3-1-2011

The NEBLINE, March 2011

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Connect, Learn, and Share
with Extension

Soni Cochran
UNL Extension Associate

For over a year, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County has been using social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. These sites give you an opportunity to connect, learn, and share with local extension staff and people with similar interests.

The quick rise of social networking isn’t surprising. Humans have always had a need to connect and talk with each other. And contrary to popular belief, technology isn’t restricting connections between people, but it is expanding them. It is just expanding our connections differently. When people connect through technology, their community and neighborhood is broadened and the pace of conversation certainly speeds up.

Just a few years ago, people were mainly using the Web to research and view information. Today, people are using their home computers, laptops, and mobile-based tools like cell phones for gathering news, finding entertainment, sharing ideas, photos, video, audio, and discussing information with other people.

When our 4-H Citizenship Workshop was asked to lead off for their educational trip to the east coast last summer, adult sponsors kept families informed by posting a daily blog online. A blog is similar to what you might put in a diary or journal. Family members could go online and read the blog describing group’s adventures and view photos. Parents could even post comments about the pictures or ask questions about what was happening on the trip.

During 4-H Embryology, when eggs are hatching in classrooms and on 4-H EGG Cam, Facebook users can log on and keep up on the action, ask questions and post their own photos. This was really helpful this past month when our Hatch Mates program was closed due to bad weather on the days chicks were hatching in third grade classrooms. Some teachers quickly emailed their students so families could still watch the eggs hatch online. Sure it wasn’t the same as watching the eggs hatch in their own classrooms, but it helped students share in the experience. One of the mom’s posted “Thanks for providing this webcast! My daughter has some eggs in her class that were supposed to hatch today but since there is no school, this allows her to see other hatch!”

YouTube is place where users upload, share, and view videos. On the local 4-H YouTube Channel, you’ll find videos to help youth learn more about their 4-H projects. For example, the UNL Animal Science Department worked with staff and a local 4-Her to develop a series of YouTube videos to help youth learn more about caring for and showing rabbits. A variety of 4-H contests and interview judging videos are also featured on the channel. These are terrific resources as families prepare for upcoming events.

If you are interested in healthy eating and buying foods locally, check out the nutrition channel for some educational, and entertaining, videos. There is also a channel featuring bagworms, millipedes, ants, and more.

Farmers are finding it out how social media can complement the work they do every day. From the seat of a combine, a farmer can use wireless technology to connect with people and experts they’ve never been able to reach quickly before. Farmers are helping educate people and supporting the agricultural industry with these new online tools. For example, through #AgChat on Twitter and other social sharing sites, farmers are:

• sharing information and ideas with other farmers, ranchers, and extension specialists
• marketing farm and ranch products.
• connecting and interacting with consumers, creating conversations and relationships with them.

As cell phone users become smart phone users, technology is becoming more mobile. It is easier for people to use their phones to capture photos and email them to our office to staff identify their plants and pests. Instead of having to be in the office or at your home computer to look up nutrition information on the Internet, you can now do it on your handheld mobile device.

Globally, people have used their cell phones and mobile devices to share news and photos about major events before the news even hits the press. Everyday people are becoming important links to information. The Haiti earthquake, Fort Hood shooting, and recent demonstrations in Cairo, Egypt were documented in real time by people who were on the scene posting photos and sharing their experiences on Twitter and Facebook — even before most of us heard about it on the evening news. Social media has quickly become the first place where millions of people post and react to large-scale catastrophes and important news.

It isn’t just young adults and students using technology to connect, share, and learn. What’s fascinating is the expanding demographics of people using social networking. According to a 2010 Pew Research Center report, the fastest growing group of people using social networking is adults ages 65 and older, followed by those ages 50 to 64.

The U.S. Administration on Aging has even developed a new guide, “Staying Connected: Technology Options for Older Adults,” to help older adults adapt to social networking. This free guide is available by calling the Eldercare Locator at (800) 677-1116 or going to http://go.usa.gov/734.

Of course there are still people who remain offline, the most significant group being our elders, but even if they choose not to take part in the Internet, many of them have second-degree internet access. Their loved ones and neighbors are online. How many times has my mom asked me to look something up for her? Plenty! Just as she enjoys listening to me show her how she can video chat with her granddaughter who is stationed in Iraq — for free, using Skype on a computer.

Facebook is a popular free social networking Web site that allows registered users to create profiles, upload photos and video, send messages, and keep in touch with friends, family, and colleagues.

Like us on Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/4HEGGCam (4-H EGG Cam)

Twitter is a social networking and microblogging service that allows you to answer the question, “What are you doing?” by sending short text messages 140 characters in length, called “Tweets,” to your friends, or “followers.” Follow us on Twitter:

http://twitter.com/UNL_LancasterCo
http://twitter.com/LancasterCo, 4-H (H)

YouTube is a video-sharing Web site where users upload, share, and view videos. The amount of content on YouTube is amazing. Users are currently uploading 24 hours of video to this social video site every 60 seconds.

Check us out on YouTube:

http://www.youtube.com/UNL_LancasterCo
http://www.youtube.com/user/4HLaCasterNE (4-H)
http://www.youtube.com/user/alicehenneman (nutrition and food)

For a list of more UNL Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR) and UNL Extension research, and teaching social network sites, go to http://edmedia.unl.edu/social-media
**Tips for Optimizing Your Fertilizer Investment**

According to Gary Hergett, UNL Extension Soil Specialist, fertilizers costs will be substantially higher in 2010 then they’ve been in the past couple years. Following these tips can help you get the most for your fertilizer investment.

- Follow your local soil testing program to know macro and micronutrient levels.
- Take deep soil samples for residual nitrate to fine-tune your N-rate for corn.
- Use the most efficient methods to apply phosphorus and nitrogen fertilizers.
- Set realistic yield goals. Expected yield is the major factor in determining N rate for corn. Use a five-year average corn yield plus 5 percent to account for hybrid and management improvements.
- Credit nitrogen from previous crop residue of soybean and alfalfa (legume) crops. Soil tests will not show legume or crop residue credits, but it will be available during the growing season.
- Value and use manure and biosolids sources properly. These organic fertilizers are an excellent source of N, P, and micronutrients.
- Understand not all fertilizer recommendations are the same. UNL fertilizer recommendations may seem conservative compared with some commercial labs, but they are based on research and on-farm verification. They will usually be the most economical rates, even for high yield situations.
- Consider replicated strip trials to determine the effect of lower or higher rates on yield.
- Comparison shop. Look at different products and do your "fertilizer arithmetic" to compare the actual cost per pound of nutrient.

**Nutrient Management Workshop, March 10**

To learn how to use the above tips to reduce fertilizer costs, come to a Nutrient Management Workshop at 2 p.m. on March 10 at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln. UNL Extension Educators Tom Dorn and Barb Ogg will discuss these and other tips to reduce fertilizer costs. No cost to attend, but you are encouraged to preregister by calling (402) 441-7180 before March 8.

**Controlling Winter Annual Bromes with Herbicides**

Early weeds like downy brome, cheatgrass, and wild oats can be a big problem in pastures. They reduce pasture quality and carrying capacity.

**Warm-season On Red Pastures**

In pastures dominated by warm-season grasses, one control option is to spray one pint of glyphosate, like Roundup®, per acre as soon as weedy bromes start to green up in the spring before warm-season grasses start growing. This will kill most of the downy brome and will knock out other early weeds like bluegrass without harming warm-season grasses. Another option is to use 4-6 ounces of Plateau herbicide, which will also provide some residual herbicide activity for later-emerging weeds as well.

