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The NEBLINE, January 2012

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People from all over the world seek out advice from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Food Processing Center. Sometimes it’s easy to overlook the public value to Lancaster County which comes from having a treasure in our own backyard such as the Center, which is a part of UNL Extension.

Many in the food manufacturing industry consider the Center to be the best and most comprehensive resource in the nation. The Center has state-of-the-art facilities and equipment, combined with an outstanding team of food scientists and business consultants.

Since the Center opened in 1983, more than 200 new food manufacturers have started business after completing the Center’s Food Entrepreneur Assistance Program — 64 percent are still in business.

“I’ve made several referrals to the Food Processing Center,” says Extension Educator Alice Henneman, RD. “Their ‘Recipe to Reality’ seminar is helpful in getting people started. For others, it may save them time and money if they discover that taking their product to market is not the best step for them.”

**About the Center**

The Food Processing Center was dedicated by the Governor of Nebraska in 1983. The Center was conceived and developed through coordinated planning efforts between the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR), Nebraska Department of Economic Development, and private food sector. It is an economic development engine for Nebraska which stimulates development of new food processing industries and aids existing food enterprises in efficiencies, production, and diversity.

In addition to maintaining its own professional staff, there is a continual collaboration with the many experts in the UNL Department of Food Science and Technology. Therefore the breadth of expertise and information is unparalleled.

In February 1999, construction of an $11.5 million Food Industry Complex was completed on UNL East Campus. This state-of-the-art facility houses four pilot plants, three laboratories, and many offices which makes the Center a single location for a wide variety of services.

**Services Provided**

The Center offers many business and technical services for start-up and existing food and beverage manufacturing businesses. Clients including manufacturers, entrepreneurs, suppliers, distributors, associations, retailers, and food service providers. The services are customized to the specific needs of each client and are strictly confidential.

Business development assistance includes, but is not limited to:

- entrepreneurship development
- market research
- marketing and promotional strategies
- business and feasibility planning
- grant writing
- contract manufacturer searches.

Technical assistance includes:

- analytical lab services
- microbiological lab services
- sensory evaluation
- food allergy research and resources

See FOOD CENTER on page 11

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

UNL Food Processing Center
143 Fillery Hall, Lincoln, NE 68586
402-472-2832
http://fpc.unl.edu

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**A Local Success Story**

Deb Beck of Lincoln credits UNL’s Food Processing Center with making it possible for her to have a product she now sells in stores. Deb owns and operates “If You Dare Foods” which makes and sells salsa.

“The Center is the best program any entrepreneur could ever hope for,” she says. “The knowledge and support from these folks is amazing and comforting. If it wasn’t for them, I wouldn’t have my salsa in stores and I’d still be daydreaming about ‘what if?’”

Her homemade salsa is adapted from a traditional family recipe Deb learned from her grandmother, Manuela. Her grandmother was from Chihuahua, Mexico, raised 16 children, and was a wonderful cook.

“Most of all, I remember her making the best salsa ever. After she passed away I wanted to keep her salsa going,” says Deb.

The salsa is made with six different peppers (three roasted and three raw) to provide a complex flavor which isn’t overpowered by heat. After a few years of trial and error, Deb would make a large quantity at home and give it away to family and friends.

She wanted to sell her salsa at the Lincoln Haymarket Farmers’ Market but had no idea how to go about it. In 2004, Deb’s mother saw a newspaper article about the Center’s “From Recipe to Reality” seminar and Deb attended.

She then moved to the second phase, “From Product to Profit.” In this stage, she received personalized assistance from Jill Gifford, Food Entrepreneur Assistance Program manager, and other Center staff. This began with finding and securing a commercial-grade kitchen, obtaining liability insurance, testing pH levels, and designing packaging.

At this point, Deb had a product she could sell at the Farmers’ Market. Since the commercial kitchen they utilized was in use during the day, production often occurred late into the evening, with Deb and a friend doing the processing and packaging and holding down other jobs.

Deb says, “We put labels on the jars by hand that my sis and her husband printed from the computer. Long hours, headaches, doubts, disappointments, frustration — you name it — we went through it. But the support from the Center was our crutch and motivation to continue.”

Repeated sellouts at the Farmers’ Market inspired her to formalize her business, so she again turned to the Center. With guidance, Deb located a contract manufacturer, applied for a UPC code, and worked with a lawyer to get her trademark registered.

Deb states, “One has no idea what all they have to go through before they see their product on the shelf. The Center guided us through step by step. There are a lot of bumps in the road and it can get very frustrating. The Center’s professionals are like family to me and kept saying ‘don’t give up.’”

In February 2010, If You Dare salsa became available in stores. The salsa currently comes in two varieties, see IF YOU DARE SALSA on page 11
Private Pesticide Applicator Certification Opportunities

Federal and state law states a private pesticide applicator must be certified and be licensed before using or selling the use of a Restricted-Use Pesticide (RUP) to produce an agricultural commodity on property they own or rent — or — on an employer’s property if the applicator is an employee of the farmer. No 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 2012, 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 pick up home-study materials. The NDA letter contains a bar-code form which tells NDA what you need to know about you.

Regardless of the certification method chosen, all applicators 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, 2015 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

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

The dates and times are:

- Wednesday, Jan. 18, 8:30–11:30 a.m.
- Saturday, Jan. 28, 8:30–11:30 a.m.
- Monday, Feb. 14, 6:30–9:30 p.m.
- Thursday, Feb. 16, 6:30–9:30 p.m.

The $30 extension training fee will be collected at the training session (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 and selected materials as they are presented. 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 answered incorrectly.

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 for this option. You will need to pay the $25 license fee. You should receive your new license within two weeks after you receive your grade on your written test.

Certify at a Crop Production Clinic

The former Crop Production Clinics have been restructured with an extended range of topics and are now called Crop Production Clinics. For most of the day, participants will make choices between two or more topics being presented concurrently. Private applicators may receive recertification by attending the full day and attending the mandatory sessions to recertify as a private applicator.

There will not be a clinic in Lincoln in 2012. The Crop Production Clinics held in southeast Nebraska will be:

- Wednesday, Jan. 4 — Beatrice (Classic’s at the Beatrice Country Club, 1301 Oak St.)
- Thursday, Jan. 5 — York (The Auditorium, 612 N. Nebraska Ave.)
- Thursday, Jan. 19 — Fremont (Midland University Event Center, 900 N. Clarkson St.)

Note: clinics start at 8:45 a.m. If you are planning to recertify, be sure to arrive early and register with NDA at the check-in table. They need proof you were there for the full day.

Crop Production Clinic fee is $60 if recertifying/$50 if not recertifying. For more information about Crop Production Clinics, go to http://cpc.unl.edu.
Growing Nuts in Nebraska
Webinar Feb. 9, Seminar Feb. 23

Hundreds of farmers, both large and small, have nut crops in Nebraska. Black walnuts and pecans are favorites, but chestnut and hickory are specialty crops that can also bring income to landowners. The Nebraska Nut Growers Association (NeNGA) and University of Nebraska–Lincoln have worked together for 34 years in the cultivation of high-quality cultivar nut trees.

Become a Grower
By using a portion of your rural acreage for nut production, you can become one of Nebraska’s growers. Are you and your acreage a good choice for growing nuts? The preferred geographic location is in the southeastern portion of Nebraska.

Your acreage should have deep and well-drained soils without a restricting layer. Irrigation will be needed during establishment and growing seasons to encourage a bountiful crop. Drip irrigation is often used.

Weed control will be essential in your orchard. Deer and rodents will need to be controlled.

