Auntie Bacteria's holiday advice

Alice Henneman
Extension Educator

Sometimes it may seem your stomach aches a little more over the holidays than it does during the rest of the year. You may ask yourself: “Is it the flu?” “Did I eat too much?” But, do you ever step to wonder, “Could it be a food-borne illness?”

Just in time for the holiday food festivities, we present Auntie Bacteria’s advice column. A mild-mannered, favorite aunt during the rest of the year, Auntie “B” becomes a Kitchen Crusader during the holidays. Donning her apron—thermometer in hand—Auntie dishes out food safety advice to beat bacteria at their game! Here Auntie B discusses ways to get germs before they get you in six common holiday food settings.

Number 1
Dear Auntie B:

How can I keep food looking and tasting good for several hours during a holiday buffet?

From: Ruffled about the Buffet

Avoid adding fresh foods to foods that have been sitting out. Auntie Advises: Serve fresh foods safely or you could serve a food-borne illness at your buffet.

Number 2
Dear Auntie B:

In my family, everyone brings a food to the holiday dinner. This year everybody is coming to my house and I have to plan the menu. Do you have any suggestions on how to decide who brings what?

From: Muddled about the Menu

DEAR MM: When assigning foods to family members, consider: Type of food and distance to travel. Remember the two-hour rule: Avoid leaving perishable foods room temperature longer than two hours (one hour in warmer seasons when the temperature is over 90° F). The two hours includes preparation time for foods that aren’t cooked or foods that need more preparation steps after cooking.

People traveling a long distance might bring non-perishables such as rolls, breads and cookies. Those traveling about a half hour or less can more safely bring perishable foods containing meat, poultry, seafood or dairy products. Neater relatives also are a better choice for providing salads, relishes and vegetables.

When traveling with food, keep HOT foods hot (140° F or higher) by wrapping them in foil, and then in heavy towels. Or, carry them in insulated wrappers or containers designed to keep food hot. Place COLD foods in a cooler with ice or freezer packs so they remain at 40° F or lower.

On arrival, place cold foods in the refrigerator and hot foods in an oven hot enough to keep the food at an internal temperature of 140° F or above. Plan to serve foods shortly after guests have arrived. Another possibility is to carry all perishable foods in an ice chest and come early. Then prepare the food after you arrive.

Auntie Advises: If you travel with food, take a detour around the “danger zone.” Keep hot foods hot (140° F or higher) and cold foods cold (40° F or lower).

Number 3
Dear Auntie B:

I frequently order take-out foods when I’m entertaining. What’s the best way to handle them?

From: In a Tizzy over Take-Out

DEAR TT: First, take the food home immediately. If you’re running several errands, buy your food last. If you estimate that your maximum travel time will be more than 30 minutes, plan to pack cold food in an ice chest. (For more information, see number 2 on traveling with food.)

Don’t leave perishable take-out foods at room temperature longer than two hours. Perishable foods include meat, poultry, fish, dairy products, pasta, rice and cooked vegetables. Also, refrigerate fresh, peeled or cut fruits and vegetables within a couple of hours.

Foods picked up COLD should be refrigerated until serving time. Hold at 40° F or colder.

Keep hot foods HOT. Eat within 2 hours. To keep food hot, set your oven temperature high enough to keep food at an internal temperature of at or above 140° F Periodically check food with a food thermometer.

Generally, foods will be of better quality (flavor, appearance, texture) and are safer if you don’t try and keep them hot longer than 2 hours. If you won’t be eating your hot foods within 2 hours, refrigerate and reheat when ready to serve.

Store foods in shallow containers and cover loosely so they cool quickly in the refrigerator. For thicker foods—such as stews, mashed potatoes and meat slices—limit depth of food to 2 inches. Once food has cooled, cover tightly.

Plan to eat takeout foods within one to two days for best quality and safety. Reheat thoroughly to 165° F until hot and steaming. After you’ve reheated food once, it’s best to toss any leftovers for greatest safety and quality.

Auntie Advises: Take-out can spell trouble if food is left at room temperature too long.

Number 4
Dear Auntie B:

How many days before a holiday meal can I start to prepare food?

From: Hurried and Hurried over the Holidays

continued on page 12

Special recycling insert in this issue!
Forcing bulbs

There is still time through early December to plant spring flowering bulbs for forcing. Choose cultivars of bulbs that are adapted to forcing. Bulb quality and the proper size are very important when purchasing bulbs for flowering.

Use a potting soil mixture. Shallow pots called bulb pans are available for forcing enthusiasts. Bulbs need only a limited nutrient support during forcing. Do not add manures and additional nutrients to the soil at planting time.

Plant 5 to 6 hyacinths or narcissus bulbs per 5-inch bulb pan, or 6 to 9 bulbs per 6-inch pan. Place the flat side of tulip bulbs against the side of the pan so the first leaf will curl over the outside of the pan. A general rule of thumb for other types of bulbs would be to plant half of the total surface area to bulbs.

You can also welcome a wide variety of birds by selecting cultivars for forcing. (DJ)

Attracting birds with the right plants

Birds are always welcome in the winter landscape. The right type of food and feeder can assure a steady stream of visitors all season. The right plants can also welcome a wide variety of birds by providing both food and cover.

For years, gardeners have planted crabapples for spring flowers and fall fruit crops. Most of the newer selections have smaller fruit that can feed the birds while adding to the color display.

The ‘Donald Wyman’ crabapple is a favorite, with its white spring blossoms and bright red fruit that persists well into winter.

Other varieties like ‘Centurion’ and ‘Adams’ also have persistent red fruit. Many viburnums are noted for their fruit crops in summer and early fall. A few, however, produce fruit that persists into winter. The European cranberry bush and the American cranberry bush viburnum produce juicy red fruit that holds well into winter to feed a variety of birds.

Winterberry develops a dense crop of bright red berries along their stems. Since the fruit is so bright and easily seen, it often kills the tree by starving it to death. Mice may often be discouraged from feeding on tree bark by removing the mulch or grass growing around the plant. This destroys the natural cover under which the mice lay their eggs. Severe mouse infestations can be controlled by creating a barrier with 1/4” hardware cloth set 3 to 4’ deep in the ground and 10’ above ground level. If the barrier is extended to reach about 2’ above normal snow level, it will also prevent rabbit nibbling.

Rodent repellents and trapping may also be used for rodent control. Repellents have an unpleasant taste that discourages feeding on the bark. A new coat must be applied each fall and after heavy rains or wet snows. (DJ)

Gifts for the gardener

If you have a non-gardening friend or relative you want to introduce to gardening, consider a total package with plant, container and growing media, along with a book on plant care.

There are many gift ideas for people who like to spend their time at the many state parks in the area. To make their adventure more enjoyable consider giving them a 1999 state park car pass to get into the parks, a compass and identification books on wildflowers, birds, insects, butterflies, trees, tracks or mammals. Other useful items would include binoculars to look for things far away, pocket magnifier to see small things close up, sports explorer’s watch, canteen for water, camera with film, hiking boots, sun screen and insect repellent.

Gifts for people who appreciate the outdoors in their own back yard might like bird feeders with birds or a compost bin. Other gifts might be a bird bath, bird or bat house, butterfly raise/release kit, outdoor thermometer, rain gauge, wild flower or native grass seed.

Some people may just wish to sit back, relax and enjoy the outdoors. Gifts for them may include a porch swing, garden bench, hammock and a subscription to NEBRASKALAND magazine. (MIM)

Rodent damage

Girdling—grawing a strip of bark completely around a tree trunk— kills the a pines, well it to death. Mice may often be discouraged from feeding on tree bark by removing the mulch or grass growing around the plant. This destroys the natural cover under which the mice lay their eggs. Severe mouse infestations can be controlled by creating a barrier with 1/4” hardware cloth set 3 to 4’ deep in the ground and 10’ above ground level. If the barrier is extended to reach about 2’ above normal snow level, it will also prevent rabbit nibbling.

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Winter care for strawberry plants

Strawberry plants have already formed their flower buds for next spring. These flower buds can not tolerate temperatures below 20 degrees Fahrenheit. Exposure to temperatures lower than this will result in the loss of some of the earlier and bigger strawberries next spring. Snow cover can act as a mulch and protect your strawberry crop.

While the strawberry plants are lush and green, hold off mulching them for the winter. Only when night temperatures are forecast to go below 20 degrees Fahrenheit should you consider mulching. Apply any coarse mulch, such as straw, to a depth of three inches. The mulching blanket will help protect the berries through the winter. You may want to go out and uncover the plants if there is a warming trend forecasted after you have applied the mulch. (MIM)
Dealing with head lice? Even for experts, it's a head scratcher.

