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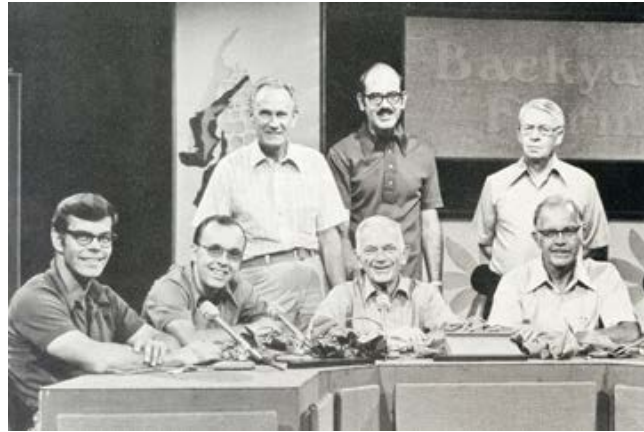
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The NEBLINE

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County



BACKYARD FARMER



Photos courtesy of Backyard Farmer

1975 panelists were: (back L–R) Emery Nelson, Tom Bare (co-host), George Round (co-host), (front L–R) Dave Wysong, Brent Hoadley, Bob Roselle and John Furrer.

UNL Extension Educator Sarah Browning (right) has been a panel member since 2010. Pictured with UNL Plant Pathologist Loren Giesler.



Six Decades of Growing Gardeners and Protecting the Environment

Sarah Browning

UNL Extension Educator

For more than six decades, University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension’s *Backyard Farmer* has been helping gardeners grow healthy productive gardens and solve landscape problems. In fact, it officially is the longest running, locally produced, educational television program in broadcast history. Although the faces on the show have changed over the years, *Backyard Farmer* continues and is more popular than ever.

Backyard Farmer is a science-based, fact-filled and fun TV show, teaching gardeners how to manage their lawns, landscapes and gardens effectively while being good stewards of the environment. They learn integrated disease, pest and weed management techniques, and are encouraged to use best cultural practices. Good lawn management techniques are provided to viewers. Gardeners are encouraged to create diversity in their landscapes using plants which are well-adapted to the climate extremes of the Great Plains. Viewers learn to identify good insects like pollinators, how to protect them and create habitat for them. Understanding the do’s and don’ts of attracting or discouraging wildlife in the garden is also a popular topic.

During the live show, gardeners call in with their questions. The show’s phone panel is staffed by Extension Master Gardeners, who answer some questions and forward others to the on-air panel for real-time answers.

In recent years, gardeners have also been able to submit their questions and pictures, via email, social media and smart phones. The show receives hundreds of questions each week, too many to answer them all on the show.

Current host Kim Todd says, “Viewers consistently tell the panelists (in the grocery store, at the gas station — and by more traditional means!) that they love the show and they wish the show would run year-round or extend further into the fall.”

A New Season Begins April 3

The TV program airs live on NET1 Thursdays at 7 p.m. (CST) from April through September. Check your local listings for replay times on NET2 and NET3. Time Warner Cable subscribers can watch *Backyard Farmer* on-demand from April through September. This year, join the *Backyard Farmer* panelists as they kick off the 62nd season on April 3.

History of Backyard Farmer TV Show

George Round, former University of Nebraska Director of Communications, and Jack McBride, former Nebraska Educational Television (NET) General Manager, were the creators of *Backyard Farmer*, which first aired in June 1953. The first panel of UNL experts consisted of host George Round, with Hal Ball, entomologist, John Weihing, plant pathologist and Wayne Whitney, horticulturist. John Furrer, weed specialist, joined the program later as a regular panelist. Hal Ball was soon followed by Bob Roselle, UNL

entomologist, establishing the rotation of retiring staff with new panelists — which continues today.

Emery Nelson, Lancaster County Extension agent, was a frequent member of the *Backyard Farmer* panel from 1953 to 1976. He was followed on the show by Brent Hoadley (1976–1980) and Don Janssen (1985–2008), both horticulture educators from the Lancaster County office. In December 2010, Sarah Browning joined the Lancaster County Extension office and continues their tradition of excellence as part of the *Backyard Farmer* panel.

Backyard Farmer aired locally in Lincoln for about the first 20 years. In 1973, construction of NET’s statewide transmitter was completed, allowing the show to be broadcast statewide. The show was the first NET program aired in color that same year.

Now the *Backyard Farmer* panel is comprised of UNL Extension Specialists, UNL Extension Educators and UNL Landscape Services professionals.

Still Growing Strong – Now With Many Online Resources

The next generation of gardeners gets answers to their gardening questions from *Backyard Farmer* experts in a variety of ways, many of which are available year-round.

Backyard Farmer started a website in 1998 at <http://byf.unl.edu>. Resources on the website currently include:

- *Backyard Farmer* video segments organized by topic area

- Hort Update email newsletter providing seasonal information for gardeners and Nebraska’s green industry
- Frequently asked questions
- Monthly “to do” calendar
- Event calendar

In July 2006, a *Backyard Farmer* YouTube channel was created at www.youtube.com/user/bucslim. Viewers can watch the show’s video segments to get answers to specific questions, or watch the question and answer portion of episodes. *Backyard Farmer*’s YouTube channel gets more popular every year, and has received over two million views from July 2006 to March 2014.

Entire episode podcasts from 2009–2013 are available for iPad, iPod or similar devices through UNL on iTunesU. A video player with these episodes is also on the *Backyard Farmer* website. *Backyard Farmer* episodes are the most frequently downloaded videos offered by UNL.

In addition, viewers can now follow *Backyard Farmer* on:

- Facebook – www.facebook.com/backyardfarmernebraska
- Twitter – <https://twitter.com/BYFUNL>
- Pinterest – www.pinterest.com/byfunl

Due to the continuing interest in horticulture issues after the show ends in September, a new way to reach viewers was developed this winter. Host Kim Todd, UNL Extension landscape horticulture specialist, and producer Brad Mills, UNL Educational Media, created *Backyard Farmer: Lifestyle Gardening*. Six episodes aired beginning January 2014. Each 30-minute show covered topics ranging from those familiar to regular viewers, to interesting and artistic garden ideas.

see BACKYARD FARMER on page 8

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Weed Awareness

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Easter Egg Safety Tips

Sometimes eggs are decorated, used as decorations and hunted at Easter. Here are some safety tips for Easter eggs.

Dyeing eggs:

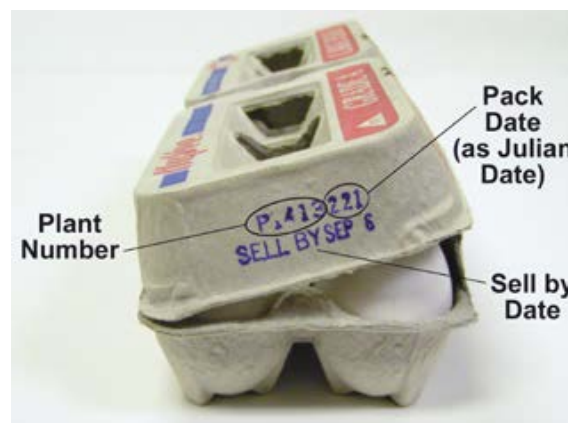
After hard cooking eggs, dye them and return them to the refrigerator within 2 hours. If eggs are to be eaten, use a food-safe coloring. As with all foods, persons dyeing the eggs should wash their hands before handling the eggs.

Decorations:

One Easter bread recipe is decorated with dyed, cooked eggs in the braided bread. After baking, serve within 2 hours or refrigerate and use within 3-4 days.

Blowing out eggshells: Because some raw eggs may contain *Salmonella*, you must use caution when blowing out the contents to hollow out the shell for decorating, such as for Ukrainian Easter eggs. Use only eggs that have been kept refrigerated and are uncracked. To destroy bacteria that may be present on the surface of the egg, wash the egg in hot water and then rinse in a solution of 1 teaspoon liquid chlorine bleach per half cup of water. After blowing out the egg, refrigerate the contents and use within 2-4 days.

Hunting Eggs: The USDA does not recommend using hard cooked eggs that have been lying on the ground, because they can pick up bacteria, especially if the shells are cracked. If the shells crack, bacteria could contaminate the inside. Eggs should be hidden in



day of the year (the "Julian Date") starting with Jan. 1 as 001 and ending with Dec. 31 as 365. When a "sell-by" date appears on a carton bearing the USDA grade shield, the code date may not exceed 45 days from the date of pack."

Plants not under USDA inspection are governed by the state laws where the eggs are packed and/or sold. Most states require a pack date as described in this article. For more information about state egg laws, contact your state's Department of Agriculture.

