2-1-2011

The NEBLINE, February 2011

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Got Bed Bugs? Don’t Panic! There are Steps You Can Take

Barb Ogg
UNL Extension Educator

One thing I’ve learned with the latest bed bug resurgence, is not all insects are treated alike. Some insects get no respect...cockroaches and termites fit into that category. Never mind German cockroaches can carry thousands, if not millions of bacteria on their bodies, including salmonella, shigellosis, staphylococcus, and E. coli. Termites do millions of dollars worth of damage to structures every year. Educational programs about cockroaches and termites are very important to people who have to deal with them. But, most of the time, ordinary folks don’t pay much attention.

Bed bugs are different. The mere thought of small insects sneaking out of hiding places and feeding on our blood during the night gets everyone’s attention. With the exception of senior citizens who remember life before WWII, most of us have never grown up with bed bugs. Those of us who have grown up in such a sanitary world, are not used to thinking of hiding places and feeding on our blood.

The most frustrating calls come from low-income people living in high-density housing who have bed bugs. In Nebraska, like other states, it is the responsibility of landlords to provide a pest-free environment for their tenants. But, because bed bugs are hard to control, treatments are expensive and not all landlords are willing to spend the money necessary for eradication. Because bedrooms must be treated, pesticide applications must be done carefully. I generally recommend people hire a pest control professional who can do the best treatment and do it safely. Advantages of hiring pest control professionals is they have experience in treating bed bugs and know where to treat, they have application equipment that allows them to treat cracks and crevices, and they can purchase products not available in hardware stores.

If people sleep on the sofa at night, it also may be infested. Take or send the bed bugs to an expert who can identify them. The University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County offers free pest diagnostic services. The public can bring samples to the office at 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

2. If bed bugs have been identified and you rent, talk to your landlord. If he decides to hire a pest control professional to treat your home, you’ll need to be as cooperative as possible to help solve this problem. You should know the pest control professional will apply insecticides but will not do the rest of the steps given below. These are actions you must take to help eradicate bed bugs.

3. If you find bed bugs during your search, use a vacuum cleaner to suck them up. This is a very important step in reducing the bed bug population right away and more effective than chemicals. When most people hear the word vacuuming, they think of vacuuming carpets. While bed bugs can be found in carpets, they are most likely to be found in cracks and crevices in and around the bed itself. Bed bugs leave tell-tale signs in places where they hide; look for spots and smears, and vacuum those places thoroughly. See BED BUGS on next page.
Now’s the Time to Build Bird Nest Boxes and Shelves

Soni Cochran
UNL Extension Associate

In only a month or so, birds will soon be choosing their favorite nesting sites. Are you ready? This is a great time to prepare for spring by building birdhouses and shelves to help attract your favorite backyard birds. It is important to get your houses and shelves ready to help with ventilation as birds begin arriving so start building now.

Decide what birds you want to attract.

Find out which birds are in your area and what they need for a nesting site. American robins and barn swallows look for cavities in old buildings, trees, and power line poles. Black-capped chickadees, wrens, bluebirds, woodpeckers, and house sparrows prefer to nest in birdhouses and shelves. These birdhouses need to be in place and ready by March to attract nesting birds.

Materials: Birdhouses can be made from a variety of materials including wood, PVC pipe, or natural items like gourds. Gourds are easy to grow, might be infested with insects, and you can control the pest problem by rotating the gourd. Another type of wood is eastern white pine. Although it is not very fast growing, it is safe may not be very effective in controlling bed bugs.

Drainage & Ventilation: Drill a few small holes in the bottom of your nest boxes. This helps with drainage. You should also place a 1/2-inch drain plug or gravel holes along the top of the sides to help with ventilation.

Entrance Holes: Birds can be very picky about their entrance holes. Certain birds need specific-sized entrances. Do not make an outside perch. The birds don’t need them and all you are doing is helping make a spot for predators to sit. In Nebraska, hang your bird houses with the entrance facing southeast or northeast. This provides some protection from cold spring rains.

Exit Stairway: To help the baby birds learn to get out of the nest box, roughen the inside of the hole just under the entrance. This can be done by sawing grooves or punching holes like a stairway with a screwdriver.

Accessibility: Make sure your nest boxes and shelves are easy to inspect. This will help you keep the nest boxes clean. Clean boxes are more likely to be used by birds.

Bird Boxes continued from previous page These are nesting boxes. In only a month or so, birds will soon be choosing what you need for a nesting site. American robins and barn swallows look for cavities in old buildings, trees, and power line poles. Black-capped chickadees, wrens, bluebirds, woodpeckers, and house sparrows prefer to nest in birdhouses and shelves. These birdhouses need to be in place and ready by March to attract nesting birds.

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Bed Bugs

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Bed Bugs

continued from previous page

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Designing a Windbreak

Don Janssen
Retired UNL Extension Educator

The best designs for windbreaks depend on their intended purpose and the characteristics of the site where they will be located. Windbreaks can be planted to

- enhance wildlife, provide snow protection for humans and livestock, and provide wind protection to dwellings in both winter and summer.
- protect from soil erosion caused by wind and reduce water runoff from agricultural lands.
- provide shelter and improve the microclimate within the windbreak area.

A basic windbreak consists of three to eight rows of both conifers and deciduous species in the center. A row of shrubs on the interior side completes the windbreak. Conifers or shrubs should be located on the windward side with the tall deciduous trees next, and the shorter trees and shrubs on the leeward side. The area protected by the windbreak will be determined by the windbreak's average height and the number of rows. Windbreaks for winter protection should be located on the north and west side of the farmstead. Summer wind protection is provided by planting on the south and east sides of the farmstead.

The number of tree rows and the plant species used will be determined by the intended purposes of the individual windbreak and the amount of space available. Typical windbreaks include two or more rows of conifers and one or more rows of deciduous trees and shrubs. Windbreaks with two legs or one planted on two sides of the protected area will provide better protection than a planting on one side only.

A windbreak should be oriented perpendicular to the prevailing wind directions. Because of wind turbulence around the end of a windbreak, the windbreak should extend 100 to 200 feet beyond the area needing protection.

Financial Recordkeeping Training, March 3

One of the most popular in-depth extension programs, a Computerized Farm Financial Recordkeeping Training, will be offered Thursday, March 3, 9 a.m.—4:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherry Creek Road in Lincoln. Pre-register before Feb. 18. Preregistration is required to hold your space.