Barb Ogg
Extension Educator

The incidence of head lice has increased since the 1970’s primarily because of head lice becoming resistant to insecticidal shampoos. This means that more children are bringing lice home in their hair or leaving home with head lice and have the chance to expose even more children to them. What can parents do that is safe and effective? In this article we will discuss how to detect head lice and the steps required to eliminate lice and prevent re-infestation. The problem is that the best old-fashioned methods of lice control are now ineffective and require patience on the part of parent and child.

First, head lice are found in children of all socioeconomic classes. They are very contagious and can spread easily. All parents should be aware that they may have to deal with head lice. While there is no reason to panic (head lice do not carry serious diseases), taking action quickly before the infestation becomes out of control is the best way to prevent the infestation of other family members. It is also important for parents to remain calm because they will need the cooperation of their child to successfully treat this problem.

Parents should be observant and watch their child’s behavior. Frequent head scratching may be the first sign of head lice. However, some children don’t seem to be as affected by head lice and don’t scratch as much. Inspection. We recommend weekly inspection of your child’s head to look for:

• Live lice. Part the hair with a rat-tailed comb. Check all areas of your child’s scalp, especially at the back of the neck and behind the ears; these are favorite spots for lice. Adult lice will be found close to the scalp, but may also be present in the eyebrows and eyelashes. Lice are greyish white and about 1/10 to 1/6 inch long. They do not fly or crawl. They also cannot hop like fleas, but will be observed crawling through the hair. They must feed every few hours, or they will die. Lice will try to find a new host as soon as they are expelled. They can live for about 4 days without feeding. 
• Eggs (nits). Female lice attach nits 1/2 to 1 inch away from the scalp. There may be a few or several hundred nits in a child’s hair. Use a magnifying glass and a good light to distinguish between nits and dandruff. Eggs are oval shaped and glued securely to only one side of the hair shaft. The eggs stay attached to the hair shaft even after the egg has hatched.
• Head lice have a head shape with a broad base that tapers to a point. Head lice are usually dark in color with a black or brown head. (ALH) 

Eggs and nits on the hair shaft. A magnifying glass and a good light are needed to look for lice and nits.

Treatment Options. What probably won’t work. We’ve tried many over-the-counter home remedies that include salad oil, coconut oil or even mayonnaise. Dillah and Quarles (1998) have observed that lice can survive in hair coverings oil ever when it is left overnight. Certain fatty acids in soaps have insecticidal properties, but shampoos are detergents, not soaps. Milk and

Milk carton bird feeder

Make a bird feeder from an empty milk carton.

What you need:
• an empty half-gallon milk carton
• a stick 9 to 12 inches long
• a large paper clip
• a small plastic bowl

What you do:
1. Wash and dry the milk carton.
2. Using scissors, cut windows in two sides of the carton, leaving margins as shown.
3. Carefully cut a small hole in each of the same sides near the bottom of the feeder.
4. Thread the stick through both of these holes to create a perch.
5. Unbend the paper clip to make a hook.
6. Insert this hook through the top of the milk carton as shown. That will serve as a perch for birds to feed on.
7. Hang the feeder outside. Choose a spot where feeding birds will be safe from cats and other predators.
8. Remember to provide a water source for birds.

Migrating birds face many hazards

Migration is the seasonal movement of animals from one habitat to another. Most of us know that many North American birds migrate north each spring and south each fall, but some whales, fish, butterflies, turtles and caribou also migrate. Some animals travel incredible distances on these journeys. The longest migration of any known animal is that of the Arctic Tern. These birds travel 20,000 miles from the North Pole to the South Pole and back again each year.

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Achieving cleaner indoor air

Indoor air quality is important for persons who have allergies or asthma. Maintaining the quality of indoor air means balancing several factors such as ventilation, control of contaminants and cleanliness.

Biological contaminants—including mold, mildew, dust mites, fungi, roach allergens, bacteria, viruses and other pests—can spread infectious diseases and aggravate allergic responses. They are one cause of indoor air problems for asthmatic child. Biological contaminants are carried indoors by people and pets, or air handling and ventilation systems. These contaminants settle on indoor surfaces and become airborne again when dust is disturbed by walking and moving about.

One key to removing and controlling biological contaminants in the home is to have a cleaning process aimed at keeping the indoor environment healthy. The potential impacts of deep cleaning and dust control in your home have been documented in one study sponsored by the Environmental Protection Agency. That study, conducted in a daycare center, reported that improved housekeeping reduced total fungi by 61 percent, airborne dust by 52 percent, volatile organic compounds by 49 percent and total bacteria by 40 percent.

Frequent cleaning may reduce contaminants in the indoor environment. Other actions include changing or cleaning air filters and air filter bags, maintaining filtration and air handling systems continued on page 11

Environmental Focus

Good reasons to recycle aluminum

Each person in the United States uses an average of two pounds of aluminum foil a year. About 50 billion pounds of aluminum foil and other containers are used in the United States annually. If all that aluminum was recycled, it would come to eight million million aluminum cans! Aluminum recycling saves 95% of the energy needed to make aluminum from bauxite ore. The energy will operate a television set for three hours. When you recycle 16 aluminum cans, you save the amount of energy generated by burning one gallon of gas. (ALH)
Holding wet corn with aeration

Corn is a perishable commodity with a limited shelf life that depends on the moisture content and temperature of the corn. Shelf life is the length of time good quality, aerated, shelled corn can be stored before losing one-half percent of dry matter. With this amount of dry matter decomposition, it is assumed that the corn loses some quality, but maintains its market grade. To illustrate this point, consider aerated corn at 18 percent moisture content and 70°F. This corn has a shelf life of approximately 31 days. At that same temperature, aerated corn at 24 percent moisture content only has a shelf life of approximately 6 days. Clearly, holding corn at high moisture content corn precludes extended storage.

Here we discuss temporary storage, or holding, of wet corn with aeration. The recommendations in NebGuide G87-862, Holding Wet Corn with Aeration, should allow for storage until the corn can be dried (and then held for extended periods), or removed from the bin for feeding or other purposes. We define wet corn as 16 percent or higher moisture content.

When holding wet corn, aeration is required. The temperature of the corn mass will not remain constant because biological activity of the corn requires heat for growth and temperature. The higher corn temperature, in turn, increases biological activity, which can rapidly lead to corn deterioration. Aeration systems are needed to offset this temperature rise and to adjust the corn temperature to ambient temperatures. Without aeration, wet corn corn will heat up.

Successfully holding wet corn requires an understanding of aeration systems and the effects of corn moisture, temperature, and damage levels on shelf life. A table can be used to estimate the shelf life of aerated corn based on the moisture content and temperature of the corn. Shelf life data is not valid for corn held without aeration. These storage times are not always accurate predictions of the point at which mold growth becomes visible on individual kernels. Visible mold growth may occur sooner than expected when the corn is held at conditions where the shelf life is less than one month. If corn is to be fed to gestating or lactating sows, a more vigorous inspection routine is recommended. (For more details, see NebGuide G94-1199. Management to Maintain Stored Grain Quality.)

An area of possible confusion is that the shelf life data was determined for aerated corn maintained at a constant temperature over the entire storage period. Wet corn stored in bins that are not aerated while held in the truck, and the temperature changes from harvest temperature to storage temperature.

Corn deterioration is a cumulative process and reducing shelf life progressively decreases during each storage interval. The amount of decrease depends on the corn moisture and temperature for a storage interval. To use Table 1, you need to know the average percent-age to determine the safe storage period. (TD)

Table 1. Shelf life (days for aerated, shelled corn. These values may also be used to estimate allowable storage times for other grains.)

<table>
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<th>Corn Moisture Content (Wet Basis)</th>
<th>Temp. °F</th>
<th>16%</th>
<th>18%</th>
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* Under Nebraska weather conditions, corn temperatures cannot be maintained at these levels for the indicated length of time. Shaded area: Corn held at these temperatures and moisture contents require frequent inspection and continuous aeration.

One way to save inputs in your farming operation is to decrease your fertilizer bill by using biosolids. The following explains what will save you the economic benefit of using biosolids.

Farmer A is interested in using biosolids to fertilize 80-acre field. His 1999 crop will be corn. After soil sampling (no cost to Farmer A), the biosolids rate is determined to be 40-45 cubic yards/acre. This rate will provide all the nitrogen needs for next corn crop. We estimate that 3500 cubic yards will be needed for this 80-acre field. After Farmer A has applied the biosolids properly, he can receive up to $0.65 per cubic yard to help defray the cost of applying the biosolids. This is $2275.

Pesticide container recycling a success

During June-September over the past four years, the Pesticide Container Recycling program has been coordinated by extension staff in Lancaster County for a 10-county area in southeast Nebraska. Public pesticide container collection days were organized in eastern Nebraska, has resulted in grain stocks that are tight commercial storage space, combined with a low export demand, transportation problems and a high cost of storage and aeration.