How Long to Keep Eggs

USDA advises:

"Always purchase eggs before the "Sell-By" or

"EXP" date on the carton. After the eggs reach home, refrigerate the eggs in their original carton and place them in the coldest part of the refrigerator, not in the door. For best quality, use eggs within 3-5 weeks of the date you purchase them. The 'sell-by' date will usually expire during that length of time, but the eggs are perfectly safe to use."

Use of either a "sell-by" or an "expiration" (EXP) date is not federally required but may be required in some states.

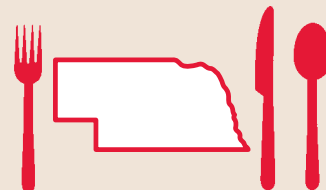
"If by chance you have an egg you have removed from the carton and no longer know when it was packed or purchased, it may be difficult to determine its freshness," according to Marcia Greenblum, MS, RD, Associate Director, Education Outreach, Nutrition and Food Safety, Egg see EGGS on next page

places that are protected from dirt, moisture, pets and other sources of bacteria. The total time for hiding and hunting eggs should not exceed 2 hours. The "found" eggs must be washed, re-refrigerated and eaten within 7 days of cooking.

Source: USDA, "Shell Eggs from Farm to Table," retrieved 3/3/2014 from <http://1.usa.gov/1fCAx0>

Pack Dates and Sell-by Dates

According to the USDA, "Many eggs reach stores only a few days after the hen lays them. Egg cartons with the USDA grade shield on them must display the "pack date" (the day that the eggs were washed, graded and placed in the carton). The number is a three-digit code that represents the consecutive



HEALTHY EATING

ENJOY NEBRASKA FOODS!

Alice Henneman, MS, RD, UNL Extension Educator

Deviled eggs make a quick main dish for a light meal, especially if you have hard-cooked the eggs in advance. Here's a simple recipe you can make earlier in the day, saving you even more minutes at mealtime.

DEVILED EGGS

Serving Size: 1 egg (two filled halves) • Yield: 6 servings

- 6 large hard-boiled and peeled eggs**
- 1/4 cup mayonnaise**
- 1/8 teaspoon salt**
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper**

Slice eggs into halves lengthwise. Remove yellow yolks and save whites. Place yolks in a one-quart zip lock style bag along with the remaining ingredients (except the egg whites). Press out air. Close bag and knead (mush together) until ingredients are well-blended. (Note: you could also put yolks in a bowl with other ingredients [except the egg whites], and mix together well until they look like a paste).

Push contents toward one corner of the bag. Cut about 1/2 inch off the corner of the bag. Squeezing the bag gently, fill reserved egg white hollows with the yolk mixture. (Note: If you used a bowl, you can spoon the yolk mixture into the egg whites. Or, a small cookie scoop may be used to fill eggs.)

Chill to blend flavors.



ALICE'S NOTES:

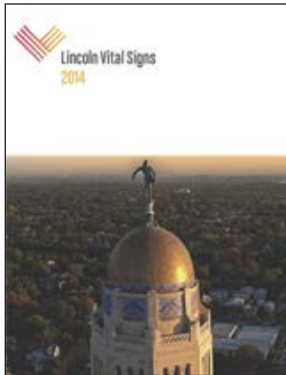
- If making less than 6 eggs, use about 2 teaspoons of mayonnaise per egg.
- To keep deviled eggs from tipping over, use a paring knife to trim a very thin slice off the bottom of the rounded side of the egg whites before filling them.

Source: Adapted from: Kids a Cookin', Kansas Family Nutrition Program, available at Food Stamp Nutrition Connection Recipe Finder, <http://recipefinder.nal.usda.gov>

Nutrition Facts: Calories, 140; Calories from Fat, 110; Total Fat, 12g; Saturated Fat 2.5g; Trans Fat, 0g; Cholesterol, 215mg; Sodium, 170mg; Total Carbohydrate 0g; Dietary Fiber, 0g; Sugars, 0g; Protein, 6g.

Lincoln Vital Signs 2014

The Lincoln Vital Signs Advisory Council has released the Lincoln Vital Signs 2014 report, compiled by University of Nebraska Public Policy Center researchers Nancy Shank, Stacey Hoffman and Teri Perkins. This comprehensive report presents data about Lincoln in seven key areas: Community Profile, Economy and Workforce, Basic Needs, Education, Health, Safety and Community Involvement and Culture.



Lincoln Vital Signs is a collaborative project of numerous organizations and leadership. These organizations have contributed leadership time, data and financial support to ensure the full funding of this effort.

The indicators presented in this study provide data, not a plan for action. Many communities have found that tracking key indicators is a powerful way to understand their community's assets and challenges. This document summarizes key indicators about Lincoln to paint a picture of our collective successes and challenges. It is hoped that it will catalyze insight and action among individuals and organizations developing a vision for the future.

Channel 5 City TV recorded the Lincoln Vital Signs breakfast held Jan. 23. A link to the video is at www.lincolnvital signs.org. At the breakfast, findings from the Lincoln Vital Signs 2014 report were presented, along with responses from Lincoln's government, business, non-profit and philanthropic communities. Jeff Kutash, Executive Director of the Peter Kiewit Foundation, provided insights on how the report positions Lincoln well to move forward.

The full report is available at www.lincolnvital signs.org. Following is the Executive Summary of the report.

Executive Summary

Lincoln is in an enviable position with its strong economy, highly-educated workforce, strong public educational system, high well-being, good health outcomes, and effective civic services. However, Lincoln has not escaped the worldwide recession unscathed. A growing proportion of Lincoln's population faces real need; among these are Lincoln's children. Lincoln's diversity is growing and this presents opportunities, as well as challenges, to the community.

1. Lincoln does many things exceptionally well and these successes should be nurtured.

- Lincoln has grown 16% since 2000; largely attributable to people moving to the community.
- Unemployment in Lincoln continues to be much lower than the rest of the nation.
- Lincoln Metropolitan Statistical Area (Lancaster and Seward counties) is ranked 18th in the country for percent of workers with a college degree.

- Lincoln has a high graduation rate. Overall rates of student proficiency are strong in standardized national testing at the third, fourth and eighth grades.
- Lincoln's violent crime rate has averaged 44% of the violent crime rate of other comparably-sized cities.
- Lincoln ranked first in overall well-being in the 2012 Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index®.
- Lincoln generally receives high marks for lower rates of disease and death for health risks attributable to behaviors.

2. A growing proportion of Lincoln's population faces real need.

- Lincoln's per capita income trails the national average by \$4,000, and trails by \$1,400 when adjusted for cost of living.
- The number of people in Lincoln below the poverty threshold increased 48% since 2005 and the city now has a higher rate of poverty than the nation or Nebraska.
- Since 2007, Lincoln's number of homeless individuals has risen 41%.
- In 2000, Lincoln had no neighborhoods in extreme poverty. By 2010, Lincoln had six neighborhoods in extreme poverty.

3. Lincoln's children fare poorly on many measures.

- The percent of children in poverty has doubled since 2008, which is now equivalent to national rates. This translates to 12,500 children in Lincoln living in poverty. Since 2009, the age group with the largest proportion in poverty in Lincoln is children (22%).
- Nearly 30% of all families with more than two children have incomes at or below the poverty threshold. For female headed households with more than two children, 68% are at or below the poverty threshold.
- In the 2013 single day count, one-third of homeless individuals were children 19 years of age or younger (n = 312); this number has increased 26% since 2007.
- Approximately 44% of Lincoln Public School students participate in the Free or Reduced Price Lunch Program (n = 16,077). Most of these students receive free lunch (n = 13,315).
- Lincoln's racial and ethnic minority children and children living in poverty have lower educational achievement than do White children.
- Lincoln has a much higher percentage of families with all parents in the workforce than the national average, suggesting that Lincoln may have an elevated need for high quality day care. However, no data for Lincoln could be identified that measures the availability of quality child care or its cost burden to families.
- In Lancaster County, there continues to be a higher percentage of children in foster care than there are nationally. On any given day almost 1,000 children are in out-of-home placements due primarily to parental neglect (58%), parental substance abuse (30%) and substandard housing (25%).
- Approximately one-third of elementary and middle school students are overweight or obese and are not proficient in cardiovascular fitness.

AARP Driver Safety Program, April 9

An AARP Smart Driver™ Course will be presented in Lincoln as a one 4-hour session on Wednesday, April 9, 9 a.m.–1 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road. A certified AARP instructor will teach the driving refresher course. This is a new, research-based Smart Driver class for older adults, extensively revised from previous versions. Sign up for the class by calling 402-441-7180.

Those attending are encouraged to arrive a few minutes early to complete check-in and registrations procedures. Cost is \$15 for AARP members and \$20 for non-members, payable at the door. **Payment by check is required** —



credit/debit cards are not accepted, nor is cash. All participants must bring their driver's license and AARP members are required to also bring their ID card and number.

