decrease but the need for vitamins, minerals and protein is pretty much the same as in younger days, if not higher in some cases. The modified food pyramid for adults over age 70 still follows basic dietary principles:

- eat a variety of foods;
- choose foods from all of the food groups; and
- balance food intake with physical activity.

In addition to these basic principles the modified pyramid suggests that a “supplement” flag be added at the very top of the pyramid, and that eight or more servings of water will make up the base of the pyramid. The “supplement” flag brings attention to the need for nutrients such as calcium, vitamin D and vitamin B12 that may be harder to get as a person ages.

The recommended servings within each food group have been adjusted for older adults to better match their energy needs while maintaining adequate nutrient intakes. The modified pyramid recommends the following number of servings for the older adult:

- 6 servings of bread, fortified cereal rice and pasta
- 3 servings of vegetables
- 2 servings of fruits
- 3 servings of milk, yogurt and cheese
- 2 servings of meat, poultry, fish, dry beans, eggs and nuts

Older adults also are encouraged to consider primarily whole grains, enriched or fortified foods from the bread, cereal, rice and pasta group. To make additional gains in fiber intake, food choices from vegetables and fruits should include the whole product more often than juices. Fruits and vegetables of deeper colors are especially rich in vitamins and minerals and would make good selections.

Along with encouraging a higher fiber intake is a strong recommendation to get more fluids. Fluid needs can vary depending on the older adult’s level of physical activity, use of medications and kidney function. One thing is certain—the thirst mechanism isn’t a good indicator for when to take a drink because older persons don’t always easily detect their thirst.

The modified food guide for older adults advocates for at least eight glasses of fluid daily. Coffee, tea and alcohol also count as a portion of the fluid intake.


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Kids in the kitchen

Children like helping in the kitchen and are often more willing to eat foods they help prepare. It’s important that you give kitchen tasks appropriate for a child’s age. Here are some recommendations that the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture gives in its guide Pyramid for Young Children.

Remember: Children have to be shown how to do these activities. Each child has his or her own pace for learning, so give it time and the skills will come. Expect a few spills—it’s a small price to pay for helping your children become comfortable around food.

2-year-olds: Can do all that 2- and 3-year-olds do, plus . . . wrap potatoes in foil for baking, knead and shape yeast dough; pour liquids; mix ingredients; shake liquids in covered container; spread soft spreads; place things in trash.

4-year-olds: Can do all that 2- and 3-year-olds do, plus . . . peel oranges or hard cooked eggs; move hands to form round shape; cut parsley or green onions with dull scissors; mash bananas using fork; set table.

5- to 6-year-olds: Can do all that 2-, 3- and 4-year-olds can do, plus measure ingredients, cut with blunt knife, use a manual egg beater.

When your child is helping you with food preparation, remember to set a good example. Wash hands using soap and warm running water before and after handling food or utensils to prepare food.

Clean Hands Campaign

Have fun using “glo-germ” to teach handwashing to youth and adults. Receive handouts for your class or group by calling Alice Henneman at 441-7180 to check out the Clean Hands Kit and receive about 15 minutes of training on using it. Kit must be checked out and returned within the same week. Available on a first come, first served, basis. (AH)

Cook It Quick!

Tips and recipes for cooking healthy foods in a hurry: www.lanco.unl.edu/food

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Focus on Food

Q: What causes popcorn to pop?
A: According to the Popcorn Board: “Popcorn’s ability to pop lies in the fact that the kernels contain a small amount of water stored in a circle of soft starch inside the hard outer casing. When heated, the water expands, creating pressure within, until eventually the casing gives way, and the kernels explode and pop, allowing the water to escape as steam, turning the kernels inside out.”