From June to September, over 29,000 properly rinsed pesticide containers were collected and recycled into other products. This is $2275. It will cost him $0.25 per cubic yard ($875) to spread the 3500 cubic yards of biosolids from the City of Lincoln Biosolids Program. It will cost him $0.65 per cubic yard ($2275) to apply the biosolids properly, keeping an average of 3500 cubic yards to help defray his farm finances tight?

Fertilize with biosolids and save $$

Fertilize with biosolids and save $$

One problem, Farmer A has a tractor and loader, but no opener. He decides to rent a spreader from the City of Lincoln Biosolids Program. It will cost him $0.25 per cubic yard ($875) to spread 3500 cubic yards of biosolids. It will be subtracted from the $2275 payment. Farmer A will receive $1400 plus get all of his nitrogen (N) fertilizer at no cost. In addition, Farmer A’s soil tests show that he has low soil levels of phosphorus (P) and zinc (Zn). Because biosolids have significant amounts of P and Zn, he won’t have to purchase extra fertilizers.

One more benefit, studies by the University of Nebraska have shown that there is an average 5% yield advantage by using biosolids compared with equivalent amounts of commercial N, P and ZN fertilizers.

This is a typical first year scenario of some of the economic benefits of using biosolids from the City of Lincoln Biosolids Program. In year 2000, as well.

How can you take advantage of this terrific fertilizer value? Contact Barb Ogg at the Lancaster County Extension Office, 441-7138, as soon as you can. Applications for next year’s fields are due January 15. (BPO)

Farm finances tight?

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Acreage reply

Q. Anyone know an average radius a bat will go from its home to find food? We have an awful mosquito problem, and I’m thinking of putting up a bat house to attract some bats. How far away from my house can I put it and still radically reduce the mosquito population?

A. Varies somewhat by species. Somewhere between a few hundred feet to several hundreds of yards, some much less. Having a bat house is a good idea, even if it is more for the enjoyment of watching the bats. Be sure your bat house has a variety of roosting slit thicknesses, and that it will increase the odds of your bat house being occupied by the bats in your area. Some people have reported success mounting the bat house on

their house. Most instructions tell you to mount the bat house on the south side of the structure (wall, tree, etc) and make sure it’s in the sun for all or part of the day. Female bats (and young) prefer very warm conditions for roosting. By all means, please try to install a bat house; encourage your neighbors to do the same. Place it between 10 and 20 feet above the ground, with a clear, unobstructed opening underneath. They are marvelous, interesting creatures as worthy as our feathered friends who receive much more attention. Q. When I grade our road with my tractor and 3pt grader blade, I end up with ripples. How can I get rid of these?

A. There are several ways to smooth a gravel or rock road. Look at these suggestions:

- Use a box scraper. This does a good job of keeping ripples out of the road, but does not allow you to move the gravel back onto the road from the edges. One pass with an angled grader blade, then another pass with the box scraper gives excellent results. (DJ)

- Cut out a bat house; encourage your feathered friends who have a variety of roosting slit thicknesses, and that it will increase the odds of your bat house being occupied by the bats in your area. Some people have reported success mounting the bat house on the south side of the structure (wall, tree, etc) and make sure it’s in the sun for all or part of the day. Female bats (and young) prefer very warm conditions for roosting. By all means, please try to install a bat house; encourage your neighbors to do the same. Place it between 10 and 20 feet above the ground, with a clear, unobstructed opening underneath. They are marvelous, interesting creatures as worthy as our feathered friends who receive much more attention. Q. When I grade our road with my tractor and 3pt grader blade, I end up with ripples. How can I get rid of these?

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- Cut out a bat house; encourage your feathered friends who have a variety of roosting slit thicknesses, and that it will increase the odds of your bat house being occupied by the bats in your area. Some people have reported success mounting the bat house on the south side of the structure (wall, tree, etc) and make sure it’s in the sun for all or part of the day. Female bats (and young) prefer very warm conditions for roosting. By all means, please try to install a bat house; encourage your neighbors to do the same. Place it between 10 and 20 feet above the ground, with a clear, unobstructed opening underneath. They are marvelous, interesting creatures as worthy as our feathered friends who receive much more attention. Q. When I grade our road with my tractor and 3pt grader blade, I end up with ripples. How can I get rid of these?

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**Mealtime tips for the preschool child**

Make it easy for your child to eat.
- The younger preschooler may need:
  - child-size spoon and fork
  - a small plate and cup
  - a booster chair

Offer child-size servings.
- Put small amounts of food on the child’s plate and let the child ask for more if still hungry.

Avoid foods that could cause choking.
- Small children can choke easily. Avoid round pieces:
  - hot dogs
  - popcorn
  - grapes
  - nuts
  - raw carrot chunks

Peanut butter and large pieces of meat can also be hard to swallow.

Include at least one of your child’s favorite foods at each meal.

Offer different textures and colors.
- This makes food more interesting and introduces your child to lots of different foods.

Keep mealtime quiet and calm.
- Ask your child to:
  - talk softly
  - sit at the table
  - turn off the television
- Keep the conversation pleasant and avoid arguments.

**Take the guesswork out of roasting a turkey**

It’s getting to be turkey time again. If you’re in charge of fixing the turkey this year, check out these directions from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) NOW. Assure that you plan adequate time for buying, thawing and preparing your turkey as you plan for activities over the Thanksgiving weekend. If you have further questions about safe turkey preparation, you can call the toll-free USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline (1-800-535-4555) from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Central Standard Time.

**BUYING A TURKEY**
- Frozen: Allow 1 lb. per person.

Buy anytime, but keep frozen until ready to thaw. (See thawing)
- Fresh: 1 lb. per person. Buy one to two days before cooking.
- DO NOT BUY PRE-STUFFED.
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**THAWING A TURKEY**
- Thawing Time in the Refrigerator:
  - 40°F: Approximately 24 hours per 5 pounds (Whole Turkey)
  - 33°F: 1 to 2 days

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**Food & Fitness**

**HOLIDAY TURKEY STRATA**

- 2 cups cooked turkey
- 2 packages (8 ounces each) frozen hash brown potatoes, thawed
- 2 cups shredded Cheddar cheese
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 cup chopped red pepper
- 1 cup chopped green pepper
- 4 eggs (regular or liquid pasteurized)
- 3/4 cup milk
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon black pepper

In a 4-cup glass measure, beat together eggs, milk, garlic, salt and black pepper. Repeat layers.
- Pour egg mixture over layered ingredients; cover lightly with plastic wrap. Microwave on medium for three to five minutes or until top is set.

**MEALTIME Family Time**

**FOOD FACTS**

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.

327 Avoid Time/Temperature Danger Zone
335 Thawing a Turkey
336 Traveling Safely with Food
and many more...

**Nutrition and Food Safety Web Site**

Visit our internet web site at:
http://ianrwww.unl.edu/ianr/nutrition/family/safety.htm

**FREE monthly FoodTalk e-mail newsletter**
To be added to the mailing list, e-mail Alice Henneman at cnry5028@unlvm.unl.edu.

**Diabetes Study Course**
Visit our internet web site at: http://www.unl.edu/ianr/nutrition/family/safety.htm

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**Focus on Food**

**Q: Is it safe to roast a turkey in a brown grocery bag?**
- A: This practice could be dangerous. Brown bags were never intended as cooking materials and the glue and ink on them may give off harmful fumes.

To cook turkey safely in a bag, use a commercial oven bag. These bags are timesavers too, particularly if fixing a large bird.

**Q: Is it safe to cook turkey at a low temperature overnight?**
- A: Cooking below 325°F is unsafe because low temperatures permit the bird to remain at a dangerously low temperature too long. While in this danger zone, bacteria can grow and may produce heat-resistant toxins. Instead, cook perishable foods, such as turkey, at oven temperature no lower than 325°F.
Recycling has become an important part of Lincoln and Lancaster County’s solid waste management program. Each year Lincoln and Lancaster County residents dispose of 275,500 tons of waste. This amount represents an average of 761 tons of waste per day that is buried in the sanitary landfill. An average of 6.5 pounds per person per day is generated by people in Lancaster County. Although this sounds like a lot, there would even be more if people didn’t recycle.

According to Gene Hanlon, Recycling Coordinator for the City of Lincoln, the current level of public sector recycling projected out over the remaining life of the landfill will add 9 years to the life of the sanitary landfill. As a result, Lancaster County’s landfill will last a total of 24 to 32 years.