In this class you will learn driving strategies which encourage confidence and safer driving, including:

- defensive driving techniques, new traffic laws and rules of the road,
- how to deal with aggressive drivers,
- techniques to safely handle driving situations, such as left turns, right-of-ways, and blind spots, and
- how to make the best use of safety features found in most automobiles.



ASK LORENE

FAMILY LIVING TIPS

Lorene Bartos, UNL Extension Educator

Q: How do I protect children from accidental poisoning?

A: Here are some steps you can take:

- Store all cleaning products and medicines out of the reach of children.
- Store foods separate from cleaning products, medicines and beauty aids.
- Put child proof locks on cabinets (especially low ones) containing products that may be harmful or poisonous.
- Always leave cleaning products in the original container.
- Be aware of poison look-alikes. Poison look-alikes are products that can easily be mistaken for safe food, drinks or other products. Many times the product or packaging is very similar to a safe product.
- Learn and teach children the meaning of the words DANGER, WARNING, CAUTION and KEEP OUT OF THE REACH OF CHILDREN.
- Never refer to medicine as candy.
- Keep the Poison Control Center number posted or in your cell phone contacts, 1-800-222-1222.

"Ask Lorene" by mail: Attn. Lorene Bartos, UNL Extension in Lancaster County, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A, Lincoln, NE 68528; email lbartos1@unl.edu; or phone 402-441-7180.

EGGS

from preceding page

Nutrition Center. "The test of freshness involves seeing if an egg floats in a glass of (salt)-water is not a reliable test. In fact, this test has no relationship to the freshness of shell eggs. While eggs do take in air as they age, the size of the air cell varies from egg to egg when they are laid. Therefore, a freshly laid egg and an older egg might react very similarly," says Greenblum.

When unsure about the safety of your eggs, as with all foods — when in doubt, throw them out.

How to Cook Eggs Safely

Proper cooking as well as proper storage is important for egg safety. Cook eggs thoroughly so both yolks and whites are firm, not runny. Casseroles and dishes containing eggs should be cooked to 160°F as measured by a food thermometer. Do not eat raw or undercooked eggs. Once eggs are hard-cooked, they should be refrigerated (in their shells) within two hours of cooking and used within a week. Refrigerate them in a clean container, not their original egg carton.

2014 Household Hazardous Waste Collections

These collections are for households only. Only residents of Lincoln and Lancaster County can bring items to collections.

SOME ITEMS YOU CAN BRING FOR DISPOSAL: Thermometers, thermostats containing mercury, solvents, oil-based paint, paint thinner, stripper, stain, old gasoline, transmission fluid, pesticides, small propane cylinders. You can dispose of compact fluorescent light bulbs at these waste collections.

DO NOT BRING latex paint, fertilizers, medicines/pharmaceuticals, electronics & computers, large propane cylinders, tires, used oil, batteries, antifreeze or ammunition.

For more information or if you have questions how to recycle or dispose of items not accepted, call the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department at 402-441-8021 or go to www.lincoln.ne.gov (keyword: household).

Saturday, April 26

Wal-Mart South: 87th & Hwy. 2

Saturday, May 17

Zoeis: 601 West Cornhusker Hwy.

Friday, June 20

Union College: South 52nd & Cooper Ave.

Saturday, Aug. 23

Veyance Technologies: 4021 North 56th St.

Saturday, Sept. 13

Lincoln Industries: 600 West E St.

October (date TBD)

Woods Park: South 31st & J St.

Friday, Nov. 14

Appointment Only: Call 402-441-8021 to schedule

Latex paint is not accepted at Household Hazardous Waste Collections. Usable latex paint can be taken to EcoStores Nebraska paint exchanges May 17 & Sept. 13, 9 a.m.–2 p.m. at 530 W. P St., 402-477-3606.

May 1 Deadline for Following Awards Presented at Super Fair

Recipients of the following awards will be recognized at the Lancaster County Super Fair in August. Deadline for applications is May 1. For application forms, call the Lancaster Event Center at 402-441-6546.

Pioneer & Heritage Farm Awards

For the 59th year, the Knights of Ak-Sar-Ben Foundation, along with the Nebraska Farm Bureau and the Nebraska Association of Fair Managers, will recognize Nebraska farm families with the Pioneer Farm Award. The program requires that the land of qualifying families has been consecutively owned by the same family for 100 years or more.

New in 2014, the Heritage Farm Award will recognize Nebraska farm families who have consecutively held ownership of land within the same family for 150 years.

Applications are online at www.aksarben.org/programs-2/pioneer-farm2-2.

Good Neighbor Award

Since 1943, the Ak-Sar-Ben Good Neighbor Award has been recognizing unselfish acts of kindness across the Heartland. The award pays tribute to the neighbors and friends who go above and beyond to make Nebraska and Western Iowa a better place. The good deeds range in size and scope but impact those served equally. Recipients are recognized in a special feature of the *Omaha World-Herald* Sunday paper. Application is online at www.aksarben.org/good-neighbor2.

Ag Society Hall of Fame

At the 2010 Super Fair, the Lancaster County Agricultural Society unveiled a new Ag Society Hall of Fame located at the Lancaster Event Center in the Business Center. This wall formally recognizes those individuals who have dedicated time and effort to the Lancaster County Agricultural Society beyond the normal volunteer hours and have made significant contributions to the establishment, development, advancement, or improvement of the Lancaster County Fair.

Ag Estate Planning: Dividing the Asset — Fair vs. Equal

Allan Vyhnalek
UNL Extension Educator,
Extension in Platte County

Each year I help teach several Ag Estate Planning workshops across the state conducted by UNL Extension. One of the topics I talk about encompasses how assets are passed to the next generation. One of the key considerations is equal versus being fair.

Many aging parents know they want to be both — fair and equal. Even my mom said that she wanted us to be treated fairly, which in her mind, was treating us boys equally. The goal in this mindset is the monetary value of the farm business is split for the siblings into equally-sized pie pieces.

However, in some cases, one of the siblings is working that farm enterprise in hopes of taking it over someday. For the sake of example, let's assume there is a four-child family with one son that stayed on the farm. The parents have split the pie equally with each getting 25

percent of the asset. Let's also argue for sake of the example, this son wants to buy the business when the parents pass. And let's also assume the other three siblings are agreeable with being bought out at that time.

With current land prices, the ag lenders are typically asking there be a down payment of around 35 percent in order to make a land purchase. So unless that son has a significant cash holding, he may not be in a financial position to make that purchase.

The wildcard here is: Has that farming son been compensated for the more than 20 years they have helped with building and running the business? In some cases, that consideration for compensation has been accounted for. In others, it has not.

If the sibling that has been making the contribution hasn't been properly compensated for their time investment, then splitting the pie equally may not be fair.

In the family I have described here, maybe the pie

is split into five parts. With the non-farm three siblings receiving one piece or 20 percent, and the one farm sibling receiving two parts — or 40 percent. The extra pie piece is recognizing that person's contribution to the asset base that this business has accumulated with that person's help. Making this adjustment to the size of pie pieces lets the passing of this asset to the next generation be "fair."

There are several ways to do this. What I have written about is one example. Each case is different depending on the relative contribution made by family members. Effective communication with all involved will be the key to working this out for your situation.

More importantly, get started with the discussion. Most participants at workshops say when the workshop is over; "This has been great, but I wish I had attended one several years ago." It is never too early to start planning for the future. Please get started.

Growing Asparagus

Sarah Browning
UNL Extension Educator

Asparagus is a well-loved spring vegetable, offering one of the earliest signs for winter's end and the beginning of a new growing season. It's not difficult to grow, and once established, can be harvested for many years. Plantings may be productive for 15 years or more with proper establishment and care.

Site Selection & Preparation

Because asparagus is one of the few perennial plants found in the vegetable garden and will be growing on the same site for many years, choose a location in the garden carefully. Asparagus grows well on almost any soil, as long as it is deep, well drained and preferably has a soil pH range of 6.5–7.5. Water-logged soils will lead to root rot, and since mature plant root systems are at least 6 feet deep, avoid sites with shallow water tables. Pick a site at the side or end of the vegetable garden, where plants won't be disturbed by tilling and to avoid shading shorter vegetables during the growing season.

It's worthwhile to take the time to prepare the soil deeply and amend with organic matter, which will increase the water holding capacity of sandy soils and improve water drainage in heavy soil. Till or spade 3–4 inches of compost into the soil at a depth of 8–10 inches. At the same time, incorporate 2 lb per 100 sq. ft. of a general-purpose

fertilizer, such as 10-10-10 or 12-12-12.

Finally, weed control is a common problem in the asparagus bed. Be sure to kill all perennial weeds in the area before planting. Mulch, plus pre- and post emergent herbicides can be used for long-term weed control in years to come.

Plant Selection

Asparagus is planted from crowns, which are one-year old dormant root systems. Choose a male cultivar, such as "Jersey Supreme," "Jersey Giant" or "UC 157," for the highest yield. Female cultivars like "Mary Washington," "Martha Washington," or "Purple Passion" will have fewer, thicker stems and a lower total yield due to energy diverted to seed production. Plus seedling asparagus plants can become a weed problem when using female cultivars.