The concepts taught in this training are applicable to several inexpensive computerized recordkeeping software programs, with slight modifications in procedure. This training will be taught hands-on using Quicken Deluxe in the classroom. All instruction will be presented in a hands-on teaching style with participants sitting at computers performing the tasks being demonstrated. Many folks comment the handouts are one of the best aspects of the training. The registration fee is $25 per person (EC 1763) at www.ianrpubs.unl.edu/sendIt/ or NebGuide “Windbreaks: Design,” (G-1304) at www.ianrpubs.unl.edu/sendIt/g1304.pdf. Both are available at the extension office.

For more information, contact your local extension office or visit the extension office website at www.ianrpubs.unl.edu/sendIt/ or sendIt/g1304.pdf. Both are available at the extension office.

Private Pesticide Applicator Certification

Federal and state law says a private pesticide applicator must be certified and licensed to buy, use, or supervise the use of a Restricted-Use Pesticide (RUP) to prevent an agricultural commodity on property they own or rent — or — on an employer’s property if the applicator is an employee of the employer or the applicator is an employee of the employer and a pesticide license is needed if the applicator will only be applying General Use Pesticides (GUPs) or if you hire a commercial applicator to apply RUPs to your property.

If you do not have a current private pesticide certification and you plan to buy or apply any RUP products, you will need to receive the same certification training as described below for people who need to be recertified. All training sessions meet the requirements for both initial certification or recertification as private pesticide applicators. If your private applicator certification expires in 2011, you will receive (or have already received) a notification letter from the Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA). Be sure to keep the letter from NDA and bring it with you to the training session you choose or when you plan to apply for home-study materials. The NDA letter contains a bar-code form which tells NDA what they need to know about you. Regardless of the certification method chosen, all applicants will receive an invoice from the NDA for the $25 license fee. Note: we cannot collect the license fee at the extension office. The certification and license is good for three years, expiring on April 15, 2013 for those who certify this spring. You should receive your new license within three weeks.

Private pesticide applicators will have four alternative methods to obtain either recertification or initial certification.

Traditional Training Sessions, Jan 27, 29, & Feb. 2

Three private pesticide applicator training sessions have been scheduled in 2011 at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherry Creek Road in Lincoln.

- Thursday, Jan. 27, from 8:30–11:30 a.m.
- Saturday, Jan. 29, from 8:30–11:30 a.m.
- Wednesday, Feb. 2, from 6:30–9:30 p.m.

A $30 extension training fee will be collected at the training site (make checks out to Lancaster County Extension).

Self-Study Option

The second option is to pick up the self-study book and associated materials at the extension office. You are expected to read the chapters, then you must answer the written test questions in the back of the book. When you bring the book back to the office, the test will be graded by our staff while you wait (usually about five minutes). You will have an opportunity to see the test results and see the correct answers to any questions you have missed.

The $60 training fee for this method of obtaining certification will be collected when the home-study book is picked up.

Testing Option

The third option is to take a written (closed-book) examination given by the NDA. Please contact NDA at (402) 471-2394 for dates of testing. There is no training fee if you choose this option. You will need to pay the $25 license fee. You should receive your new license within two weeks after you receive a passing grade on your written test.

Certify at a Crop Production Clinic

Private applicators may receive initial certification or recertification at a private applicator’s Crop Production Clinics held in January. This year’s clinics will be over by the time this newsletter is published.
Enjoy Nebraska Foods!

Alice Hennessy, MS, RD, UNI. Extension Educator

This recipe provides you with chocolate plus dairy AND fruit. Enjoy! Recipe courtesy of 3-A-Day of Dairy (www.3aday.org) and provided by Jennifer Meyer, RD, LMNT, Dairy Council of Nebraska.

**Cocoa-Berry Yogurt Tarts**
(Makes 6 servings. Prep time: 10 minutes)

- 1 1/2 cups low-fat vanilla yogurt
- 1 1/2 cups reduced-fat ricotta cheese
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- 6 graham cracker tart shells
- 3/4 cup strawberries, sliced (raspberries or blueberries also can be used)

**Directions:** Mix yogurt, ricotta, sugar, and cocoa powder thoroughly with whisk until cream. Spoon 1 1/2 mixture into each tart shell and top with sliced strawberries.

**Nutritional Facts Per Serving:** Calories: 260; Total Fat: 5 g; Saturated Fat: 3 g; Cholesterol: 20 mg; Sodium: 250 mg; Calcium: 20% Daily Value; Protein: 9 g.

**Carbohydrates: 17 g; Dietary Fiber: 3 g**

**Alice’s Tips:**
- This recipe also tastes delicious spooned directly into a serving dish and topped with berries. Dress it up for an elegant meal by serving it in a fancy glass.
- If you have extra ricotta cheese after making this recipe, you can blend equal portions of ricotta cheese and yogurt in a blender or food processor until smooth to make a base for dips.

**Rescue Dinner Time by Planning Ahead**

When you get home, many see PLANNING on next page

**Health Benefits of Chocolate**

- Chocolate is a “Functional” Food?
- “There are four basic food groups: milk chocolate, dark chocolate, white chocolate, and chocolate truffles.”
- “Equal amounts of dark chocolate and white chocolate is a balanced diet.”
- “Chocolate is cheaper than the doctor, so don’t need an appointment.”

A functional food is a food that contains an active compound that provides health benefits beyond basic nutrition. Protein, fat, carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals are the basic nutritional needs but other components in food also contribute to your health.

**Chocolate**

Chocolate refers to a large number of raw and processed foods produced from the seed (bean) of the Theobroma cacao tree found in Mexico, Central, and South America. It was first documented around 1100 B.C.

The Aztecs and Mayans made a chocolate beverage that had a bitter taste. The Aztecs used chocolate for ceremonial purposes and believed chocolate had medicinal properties. Cacao beans also were used as a form of currency. The Spanish, who visited the Aztecs, brought chocolate to Europe in 1525 and it was considered a luxury item.

The modern chocolate bar with added sugar was created in 1847. Prior to this, chocolate was only consumed as a drink. The Dutch removed the cocoa butter from the solids and then were able to process chocolate in a solid form.

The addition of sugar helped mask the natural bitter flavor. Through the centuries, chocolate was considered an aphrodisiac, and was used to treat fatigue and diarrhea.