**Cool-Season Pastures**

Weed control in cool-season grass pastures is tougher. Both glyphosate and 2,4-D can be used on cool-season grasses. Gramoxone is a better choice, but don’t spray until the weedy bromes are about to form seed. Always make sure the grass is growing before spraying. If you spray too early, the grass may not grow back for several years. Once you’ve gotten rid of the weeds, be sure to graze the pasture to maintain the vigor and competitiveness of the desired grasses.

Source: Bruce Anderson, Extension Forage Specialist

**Soil Fertility – Liming**

When a testing lab analyzes a soil sample, the test report shows one number for pH and another number for buffer pH. pH is a measure of the acidity or alkalinity of a soil. When the water (H₂O) in the soil) contains equal numbers of hydrogen ions (H⁺) ions as hydroxyl (OH⁻) ions, the soil is neutral and the pH of the soil is 7.0. When there are more H⁺ ions than OH⁻ ions, the soil is acidic. When there are more OH⁻ ions than H⁺ ions, the soil is alkaline. The scale is logarithmic. That is to say a soil with a pH of 6.0 is 10 times more acidic than a soil with a pH of 7.0. A soil with a pH of 5.0 is 10 times more acidic than a soil with a pH of 6.0 and 100 times more acidic than a soil with a pH of 7.0.

There are two types of soil acidity: one is created naturally within the soil and the other is due to the addition of acid or non-acidic substances. Acidity can be described as the ability of the soil to neutralize or to be neutralized by acids added to it. Several factors influence soil acidity including factors affecting soil pH, such as: neutralization by leaching, and the net addition of soluble aluminum concentration in the soil. Two soils can have the same measured pH, but could require different amounts of lime to correct the change of active pH back to a more neutral value.

A chemical test using a buffer, is performed to determine the amount of calcium carbonate equivalent (CCE) necessary to raise the active pH to a desired level. The change in the pH of the buffer can be measured and correlated to the amount of lime needed per acre to obtain the same results in the field. This is reported on the soil test report as buffer pH. A rule of thumb for buffer pH values is, for every 0.1 point below pH 7.0, it takes about 1,000 pounds of lime per acre to raise the pH one point. For example, a soil with a buffer pH of 6.3 would require (7.0 - 6.3) = 0.7 x 1,000 pounds per acre = 700 pounds of lime. For every 1.0 point below pH 7.0, it takes about 2,000 pounds of lime per acre to raise the pH to 7.0. When the lime is incorporated deeper than seven inches, larger amounts of lime are required to neutralize the acidity because they are affected by the larger mass of soil.

An active pH of 6.5 is considered ideal. This is the value where most of the essential nutrients for plant growth (Phosphorus, Copper, Zinc, Nitrogen, Sulfur, Calcium, Magnesium, Potassium, Molybdenum, and Boron) are in forms in the soil most available to plants. As active pH values drop below 5.5, all of the nutrients mentioned above become progressively less available to plants whereas Iron, Manganese, and Aluminum are more soluble (Aluminum is not a plant nutrient, but can be toxic to plants when present in high concentrations) so is often reported when soil pH is low.

Southeastern Nebraska is fortunate to have lime deposits which are mined and used for agriculture and industrial uses. Since it can take several thousand pounds of lime per acre to neutralize 1.0 point of pH, the 2,000 pounds of lime per acre used relatively close by reduces the freight cost and saves local producers money.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

UNL’s new online publication “Answers to Questions About Lime Application Scales” (303) available at http://lancaster.unl.edu/ or online at http://lancaster.unl.edu/ ag/Forinfo/303-03.pdf

**Leasing Pastures**

- **Rental by the AUM**
  - A major advantage to the landowner is in rental production is lower, the tenant has incentive to balance the number of animals grazing the pasture to match the forage produced. This preserves the health of the pasture over the long term. The disadvantage to the landowner is not knowing what the income will be until the end of the season. The major advantage to the tenant is they only pay for the time cattle are in the pasture. When pasture is short, they can move animals and stop paying rent. The disadvantage to this rental method is the need to keep records of the dates when cattle are brought in and taken out and the number of cattle on the pasture at any one time so an accurate calculation of the total AUMs utilized for the season can be calculated.

- **Issues to Negotiate**
  - How many head can the tenant bring in (usually specified only when renting by the acre).
  - Lease dates — earliest in spring — latest in fall animals can be on the pasture.
  - Livestock water — who is responsible for monitoring drinking water and salt.
  - If roads need to be pumped, is the landowner compensated for electricity to operate the pump.
  - Fence repair — who supplies labor.
  - Weed control — who supplies labor and/or herbicides or mowing.
  - Weed control — if road sides need mowed, which party is responsible.

**For additional information: liability and hazard (lightning).**
Bed Bug Prevention

Barb Ogg
UNL Extension Educator

Bed bugs are on everybody’s mind it seems. Some people call the extension office and want to know how to deal with an infestation. I wrote last month’s feature, “Got Bed Bugs? Don’t Panic.” They are immunity from getting bed bugs for those people. (If you missed it, you can obtain it at http://lancaster.unl.edu/press.)

However, many people call to find out how to make sure they don’t get bed bugs. This article focuses on this topic.

If you live alone in a single-family home; don’t go anywhere, do anything outside your home, never buy used furniture, and don’t allow visitors into your home, it’s unlikely you’ll ever get bed bugs. That’s because bed bugs are hitchhikers, traveling from infested places to other locations in/on objects people move from place to place.

In understanding how to prevent bed bugs, it’s important to recognize locations or situations where you are most at risk of picking up bed bugs. It is also helpful to recognize locations where the chance of encountering bed bugs is very low. By recognizing these differences, we can still go about our regular activities, taking precautions when we know bed bugs are likely to be a problem and not worrying about the improbable.

People who live in, or frequent, multi-family dwellings are at greater risk of getting bed bugs because of the greater number of people who live there or spend time there. Bed bugs are more likely to be in your bedroom if you share a living space with others and the greater the chance someone will bring bed bugs into your dwelling, the greater the chance someone will bring them inside. Once inside a high-density dwelling, bed bugs can spread between units, especially if infestations are unrecognized and untreated.

Tips for Travelers

If you live in a single-family home, the most likely way you will encounter bed bugs is when you travel and stay in another location away from the house.

• Be mindful of where you place camera cases, computer cases, purses, or backpacks. These cannot be run through a dryer, however. At a recent bed bug seminar, it was found inside a cell phone. Do not place any insecticidal sprays on or in anything.

• If you have a job where you go into other people’s homes, you could accidentally bring bed bugs home with you. Don’t take any nonessential items into other homes. Don’t sit on upholstered furniture; the kitchen table is a better choice. When you get home, remove clothing and run through a dryer for 30 minutes.

• Be careful with your coats and jackets. Never leave them on someone’s couch or bed. If you are having a party in your home, you can lay guest’s coats in a large plastic bag. When you are ready to leave, take the bag with you.

What about wearing bed bugs? If you are buying new clothes, you don’t need to do anything about them. Run them through a dryer for 30 minutes.

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Avoid oversized portions

People eat and drink more when they are given larger portions. Downsize your portion size. Eat off smaller plates and/or serve smaller portions at home. When eating out, order a small-sized option when possible, share a meal, or take home part of the meal. Consider asking for the to-go box right away and put half the meal away so you can’t see it. Review the calorie content of foods and beverages offered and choose lower-calorie options. Calorie information may be available on menus, in a pamphlet, on food wrappers, or online.

2. Foods to Increase

Make half your plate fruits and vegetables

Eat a variety of vegetables, especially dark-green, red, and orange vegetables, and cooked dry beans and peas. As a general guideline, your plate should contain half fruits and vegetables. Divide the other half between a protein and a grain source. Make half your grains whole.

Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk

Increase your intake of fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products, such as milk, yogurt, cheese, or fortified soy beverages. If you are drinking whole milk, gradually switch to lower fat options. If you are drinking whole milk, go to 2%, and move on down to 1%, or fat-free milk.

Lower fat milk provides the same nutrients as higher fat milk, but is lower in calories.

3. Foods to Reduce

Compare sodium in foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals — and choose the foods with lower nutrients

A strong body of evidence supports that as sodium intake for adults decreases, so does blood pressure. There is moderate evidence the same is true for children. The key recommendations for sodium are as follows: Reduce daily sodium intake to less than 2,300 mg; further reduce intake to 1,500 mg among persons who are 51 and older and those of any age who are African American or have hypertension, diabetes, or chronic kidney disease.

All adults should consider one of our very best sources of sodium. The 1,500 mg recommendation applies to about half of the U.S. population, including children, and the majority of adults.

Check the Nutrition Facts label on foods for sodium content.

Drink water instead of sugar drinks

Added sugars contribute an average of 16 percent of the total calories in American diets. As a percent of calories from total added sugars, a major source of added sugars in the diets of Americans is soda, energy drinks, and sports drinks (36% of added sugar intake).

Strong evidence shows children and adolescents who consume more sugar-sweetened beverages have higher body weight compared to those who drink less, and moderate evidence also supports this relationship in adults. Sugar-sweetened beverages provide excess calories and few essential nutrients to the diet and should only be consumed when nutrient needs have been met and without exceeding daily calorie limits.

Reduce the intake of sugar drinks by drinking fewer sugar-sweetened beverages and/or consuming smaller portions. Substitute water and other beverages with few or no calories.

Source:
President’s View — Irene’s Items

Irene Colborn
FCE Council Chair

After having worked for the Nebraska School Activities Association (NSAA) for 25 years, I always think of March as being High School Boys and Girls Basketball Tournaments and sometimes snow storms as well. There were times when a few teams had to stay in Lincoln because they were unable to travel home. March also brings spring. How we will look forward to those days again this year. However I don’t mind the excuse to stay in; I can always find a book to read.

We have met with Marge Dudley from Omaha, State FCE President, on planning the State Convention in Lincoln on Sept. 22–24. My “item” — whatever happens, losers lot things happen.

FCE News & Events

Leader Training Lesson, “Brain Blitz,” March 23

The FCE and Community Leader Training lesson “Brain Blitz” will be Wednesday, March 23, 1 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherry Creek Road. Extension Educator Lorene Barios will present the lesson. Participants will be able to identify differences between typical age-related and more serious changes in mental functioning. Identify health and lifestyle practices maximizing a person’s ability to maintain the enhanced mental functioning, regardless of age. Identify and practice techniques to simulate mental functioning. Learn memory tools and triggers to trigger memory. If you are not an FCE member and would like to attend, call Pam at (402) 441-7180, so information packets can be prepared.

FCE Council Meeting, April 4

Note date change — the next FCE Council meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 4, 12:30 p.m. at Greenfield’s Pancake House & Restaurant, 87th St. and Hwy 2.

Save the Dates

• July 7 — Sizzlin’ Summer Sampler
• Oct. 17 — FCE Achievement Night

FCE Scholarship Applications Due

May 1

A $400 scholarship provided by the Lancaster County FCE Council 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 2011, or who have completed two quarters of study in a vocational school. Applications are available at the extension office and online at http://lancaster.unl.edu/home/fce. Deadline is May 1.

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Poison Prevention Week

Children At Fast - Do So Poisons

National Poison Prevention Week, March 13–19, is celebrated to help educate and inform consumers of the dangers associated with unintentional poisonings. How safe is your home? Have you taken the precautions necessary to keep items that may be poisonous out of the reach of children? Many homes who only have children as occasional visitors forget about how inquisitive children are. Unintentional poisonings occur to more than 1.2 million children five and under yearly. Young children are curious and use their home environment as a classroom — a place to learn and explore. Exploring for younger children is often done by mouthing objects which puts them at greater risk of unintentional poisonings. For young children who are unable to read, a bottle of orange-scented household cleaner can be mistaken for orange juice; the medicine in the pill container can look like small toys; and bulbs of oil which can be deadly, if ingested, can resemble a clear drink.

Every day thousands of new parents assume the responsibility of caring for and protecting a child. Many of these first-time caregivers are unaware of the dangers of unintentional poisonings often related to medicines and household products commonly found in the home, such as personal care products, over-the-counter pain relievers, and cleaning substances.

To prevent these incidents, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) recommends the following safety steps:

• Use child-resistant packaging properly by closing the container securely after each use. Some products come in child-resistant blister labels, which avoid the need to re-seal.
• Call (800) 222-1222 immediately, in case of poisoning.
• When products are in use, never let young children out of your sight, even if you must take them along when answering the phone or doorbell.
• Keep items in original containers.
• Leave the original labels on all products, and read the label before using to understand correct use and dosage.

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Bake and Take Month Is Good Community Service Project

March is Bake and Take Month. Begun in 1970, Bake and Take is observed annually on the last Friday and Saturday of March. Many organizations participate in Bake and Take Days as a community service project to demonstrate their care and concern for the elderly or shut-ins in their communities. Individuals can use this opportunity to do something special for a teacher, neighbor, or friend. Nebraska Wheat recommends participants obtain permission from shelterers, nursing homes, or other institutions before delivering baked goods.

Contact Nebraska Wheat at

Wheat.board@nebraska.gov.

Nebraska Wheat offers recipes booklets and stickers free of charge to you for your participation in the event. This year’s recipes include Apple Ice Cream Muffins and Cherry Almond Cookies. The recipes include nutritional information. Recipes are also on the website at www.nebraskawheat.com. Contact Nebraska Wheat at (402) 471-2358 or email wheat.board@nebraska.gov.
Hints for Starting Transplants at Home

Mary Jane Frogge, UNL Extension Associate

Starting flower and vegetable transplants at home can be fun. Growing quality transplants requires good seed, a sterile, well-drained growing medium, proper temperature, good moisture conditions and adequate light. Since the home is usually not the best environment for growing transplants, problems occasionally develop.

Poor or erratic germination of seed may be caused by improper planting, for example, planting too deep. Uneven moisture and cool temperatures can also cause problems. Medium to large seeds are sown at a depth of two times their minimum diameter. Fine seed is usually dusted on the surface of the seedbed. Cool potting mix temperatures, below 70°F, delay germination. Maintaining uniform germination temperature and even moisture conditions is critical for rapid, uniform germination.

Damping-off, caused by several fungi, can cause serious plant loss. Seedlings may develop water-soaked spots on their stems near the soil surface, then collapse and die. Environmental conditions usually associated with damping-off are a poorly drained potting soil and over-watering. Damping-off can be prevented by using clean containers, a sterile, well-drained potting mix, and by following good cultural practices. Previously used containers should be washed in soapy water, then disinfected by soaking in a solution containing one part chlorine bleach and nine parts water. Flower and vegetable seed need an evenly moist potting mix for good germination.

Tall, spindly growth is a common problem when growing transplants indoors. Poor or insufficient light, excessive watering, excessive fertilization, and crowded growing conditions are factors which contribute to spindly growth. It is best to place the seedlings under artificial light. A standard fluorescent shop fixture with one cool and one warm fluorescent tube works fine. For best results, the lights should be approximately 1 inch above the seedlings. Raise the light as the seedlings grow. Leave the lights on 12 to 16 hours a day.