Planting

Don't plant until the soil is at least 50°F. When the time is right for planting, dig a trench approximately 6 inches deep and 12–18 inches wide. Space rows 4–5 feet apart. Spread 1 lb of triple super phosphate (0-46-0) per 50 feet of row in the bottom of each trench. Place the crowns bud side up in the trench about 1½ feet apart, spreading the roots out across the trench.

Traditionally, the crowns are then covered with 2 inches of soil. When new shoots emerge, 2 additional inches are added being careful to keep some of the new growth exposed. This process is repeated until the soil



Plant asparagus crowns in a trench approximately 6 inches deep, spreading the roots out.

is filled to the top of the trench. While most people still plant asparagus this way, new studies have shown this is not necessary and the planting trench can be completely filled with soil after planting. Either way, do not compact the soil over the crowns.

Maintenance

Do not harvest any spears from your asparagus plants during the first year. Plants may be harvested lightly, for about 3 weeks, during the second year. Harvest when the spears are 6–10 inches above the ground but before the heads open, by cutting or snapping the spears off at the soil line.

The third year plants may be harvested for 6–8 weeks. Stop harvesting anytime the majority of spears are less than 3/8" diameter.

2014 Composting Workshops and Demonstrations



Learn how to be successful with composting by attending a composting workshop or demonstration sponsored by University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County and the City of Lincoln Recycling Office. At each composting program, two lucky participants will win either a composting thermometer or a composting bin.

Composting Workshops are held at various Lincoln locations:

- Tuesday, April 8, 6 p.m. — Bess Dodson Walt Library, 6701 S. 14th St.
- Tuesday, April 15, 6 p.m. — Loren Corey Eiseley Library, 1530 Superior St.
- Tuesday, Oct. 7, 6 p.m. — Charles H. Gere Library, 2400 S. 56th St.
- Tuesday, Oct. 14, 6 p.m. — Anderson Library, 3635 Touzalin Ave.

Composting Demonstrations are presented at the Pioneers Park Nature Center's backyard composting demonstration area. You will see three types of composting bins and how to use them. Demonstrations will be held:

- Saturday, May 10, 10 a.m.
- Saturday, June 7, 10 a.m.
- Saturday, Sept. 27, 10 a.m.
- Saturday, Oct. 11, 10 a.m.



2014 Weed Awareness

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.

444 Cherrycreek Road, Bldg. 'B', Lincoln, NE 68528 • 402-441-7817 • <http://lancaster.ne.gov/weeds>

Attack of the Alien Weeds!

Lancaster County is under attack from alien invaders, although they are not from outer space, they are not native to the United States and are infesting our agriculture and natural resources.

These invasive plants cause harm to our economy, the environment and human health. In today's global marketplace, the volume of international trade brings increased potential for these invaders to enter our county. Interstate 80 is a major pipeline for potential weed invasions. Will it be yellow star thistle from California, tropical soda apple from Florida or some other invader showing up at our door step?



Phragmites on a Platte River channel by Lexington. Invasive species can take over ecosystems and create adverse economic impacts.



ALIENBUSTERS

What Are Invasive Species?

An "invasive species" is a species that is non-native (or alien) to the ecosystem under consideration and whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health.

An invasive species grows/ reproduces and spreads rapidly, establishes over large areas and persists. Species that become invasive succeed due to favorable environmental conditions and lack of natural predators, competitors and diseases that normally regulate their populations.

This includes a wide variety of plants from exotic places. As invasive species spread and take over ecosystems, they decrease biodiversity by threatening the survival of native plants.

In addition to negatively impacting ecosystems, invasive species are also costly. It is very expensive to prevent, monitor and control the spread of invasives, not to mention the damage to crops, fisheries, forests and other resources.

Most non-native plants do not become problems; but too often, plants out of their natural range crowd out

natives and create adverse economic impacts.

You can help control known invasive plants and avoid introducing new threats by understanding the problem:

How Do Invasives Spread?

When a species ends up in a new ecosystem, it is considered "introduced." Often, invasive species are spread by humans who do not realize these plants are highly destructive.

This may happen, for example, when people plant garden ornamentals, feed range forage plants to cattle or use plants for erosion control and habitat enhancement for wildlife.

Other species are introduced accidentally on imported nursery stock, fruits and in ship ballast waters, on vehicles, on ATV's and UTV's, in packing materials and shipping containers, through human-built canals and from human travel.

Lack of natural controls.

Insects and plant diseases that kept the plant in check in its native environment seldom travel to new habitats with their invasive host. Without these natural controls to keep them in check, they spread rapidly.

Why Should I Care?

Everyone who lives in Nebraska should care, because unless we can reduce or stop their spread, invasive species will continue to require significant dollars to treat, control and to remedy damage caused to public resources.

Also if you love the outdoors, recreate in the outdoors or are in a business that depends on the health of the natural resources, you should care about invasive species. Whether you are a hiker, biker, camper, bird watcher, gardener, fisherman, boater, hunter, logger, forester, rancher or farmer, invasive species can ruin your favorite outdoor activity — or your livelihood.

What Can I Do?

Get involved in the fight. If you find any on your property, eradicate it. Get to know the common invasive threats. Inform friends and neighbors. If you see these offered for sale, explain the problem to your nursery, grower or supplier. Support national, state and local efforts of early detection and rapid response to newly-found invasive plants. Volunteer as a Lancaster County **Weed Watcher** (see next page)!

continued on next page



Cutleaf teasel

New Invaders to Watch For: Cutleaf and Common Teasel

Appearance — Cutleaf teasel (*Dipsacus laciniatus* L.) is a monocarpic perennial (produce seed only once in a lifetime) that form basal rosettes for at least one year until enough resources are acquired to send up flower stalks. Cutleaf teasel can reach 6–8 ft. in height. The plant dies after flowering.

Foliage — Opposite leaves are joined at the base and form cups surrounding the prickly stem.

Flowers — The small, white flowers densely cover oval flower heads and are present from July to September. Spiny bracts are located on the ends of flower stems.

Fruit — A single plant can produce up to 2,000 seeds and can remain viable in the soil for at least two years.

Ecological threat — Cutleaf teasel was introduced from Europe in the 1700s and spreads by producing abundant seeds. Cutleaf teasel grows in open, sunny habitats preferring roadsides and other disturbed areas. It can, sometimes, be found in high-quality areas such as prairies, savannas, seeps and meadows. Cutleaf teasel is currently a noxious weed in Missouri and Colorado and is on Nebraska's "watch list" for new invasive species. Cutleaf teasel has been found in Lancaster County and should be eradicated, if found.

Cutleaf vs. Common teasel — There are two species of teasel found in Nebraska. Common teasel (*Dipsacus fullonum* L.) has pale purple flowers while cutleaf teasel has white flowers. Common teasel is typically smaller and the leaves are smoother around the edges. Both varieties can spread rapidly and control is recommended.



Common teasel

Thistles of Nebraska: They're Not All Bad

Lancaster County Weed Control recently updated the "Thistles of Nebraska" identification guide, online at <http://lancaster.ne.gov/weeds/pdf/thistleneb.pdf>. We developed this resource to help people learn how to identify all thistles. Identification is the key in knowing if you have a "bad" or "good" thistle. Yes, native thistles are actually good and provide many benefits to our natural environment.

Did you know there are 10 different species of thistles in Nebraska? Thistles, in general, get a bad rap whenever the word "thistle" is mentioned. However, not all thistles are bad for the environment or agriculture. Out of the 10 species identified in the state — five of these occurred in North America before settlement by Europeans.

The other five are considered "nonnative" or "introduced" thistles. Out of the five nonnative thistles, only three are considered "noxious;" musk thistle, plumeless thistle and Canada



Wavyleaf thistle



Bull thistle



Tall thistle

thistle, and are required by state law to be controlled by the landowner. Canada thistle has been on the Noxious Weed List since 1873. Landowners and homeowners realized this plant was a serious problem and needed to be controlled. It wasn't until 1959 the rapid infestation rate of musk thistle brought out the public concern in Nebraska and was added to the Noxious Weed List in 1962. Plumeless thistle became a noxious weed in 1975.

Thistles commonly found in Lancaster County **not** considered noxious are wavyleaf thistle, bull thistle and tall thistle.

Thistles not commonly found in Lancaster County but can be found in Nebraska and are **not** Nebraska noxious thistles include: Platte thistle, flodman thistle, yellowspine thistle and Scotch thistle. (*Scotch thistle and bull thistle are listed on some individual county noxious lists.*)

More at <http://lancaster.ne.gov/weeds>

Lancaster County Weed Control Authority's website has additional information about Nebraska's noxious weeds, new invaders, a monthly weed report, weed complaint form, and much more.