There are three main public sector recycling programs. The yard waste composting program has diverted over 85,000 tons of grass and leaves since it started in October, 1992. During the same period over 152,700 tons of brush has been diverted from the landfill. This includes storm damage from 1993 and 1997. These recycling efforts not only save landfill space, but also create beneficial products that people can use. For example the compost adds organic matter to soils which produces a healthy turf and saves on watering costs. Similarly, wood chips retain moisture and reduce weeds.

The second program is the biosolids land application program. The city also began diverting wastewater sewage sludge or biosolids from the landfill in 1992 and applying it on area farmland as a municipal fertilizer. Last year, 28,900 tons of biosolids was applied on land in Lancaster County. Since the program began, over 35 farmers have used this material on 120 fields in the county.

Another major public sector recycling program is the recycling drop-off program. Last year, residents deposited 10.8 million pounds of recyclables at 22 recycling drop-off sites in the county. This represented a 4.6% increase over the previous year. The city estimates that roughly 45% of the county residents utilize the recycling drop-off sites. The cost of providing this service is approximately $40 per ton which is less than the cost to collect and dispose of residential waste.

The private sector plays a key role in the County’s recycling efforts. Local scrap metal yards and scrap paper recyclers diverted over 110,870 tons of material from the landfill last year. In addition, local contractors recycled over 324,000 tons of concrete and asphalt last year. When the public and private sector recycling efforts are combined, 61% of the total waste generated in the community was recycled last year. If concrete, asphalt, biosolids and storm debris recycling efforts are excluded, the City had a 34% recycling rate.

Individuals can obtain more information on recycling in Lancaster County by contacting the Recycling Office at 441-8215 or on the Internet at: http://interlin.ci.ne.us/interlinc/ncrt/works/wasten/index.htm.

Recycling newspapers

We could save about 25 million trees each year if people in the United States would recycle one-tenth of their newspapers. Recycling one ton of newspapers conserves 7,000 gallons of water. Making recycled paper from waste paper used at least 30 percent less energy than making paper from wood pulp.

A survey conducted by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development in 1997 shows that there is an economic benefit for recycling. The survey showed over $80 million in capital investments since 1990 by 138 public and private entities. Recycling related employment in 1996 totaled 1,224 jobs. 82% of these jobs were in the private sector.

To help strengthen markets for recycled materials, the State of Nebraska has developed Markets for Recyclables: Nebraska’s Blueprint for Action. This plan is a collaborative effort of five State Agencies: the Departments of Administrative Services, Economic Development, Environmental Quality, the Nebraska Energy Office, and the Nebraska State Recycling Association.

The document these agencies prepared described and strongly encouraged an approach to recycling that emphasized the manufacture and purchase of recycled content products in Nebraska. While recognizing that all components of recycling must be in place in order for the recycling process to function successfully, the blueprint viewed the development of new or expanded manufacturing capacity and other end uses for recycled commodities as critical to the long term success of recycling efforts.

If interested in more information on how the state plans to strengthen markets for recycled materials and encourage the purchase of recycled content products, contact the Recycling Economic Development Advocate at the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, P. O. Box 94666, Lincoln, NE 68509-4666 or call (402) 441-3766. You can also visit their web site at http://reda.ed.state.ne.us
Myths about buying recycled products

There are common misconceptions about buying recycled content products. Recycled content products are hard to find. This used to be true, but no longer. From the neighborhood grocery store to national retailers, stores sell thousands of products made from or packaged in recycled content material. Ask a retailer or supplier to offer more recycled content products or ask them to indicate in their catalogs which products contain recycled content. Read the labels on paper and plastic items, and look for “safe” pet products that generally contain significant recycled content material. These include steel cans for food, aluminum beverage containers and glass bottles and jars.

Recycled content products cost more. Many recycled products are priced competitively with their non-recycled counterparts. In fact, some (like photocopy paper, re-manufactured toner cartridges) may be less expensive. Take the time to investigate prices.

• Recycled products are inferior in quality. Recycled content products often share the same performance characteristics as their virgin equivalent. Recycled products often look different and offer the same level of reliability and functionality as non-recycled products. A recent survey of hundreds of corporate purchasing agents showed that 97% of respondents were pleased with the performance of recycled content products. These days recycled content products must undergo the same stringent testing and exacting performance standards as their non-recycled counterparts. In fact, some (like photocopy paper, retread tires or re-manufactured toner cartridges) may be less expensive. Take the time to investigate prices.

Complete the loop: buy recycled products

Most people think that recycling ends when they leave their recyclables at the local drop-off site, but reality is that it is only one part of the process. The recycling loop, which consists of three arrows, explains that the recycling process is. One arrow represents the collection of recyclables. A second arrow represents the manufacturer making a new product from recycled material, and the third arrow represents consumers buying recycled content products. Based on this concept, you’re not truly recycling until you’re buying recycled content products; you close the loop when you buy items or packaging made from recycled content materials. The item can go from a recycling bin to a manufacturer, to the store shelf and back to you. Then, after using the item, you can start the loop again by recycling it. Without informed consumers and a market for products made of recycled materials, locl recycling programs will become more costly and fewer recyclables may be collected and processed. There are five reasons why citizens should buy recycled: it saves natural resources. By making products from recycled materials instead of virgin materials, we conserve

Product labeling and important elements in buying recycled

Most people are familiar with the recycling logo, but less well known is that there are actually two symbols—one indicating a product made from recycled material, the other indicating a product whose packaging is recyclable. Not all products with the recyclable symbol can be recycled in Lancaster County. It is important to check with local recyclers to make sure it is recyclable. When looking for recycled products to buy, there are two definitive things a person needs to know. The first one is pre-consumer content which refers to materials such as fabric trimmings, damaged or obsolete products, or overruns generated by the manufacturer. Pre-consumer content materials have been recycled for decades. The other term is post-consumer content which refers to materials that have served their use and have been recycled by a consumer or business. By buying products high in recycled content, even if they aren’t labeled, such as for food cans, cars, appliances, furniture, and nails; aluminum, including beverage cans; glass bottles and jars; and molded pulp containers, including gray or brown cardboard egg cartons and foam products.

Aluminum is a great way to start recycling and even make a little money on the side. Americans discard enough aluminum to rebuild our entire commercial air fleet every three months. Besides aluminum, there are now more than 1,400 quality products and packages made from recycled plastic. The recycled steel is used in just about every product from refrigerators to cars, so when you buy a product with recycled steel, you’re closing the loop. There are items everywhere you look made from recycled products. When we use these products we find an alternative to depleting our natural resources.

The Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality reports that in 1996 Nebraskans recycled 25% of waste generated. The state legislature has passed the Solid Waste Management Act which establishes a goal of a 50% recycling rate by the year 2002. More and more local recycling programs for recycled content materials need to be strengthened. Many businesses and organizations have developed policies to use recycled content products whenever economically feasible. Buy recycled policies help strengthen recycling programs and conserve limited resources.

Tips to buy recycled

Your favorite products were probably packaged using recycled content materials. Buy one product each month that has recycled content. If every consumer bought just one recycled content product a month, think of the effect! Tell friends about recycled content products that you like. Changes in consumer behavior start with word-of-mouth. Check your phone book for recycling programs. The Aliant Telephone blue pages list materials that are being recycled in Lincoln.

Plastic codes
(on bottom of containers)

PETE Bottles recycled in Lincoln.
HDPE Bottles recycled in Lincoln.
LDPE NOT recycled at drop-off sites.
PPF NOT recycled at drop-off sites.
PS NOT recycled at drop-off sites.
OTHER

Vinyl/polyvinyl chloride (PVC) NOT recycled at drop-off sites.
Low density polyethylene NOT recycled at drop-off sites.
Polyethylene terephthalate (PET) Bottles recycled in Lincoln.
High density polyethylene Bottles recycled in Lincoln.
Polypropylene NOT recycled at drop-off sites.
Polystyrene NOT recycled at drop-off sites.
All other resins NOT recycled at drop-off sites.

Tips for the office

• Bring new ideas for recycled content products to your purchasing manager. Ask for recycled content products when you order supplies.
• Share information about your favorite products with your colleagues.
• Give your company a cheer for its environmental efforts. Tell family and friends about your workplace environmental activities.
• Tips for the home
• Look for packaging with recycled content.

Carpet fiber. #2 plastics, high-density polyethylene, (HDPE), and polypropylene are made from recycled materials. It usually takes less energy to recycle products than to make them from virgin materials. Be sure to join the recycling process early. It creates less air pollution and water pollution than making products from virgin materials.

4. It saves landfill space. When the materials that are recycled go into new products, they don’t go into landfills, so landfill space is conserved.
5. It can save money and create jobs. The recycling process creates far more jobs than landfilling or incinerating waste. Recycling can frequently be the least expensive waste management method for towns.

