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LEAD Group Presentation

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LEAD Group Presentation
11:30 a.m. Monday, Sept. 15, 2008
East Union
John C. Owens, NU Vice President and Harlan Vice Chancellor, IANR

Let me begin today by offering my congratulations to each of you who is a member of this new LEAD class. You are embarking upon a truly exciting, rewarding opportunity, important to both you *and* Nebraska. Our state needs good leaders, people dedicated to keeping our organizations, communities, and Nebraska strong, and moving forward. We need leaders of courage and compassion, able to think clearly, assess information, formulate a plan, and adjust that plan as needed. We need leaders who work toward a common good.

We look to you to be such leaders. During the next two years I urge you to wring out every ounce of good you can from every opportunity you have. You've got an excellent leader in Terry Hejny, and I know he will do a great job for you.

I also want to thank your family members here with you today, who are supporting you in this exciting endeavor. This support is absolutely vital. Thank you to each of you for your support of this new LEAD class.

It's my pleasure to talk with you today about the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, and provide you with some information about the diverse ways we are at work for Nebraska. We're going to show a video that does just that, and I should tell you – there will be a test at the end of the video!

We in the Institute take our land-grant university mission of taking the university's resources to Nebraskans very seriously. Perhaps you've heard the land-grant university mission often is described as a three-legged stool, with research, teaching and extension education the stool's three legs.

That's true in the Institute, where our Agricultural Research Division, our College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, and our Cooperative Extension Division, which we call University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension, are closely entwined. Through research we discover new knowledge to meet Nebraskans' concerns. That new knowledge is taught in our on-campus classrooms and laboratories, and across Nebraska through extension education. We have four research and extension centers located throughout Nebraska, and 83 county extension offices serving all 93 Nebraska counties. UNL truly is at work for Nebraska every single day.

One example – the Institute is a leader in addressing complex, important water management issues for Nebraska and our region. Extension field days in the Republican River Basin have focused on teaching producers to achieve nearly full yields with less water. According to the 190 farmers attending field days there in 2007, the collective dollar savings of knowledge gained was $3.4 million, with a potential water savings of nearly two inches of water per acre.

Another example -- economical wet-byproducts from Nebraska's expanding ethanol and grain processing industry have become a major cattle feed, thanks largely to pioneering Institute research by our animal scientists, who proved its feasibility, benefits, and economic advantages. It's estimated from 1992 through 2006, the cumulative benefit to Nebraska from feeding byproducts wet instead of dry was approaching half a *billion* dollars.

I'm also very pleased to tell you that for the fourth year in a row we're seeing enrollment increases in our College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, where this fall we have 1,642 undergraduate students studying with us – up 12.9 percent from last year. This year and last year, CASNR leads UNL with the highest percentage increase. Incidentally, we are very pleased that 44 percent of the CASNR students have scholarships to study with us here at UNL.

Let's take a look at other ways the Institute is at work for Nebraska with this video.

At work video – 10 minutes

One thing I need to tell you – the video mentioned we had over 118,000 young Nebraskans involved in 4-H programming. That's an impressive number, but we have an even more impressive one now; last year approximately 135,000 youth – one in three eligible in the state -- were involved in Nebraska 4-H programming.

Now. I'm going to stop talking so we can take that test I mentioned earlier! Actually, we're going to play a little game called Play the Hand You're Dealt, which is a lot of what leadership – and life! – is about. The good news is, this game is open book, and everyone at your table gets to work together on the answers.

You heard some of the answers in the video; some answers are from what I've said, and other answers are part of carefully looking and listening. Some will test your general knowledge of the Institute and our statewide campus, and still others are general agriculture facts from the 2008 Nebraska Agriculture Fact Card, a cooperative effort of the Nebraska Department of Agriculture; USDA, NASS, Nebraska Field Office; Nebraska Bankers Association, and Nebraska AgRelations Council.

Here's how you Play the Hand You're Dealt.

Each table gets a hand composed of eight questions. There are four different sets, and each table will have the opportunity to play two. So when you get your hand, look at the number on it – Hand #1, 2, 3 and 4 – and write that number on the top of your answer sheet, which we'll distribute with the hands. You need to select one person at your table to write down your group's answers on your answer sheet.

Part of its luck. Part of it is a leader's careful looking, listening, and thinking. Much depends on the collective knowledge around your table.

So. We're going to distribute hands to each table now; please leave all hands lying face down until I say "Begin." When I do, you'll have four minutes to answer your eight questions. Remember, another table in the room has those same questions, so you might want to keep your answers somewhat quiet to avoid being overheard! At the end of four minutes you'll hear a bell and we'll ask you to immediately gather up your hand and wait for the next hand you're dealt.

You'll get a second hand -- remember to write its number on your answer sheet, also. Do not turn the hand over until I say "Begin;" you'll again have four minutes to answer the questions in that hand. When the bell sounds again please lay your hand down immediately, and we'll go through the answers. The table with the most correct answers wins our fabulous prizes!

So, we'll distribute your hands now, ask you to leave them lying face down until I say "Begin," and we'll Play the Hand You're Dealt!

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Go through hand one, four minutes.

Will pick up hands and distribute again. When all distributed, say "Begin" again, go four minutes, stop everyone, and go through answers to all four hands. Identify winners by asking who had the most correct answers, including bonus questions, which also count one point per bonus question, will hand out door prizes to the table with the most correct answers.