Q: Is there anything I can do if popcorn has lost its pop?
A: If your popcorn doesn’t pop into fluffy, crunchy kernels, it may have lost some of its moisture according to the Popcorn Board. The Board suggests rejuvenate popcorn by filling a 1-quart jar 3/4 full with popcorn. Add one tablespoon of water. Cover and shake every five to 10 minutes until the water is absorbed. In two to four days it should be perfect for popping. (AH)
Jean's Journal

Jean Wheelock
FCE Council Chair

October is such a beautiful month with a variety of colors in reds, oranges, scarlets, and browns everywhere we look. What a perfect time of the year to go outside for a nature walk just to inhale fresh air and invigorate our being. There is a hidden treasure right here in your own backyard that many people have yet to discover. It is the Pioneers Park Nature Center located at the entrance of Pioneers Park. The park is located at Coddington and West Van Doorn Streets. We have 360 acres with six miles of hiking trails throughout the nature center. You can choose to walk in the prairie and enjoy the beauty of the tall grasses or meander through the woods watching the squirrels as they get ready for the coming winter season. If you enjoy watching birds, this is the place to be, especially now with migration in full swing. They are open year round, except Christmas and New Year’s Day and there is no admission fee. The mission is to interpret the natural history of Nebraska and the Central Great Plains; to promote the enjoy- ment, appreciation and awareness of our natural environment; to practice and foster a conserva- tion ethic; and to provide a peaceful retreat for people of all ages. The annual spooktacular event scheduled for October 28, 29 and 30 is a time to walk the candle lit trails with the aid of a silly costumed character as you go from station to station to learn about the goings on of nature from other costumed characters. Another fun family event is their hayrack rides on the weekends now through November. December 11 will be the winter songfest singing songs of the season as you walk through the woods. They offer activities on owls, the night skies, birds and nature crafts. Some of the programs are for a child/adult team, children only or adults only. There is a fee for these programs and they ask you to call 441-7895 for information.

At our Achievement Day celebration recognition of 60 years of service to FCE was presented to Stella Maye Ehlers; 50 years of service to Winona Kretlhub, Phyllis Spredler, Junerose Kayser and Eleanor Cyr. Congratulations to all of you. What a wealth of knowledge these lovely ladies have to share with all of us. Many thanks to Janis Kenning, ‘The Pencil Lady’, for a fun presenta- tion on her pencil collection.

- FCE News -

The Family and Community Education (FCE) leader training lessons for 2000 are:

• Herbal Remedies, January 6
• Indoor Air Quality...Be Safe...Prevent Accidental Poisonings, January 25
• Becoming Financially Fit, February 22
• Heart Healthy Foods that Help You Keep on Ticking, March 28
• Is It Alzheimer’s?, September 26

All leader training lessons will be given at 1 p.m. If you are interested in these trainings, call the extension office at 441-7180 to register so we can have a supply of materials. Lessons are open to anyone interested in these areas.

Study lessons that are also available are:

• Bridging the Miles: Long Distance Families
• Healthy Meals
• Home Ventilation
• Managing Mold and Mildew in the Home
• Parents Again: Grandparents Becoming “Grand” Parents
• Shopping via Telephone and Television
• When a Loved One or Dear Friend Dies (LB)

AARP offers 55 Alive - Mature Driver Course

If your driver’s license expires in 2000 and you are 50 years of age or older, you are urged to enroll in the 55 Alive — Mature Driver Course. In this course, you will review driving skills and prepare to take the license renewal test. This class is being offered Tuesday, December 1, and Wednesday, December 15, from 6-9 p.m. To register, call 441-7180. Registration fee is $5. Participants are asked to bring a sack lunch. (LB)

Character Counts! Corner

An evening Character Counts! workshop
A Character Counts! workshop to qualify people to use the license
Character Counts! curriculum or to find out more about the program has been scheduled for all interested persons in the community.

When? Thursday, October 28
Time? 6-9 p.m.
Where? Lancaster Extension Education Center
Cost? $5 per person (4-H organizational leaders will receive complimentary registration)
To Register? Call 441-7180. Payment can be made the evening of the workshop.
For more information, ask for LaDeane Jha.

