2-1997

The NEBLINE, February 1997

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Living on a few acres in Lancaster County

Dave Varner
Extension Educator

Interspersed among Lancaster County’s 1,500 commercial farms, small towns and sprawling urban development lie more than 3,600 acreage parcels consisting of no more than 20 acres. The proud owners of these acreage parcels consider themselves acreage owners, others small farm operators and some like to be identified as part-time farmers. In fact, 48 percent of Lancaster County farmers consider themselves part-time farmers with their primary occupation being off the farm.

Acreage owners have evolved from numerous walks of life and engage in nearly every occupation imaginable. Most are seeking the wide-open country environment, the refreshing taste of their own well water or perhaps an opportunity to begin an agricultural enterprise. You can be assured they live a busy lifestyle combining the responsibilities of their “day job” and families with the many demands of a country living environment.

University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension established a proud tradition of helping farmers early in the twentieth century. Today Extension outreach in the agricultural arena involves two distinctly different strategies. Barb Ogg’s feature article in the January NEBLINE outlined the specialized, curriculum-based, continuing education credit approach targeting large commercial farm businesses. Here you will learn about the strategies being implemented to meet the needs of today’s small farm audiences which include both acreage owners and part-time farmers.

So far we have established that Lancaster County’s acreage population is rapidly growing. These individuals typically have off-the-farm employment and country-living tasks which make attending traditional Extension programs challenging. Just as drive-thru windows and automated teller machines (ATM) have made banks more accessible and convenient, Extension has also adapted to changing times and has implemented several new information and education delivery strategies. Here are a few examples:

NUPACTS Information Center

On July 1, 1996, the NUPACTS Information Center debuted allowing Extension customers 24 hour a day, 7 day a week access to over 450 pre-recorded voice messages and 425 fax-on-demand publications that address some of our most frequent customer inquiries. Individuals can access the NUPACTS system from any touch-tone telephone by calling 441-7188 in the Lincoln area or 1-800-832-5441 statewide.

“Part-time Farming” video series

In September, a five-part videotape series produced locally entitled “Part-time Farming” was released. This tape includes five 20-minute segments addressing (1) Farm management, (2) Haylands and pastures, (3) Field crops, (4) Livestock, poultry and horses and (5) Specialty enterprises. “Part-time Farming” was produced to allow part-time farmers a convenient learning alternative in the comfort of their own home. To obtain your copy of “Part-time Farming,” send a check payable to Lancaster County Cooperative Extension for $16.99 to 444 Cherry Creek Road, Lincoln, NE 68528-1507.

NEW NEBLINE look

Last month we responded to your feedback in our recent NEBLINE phone survey by dividing our Rural Sense section into Acreage Insights and Farm Views sections for acreage owners and commercial farmers respectively. You will find these two NEBLINE sections side-by-side in future issues of the Lancaster County Cooperative Extension newsletter. If you have particular questions or items of interest that you would like us to address, please contact us.

World Wide Web accessibility

For individuals interested in Internet technology, the “Acreage and Small Farm Owners Insights” World Wide Web page is a new information-access tool. This page is under construction. However, you can access our new image map and begin exploring it by book marking it at this address: http://ianrn.unl.edu/4h/acerage.htm. Our goal is to establish a nationally-recognized web page that will provide world-wide information access to Lancaster County residents. Please provide some feedback via the e-mail option on this page.

Acreage owner workshops

Finally, we plan to offer ongoing workshops, home-study courses and seminars throughout the year. These offerings will typically be scheduled on evenings or Saturdays to make them accessible to as many acreage owners as possible. One workshop that you won’t want to miss is the Annual Acreage Owner Workshop scheduled for March 8 at the Agricultural Research and Development Center near Mead. This event attracts over 400 participants from over a dozen counties each year. Also, workshops addressing beekeeping, tree care and pond development will be offered in the near future. (DV)

Acreage development accelerates

More Lancaster County residents are choosing to live in the rural environment. A recent review of county building permits and recorded residential building construction shows an increase in acreage development. (DV)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lancaster County Acreage Building Activity</th>
<th>1991-1994</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 acres or less</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 to 40 acres</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>105</td>
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</tbody>
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Living on a few acres in Lancaster County (DV)

Living on a few acres in Lancaster County (DV)
Over the garden fence

Don Jansen
Extension Educator

Q. Are Christmas peppers edible?
A. If you’re talking about Christmas peppers, you’ve grown yourself, the answer is yes—but they’re very, very hot. Christmas peppers bought from florists and other retailers may have been treated in the greenhouse with systemic insecticides and other pesticides, so they may be unsafe to eat.

Squirrel damage to trees

Squirrels forage in search of additional food material when their winter food supply begins to dwindle. February is also the time when the young are born and additional nutrition is necessary for them. Often, older spruce trees are the first to be damaged. Squirrels are especially fond of spruce boughs, and usually begin feeding on them by late February. The young twig tips are clipped off, the buds eaten, and the twigs dropped to the ground. The bitten twigs are about four inches long, and often, the buds have been eaten back to the base of the twig. Damage can be found littering the ground whenever squirrels are active. This will usually happen from late February to early March.

Later in the spring, squirrels may chew the bark of small branches near the trunk of trees. Often, older spruce trees are the first to be damaged. Squirrels are especially fond of spruce boughs, and usually begin feeding on them by late February. The young twig tips are clipped off, the buds eaten, and the twigs dropped to the ground. The bitten twigs are about four inches long, and often, the buds have been eaten back to the base of the twig. Damage can be found littering the ground whenever squirrels are active. This will usually happen from late February to early March. Squirrels are especially fond of spruce boughs, and usually begin feeding on them by late February. The young twig tips are clipped off, the buds eaten, and the twigs dropped to the ground. The bitten twigs are about four inches long, and often, the buds have been eaten back to the base of the twig. Damage can be found littering the ground whenever squirrels are active. This will usually happen from late February to early March.

Thornless honeylocust

Thornless honeylocust is a genetic selection of honeylocust that does not produce thorns. Usually, thornless honeylocust trees sold as shade and ornamental nursery stock are propagated by grafting or by tip cuttings to guarantee the thornless characteristic. Seeds collected from thornless trees will not necessarily produce trees that are thornless. However, much depends on the area where the seed is collected. If seed is collected from thornless trees that are isolated from their thorny cousins, then chances are good (80-90 percent) that seedlings will be thornless.

What do they like to eat?

Be A Better Gardener
Preregistration

DEADLINE: MARCH 17, 1997

Name ________________________________________________________________
Address ______________________________________________________________
Phone Number _________________________________________________________

Send to: Lancaster County Extension Office
Attention: Mary Jane
444 Cherryview Rd.
Lincoln, NE 68528-1507

1997 All America Selection winners

Each year the All America Selection introduces new varieties of plants that have won AAS awards. They have been tested and retested to ensure that they meet the high quality standards that consumers have come to expect from AAS award winners. This year, three flowers, two vegetables and one herb are award winners. They are all excellent and are worthy of being grown in your gardens. These AAS award winners will be available from seed catalog companies and garden centers. All American Selections and perennial flowers include: calendula, cockscob, dusty miller, mari-, black-eyed susan, statice and straw- flowers. Perennials include: astilbe, baby’s breath, flowering onion, lavender, lemon verbena, neemhalm and butterfly weed. All of this will dry nicely hung upside- down in bunches or stood upright in jars. Annuals for drying in sand or box include: annual asters, balsam (Tooth-me-not), candy tuft, Canterbury bells (a biennial), annuals dianthus, coreopsis, cornflower, cosmos, cosmos, gloriosa daisy, panoy, stock, Snapdragon and zinnia. Perennials to be dried this way include: perennial asters, balloon flower, columbine, coreopsis, cornflower, coral bells, delphinium, pink and Shasta daisies, peonies, mums, dahlia, iris, gladolli, lilac, lily of the valley, tulips and roses.