When the first pair of “true leaves” appear, thin the seedlings to the recommended time to get the best control of annual weeds. The month of March is too early and the recommended target time to apply pre-emergent on the lawn at the beginning of April. Keeping an eye on the current soil temperature in Lincoln, NE is important in determining the best time to apply pre-emergent.

Starting in June, check for signs of rust. Remove any surface rust with steel wool. If you have not done it already, check stored tools and outdoor furniture for signs of rust. Remove any surface rust with steel wool. If you have not already, check stored tools and outdoor furniture for signs of rust. Remove any surface rust with steel wool.

Buy a notebook and use it to keep all your gardening information. List what you plant in the garden. Include the name of seed companies, plant name, variety, planting date, and harvest date. During the summer, do not plow your garden when the soil is wet. It will form clods which will be impossible to break up and interfere with the process of the soil drying. Plan your vegetable garden on a sheet of paper to utilize the space most efficiently. Remember to rotate the vegetables in the garden to benefit this plant despite a nice producer on a tidy low-growing, determinate bush variety.

All this information will be helpful in planning future gardens.

Tomato ‘Lizzano’

‘Lizzano’ is a vigorous semi-determinate tomato variety with a low growing, trailing habit excellent for growing in patio containers or hanging baskets.

In the garden, some staking will be necessary. The durable, appealing and is ideal for painting or carving. The strong durable stem produces small-sized, 6 to 7 pound fruits and is very uniform in size and shape. Smooth deep orange skin with distinctive grooves gives a very classy appearance to fall decorations and is ideal for painting or carving. The strong durable stem produces small-sized, 6 to 7 pound fruits and is very uniform in size and shape. Smooth deep orange skin with distinctive grooves gives a very classy appearance to fall decorations and is ideal for painting or carving. The strong durable stem produces small-sized, 6 to 7 pound fruits and is very uniform in size and shape. Smooth deep orange skin with distinctive grooves gives a very classy appearance to fall decorations and is ideal for painting or carving. The strong durable stem produces small-sized, 6 to 7 pound fruits and is very uniform in size and shape. 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This report highlights the Noxious Weed Program over the past two decades and the City of Lincoln’s Weed Abatement Program since 1996 when the Weed Control Authority began its administration.

The County Commissioners serve as the Lancaster County Weed Control Authority. Currently Brent Meyer serves as the superintendent and supervises a seasonal staff of six weed inspectors with the assistance of Chief Inspector Barb Frazier and Julie Manske, Account Clerk.

The County Commissioners serve as the Lancaster County Weed Control Authority. Currently Brent Meyer serves as the superintendent and supervises a seasonal staff of six weed inspectors with the assistance of Chief Inspector Barb Frazier and Julie Manske, Account Clerk.

The Weed Control Authority is responsible for implementation of the Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Act throughout Lancaster County. The authority has also provided the inspection and administration of the City of Lincoln’s Weed Abatement Program since entering into an interlocal agreement with the city in 1996.

Staff Changes
Superintendent of 20 Years Retires
Russell Shultz, 76, retired at the end of last year after two decades as the county’s top weed guy. It will be his second try at retirement. In 1990, he ended a 34-year career with the USDA Soil Conservation Service, now called the Natural Resources Conservation Service, retiring as Assistant State Conservationist for programs.

As Lancaster County’s Weed Control Superintendent, he oversaw 537,000 acres — the entire county for noxious weed control. He began supervising the City of Lincoln’s Weed Abatement Program in 1997 as a result of an interlocal agreement between the county and city.

During the 20-year period, many improvements were implemented, including:
- Web-based database used by staff to store all the inspections and related information to generate all needed reports and forms; with field data entry by inspectors using personal digital assistants (PDAs).
- A database to help the public with information, map of noxious weeds, weed complaints, search of all active inspections, position of a weed specialist, weed weed special assessments, etc.
- Weed awareness campaign, including an annual Weed Awareness insert in University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County’s The Nebraska, which has improved voluntary compliance of landowners.
- Use of surplus sheriff’s cars for weed management and purchasing new vehicles.
- See article “20 Years in Review” for more results.
- Shultz was active in many statewide, regional, and national weed organizations, task forces, and planning committees. His accomplishments include:
  - Helped the Nebraska Weed Control Association (NWCA) to become a strong and effective leader in noxious weed control.
  - Developed a strong relationship with the Unicameral Ag Committee resulting in the riparian vegetation management grant program, emergency designation of noxious weeds, project general notice, etc.
  - Participated in the development of www.neuseemakeupr.org online weed management system and grants for its update.
  - continued on back page of Weed Awareness
Phragmites forms dense stands which include both live stems and standing dead stems from previous year’s growth. Leaves are elongate and typically 1–1½ inches wide at their widest point. Flowers form bushy panicles in late-July and August and usually purple or golden color. As seeds mature, the panicles begin to look “fluffy” due to the hairs on the seeds and they take on a gray sheen. Below ground, Phragmites forms a dense network of roots and rhizomes which can go down several feet. The plant spreads horizontally by sending out rhizome runners which can grow 10 feet or more in a single growing season if conditions are optimal. Once Phragmites invades a site, it quickly can take over riparian and standing water, crowding out native plants and altering wildlife habitat. Its high biomass blocks light to other plants and occupies all the growing space below ground so plant communities can turn into a Phragmites monoculture very quickly. Phragmites can spread both by seed dispersal and by vegetative spread via fragments of rhizomes breaking off and transported elsewhere. New populations of the introduced type may appear sparse for the first few years of growth, but due to the plant’s rapid growth rate, they will typically form a pure stand choking out other vegetation very quickly.

Weed Awareness

Learn to Recognize Lancaster County’s Noxious Weeds

Noxious weed is a legal term used to denote a destructive or harmful weed for the purpose of regulation. The Director of Agriculture establishes which plants are noxious. These non-native plants compete aggressively with desirable plants and vegetation. Failure to control noxious weeds in this state is a serious problem which is detrimental to the production of crops and livestock, and to the welfare of residents of this state. Noxious weeds may also devalue land and reduce tax revenue.

Japanese Knotweed

Nebraska’s newest noxious weed is the knotweed family. We would like reports of any wild sightings or ornamental plantings. See next page.

Saltcedar

A Nebraska noxious weed, saltcedars are still rare in Lancaster County, with 9 total sites found in 2010. Only 7 were wild infestations. The other 2 were ornamental plantings.

Most saltcedars, or tamarisks, are deciduous shrubs or small trees growing 12–15 feet in height and forming dense thickets. Saltcedars are characterized by slender branches and gray-green foliage. The bark of young branches is smooth and reddish-brown. As the plants age, the bark becomes brownish-purple, ridged and furrowed. Leaves are scale-like, about 1/16-inch long and overlap each other along the stem. They are often encrusted with salt secretions. From March to September, large numbers of pink to white flowers appear in dense masses on 2-inch long spikes at the branch tips.

Weed Control Resources

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension’s current Guide for Weed Management in Nebraska (EC130) is the Nebraska Department of Agriculture’s (NDA) official reference for the herbicide control of noxious weeds. The guide has a special section on noxious weeds prepared in cooperation with NDA. This section provides information options for herbicide control for each noxious weed. Cost for printed book is $10 plus tax or it can be viewed online free.

UNL Extension and the NDA have developed a series of free publications on the biology, identification, distribution, and control of the state’s noxious weeds.