Character Counts! tip

LaDeane Jha
Extension Educator

A character-based decision making model:
In about 90% of the ethical problems we face we know what we should do. The real question is whether we are willing to do the right thing when it is likely to cost more than we want to pay. When making ethical decisions think about the following:

1. Ethical decisions take into account the interest and well-being of all persons likely to be affected by your actions. ("stakeholders")
2. Ethical decisions put the core ethical values of trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship above others.
3. If it is clearly necessary to violate one core ethical value to honor another core ethical value, do the thing that you sincerely believe will produce the greatest amount of good in the long run. (LJ)

continued on page 11

NU Family Week activities

Lancaster County Extension will broadcast two video conferences during the week of November 8th in celebration of NU Family Week. Each conference will include a satellite delivered presentation, local discussion groups, a state-wide call-in discussion and a satellite wrap-up.

Video Conference One

Raising Successful Kids
November 8
7:30-9 p.m.
Lancaster Extension Education Center
Parents want their children to be successful and have a happy childhood. There is not a prescription for raising such children, but there are tools and common sense approaches that are being used by many parents. Learn what University of Nebraska experts are finding from research and listen to parents and children who seem to be “doing things right.” Some of the topics to be discussed are:
• using a child’s interests to help him or her develop;
• responding to an active child versus a quiet child;
• passing on goals and values to a child;
• the impact sports and activities have on children;
• responding to an active child versus a quiet child;
• using a child’s interests to help him or her develop;

Video Conference Two

Being in the Middle—The Sandwich Generation
November 9
7:30-9 p.m.
Lancaster Extension Education Center
It has been described in a variety of ways; being in the middle, the sandwich generation and sometimes the “hoggie” generation, with three or four generations involved. Adult children are finding themselves taking care of their children and looking after their parents. People are living longer. Balancing the needs of children, parents and yourself is often a struggle that needs to be discussed openly and frankly. If you are in between, then you should join us. We will discuss:
• Getting ahead of the situation before it becomes a crisis;
• Working with your siblings;
• improving communication between all family members; and
• finding support from relatives, friends and community.

Family Living

Paint removal from fabrics
To remove paint from fabrics, the treatment depends on whether the paint is water or oil-based. For water-based paints, rinse the soiled area in warm water, then launder. Removal must be done while the paint is still wet; when dry, water-based paints become permanent. For oil-based paints, check the paint can label, then use the same solvent recommended as a paint thinner. If there is no label, use turpentine. Always test on an inconspicuous area of the garment first. Rinse, then pretreat with a prewash stain remover, bar soap or laundry detergent. Rinse again, then launder. (LB)
Community service opportunities

Kiwanis Pancake Festival
Lincoln Center Kiwanis, a strong supporter of the 4-H program, is looking for help at their Pancake Festival, Thursday, November 4, 4-8 p.m. For more information on helping anytime during those hours, call Lorene at 441-7180.

Holiday Gifts
Holiday gifts needed. There is always a need for helping the less fortunate, especially around the holiday season. Lincoln Public School Headstart Program is in need of over 300 gifts for 3 and 4 year old children. New, handmade or purchased items such as books, stuffed toys, dolls, cars, trucks, markers, puzzles, etc., are needed.

If gifts are wrapped, please indicate what the item is, the cost ($3-$4 recommended) and if the gift is for a boy or girl. Bring gifts to the extension office by December 1.

For more information, contact Lorene at 441-7180. This is an excellent community service program for 4-H, FCE and other community clubs. Individuals may also participate.

Quilt and craft supplies needed at Senior Centers
Cotton and knit fabric for quilts, clean, old nylon for stuffing quilts, lace and yarn are needed. If you would like to help with the project, call Lorene at 441-7180 or drop off the items at the extension office. (LB)

The Wittstruck award
On Tuesday, August 10, Horse Achievement night was held to honor all horse exhibitors who showed at this year’s Lancaster County Fair. At the end of the evening, the Wittstruck trophy was given to the “all-around champion individual”. The award is given to the exhibitor with the most points, with points being based on the results of six classes chosen by the exhibitor. Riders must ride from at least three of four categories of classes, with showmanship mandatory.

This year’s Wittstruck award winner was Josh Blum, son of Gary and Lori Blum, of Malcolm. Josh is a member of the Ropes ‘n Reggins 4-H Horse Club. He was also the winner of the Franklin Manning Memorial Racing award for the fastest time in barrels at this year’s fair. Congratulations Josh! (EK)

Lancaster County Born and Raised beef
November will be here before you know it. As you pick out those special market animals, keep in mind the Lancaster County Born and Raised contest that is held each year at the county fair to help promote Lancaster County beef.