The ideal acreage has rolling topography for safety, ease of using equipment; the only requirement is in the southeastern portion of Nebraska.

The preferred geographic location is in the southeastern portion of Nebraska.

Depending on your location, you can become one of Nebraska’s growers.

Most fruit tree pruning is done during the dormant season when no leaves are on the tree. Branches or varieties of trees susceptible to winter injury are pruned in late spring before growth begins, rather than in January, or February. Regardless of the cultivar grown, do not prune any tree before January or winter injury will occur. Besides dormant pruning, you may prune during July and August to restrict growth; to remove water sprouts; and to remove diseased or damaged wood. Once the basic structure of a fruit tree is developed, avoid pruning until fruiting occurs.

Proper fruit tree pruning is essential for optimum fruit development using a renewal pruning strategy. The major requirement of backyard gardeners is to have a tree small enough to spray and harvest easily. Pruning, combined with the use of dwarf fruit trees will help accomplish this goal. But remember, although pruning is essential for development and maintenance of fruit trees, excessive pruning in young trees will delay fruiting.

Keep trees healthy when pruning by using tools made for the purpose and keeping them sharp and clean. To disinfect pruning tools, use either a 70 percent denatured alcohol solution, or household bleach at one part bleach to nine parts water. Either use a sponge or dip the equipment into these solutions between cuts.

Goals of Pruning
The goals of fruit tree pruning are many, including:

- Obtaining maximum light exposure for both leaves and fruit.
- Providing uniform distribution of fruiting wood along the scaffold branches.
- Controlling the tree’s size and vigor.
- Reducing limb breakage due to excessively heavy fruit loads.

The Nebraska Nut Growers Association (NeNGA) and University of Nebraska–Lincoln have worked together for 34 years in the cultivation of high-quality cultivar nut trees. NeNGA is a nonprofit educational association that provides many benefits to the growers and other interested parties. Information is available at the Nebraska AgriMarketing Center, 444 Cherry Creek Road, Lincoln. You can also contact Heartland Nuts ‘N More. For more information about the webinar, contact Heartland Nuts ‘N More.

Heartland Nuts ‘N More is sponsoring an in-depth seminar, “Planning, Planting, Care, and Harvesting” on Thursday, Feb. 23, 7–9 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Learning Center, 444 Cherry Creek Road, Lincoln. You may register at http://marketplace.unl.edu/extension (there is a nominal $1 registration fee) or by calling 402-788-2717. The cost at the door is $10.

If you want to plant just a couple nut trees or an orchard, you will find this seminar informative. Everyone has different expectations and goals when planting nut tree seedlings. This seminar will introduce you to most aspects of what it takes to accomplish your goals and expectations. There will be professional growers on hand to answer your questions.

Topics include:
- Planning phase will cover setting realistic goals, understanding an orchard environment, and the tasks to meet your goals so you will be successful.
- Planting phase will cover preparing your land, laying out the orchard, and seedling selections.
- Caring phase will cover fertilization, watering, pruning, and harvesting.

There will be professional growers and nurseries on hand to answer your questions. The seminar will also cover:
- Harvesting practices
- Marketing and marketing nut oil

For more information about the live seminar, contact NeNGA.

Heartland Nuts ‘N More
President, Larry Martin 206 West 2nd Street, Box 439 Valparaiso, NE 68965 www.heartlandnutsnmore.com 402-788-2717 email: lomartin@windstream.net

Nebraska Nut Growers Association (NeNGA) President, Jason Killmer 206 West 2nd Street, Box 439 Valparaiso, NE 68965 www.nebraskaanutgrowers.com 402-788-2717 email: joknorr@attglobal.net

Nearby Green Industry Conferences
GREAT PLAINS GROWERS CONFERENCE JANUARY 5 – 7 A CONFERENCE FOR BEGINNING & SEASONED GROWERS Hosted by Extension Services, Vegetable Growers’ Associations of MO, KS, NE, IA & SD, and the Mid-America Fruit Grower’s Association Location: Missouri Western State University, St. Joseph, MO The conference will focus on a wide range of topics for both fruit and/or vegetable growers including:
- Jan. 5 workshops: High Tunnel Production, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), GAPs/Food Safety, Fruit Growers, Honey Bee
- Jan. 6 – 7 general tracks: Farmers’ Market, Small Fruit & Tree Fruit, Agritourism & Marketing, Irrigation Practices, Organic Production, Cut Flower, Vegetable Production, Urban Horticulture & Gardens, Pest Management Contact Buchanan County Extension Office (816) 279-1691 • email: cookkm@missouri.edu • www.greatplainsgrowers.org"
Little Things You Can Do to Increase Your Physical Fitness

In order to be physically fit, you do not have to buy a pricey membership to a gym. There are little things you can do throughout the day to increase your physical activity in your home and at the office. USDA’s MyPlate (www.choosemyplate.gov) has some helpful tips to increase a person’s moderate physical activity such as briskly walking during your breaks at work, gardening (such as raking leaves and trimming shrubs), and riding your bike to do an errand down the street instead of driving. All of these are ways to increase your daily physical activity while completing tasks throughout the day.

The Centers for Disease Control Prevention recommend adults get at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity activity each week along with at least two days of muscle strengthening activities for the whole body. What a person could do is break up the two muscle strengthening days and mix them throughout the week with the 150 minutes of moderate physical activity. Your week would potentially look like the chart below.

Each day you do 30 minutes of moderate physical activity can be broken up into smaller time increments in order to accomplish this workout throughout your work day. Ten minutes could be completed during a morning break, lunch break, and afternoon break. A person could do jumping jacks or jog during these breaks as well as walking briskly.

Different muscle strengthening workouts a person could do at the office include: lunges, wall push-ups, calf raises, chair dips, and chair abdominal exercises. To view how to do all these exercises go to www.youtube.com and type in 15 minute desk workouts. Coach Nicole from http://sparkpeople.com does an excellent job of demonstrating how all these muscle strengthening exercises can be completed safely and effectively. Some other helpful hints to use throughout the work day to increase your physical activity would be:

• Swap out your chair for an exercise ball.
• Instead of calling or instant messaging colleagues, walk over to their office or Cubicle.
• Walk to get your mail instead of having it delivered to your desk.
• Wear a pedometer to track your steps and try to get 10,000 steps in a day. This roughly equals five miles!

Pinto Bean Salsa Dip

1 can (approx. 15 oz.) pinto beans, drained and rinsed or 1-1/2 cups cooked dried beans
1 cup shredded cheese
1/2 to 1 cup chunky salsa
1 to 2 tablespoons chopped onion (optional)
1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon chili powder or to taste (optional)

Mash beans with a fork. Mix in cheese. Stir in enough salsa until mixture is desired consistency for dipping. Add onion and seasoning as desired. Serve cold or cool, stirring, over medium heat until the cheese melts and the mixture is well blended and hot (about 5 minutes).

Tuna Veggie Dip

1 can (approx. 6 oz.) water-packed tuna, drained
1 stalk celery, chopped fine
1 medium carrot, chopped fine
4 to 6 tablespoons lower fat mayonnaise
1 teaspoon Italian seasoning or to taste
1/8 teaspoon black pepper

Mix ingredients until well blended with sufficient mayonnaise until desired consistency is obtained.