Gypsophila muriel’s ‘Gypsy’ is a short, compact, annual baby’s breath that will flower abundantly in a sunny location. Plants will grow up to 8 inches tall with a fine textured foliage and pink blossoms. This plant will grow well in flower beds or containers. It can be grown from seeds or transplants.

Gypsophila “Gypsy”

Zinnia angustifolia ‘Crystal White’ has pure white, daisy-like flowers that produce nonstop through the growing season. Plants are a fairly uniform 10 inches in height and spread. They are well adapted to growing in beds or containers and can be easily grown from seed. Plants prove to be tolerant of powdery mildew and severe heat.

Zinnia “Crystal White”

Be A Better Gardener is a new program to help 4-H members interested in horticulture, improve their gardening skills. Workshops will provide educational and fun activities throughout the garden season. There will be no cost for this program, but participants may be asked to provide their own supplies. The Be A Better Gardener workshop on March 24, 1997, 7:00 p.m., will be an introduction to this program. Participants will receive free garden seeds and plant seeds for transplants. Participants must attend the workshop and preregister for the Be A Better Gardener program to receive the seeds and transplants. Preregistration deadline is March 17, 1997. If you have questions about this program, please call Mary Jane at the Lancaster County Extension Office, 441-7180. (MJM)
Swarm of ants in the winter? Hard to believe, but true!

Every year, we have clients bringing winged ants to our office in January and February. One ant species that swarms this time of year is the large yellow ant. Like its name suggests, these ants are pretty large—almost 1/4-inch in length and they are always orange in color. One peculiar feature of this species is it smells like citrus if you crush it between your fingers. Another common name for this species is the citrusella ant. This ant nests in the soil and forms colonies under logs, rocks and patio blocks. Swarmers are often observed coming out of the crawl space of a house or in cracks in the basement foundation or slab floor. This ant excavates large amounts of soil as it builds its galleries in the soil—a characteristic which is sometimes upsetting to homeowners.

After collecting a few swarmers for a positive identification (at the Extension Office), swarmers should be vacuumed up. For more information about controlling these ants, call the Lancaster County Extension Office (441-7180) 8-noon weekdays. (BPO, SE)

Woodpeckers come knocking

Each year thousands of homeowners put out suet feeders to attract woodpeckers. These handsome birds reward us by consuming enormous numbers of insects, including carpenter ants and carpenter bees. But they can be a problem, too. One woodpecker may single out a house for drumming, or worse, for a nest or dining site.

Each spring, when males set up territories and attract mates, woodpeckers mark their presence known by “drumming.” Normally they pick a resonant dead tree trunk. As more homeowners remove dead trees, woodpeckers may turn to metal gutters, house siding and television antennas.

While drumming may be aggravating, it usually doesn’t physically damage your house. You can eliminate the drumming noise by deadening the resonant area. Fill the hollow space with caulking.

Then distract the bird from the drumming site by using scare techniques: balloons, a child’s pinwheel, flash tapes, and strings of shiny, noisy tin cans lids, wind chimes and/or pulsating water sprinklers. If that doesn’t work, create a physical barrier by screening the drumming site with hardware cloth, sheet metal or nylon “bird netting.”

You might encourage the bird to leave altogether by creating an alternative drumming site nearby (but away from your bedroom or bathroom windows). Here’s how to make a drum. Fasten two overlapping boards, the back board firmly secured and the front (covered with metal sheeting) nailed to it at one end.

Serious structural damage occurs when woodpeckers drill holes in unpainted, untreated plywood and cedar siding, window frames and roofing. While no one knows for sure what attracts a woodpecker to a house, your first step in eliminating the problem is to check for signs of insect infestation—carpenter ants, carpenter bees and cluster flies.

You may want to consult with a licensed pest control operator on how to remove the insects and eliminate future infestations. It may be as simple as caulk ing their tunnels and painting with extra-thick caulk.

If you can’t find any insects, try “scare” techniques. If you have a bird feeder that attracts woodpeckers, you might think removing your feeder will cause the bird to leave. Just the opposite may be true. Keeping a feeder full of suet may encourage the birds not to look at your suiting for food. If you have dead trees in your yard, you might think removing them (and the insects they harbor) will solve woodpecker problems. Again, the opposite may be true. Cutting down dead and decaying trees deprives these birds of nesting, drumming and food sites, and may force them to take a look at your house. Source: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service “Backyard Bird Problems” (SE)

Plants have many roles

Plants do a lot of people. They clean the atmosphere, modify climate, reduce noise, inhact glare and control erosion. In addition, many are lovely to the eye and can add beauty to your property.

Plants clean and purify existing air as well as manufacture oxygen. Each person requires 30 to 60 pounds of clean air to breathe each day. Ornamental plants provide clean air in four ways:

First, their “manufactured” air created through photosynthesis dilutes polluted air and increases the ratio of “clean to dirty” air.

Second, moisture that plants off give traps airborne particles and acts as a filter for some dust particles and pollutants to settle. Plus, fumes and odors can be trapped by plants with particu- larly fragrant blooms or foliage.

By modifying the intensity of sunlight and humidity control, plants can have a significant impact on the tempera- ture around the home. The shady area under trees is cooler because of both an increase in moisture and a decrease in direct solar radiation.

Trees not only give off moisture, but the leaf canopy tends to prevent moist air from moving away. This moist air}

Benes farm joins effort to protect Wildwood Lake Watershed

Ermin Benes had learned to live with the water flowing through his cattle operation. It’s the way things had always been and he didn’t think of the fact of nature would ever change.

Benes farms 360 acres of land in southwest Saunders County. His homestead and livestock facility are both located in a low-lying draw—surrounded by that area’s characteristic high, rolling hills.

When it rained, it literally poured through this bottom land. The problem reached a point where the health of his livestock was affected.

When Extension Educator Corey Brubaker approached Benes with a solution, Benes decided it was time to try something different.

Brubaker has been working with landowners in the Wildwood Lake Watershed to take a bite out of sediment and nutrient loading in the lake. His efforts are part of the Salt Valley Clean Lakes Project—a cooperative effort to reduce nonpoint source pollution. Polluted runoff from farmed and cultivated areas poses a threat to water quality in the reservoir. This is just one of many success stories in the last few years.

Benes has always been a firm believer in terraces and farmponds so the NRD and NRCS that worked with him on this cost-share project and a lot with work. The most puzzling aspect of the conservation work was to solve the drainage problem through the livestock operation. A natural draw running through that area had caused problems for decades. The engineers came up with a plan to construct a small dam specially designed to trap pollutants and to divert water around and away from the feedlot.

This cooperative project made good economic sense for the Benes family and, at the same time, good environmental sense for Wildwood Lake. Thanks to the Benes family for their stewardship! (CB)

Free lead poisoning prevention program identifies children at risk

The Lincoln/Lancaster County Health Department has a valuable program and it’s free! It is the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program and it is open to Lancaster County children between the ages of six months and six years who live in a home built before 1978. These children are at greatest risk because lead paint was used in homes prior to 1978, and young children often put non-food items in their mouth.