Some people may be wondering, how do I buy recycled? The easiest thing to do is to read the label and see if the container is recyclable or not. If the information is unclear or not available, call the 1-800 number on the label and ask. Some types of materials always have a high percentage of recycled content. These four materials always have a significant amount of recycled content, even if they aren’t labeled: steel, including food cans, cars, appliances, furniture, and nails; aluminum, including beverage cans; glass bottles and jars; and molded pulp containers, including gray or brown cardboard egg cartons and foam products.

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Green buildings: construction uses recycled products

There is something new going on in Lincoln in the world of recycling. The construction of the first “green building” in the city is underway. The Lincoln Children’s Museum, located at 1420 P Street will be designed by the Architectural Partnership of Lincoln with environmental criteria and performance parameters as objectives.

There are several goals of green buildings. Some of the goals include: appropriate use of land, existing buildings and materials; use water, energy and natural resources efficiently; use and enhance the market for recycled materials wherever possible; conserve and protect resources and habitats; and strengthen the local economy and the community. By using an existing building, the central location and is served by mass transit, the Lincoln Children’s Museum is consistent with the sustainable design of the area. This project will take a three-year period with four phases. In the first phase, there are tips to buy recycled content products when economically feasible, will also be undertaken. The city has developed a directory of recycled content products that are available locally. For example, drywall can contain recycled gypsum and cardboard, 5-10%.

Recycling - Page 3a

Buyers created content products at work

Because of the tremendous buying power of businesses, institutions and government agencies, these organizations send a powerful message to manufacturers by the products they choose. When businesses buy recycled, they assure manufacturers that a consistent, long-term demand exists for recycled products. Commitment from agencies and management is needed to make a buy recycled program a success.

State and local governments, as well as businesses, have adopted policies to buy recycled content products when economically feasible. In 1997, government in Lincoln and Lancaster County purchased over $900,000 worth of products that contained recycled content. Most of the photocopy paper used by local government contains 20% post-consumer recycled paper.

All print cartridges ordered through the purchasing department in the local government must be remanufactured. Remanufacturing is the repairing or restoring of used products to “like new” condition. Remanufactured cartridges meet standards for new cartridges and are about half the price.

Many office products contain recycled content. These items can include, but are not limited to: pencils, rulers, diskette mailers, padded envelopes, tape dispensers, organizer trays, calendars, binders, computer disks, furniture, carpet, janitorial supplies and construction materials. WasteCap of Lincoln, with the Chamber of Commerce, has prepared a catalog of over 200 recycled content products available to businesses, institutions and governmental agencies in Lincoln. For more information on the buy recycled catalog for businesses, contact WasteCap of Lincoln at 472-0888 or http://www.wastecaplink.org.

Compliance with the Loop of Recycling

The recycling market is more dependent on demand rather than supply. As consumers buy recycled products, demand for recycling increases. That contributes to the loop of recycling from production, consumption to recycling. Here are some ideas to reduce waste before you buy and on re-using products.

Shop Smart

About one of every ten dollars Americans spend on food and beverages, pays for packag- ing. Product wrapping and decoration comprise about half of the nation’s paper, 90% of the glass, 75% of the aluminum and 40% of the plastic. Packaging makes up about a third of the weight and half the volume of household waste. Here are tips to reduce waste from the start:

• When possible, buy food and personal products in reusable, refillable or recyclable containers. For example, food products can be purchased in glass or tin instead of non-recyclable plastic.
• Purchase products in bulk. Existning glass or plastic bottles or sacks with you for groceries.

Some stores offer cash credits if you use your own paper sacks.
• With many purchases just say “I don’t need a sack.”
• Buy greeting cards, stationary, toilet paper and other products made of recycled or recyclable paper.

Helpful Home and Office Tips

• Minimize use of disposable items, such as eating utensils, pens, lighters, even cameras!
• Donate clothes, furniture and appliances to thrift stores and charities.
• Use shaving soap instead of aerosol cream.
• Use cloth napkins and hand towels.
• Reuse empty plastic containers for travel items, nails, bolts, etc.
• Compost and mulch grass clippings and leaves.
• Use a mug instead of styrofoam/paper cups. Ask your office or church to do the same.
• Write to Mail Preference Service, Direct Marketing Associates, P.O. Box 3861, New York, NY, 10163-3861. Request that your name be removed from mailing lists.
• Reuse old file folders and use two-sided copies.
• Pass along used magazines to a friend, school, nursing home, etc. Consider sharing a subscription with someone.
• Give excess paint and building materials to a neighbor, community agency, school or theater. Note: Keep hazardous products in original containers.

More Reducing Ideas

• Choose the energy and/or cooperative extension office for more suggestions on how to reduce waste.
• Many time and money-saving ideas indirectly involve recycling or reusing items around the home.

The Lincoln Recycling Office has brochures regarding recycling, including a commercial waste reduction handbook for business and industry.

Reducing is a good habit

If you follow some of these tips, they will become habit when you head to the store or clean the garage.

For information on waste reduction, contact the Recycling Division of the Mayor’s Office; 555 S. 10th Street; Lincoln, NE 68508; (402) 471-821.

Examples of Recycling

Recycling - Page 3b

Recycling is turning used paper back into pulp and then making new paper from that pulp. The Lincoln Journal Star made out of 25-40% recycled newspaper.

Recycling is melting aluminum cans, press- ing the metal molten into sheets as it cools and shaping these sheets into new cans. Each new food and beverage container made out of glass has 50% recycled glass in it.

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Recycling is turning used paper back into pulp and then making new paper from that pulp. The Lincoln Journal Star made out of 25-40% recycled newspaper.
There are 5 newspaper only and 13 multi-material recycling drop-off centers located in Lincoln. And 5 multi-material sites in the County. Here’s what materials are accepted at multi-material recycling sites:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Accepted</th>
<th>Not Accepted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>No other paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inserts</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>No other paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardboard Boxes</td>
<td>Flatten cardboard</td>
<td>Thin cardboard (i.e. cereal boxes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glass Bottles and Jars</td>
<td>All food and beverage glass</td>
<td>Green, brown and clear glass OK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plastic #1 &amp; #2 Bottles</td>
<td>All #1 &amp; #2 plastic bottles</td>
<td>Labels OK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tire Recycling</td>
<td>Central States Tire Recycling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Mixed Paper</td>
<td>Mail, magazines, office and school paper</td>
<td>Telephone directories</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contact 441-8215 for more information on proper separation of recyclables.

CITY OF LINCOLN

Match the symbol on the map with the adjacent symbols for easy site location information:

- Aluminum cans
- Glass containers
- Newspaper
- Plastic gallon milk jugs
- #1 & #2 Plastic bottles
- Tin cans
- Cardboard & Mixed paper

North
- UN-L East Campus Parking Lot Behind Fire Station No. 2 33rd & Holdridge Streets
- Sherwood Lumber Co 3700 Sheridan Boulevard
- Willard Community Center Folsom & West 18th Streets
- All Saints Lutheran Church 9501 Pioneers Boulevard
- Indian Village 13th & High Streets

South
- Leo’s Food Mart 
- Athletic Field Parking Lot 3rd & Calvert
- Lincoln School of Commerce Parking Lot 19th & “L” Streets
- Jayport Hall 12th & South Streets

Additional Communities
- Bellevue, Refuge Transfer Station
- Cayce-Refuge Transfer Station
- Holmes City Park Panama
- Refuge Transfer Station Waverly, Waverly Plaza

Contact 441-8215 for more information on proper separation of recyclables.
Jean's Journal

Jean Wheelock, FCE Council Chair

Here we are, about ready to celebrate Thanksgiving with turkey, cranberries and pumpkin pie. We, in this country, have so much for which to be thankful. I hope we can all share some of our bounty with those around us.

We often wonder what can just one person do? If we work together, we can make changes.

Your FCE president has a copy of a petition for “Tune Out Violence” on TV. Get a copy or several copies and begin now to get your signatures as possible and let’s make Nebraska the leader in this campaign. We are all a part of the solution.

I recently attended the Southeast District FCE meeting and a review of the past programs was given. Thought a review of the TV rating system might be helpful.

“Y”=all ages; "Y-7”=7 years and older; “F”=fantasy but can contain violence; “TVG”=parental guidance, may be unsuitable for young children; “TV-G”=all ages; “MA”=mature adults; “D”=dialogue; "L"=language; “S”=sex; “V”=violence. We, as part of the national organization, are helping to make our communities a safer place for our children and grandchildren.

Happy Thanksgiving to all.

Taking the crunch out of holiday shopping

Putting just the right gift for a friend or family member often can lead us to stretch the family budget, and commercialization of Christmas just in- creases the stress.

Giving the gift of time can sometimes help alleviate the pressure. For herb gardeners, a gift of home-grown products can stretch the cash and add a personal touch. A small, stop- pered bottle of flavored vinegar, made with fresh herbs such as basil, oregano or tarragon, for example, adds an elegant touch to any Christmas box.