The Lancaster County Born and Raised contest is open to all market beef born and raised in Lancaster County. This calf can be one from your own herd or one you bought from someone else in the county.

If the calf is purchased from a cattle breeder, all you have to do is have a copy of the bill of sale showing the origin of the calf. If the calf was home raised, a written statement that the calf was born and raised in Lancaster County needs to be turned in, signed by a parent or guardian.

Entries for this contest are taken at check in at county fair. If you have any questions, call the extension office. (DK)

America Recycles Day
Sunday, November 15, 1999
The theme for the third annual America Recycles Day is “For Our Children’s Future...Buy Recycled Today.” Maybe you’re already putting plastic bottles in your recycling bin. But did you know that you may be wearing them or walking on them?

Some t-shirts are made from EcoSpin, a fiber made completely from recycled plastic soda bottles. Recycled milk bottles, tires, diapers, card-board, soda bottles and more are used to make shoes. And some writing papers are made from recycled blue jeans or old money.

So—celebrate America Recycles Day all year around by closing the loop and buying recycled products. (ALH)

Top awards for Family and Consumer Science Contest participants
Congratulations to the following individuals who were chosen to represent Lancaster County at the 1999 State Family and Consumer Sciences Contest. They exhibited knowledge and decision-making abilities in being chosen for this event.

Laurie Conroy, daughter of Thomas and Kathleen Conroy, was a Top 10 Individual in the Senior Division, receiving 5th place. 183 contestants participated in this division.

The Intermediate Division Team was awarded 1st place out of 31 teams. The team consisted of Rachel Carlson, daughter of Randy and Rebecca Carlson, Andrew Kabes, son of Dale and Marilee Kabes, and Emily Veburg, daughter of Gene and Charlotte Veburg. Rachel Carlson was a Top 10 Individual, receiving 7th place and Andrew Kabes was also a Top 10 Individual, receiving 10th place. There were 95 individuals participating in the Intermediate Division. (TK)

Our sincere sympathy is extended to the family of Amy Countryman in their time of sorrow and loss. Amy was a member of the Wee Amigos 4-H Club and was killed in a car accident Friday, September 24.
The Nebraska Horse Conference
The Nebraska Horse Conference will be held at the Animal Science Complex on East Campus, University of Nebraska, Saturday, October 23, 8 a.m. Keynote presentation will be given by Bryan Neubert of Alturas, California. Mr. Neubert has been a cowboy on several large ranches in California and Nevada. By “thinking about the horse from the horse’s point of view” he was able to perfect his observational skills and horse-handling techniques. While working on ranches as well as working with mustangs at government wild horse and burro adoption centers around the West. He has also done much work with the Bureau of Land Management.

To start the conference, Bryan will take an unstarted horse and show how he communicates with him to build a foundation necessary for the rest of his young horse’s life. In the afternoon, he will show basic horse handling principles, which, if applied to any horse, are a valuable learning experience for all horse people.

For more information, call Ellen at 441-7180. (EK)

Make a Difference Day
October 23 is Make a Difference Day. A small act of kindness can make a difference to a person, family or community in need. 4-H clubs can create and participate in activities that benefit their communities. Check out the Make a Difference Day website at http://www.usaweekend.com/diffday/index.html and find funding sources and ideas for projects. Remember to keep a record of your activity (with photos and quotes from participants). Please share your finished projects and activities with us. (TK)

The AQHA World Championship Show
The AQHA World Championship Show will be November 7-20 in Oklahoma City. Each year more than 3,200 American Quarter Horse exhibitors from around the world compete for a championship title. The extension office is scheduled to receive 15 passes available to any 4-H members who wish to attend the show. If you are interested in a free pass or would like to see a show schedule, contact Ellen at 441-7180. (EK)

Shooting sports meeting
Youth and parents interested in shooting sports are invited to the re-organizational meeting of the Lancaster County 4-H Shooting Sports Club Monday, November 1 at 7 p.m. Shooting sports disciplines offered through 4-H include air rifle (BB and pellet), archery, shotgun (trapshooting), small bore rifle, pellet pistol and muzzleloading. All 4-H instructors are specially certified through the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension to focus on teaching safe and responsible use of firearm and archery equipment.