According to Adrienne McGlone, LLCHD Community Outreach Coordinator, about 10% of the Lancaster County children who have been tested have elevated lead levels. In the case of elevated levels, local health personnel also advise parents about ways to reduce the lead level in their environment to protect the health of their children.

Testing is done weekdays, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., in the first floor laboratory at 3140 N Street. Walk-ins are encouraged; no appointment is necessary. For more information about this program, call Adrienne McGlone (441-6297). (BPO)
Satellite conference on CRP

A satellite conference entitled “Returning CRP to Crops” will be held on February 19, 1997 at the Lincoln Research and Extension Education Center. The program will consist primarily of presentations by UNL researchers on results from work done at the University of Nebraska CRP Research Sites in Colfax and Logan Counties, Nebraska.

The Northeast Research and Extension Center is in the third year of a five-year study on returning CRP land to crop production. This state-wide cooperative venture is designed to determine the impacts of crop production on soils, fertility, conservation practices, root development, soil erosion, and water management.


February 18, 1997: Understanding Genetically Engineered Crops. Dr. Don Lee, Department of Agronomy; Dr. Bill Miller, Professor of Agricultural Economics, UNL; Matthew Renkoski, Business Manager-Specialty Grains, DuPont Products, Des Moines, IA. Registration Limit: 50 persons.


February 24, 1997: Impact of Stress on Physiological Development and Yield of Corn and Soybeans. Dr. Bob Caldwell, Extension Cropping Specialist; Dr. Ken Hubbard, Director High Plains Climate Center, Department of Ag. Meteorology; Dr. Jim Specht, Professor Agronomy; Dr. Barb Ogg, Extension Educator.


February 28, 1997: Soil Management:
- February 27 at 1:00 p.m. at the 4-H Building—York
- March 4 at 1:00 p.m. at the Saline County Extension Office—Wilber
- March 6 at 9:00 a.m. at the Dodge County Extension Office—Fremont (WS)

1997 grain sorghum seminars

Two seminars on the production and marketing of grain sorghum will be held in Southeast Nebraska this winter. One will be held at the 4-H Building on the Saline County Fairgrounds in Crete on February 27 (9 a.m.-3 p.m.) and the other at the Gage County Extension Office in Beatrice on March 4 (9 a.m. to 3 p.m.). Both seminars will be nearly identical regarding registration, program content and starting times. Topics to be discussed include: obtaining market information on the Internet, formulating marketing strategies for increasing profits, insect and weed controls, and revenue insurance. A pancake feed utilizing grain sorghum flour will be held at noon. More information is available by contacting Extension Offices in Saline, Gage or Lancaster counties. (WS)

Balance expenses for more beef profit

Beef producers can improve profitability, despite the competitive price of beef compared to other livestock commodities. The key is to examine and reduce production costs. Large differences occur in costs of beef production. The challenge is to identify the key factors that influence cost of beef production, and evaluate management practices in reducing these costs. It is important to avoid confusing cutting costs with cost of production. It is easy to cut costs, but harder to cut costs efficiently. When cutting costs of production, however, the key is to consider both the cost of doing business and the level of output or production. Areas that allow cattle operators to cut costs of production include:
- Controlling feed and supplement costs by careful analysis. Most profitable producers feed cows to meet their requirements as economically as possible.
- Managing to prevent problems rather than planning to deal with crisis.
- Using marketing expertise. Producers who post higher profits change their market plan, using marketing services that fit their requirements as economically as possible.
- Distinguishing between hype or inaccurate material and sound advertising.
- Managing your workers. Labor is a major cost for cow-calf operations. Smart operations make efficient use of available labor, including family, neighbors and part-time employees.

Grain yield monitors

Using grain yield monitors on combines is one site-specific management tool which is becoming more widespread among Nebraska farmers. Yield monitors can be coupled with a global positioning system or “GPS” receiver, allowing yield and position information to be collected on one-second intervals. This information can be used to create a yield map of the field.

Most yield monitors, however, are not yet linked to GPS receivers. Producers can still get very useful information from yield monitors without GPS information if they plan ahead. Yield monitors allow the storage of data from many fields, subdivisions or loads related to hybrid, soils, planting dates, previous crop, etc., information about yield per acre. The yield monitor can be used to examine and reduce production costs.

Professionals and Farm Managers...
You’re invited to the home and garden show!

Mark your calendars for the 1997 Nebraska Builders’ Home and Garden Show at Pershing Auditorium, February 13-16. University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension will debut their new Acreage and Small Farm Center display that offers several new and exciting ways of accessing educational opportunities and information sources.

To stop by the Cooperative Extension exhibit area and see the new “Part-time Farming” video series, try the NUFACTS Information Center, explore the “Acreage & Small Farm Insights” World Wide Web page and learn about several upcoming workshops designed specifically for acreage owners, small farm operators and part-time farmers. (DV)

Rural Nebraskans interested in environment

Most rural Nebraskans support laws protecting the environment.

That’s one result of the first Rural Nebraska Poll, recently conducted by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. More than 2,700 rural Nebraskans responded to the spring 1996 survey.

The latest findings emerging from University of Nebraska-Lincoln’s Center for Rural Community Revitalization and Development, examines rural Nebraskans’ feelings about the environment.

More than half of the rural Nebraskans surveyed support environmental regulations and cleanup regulations.

Asked whether requirements for preventing environmental damage should be relaxed to reduce business compliance costs, 58 percent said no; 19 percent said yes; and 23 percent had no opinion.

When surveyed about whether farmers who cause environmental damage should be required to pay for it, 63 percent of those surveyed said yes; 15 percent said no; and 21 percent had no opinion.

Farmers and non-farmers responded differently to the poll’s environmental questions, probably because of different perspectives and experiences.

Farmers’ dealings with environmental regulations daily and may tend to view them as more of a burden than non-farmers.

On groundwater questions, 42 percent of rural Nebraskans said the state doesn’t do enough to prevent groundwater pollution; 37 percent said it does; and 21 percent had no opinion. Thirty-seven percent said Nebraska doesn’t do enough to prevent groundwater depletion, 34 percent disagreed; and 29 percent had no opinion. The poll’s margin of error is plus or minus 3 percent.

The first report based on survey results, released earlier, looked at Nebraskans’ attitudes about their well-being and sense of satisfaction with life. Future reports will look at rural resident’s opinions on work and taxes. (WS)

Using custom machinery rates

Custom machinery rate information should be used with caution. Average rates provide an estimate of the prevailing charge for particular work, but may not accurately reflect the cost of performing the work specified. Some custom operators may only be recapturing the variable costs of fuel and labor. Other operators may be recovering all costs including depreciation on equipment and a charge for risk.

Fuel prices are not the only factors which affect the price of custom work. Many other factors, which vary with location rather than time, will affect the rate paid or charged. Some of the major influences affecting custom rates are terrain of the land, condition of the field, travel distance between the field and custom operator’s home, size of field and the condition of the equipment being used.

Land which is extremely hilly, rocky or weedy is charged a higher price for custom operations, such as tillage and harvest. Flat, clean land is easier to farm and the cost of custom operations tends to reflect this.