There’s still time to create some simple craft items when those run out and there’s still the need to shop. The following tips may help.

First, determine what you can spend. Then begin with a list before leaving the house. Check off the family members and friends for whom you have already created gifts. Consider purchasing family gifts that everyone can enjoy, rather than buying several individual gifts. Older children can pool a little money to buy something for their parents.

Next, jot down a few suggestions for each person. Starting with more than one idea helps eliminate too expensive or sold-out gift items. Catalogues and store flyers can simplify common shopping at home and reduce time scurrying from store to store. Remember, though, that service and return policies can make a gift truly enjoyable—or a hassle.

Shop when the stores are least crowded. Unless a major sale is in progress, early morn- ings usually are good times. Some people save a vacation day or two for holiday shopping so they can go during the week and avoid weekend crowds. Specialty stores such as bookstores, sporting goods stores or second-hand stores may be less crowded.

Shop at stores you know. "I’ll return if you have a problem. Before making major purchases at seasonal stores, check their records with the Better Business Bureau.

Research major purchases such as computers, audio/video equipment or appliances. Consumer magazines and shopper’s guides evaluate models and provide helpful information. Avoid credit cards and pay later gifts or promotions of no interest or payments until next year. With these purchasing “plans,” it’s easy to lose track of how much is actually spent.

Save holiday receipts in an envelope, in case something needs to be returned or changed. Keep boxes or packaging material to help simplify returns. Leaving the store name and department code intact will help if receipts disappear.

And, to make next year easier, start this year. Add up the cost of family gift purchases to estimate the cost next year. Divide the total by 12 and deposit that amount in an interest-bearing account every month. Purchase full items and seasonal decorations after the holidays. Some gifts, such as small remembrances for friends or co-workers, may be purchased early.

Source: Kathy Prochaska-Cue, Ph.D., Family Economist. (LB)

Families need not become victim to holiday stresses

One of the major stresses for families occurs when parents put a lot of emphasis on the holidays and attempt to do too much. Parents should think back to prior holidays and ask themselves, “Did we really have fun? Was all this hard work worth it?”

Parents frequently try to make up for not spending enough time with their children. As a result, their stress from trying to do too much gets transferred to their children.

The best gift a parent can give a child is to slow down and reconnect with them. Here’s how:

• Do some things the kids want to do. For instance, read another story, build a snowman and give the extra hugs and twinkles with your child you normally don’t get to do. This may take some planning, but it’s better than leaving them occupied with the television or the tree to make sure it’s the perfect time for a child to a children’s mu- seum, the library or the movies.

• Keep the holiday simple. Time spent preparing meals or entertaining guests could be spent playing with kids and their new toys.

• Family get-togethers often become adult get-togethers. Kids need to get lost in the shuffle and end up fend- ing for themselves. Involve children in gift wrapping, preparing meals or taking coats. Provide an opportunity where they can do something that allows them to participate.

• When traveling or having guests over, it’s important that children retain their routine and bedtimes. Children need continuity and structure, even on Christmas eve.

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• When traveling or having guests over, it’s important that children retain their routine and bedtimes. Children need continuity and structure, even on Christmas eve.

• Let children be comfortable with company at their own pace. Forcing them to greet every stranger with a hug can become very stressful or young children, especially when they aren’t approach strangers. Let them socialize with guests and relatives when they are ready.

• Establish a model for appropriate Christmas behavior. Christ- mass is about giving, so this is the perfect time to teach a lesson about what is that really all about. Invite someone over for dinner who may be left out, serve at a soup kitchen, or shop together for a gift that will be donated to a needy person.

• Finally, expect disruptions and try to be patient with children over the holidays. The goal should be to create Christmas memo- ries, not Christmas tension.

Source: Herb Lingren, Ph.D., Family Scientist. (LB)

Is your child getting enough sleep?

Eight hours sleep is often a standard by which adults judge the amount of sleep they need. However, children need more. In fact, some studies indicate that not only adults, but many children do not get adequate amounts of sleep.

How do you know when your child is getting adequate sleep?

Experts say that the key factor is morning alertness, not nighttime ability to stay awake. Is your child relatively easy to awaken? Is he or she able, with a little coaxing, to get up in the morning without much sleep? More sleep may be required. Do not base sleep requirements on evening alertness levels.

Children are capable of stretching themselves into a second wind, especially ones old enough to want to stay involved in household activity. Just because your child does not want to go to bed doesn’t mean a later bedtime is indicated.

Here are some guidelines to consider:

Newborn: Newborns generally sleep or drowse 16-20 hour per day.

Six to 12 months: About 11 hours of nighttime sleep with three or more hours of daytime sleep.

One to three years: About 10-13 hours sleep every night, with naps if needed.

Four to five years: About 10-12 hours of sleep. May not require naps during the day.

Six to 12 years: A six year old may need as many as 12 hours of sleep, while an older child might need as little as ten. Weekend allowances may be made for less sleep.

Teens: Research shows that teens typically experience an increased need to sleep. Your suddenly sleepy teen may not be lazy, rather his body is requiring an additional two or three hours sleep to accomplish all the growing he is trying to do.

A well rested child, according to Dr. Dehaene, does much better, is happier, less irritable and achieves higher grades in school. School should be a parental priority and should be determined by parents not children. Sleep is essential to school performance. The unrested child cannot work to his or her potential. Getting a child to bed earlier can be hard on a parent until a routine is established, but it must be a priority. A child does not have the judgement skills to know when to go to bed on his or her own.

A sense of security comes from Lorene Bartos, Extension Educator

Mold grows in moisture or high humidity. Reduce mold with good ventilation, good drainage and a dehumidifier. This is especially good in basements and the attic.

AARP offers 55 Alive—Mature Driver Course

If your driver’s license expires in 1999 and you are 50 years of age or older, you are urged to enroll in the 55 years of age or older Driver’s course.

You will review driving skills and prepare for the license renewal test. This class will be offered Tuesday, December 15 and Wednesday, December 16, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. At the Mature Driver Course, you will re-certify your 55 Alive—Mature Driver Course.

In this course, you will be tested on your knowledge of driving skills and the cost of family gift purchases to estimate the cost next year. Divide the total by 12 and deposit that amount in an interest-bearing account every month. Purchase full items and seasonal decorations after the holidays. Some gifts, such as small remembrances for friends or co-workers, may be purchased early.

AARP offers 55 Alive—Mature Driver Course. In this course, you will review driving skills and prepare for the license renewal test. This class will be offered Tuesday, December 15 and Wednesday, December 16, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

To register, please call 441-7185. Registration fee is $8.

Participants are asked to bring a sack lunch.

Family get-togethers often become adult get-togethers. Kids tend to get lost in the shuffle and end up fendering for themselves. Involve children in gift wrapping, preparing meals or taking coats. Provide an opportunity where they can do something that allows them to participate.

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Finally, expect disruptions and try to be patient with children over the holidays. The goal should be to create Christmas memo- ries, not Christmas tension.

Source: Herb Lingren, Ph.D., Family Scientist. (LB)
Hello families— save pop tabs
The Nebraska 4-H Action Team is sponsoring a statewide community service project. They are asking all 4-H’ers to collect pop tabs for the Ronald McDonald House in Omaha. Last year Nebraska 4-H’ers collected 3 million pop tabs worth $3,000 for Ronald McDonald House. Nebraska 4-H’ers definitely made a difference. The Ronald McDonald House in Omaha was opened in 1994. It provides a home to families whose children, 18 years of age and younger, are receiving medical care in the Omaha area. The families are asked to pay just $7.50 per night. This fee, however, does not pay for all of the operating costs of the house, therefore, the Ronald McDonald House recycles pop tabs and the proceeds are used to offset operating costs. Bring your pop tabs to the Lancaster County cooperative extension office by January 15, 1999 and again by June 30, 1999. The goal for this Nebraska community service project is to collect five million pop tabs, so start collecting pop tabs today! (TK)

Kids, do you own a cat?
If the answer is yes, and you want to learn more about your pet, plan to join the Lancaster County 4-H Cat Club! All youngsters, between the ages of 9 and 19, are welcome.

We all know that cats are independent, curious and playful! And that they are one of America’s more popular companions. Although cats are loners, they do depend on people for good care.

So...come to the 4-H cat club and learn about immunizations, diet, grooming and more.

The club meets on Thursday, November 19 at 444 Cherry Creek Road. Make new friends and have lots and lots of fun! For more information, call Julie Monroe at 421-3729. (ALH)

Scholarship opportunity
The Nebraska Association of Fair Managers will be offering two $500 scholarships to Nebraska 4-H youth. One to a 4-H boy and one to a 4-H girl, who are graduating seniors and are planning to continue their post-secondary education. Only one boy and one girl may be submitted per county.