• Canada Thistle (EC171)
• Flanneless Thistle (EC172)
• Spotted & Diffuse Knapweed (EC173)
• Leafy Spurge (EC174)
• Musk Thistle (EC175)
• Purple Loosestrife (EC176)
• Saltcedar (EC164)
• Common Reed (Phragmites) (EC166)

These UNL Extension publications can be obtained at County Weed Control offices, extension offices, or viewed online at www.ianrpubs.unl.edu.

Lancaster County’s Invasive and Noxious Weed Alert List

This list focuses on invasive and noxious weeds — rare to nonexistent in the county — posing the greatest threat.

Japanese Knotweed (Fallopia japonica)

This is a noxious weed which has been found in clusters of 2–4, from the axis of the upper and median leaves. Sericea lespedeza is primarily a threat to pastures and CRP. Once it gains a foothold, it can crowd other plants and develop an extensive seed bank in the soil, ensuring its long residence at a site. Established dense stands of lespedeza and its high tannin content make it unpalatable to native wildlife as well as livestock.

Saltcedar (Hyphaene salicornia)

Spotted and Diffuse Knapweed (Centaurium diffusum)

Sericea Lespedeza (Lespedeza sericea)

Weeds

Common Reed (Phragmites) (EC166)

• Purple Loosestrife (EC177)
• Musk Thistle (EC176)
• Leafy Spurge (EC174)
• Spotted & Diffuse Knapweed (EC173)
• Flanneless Thistle (EC172)
• Canada Thistle (EC171)
Weed Awareness

Knotweed Family is Nebraska’s Newest Noxious Weed

All potentially invasive members of the knotweed family have been designated a Nebraska noxious weed. These invasive weeds are considered to be some of the worst in the world. They now occupy site(s) every 10km of England. There has been a more rapid spread in the United States. They are now found in 42 states with only a few sites detected in Nebraska. This early designation in Nebraska will allow us an opportunity to eradicate the small infestations detected and to stop the sale of plants on the ornamental market to prevent major infestations of riparian areas and streambeds across the state.

This designation includes Japanese knotweed and giant knotweed, including any cultivars and hybrids. There are several Japanese knotweed cultivars developed for the ornamental market included in this designation since they can contribute to the Japanese knotweed invasion by providing pollen necessary for Japanese knotweed to produce viable seed. Two of the cultivars are being sold in Nebraska: Pink Fleece Flower and Variegated Fleece Flower.

There are several more cultivars available across the country including Compacta, Crimson Beauty, Devon Cream, Milk Boy, and others. If you have any of these cultivars, they are included in the noxious weed designation and are required to be controlled.

Weed Risk Assessment
An assessment was made of Japanese knotweed and it was found to be very high risk to establish, spread, and cause harm in the state. It has the potential to invade all riparian areas in the state as well as establishing in 55% of the state’s upland areas receiving over 20-inches of rainfall.

It threatens open and riparian areas where it spreads rapidly and forms dense near-monoculture stands by reducing species diversity, altering habitat for wildlife, increasing the risk of flooding, and river bank erosion. It’s preferred habitat is of flooding, and river bank for wildlife, increasing the risk of species diversity, altering habitat monoculture stands by reducing species diversity and profusely branched. It’s spreading rapidly and forms dense near-riparian areas where it spreads receiving over 20-inches of rainfall.

There will be planned ongoing surveillance across the state.

Prevent New Infestations by Blocking Invasion Pathways
Small segments of the plant are able to regenerate into new plants. These plant segments may be transported to new sites via water and regenerate new plants on the banks of streams. These plant segments may be transported to new sites by foot traffic, equipment, mowing, and improper disposal of vegetation. Sexual reproduction is also possible in the United States as evidenced by viable seeds collected from two Japanese knotweed sites in Lincoln. The seeds move easily by water and wind.

Eradicate Any Plants Found or Report to Weed Control Authority
Timing is key to eradicating knotweed. Treat from July 1 to the first killing frost when carbohydrates produced in the leaves are moved to the rhizomes for growth and storage. Foliar applied herbicides move through the plant with the carbohydrates.

For Small Sites and Ornamental Plantings:
1. Cut the stems about two-inches above ground level. Immediately apply a 25% solution of glyphosate (e.g., Roundup®, or use Rodeo® if applying in or near wetland areas) and water to the cross-section of the stem.

For Larger Sites:
Some products may not be available in small quantities.
1. Apply two quarts per acre of imazapyr (e.g., Arsenal®, or use Habitat® if applying in or near wetland areas), use non-ionic surfactants or methylated seed oil (MSO) (consult label) or.
2. Apply two quarts per acre of Garlon 3A, use non-ionic surfactants (consult label) or.
3. Apply one quart per acre of glyphosate (e.g., Roundup®, or use Rodeo® if applying in or near wetland areas), use non-ionic surfactants (consult label).


Provide Follow-up
To prevent re-establishment, continue with follow-up maintenance annually. It is very important to keep plants and wild sites controlled and kept from growing.

We Need Everyone’s Cooperation
Everyone’s cooperation is needed in preventing new infestations, spotting new infestations, taking actions needed to assure eradication with follow-up to prevent re-establishment. This early vigilance and action will prevent the potential harm and huge cost of controlling new, established stands of the knotweed family. Contact your local county weed control authority for assistance and information.
New Approach for Designating Noxious Weeds

The Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Association (NWCA) — which consists of all county weed superintendents — and the Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) — which regulates the Noxious Weed Control Act in Nebraska — have worked together to create and implement a new approach to designing new noxious weeds.

This new approach is proactive and addresses all those with an interest and/or responsibility in preventing and controlling invasive plants that have a high potential to enter, spread, and cause harm in the state. It is a process that identifies these high risk invaders, designating them noxious before they enter the state or soon after they enter the state, so they can be detected, eradicated, and implement a strategy to contain large establishments and place priority on eradicating all small, new infestations spreading from the established infestations. This new approach includes:

1. Noxious weeds designation of highly invasive plants in early invasion stage.
2. Control strategies for each state and county noxious weed.

Noxious Weed Designation

The NDA has revised the Noxious Weed Program, procedures, and policies to provide the following designation process:

1. Nebraska Invasive Species Council (NISC) — which develops invasive species management and research across the Nebraska for the prevention and detection of invasive plant and animal species — develops and maintains lists of invasive weeds (replaces the previous watch list).
2. NWC prioritizes the species on these lists.
3. NWC carries out an assessment of the weed risk potential of the highest-priority weeds from each listing using the federal Animal Plant and Health Inspection Service’s (APHIS) weed risk assessment model.
4. NWCA reviews the species rated as having a high risk to enter, spread, and cause harm in the state and recommend the species they feel should be designated noxious and/or be quarantined to the Nebraska Noxious Weed Advisory Council — which is appointed by the governor.
5. The Nebraska Noxious Weed Advisory Committee reviews the recommendation and determines whether to forward it to the director of the NDA.
6. The director of the NDA then makes a decision on this recommendation. He may reject the recommendation, make a temporary designation, or initiate the process to make a permanent designation.

Weed Management Strategies

County weed control authorities need weed management strategies for each state and county designated noxious weed. Prioritizing potential invaders and eradicate new invaders while suppressing and preventing spread of established invaders. The strategy includes biology information for each noxious weed including attributes and means of spreading, identifying pathways contributing to spreading, and measures required to control, eradicate, or restrict the spread of a weed during each stage of invasion.