**Types of Chocolate**

Chocolate products are made from cocoa solids, cocoa liquor, and cocoa butter in varying proportions. Dark chocolate may contain up to 70 percent cocoa; milk chocolate products contain less cocoa.

To develop the taste, cocoa beans are fermented and dried, and the shell removed. The resulting nibs are ground into cocoa liquor, which is processed into cocoa solids and cocoa butter.

- **Unsweetened chocolate, bitter white, or dark baking chocolate** is pure chocolate liquor.
- **Milk chocolate** is made by adding fat and sugar to cocoa liquor and cocoa butter. Dark chocolate has a high cocoa content.
- **Bittersweet chocolate** is chocolate liquor plus sugar, cocoa butter, and vanilla. Usually bittersweet chocolate has less sugar and more flavor than semisweet chocolate but the terms bittersweet and semisweet, are used interchangeably.

Semisweet chocolate is dark chocolate with low sugar content. **Milk chocolate** is made by adding sugar and milk powder or condensed milk to cocoa butter and cocoa liquor.

**White chocolate** is made from sugar, cocoa butter, and milk solids. White chocolate does not contain cocoa liquor.

**Storage of Chocolate**

Chocolate is sensitive to temperature and humidity. Store chocolate between 59 and 63°F in low humidity. Chocolate can absorb aromas from other foods. Keep chocolates wrapped to prevent absorption of moisture and aromas.

If chocolate is not stored properly, it can “bloom.” This whitish discoloration forms when the chocolate absorbs enough moisture for the fat or sugar crystals to rise to the surface. This bloom is visually unappealing but the chocolate is safe to eat.

High temperatures can cause the chocolate to melt and change the crystals, causing a rougher feel on the tongue.

**Health Benefits of Chocolate**

Recently, compounds in chocolate have been found to have health benefits, and chocolate sometimes is being referred to as a functional food. Components in chocolate include antioxidant flavonoid compounds, such as catechins, which reduce free radicals produced by oxidation, lower LDL cholesterol, reduce blood pressure, and reduce platelet aggregation.

Source: University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension publication “Chocolate – a Functional Food!” (HEF 5999) by Julie M. Allred, Extension Food Specialist; Carol J. Schwarz, Extension Educator; and Marilyn Schmepf, Professor, Nutrition and Health Sciences. To read the complete publication, go to http://www.unl.edu/extension/hef/5999.pdf.
When it comes to winter, precautions need to be taken to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning and winter fire hazards.

Carbon monoxide often is called the silent killer because it is an invisible, odorless, colorless gas created when fuels, such as kerosene, gasoline, wood, coal, natural gas, propane, oil, and methane, etc., burn incompletely. Carbon monoxide can result from faulty furnaces or other heating appliances, portable generators, water heaters, clothes dryers, or cars left running in garages. Common symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning may include headache, nausea, and drowsiness. Extremely high levels of poisoning can be fatal, causing death within minutes. Be especially alert during heavy ice and snow conditions in the heating season and extremely cold weather.

To avoid carbon monoxide poisoning, take these precautions:

• Make sure all fuel-burning vented equipment — such as the vents for the dryer, furnace, stove, and fireplace — is vented to the outside to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. Make sure that the exhaust is kept clear and unobstructed by snow or ice.

• Also be sure the gas meter is clear. If the meter or an appliance vent is covered in snow, remove the snow carefully with a brush, a broom, or a rake. Do not remove it by kicking or pictures, then on to the drawers. It is surprising what you might find. Next I light up even to get to the closets.

• Place space heater on solid, flat surface.

• Install and maintain carbon monoxide alarms to avoid risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.

• Maintain heating equipment and chimneys by having them cleaned and inspected annually by a qualified professional.

• If you need to warm a vehicle, remove it from the garage immediately after starting it. Never run a vehicle or other fueled engine or motor indoors, even if garage doors are open. Make sure the exhaust pipe of a running vehicle is not blocked with snow, ice, or other materials.

• Do not use barbeque grills — which can produce carbon monoxide — outside. Never use them near the house, garage, porch, or near building openings.

• Follow use and care instructions when using portable generators during power outages. Safe use is critical, so fumes do not enter the home.

• Remember to keep battery-powered fans indoors and in all vehicles.

• Avoid potential fire hazards with flame heaters, fireplaces, and other appliances, follow these precautions:

• Turn heaters off when you go to bed or leave the room.

• Use and purchase portable space heaters with an automatic shut off so if they’re
tipped over they will shut off.

• Supervise children when a fireplace, fire pit, or other space heater is being used.

• Use a sturdy, metal screen to prevent contact burns, which are even more common than flame burns.

• All heaters need space. Keep things that can burn, such as paper, bedding or furniture, at least three feet away from heating equipment.

• Use heating equipment that has the label of a recognized testing laboratory.

• Never use the oven for heating.

• Make sure that the exhaust is kept clear and unobstructed by snow or ice.

• Also be sure the gas meter is clear. If the meter or an appliance vent is covered in snow, remove the snow carefully with a brush, a broom, or a rake. Do not remove it by kicking or
Put your garden gloves on and join the fun because "gardening with a purpose" is taking root.

The purpose may be to grow your own food or create urban 'green' sanctuaries, but planting for a good green is changing neighborhoods and communities, one at a time. Big city mayors are promoting gardening programs in schools, connecting students with nature, growing food, and 'greening' their urban communities.

Since last year, according to the latest GWA Garden Trends Research Report, half of those surveyed said they have gardens in their backyard, while more than one-quarter have gardens in their front yard. With vegetable gardening up almost 20 percent and community gardens up 60 percent over last year, growing food for the table is certainly on the rise along with gardening with native plants. Backyard conservationists and gardeners are transforming yards, gardens, rooftops, and even urban alleys into green and productive spaces, knowing they are making a positive impact.

Here is a look at top emerging garden trends for 2011:

Gardening with a Purpose — In the wake of the shocking Gulf coast images of oil-soaked waves and coated wetlands and wildlife, people are taking measures to protect and conserve valuable natural resources. There is nothing we all need to work together to rejuvenate, regenerate, and restore Mother Earth. Choosing eco-friendly products over toxic chemicals is a proactive step to making our world cleaner and greener. Since healthy plants start with healthy soil, people are looking for sustainable and organic soils.

According to the recent National Gardening Association’s Lawn & Garden Survey, 9 out of 10 households want to manage their lawns and gardens in an environmentally-friendly way.