Your Super Bowl Game Plan for Healthy Eating

Super Bowl Sunday is the second-largest day for U.S. food consumption, after Thanksgiving Day, according to Wikipedia. Develop a winning Super Bowl “food game plan” by thinking like a football player on the playing field. Only, instead of the opposing team, your field is filled with food and refreshments. Here are eight winning strategies:

1. HAVE A GAME PLAN
Plan a successful defense against food that is excessive in fat and calories:
• Equip yourself — include some lower-calorie drinks and munchies.
• Position yourself away from heaping platters.
• Go in knowing what you will eat. For example, choose to have the three choices you will enjoy the most. You don’t have to eat some of everything just because it’s there.

2. SIZE UP THE OPPOONENT
• Look at the stats on different foods. Check for a Nutrition Label that tells how many calories per serving.

3. GET IN CONDITION
• Lift a weight — other than your driver and offer alcohol-free beverages.
• Plan an effective running (or walking) conditioning strategy — by “pass” excessive food intake and avoid penalties which keep you from moving toward the goal line — and you’ll score a successful Super Bowl “Game Plan for Healthy Eating.”

4. WATCH WHAT YOU EAT BEFORE THE GAME
• Resist overloading on calories and refreshments. Here are eight winning strategies:

5. AVOID PENALTIES
• Avoid later weight penalties from too many calories by choosing smaller portions.

6. KEEP YOURSELF IN THE GAME
• Follow the “two-hour rule.” Leaving perishable food at room temperature more than two hours is a big mistake.

7. KEEP ADVANCING TOWARD THE GOAL LINE
• Face yourself by alternating between higher and lower calorie foods.
• Make a successful passing play by bypassing seconds at the buffet table — or take half as much the second time around.
• Take an occasional time-out to put a halt in your eating.

8. TOUCHDOWN!
• Plan an effective running (or walking) conditioning strategy — by “pass” excessive food intake and avoid penalties which keep you from moving toward the goal line — and you’ll score a successful Super Bowl “Game Plan for Healthy Eating.”

When food sits out for more than two hours, bacteria can easily multiply and cause foodborne illness. Set out small amounts of perishable foods and replace those with clean plates of food within two hours.
• Or, keep hot foods hot (140°F or hotter) with chafing dishes, slow cookers, and warming trays. Cold foods should be held at 40°F or colder. Keep foods cold by nesting dishes in bowls of ice or using party trays filled with ice.

Food & Fitness

Enjoy Nebraska Foods!

Alice Henneman, MS, RD, UNL Extension Educator

Need a quick dip recipe for Super Bowl Sunday? How about a dip that doubles as a nutritious snack or perhaps even a mini-meal? Enjoy these dip recipes made from items commonly found in your fridge or cupboard. They’re filled with nutrient-rich foods such as beans, fish, cheese, and salsa. Serve with vegetables and whole grain chips or cracker dippers.

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January 2012
Family & Community Education (FCE) Clubs

President’s View — Irene’s Items

Irene Colborn
FCE Council Chair

I had a wonderful Thanksgiving with the family, including my new great grandson born Oct. 28. Of course, he got passed around all afternoon so everyone got to hold him. It is hard to remember how small they can be. My wish for you for the new year is love, gratitude, friends to cherish, sharing, laughter, music, and warm feelings in your heart.

This is my last article in 2011 as I turn over the council chair duties to Marian Storm of the Helpful Homemakers Club. A friend gave me this little refrigerator magnet. It says “A true friend overlooks your broken gate and admires the flowers in your garden.” Have a good new year!!

FCE News & Events

FCE Council Meeting, Jan. 23
The January FCE Council meeting will be held Monday, Jan. 23, at 12:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center. The officers have planned a soup luncheon followed with a craft. Club presidents are automatic council members. Each club should plan to have at least one representative attend. Everyone is welcome.

2012 FCE & Community Leader Training Lessons

These FCE and Community Leader Training Lessons give you the tools to present the topic as a program. Extension provides a teaching outline for the facilitator and a handout for participants.

All trainings will be presented at 1 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycrest Road, Lincoln. Non-FCE members or groups should select Pam at 402-441-7180 to register for these lessons so materials can be prepared.

“Lighting Your Way,” Jan. 25 — presented by Extension Educator Lorene Bartos. Day and night, lighting makes a big impact on our daily lives. In this lesson we will examine how lighting choices in our environment can make our lives safe and comfortable as well as save us money. Learn how lighting affects how well we do our daily tasks, influences our mood, and will even impact our health.

“Social Networking Sites: What They Are and How to Navigate Them,” Feb. 22 — presented by Extension Associate Soni Cochran and Extension Educator Lorene Bartos. The use of Social Networking Sites (SNS) has dramatically increased in recent years. Today, over 50 percent of teens and 35 percent of adults are using at least one type of SNS. These sites can have many personal and professional benefits, however, can also pose many challenges and even risks to both adults and teen users alike. This community lesson will provide basic information about some of the most common SNS available and help audiences learn about appropriate and safe “netiquette” techniques in using these sites.


Achievement Night was held in October. Karla Cross of Friend presented a program, “The Mysterious Friendship Quilt,” which she shared her experiences of purchasing a quilt at an auction and then finding hidden beneath a cover was a special quilt made by a group of friends. FCE members donated 187 pounds of canned food and paper products, as well as cash for the annual FCE Food Bank Campaign.

The Extension system is launching an online “Small Steps to Health and Wealth” (SSHW) Challenge called “Winter 2012 SSHW Challenge.” This free six-week program, open to anyone who enrolls online, will be held from Sunday, Jan. 15, through Saturday, Feb. 25. Prizes will be awarded for participants who report the highest point totals.

To sign up for the SSHW Challenge, follow the “Challenges” link on the website at http://njaes.rutgers.edu/sshw. Set up a user name and password and download a simple one-page user’s guide with instructions how to proceed. The SSHW Challenge is part of “Small Steps to Health and Wealth,” a national Extension program developed to motivate Americans to take action to simultaneously improve their health and personal finances. SSHW was built around a framework of 25 research-based behavior changing strategies. The five daily health and nutrition practices are: eat at least 4 cups of fruits and vegetables, get at least 30 minutes of physical activity, drink water or unsweetened beverages instead of sugar-sweetened beverages, eat at least two servings of whole grain foods, and learn something new about health and nutrition.

The five daily financial management practices included in the challenge are: save a $1 bill (or more) and/or pocket change, invest $5 or more per day (including automated retirement savings plan deposits), track money spent throughout the day, eat lunch prepared at home, and learn something new about personal finance.

Doing even one of the ten recommended daily practices is a good way to start on the path to better health and improved financial security. The more challenge activities performed, the better. You can track your progress online and compare to the average points for other people.

Small Steps to Health and Wealth™ Online Challenge Begins Jan. 15

The AARP Driver Safety Program, Jan. 18

The AARP Driver Safety Program is the nation’s first and largest classroom course designed for motorists 50 and older. The course will be presented in Lincoln as a one four-hour session on Wednesday, Jan. 18, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycrest Road. A certified AARP instructor will teach the course. Cost is $12 for AARP members and $14 for non-members payable at the door. To register for the class, call 402-441-7180.

You will learn: defensive driving techniques, new traffic laws, and rules of road, how to deal with aggressive drivers, techniques to handle driving situations such as left turns, right-of-way, and blind spots, and how to save money on fuel, brakes, bags, and safety belts.

There is no test. Course participants may be eligible to receive an insurance discount — consult your insurance agent for further details. For more information about the course, go to www.aarpdriversafety.org or call 1-888-227-7669.

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• defensive driving techniques, new traffic laws, and rules of road,
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Don Janssen
Community Educator, Friend, and Colleague

Don Janssen, retired extension educator, passed away at his home on Sunday, Dec. 11. Don had a long, hard-fought battle with brain cancer. Don retired after 30 years with University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension as a horticultural educator in Lancaster County.