Early Detection/Rapid Response Program

NISC carries out an awareness and education effort. This includes Invasive Species Web site http://snr.unl.edu/ invasive, publications, billboards, and education events. They are currently developing a protocol for reporting detections and recruiting and training invasive plant spotters. If eradication programs are to be successful, a large number of individuals need to be attuned to the priority weed list to assure early detection and reporting of all sightings. The new approach is more focused on invasive weeds that pose the greatest threat to Nebraska and directed at exclusion, prevention, early detection, and effective responses. It establishes the like-priorities for all local weed control entities and their partners and improve noxious weed management assistance to landowners. Landowners will be provided with weed specific strategies to prevent new infestations, to be vigilant and eradicate new infestations and to contain larger established infestations. This is the least-cost approach providing the most effective long-range control.
March — A Great Time For Tree Pruning

When to Prune
Most trees can be pruned at any time during the year, but growth is maximized and wounding is faster if it takes place just before spring growth. However, flowering trees, like Japanese larch and magnolia, should be pruned right after they finish blooming to prevent the removal of flower buds during pruning.

How to Prune
Pruning should be done with an understanding of how trees respond to each cut. Improper pruning can cause damage that will last for the life of the tree, shorten the tree’s life, and can actually make the tree more susceptible to stress from high summer temperatures. Therefore, it’s important to establish a strong trunk scaffold branches and trunk, which gives the branches their strength. Watersprouts’ weak attachment makes them prone to breakage. Suckers are very similar but originate from the base of the tree.

Developing Branch Structure
When pruning, it’s important to establish a strong scaffold structure. Scaffold branches provide the framework for mature trees. The goal in training young trees is to establish a strong trunk with sturdy, well-spaced branches. Scaffold branches should be alternately up the trunk of the tree, and evenly around the circumference of the trunk.

Branches forming wide angles with the trunk have greater strength than those forming narrow angles with the trunk. Good pruning techniques remove structurally weak branches while maintaining the natural form of the tree’s canopy. Young trees, maintain a single, dominant trunk leader.

Avoid the development of co-dominant branches, or branches with approximately the same diameter, attached to the trunk at the same location. Co-dominant stems lack the strong intervesive connection that non-dominant branches form with the trunk. This can make the tree prone to cracking and eventual failure at the joint of co-dominant branches. Some tree species, such as the ornamental pear ‘Bradford’ are prone to the development of co-dominant branches. Instead, choose a cultivar that naturally develops better branch structure, like ‘Arboretum’ pear.

How Much To Remove
The amount of live tissue that should be removed depends on the tree size, species, and age, as well as, the pruning objectives. Younger trees will tolerate the removal of more living tissue than mature trees, but limiting up a tree too quickly can reduce the development of trunk caliper. Based on the tree’s total height, two-thirds of the tree should be canopy and one-third trunk. Try to maintain these proportions and never remove more than one-third of the tree’s canopy in any growing season.

It’s important to maintain an even distribution of foliage along large limbs and in the lower portion of the crown. Routine thinning of the tree’s inner canopy does not improve its health, but can actually make the tree more susceptible to stress from high summer temperatures.

Three-Cut Pruning Method
Small branches can be removed with a single cut using hand pruners or loppers, but large branches should be pruned using a series of three cuts. The first cut is to the underside of the branch, approximately 10–12 inches from the tree’s trunk, and goes less than half way up through the branch. The first cut does not remove any of the branch; it’s purpose is to prevent bark from ripping down the side of the tree when the branch falls. The second cut is made an inch or two further out from the first cut, away from the tree trunk, and removes the majority of the branch. The second cut should be made from the top side of the branch down. The final cut removes the remaining stump, also going from the top of the branch down, being careful not to cut into either the branch bark ridge or the branch collar.

Where to Start
Begin pruning your tree by removing dead, broken, or diseased branches. Next, remove crowded or rubbing limbs and watersprouts or suckers. Watersprouts are very quickly growing, vertical shoots that originate from latent buds on tree branches. They lack the interwoven layers of growth that develops between a tree’s scaffold branches and trunk, which give the branches their strength. Watersprouts’ weak attachment makes them prone to breakage. Suckers are very similar but originate from the base of the tree.

Pruning Don’ts
- Don’t make flush cuts that remove the branch collar. Wounds created by flush cuts cause substantially more injury to the tree than wounds left by proper pruning.
- Don’t “top” trees. Topping results when branches are cut flat, leaving a long stub behind the next viable branch. The flat cut can allow water to remain on the wood and promote wood rot. The stub dies and also promotes wood rot. Trees respond to this type of pruning by producing a quick flush of fast-growing, weakly attached branches called watersprouts. Because of their weak attachment, watersprouts are prone to breakage as they grow larger. Topping can cause a decline in the tree’s health and ruin the beauty of your tree.
- Don’t apply wound dressings to the cut surface. Wound dressing releases chemicals harmful to the tree and can hold moisture against the cut surface that promotes wood rot. Instead, allow the area to dry naturally. The tree will seal off the wounded tissue and begin growing callus tissue to cover it.
- Don’t be overly concerned if some trees “bled” or leak sap in spring after late winter pruning. Maple, walnut, willow, and birch are prone to bleeding and should ideally be pruned in late summer. However, bleeding is not harmful to the tree. The sap that is lost was intended for the branches that are now gone, so the tree is not weakened. However, sap can attract insects and provide a place for fungal spores to grow; so frequently wash the sap off the tree until it stops bleeding.
- Don’t take on the pruning of a large tree if it is beyond your skill. Pruning large trees is dangerous work. If pruning involves working above the ground, or using power equipment, it’s best to hire a professional arborist who can determine what type of pruning is necessary to improve the health, appearance, and safety of trees. An arborist will not cause any additional damage to the tree through improper pruning cuts and should be fully insured with liability, property damage, and workmen’s compensation insurance.

Become a Partner — Greener Nebraska Towns Initiative
Do you want your community or neighborhood to be greener and more environmentally sustainable? Would you like to better conserve water and other natural resources; develop more eco-friendly green spaces; diversify public landscapes to better sustain, and also reflect Nebraska’s Agrarian heritage; improve the tree canopy to add beauty and reduce energy consumption; and attract more birds and other beneficial wildlife? Would you like your community to serve as a model for other communities to follow?

To qualify for consideration, potential partner communities will intensively partner in a wide-reaching public information and education campaign. Each partner community will apply for a grant to implement highly visible “waterwise” demonstration projects. Each community will be led through a strategic planning process to develop goals, potential projects, and implementation strategies. Each community will also partner in a wide-reaching public information and education campaign.

Source: Nebraska Forest Service

The Nebrine
http://lancaster.unl.edu
4-H & Youth

March

Heart of 4-H Award

Lancaster County 4-H is proud to announce Peg Fairfield-Bixby and Sherm Bixby as co-winners of March’s “Heart of 4-H Award” in recognition of outstanding volunteer service.

They were nominated for the award by Stephanie Wachtler, saying, “They open their home to our horseless club once a week. Peg and Sherm have huge hearts: if the girls or their families need anything, Peg and Sherm try their hardest to help.”

Peg has been involved with 4-H for many years. About five years ago, she started the Harmony Hill 4-H club for youth without horses. Harmony Hill Stables provides the horses.

Peg says, “I have a soft spot for these youngsters — as I was a horse crazy girl that didn’t have a horse and would have loved to have had an opportunity to ‘horse around.’ I enjoy supporting the character growth of children. It is an opportunity to teach equine materials, of course, but there is so much more. Building their self-esteem and self-confidence, watching them learn responsibility, perseverance, courage, and to handle the ups and downs of life. Horses are an excellent instrument for teaching growing, harvesting, and exhibiting these unique cucumbers at county fair. Each participating family will receive a packet of seeds, along with a newsletter of growing tips. Youth may choose from several different project areas for exhibiting their project at fair. One seed packet per family. The cost to participate is $2 per family. To enroll in this special garden project, contact Sarah or Mary Jane at the extension office, 402-441-7180.