Eco-Scaping — Terms like "sustainable" and "biodevity" were seldom heard a decade ago, but today are part of our vocabulary. The move to de-lawn large tracts of turf and transform lawns into sustainable landscapes is achievable with the right plants for the right spot that use less water and pesticides.

Edible Ornamenals — There is rising consumer interest in edibles: small fruit bearing shrubs and smaller trees. Fresh berries like raspberries and blueberries can you pick right from home are spiking in popularity. According to a recent survey by the Garden Writers Association, about 16 percent more American households planned to add a vegetable garden and an additional 12 percent planned on adding an herb garden. Why? More than three-quarters of respondents felt veggies are less expensive with better taste, quality, and nutrition.

Sustainable Containers — Annual flower sales were down almost 20 percent last year. It appears gardeners see them as "luxuries" they can replace with long-blooming perennials and ever-blooming shrubs. They deliver all-season color without the high maintenance. For small space gardens, growing food in containers makes the productivity, environmental quality, and return on investment that indoor plantings and vertical living walls are bringing to their projects. Climbing plants can be used to provide privacy, screen eye-sores and draw the eye upward to create the illusion of space.

Urban Farming & CSA's — In step with the move to reinvigorate communities with gardens, urban farming, and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farms are springing up. Urban farming 'micro-farms' are converting small spaces in blighted areas into thriving farms that produce fresh produce for inner city communities. According to the Slow Food Movement, farmer’s markets and CSAs are up a whopping 60 percent.

New Urbanism — Sustainable urban communities offering convenient and enjoyable places to enjoy an urban lifestyle are rising in popularity. Best-stop parklets replace sidewalks with small "parklets" of outdoor plazas for sunning and socializing, are popping up throughout cities and small towns where, believe it or not, lodging is encouraged! These new "parklets" convert concrete parking stalls along a block for relaxation, eating, and enjoying green spaces with flowering shrubs, trees, and paths. Planting water wise plants, collecting rain-water, homes, and apartments with little or no turf and more plants encourages better stewardship of our earth and we reconnct us as fellow stewards of our resources and our communities.

In 2010, the Arbor Day Foundation constructed a green roof demonstration project on top of the Lincoln Trucking building in downtown Lincoln. Most of the green elements on the roof include sedum and other low-growing plants. The roof also contains a test plot for University of Nebraska-Lincoln professor of agronomy and horticulture Richard Sutton. He is using the test plot to determine which native grasses can thrive and provide benefits in a green roof setting.

Top 2011 Garden Trends: Gardening with a Purpose

1. Growing food in containers makes small space gardens, growing food in containers makes sense. Containers brimming with fragrance herbs, basil, rosemary, or thyme are attractive and aromatic additions for indoors and outdoors. Blended containers with herbs and vegetables provide a one-two combo that can’t be beat for freshness and convenience.

2. Succulents — Dry gardening with less water is bubbling across the nation. From college dorm rooms to home gardens, succulents are a perfect choice. These easy sustainable plants produce showy flowers along with thick, fleshy foliage that stores water. Drought tolerant and able to thrive in a variety of conditions, succulents are perfect for small gardens and large landscapes.

3. Indoor Gardening — Extend nature’s influence by bringing the outdoors in with houseplants. From “sting-a-pumpkin” Victorian hipster décor rocking among young urbanites to upscale suburban gardens, orchids, fuchs, and palms are now wildly popular. Chic and easy to grow, orchids are graceful additions to any room. Plus these hard-working beauties clean indoor air from volatile organic compounds and provide oxygen. Phalaenopsis (moth) orchids are perfect choices for easy growing, colorful, and exotic plants that look as comfortable in 21st century homes as they did in Victorian times.

4. Growing Up With Vertical Gardening — Vertical gardens are becoming increasingly popular and will grow far beyond anything we can envision. Businesses are seeing the future of space.

5. Slow Food Movement, farmer’s markets and CSA's are up a whopping 60 percent.

2011 All-America Selections Flower Winners

Gaillardia 'Arizona Apricot'

Gaillardia 'Arizona Apricot' offers a new and unique apricot flower color to the garden. Blooms are 3-inch daisy-like flowers and have yellow edges that deepen to a rich apricot in the center. Just 105 days after sowing seed, this Gaillardia x grandiflora will bloom from early summer into autumn. The compact 12-inch tall plant offers bright orange foliage and a tidy uniform habit best viewed when planted to the front of the flower bed. This long-flowering perennial is hardy in USDA Zones 2–10, is relatively maintenance free, and drought-tolerant once established. Gardeners will want to remove old flowers to encourage additional blooming.

Ornamental Kale 'Glamour Red'

This is All-America Selections' first winning kale (edible or ornamental) in 78 years of trials! 'Glamour Red' is an excellent achievement in breeding for its unique shiny leaves. The waxless because of its early and generous flower blossoms, superior or above average by the AAS judges annual will bloom 90 days from sowing seed, this Gaillardia x grandiflora will bloom from early summer into autumn. The compact 12-inch tall plant offers bright orange foliage and a tidy uniform habit best viewed when planted to the front of the flower bed. This long-flowering perennial is hardy in USDA Zones 2–10, is relatively maintenance free, and drought-tolerant once established. Gardeners will want to remove old flowers to encourage additional blooming.

Salvia ‘Summer Jewel Red’

This Salvia cocinea was consistently rated superior or above average by the AAS judges because of its early and generous flower blossoms, continuing from spring to autumn. Additionally, the dark red flower spikes are covered with half-inch red flowers in containers are perfect for the the Sunny’s garden where the bright red color acts as a magnet for hummingbirds. As an added bonus, goldfinchswarm the plant for seeds. Even the leaves add fine textured, dark-green color. see ALL-AMERICAs on next page
Asparagus is the earliest spring vegetable for most Nebraska gardeners and a high value garden crop. It is tolerant of the nutritious food, and with proper care an asparagus planting can continue to grow for 20 or more years.

**Growing Asparagus in the Home Garden**

Asparagus is best planted from one-year-old, healthy, disease-free crowns, purchased from a reputable grower. A “crown” is the root system of a one-year-old asparagus plant that was grown from seed. Each crown can produce 1/2 lb. of spears per year when fully established.