He was a familiar face in the office when customers had questions about their yard or garden. Don was often a speaker at local events and community meetings. He was a regular on Backyard Farmer and had a regular column in the Lincoln Journal Star newspaper for 30 years.

Don was a respected colleague and a friend to those of us in the office, at UNL, and to the community. We will miss Don.

Landscape Plants that Attract Birds

Mary Jane Frogge
UNL Extension Associate

Interest in songbirds is growing every year. If you would like to attract songbirds to your property, think carefully about the trees, shrubs, and other plants that will make up your landscape. Careful landscape planning and plant selection will help you create an attractive, functional landscape for both people and birds.

Many bird species nest or migrate through Nebraska. The migrants may stop for a day or two during their migration if they find your property attractive. Do not forget about the birds that stay through winter. They add interest to the winter landscape and are more likely to visit your property if you design and plant the landscape with birds in mind.

Bird feeders and bird baths will increase your ability to attract a variety of birds year-round.

Landscaping plants can make your property attractive to birds in several ways. Plants provide year-round shelter from predators and harsh weather. Plants provide safe nesting sites and a safe place to rear young. Landscape plants supply food for birds in the form of fruit, seeds, and nectar. Many birds also find landscape plantings a convenient place to hunt for insects.

When you select trees, shrubs and vines, consider their landscape value for both you and the birds. Use plants with good summer and fall foliage, attractive flowers, colorful fruit, interesting branching patterns, and attractive bark. You should also consider maintenance. For example, you will want to avoid plants with pest problems that require frequent or regular pesticide sprays to control.

With these tips in mind, here are some excellent landscape trees, shrubs, and vines to attract birds in Nebraska:

- Evergreen trees are important to winter landscape and are more likely to visit your property, think carefully about the trees, shrubs, and other plants that will make up your landscape. Careful landscape planning and plant selection will help you create an attractive, functional landscape for both people and birds.

- Medium to large scale trees include the alder, serviceberry, maple, chokecherry, sumac, viburnum, hazelnut, elderberry, and honeysuckle.

- Small to medium scale shrubs include the alder, serviceberry, maple, chokecherry, sumac, viburnum, hazelnut, elderberry, and honeysuckle.

- Many bird species nest or migrate through Nebraska. The migrants may stop for a day or two during their migration if they find your property attractive. Do not forget about the birds that stay through winter. They add interest to the winter landscape and are more likely to visit your property if you design and plant the landscape with birds in mind.

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- When you select trees, shrubs and vines, consider their landscape value for both you and the birds. Use plants with good summer and fall foliage, attractive flowers, colorful fruit, interesting branching patterns, and attractive bark. You should also consider maintenance. For example, you will want to avoid plants with pest problems that require frequent or regular pesticide sprays to control.

- With these tips in mind, here are some excellent landscape trees, shrubs, and vines to attract birds in Nebraska:

- Evergreen trees are important because they provide year-round cover for birds. Some of the better large evergreen trees are Douglas fir, hemlock, eastern red cedar, and spruce. Small to medium scale evergreen trees include yew, arborvitae, and junipers.

- Medium to large deciduous trees known for attracting birds include the alder, serviceberry, maple, chokecherry, plum, and many varieties of flowering crabapple.

- There are also many shrubs that will attract birds. Some of the best include dogwood, sumac, viburnum, hazelnut, elderberry, and honeysuckle.

- Good vines for birds include bittersweet, grape, and Virginia creeper.

For More Information
UNL Extension in Lancaster County
G1572 “Landscape Plants for Wildlife” available on the Web at http://go.unl.edu/uxar or at the extension office.

Master Gardener Training Begins February

If you have a strong interest in gardening and enjoy helping others, you are invited to become a University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension Master Gardener volunteer.

This program will increase your knowledge and understanding of such horticultural topics: best cultural practices for growing flowers, vegetables, turf, plant disease and insect pest identification, control, and much more. Instructors are Extension specialist- ists, professionals, volunteers, and horticulture professionals.

To become a Master Gardener volunteer, you must attend all training sessions, pass an examination, and volunteer for Extension educational programming. Such volunteering could include answering gardening questions from the public, teaching 4-H youth gardening, assisting at the county or state fair, and assisting community garden participants among many others.

Training class size is limited. Those participating in the 2012 training class must pay a materials fee of $150. There are two options for Master Gardener training in Lincoln this year:

- UNL Extension in Lancaster County Master Gardener training program will begin February 2012. Training hours will be 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and sessions will be held at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherryreek Road. For more information or to receive an application, call Mary Jane Frogge at 402-441-7180. Applications are due Jan. 27.

- UNL Extension campus-based Master Gardener training program will begin February 2012. Training hours will be 6 to 9 p.m. and sessions will be held at UNL East Campus. For more information, call Terri James at 402-472-8973.

Do not miss this opportunity to increase your gardening knowledge, and the chance to share them with others in the community.
Land-grant universities work with the people they serve. University of Nebraska–Lincoln teaches, discovers new knowledge through research, and extends this research-based information across the state through Extension programs.

4-H & Youth
- Clubs, school enrichment, afterschool & more
- Developing life skills & leadership
- Hands-on projects, science & technology
- Volunteering & service

Farms & Acreages
- Livestock & crop production
- Acreage living
- Urban agriculture
- Water resources

Food & Nutrition
- Nutrition & cooking
- Food safety
- Stretching food dollars

Home & Families
- Home environment, safety, energy & consumer education
- Parenting, families & relationships
- Family & Community Education (FCE) clubs

Pests & Wildlife
- Pest identification
- Insect, spider & wildlife education
- Low-toxic solutions

Yard & Garden
- Plant & pest problem diagnosis
- Master Gardener volunteers
- Horticulture education
- Managing water resources

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Yard & Garden
- Plant & pest problem diagnosis
- Master Gardener volunteers
- Horticulture education
- Managing water resources

Community Value

"Barb Ogg has been a valuable resource in my work with child care facilities. Her willingness to provide pest management training and work individually with child care professionals has made a positive impact on our community."
— Gina Egenberger, Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department Children’s Environmental Health Educator

"I found out cover crops definitely protect the soil and are beneficial for wildlife. I still have a lot to learn on how to manage cover crops."
— Calvin Paschold, og producer

"After the Nutrition Education Program presented lessons to the Everett Elementary School’s parent group, my son and I have been eating less salt. Other parents report they are now aware of portion sizes and their families are eating more vegetables and fruits."
— Elizabeth Montes, Nutrition Education Program graduate and Lincoln Public Schools Spanish Bilingual Liaison

"The Guardianship Training was invaluable with understanding the requirements for guardianship."
— Range Shaw & Bowman Show, Guardianship Training participants

"4-H has done a wonderful job preparing me for college as an Animal Science major. Horse quiz bowl, hippology, and judging — paired with the work my 4-H leader and Extension staff have done — helped lay a strong foundation for my college education."
— Cory Peters, 10-year 4-H member and UNL freshman majoring in Animal Science

"The Master Gardener program gave me an increased level of knowledge on horticultural subjects, and a new understanding of our community gardens. It has been great sharing my love of gardening with others through the program."
— Elaine Booth, UNL Extension Master Gardener volunteer

Outreach

UNL Extension in Lancaster County develops and delivers educational programs which strengthen individuals, families, businesses, and communities.

YL Extension Educator Barb Ogg helps present an annual home hands-on school for pesticide applicators and others. This year, 38 people attended — totaling more than 200 attendees in the six years it has been presented.