Special 4-H Garden Project — Striped Armenian Cucumbers

4-H clubs are invited to participate in an unusual garden project — growing striped Armenian Cucumbers. Thirty seed packets will be available April 4 on a first-come, first-served basis. The project will give youth the opportunity to learn about growing, harvesting, and exhibiting these unique cucumbers at county fair. Each participating family will receive a packet of seeds, along with a newsletter of growing tips. Youth may choose from several different project areas for exhibiting their project at fair. One seed packet per family. The cost to participate is $2 per family. To enroll in this special garden project, contact Sarah or Mary Jane at the extension office, 402-441-7180.

Clove College Instructors Needed

4-H Clover College is four days of fun-filled, hands-on workshops for youth ages 6 and up, June 14–17. If you have workshop topic 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!

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

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 Cherry Creek 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.), 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 to attend with youth.

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 Cherry Creek 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 3555), pre-washed flannel or 100% cotton fabric (no one-size-fits-all 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 and styled in the Style Revue under Clothing Level 1.

PSA Contests

Opportunity to Practice Communication Skills

The Speech & Public Service Announcement (PSA) Contests provide 4-H’ers the opportunity to learn to express themselves clearly, organize their ideas, and have confidence. Contests are open to all 4-H’ers ages 8–18 (by January 1 of the current year) — need not be enrolled in a specific project. Youth may choose to participate in either or both the Speech and PSA contests. For rules, resources, guidelines, and examples go to http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/contest/speech.shtml.

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 Cherry Creek Road, Lincoln. Register by April 25 by calling (402) 441-7180 or emailing dhkarmazin@unl.edu with your name, speech title, and your age division.

4-H Horse Scholarship Due March 1

One $500 R.B. Warren 4-H Horse Educational Scholarship and four $1,000 Grand Island Saddle Club 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/b44. Applications must be postmarked by March 1.

Additional Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Expo Results

Hannah Scow was Champion in Senior English Pleasure at the 2010 Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Horse Show. This is an addition to the Lancaster County 4-H top award winners published in the January Nebline. Complete results are at online at www.rivertcyrodeo.com.

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 Ell�t 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!

4-H Horse Incentive Program Begins

The 2011 4-H Horse Incentive Program began Feb. 1 and runs through June 30. 4-H’ers can log hours they spend doing horse related activities and win awesome prizes. Forms are available online at http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h or at the extension office. Again this year, you are able to include hours spent at Teen Council meetings and other activities. One can earn bonus points by being an active junior leader, completing a record book, serving as a club officer and entering a static entry at the fair. Remember, you must use the calendar log sheets provided by the 4-H office. If you have any questions call Marty at (402) 441-7180.

4-H Programs Bulletin

May 2011

4-H Speech & PSA Contests

Speech Contest, May 1

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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 2011 PSA Contest will be held via audio only (not in person). Submit a PSA via CD playable on any standard stereo (no tapes please.) Contest on Sunday, May 1.

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2011 Horsemanship Level Testing Dates

Mark your calendars! The 2011 group testings 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 one week in advance to Marty at mcruckshank2@unl.edu or (402) 441-7180.

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4-H Achievement Night

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County and 4-H Council presented Lancaster County 4-H Achievement Night on Feb. 10. 4-H’ers, 4-H clubs, and 4-H leaders were recognized for their 2010 achievements. City of Lincoln Mayor Chris Beutler began the evening with a proclamation of Feb. 10 as 4-H Achievement Day. Lancaster County 4-H congratulates all 4-H youth who commit themselves to excellence! We also thank the 4-H leaders who volunteer their time and talents to youth! For a complete list of award, scholarship, and pin recipients (as well as additional photos) go to http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h.

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS
Presented to 4-H’ers who have completed the most hours of community service. Award recipients receive a $30 Activity Certificate from Lancaster County 4-H Council redeemable towards 4-H activities and supplies.

Age 14 and over: Spencer Farley, Sadie Hammond, Jacob Pickrel, Rachel Pickrel, Abbey Spencer, Emily Steinbach, Levi Trumile
Age 13 and under: Madeline Gabel, Valerie Gabel, Elizabeth Garza, Victoria Garza, Holly Hillebran, McKenzie Kapperman, Kylee Plager, Paige Roach, Sheridan Swotek, Katie Wirthle

NEBRASKA DIAMOND CLOVER
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. 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.

Level 1 – Amethyst: Kailee Brown, Glenn Catt, Elizabeth Garza, McKenzie Kapperman, Brooke Kreikemeier, Jared Nielsen, Brenna Painter, Joshua Rannou, Collin Schmidt, Sam Schuster, John Swotek, Caitlyn Walbrecht, Jenna White, Katelyn Wirthele, Alyssa Zimmer

Level 2 – Aquamarine: Alyssa Catt, Victoria Garza, Jaclyn Heinrich, Holly Hillebran, Emma Lanik, Nicole McConnell, Caleb Nielsen, Paige Roach, Jacob Ronnau, Jacob Rushman

Level 3 – Ruby: Hannah Bellinghausen, Valerie Gabel, Kylee Plager, Sheridan Swotek

Level 4 – Sapphire: Ivy Dearmont, Madeline Gabel, Spencer Peters, Hannah Ronnau

Level 5 – Emerald: Elii Dearmont, Kiyi Green, Emily Steinbach

D O G  V E R S A T I L I T Y  A W A R D
Awarded to an individual who enters the same dog in obedience, showmanship, and agility at the Lancaster County Super Fair and earns a ribbon in each area. This year, we recognize the first 4-H’er in over 14 years to earn the award!

Level 1 – Amethyst
Level 2 – Aquamarine
Level 3 – Ruby
Level 4 – Sapphire
Level 5 – Emerald

NEBRASKA 4-H CLUBS OF EXCELLENCE
Nebraska 4-H Clubs of Excellence have met the criteria outlined by the State 4-H Office to be considered a “Club of Excellence.”

Outstanding 4-H Members
Presented to individuals 14 years of age or older who have excelled in his/her involvement with the Lancaster County 4-H program. Selection is based on participation in a wide variety — and depth of — 4-H activities.

Macy Lienemann, Emily Steinbach

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

Lancaster County 4-H Council – $500: Spencer Farley, Cory Peters, Rachel Pickrel, Lee Kreimer, Ian Schuster, Samantha Steward

4-H Teen Council – $250: Spencer Farley, Rachel Pickrel

Lincoln Center Kiwanis – $1,000: Spencer Farley

4-H MERITORIOUS SERVICE
was awarded to Chris Scow (pictured with Extension Associate Marty Crucikshank).

He co-leads the horse 4-H Club Boot Scootin’ 4-Hers which he helped start in 2001. He has also been co-superintendent of the Miniature Horse Show at the Lancaster County Fair and a member of the Horse VIPs Committee for 10 years. In addition, Chris served on 4-H Council for three years, including one year as president. For years after his 4-H Council term, Chris continued to help lead the 4-H Council food booth at county fair.

OUTSTANDING 4-H MEMBERS
Presented to individuals 14 years of age or older who have excelled in his/her involvement with the Lancaster County 4-H program. Selection is based on participation in a wide variety — and depth of — 4-H activities.

Spencer Farley, Rachel Pickrel, Jessica Stephenson

I D A R E  Y O U  L E A D E R S H I P  A W A R D
Awarded on behalf of the American Youth Foundation to juniors or seniors who strive to achieve their personal best and make a positive difference in their community.