A custom operator may charge different rates to different farmers to account for the challenges he or she expects to experience in each field.

It is estimated that on the average, fuel and lube account for 14 percent of the rate charged by custom operators; labor, 17 percent; repairs and maintenance, 18 percent.

This means that approximately 50 percent of the custom operator’s charge is due to variable costs which must be recaptured regardless of the profit objective of the operator. This 50 percent is used to cover the overhead of operating a business and to pay the ownership costs of the machinery and equipment used.

Performing custom operations on small tracts of land, such as grass planting in waterways versus pasture, may be much more expensive than work done on large tracts of land. A producer and custom operator should mutually decide what it will cost to perform the work in a particular field at a particular time. (DV)

Register for Beginner's Beekeeping Workshop!

Come to a 12-hour, three-session series at UNL’s Bee Biology Center, 4646 W. 93rd St. North, to learn about bee biology, behavior, handling and management — everything you need to get started in this fun and profitable hobby/enterprise.

The first two training sessions will be held on February 20 and 21 from 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm at the Douglas County Extension Office, 8015 W. Center Rd., Omaha. The practical laboratory session will be held at the Agriculture Research and Development Center (ARDC) at Ihaha, NE on March 15, from 9:00 to 4:00 pm.

The cost of this workshop is $15.00 and includes reference books. If you have no hive supplies or protective equipment, these can be ordered ahead of time so have everything needed (except the bees) to get started this year. At the laboratory session, you will assemble your hive and learn how to install package bees.

Presenters will include Marion Ellis, University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension Apiarist and Dennis Ferraro, Extension Educator in Douglas County. This workshop will be limited to 20 persons so register as soon as possible. To register or for more information, call (402) 444-7804. (BPO)

Acreage Insights

University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension educational programs abide with the nondiscrimination policies of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the United States Department of Agriculture.

nufacts (audio) Information Center

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

Acreage & Small Farm Insights Web Site

Visit our Internet web site at: http://aianrwww.unl.edu/lan/lanceo/sg/acreage to learn about Extension programs, publications and links to other acreage and small farm information.

NUFACS (faxback) Information Center

NUFACS faxback document center offers fast, convenient information. In the Lincoln area call 441-7188; for the rest of Nebraska call 1-800-832-5441. When directed, enter the 4-digit number of the document you wish to receive.

“Part-time Farming” video

“Part-time Farming” will help effectively develop your country environment and improve your quality of life. Just one hour of “Part-time Farming” provides numerous tips that will save you costly mistakes and precious time. Call 402-441-7180 to order your copy.
Focus on Food

Alice Henneman, R.D., LD MT
Extension Educator

Q: How long can I keep commercially canned foods?
A: For greatest safety and quality, use commercially canned foods within two years. Store canned foods in a cool, dry place where temperatures are below 75 degrees F. A range of 60 to 70 degrees F is desirable. At prolonged storage temperatures above 75 degrees F, the rate of nutrient loss in canned foods increases.

Never use foods from containers with these spoilage warning signs: loose or bulging lids of jars; bulging, leaking or badly dented cans, or foods with a foul odor. WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT! Even a small taste of some foods could prove fatal.

For more information, call the NUFACS number cited in our information center box and listen to the message on “How Long Should You Keep Commerically Canned Foods?”

Q: If I buy “self-rising” flour by mistake, is there any way to substitute it for regular flour in recipes?
A: Self-rising flour is an all-purpose flour to which 1-1/2 teaspoons of baking powder and 1/2 teaspoon of salt have been added per cup of flour. You can substitute for all-purpose flour by reducing the baking powder and salt accordingly in the recipe.

Healthy Eating

Alice Henneman, R.D., LD MT
Extension Educator

New Oatmeal Raisin Cookies

2-1/2 dozen cookies

Calories and fat are lowered in this recipe by substituting applesauce for some of the fat. This is a good recipe to make with your children or grandchildren. Directions are included for tasks that children can help with.

3/4 cup sugar
1 cup applesauce
3/4 cup all-purpose flour
1/4 cup canned applesauce
1/2 cup lowfat milk
1 fresh large egg
3/4 cup sugar
1/4 cup white sugar
3/4 cup brown sugar
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
1-1/4 cup quick oats
1/2 cup raisins

Preheat oven to 350o F.
1. Guide children in using an electric mixer on medium speed. Cream sugar and margarine or butter until smooth and creamy.
2. Ask child to slowly add egg. Mix on medium speed for 1 minute.
3. Child can slowly add milk and applesauce. Mix for 1 more minute. Scrape the sides of the bowl.
4. In a small bowl, help child combine together flour, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt. Add dry ingredients gradually to the creamed mixture and mix on low speed for 2 minutes, until blended.
5. Add oats and raisins and blend for 30 seconds on low speed. Scrape the sides of the bowl.
6. Child can portion dough by rounded teaspoons onto lightly greased cookie sheets.
7. Bake for 10 to 13 minutes until lightly browned. Cool on a wire rack.

NUTRIENTS PER SERVING: 1 COOKIE
Calories: 70, Protein: 1 g, Carbohydrate: 14 g, Total Fat: 1.3 g, Saturated Fat: .3 g, Cholesterol: 8 mg, Vitamin A: 14 RE; Vitamin C: 0 mg, Iron: .4 mg, Calcium: 7 mg, Sodium: 42 mg; Dietary Fiber: 1 g

Source of Recipe: Food, Family & Fun, USDA Food & Consumer Service Department. (AH)

Choosing foods can be a family affair

Even the youngest family members can help plan menus and choose healthy snacks. Here are some tips:

When planning the shopping list or at the grocery store, let the child choose three vegetables for the week’s menus. Next week, ask the child to select three different vegetables.

Try the A-B-C approach to choosing fruits and vegetables.

Name a letter and invite the child to think of a fruit or vegetable the family could eat that starts with it. For example, buy carrots and many more...

Food & Fitness

Slow cooking helps warm up winter

One of the more pleasant ways of dealing with winter is using a slow cooker to prepare the evening meal. Aside from the convenience of having dinner ready, the inviting smells are a wonderful welcome to a home. Slow cookers, or countertop electric appliances, are safe and economical way to cook food. They use low temperatures and long cooking times to help less expensive cuts of meat become tender.

The direct heat from the pot, lengthy cooking times and the steam created within the tightly-covered container all help destroy bacteria and make slow cooking safe.

Tips for safely using the slow cooker include:

Keep perishable foods refrigerated until preparation time.

If meats and vegetables are cut up in advance, store them separately in the refrigerator. The slow cooker may take several hours to reach a bacteria-killing temperature. Constant refrigeration assures that the bacteria, which multiply rapidly at room temperature, won’t get a head start during the first few hours of cooking.

Always defrost meat or poultry before using in the slow cooker. Brown the meat if the recipe calls for it.

Choose recipes that produce foods with a high moisture content, such as chili, soup or spaghetti sauce.

Fill the slow cooker no more than two-thirds full and no less than half full.

Vegetables cook slower than meat or poultry. If using vegetables, put them in first, at the bottom and around the sides of the cooker. Then add meat and cover the food with liquid such as broth, wine or barbecue sauce.

Keep the slow cooker’s lid in place as much as possible. It takes time for the cooker to replace lost heat, so remove the cover only to stir the food or to check for doneness.