Extension Educator Sarah Browning (at right) is a regular panelist on “Backyard Farmer.” Ratings for the popular garden show reached an all-time high in 2011, reaching 23,500 households across Nebraska. The show also received thousands of hits on its YouTube channel.

Extension Educator Maureen Burson presents monthly Guardianship Training Classes approved by the Nebraska Supreme Court. This year, 347 total guardians attended one of 22 trainings Maureen presented.

Extension Educator Tom Dorn presents annual trainings for private, commercial, and noncommercial pesticide applicators. This year, 497 total applicators attended one of eight trainings presented.

Extension Educator Lorene Bartos (upper right) presents several Family & Community Education (FCE) and community leader training lessons each year. In 2011, attendees at four trainings learned how to present specific lessons to other groups. Extension Educator Alice Heineman (second from upper right) helped present a food-related lesson last year.

"The Master Gardener program gave me an increased level of knowledge on horticultural subjects, and a new understanding of our community gardens. It has been great sharing my love of gardening with others through the program."
— Elaine Booth, UNL Extension Master Gardener volunteer
Extension Educator Sarah Browning helped present two-day Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Trainings at five locations in Nebraska, including Lincoln. A total 133 commercial fruit and vegetable growers learned their knowledge and agricultural practices and used these practices in their production operations enabling them to maintain or improve the safety of their produce by preventing contamination with microbial pathogens. Three months after the program, 74% implemented a health and hygiene training program for all employees; 59% implemented a system to clean all harvest equipment on a scheduled basis.

Less than a week after USDA unveiled the new MyPlate icon in June, Extension Educator Alice Henneman created a PowerPoint and online slideshow of “Choose MyPlate: Selected Consumer Messages.” The webinar has received 18,595 pageviews. 238 visitors participated in an evaluation, of which 92% indicated they would recommend it to others; 87% indicated they learned something new. The PowerPoint was also shared on SlideShare.net which has received more than 23,000 views and as a YouTube video which has received more than 7,300 views.

Since 2000, the Nutrition Education Program School Enrollment Kits have increased nutrition education in qualifying Lincoln classrooms from an average of 11 hours per year to 32 hours, and 2,254 classrooms (grades K-8) have benefited from more than 23,000 total hours of teaching. Teachers have noticed students choosing healthier foods and improving their eating habits.

Barb Ogg offers a charity organization how to inspect donated beds for bed bugs.

Extension Educator Barb Ogg is known as a bed bug expert. This year, Barb gave 55 bed bug presentations to agencies, businesses, non-profit organizations, daycare providers, and schools— as well as medical, real estate, and pest control professionals— totaling approximately 2,400 total attendees. She also consults with hundreds of renters and homeowners who have bed bugs.

In the 2010-11 school year, NEPT nutrition in 361 Lincoln classrooms to more than 7,000 students.
Benefit to Youth

"Communities benefit when they support 4-H. Youth who participate in 4-H learn life skills, science, technology, leadership and citizenship."
—Lancaster County 4-H Council

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension 4-H youth development program is open to all youth ages 5–18. Emphasis is on developing life skills through learning-by-doing.

Lancaster County 4-H consists of:
• Organized Clubs — 115 clubs ranging from 5 to 67 members and led (or co-led) by adults. Youth choose officers to run meetings. Clubs usually work on one or more projects together.
• Independent Members — With increasingly busy schedules, more and more youth are becoming independent 4-H members. Youth and families work independently on 4-H projects.
• Projects — Youth can choose from numerous 4-H projects. Project manuals are developed by experts and most project manuals have leader guides.
• School Enrichment — 4-H programs for classrooms include: Garbology (2nd grade), Embryology (3rd grade), Ag Awareness Festival (4th grade), earth wellness festival (5th grade), and Nutrition Education Program (K–8th grades in qualifying schools). These curricula meet Nebraska Curriculum Standards.
• After-School Programs — 42 Lincoln after-school/summer site programs have incorporated 4-H projects and/or county fair exploration activities into their programs.
• 4-H Embryology Website — EGG Cam and other resources at http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/embryology.
• Educational Events — 4-H staff organize events such as Clover College, workshops, contests, and leader trainings.
• Leadership Opportunities — 4-H Teen Council, 4-H Council, and more.

In the past year, Lancaster County 4-H reached nearly:
• 1,237 club members
• 410 independent members
• 1,929 youth in after-school and summer programs which incorporated 4-H activities
• 18,643 youth in 4-H school enrichment programs

Nearly 530 fourth graders from local schools attended the Ag Awareness Festival in April at the Lancaster Event Center. Extension Assistant Cole Meador also assisted at the Ag Awareness Festival in October at UNL’s Agricultural Research and Development Center near Mead.

In 2011 Lancaster County Super Fair, nearly 700 exhibitors showcased more than 5,400 4-H/FFA exhibits (including static exhibits, Clover Kids, animals, and contest entries).

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In 2011, UNL Extension received an Agriculture and Food Research Initiative competitive grant to address the childhood obesity issue in the Lincoln community. The $947,093 grant will be used to replicate the highly successful Lancaster County Nutrition Education Program’s school enrichment kit program which is currently only available to income qualifying schools. All Lincoln Public Schools will now have access to nutrition kits containing hands-on educational experiences designed to enhance the school health curriculum. Teachers will be trained on the use of kits in their classrooms and the importance of healthy eating. The five-year “Growing Healthy Kids Thru Healthy Communities” also provides for parent/community involvement though a “Family Meal Night” component.

Diagnostic Services

Throughout the year, Lancaster County residents bring plant samples, insects, pets, and wildlife to UNL Extension. A free service, Extension entomologists and horticulturists identify weeds, diseases, and insects and provide recommendations about the best way to help manage these problems.

Pests & Wildlife

UNL Extension in Lancaster County has extensive resources to help identify pests and recommend control methods. Emphasis is on low-toxic control methods, when ever possible. Extension Educator Barb Ogg and Extension Associate Soni Cochran assist area residents via phone calls, walk-in requests, email questions, publications, presentations, workshops, and radio. Extension’s popular pest and wildlife website reaches a global audience with research-based resources including videos. Ogg partners with community organizations and industry professionals in training and disseminating pest control resources and assistance. Bed bugs are a growing problem in Lincoln and other Nebraska communities, particularly in low income families who cannot afford professional treatments.

Farms & Acreages

UNL Extension continues to make agricultural profitability and sustainability a priority issue. Extension Educator Tom Dorn fulfills this goal through numerous workshops and meetings, educational resources, person-to-person contacts, and an up-to-date website. He is Extension’s statewide contact for grain storage questions. Some of the agricultural programs presented this year include: Private and Commercial Pesticide Applicator Trainings, Nutrient Management seminars, and a Farmland Leasing Arrangements workshop.

Residential acreages are rapidly increasing in Lancaster County. Extension delivers information on a wide range of issues related to acreages such as proper management of septic tanks and wastewater lagoons, landscape management, and alternative crops profitable for acreages such as garlic. UNL Extension also offers an Acreage and Small Farms Insights website at http://acreage.unl.edu. Production ag and acreage resources are online at http://lancaster.unl.edu/ag.
Ultrasound Devices and Deer Whistles: Do They Work?

Barb Ogg  
UNL Extension Educator

Ultrasound Devices  

We recently had an email from an Internet reader who suggested the information on our website about ultrasound devices is outdated and there have been improvements in these electronic pest control devices. Our article, "Ultrasound Devices: Don't Waste Your Money," can be found at http://lancaster.unl.edu/pest/resources/ultrasonicdevices.shtml.