WEED AWARENESS

Volunteer to Become a Weed Watcher!

The Weed Watcher program is designed to train and support volunteers to find and report new occurrences of harmful invasive plants in the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County. Weed Watchers help protect natural areas from the impacts of invasive plants by **detecting new populations early** before they get out of hand.



Preventing a plant from invading in the first place is more efficient, less ecologically damaging and far less costly than managing large plant infestations after they're already established.

A second, and equally important goal of the Weed Watcher program is to build capacity for other organizations to initiate early detection programs by serving as a potential model and providing educational materials for use and adaptation. Invasive plant early-detection programs can be as simple as informally training your staff or volunteers on weeds to watch for.

Weed watchers can be anyone who simply wants to scan for new invaders. "Weed Watchers Trek to Protect."

Weed Watching is as easy as one, two, three:

1. Learn the weeds.
2. Look for weeds.
3. Document and report weeds.

For more information including a "Weed Watcher Guide" and "Hit Report," visit <http://lancaster.ne.gov/weeds>. To sign up, email weeds@lancaster.ne.gov or call 402-441-7817.

"Weed Awareness" content by Brent Meyer, superintendent of the Lancaster County Weed Control Authority.

Alien Weeds

from preceding page

Based on your outdoor hobbies or your occupation, here are some actions you can take to prevent the spread of invasives.

Hikers, bikers, campers and outdoor enthusiasts:

- To avoid spreading seed of invasive plants, learn to recognize infestations and avoid passing through them.
- Clean equipment, boots, animals and gear between trips, or preferably, before leaving an infested area. Make sure to remove all seeds and other plant parts.
- Report any invasive pest sightings to the local land manager or local weed control authority.
- Always use weed-free hay and feed for your animals.

Hunters:

- Use only native plants for food plots. Native plants provide much better food and cover for wildlife.

- Clean your boots, hunting gear, truck bed and tires after a hunting trip to make sure you are not spreading seeds, to a new location.

Gardeners:

- Plant carefully! There is a wide variety of beautiful, easy-to-care-for native plants available.
- Avoid using invasive plant species at all costs.
- Remove invasive plants from your garden.
- Until you are able to rid your garden of invasive plants, be responsible and remember to remove and destroy seed heads before they can spread. Also, don't share invasives with other gardeners.
- Talk to other gardeners about invasives and how you plan to help in the fight against them.
- If you are worried your garden will lose its luster after removing invasives, talk to your local nursery or county extension. These organizations will be able to suggest suitable native replacements.

Bird watchers:

- To avoid spreading seed of invasive plants, learn to recognize infestations and avoid passing through them.
- Clean equipment, boots and gear between trips or, preferably, before leaving an infested area. Make sure to remove all seeds and other plant parts.

Ranchers and farmers:

- Learn to identify the invasive species in your area.
- Report any sightings to your county weed control authority. The sooner invasive species are detected, the easier and cheaper it is to control them.
- Clean your boots, gear, truck bed, tires and harvesting equipment after working a site to make sure you are not spreading seeds to a new location.
- Be sure to control invasive plants along fencerows, ditches and other areas adjacent to fields.
- Always use weed-free hay and feed for your animals.

Weed-Free Forage Certification Program

You can prevent potential noxious weed infestations by insisting on Certified Weed-Free forage. As a buyer, you should be aware noxious weed infested forage products can cost you hundreds or even thousands of dollars down the road. Ask your forage supplier to have their hay certified **prior to harvest**.

Forage growers must call the Lancaster County Weed Control Authority **one to two weeks prior to harvesting**. There is no charge for the field inspections. There is a small charge for the cost

of bale tags.

Nebraska carries out its Weed-Free Forage Certification Program in accordance with the standards of the North American Invasive Species Management Association standards. Certified weed-free forage products include: straw, alfalfa/grass hay, forage pellets/cubes, alfalfa hay, grain hay and grass hay.

Weed-free forage is required on many U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management lands, in National Parks, Bureau of Reclamation land, military

locations, new pipelines, tribal lands, as well as, National Fish and Wildlife refuges. The Nebraska Department of Roads requires weed-free forage on all highway projects. Restrictions may apply to other lands administered by county, state or federal agencies.

If you have questions about certification regulations or weeds not allowed in certified forage, go to the Nebraska Weed-Free Forage website at www.neweedfree.org for a complete list of weeds and regulations.



Funding Available for Weeds in Grasslands and Prairies

The Five Rivers Resource Conservation and Development, Inc. has received a grant from the Nebraska Environmental Trust for the "Native Grassland Protection against Invasive Weeds II" Project. This money is in use by the Five Rivers Weed Management Area (WMA) to utilize a cost share program that assists in making effective weed control affordable for landowners, land managers and other entities.

This program is available on a rating basis; dependent on severity of



invasion, type of invasive weed(s), native prairie in an identified biologically-unique landscape and cash match (minimum requirement of 25 percent).

The fee for the chemical and application minus the cash match would be funded through this grant. A five-year maintenance agreement will be required on any entity acquiring grant funds.

The Five Rivers Weed Management Area (WMA) plans to do project promotion workshops throughout the WMA area. The WMA

consists of 10 counties in Southeast Nebraska (Saline, Jefferson, Gage, Pawnee, Johnson, Otoe, Cass, Nemaha, Lancaster and Richardson).

If anyone is interested in applying for grant funding to control *Sericea lespedeza*, *St. Johnswort*, *Garlic Mustard*, *Cutleaf Teasel* or *Caucasian Bluestem*, please contact Bobbie Meints at 402-869-2355 or 5rivers.meints@gmail.com or feel free to contact your local weed superintendent in your county.

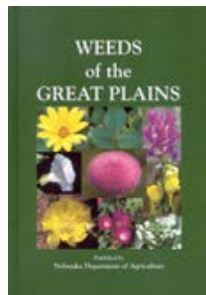
First deadline for applications is April 1. Applications will be reviewed on a monthly basis at Five Rivers WMA meetings.

Hidden Word Find

Responsible landowners take pride in their management efforts to control weeds in order to protect our environment. Sometimes the greatest challenge is to understand how invaders spread, the groups involved in treating them and tools they use.

Find the words in the puzzle and send your completed form to Lancaster County Weed Control for your chance to win the "Weeds of the Great Plains" book published by Nebraska Department of Agriculture. **All entries must be postmarked by April 18.**

If your name is drawn, the book will be mailed to you. This information will not be used to contact you with any other offer.



Enter drawing to win:

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Send completed Word Find to:
Lancaster County Weed Control, Weed Book Drawing
444 Cherrycreek Rd., Bldg. B, Lincoln, NE 68528

- Annual
- Biennial
- Canada thistle
- Knapweed
- Knotweed
- Herbicide
- Introduced
- Invasive
- Lancaster
- Leafy spurge
- Mapping
- Musk thistle
- Noxious weeds
- Perennial
- Phragmites
- Plumeless thistle
- Purple loosestrife
- Saltcedar
- Sericea lespedeza*
- Weed watcher

E O P P S P H R A G M I T E S F T I A
D S G N I P P A M I I D M L N N S V V
V L A I N N E I B T P W I T D E Y A R
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Nebraska's Noxious Weeds

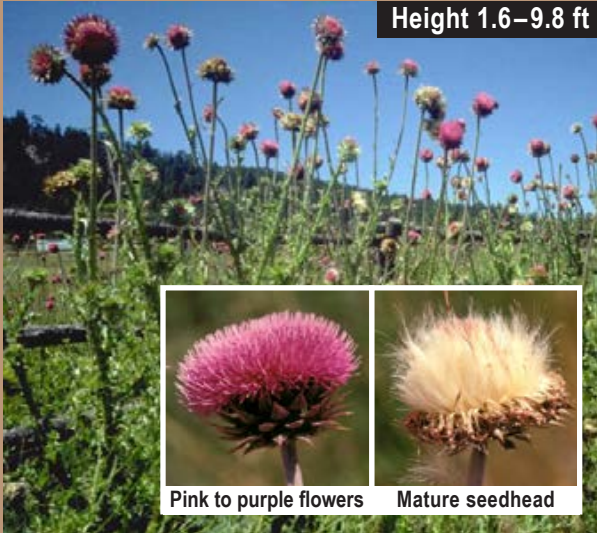
It is the duty of each person who owns or controls land to effectively control noxious weeds on such land.

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.