Each discipline holds practice sessions throughout the year. Youth may participate in more than one area. If you enjoy shooting sports or would like to learn more about them, this is the club to join. New members are welcome. For additional information, call Lorene at 441-7180. (LB)

Lancaster County placed fifth in state competition
The Lancaster County Intermediate Livestock Judging team placed fifth overall in the state livestock judging contest. Team members were Bryce Lemke, Steve Landon, Matt Hollman and Emily Johnson. (DK)

Lemke wins state
Bryce Lemke, son of Mark and Bonnie Lemke of Walton, won the Intermediate Livestock Judging contest at the Nebraska State Fair. Bryce competed against 112 exhibitors from across the state. Congratulations Bryce! (DK)

CWF re-organizational meeting
The Lancaster County CWF group will have a re-organizational meeting Wednesday, November 3 starting at 7 p.m. All youth who will be 14 years old by June, 2002 are encouraged to come and learn about the program. If you would like more information about the CWF program, contact Deanna Karmazin at 441-7180. (DK)
Y2K and emergency preparedness—subject of extension workshops

Tom Dorn
Extension Educator

One second past midnight on December 31 will be the start of the year 2000 (shortened to Y2K by many people). This date will be expressed by many older computer programs as 01-01-00. The fear is, some computer programs may interpret the double zero (00) as the year 1900 instead of 2000. This may cause some computer programs to malfunction and therefore is referred to as the "Y2K bug." Programmers have been hard at work for the past several years converting date sensitive programs to a four digit year code in computer systems used by governmental departments and critical industries (medical, transportation, utilities, etc.).

There are many opinions on the severity of the Y2K problem and its effect on supplies and services that we take for granted in everyday life. Regardless of your personal opinion on Y2K, it is a reminder to all of us to be prepared for any potential disaster. Anyone who is living in eastern Nebraska during the blizzard of October 1997 will attest to the fact that we do occasionally experience extended power outages.

The extension staff in Lancaster County believes that any preparation that people make should cover the most likely scenarios first and preparations should be done according to a list of priorities, covering the most critical needs first (such as a supply of drinking water). We also feel that money spent on Y2K emergency preparations should be for items that can be used for any emergency, either natural or man made, and for items that will be consumed even if no disaster occurs.

We are planning two evenings (7 to 9:30) workshops on preparing for Y2K and other emergencies. On Monday, November 29, we will cover Community Readiness for Y2K.

On Monday, November 29, we will cover Individual and Home Readiness for emergency situations. Topics include: water storage and emergency water purification. Will your sewer work if the power is out? Korin emergency food supplies and food preparation in an emergency situation. Suggested readings: C.P. Bean, "Lancaster County Farm Management," University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Both workshops will have relevance to people living in Nebraska and the first of her novels set in Nebraska. Her belief in the power and beauty of her new country enables her to awaken the land's fruitfulness, but her success with the land may come at the cost of love and family. Crossing Alexandra's story is that of her younger brother, Emil, and his hopeless illicit love for the wife of a neighboring farmer. Overarching both stories is the brooding presence of the land itself and its wind-swept skies. White's musical treatment of the story intersperses passages of spoken dialogue and symphonic interludes with the familiar operatic format of aria, ensemble, and recitative.

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**Peer pressure and teens**

Peer pressure is overrated as a negative influence in the lives of children. In fact, it can be a positive force. Generally, adolescents choose friends with similar values and tastes to theirs; however, parents still retain the major influence over the child's life. Re- search shows that parents who monitor their children can help prevent a number of risky behaviors, including alcohol use, sexual activity, delinquency and other misconduct that may be influenced by peer pressure. Monitoring also helps parents keep the increasing privileges comes increasing responsibilities.

Parental monitoring means establishing guidelines and limits for your child in order to keep track of what is going on in his or her social world. It means knowing:

- Where your kids are.
- Who they are with.
- What kinds of activities have been planned.
- How they will get there and back again.
- Parental monitoring also means making expectations clear with the child about what to do in an emergency. But parental monitoring does not mean demanding obedience, attempting to control a child's choices and behavior, or imposing a parent's will on the child.