For the adventurous grower, asparagus can be planted from seed. Sow the seed so that the small seedlings until they become established can be time consuming. When the seeds are spaced a few inches apart, the crowns will have to be dug and transplanted to their permanent, wider-spaced location in the garden after one year. For the average gardener, choose one of the new all-male hybrid asparagus varieties that have been developed by Rutgers University, such as ‘Jersey Knight,’ ‘Jersey Supreme,’ and ‘Jersey Giant.’ These all-male cultivars can out-produce older female cultivars, such as ‘Mary Washington’ and ‘Martha Washington.’ All-male hybrids also avoid the weed problems caused by new asparagus seedlings.

**Planting**

Asparagus can be planted from early April to late May after the soil has warmed up to about 50°F. There is no advantage to planting the crowns in cold, wet soils. They will not grow until the soil warms and there is danger of the plants being more susceptible to Fusarium crown rot if crowns are exposed to cold, wet soils over a prolonged period. Plant the asparagus at either the west or north side of the garden so that it will not shade the other vegetables and will not be injured when the rest of the garden is filled. Dig a furrow no deeper than 5 to 6 inches. Research has shown that the deeper asparagus crowns are planted, the more total yield is reduced. Apply about 1 lb. of 0-46-0 (triple superphosphate) fertilizer per 50 feet of row in the bottom of the furrow before planting. This will make phosphorus immediately available to the crowns. Omitting this procedure results in decreased yields and spear production will not be as vigorous.

Place the crowns into the furrow on top of the fertilizer. The fertilizer will not burn the crowns. Space the crowns 1-1/2 feet apart in the row. If more than one row is planted, space the rows five feet apart from center to center. Wide between-row spacing is necessary because the vigorously growing ferns will fill in the space quickly. Wide spacing also promotes rapid drying of the ferns to help prevent the onset of fungus diseases.

After planting, back fill the furrow to its original soil level. It isn’t necessary to gradually cover the crown. If the crowns are grown from seeds, a few inches of soil until the furrow is filled in. However, do not compact the soil over the newly filled furrow or the emergence of the asparagus will be severely reduced. Spears should emerge within one week in most soils.

Asparagus is very drought tolerant and can usually grow without supplemental watering because it seeks moisture deep in the soil. However, if rainfall is insufficient when planting or after the first spear begins to irrigate the crowns. Otherwise the plants will become stressed and vigorous growth will be impeded.

**Harvesting**

Not harvesting asparagus during the first planting year, will encourage good root development and energy storage. Spears will be produced from buds on the crown, elongating to a height of about 6 to 8 inches. The plant’s fern-like foliage will produce food for the plant and then move it down to the crown for next year’s spear production.

Harvest lightly for only 3 to 4 weeks the second year. In subsequent years, harvesting can begin when the newly emerging spears reach 6 to 8 inches tall, usually about mid-June. In eastern Nebraska, and continue for 6 to 8 weeks. Remove the spears by cutting or snapping them off at the soil surface.

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Meet the 2011 Lancaster County 4-H Council

Lancaster County 4-H Council represents the interests of youth, parents, and leaders. 4-H Council is responsible for determining long- and short-term goals and policy for Lancaster County 4-H. They also raise funds by operating a food booth at the Lancaster County Fair. These funds help support 4-H programs, activities, and scholarships. Here is this year’s 4-H Council:

Officers: Quentin Farley (President), Spencer Farley (Vice-President), Lynnette Nelson (Treasurer), and Rachel Pickrel (Secretary).

Members: Elizabeth Frohlich, Mike Frohlich, Miranda Gunnerson, Mark Hunt, Katie Lloyd, Mike Lloyd, Ann Pickrel, Jennifer Cusick-Rawlinson, Abby Spencer, Jessica Stephenson, and Stephanie Wachtler.

Community Service Grants Due March 2

The Governor’s Agricultural Excellence Awards are sponsored by the Nebraska Investment Finance Authority (NIFA) in cooperation with the Nebraska 4-H Foundation. These awards recognize outstanding volunteer service. Trina started volunteering with 4-H as a parent volunteer when her daughter began 4-H six years ago. Trina started the Super Shamrocks club three years ago and is organizational leader.

Every year, she and her club members volunteer at the Lancaster County Fair setting up displays and taking a shift at the 4-H food booth. This will be the second year Super Shamrocks is recognized a Nebraska Club of Excellence.

“I enjoy working with the kids,” says Trina Brown. “As they learn new skills and interact in volunteer community projects, they really open up and come alive with all the possibilities in front of them. My favorite experience as a 4-H volunteer was when we made pillows as a group project. After finishing, I asked the 4-H’ers what they had learned. One girl raised her hand and said she learned it is much easier and faster just to buy a pillow. I had to smile at that! Valuable lesson learned.”

Congratulations to Trina. Volunteers like her are indeed the heart of 4-H.

Nominate your favorite 4-H volunteer by submitting the form available at http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h or at the extension office.

4-H/FFA Market Beef Weigh-In, Feb. 3

4-H/FFA market beef weight in will be held Thursday, Feb. 3, 6-8 p.m. at the Lancaster Event Center – Pavilion 3. Any market steer or heifer planning to show at county fair, state fair, or Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Livestock Show must weigh-in and get DNA processed at this time.

Crocheting Workshop, Feb. 5

All youth ages 8 and up (need not be enrolled in 4-H) are invited to learn how to crochet a dishcloth utilizing the single crochet stitch at a free basic crocheting workshop on Saturday, Feb. 5, 9 a.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherry Creek Road, Lincoln. All supplies will be provided.

Food and Nutrition Resource for 4-H Clubs

Are you interested in having hands-on nutrition projects brought to your club? A UNL dietetics major and former 4-H member is interested in working with 4-H clubs in the area of foods and nutrition. For more information, call Tracy at (402) 441-7180.

Food and Nutrition Resource for 4-H Clubs

4-H Horse Stampede, Feb. 19

The 4-H Horse Stampede will be held Saturday, Feb. 19 at the Animal Science Building on UNL East Campus. Lancaster County has several 4-H’ers competing in these statewide competitions. The schedule is as follows:

- Art Contest Judging and Display, 8:30 a.m.–2 p.m.
- Demonstration Contests, 8 a.m.
- Public Speaking Contests, 8:30 a.m.
- Horse Bowl, 1:2 p.m.

These are fun contests! I would highly encourage those of you who aren’t familiar with Stampede to stop in and see what it is all about.

Support our county 4-H’ers and see if the contest might be something you would enjoy doing in the future. These competitions do not require a horse.