Musk Thistle

Height 1.6–9.8 ft



Canada Thistle

Height 1–3.9 ft



Plumeless Thistle

Height 1–4.9 ft



Phragmites

Height 3.2–20 ft



Leafy Spurge

Height .3–2.6 ft



Sericea Lespedeza

Height 1.5–6.5 ft



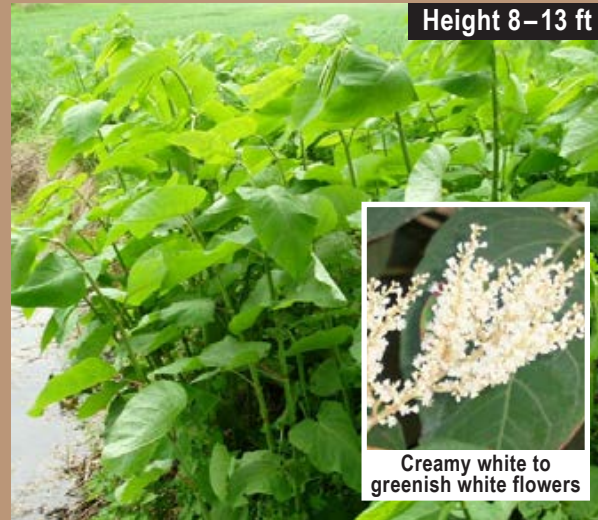
Japanese Knotweed

Height 3–10 ft



Giant Knotweed

Height 8–13 ft



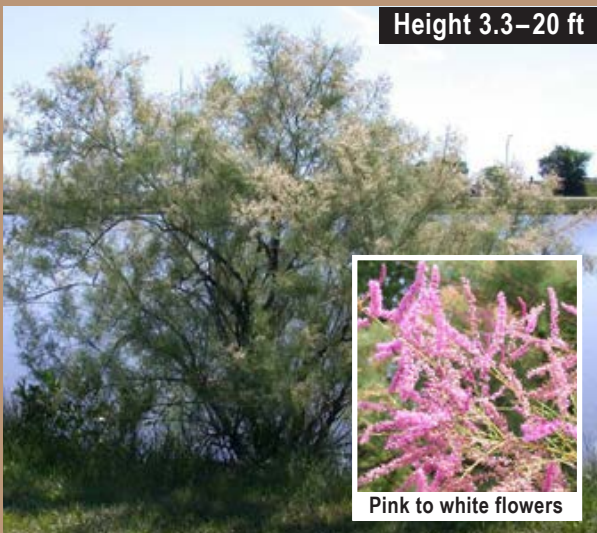
Purple Loosestrife

Height 1.3–8 ft



Saltcedar

Height 3.3–20 ft



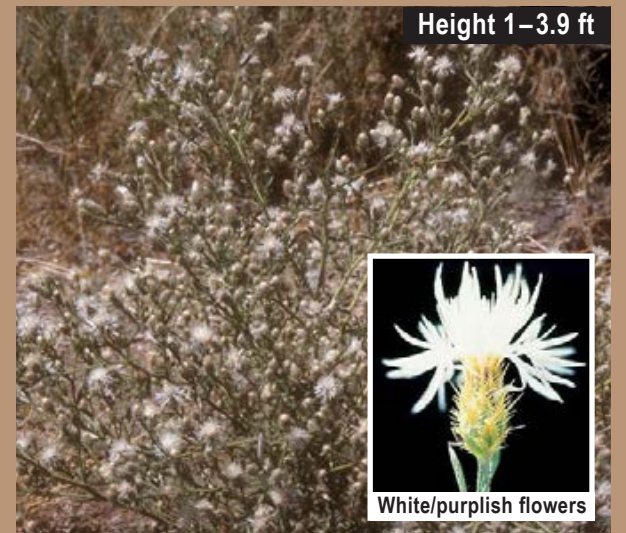
Spotted Knapweed

Height 1–3.9 ft



Diffuse Knapweed

Height 1–3.9 ft



GOOD NEIGHBORS CONTROL NOXIOUS WEEDS

If you have questions or concerns about noxious weeds, please contact your local county noxious weed control authority, Nebraska Weed Control Association (www.neweed.org), or Nebraska Department of Agriculture (www.agr.ne.gov/noxious_weed)

WEED AWARENESS

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 Pat Dugan and Account Clerk Ashley McAllister.

2013 Annual Report

Lancaster County Weed Control Authority's purpose is to educate the public concerning noxious weeds, exercise the necessary authority to obtain effective control of noxious weeds county-wide, educate the public concerning weed abatement and to exercise the necessary authority to cut and clear overgrown weeds and worthless vegetation in the City of Lincoln. We accomplish this by:

- educating the landowners of Lancaster County about the legal requirements and benefits of controlling noxious weeds,
- providing information to the citizens of Lincoln about the legal requirements and benefits of cutting and clearing overgrown weeds and worthless vegetation,
- efficiently and effectively exercising authority when necessary to obtain acceptable noxious weed and weed abatement control, and
- improving efficiency and effectiveness of operations through management techniques.

Noxious Weed Program

Lancaster County Weed Control office utilizes a three-phase program to assist landowners in reducing the number of noxious weed infested acres in the county.

Phase 1. Prevent the development of new weed infestations — Prevention is the least expensive and most effective way to halt the spread of noxious and invasive weeds. Integrated weed management includes preventing encroachment into land that is not infested, identifying the pathways in which weeds are spread, detecting and eradicating new weed introductions, containing large-scale infestations using an integrated approach and often re-vegetation.

Phase 2. Provide education and public outreach on noxious and invasive weed control — The public is generally not aware of the economic and environmental impacts of noxious weeds. There is a need to improve awareness of noxious weeds and to provide educational information to cooperators, land managers and the public. As people become more aware of noxious weeds, the probability of detecting them is greatly increased, which allows for more effective and timely control. Education and awareness assist:



Beginning in 2013, educational kiosks are being placed along hiking trails.

- weed identification
- reporting new infestations
- prevention
- control
- fostering cooperation and partnerships

Phase 3. Provide for ongoing management of State of Nebraska-mandated noxious weeds — Noxious weed management is the systematic approach to minimize noxious weed impacts and optimize intended land use. It is very important for all infested areas to be treated with effective methods. Integrated management is a program of noxious weed control that properly implements a variety of coordinated control methods. Types of control methods include mechanical, cultural, chemical and biological. Integrated management greatly improves the success rate for your weed control plan. All noxious weed management must be applied and evaluated over an extended period of time to be successful.

Noxious Weed Overview

Noxious weeds know no boundaries. They find themselves at home in cities and villages, along creeks, in wetlands and waste areas, as well as in the rural areas.

In 2013, our inspectors documented 1,631 sites infested with noxious weeds, 493 (33.1%) of those were within Lincoln city limits. While the total number of acres infested in the city is small, we continue to find noxious weeds all around the city. Saltcedar, purple loosestrife and knotweed are found more in the city than in rural areas, because they were first introduced as ornamentals and planted in our landscapes. Without aggressive management, these sites will continue to grow and spread.

Musk Thistle — Musk thistle continues to be a problem on poorly-managed pastures, wastelands and roadsides. A total of 1,028 inspections were made on 494 sites. There were 425 sites found to be in violation amounting to 802 acres infested. The Weed Control office carried out 10 enforcements.

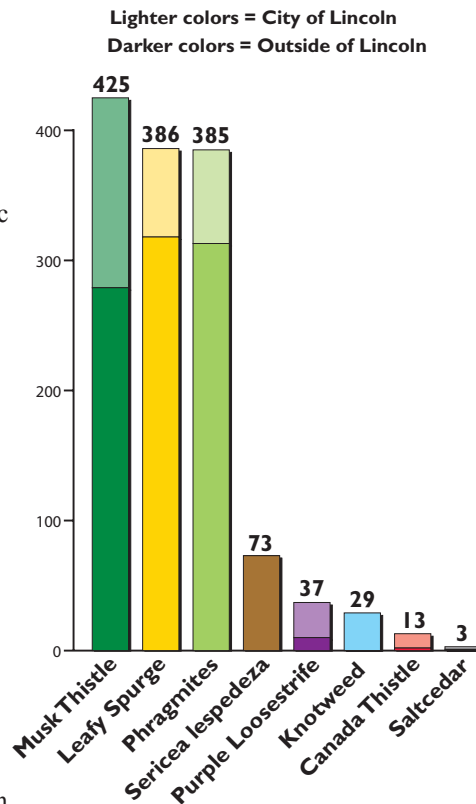
Phragmites — Phragmites continues to increase in Lancaster County with 385 sites found to have infestations. The number of sites rose 7.2%, up from 359 sites reported in 2012. It's important to be aggressive on phragmites while the average site is still less than 1 acre; we are seeing it spread at alarming rates.

Leafy Spurge — Leafy spurge is a very difficult-to-control perennial plant and infests 545 acres in the county and city. Once an infestation is identified, it should be controlled and monitored for many years. Its deep rhizome root system will allow it to continue to grow. In 2013, there were 626 inspections made at 446 locations, finding 386 infestations.

Purple Loosestrife — Most of the purple loosestrife

NOXIOUS WEEDS

Number of Lancaster County Sites in Violation



found are ornamental plantings. There are a few waterways with wild purple loosestrife, but for the most part, this has been a success story in Lancaster County. In 2001, when purple loosestrife was added to the State Noxious Weed list, we reported 490 locations. In 2013, we had 37 sites that had either ornamental or wild purple loosestrife.