Application forms are available at the extension office. All applications are due into the office by December 9. For more information, contact Deanna at 441-7180. (DK)

4-H Volunteer Forum
Mark your calendar for February 5 and 6 and plan to attend the Nebraska State 4-H Volunteer Forum in Grand Island. This forum is a conference developed by a committee of 4-H volunteers from across the state. Network with other 4-H leaders, exchange successful 4-H programs among 4-H leaders and be introduced to new areas and projects. There will be numerous workshops offering hands-on learning experiences and new ideas and programs designed to enhance your club. Anyone interested in 4-H is welcome to attend. Scholarships are available through the 4-H Council. For more information, please contact Tracy at 441-7180. (TK)

Essay and oratorical contest
The Evening Optimist Club of Lincoln is sponsoring an essay and oratorical contest on December 8, 1998. Winners will advance to “Zone” and “District” contests and have a chance to win an all expense paid, four-day trip to Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania in July, 1999. This weekend will include interactive presentations, debates, leadership workshops, recreational activities and a tour of nearby Valley Forge National Historic Park. You will also have the opportunity to win a college scholarship of up to $15,000.

To enter you must be under the age of 19 as of December 31 of the current school year, educated in the United States grades 10, 11 and 12.

If you are interested in participating, please call Jeri Johns at 486-4166 or 471-9400, or call Deanna at the extension office. (DK)

Character Counts! Week poster contest winners
Over 120 colorful, creative posters were entered in the Lancaster County Character Counts! Week poster contest and nearly 80 posters were submitted from all across the state in the state contest. Lancaster County winners were:

Winner: Jamison Miles Scott Middle School
Runner-up: Lindsay Grams Scott Middle School
Runner-up: Leo Ladely Scott Middle School
Runner-up: Jessica Zulkoski Bennet Elementary School
Honorable Mention: Stephanie Ellis Bennett Elementary School
Jennifer French Bennett Elementary School
Bethany Hellerich Bennet Elementary School
Karina Stott Bennet Elementary School
Galina Lothof Scott Middle School
Sara Prase Scott Middle School
Nicole Bennett Scott Middle School
Tylee Newlin Scott Middle School
Zac Wolfe Scott Middle School
Kirsten Schwab Scott Middle School

Honorable Mention: State Contest: Jamison Miles Scott Middle School (LK)
Ak-Sar-Ben horse show results

Following are the results from the Ak-Sar-Ben Horse Exposition in Omaha on September 22 and 23. Congratulations to all who participated and thank you for representing Lancaster County so well. (EK)

Josh Blum
Western Pleasure (Red)
Western Horsemanship (Blue)
Barrels (Blue)

Amy Countryman
Western Horsemanship (Purple)

Jeremiah Frink
Pole Bending (Blue)
Barrels (Blue)

Kevin Hajek
Western Pleasure (Red)

Kasi Hollman
Barrels (Blue)

Kelli Hollman
Barrels (Blue)

Chelsea Leatherwood
Barrels (Purple)

Jacob Messick
Western Horsemanship (Red)

Sara Messick
Advanced English Pleasure (Purple)

Megan Miller
Western Pleasure (Blue)
Western Horsemanship (Purple)

Ashley Murray
English Equitation (Red)

Alicia Ronhovde
Western Pleasure (Blue)
Western Horsemanship (Purple)

Jennifer Ronhovde
Pole Bending (Blue)
Barrels (Purple)

Katie Salstrand
Western Pleasure (Purple)
Western Horsemanship (Purple)

Tami Schneider
Western Pleasure (Red)
Western Horsemanship (Purple)

Lindsay Schoneweis
Barrels (Red)
Western Pleasure (Purple)
Western Horsemanship (Red)

Nicki Steinhauser
Western Pleasure (Blue)
Western Horsemanship (Blue)

Jessica Suhr
English Equitation (Red)

Christi Vialak
Pole Bending (Red)

Candace Willingham
Western Pleasure (Blue)

Jason Wise
Western Pleasure (Purple)

Brandy Wynegar
English Pleasure (Blue)
Western Horsemanship (Blue)

Katie Salstrand, 16, of Lincoln took third place in senior western horsemanship at the 1998 Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Horse Show. She rode a 6-year-old Quarter Horse gelding named Cody’s Top Rebel. The daughter of John and Julie Salstrand received a plaque from Ak-Sar-Ben.

Jeremy Holthus, 18, of Roca exhibited the champion Polled/Horned Hereford breeding beef heifer at the 1998 Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Livestock Exposition in Omaha, September 26. Jeremy, son of Clavin and Diane Holthus, showed Horizon Dolly, born February 15, 1997, and received an award from the Nebraska Hereford Association.

Melanie Nisley, 15, of Hickman showed the champion Shorthorn breeding beef heifer at the 1998 Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Livestock Exposition. Melanie, daughter of Gregg and Jodene Nisley, exhibited NB Playmate, born January 26, 1997. She received a plaque from the Nebraska Shorthorn Association and M & S Shorthorns, in memory of Billy McCullough. Congratulating Melanie is Trisha Newmeister, Nebraska Angus Queen, and Charlie Obrecht, representing the Shorthorn Association. (Photos courtesy Knights of Ak-Sar-Ben)

Sara Messick, 15, of Ceresco won the championship in advanced English pleasure. She also earned the advanced western horsemanship reserve championship. Sara rode 10-year-old Zips Jr. Mint, a Quarter Horse gelding. She received plaques from Ak-Sar-Ben.

Megan Miller, 14, of Adams took third place in junior western horsemanship at the 1998 Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Horse Show. She rode a 17-year-old Paint gelding named Classic King. Megan, daughter of Randy and Janet Miller, received a plaque from Ak-Sar-Ben.

Nate Dowding, 18, of Bennet received the title of overall grand champion beef showman at the 1998 Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Livestock Exposition. Nate is the son of Ron and Arlene Dowding.

Tyson Ritz, 15, of Malcolm took the reserve championship of the Ayrshire division in the dairy show at the 1998 Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Livestock Exposition. Tyson, son of Dale and Paula Heidbrink, exhibited Pocohantas. Nebraska Ayrshire Assoc. provided the award.

Photos courtesy Knights of Ak-Sar-Ben
The Nature Center Staff: The Nature Center provides a staff naturalist Nearly 350 youth and Counts! It is never enough to just talk to young people about service. Community service is part of the Character Counts! citizenship program designed for third through seventh grade youth. The program immerses participants into nature with staff naturalists guiding different nature exploration activities until nighttime. Then, with guidance of naturalists and under the shadow of night, participants immerse with natures critters and explore the woods and prairie of the night. Later, groups will sleep in the Malinowski Auditorium and greet the next morning with a hike looking for animal tracks and signs of nature.

Program Details: When: year-round; any night of the week except holidays Sugarsnap program: 4-H clubs, scouts, schools, church groups, other youth groups Age: 3rd through 7th grade (others given consideration) Time: 7 p.m. to 9 a.m. Fee: $15 per child Number: 10 to 25 children (one adult per every 4th child is required; no fee charged) Community service for kids Part of being a good citizen is participating in life as a community and giving service to others. Often community service is used as a punishment and as such has made many students hate it. A much more productive use of service is intense involvement of young people in a project prior to participation. All service has value. Service is problem based learning. However, the more an adult takes over, the less the student gets from the experience. Service can be a family activity, but must include planning and involvement from all family members. Letting youth take leadership is gratifying. They are incredibly talented and stand in each of two roles. Patience will be necessary. That is the best start that’s been made in the minds of many as the basic stereotype of a farmer. "What is farming?", is to start with an answer above the building and construction industry. Take today’s typical “home builder” and compare that person to the “carpenter” of a generation or two back. The carpenter of times past was a skilled craftsman who participated directly in virtually all phases of the building process, whatever the project. For example, when a house was to be built, the carpenter, along with his helpers, dug and poured the foundation, carrying a rowel from his tool chest and laying up the foundation. He would then frame the house, roof it, plaster the interior walls and trim it out, including building all the cabinetry from scratch. When that house was finally completed after many months, it certainly represented both the seat of that carpenter-builder. His touch was evident from the basement floor to the gable peak.

The occupation of farming Japanese developments important Roy Frederick Professor and Extension Economist, Dept. of Agricultural Economics - UNL.

If you’re a Nebraska farmer or rancher, Japan’s economy may not be one you think about too often. Too many things going on at home, you say, to worry about what’s going on half-way around the world. But wait. What about those ketchup and soy sauce imports. Does a change in Japanese economic policy help increase those prices? I think the answer to the latter question would be “yes.” I don’t think it won’t happen overnight, though. Patience will be necessary. That takes nothing away from the good start that’s been made in recent days.