If possible, use the highest temperature setting for the first hour of cooking and then turn to a lower temperature. However, it is safe to cook foods on the lower setting for the entire time—for instance, if leaving the cooker on all day while you are at work.

If you aren’t at home and the power goes out, throw away the food when you get back, even if it looks done. If you are home, immediately finish cooking by other means: on a gas stove, on an outdoor grill or at a house where the power is on.

Store leftovers in a shallow, covered containers and refrigerate within two hours of cooking.

Reheating leftovers in a slow cooker isn’t recommended; however cooked foods can be brought to steaming on the stove top or in a microwave oven and then placed in a preheated slow cooker to keep hot for serving.

It might be looking ahead a bit, but slow cookers also are very useful in the summer, when the small appliances provide a cool alternative to using the oven. (AH)

Nutrition Education Program

for Limited Resource Families

Maureen Burson, Extension Educator

Nutrition Education Program

NUTRITION AND FOOD SAFETY WEBSITE

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MESSAGE: subscribe foodtalk (do not include signature when subscribing)
**Pillars of character**

Kids are 27 percent of our population and 100 percent of our future. The direction they go depends on us. We all want our kids to have strong values and good character. But, good character doesn’t just happen. It’s up to each of us to lay a solid foundation for character development by teaching children right from wrong and by acting as positive role models.

Character Counts! is a program designed to help parents teach their children character. Teachers and others teach children that their character counts.

A person of character thinks right and does right according to core universal values (Pillars of Character) that define the qualities of a good person: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship.

**TRUSTWORTHINESS:** Trustworthiness is being honest, telling the truth, and keeping promises. Children learn the value of trustworthiness as being loyal so people can trust you. Trustworthy people don’t lie, cheat or steal.

**RESPECT:** Respect is showing others how you value their thoughts and opinions. Our children should be taught to treat others with respect.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Responsibility is doing your share to help your community or school. It means treating others the way you want to be treated.

**FAIRNESS:** Fairness is playing by the rules, taking turns, sharing and listening to what others have to say.

**COURAGE:** Courage is the moral courage to do the right thing and stand up for their beliefs even when it is hard.

**COMPASSION:** Compassion is helping others. They have compassion and empathy because they care how others feel and they are charitable and forgiving.

**CITIZENSHIP:** Citizenship is doing your share to help your family and make your community a better place. Good citizens are good neighbors. They cooperate with others, obey laws and rules, respect the authority of parents, teachers and others. (LJ)

**TRUSTWORTHINESS: number of words:** 84

**RESPONSIBILITY: number of words:** 57

**FAIRNESS: number of words:** 45

**COURAGE: number of words:** 48

**COMPASSION: number of words:** 54

**CITIZENSHIP: number of words:** 67

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**How to have positive influence on youth**

Often, it seems, we are aware of how influential our parents are to our children. We know our parents teach us right from wrong. Adolescents and teens have a great need for attention and one-on-one contact with parents as well. The following are some suggestions to help you develop patterns of positive caring with your youth.

**Ten commandments for adults in youth rearing**

1. Praise well and often.
2. Give youth opportunities to choose and make their own choices.
3. Look for the positive in all situations.
4. Be responsible and give responsibility.
5. Validate feelings.
6. Focus on what it will take to make it right, to make it better, or make it different.
7. Help each other be right.
8. Get what you need for your youth to be.
9. Play more, laugh more, and always say thank you.
10. Create memories that will serve your youth for a lifetime.

*Source: How to Create Positive Relationships with Students, Shelley Mackey Freeman, Chilton Institute, Minneapolis, MN, 1989.* (LJ)

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**Family Living**

**FCE scholarships**

Now is the time to apply for scholarships and grants if you are planning to continue your education. Applications for the following scholarships may be obtained at the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County.

A $200 Homemaker’s Education Grant, sponsored by the Nebraska Education Association of Family Education and Extension Clubs, Inc., is available for an FCE club member planning to take courses leading to an academic degree, vocational training or completing high school. Applications are due April 1, 1997. The grant must be used between June 1 and December 31, 1997.

A $125 scholarship is available for a graduate of a high school in Lancaster County or a permanent resident of Lancaster County majoring in family and consumer science or a health occupation. This is open to full-time students beginning their sophomore, junior or senior year of college in the fall of 1997 or who have completed two quarters of study in a vocational school. Applications are due April 1 in the Extension office. (LJ)

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**March leader training**

The March leader training lesson, “Spelling Out Changes in Health Care,” is scheduled for Tuesday, February 25 at 1 or 7 p.m. Lorene Bartos, Extension Educator, will coordinate the lesson. Participants will increase their knowledge of the changing health care environment.

Anyone interested in this topic is invited to attend. Non-FCE members should register by calling 441-7180. (LJ)

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**How to be someone’s Valentine**

Swallow your ego. Gush a little. Let someone know they’re important in your scheme of things. Do they make you smile? Tell them! Is your life better because of them? Of course! Have they made a difference? Admit it! It’ll make them feel very good. I’ll make you feel even better.

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**How about a Valentine tree?**

Children enjoy decorating a tree with homemade ornaments. A branch from a tree and a container with sand to support it is all you need. Think, too, about the possibility of clipping branches from a lilac, pussy willow or forsythia—bundle the branches together at the base so they will form a trunk with the branches spread in various directions. Add water to the sand in the container and in due time you’ll find a volcano—the branches will start to develop flowers and leaves, eventually the upper branches will dry and you can switch it to an Easter decoration in time. (LJ)
Speech and PSA contest scheduled for March

The 1997 Lancaster County 4-H Speech and PSA Contest will be Sunday, March 2, 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the State Capitol Building. The Speech and PSA Contest is an excellent opportunity for 4-H youth to expand their communication skills and meet new people. Youth compete in one of three divisions. Novice division speakers (8 and 9 year olds) present a speech of up to two minutes in length. Junior division speakers (10 and 11 year olds) present for 2-3 minutes. Intermediate division speakers (12 and 13 year olds) present for 3-5 minutes. Senior division speakers (14 to 19 year olds) present for 5-8 minutes. Youth can also prepare a 45-second Public Service Announcement for the contest.

Money available for 4-H clubs

The Nebraska Investment Finance Authority (NIFA) has made 25 awards of $1000 each available to 4-H clubs in Nebraska. The purpose of the awards is to:
- Allow 4-H members to explore careers in agriculture
- Strengthen the image of agriculture in local communities
- Strengthen 4-H educational programs which emphasize agriculture and life skills

In order for 4-H clubs to be considered for the award, the primary focus of their activities must be an agricultural nature. The award will be based on the club’s past year performance. Consideration will include show placings, record keeping abilities and an evaluation of various projects completed by the club. A written report as to how the award money will be used will also be required. Suggestions as to the use of the award money include:
- Ag promotion programs
- Farm/ranch safety awareness programs
- Community service projects related to agriculture
- Promoting an Ag Career Development Day

Student projects can be either individual projects or group projects. The project must be a new venture or a new aspect of a project that has already been started. Each project must also involve the use of technology.

Community service project

A community service project for you or your club is the Teddy Bear Cottage. The Teddy Bear Cottage, a non-profit distribution center managed by volunteers, is designed to increase the number of limited income women seeking early and continuing prenatal care. Expectant mothers and mothers of infants up to two years old exchange healthy lifestyle “Teddy Credits” for diapers, lotions, clothing and miscellaneous items. The cottage is located in the basement of the Hispanic Community Center, 2300 “O” Street.