Macy Lienemann, Emily Steinbach

4-H Achievement Night
Protect Yourself from Identity Theft

Everyone has seen the commercials warning them about identity theft, and everyone has thought to themselves, "That will never happen to me." When it does, they ask themselves, "How did this happen to me? What do I do now?" This article will help educate consumers about how to avoid identity theft and what to do if it does happen.

What is Identity Theft?
You’ve seen it on the news, but how can someone really steal your identity? Thieves steal your personal identification and use that information as if it were their own. They can make withdrawals from bank accounts and ATMs, open credit card accounts, obtain employment and make deposits or payments on a car or housing under your name.

The easiest way for identity theft to happen is if someone steals your credit card, but that is not the only way. Thieves can obtain your personal information by going through your trash, accessing public records, stealing from your mailbox or recording your credit card number when you pay with it over the phone or on the Internet.

What Can You Do To Protect Yourself?
Take great care to protect the following information: name, address, date of birth, Social Security number, mother’s maiden name, credit card numbers, driver’s license number, bank account numbers, and phone numbers. Do not carry your social security card, birth certificate, or passport in your purse or wallet except when needed. Never print your Social Security or driver’s license numbers on checks. You do not have to give out these and other personal information when asked. When businesses ask for personal information, ask these questions before deciding whether to release the information: Why is this information needed? How will it be used? What law requires that I give you this number? What will happen if I refuse to give the number? Do not loan out your house or apartment keys to others. Leave a duplicate key to your home with someone you trust in case you are locked out. Do not leave your home unlocked because you cannot find your key or will be gone only a short time.

If possible, carry your credit cards and driver’s license in separate wallets. This way, you will not lose all your identification if one wallet is lost or stolen.

What To Do If Your Identity is Stolen
Do you’ve taken all these precautions and more, but some sneaky thief has still managed to steal your identity. What do you do? If you notice strange charges on your credit card bill, immediately notify your carrier. In cases of identity theft, immediately notify all affected parties in writing.

Let your card company, your bank and any other creditors involved know that you are willing to cooperate with them to reclaim their losses. Be clear that you are not responsible for the charges. Keep copies of all your correspondence and document telephone calls you make so there will be no questions of what you reported and how the company agreed to handle it.

Report the theft to your local police department, county sheriff, or State Patrol office. The Nebraska State Patrol number is (402) 471-4545. If you think someone is using your Social Security number, contact the Social Security Administration office at (800) 269-0271.

Immediately call the three national credit reporting organizations to place a fraud alert on your name and identification numbers. Follow up all conversations with a written explanation. The toll-free contact information for the major credit reporting agencies is:

EXPERIAN
955 American Lane, Schaumburg, IL 60173
(888) 397-3742
www.creditexpert.com

TransUnion
PO Box 1500, Chester, PA 19022
(800) 916-8800
www.transunion.com

Equifax
PO Box 742441, Atlanta, GA 30374-0241
(800) 685-1111
www.equifax.com

FIND OUT WHAT CAN BE DONE TO REGAIN WHAT YOU MAY HAVE LOST.

The Identity Theft Repair Kit offers consumers who are victims of identity theft a step-by-step guide to repairing their credit. It also reviews a consumer’s rights and liabilities under Nebraska and federal laws, and offers tips for protecting personal information in the future.

If you think you have been an identity theft victim, take action. To ensure the best possible protection, don’t wait. Call us at (402) 471-2682, toll-free at (800) 727-4632, or download the Identity Theft Repair Kit at http://go.ne.gov/consumer/idtheftinfo.htm to find out what can be done to regain what you may have lost.

Source: Nebraska Attorney General, Nebraska State Web site http://go.ne.gov/index.htm

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Bed Bug Prevention continued from page 3

How can this happen? A bed bug infestation in a home can become very large because bed bugs have unlimited access to food (as at night). It is possible for the resident to be initially unaware of the infestation and ignore it. (Some people do not react to bites.) When a bed bug infestation is very large, bed bugs can find good hiding places.

They crawl onto clothing or into pockets, in backpacks or diaper bags. The resident inadvertently takes them to work and other places where he or she goes.

If you think about all the different places people work or visit, you’ll soon realize it is possible for just about any location where people spend time, including transportation vehicles (buses, trains, airplanes), to acquire bed bugs. In offices and similar places, like the City-County Building, bed bugs do not have unlimited food at night and do not survive very well.

They tend to become scattered, and do not survive very well. Bed bugs do not have unlimited food at night, and so do not survive very well. County Building, bed bugs do not have unlimited food at night, and do not survive very well.

Bed bugs tend to choose locations where there is the greatest risk of encountering bed bugs (like hotels/motels) and not spend time worrying about locations where risks are low.

And finally, the local officials who made decisions about what to do with the bed bug problem at the City-County Building in Lincoln, in my opinion, made the very best decisions which could have been made. They brought the bed bug sniffing dog in first to locate bed bugs, and then dealt with those locations. This was exactly the correct protocol in this type of building. In situations like this, all too often people panic and douse areas with chemicals first, without even knowing exactly where bed bugs are hiding. This results in too much chemical exposure and often, not very good control. It is great to have this as an example of the right way to deal with a bed bug infestation.

Watch Chicks Hatch Online with EGG Cam!  
lancaster.unl.edu/4h/Embryology  
Embryology resources include incubation, candling, and more!  
Follow us on Facebook!

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln is an equal opportunity educator and employer with a comprehensive plan for diversity.
Spring Rabbit Show

Saturday, March 19, 9 a.m.
Lancaster Event Center - Exhibit Hall
84th & Havelock, Lincoln

Registration Fee
Class and Pee Wee Class
$2.50 per rabbit or cavy, $1 fur class, $1 Showmanship

Acquisitions:
Raffle for many prizes! Tickets 3 for $1. Please bring an item for raffle such as crafts, rabbit items, plants, Easter/Spring items, books, etc.

FREE Contests: Rabbit Quiz & Rabbit Race!

For more information, call Rodney at (402) 722-2186 or Marty at (402) 441-7180

Sponsored by Lancaster County 4-H Rabbit VIPs Committee and UNL Extension in Lancaster County.

Applications Open for 4-H Camp Staff

The 2011 Big Red Summer Academic Camps for over 40 years. The 4-H camps and centers all meet over 300 standards established by the American Camping Association. Brochures have complete information about all camps. Discover the adventure!

Explore Career Options at Big Red Academic Camps

The 2011 Big Red Summer Academic Camps are a chance for youth grades 9–12 to spend time investigating an interest or potential career, explore the UNL campus, meet people from across the state and have lots of fun. Held in June, Big Red Summer Academic Camps features 12 career exploration camps hosted by Nebraska 4-H and University of Nebraska–Lincoln faculty members. The camps are residence camps held on UNL campus. Housing and food are provided.

After spending several fun-filled days exploring a specific topic such as movie-making or food molecular biology, youth showcase their work at a special “capstone event” which family members are invited to attend. For more information, call (402) 472-2805.

Applications are available at http://bigredcamps.unl.edu or at the extension office. For more information, call (402) 472-2805. 4-H members are encouraged to apply for a scholarship — application is on the Web site.

Save 10% by registering before April 1!

Applications for 4-H Summer Camp Brochures Now Available

2011 4-H Summer Camp brochures are now available online at http://dh.unl.edu/camp and at the extension office. Camps are open to all youth ages 3–18 (need not be in 4-H). With three unique Nebraska locations at Halsey, Gering, and Alma, there are more than 40 camps ranging from half day to four days/three nights!

UNL Extension, through its 4-H Youth Development Program, has been operating 4-H Camps for over 40 years. The 4-H camps and centers all meet over 300 standards established by the American Camping Association. Brochures have complete information about all camps. Discover the adventure!

www.elcarsony.com