Japan needs to be understood in each of two roles. First, for many years, Japan has been the United States’ single largest customer for agricultural products, typically accounting for about 20 percent of our total sales. In 1996, Japan’s imports of U.S. agricultural products reached a record $11.7 billion. Since then, however, her purchases dropped to about $9 billion in 1997 and seem sure to sag again in 1998. This is especially important for Nebraska producers. Japan buys more feed grains and red meats—two products we specialize in—than anything else. "Yes, the market for imports is not as large as when we first started trading with Japan," said one Nebraska producer. "But Japan suddenly has not become capable of producing all her own food. But as the Japanese economy stagnated..." Page 10

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Attracting birds with the right plants

continued from page 2

serves as an early season food. The hawthorns have been used for years as a source of winter food. All hawthorns produce edible fruit attractive to many species of birds. Two useful hawthorns are Washington and Winter King. Both trees produce abundant crops of bright red fruit in the fall. The quantity is sufficient to last through a number of feedings by numerous bird species.

Trees can also provide both cover and food for birds. Thick coverings of stems and foliage on a wall or trellis can make ideal nesting sites. Virginia creeper and Boston ivy both form heavy leaf cover in the

summer months. Both the Oriental and American bittersweet produce orange-red berries that are highly ornamental in fall and sources of food in winter. The Virginia creeper has out-standing fall foliage color and along with Boston ivy produces heavy crops of blue-black fruit that persists well into December. Evergreens, such as junipers, pines and spruce, are particularly desirable in landscape designs as well as for yearly cover for many birds. During spring and summer the dense foliage provides protection from danger, and in winter it protects birds from the elements (MJM).

Take the guesswork out of roasting a turkey

continued from page 6

12-16 lbs ............. 2 to 3 days
16-20 lbs ............. 3 to 4 days
20-24 lbs ............. 4 to 5 days

ROASTING A TURKEY

Timetable for Fresh or Thawed Turkey at 325°F
(These times are approximate and should always be in conjunction with a properly placed thermometer.)

Unstuffed

11-12 lbs ............. 2-1/2 to 3 hours
12-14 lbs ............. 3 to 3-1/2 hours
14-18 lbs ............. 3-1/4 to 4-1/2 hours
18-20 lbs ............. 4-1/2 to 5 hours
20-24 lbs ............. 4-3/4 to 5-1/2 hours

Stuffed

8-12 lbs ............. 3 to 3-1/2 hours
12-14 lbs ............. 3-1/2 to 4 hours
14-18 lbs ............. 4 to 4-1/2 hours
18-20 lbs ............. 4-1/4 to 4-3/4 hours
20-24 lbs ............. 4-3/4 to 5-1/4 hours

Roasting Instructions

1. Set the oven temperature no lower than 325°F.

2. Place turkey breast-side up on a rack in a shallow roasting pan.

3. For uniform results and to assure that the stuffing reaches a safe temperature, it is recommended to cook stuffing outside the bird. If stuffed, mix stuffing and stuff right before cooking; stuff the bird loosely (no more than 3/4 cup stuffing per pound of turkey) and use a meat thermometer to ensure the center of the stuffing reaches 165°F.

4. For safety and doneness, the internal temperature, as registered on a meat thermometer, must reach a minimum of 180°F in the thigh before removing from the oven. The center of the stuffing should reach 165°F as measured by a meat thermometer.

5. Juices should be clear or a little pink. Allow to sit for 20 minutes before removing stuffing and carving.

Wash hands, utensils, sink and anything else that has contacted raw turkey with hot, soapy water.

STORING LEFTOVERS

Remove all stuffing, debone turkey, and refrigerate leftovers in shallow containers within two hours of cooking. Use leftover turkey and stuffing within three to four days, gravy within one to two days, or freeze foods. Reheat thoroughly to an internal temperature of 165°F or until hot and steaming. (AH)

Japanese developments important

continued from page 10

Japan’s actions contributed to the

infectious diseases that caused a great deal of suffering and mortality in the population. The death toll in Japan was approximately 250,000, or about 2% of the population. This was a significant proportion of the population, and it had a profound impact on society and the economy. The country was still recovering from the devastation caused by World War II, and the loss of so many lives was a severe blow to the nation.

Among the most important developments was the establishment of the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare (MHLW). This ministry was responsible for the public health and safety of the Japanese people. It was established in 1947, shortly after the end of the war, and it was given the task of rebuilding the health infrastructure of the country. The ministry was given a wide range of responsibilities, including the control of infectious diseases, the regulation of food and drug products, and the promotion of public health.

The ministry was very successful in its efforts. It quickly established a system of health centers and clinics throughout the country, and it implemented a number of programs to control infectious diseases. For example, it launched a campaign to control tuberculosis, which had been a major problem in Japan. The ministry also implemented a vaccination program, and it worked to control other diseases such as polio and measles.

The ministry also played a major role in the development of public health policies and regulations. It was instrumental in the development of food safety standards and regulations, and it worked to ensure that the food and drug industry was held accountable for the safety of its products. The ministry was also involved in the development of occupational health and safety policies, and it worked to ensure that workers were protected from the hazards of their jobs.

The ministry was also involved in the development of public health education and awareness programs. It worked to educate the public about the importance of personal hygiene and the prevention of infections. It also worked to improve the health of the elderly, and it implemented programs to care for the elderly population.

Overall, the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare played a major role in the development of public health in Japan. It was successful in its efforts to control infectious diseases, and it had a lasting impact on the health of the Japanese people. Its efforts had a profound impact on society and the economy, and it is remembered today as a key player in the development of public health in Japan. Despite some shortcomings, it remains a source of pride for Japanese people and an inspiration for public health officials around the world.
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Auntie Bacteria’s holiday advice continued from front page

DEAR HHII:
I’d suggest a 1-2-3 day approach. The first day, buy most of your foods. The next day, do as much pre-preparation as possible. The third day, complete the final cooking and enjoy your meal. Unless food will be frozen, it’s safest to start preparing most perishable foods no more than a day before a meal. For example: 
• Assemble a vegetable casserole a day in advance and then bake the day of your dinner. Plan 15 to 20 minutes additional heating time for the refrigerated cold casserole.
• Cut fruits and vegetables within a day of your meal for salads and relish trays. Store all CUT fruits and vegetables covered, such as in storage containers or one-time use plastic bags in the refrigerator. Store fresh cut produce above raw meat, poultry and fish and below cooked items.

DEAR LII:
Follow the same guidelines for holding hot take-out foods—limit depth of meat, etc. to about two inches. Cover tightly when cooled. On the day of your meal, reheat thoroughly to a temperature of 165° F until hot and steaming. For best safety and quality, reheat foods only once. Then either eat or toss.

Auntie Advises: Keep ahead of bacteria when getting a head start on holiday food preparation. Prepare and store foods safely.

Number 5
Dear Auntie B:
Should I do with the food if my guests are late?
—From: Leary about Latecomers

DEAR LL:
Follow the same guidelines for holding hot take-out foods given earlier (see number 3). Keep COLD foods refrigerated. Hold thoroughly cooked HOT foods in the oven so their temperature stays at 140° F or above. If your guests will be more than two hours late, reheat cooked foods in shallow pans and reheat thoroughly to 165° F when they arrive.

Auntie Advises: Don’t let bacteria show up at your table while you’re waiting for late guests. Hold food at safe temperatures.

Number 6
Dear Auntie B:
Have a small kitchen and little time to prepare a big holiday meal for my relatives. I hardly have the time and space to get the main dish ready. But, I’d still like to get everyone together for a family meal. 
—From: Cramped in the Kitchen

DECK:
Prepare just the main dish. Buy a special bread and order a cold relish tray from the grocery store. Ask one of your guests to bring a salad. Have someone else furnish dessert. Or, meet at a restaurant and avoid cooking entirely.

Auntie Advises: When it’s difficult to make a meal for guests, do as Auntie sometimes does, make reservations!

A Final Tip from Auntie: The 10 most common causes of spreading disease are your fingers! Wash your hands well—about 20 seconds—before and after handling food. Don’t give bacteria a free ride to your holiday gatherings!

Best Wishes for the Holidays!

For more information: Information in this article comes in part from U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) guidelines. Check the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service Website (www.fsis.usda.gov) and the Fight BAC! (TM) Website (fightbac.org) for more food safety tips for the holidays.

A SPECIAL “THANKS”: A special “thank you” to Dr. Fayrene Hamouz and her Food Safety and Sanitation Class, University of Nebraska Department of Nutritional Science and Dietetics, for reviewing Auntie B’s column. It’s being made sure that Auntie B didn’t get too carried away in her Holiday Kitchen Crusade!