You can help the cottage by holding a baby shower at your club meeting. New baby supplies including diapers, baby lotion, bath soap, powder, receiving blankets and other necessary items are needed. The Teddy Bear Cottage is sponsored by the Nebraska Chapter of the March of Dimes, Healthy Homes, Lincoln /Lancaster County Health Department, University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County, Lincoln YWCA, Lincoln Hispanic Community Center and Kiwanis Clubs of Lincoln.

For more information on hosting a shower, contact Lorene Bartos, 441-7180 or Deb Rocker, 464-9131 or 782-8938. Items from a shower may be brought to the Extension office. (AF)
1997 Activity Calendar

July
31
Lancaster County Fair opens—State Fair Park, Lincoln, NE 4:00-8:00 p.m.
July 31-August 3 Lancaster County Fair—State Fair Park, Lincoln, NE
August
August 2-29 Nebraska State Fair—State Fair Park, Lincoln, NE

September
1
Market Steer Nominations for National Western ’98 Due
2
4-H Council Meeting
14
Teens Council
15
Large Animal VIPS Meeting
18
Fair Board Meeting
24-29 Ak-Sar-Ben Livestock Exposition—Omaha

October
1
State Volunteer Forum Presenter Proposal Due
3
National 4-H Week
7
Production Livestock Booster Club Meeting
8
4-H Council Meeting
13
Teens Council
15
CWF Meeting
19
School Livestock Anatomy Teacher Inservice Training
20
Volunteer Workshop
24-25
Tri-state Leaders Forum—Rapid City, SD
28
School Livestock Water Riches Teacher Inservice Training

November
1
Market Lambs for 1998 National Western
1 Market Swine for 1998 National Western
4
Production Livestock Booster Club Meeting
7
4-H Council Meeting
9
Teens Council Meeting
10
Extension Board Meeting
13-16
North Central Regional Volunteer Forum—Omaha, NE
20
Fair Board Meeting
November 28-December 2 Congress—Memphis, TN

December
2
4-H Council
7
Extension Board Meeting
9
Teens Council
12
Fair Board Meeting

The following items were not included in the January-July calendar in last month’s NEBRINE:

June 30-July 3 Niobrara Camp
July 5-6 First Timers Camp—Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center, Gremna
July 7-9 Wet-N-Wild Camp—Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center, Gretna
July 17-19 Just Play It Camp—Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center, Gretna

NOTE: All dates subject to change, please watch NEBRINE for updates. All events held at the Lancaster Extension Education Center unless otherwise noted.

Hands—good, bad and otherwise

Our messages to the horse are delivered by our hands through the reins. These messages are transmitted through the bits to the horse. The receiving end of the horse’s message center is the bars of his mouth. As it has been stated by many top trainers, “At our ends of the reins are soft pliable leathers resting on fingers padded with flesh; at the horse’s end is a bar of unforgiving steel resting on a ridge of bone, thin as a knife and covered only with a layer of the most sensitive membrane.” The bars can easily become calloused or the nerves damaged by uneducated or indifferent hands. The snaffle bit works on the corners of the horse’s mouth, his tongue, lips and bars. The curb works on the leverage principle, because of the shanks. It puts pressure on the jaw, bars, roof of the mouth and curb groove. Bits are designed to get the best performance from the horse when used by educated riders, but they become instruments of torture when used by inconsiderate ones.

Help wanted

The 4-H Horse VIPS Committee is still looking for volunteers to help with various committees for this year.

Education—volunteers to help with two clinics; one riding and one non-riding to be held in the Spring and/or Fall

Pre-District—volunteers to handle various jobs, held in early June

County Fair—volunteers are needed to serve as superintendents for the various events as well as all of the individual help needed for one or several days as gatekeepers, secretarial assistants, judge assistants and announcers

Awards—volunteers to handle the ordering and distribution of trophies and/or ribbons for the Pre-District, county fair and horse banquet; as well as aiding, if needed, the fundraising drive

Interested? Come to the next 4-H Horse VIPS meeting Wednesday, December 17, 7:00 p.m. All 4-H horse club leaders, parents, youth and interested volunteers are encouraged to attend. (CB)

Rabbits, rabbits, rabbits

I’m sure that all of the 4-H rabbit club leaders, parents, youth and interested volunteers attended the 4-H rabbit VIPS meeting on January 16 and listened with great interest to the 1997 goals for their VIPS committee. Suggestions for changes at the county fair were also discussed, as well as the possibility of holding a clinic this spring or early summer. But, for those of you that missed the fun, mark Thursday, February 20, 7:00 p.m. on your calendar for the next 4-H rabbit VIPS committee meeting. If you have any issues/concerns that you feel should be covered, please contact Cindy Blome (Exten-

Appreciate your embryologist!

It’s that time of year again. Soon, your third graders will be coming home from school bubbling over the egg-citement about the 4-H School Embryology Project. Embryology, a part of the third grade curriculum in all Lincoln Public Schools, teaches students about embryology while teaching them about the development, while instilling a sense of responsibility at the same time. Eggs are brought into the classroom and incubated for 21 days. During this time, the students are responsible for turning and rotating the eggs, and for maintaining the incubators.

Half-way through, Extension personnel return to the classroom to
Volunteer monitoring program

The Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality is planning a one-day workshop for those who are interested in volunteer monitoring of streams, lakes or wetlands in the state. Individuals interested in being a volunteer monitor have a great opportunity to become involved, learn about Nebraska’s waterways and how to help keep them clean. This may be a perfect opportunity for student natural resources projects, or an interesting retirement activity.

The one-day workshop for the workshop is scheduled for Saturday, April 5, 1997. For more information, you are encouraged to contact: Terry Hickman, Volunteer Monitor Coordinator, Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality, P.O. Box 99922, Lincoln, NE 68509-8922. Phone 402-471-2875. (GB)

Career opportunities in food science and technology

There are about 4-1/2 billion people living on earth today, and every one of them requires food. Food technologists must convert the world’s food into safe, satisfactory, satisfying food products for this ever increasing population. The complexities of this challenge provide a variety of careers for food technologists.

Most career opportunities will bring new challenges to food technologists. Developing foods that will travel to distant planets with astronauts or converting low-cost food sources such as cereal grains, fishmeal and waste products from meat and dairy into nutrition and edible foods are some only possibilities. The world’s population will continue to grow and the need for creative food technologists will become even more critical. (GB)

Career Spotlight—

Individuals with a background in science and possessing interest in a food science and technology career should write: S. L. Taylor, Head of the Department of Food Science and Technology, 143 H. C. Filley Hall, East Campus, P.O. Box 830919, Lincoln, NE 68583-0919. (GB)

Skills employers want: these seven skill groups

Learning to Learn

Knowing how to learn is now a fact of life in the workplace. Employees’ ability to adapt to change through retraining is crucial, as technology creates new job opportunities in the job market.

Reading, Writing, and Computation (Three Rs)

Workers spend an average of one hour and a half to two hours per workday reading forms, charts, graphs, manuals and computer terminals.

Communication: Listening and Oral Communication

Only job knowledge ranks above communication skills as a factor for workplace success. Five listening skills: content, to follow directions, to conversations, for long-term contexts and for emotional meaning.

Adaptability: Creative Thinking and Problem-Solving

Most training in creative thinking involves problem-solving, personality awareness and development, and group team building.