Knotweed — In 2013 there were 29 sites of knotweed reported. Almost all of the sites are ornamental plantings with only 2 sites being wild infestations. Most owners have been very receptive to removing the plantings once they realize how much damage it can do. Knotweed is often considered one of the 10 most invasive plants in the world, so early detection and control is important.

Canada thistle — Canada thistle is a deep-rooted perennial thistle; it is the most difficult thistle to control. While we don't have a large number of infestations, what we are finding is that it is showing up in landscaping. Meaning, it is likely coming in with some of the trees and shrubs being planted. Always make sure the root stock you are getting is noxious-weed-free. Currently, we have 13 locations, totaling just over 6 acres infested.

Saltcedar — Saltcedar is a great example of Early Detection – Rapid Response (EDRR), getting on a problem early and eliminating it before it gets out of control. Lancaster County has only a few locations of saltcedar and those are being eradicated by the owners. We are working on 3 locations and no new locations were found in 2013.

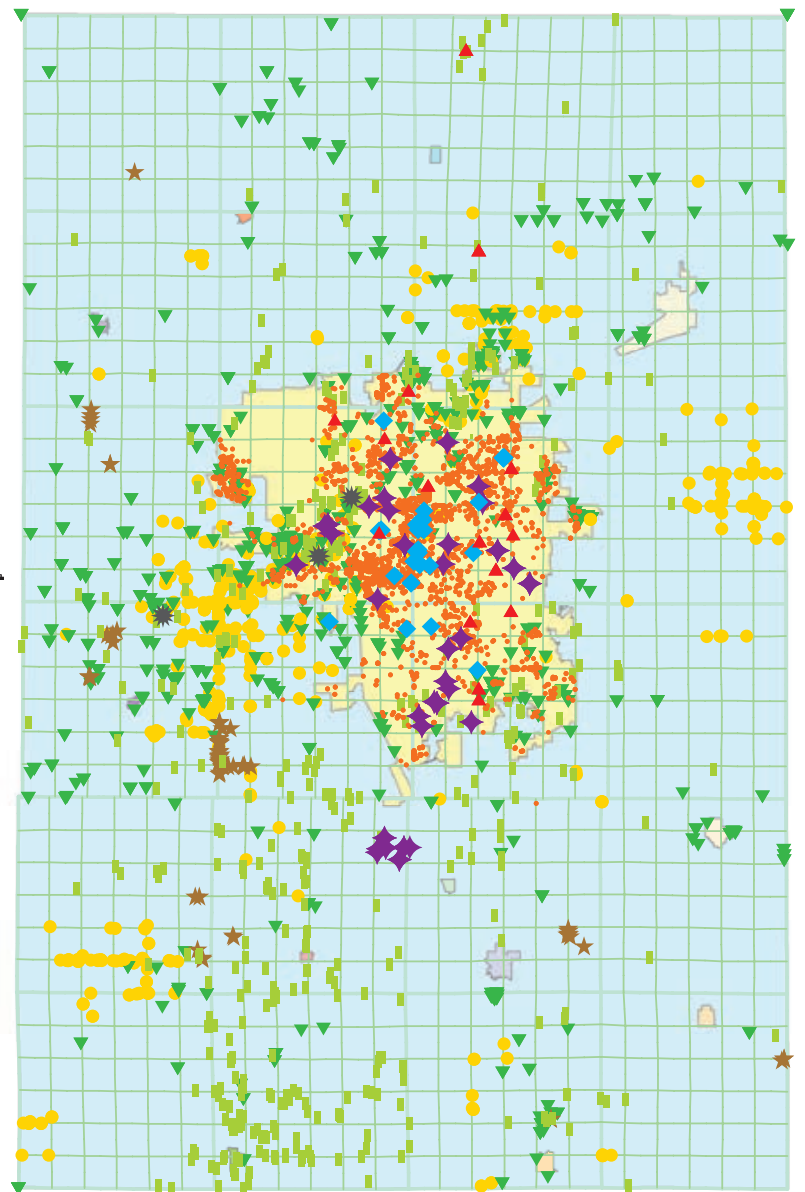
Sericea lespedeza — Sericea lespedeza was added to the state noxious weed list in April of 2013. This designation requires this very difficult-to-control perennial to be controlled by the landowner. Our inspectors found 73 sites infested totaling 129 acres.

Lancaster County Noxious Weeds

- ▼ Musk Thistle
- Leafy Spurge
- Phragmites
- ★ Sericea lespedeza
- ▲ Canada Thistle
- ◆ Knotweed
- ◆ Purple Loosestrife
- ✱ Saltcedar

City of Lincoln Weed Abatement

- Weeds & worthless vegetation above 6"



City of Lincoln Weed Abatement Program

The City of Lincoln Weed Abatement Ordinance requires owners of land within the city limits to maintain the height of weeds and worthless vegetation below 6 inches. This includes all areas to the center of the street or alley that joins their property.

Three seasonal inspectors are used in administering this program. Most inspections are carried out as a result of complaints.

In 2013, there were 265 properties pre-selected for inspection because of past violations and the lack of response to correct the violations. Our office received 1,867 complaints from the public and an additional 967 properties were inspected and observed as having violations. It required 7,099 inspections to make the initial and follow-up inspections on 3,099 sites.

Properties not in compliance were notified of the violations with 1,629 legal notices, 1,546 reminder letters and 45 personal contacts. Landowners cut 2,314 sites and a forced cutting was contracted on 325 sites. Landowners are responsible to pay the cost of control; it remains a lien against the property taxes until paid.

City Landfills

The Weed Control Authority is also responsible for managing both the 48th Street and Bluff Road landfills for all noxious weeds. Musk thistle, leafy spurge and phragmites are the main problems. Both landfills are annually inspected and mapped. A contractor is then hired to do the control work. We do a follow-up inspection once the contractor spraying is complete to ensure proper control.

Lancaster County Abandoned Cemeteries

Mowing and general maintenance on 6 abandoned cemeteries throughout the county is also under the supervision of the Weed Control office. Cemeteries included are the County Poor Farm, Dietz, Evangelical, Highland, Jordan and Uphoff.

Special recognition goes to the following volunteers:

- Lincoln Tree Service for tree trimming and removal
- Steve Wedge for mowing Jordan
- Terry Briley for mowing Evangelical
- Boy Scouts of America Troop 64 for mowing Dietz
- The good Samaritan for mowing Highland & Uphoff (we don't know who is mowing these, but are very appreciative of them for doing it and keeping them looking great.)

Spring Affair Plant Sale, April 26

Spring Affair, the Midwest's largest gardening event, will be Saturday, April 26, 9 a.m.–4 p.m. at the Lancaster Event Center, 84th & Havelock in Pavilion 1. More than 500 varieties of plants will be offered at the plant sale, with educational talks, "talk-about" and garden vendors all under the same roof. Admission to the sale and talks is free.

Plants available at the sale are selected for regional suitability, uniqueness, demand and are provided by Bluebird Nursery Inc., of Clarkson, Neb. Gardeners will find perennials, herbs, native plants, temperennials, vines and a variety of trees and shrubs.

Spring Affair is sponsored by Nebraska Statewide Arboretum in partnership with the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Department of Agronomy & Horticulture, UNL Extension and Extension Master Gardeners. This annual event serves as both an educational tool and a fundraising event for the ongoing growth of the arboretum and the department.

For more information or to get a copy of the 2014 Spring Affair Newsletter, go to <http://springaffair.unl.edu> or call 402-472-2971.



Plant Talks in Lancaster Room

- 10:30am "The Buzz on Bees," UNL Entomologists
12:00pm "GreatPlants for Great Gardens," Bob Henrickson, GreatPlants Coordinator
1:30pm "Gardens make a Difference," Jackie Urkoski, Nebraska Statewide Arboretum Executive Director, and Justin Evertson, Grants Coordinator

Talk-Abouts at Plant Sale Tables

- 11:00am Trees – Bones of the Garden (Arboretum plant tables)
11:30am Plants that Love Bees
12:30pm Parched and Perfect – Plants for Sun
1:00pm Shrub It Up (Arboretum plant tables)
2:00pm Reach for the Sky – Vines
2:30pm Cool in the Shade

GARDEN GUIDE

THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH

Mary Jane Frogge, UNL Extension Associate

Cut flower stalks back to the ground on daffodils, hyacinths and other spring flowering bulbs as the flowers fade. Do not cut the foliage until it dies naturally. The leaves are necessary to produce strong bulbs capable of reflowering next year.

The last Friday in April is National Arbor Day. Plant a tree or support an organization which plants trees.