The email further suggested we should either update this information or remove it altogether. The sender did not leave an email or phone number. (Hmm ... this seems suspicious — most people who leave comments about our website, at least provide an email address so we can get back to them.)

I decided to check out credible sources of information to see if I could find any recent information about the effectiveness of ultrasound devices. For me, the best such sources include university websites (with the .edu suffix) or research articles by scientists.

In my search, I found many commercial sites marketing ultrasound devices. But, commercial websites are in the business of selling these devices and are not unbiased.

I read the number of research publications whose authors looked at the effectiveness of these devices on wildlife. None of these research articles concluded ultrasound devices were effective at repelling or deterring wildlife pests.

I found a nicely written fact sheet from Dini Miller and Phil Kohler (2009), called, "Least Toxic Cockroach Control." In this fact sheet, they note, "Ultrasound devices are frequently advertised as a non-toxic method of cockroach control. However, extensive research has shown that these devices neither kill nor repel cockroaches ..."

In short, ultrasound devices are not effective at repelling wildlife, including rats, mice, white-tailed deer, bats, cats, starlings, pigeons, and other bird species. The use of these devices on cars do not keep large animals away from roads.

Ultrasound collars do not drive fleas off cats and dogs or change flea activity patterns. Ultrasound bracelets and other devices do not repel mosquitoes or change mosquito behavior.

Why don’t these devices work? Ultrasound devices do not work because animals become habituated to repeated sounds. They quickly learn the ultrasound isn’t dangerous and return to their normal activities.

Ultrasound is very weak and drops off rapidly with distance from the source. Half the energy of ultrasound produced is gone at 15 feet, and no energy remains at 30 feet.

And finally, objects like walls and furniture block ultrasound which can’t travel through walls and around corners. It is possible for ultrasound to cause convulsions and permanent damage, but the intensity must be so great it would also damage humans and domestic animals. Commercial ultrasound pest control devices do not produce sounds of this intensity.

Deer Whistles  

While on the same Internet search, I found information about another type of "sound" repellent: the deer whistle. I have relatives who have purchased these devices, which are mounted on the front of the car or truck. Air rushing through the whistle is supposed to make a sound which alerts birds and keep them from crossing the road, hence, preventing deer-car accidents.

Do these work? Very unlikely. A University of Connecticut researcher found the whistles produce a signal either at a frequency of 3 kilohertz (kHz) or 12 kHz. Because white-tailed deer have a hearing range of 2 kHz-6 kHz, it cannot even hear the 12 kHz signal. It is possible for a deer to hear the 3 kHz signal, but the sound is so soft, it is drowned out by the road noise created by the car. Some whistle manufacturers claim deer can hear the sound a quarter mile away, but this has not been verified by research.

The Ohio State Police installed deer whistles on patrol cars and found no significant subsequent decrease in deer accidents.

So, if you’ve got a deer whistle on your car or truck, don’t count on it very much to keep the deer on the side of the road. Your best protection is to drive carefully, especially at sunrise and sunset when deer are hard to see. And, if you see one deer, slow down ... there will often be another deer behind it.

FOR MORE INFORMATION  

http://lancaster.unl.edu/pest/resources/ultrasonicdevices.shtml

Preventing Birds from Colliding into Windows

Soni Cochran  
UNL Extension Associate

I love watching birds from the window in my kitchen, but large windows are a danger to birds. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, one of the greatest hazards to birds is plate glass, with windows in homes and offices killing as many as one billion birds each year.

If you are having trouble with window collisions, take a look at the windows on your home and where the feeders are placed. Large picture windows or a pair of windows at right angles to each other on the corner of a house or other building, are usually the worst culprits.

Go outside near your feeders and look at your windows from a bird’s point of view. If you see branches or sky reflected in or through the glass, that’s what the birds will see, too. The birds don’t even see the glass and think they have a clear path right through it.

Now let’s look at how to prevent those collisions. Try moving your feeders closer to the window (within 2–3 feet). If your feeders are closer, birds may still fly into the windows but are less likely to hurt themselves. You can also move your feeders farther away, and at an angle, to decrease the appearance of an open flight path.

Window collisions can be prevented by breaking up the reflection of sky and trees in the window:  

• The Cornell Lab of Ornithology recommends covering the glass on the outside with window screening or netting at least 2–3 inches from the glass, taut enough to bounce birds off before they can hit the glass. This can be extremely effective. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology installed crop netting — the kind used to keep birds away from fruit trees — in front of a large picture window next to their bird-feeding garden. The result? No more dead and injured birds. Small-mesh netting is best — Cornell staff used 3/8” (.6 cm) in diameter — so if birds do fly into it, they won’t get their heads or bodies entangled but will bounce off unharmed.

You can mount the netting on a frame, such as a storm-window frame, for easy installation and removal. (www.allaboutbirds.org)

• Cover the glass with a one-way transparent film that permits people on the inside to see out, but makes the window appear opaque on the outside. These are applied on the outside of the window.

• Try blocking the reflection of windows by hanging strips of cloth or aluminium foil in front of the window. You can use soap or products designed to be used on glass to draw on the window to break up the reflection.

• Install external sun shades, awnings, shutters to block the reflection.

• Is there a door or shade that can be closed on the inside of the house that helps break up the reflection?

• Decals, paper cutouts of hawks, owls and silhouettes taped to windows have limited effectiveness. You would need many of these arranged very close together on the window for them to work.

FOR MORE INFORMATION  

http://lancaster.unl.edu/31-2012/weather/ultrasonicdevices.shtml

Placing Bird Feeders for Success

Ike Miller  
UNL Extension Associate

Have you had any success with your bird feeders this winter? Are you enjoying the more than 20 species of birds that regularly visit Nebraska feeders? If not, let’s take a look at where you’ve placed your feeders.

Place feeders so birds have protection from winter winds, keep an eye on predators, and are able to avoid accidental collisions with your windows. And of course, you want to be able to see your feeders from your home so you can enjoy them.

A good spot to place a feeder is in a pretty open area, but within about 10 feet of cover such as bushes or trees. Some open area allows birds to observe predators, such as cats that might hide, and the shrubs or trees can provide shelter from strong winds and a place to escape from overhead predators like hawks.

Your live cut Christmas tree makes an excellent shelter for birds near feeders. After the holidays, place your tree within about 10 feet of your feeders. You don’t have to go to all the trouble of standing the tree up, it can lay on its side. Small birds will roost in the tree, get protection and find shelter from bitter winter winds. Our recycled tree has also given birds a quick escape from the Coop’s Hawks visiting the neighborhood.

FOR MORE INFORMATION  

http://lancaster.unl.edu/31-2012/weather/ultrasonicdevices.shtml
Get Involved in 4-H Dog Program!  
Next VIPS Meeting, Jan. 18  

The Lancaster County 4-H Dog program is growing by leaps and bounds! Any volunteer, parent, or youth who involved in the 4-H dog project is invited to attend the Dog VIPS (Volunteers in Program Service) Committee meetings. Bring your ideas to help the program. The next Dog VIPS committee meeting will be Wednesday, Jan. 18, 6 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherry creek Road.  
The 4-H dog project is open to all youth ages 8–18.  

Lancaster County Super Fair dog shows include:  
• Obedience  
• Agility (obstacle course)  
• Showmanship  
• Costume contest  
• Creative kennel contest  
• Static exhibits  
• Dog Skill-a-Thon  
The Dog VIPS Committee is asking all dog exhibitors to come up with a theme for this year’s Creative Kennel contest at the Lancaster County Super Fair. This year’s Super Fair theme is “Super Fun!”  
For more information about the 4-H dog program, Dog VIPS Committee, or to send Creative Kennel theme ideas, contact Cole Meador at cmeadord2@unl.edu or 402-441-7180.  