Between Stampede events, you may want to check out the UNL Equestrian Team who will be hosting an intercollegiate show in the R.B. Warren Arena (also located in the Animal Science Building). Several former Lancaster 4-H’ers are on the UNL team!

No admission fee for either the Stampede or Equestrian Team show.

Now is a Good Time to Choose 4-H Diamond Clover Goals

The Nebraska 4-H Diamond Clover Program is a statewide program which encourages 4-H members to engage in a variety of projects and activities. Every 4-H’er who participates can earn recognition! Youth can progress from Level 1 up through Level 6.

At the beginning of the 4-H year, youth choose goals from a provided list and at the end of the 4-H year, fill out a report which documents their accomplishments. For each level, the Nebraska 4-H Diamond Clover program provides a list of age-appropriate activities, increasing in numbers and difficulty for each level.

For more information, go to http://4h.unl.edu/diamondclover or call (402) 441-7180.

4-H Youth Eat Up Equine Nutrition Clinic

Approximately 90 4-H members, their families, and leaders attended a clinic on equine nutrition held in December at the extension office. Jennifer Cusick-Rawlinson was lead clinician. Some of the areas covered include feeding options, deciding what to feed, body condition scoring, reading labels, cost saving tips, solving common equine nutrition problems, weighing feed samples, converting girth measurement to weight estimates, and completing a feed chart for horsemanship levels II and III. The clinic was followed by lunch.

R.B. Warren and Grand Island Saddle Club 4-H Scholarships Due March 1

One $500 scholarship and four $1,000 scholarships are available for 4-H’ers enrolled and active in the Nebraska 4-H Horse Program. For complete directions and applications go to http://go.unl.edu/4h4. Applications must be postmarked by March 1.

2011 Horsemanship Level Testing Dates

Mark your calendars! The 2011 group testing will be held at the Lancaster Event Center on the following dates:

- Tuesday, April 19, 6 p.m.
- Tuesday, May 3, 6 p.m.
- Tuesday, June 21, 6 p.m.
- Tuesday, June 28, 6 p.m.
- Tuesday, July 5, 6 p.m.
- Saturday, Oct. 1, 9 a.m.

Please RSVP at least by one week in advance with Marty at mcruickshan3@unl.edu or (402) 441-7180.
Lancaster County 4-H and 4-H Council invite ALL 4-H’ers, 4-H families and volunteers to

**4-H Achievement Night**

**Thursday, Feb. 10 • 6:30 p.m.**

**Lancaster Extension Education Center**

444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln

**Evening Starts With a Dessert Potluck**

Please bring a dessert to share (plates and utensils provided).

Lancaster County 4-H congratulates all 4-H youth who commit themselves to excellence!

4-H members, clubs and volunteers receiving awards, scholarships, or pins will be mailed detailed information.

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**Pillow Party, March 12**

All youth ages 8 and up (need not be enrolled in 4-H) are invited to learn beginning sewing skills and make a pillow at the Pillow Party on Saturday, March 12, 9 a.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln. Bring your sewing machine, basic sewing equipment (scissors, pins, measuring tape, etc.). Also bring 1/3 yard and 2/3 yard contrasting fabrics, pre-washed, 100% cotton (no plaids) and matching thread. Pillow forms provided. No cost to attend. Adults are welcome. Sign up by March 10 by calling (402) 441-7180. 4-H’ers may enter pillows at the county fair under 4-H Clothing - Sewing for Fun.

**Jammie Jamboree, April 2**

Learn basic sewing skills as part of the 4-H Clothing Level 1 project and make jammie bottoms on Saturday, April 2, 9 a.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln. Open to all youth (need not be in 4-H). Adults are welcome.

Bring your sewing machine, basic sewing equipment (scissors, pins, measuring tape, etc.), pull-on pajama bottom pattern (one simple pattern is Simplicity 3553), prefawned flannel or 100% cotton fabric (no one-way design fabrics or plaids) and matching thread. Also bring a sack lunch. Sign up by March 31 by calling (402) 441-7180. Jammie bottoms may be entered at the county fair under 4-H Clothing - Sewing for Fun.

**Windstream 4-H Camp Scholarship**

Thanks to the generosity of Windstream Communications, two Lancaster County 4-H members will receive full scholarships to attend a 4-H summer camp at the Eastern Nebraska 4-H Camp near Gretna! Applicants must be age 9 or older and currently enrolled in 4-H. Scholarship is based on need. Application deadline is May 1 — preference given to applications submitted by March 1. Applications are available at the extension office and at http://go.unl.edu/hpv. 

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**Spring Rabbit Show**

**Saturday, March 19, 9 a.m.**

**Location To Be Announced**

Open to all youth 8–18

**Awards will be given!**

CLASS II: Fancy Rabbits, Commercial Rabbits, Pet Class and Pee Wee Class.

**REGISTRATION FEES:** $2.50 per rabbit or cavy, $1 for showmanship.

**FREE CONTESTS:** Rabbit Quiz & Rabbit Races!

All rabbits must be tattooed in the left ear (available at the show). All rabbits must be brought in solid bottom cages which are leak-proof with a CLOSED, solid bottom.

For more information, call Rodney at (402) 782-2186 or Marty at (402) 441-7180

Sponsored by Lancaster County 4-H Rabbit VPS Corperation and UNL Extension Lancaster County

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**Clover College Instructors and Volunteers Needed**

4-H Clover College will be held June 14–17 at the Lancaster Extension Education Center. Clover College is four days of fun-filled, hands-on workshops for youth ages 6 and up. If you have workshop ideas, or if you would like to teach a workshop or volunteer to help, please contact Tracy at (402) 441-7180. All help is very much appreciated!

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**4-H Clubs Needed to Help Provide Booths at Kiwanis Karnival, April 9**

The annual Kiwanis Karnival, a FREE family event is sponsored by the Lincoln Center Kiwanis. This year, it will be held Saturday, April 9, 6–8 p.m. at Elliott Elementary School, 225 S. 26 Street, Lincoln. The Karnival features carnival type games for the kids, bingo for adults, prizes, snacks, fun, and fellowship. Lincoln Center Kiwanis has sponsored this event for over 50 years providing prizes and snacks. 4-H clubs are needed to provide carnival-type booths. This is a great community service and leadership activity for clubs. If your 4-H club or family would like to have a booth or for more information, call Lorene at (402) 441-7180. Come join the fun!