Self-Esteem, Goal Setting/Motivation & Personal/Career Development

An employee’s effectiveness in the workplace can be linked directly to positive self-esteem and successful personal management.

Interpersonal Skills, Negotiation and Teamwork

The team approach has been linked conclusively to higher productivity and product quality as well as increased quality of work life.

Organizational Effectiveness and Leadership

Employers need employees who can operate effectively within the parameters of their organization, assume responsibility willingly and motivate co-workers toward exemplary performance.


Scholarship opportunities

Incoming students pursuing a major leading to a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Sciences or Natural Resources have scholarships available in excess of $75,000. Scholarships vary from $100 to $2400 per year, with some available for up to four years. Funds for the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources Scholarship Programs are provided by individuals, companies, foundations and organizations who are aware of the financial commitment a student must make to complete a college education.

In details interested in these scholarships should direct inquiries to Dr. Jack Schinstock, Assistant Dean, 103 Agricultural Hall, Lincoln, NE 68583-0702. For information about University scholarships, in general, write or call the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid, 16 Administration Building, P.O. Box 880411, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE 68588-0411, (402)472-2201, Fax (402)472-2185.

4-H members take note—

The Allegra Wilkens Scholarship is available only to 4-H youth. The scholarship is intended to help eligible 4-H members enroll in a two-year college or complete one year of study to prepare for a four-year college. For more information, you are encouraged to contact: Dr. Jack Schinstock, Assistant Dean, 103 Agricultural Hall, Lincoln, NE 68583-0702.

Evaluating Financial Aid

Getting ready to complete college applications can be daunting. Applications for federal financial aid are available by phone, online, or through a campus financial aid office.

Source: 1996 edition of Careers

Evaluating Educational Options

You will do your best at a college for which you are academically prepared. The grade point average and entrance exam scores of entering freshmen from previous years may also be a good indication of how well you will fit academically at schools you are considering.

Education and earnings: what's the link?

Studies repeatedly show that persons with the most education report the highest average annual earnings and the latest data from the US Census Bureau confirms this fact. Shown are averages for men and women by highest level of education completed.

Not all persons, of course, achieved degrees report high incomes and many who left school early have high earnings today. But, overall, there is a clear relationship between the amount of schooling and subsequent earnings. (GB)

Making an educated decision

Selecting a post-secondary school is a major decision, but following a systematic approach in narrowing the choices, you can simplify the process. Here are some steps following these four steps:

1. Explore Career Options

Selecting a post-secondary school is a major decision, but following a systematic approach in narrowing the choices, you can simplify the process. Here are some steps following these four steps:

2. Get a Good Academic Fit

You will do your best at a college for which you are academically prepared. The grade point average and entrance exam scores of entering freshmen from previous years may also be a good indication of how well you will fit academically at schools you are considering.

3. Do Comparison Shopping

To help you narrow your choice of colleges, consider factors such as:

4. Visit the Campus

A campus visit before making your final decision is essential. During your visit you can tour facilities, meet faculty, talk to students and ask questions of admissions counselors and financial aid administrators.

Source: 1996 edition of Careers and Education in Nebraska (GB)
Building strong bones in younger years

The four best ways to get enough calcium to build healthy bones are food, food, food and food!

Among females, especially, there is a drop in use of milk and other dairy products. Emphasis on maintaining thinness, strength, and exercise-induced amenorrhea (lack of regular menstrual cycles) are among the factors that can hinder bone development by affecting calcium-rich food intakes, and disrupting normal hormonal cycles that help to promote bone health.

Current calcium recommendations such as high in Mom to 1,500 mg each day for 11- to 24-year-olds. That translates to three cups of milk a day. One cup of milk or yogurt, 1 ounce of cheese, or 3 ounces of shrimp with bones are examples of high-calcium foods. Other foods that contain calcium, but in lesser amounts per serving, include cottage cheese, ice cream or ice milk, frozen yogurt, tofu processed with calcium, dried beans and peas, and leafy green vegetables. Eating these medium-calcium foods with some high-calcium milk servings will add significant calcium to the diet.

Whether good bone health is achieved may not be evident until a person gets older. The consequences of poor bone health can result in painful and debilitating bone breakages, especially in the hips, vertebrae, and hands. It’s important to let diet help you in the way best possible in your environment.

Calcium-rich NUFACS number cited in our information center box and listen to the message on the “Milk, Yogurt and Cheese Group” for more facts about calcium-rich foods. (AH)

Time

When I was young, Mama was going to read me a story and I was going to turn the pages and pretend the stories were floors to be walked and there wasn’t time.

When I was young, Daddy was going to come to school and watch me in a play. I was the fourth Wise Man (in case one got sick) but he had a car tuned and there wasn’t time.

When I was young, Grandma and Grandpa were going to come to school and wasn’t time.

When I was young, Daddy was going to come to school and was in very critical condition. As I sat by his hospital bed, there was so much I wanted to say, but there wasn’t time.

Remember, as you start the new year, set priorities to include taking time for your family and friends. (LB)

1997 All-America Selections winners continued from page 2

holding quality in the garden and a mild cabbage flavor. This variety is resistant to Fusarium yellows and is easy to grow from seed or bedding plants.

Plants have many roles continued from page 3

is more difficult to heat than dry air and can help reduce the temperature near the tree.

Trees are also effective at shielding something from the sun’s radiation. Leaves, twigs and branches absorb part of the radiation, transmit a smaller portion, and reflect the rest. There are several more ways plants can modify the climate. One important way is to use trees that are deciduous (those which lose their leaves in the winter) in landscaping, to reduce both heating and cooling bills. Trees planted so that they reflect the sun away from the house and shade it during the summer help keep the house cool. In the winter, when they have lost their leaves, the sun is able to reach the house and warm it.

Noise can be reduced with properly placed ornamental plantings. Trees, shrubs, vines and turf absorb noises. Plant parts break up sound waves, changing their direction and reducing their intensity. Densely growing plants are best for sound control but the width of the planting is critical. To effectively screen highway noises, plantings would have to be 25 to 35 feet thick. Plant sounds, such as rustling leaves, help conceal or disguise offensive noises.

Glar from car headlights can be annoying. Control of such glare can be achieved by placing buffer plantings between the light source and the room. Place them close to the house to be most effective.

A secondary source of glare, such as reflected sunlight from pavements, can be reduced by plants, too. Plants, even in tubs or containers, can be used to visually “break up” or soften a reflective surface. The light is reflected to the plant which softens it by diffraction before it reaches the viewers’ eyes.

Finally, erosion control is an important role for plants. Trees, shrubs, vines, ground covers and grasses help prevent serious erosion by intercepting and breaking the impact of raindrops and by holding the soil in place with their roots. (MM)

Cabbage F, “Dynamo”

Okra ‘Cajun Delight’ has an early, extended harvest and high-yield potential. The plant grows very quickly under warming conditions and can be very productive even in Northern gardens. It grows 4 feet high and 2 feet wide. This okra produces dark-green pods for harvest in about 50 to 55 days after transplanting into warm garden soil. Pods should be picked when 3 to 5 inches in length. (MM)

Appreciate your embryologist! continued from page 9

candle the eggs, allowing the children to actually observe the developing embryo. Soon after, the students will witness the hatching of their organ—something that we, as kids, don’t get to experience. Until the chicks are picked up, students are responsible for their care. It all sounds pretty simple, doesn’t it? However, behind the scenes, Extension personnel (mostly Arlene Hanna) are scurrying to pick-up, calibrate and re-deliver each incubator, delivering hundreds of eggs, giving up to 12 presentations a day, and picking up and finding homes for hundreds of baby chicks at the end, not to mention all the scheduling, paperwork and teacher training. So, don’t forget to appreciate your embryologist! (TB)

Cabbage F, “Cajun Delight”

Facts about steel recycling continued from page 3

the auto industry to produce new cars.