4-H  
4-H Crocheting Workshop, Feb. 11  
4-H youth ages 10 and up are invited to learn how to crochet a washcloth utilizing the single crochet stitch at the “Basic Crocheting” workshop on Saturday, Feb. 11, 9 a.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherry creek Road. No cost — all supplies will be provided. Must RSVP by Jan. 25 by calling 402-441-7180.  
Counterchange smocking is a fun and interesting way to bring texture to fabric. Apply it to your 4-H sewing or Decorate Your Duds exhibits.  

4-H Counterchange Smocking Workshop, Jan. 28  
4-H youth ages 10 and up are invited to learn how to hand smock at the “Counterchange Smocking” workshop on Saturday, Jan. 28, 9 a.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherry creek Road. No cost — all supplies will be provided. Must RSVP by Jan. 25 by calling 402-7180. Counterchange smocking is a fun and interesting way to bring texture to fabric. Apply it to your 4-H sewing or Decorate Your Duds exhibits.  

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4-H/FFA Market Beef Weigh-In, Feb. 9  
4-H and FFA exhibitors showing market steers or heifers at the Lancaster County Super Fair, Nebraska State Fair, and/or Ak-Sar-Ben, and/or the Nebraska State Fair have $500 checks issued to the club’s treasury to be used as described in the award application form completed by the club. Forms are due by March 2 (email to 4hfoundation@unl.edu) and the awards will be presented at UNL’s East Campus on June 25. For more information, go to www.nedubfoundation.org.  

4-H Photography Superintendent Needed  
Do you enjoy photography and helping youth? Here is a great opportunity to do both. A 4-H Photography Superintendent is needed for the 2012 Lancaster County Super Fair. The former 4-H Photography Superintendent will provide guidance and direction. Find another interested person and become a team. Call Tracy at 402-441-7180.  

Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Expo Results  
The 2011 Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Horse Show was held last September at the Lancaster Event Center. Below are the Lancaster County 4-H top award winners. Complete results are at www.rivercityrodeo.com.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Winner</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior Pole Bending</td>
<td>Champion</td>
<td>Reserve Champion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Barrel Racing</td>
<td>Champion</td>
<td>Reserve Champion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior English Showmanship</td>
<td>Champion</td>
<td>Reserve Champion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Western Pleasure</td>
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<td>Reserve Champion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior Western Horsemanship</td>
<td>Champion</td>
<td>Reserve Champion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Western Pleasure</td>
<td>Champion</td>
<td>Reserve Champion</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Horse Stampede Entries Due Jan. 13  
The 10th annual 4-H Horse Stampede will be held Saturday, Feb. 18 at the Animal Science Building on UNL’s East Campus. The Stampede consists of the 4-H state horse-related competitions:  
- Horse Bowl  
- Public Speaking  
- Demonstration  
- Art Contest  

Stampede contestants must be enrolled in a 4-H horse project with the exception of the art contest. Contestants may participate in all contests. Senior division is ages 14–18, junior division is ages 10-13. Teams are to consist of three to five youth.  

Stampede T-shirts will be available to participants for $5 — you must pre-order. Look and bounds! Any volunteer, parent, or youth who involved in the 4-H horse project is invited to attend the 4-H horse show. The Dog VIPS Committee is asking all dog exhibitors to come up with a theme for this year’s Creative Kennel contest at the Lancaster County Super Fair. This year’s Super Fair theme is “Super Fun!”  
For more information about the 4-H horse program, Dog VIPS Committee, or to send Creative Kennel theme ideas, contact Cole Meador at cmeadord2@unl.edu or 402-441-7180.  

2012 Horsemanship Level Testing Dates  
Mark your calendars! The 2012 group testing will be held at the Lancaster Event Center on the following dates:  
- Tuesday, April 17, 5:30 p.m.  
- Thursday, March 15, 5:30 p.m.  
- Thursday, June 26, 5:30 p.m.  
- Tuesday, July 3, 5:30 p.m.  

For more information, go to http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/horsenews.shtml.  

Governor’s Ag Awards 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 25 4-H clubs each year for the work of the individuals in the club and the community service work of the entire club. Recognition is in the form of a plaque and a $500 check to the club. Forms are due by March 2 (email to 4hfoundation@unl.edu) and the awards will be presented at UNL’s East Campus on June 25. For more information, go to www.nedubfoundation.org.

ORSE BITS  
Horse Bowl  
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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. 2 • 6:30 p.m.
Lancaster Extension Education Center
444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln

Evening Starts With a Dessert Potluck
Please bring a dessert to share

Congratulations to 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.

2012 4-H Calendar

All events will be held at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln unless otherwise noted.
Lancaster Event Center is located at 84th & Havelock, Lincoln.
Nomar Guerra
President Elect, Joe’s Clover Knights

Our 4-H club, Joe’s Clover Knights, was selected as a recipient of the 2011 4-H Governor’s Award of $500 to use to help our community and promote the great things 4-H does to educate and help others.

As a group, we decided to plan our nutritious meals on a budget and give them to low-income families and the homeless (enough to provide 45 families with one meal).

To get prepared to do this project, we learned about what a nutritious meal consists of. Some of the things we learned were what the food pyramid looks like, and which foods are in each section, how to use the food pyramid to plan a healthy meal, how to budget for a meal, and how to create a grocery shopping list. We made a huge plate on the wall and everyone drew their favorite foods and put them in the right categories on the plate.

One of our members, Grant Johnson, said, “I learned a lot about how to prepare healthy meals.”

At our next meeting, we had two main entries (and included the recipes) along with other food items that would make a healthy meal. All of the items were labeled with how much they cost, so each small group had to write out a dinner plan that covered all the food categories with a budget of $11 per bag. We filled 45 grocery bags that would be distributed to the families with the non-perishable food and attached tags with the 4-H pledge on them.

Club member Megan Neal said, “Not everyone knows 4-H can be in the city too.”

This was an important goal, to show that 4-H is not just in the country and to show how much you can learn from being involved in it.

On Nov. 1, we started our church filling the grocery bags with the additional fresh foods, such as vegetables and fruits needed to complete the healthy meal. We then went as a group to the Matt Talbot Kitchen and St. Gianna Women’s Home to distribute the food.

Club member Luke Johnson said, “I loved seeing the kitchen at Catholic Social Services and learning about St. Gianna and how much those families needed our meal bags.”

We learned just as much from distributing the meals as we did from putting them together.

Through this project, we definitely used our head for clearer thinking, by planning ahead and figuring out how to budget a healthy meal, as well as thinking about others who are in need. Our hearts were feeling great loyalty to the 4-H organization and leaders for all of our hard work. Our hands were used for larger service, packing bags of groceries and carrying them to those in need. And finally, we learned our health is our wealth, and how to feed our bodies so we can be healthy and help others.

We are grateful for the opportunity to do this project for our club and our community.

The girls could select from nearly 100 prom/formal dresses

Fantastic 4 club hosted a “tea” party for girls living at the People’s City Mission.

The first show featured clothing lines by each 4-H designer, with the garments either made or designed by each member. The second show featured formal gowns with a wedding dress finale. Then, the guests modeled their new looks as they walked the runway.

The day ended with the guests receiving gifts and gift bags filled with more than $60 worth of goods — from personal care items to fun stuff — all put in ByTec backpacks. The girls were shocked to find out they could keep the crowns and jewelry, and even their dresses. Common parting phrases included, “My dreams really did come true!” and “When are you doing this again?”