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**Volunteers Needed**

Instructors and Volunteers Needed

**Spring Rabbit Show**

**April 2**

**Location To Be Announced**

Register by March 1. Applications are available at the extension office and the deadline is May 1 — preference given to applications submitted by March 1. Applications are available at the extension office and at http://go.unl.edu/hpv. 

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**Speech Contest, May 1**

The 2011 4-H Speech Contest will be held Sunday, May 1, 1:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln. Register by April 25 by calling (402) 441-7180 or emailing dkarmazin2@unl.edu with your name, speech title & your age division. Contest divisions:

- **Clover Kid:** 5–7 years old, read or recite any short story, nursery rhyme, poem, pledge, etc.
- **Novice:** 8–9 years old, 2 minutes in length, any topic related to 4-H.
- **Intermediate:** 10–11 years old, 3–5 minutes in length, any topic about a 4-H experience.
- **Junior:** 12–13 years old, 3–5 minutes in length, encouraged to talk about a 4-H project you would like others to enroll in.
- **Senior:** 14–19, 5–8 minutes in length, a timely topic related to 4-H.

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**PSA Contest, Due April 25**

In the Public Service Announcement (PSA) Contest, 4-H’ers submit a 60 second “radio commercial” promoting 4-H. The PSA contest will be held via audio only (not in person). Submit a PSA via CD playable on any standard stereo equipment to extension by Monday, April 25. (New this year, no tapes please.) If you do not have the capabilities to record a PSA, contact extension to set up a recording time. Results and comment sheets will be handed out at the 4-H Speech Contest on Sunday, May 1.

State 4-H asks for PSAs to be non-county specific so winning PSAs can be aired on radio statewide (for example, say “call your local extension office”).

- All PSAs must use the state theme as the basis for their PSA. The 2011 PSA theme is “Taking the Lead”.
- All 4-H PSAs must include the following tag line within the last ten seconds of the PSA: “Learn more about the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension 4-H Youth Development Program at 4h.unl.edu and ‘Know How. Know Now.’” The tag line is included in the 60 second time limit. As always, background noises and sound effects are encouraged.
Lincoln's Free Tax Preparation and Filing

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) is a program developed and co-sponsored by the IRS with assistance from local coalitions which offers free tax help to low- to moderate-income individuals who need assistance preparing their federal and state tax returns. As part of local VITA efforts, the Lincoln Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Coalition led by Community Action Partnership of Lancaster and Saunders Counties, will provide free tax preparation services at several sites in Lincoln.

In 2010, the Lincoln EITC Coalition filed over 5,000 free tax returns which resulted in over $6 million in refunds to our local economy. Approximately 35% of those refunds (or over $2 million) was from the EITC.

The EITC is a special tax benefit for working people who earn low to moderate incomes. Updated for 2010: The maximum amount of income you can earn and still get the credit has increased, and you may have up to three qualifying children.

You may be able to take the EITC if:
- You have three or more qualifying children and your earned income was less than $43,352 ($48,362, if married filing jointly).
- You have two qualifying children and your earned income was less than $40,363 ($45,373, if married filing jointly).
- You have one qualifying child and your earned income was less than $35,535 ($40,545, if married filing jointly).
- OR
- You do not have a qualifying child and your earned income was less than $13,460 ($18,470, if married filing jointly).

Please note: if your tax return has transactions beyond the scope of the VITA volunteers’ training, VITA volunteers cannot prepare the return. In case of bad weather, please call the VITA site or tune into KEFOT 1240 AM for cancellations.

For more information about VITA sites in Lincoln, call 1-877-659-7870.

Lincoln VITA Sites and Hours

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites offer FREE tax preparation and filing of Federal and State of Nebraska returns Jan. 22-April 15 unless otherwise noted.

ANDERSON LIBRARY
3615 Turner Avenue
- Tuesdays, 4:30–7 p.m. (closed April 5)
- Wednesdays, 4:30–7 p.m. (closed March 23)
- Sundays, 1:30–4 p.m.

EISELEY LIBRARY
1530 Superior Street
- Mondays, 1–7 p.m. (closed Feb. 21)
- Thursdays, 1–7 p.m.

GOOD NEIGHBOR CENTER
2677 Y Street
- Tuesdays, 6–8:30 p.m. (Feb. 1, 8, 15 only)
- Sundays, 1–4 p.m. (Jan. 30, Feb. 6, 13 only)

INDIAN CENTER
1100 Military Road
- Mondays-Fridays by appointment, call (402) 438-5231 ext. 105

COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP
210 O Street
- Mondays, 5–7:30 p.m. (Jan. 24–April 11)
- Tuesdays, 5–7:30 p.m. (Jan. 23–Feb. 22)
- Wednesdays, 5–7:30 p.m. (Jan. 23–Feb. 22)
- Saturdays, 1–5 p.m. (Jan. 23–Feb. 22)

NEBRASKA EAST UNION
- Enter on Holdrege & 35th & follow signs
- Mondays, 5–8 p.m. (Jan. 24–Feb. 20)
- Tuesdays, 5–8 p.m. (Jan. 23–Feb. 20)
- Wednesdays, 5–8 p.m. (Jan. 26–Feb. 20)
- Saturdays, 1–5 p.m. (Jan. 22–Feb. 20)
- Sundays, 1–5 p.m. (Jan. 23–Feb. 20)

NEBRASKA UNION
14th & R
- Mondays, 5–8 p.m. (Feb. 28–March 9)
- Tuesdays, 5–8 p.m. (March 1–9)
- Wednesdays, 5–8 p.m. (March 2–9)
- Saturdays, 1–5 p.m. (Feb. 26–March 9)
- Sundays, 1–5 p.m. (Feb. 27–March 9)

WILLIAMS LIBRARY
at Arnold Elementary, NW 48th Street & West Cuming
- Tuesdays, 4–7 p.m. (Jan. 25–Feb. 22)
- Wednesdays, 4:30–7 p.m. (Jan. 26–Feb. 23)

Karen Madden sets eggs in an incubator for EGG Cam.

Karen Madden joins UNL Extension in Lancaster County in December as an extension assistant for the 4-H Embryology school enrichment program. She will coordinate the Embryology science unit in schools and give presentations in classrooms.