While children may complain that parents “don't trust them” or that they are being unreasonable, there is security in knowing that parents care enough to ask. Parents need to understand that monitoring is an important right and responsibility of parenting. If you wait until the teen years to begin monitoring it will feel too much like you are trying to control them. Teens will turn the issue into a power struggle. So start monitoring children early in ways that are age appropriate. This will help children accept this as a part of life. Teenagers need increasing freedom to begin their road to independence and they need parents who monitor their behavior in a respectful and appropriate way. Starting early may be the best strategy, but it is never too late.

Since you cannot always be around to monitor children, family rules will help parents monitor their children when they are out of sight. A phone call to a parent at home or at work at an agreed-upon time or when plans change will help parents know where their children are. If the parent is not available by phone, a neighbor or relative can serve as the connection. The most effective remedy for negative peer pressure is effective parents who set high standards and are demanding but who work with warmth, love and involvement.

Karen Wobig began working at Lancaster County Extension as an Extension Assistant with NEP in 1983. She started work with Early Childhood Development in 1989, working with Lincoln Housing Authority and Head Start programs, Nebraska Colleges of Public Schools, WIC programs and various groups and individuals. She grew up on a farm in northeast Nebraska, but has lived in Lincoln since 1973, receiving both her Bachelors and Masters degrees in Human Development and the Family from UNL. Karen and her husband Randy have a 12 year old daughter, Sarah. (MB)
Phone numbers & addresses:
Office (leave message after hours) 441-7180
After hours 441-7170
Fax 441-7188
Composting Hotline 441-7139
Nebraska Information Center 441-7188
Extension Office Email Extension@LancCo.unl.edu
World Wide Web Address www.lanco.unl.edu
OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday

Raising successful children and adolescents

Join Drs. Lisa Crockett, Marcela Raffaelli and Gustavo Carlo for an informal panel discussion on issues of interest to parents on Tuesday, October 26. This event is free to the public and hosted by the Department of Psychology at UNL. Listen to the experts talk about tough issues such as peer and family influence and promoting positive behavior. Refreshments and child care provided (RSVP to 472-0737 if you are bringing children).

Date: Tuesday, October 26 at 7:00 p.m.
Location: Ruth Staples Building (35th and Fair Street; UNL East Campus) (LJ)

Fall and winter care of water gardens

continued from page 5
again. Fill the pool with fresh water and allow the chloroform to evaporate. Wait until its water temperature is within 3 degrees F of the pond water. Release your fish and scavengers into the pool. Divide and repot those plants that need it and put them back in the pool or store them in a frost free area for winter.

Water gardens are a beautiful addition to the home landscape. However, they are not a low maintenance addition. For a lower maintenance water garden, select only hardy species and install a pond that is deep enough for overwintering plant material. Installing a water heater is also an excellent alternative. (DJ)

Transplanting peonies

continued from page 5
system. Using a sharp knife, divide the clump into sections. Each section should have at least three to five buds (eyes) and a good portion of the root system. Peonies perform best in full sun and well-drained soils. When selecting a planting site, choose an area that receives full sun. Avoid shady areas near large trees and shrubs. Poorly drained soils can often be improved by working in large amounts of compost or peat. When planting peonies, dig a hole large enough for the entire root system. Place the peony plant in the hole so the bud is no more than one inch below the soil surface. (Peonies often fail to bloom satisfactorily if the buds are more than two inches deep.) Fill the hole with soil, firming the soil around the plant as you backfill. Then water thoroughly.

In late fall (November), apply a two to four inch layer of mulch over the newly planted peonies. Straw is an excellent mulch. Mulching will prevent repeated freezing and thawing of the soil during the winter months that could damage the plants. Remove the mulch in early spring before growth begins.

Transplanted peonies will not bloom well the first spring. In fact, it’s advisable to remove any flower buds that form the first year to maximize plant growth. Transplanted peonies should bloom well by the third or fourth year. (DJ)