Sarah Browning Receives 2011 UNL Extension Distinguished Educator Award

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension Educator Sarah Browning received the 2011 “Distinguished Educator” award presented by UNL Extension at its annual conference in November.

Sarah joined UNL Extension in Lancaster County in December 2010, and was with UNL Extension in Dodge County from 1998 to 2010.

Sarah is involved with several Extension educational program areas:
• horticulture education for homeowners, Master Gardeners, green industry professionals, and commercial vegetable growers
• regular public on NET’s Backyard Farmer: featured in Backyard Farmer’s popular DVD How to Grow Tomatoes
• co-leader for development and maintenance of Backyard Farmer website (http://byf.unl.edu)
• horticulture column is published in the Lincoln Journal Star every Sunday

Sarah’s co-workers say she is a respected leader and teacher. One of her strengths is her technology skills. Sarah is the team member others turn to when advanced technology skills are needed to increase educational outreach. She also willingly steps into leadership roles and has been an effective co-leader of action teams.
FOOD PROCESSING CENTER

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• comprehensive product and process development for many types of food and beverages.

Youth participating in the “Chillin’ for Freedom” workshop at 4-H Clover College learned basic sewing skills as they sewed neck coolers to send to soldiers. A total of 18 neck coolers were made and Extension staff donated additional items. Two boxes were sent to a U.S. Army unit stationed in Kuwait to enjoy before the holidays.

Food Entrepreneur Assistance Program

The Center also offers the nationally recognized Food Entrepreneur Assistance Program. The program was developed by the Center in 1989 to meet the needs of individuals interested in starting a food manufacturing business.

It begins with a one-day “Recipe to Reality” seminar that provides entrepreneurs with an understanding of the key factors to be considered when starting a food manufacturing business. Entrepreneurs gain valuable insight on the basics of starting a food business that could take them months or even years to research on their own. Topics include:
• market research
• product development
• packaging
• labeling
• pricing
• product introduction
• promotional materials
• food safety
• legal and business structure issues

Following the seminar, participants may choose to enter the “Product to Profit” phase of the program. During this phase, entrepreneurs receive comprehensive, individualized, and confidential assistance from food scientists and business consultants with the development of their own business venture.

The Center often has requests from other states to bring the program to their entrepreneurs. This is an efficient and cost-effective method for a state to provide assistance and reap the economic impact of new business growth within the state. Ongoing marketing and promotional support from the host state can help to promote the success and growth of these newly formed companies.

UPCOMING “RECIPE TO REALITY” SEMINARS
The UNL Food Processing Center will present its one-day seminar “Recipe to Reality” at UNL East Campus on the following dates:
• Saturday, Jan. 14
• Friday, March 16
• Friday, May 11
• Friday, Aug. 10
• Saturday, Nov. 3
Pre-registration is required and space is limited. For an information packet, contact Jill Gifford at jgifford1@unl.edu or 402-472-2819.

UNLIN Food Processing Center presents...
The National
Small Food Manufacturer Conference March 2-3 at Embassy Suites Conference Center in Lincoln. This conference has been designed specifically for small food manufacturers throughout the country. The conference will educate and motivate you.

BENEFITS OF ATTENDING INCLUDE:
• Learn from nationally known industry experts
• Participate in interactive sessions
• Explore new opportunities
• Network with peers and industry experts
• Learn how to expand and grow your business

A 20% discount is available for the early registration. The final registration date is March 25. Space is limited, early registration is encouraged.

For more information about the conference, go to http://fpc.unl.edu or contact Jill Gifford at 402-472-2819.

IF YOU DARE SALSA
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Deb says, “Recently, Everett Even has joined as our business partner and we look forward to new crossings on this journey. Plans for the future include adding a bean dip and green chil.

For more information about If You Dare salsa, go to http://ifyoudaresalsa.com.

EXTENSION EDUCATOR & UNIT LEADER
Gary C. Bergman

EXTENSION EDUCATORS
Lorene Bartos, Sarah Bohr, Madeleine Burson, Tom Dorn, Alice Henneman, Bob Ogg, Karen Wobig

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2011 Outstanding 4-H Club Awards

The Lincoln Center Kiwanis Club presents Outstanding 4-H Club Awards to the top 4-H clubs participating in the Lancaster County Super Fair. There are three categories based on number of club members. One category winner is awarded the Wayne C. Farmer memorial cup as the overall Outstanding 4-H Club for the year. Clubs receive points based on all members’ total county fair exhibit and contest placings. The following clubs were recognized at a recent Lincoln Center Kiwanis meeting and also will be recognized at 4-H Achievement Night on Thursday, Feb. 2.

Fantastic 4 4-H Club of Lincoln is the winner of Category 1 (5–7 members) — and winner of the Wayne C. Farmer trophy as overall Outstanding 4-H Club for the year. The club’s 6 members were enrolled in approximately 65 projects and entered 92 total exhibits at the fair — including photography, clothing, foods, home environment, child development, citizenship, horiculture, household pets, dog, sheep, and swine. This is their third year as an outstanding club and third year as overall club. Jennifer Smith is club leader, and Sarah Lanik Frain is assistant leader.

In November, the Lancaster County Livestock Judging team represented Nebraska at the National 4-H Livestock Judging Contest which was part of the 2011 North American International Livestock Exposition in Louisville, KY. Team members were Rachel Johnson, Taylor Johnson, Chandler Kramer, and Grant Rathje. They were accompanied by coach Roger Bell. Judging classes included cattle, swine, sheep, and goats. Grant placed fifth high individual in swine and 13th high individual overall, earning him Livestock Judging All-American honors (which goes to the top 20 individuals). Grant says, “The national contest was a great growing experience for me as an individual and for our team. The things that we were able to do there will help all of us later in life. It wasn’t just about the judging, but about developing life skills. Judging teaches you to perform under pressure, think critically, make decisions, and communicate those decisions to others effectively. The trip to Louisville is one that I will remember for the rest of my life.” During their trip, team members were able to watch several cattle and sheep shows. They also saw the University of Kentucky livestock facilities, horse farms, Churchill Downs, the St. Louis Gateway Arch, Truman Presidential Library & Museum, and the American Angus Hall of Fame.

Salt Valley 4-H Club of the Lincoln area is the winner of Category II (8–13 members). The club’s 11 members were enrolled in 7 projects and entered approximately 80 total exhibits at the fair, including horse, rabbit, swine, photography, woodworking, foods, and citizenship. Horse is the club’s major project. Members participated in the Horse Course Challenge and horse judging contest. Riding classes included English, reining, working pleasure, western, trail, dressage, and jumping. The club is winning this award for the first time. Maralee Sobotka is club leader.

South Prairie Wranglers 4-H Club of the Hickman area is the winner of Category III (13 or more members). The club’s 67 members were enrolled in more than 25 projects and entered approximately 220 total exhibits at the fair — including horse, rabbit, bucket calf, dog, photography, clothing, horiculture, foods, child development, woodworking, and engineering. Members participated in many fair contests including horse/rabbit judging, rabbit breed identification, rabbit quiz bowl, speech, public service announcement, presentations, table setting, and style revue. Several members are Clover Kids (ages 5–7). The club is winning this award for the fourth year. Kendra Ronnau is club leader and there are seven assistant or project leaders.

Lancaster County 4-H Livestock Judging Team at Nationals

Lancaster County 4-H Livestock Judging team included Rachel Johnson, Taylor Johnson, Chandler Kramer, and Grant Rathje. They were accompanied by coach Roger Bell (right) and Extension Assistant Cole Meador (left).

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

Find us on Facebook!