Each spring, approximately 4,000 Lancaster County third graders in 175 classrooms at 53 schools incubate, candle, and watch eggs hatch. During the 21 day incubation period, students care for chicken eggs and study the stages of the developing embryos. Students “candle” their eggs by holding a light to the egg to reveal a silhouette of the chick inside. Katie will also coordinate chicks hatching on EGG Cam, part of the Lancaster County Embryology Web site at http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/Embryology.

Prior to joining extension, Karen was a Family and Consumer Sciences middle school teacher in Lakewood, Colo. She has a BA in Consumer Affairs with a Business minor and an MA in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from Louisiana Tech University in Ruston, La.

University of Nebraska–Lincoln students are providing free tax preparation services at the UNL Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites, and have done so for the past four years. Free parking and childcare is also provided at the UNL sites.

Dr. Linda Moody, assistant director of Service-Learning, says, “Our students gain real world experience through this service opportunity. Not only do students learn tax law and how to complete tax returns, they learn from the community members as well. This valuable experience has helped students gain valuable work experience leading to internships and entry-level employment.”

In 2010, UNL student volunteers prepared 785 tax returns which generated $1,400,000, including $373,000 of Earned Income Tax Credit. The 26 student volunteers donated 1,200 hours to help low- and moderate-income families electronically file their returns. Those receiving refunds have said they plan to pay off bills, repair a car, or pay their mortgage.

The UNL students will prepare tax returns at the Nebraska East Union Jan. 22-Feb. 20 and at the Nebraska Union on city campus Feb. 26-March 9. The sites are open Saturday and Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. and Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday from 5 to 8 p.m.

UNL students are also providing expertise at six targeted sites.

What to Bring to Have Your Taxes Prepared at a VITA Site
- W-2’s from your employer, 1099’s for miscellaneous income, and W-2’s for foreign income
- 1099’s for interest, dividends, unemployment, retirement, and other income
- Social Security cards or ITIN letters (for you, your spouse, your children, and other dependents)
- Copy of last year’s tax return (very helpful)
- W-2’s from your employer, 1099’s for miscellaneous income
- Copy of last year’s tax return (very helpful)
- Statements of student loan interest, mortgage interest and property tax
- List of any other income and expenses

Caleb Pickard, a Physics/Philosophy Major from Bismarck, N.D. is one of several UNL students providing free tax preparation at the UNL sites.
**EXTENSION CALENDAR**

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

### January

24 Family & Community Education (FCE) Council Meeting .......................... 10 a.m.—Noon 
26 Family & Community Education (FCE) and Community Leader Training 
Lesson, “Healthy Meal Planning on a Budget” .......................... 1 p.m. 
27 Private Pesticide Applicator Training Session .......................... 8:30–11:30 a.m. 
29 Private Pesticide Applicator Training Session .......................... 8:30–11:30 a.m. 

### February

1 Initial Pesticide Training .......................... 8:30 a.m. 
2 Private Pesticide Applicator Training Session .......................... 6:30–9:30 p.m. 
3 Recertification Pesticide Training .......................... 9 a.m. 
4 H/FFA Beef Weigh In, Lancaster Event Center - Pav. 2 .......................... 6–8 p.m. 
5 H Basic Crocheting Workshop .......................... 9 a.m. 
10 H Achievement Night .......................... 6:30 p.m. 
11 Extension Board Meeting .......................... 8 a.m. 
13 H Teen Council Meeting .......................... 3 p.m. 
15 Guardian/Conservation Training .......................... 1:30–4:30 p.m. 
16 Parents Forever Class .......................... 9 a.m.—12:30 / 5:30–9 p.m. 
19 H Horse Stampede, UNL Animal Science Building .......................... 9 a.m. 
23 Family & Community Education (FCE) and Community Leader Training Lesson, “Ready to Learn Infant and Toddlers for Success!” .......................... 1 p.m. 
24 Initial Pesticide Training .......................... 8:30 a.m.

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**Lancaster Ag Society Seeks Nominations for Hall of Fame**

At the 2010 Super Fair, the Lancaster County Agricultural Society unveiled a new Ag Society Hall of Fame located at the Lancaster Event Center. This wall formally recognizes those individuals who have dedicated time and effort to the Lancaster County Agricultural Society beyond the normal volunteer hours and have made significant contributions to the establishment, development, advancement, improvement or improvement of the Lancaster County Fair. Last year’s inductees were Gordon Chapelle, Larry Hudkins, Franklin Manning, and Charlie Willnerd. If you know of a person who is deserving of this honor, please nominate them. Nomination forms and more information can be requested by calling the Lancaster Event Center at (402) 441-6045. Nomination forms will be due by May 1, 2011.

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**Horsin’ Around, Feb. 12–13**

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension is presenting the 18th Annual Horsin’ Around conference Feb. 12–13 at the R.B. Warren Arena in the Animal Science Complex on UNL East Campus. Clinicians are Shane Dowdy and Jamie Hartman. The clinic is open to participants of all ages. Adult registration is $30 for the weekend or $20 for one day. For youth 18 and under, registration is $20 for both days or $15 for one. Registration closes Feb. 7. If the clinic doesn’t sell out, adult registration will be available at the door for $40 for the weekend and $25 for one day — youth registration at the door will be $30 for the weekend and $20 for one day. For more information or to preregister, go to http://go.unl.edu/hsbe or call (402) 472-6411.

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**Master Conservationist Entries Due April 1**

Nebraska adults and youth in both rural and urban areas who have implemented soil and water conservation practices are eligible to enter the 2011 Master Conservationist Recognition program. The deadline for entries is April 1. There are categories for youth groups, and individuals, residences, communities, and private businesses as well as production agriculture (farming and ranching). Master Conservationist program brochures are available at the UNL Extension office and online at http://owh.com (click on the “In the Community” link).

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**Open House Events**

**RED LETTER DAY**

Monday, Feb. 21 — an all-day open house experience for high school seniors.

**JUNIOR WEDNESDAYS**

Wednesdays from March 2 to April 27 — a Husker Weekday tailored for juniors.

**BIG RED OPEN HOUSE**

March 7, April 15 or April 22 — Spend a day on campus learning more about academics, student life, scholarships, and Husker spirit!

**SUPER SATURDAY**

April 2 — A visit day built by students for students!

For more information or to register, see http://admissions.unl.edu

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**The Nebline**

Tie Nuisance is published monthly (except December). Mailed to more than 12,000 households in Lancaster County and can be read online at http://lancaster.unl.edu/nebline

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