What are other benefits of steel recycling? Recycling steel saves valuable energy and natural resources. Each year, steel recycling saves the energy equivalent to electrically power about one-fifth of the households in the United States (or about 18 million homes) for one year. And every ton of steel recycled saves 2,500 pounds of iron ore, 1,000 pounds of coal, and 40 pounds of limestone.

For more information on the recycling location nearest you for steel cans, appliances and other materials, call the Steel Recycling Institute’s consumer hotline, 1-800-YES-1-CAN (937-1226). (LB)

Horse bits continued from page 9

this is sitting the trot. When this is done correctly, the toto jiggles but the hands stay quiet.

While it is important to study correct position of hands and arms, remember that this position varies with every horse and every rider’s body build. The rider puts the horse’s head in place with his hands. He should not just hold his hands at a “proper position.” The hands must have a direct relation to the horse’s mouth, so the carriage of the horse’s head dictates the height of the rider’s body. (CB)

University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension educational programs abide with the nondiscrimination policies of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the United States Department of Agriculture.

...and more than 400 additional topics.

Missellaneous

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

Call 441-7180 to receive a brochure with all the NUFACS message topics.
February 1997

The NEBLINE
Lancaster County Cooperative Extension Newsletter

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

GARY C. BERGMAN, EXTENSION EDUCATOR

NOTICE

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

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CINDY BLOM, YOUTH EXTENSION AIDE
TINA BROWN, AMERICAN CORPS VISTA VOLUNTEER
COREY BRUBAKER, EXTENSION EDUCATOR
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Office (leave message after hours) ............................................. 441-7180
After hours .............................................................. 441-7170
FAX ............................................................................. 441-7148
COMPOSTING HOTLINE .......................................................... 441-7139
NEBRASKA INFORMATION CENTER .................................................. 441-7188

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

EXTENSION CALENDAR

February 1
State 4-H Volunteer Forum—Hastings ........................................ 9:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.
February 2
4-H Speech & PSA Workshop .............................................. 6:00-7:30 p.m.
February 4
4-H Council Meeting .......................................................... 7:00 p.m.
Private Applicators Certification—Milford Farmers Bank, Milford ............................................... 1:00 p.m.
Private Applicators Certification ............................................. 7:00 p.m.
February 5
Mid-America Alfalfa Exposition—Activities Center, Hastings
February 6
“Graing’泌en’t: Not What I Thought It Would Be” Workshop Series—call for location ....................... 7:00 p.m.
February 8
4-H Leader Project Update: Jump Start Your 4-H Year .......................................................... 6:30-9:30 p.m.
February 9
4-H Cattle Weigh Day—State Fair Park ................................ 8:00 a.m.-noon
February 9-9
Horsemanship Conference—Animal Science Arena, East Campus
February 9
4-H Teen Council .............................................................. 3:00-5:00 p.m.
February 10
CRP Update Satellite Seminar ............................................. 2:00-4:30 p.m.
Lancaster County 4-H Shooting Sports Club Meeting .......................................................... 7:00-9:00 p.m.
Extension Board Meeting .......................................................... 7:30 p.m.
February 12
4-H Horse VIPS Meeting .......................................................... 7:00 p.m.
February 13
Family & Consumer Science & general areas 4-H VIPS Meeting ............................................... 7:00 p.m.
February 13-14
Nebraska Builders’ Home & Garden Show—Perishing Auditorium ............................................... 7:00 p.m.
February 15
Private Applicators Certification ............................................. 9:00 a.m.
February 17
The New in Corn Insect Pest Management—ARDC, Ithaca ........................................................................ 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
February 18
Understanding Genetically Engineered Crops—ARDC, Ithaca ........................................................................ 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Star City Rabbit Raisers 4-H Club Meeting .......................................................... 7:00 p.m.
February 20
Sprayer Technology for High Boys, Spra-Coupe Sprayers and Row Gators—ARDC, Ithaca ........................................................................ 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
4-H District Record Books Judged .......................................................... 7:00 p.m.
4-H Rabbit VIPS Meeting .......................................................... 7:00 p.m.
Fair Board Meeting ........................................................................ 7:30 p.m.
Breeding Workshop (1 of 3)—ARDC, Ithaca ........................................................................ 6:00-9:00 p.m.
February 21
County 4-H Speech & PSA Contest Entries Due Breeding Workshop (2 of 3)—ARDC, Ithaca ........................................................................ 6:00-9:00 p.m.
February 22
Breed Ambassador Contest—Buffalo County Extension Office, Kearney ............................................... 10:00 a.m.
February 24
Impact of Stress on Physiological Development and Yield of Corn and Soybeans—ARDC, Ithaca ........................................................................ 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
4-H Cat VIPS Meeting ........................................................................ 6:30 p.m.
February 25
Yield Map Generation and Interpretation—ARDC, Ithaca ........................................................................ 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
“Spelling Out Changes in Health Care” FCE Leader Training ........................................................................ 1:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.
February 26
Nutrient Requirement and Mineral Nutrition of Nebraska Crops—ARDC, Ithaca ........................................................................ 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
February 27
Grain Sorghum Seminar—Saline County Fair, Crete ........................................................................ 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
Chemigation Certification Training—York County Fairgrounds, 4-H Building ........................................................................ 1:00 p.m.
February 28
Soil Management: Where Has All The Topsoil Gone? Fundamentals of Soil Erosion and No-till Planter Adjustment—ARDC, Ithaca ........................................................................ 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
March 1
Outbound Japan Lab Applications Due
March 2
4-H Speech & PSA Contest—State Capitol, Lincoln .......................................................... 2:00-4:00 p.m.
4-H Teen Council Meeting ........................................................................ 3:00-5:00 p.m.
March 3
Weed Biology and Ecology—ARDC, Ithaca ........................................................................ 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
March 4
Teen Learn & Serve Conference—East Campus
Grain Sorghum Seminar—Saline County Extension Office, Beatrice ........................................................................ 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
Chemigation Certification Training—Saline County Extension Office, Wilbur ........................................................................ 3:00-5:00 p.m.
4-H Council Meeting ........................................................................ 3:00-5:00 p.m.
March 5
Field Crop Scout Training for Co-op Employees—ARDC, Ithaca ........................................................................ 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
4-H Small Animal VIPS Meeting .......................................................... 7:00 p.m.
March 6
Irrigation/Water Management of Nebraska’s Crops—ARDC, Ithaca ........................................................................ 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Chemigation Certification Training—Dodge County Extension Office, Fremont ........................................................................ 9:00 a.m.
March 7
4-H Cloverleaf VIPS Meeting ........................................................................ 1:30 p.m.
March 8
Acreage & Small Farm Owner Workshop—ARDC, Ithaca ........................................................................ 9:00 a.m.
CFW Fundraising—ARDC, Ithaca
March 9
Breeding Workshop (3 of 3)—ARDC, Ithaca ........................................................................ 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.