Do not add organic matter to the soil when planting trees. It does not help the plant become established and it may create conditions that encourage the roots to stay inside the planting hole instead of spreading to the surrounding soil. Do dig a large planting hole, but fill it with the original soil removed from it.

Prune spring blooming shrubs such as forsythia and spirea after they have completed flowering.

Remove sticks, rocks and other debris from your lawn to prevent damaging your lawn mower or injuring yourself when mowing. Check your lawn mower and other lawn-care equipment in preparation for the coming season.

Seed bare spots in your fescue or bluegrass lawn.

Scatter annual poppy seeds in flower borders. The fine seeds need not be covered. The plants grow rapidly and provide colorful flowers in early summer.

In a sunny location with poor soil, plant nasturtiums for a colorful show. They require warm soil to sprout and start blooming in about 50 days. Too much water and fertilizer produces excess leaves and few flowers.

Measure the rainfall with a rain gauge posted near the garden so you can tell when to water. The garden needs about one-inch of rain per week from April to September.

When chrysanthemums show signs of life, dig up and divide large plants. Discard woody portions and replant divisions 12–15 inches apart.

Understanding Canine Heartworm Disease

Barb Ogg

UNL Extension Educator

Spring is just around the corner. If you are a dog or cat owner, it is a good time to make an appointment with your animal's veterinarian about fleas and heartworms.

Canine heartworm infections are caused by a parasitic roundworm, *Dirofilaria immitis*. Heartworm infections are serious ... even small infestations of heartworms can damage a dog's pulmonary arteries. Adult worms, which can grow to 10–12 inches long, will find their way to the dog's heart. Infected dogs may have a persistent cough, tire easily with exercise and may have difficulty breathing. Untreated dogs may die. Treatments with veterinary-prescribed medications are usually effective when infections are caught early and dogs are otherwise healthy.

Transmission

A mosquito feeds on an infected dog, taking up nematode microfilaria with its blood meal. Over the next two weeks, the microfilaria molt into infective larvae and are present in mosquito mouthparts. With subsequent feeding, the larvae are deposited on or in the skin. As the worm larvae mature, they enter the vascular system and are carried to the pulmonary arteries and the heart. It takes about six months after the initial infection for adult nematodes to develop and produce microfilaria which can be detected in the blood.

Risk

More than 70 species of mosquitoes are known to vector heartworms. Dog heartworms have been found in all 50 states, with the highest infection rates found in the southeast U.S. and the Mississippi River Valley and its tributaries. In Nebraska, the incidence



The heartworm life cycle is demonstrated in the figure above.

rates are much lower; highest rates found in urban areas (lots of dogs), especially where there are low-lying areas or flooded areas and high mosquito populations. Dogs housed outdoors are 4–5 times more likely to be infected than those housed indoors and male dogs are more likely to be infected than female.

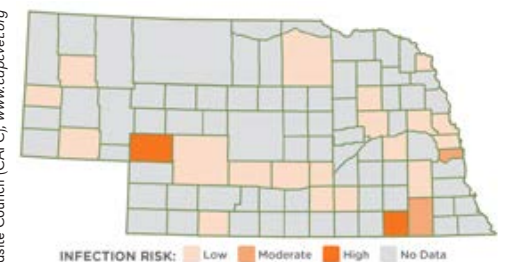
Dogs are the primary host for this disease. Feral dogs, coyotes and untreated dogs are important reservoirs in maintaining this disease. The disease can also infect cats, but with less serious consequences. Infections in humans have also been recorded.

Prevention

After hearing reports of ineffective prevention treatments in the Mississippi Delta area, veterinary researchers recently discovered resistant strains of heartworms

uncontrolled by preventative treatments of the macrocyclic lactone class (ivermectin, selamectin and milbemycins). This means a dog faithfully given heartworm-preventative medication could still become infected with the heartworm parasite, *Dirofilaria immitis*. This resistance has only been found in a small number of heartworm strains in the Mississippi Delta, where mosquito populations are very high. In this high-incidence area, 45 percent of all untreated dogs have heartworm disease. In Nebraska, incidence rates are much lower, but, veterinarians still recommend preventative treatments because of the seriousness of heartworms.

In Nebraska and other parts of the United States preventative treatments of ivermectin and similar drugs are still expected to be effective. Other ways to reduce heartworm infections are to house



According to data reported to the Companion Animal Parasite Council, Nebraska had 85 positive cases out of 22,439 dogs tested for heartworm in 2013.

dogs indoors or in a mosquito-proof, screened-in porch. Use mosquito repellents on your animal, especially on areas of the body where there's not much hair. And, reduce mosquito breeding sites in your landscape by dumping containers of standing water.

Monitor and Treatment

Veterinarians recommend dogs be checked annually for the presence of heartworms through a blood test. In areas where resistance is found, it may be wise to test outdoor dogs twice each year. If heartworms are found, veterinary treatment should focus on adult heartworms and should not be delayed. Because resistant heartworms have been found, the Companion Animal Parasite Council (CAPC) is no longer recommending the "slow kill" method (July 2013). The "slow kill" method involves administering monthly treatment medications of macrocyclic latones (ivermectin, selamectin, milbemycins) to infected dogs without treating for adult worms. Use of these medications when animals are infected may be one of the reason heartworm resistance to these products has developed. Consult your pet's veterinarian for more information about specific heartworm treatments and recommendations.

Source: CAPC, www.capcvet.org/capc-recommendations/canine-heartworm



HEART OF 4-H VOLUNTEER AWARD

Marsha Prior

Lancaster County 4-H is proud to announce Marsha Prior as winner of April's "Heart of 4-H Award" in recognition of outstanding volunteer service.

Marsha started a 4-H club, "Clover Kids," in 1978 and was leader of it for more than 12 years. On year, the club earned Outstanding 4-H Club for participation in the county fair. Marsha has taught numerous classes on sewing, cooking and needlework. She has also helped with the 4-H food booth at the county fair and Citizenship Washington Focus. In 2009, Marsha started the Fusion 4-H'ers club, which won Outstanding 4-H Club for Category II with 8-12 members and was recognized as a Nebraska Club of Excellence last year.

"I like being a 4-H volunteer because I am involved in promoting countless enriching learning experiences for children," says Marsha. "My favorite experience as a 4-H volunteer is the smiles of each and every 4-H'er when they have personally learned and accomplished another of their goals. It may be a sewing project completed, making a yummy cookie, a beautiful drawing, a photograph that shows the beauty of our world, a woodworking project, a rocket blasting off, giving a speech, a completed record book, helping one another, a community service project well done, etc."

Lancaster County 4-H thanks Marsha for donating her time and talents. Volunteers like her are indeed the heart of 4-H!

Volunteers are needed to help lead 4-H clubs. If you would like to learn more about 4-H volunteer opportunities, call 402-441-7180.



Rabbit Show, March 29

All youth ages 8-18 are invited to the 4-H Spring Rabbit Show, March 29, 9 a.m. at the Lancaster Event Center – Exhibit Hall. Registration 7:30-8:30 a.m. Classes include fancy, commercial, pet and pee wee. A great opportunity to learn and practice showmanship. Rabbit Quiz and Breed Identification contests are free. For more information, go to <http://go.unl.edu/mqua> or call Marty at 402-441-7180.

Youth Ag Conference

Nebraska Agriculture Youth Institute (NAYI) is a five day summer conference for high-school juniors and seniors held July 7-11 at UNL East Campus. The Nebraska Department of Agriculture will provide the cost of meals, lodging and conference fees. Applications are due on April 15. Information and application form is available at www.nda.nebraska.gov/nayi and the Extension office.

Furniture Painting Workshop, April 12



4-H youth ages 8 and up are invited to participate in a furniture painting workshop on Saturday, April 12, 9 a.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherry Creek Road. Bring a small piece of unpainted furniture, such as a shelf, stool or chair. These items can be found around your house, at craft stores, garage sales and thrift stores. Learn how to prepare new and used wood furniture by sanding, sealing, painting and finishing. All paints and finishes provided. No cost to attend. Adults are welcome to attend to help youth. Register by April 9 by calling 402-441-7180.

4-H Design Camp, June 4 & 5

Mark your calendars for the upcoming 4-H Design Camp on June 4 & 5 at the Lancaster Extension Education Center. 4-H'ers will plan and design their own fabric, learn pattern alteration and manipulation, sew a skirt with designed fabric and participate in a runway show. Check the May NEBLINE for more information.

Wanted: 4-H Clubs to Help Landscape at Event Center

The Lancaster County Ag Society is seeking 4-H Clubs interested in a community service project. Volunteer groups are needed to spruce up the grounds of the Lancaster Event Center by planting some flower beds, trees and other general landscaping projects. If interested, please call the Lancaster Event Center at 402-441-6545.

HORSE BITS

4-H Horsemanship Level Testings, April 15 & 29

The first 2014 riding skills level testing will be held on Tuesday, April 15, 5:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Event Center in the Amy Countryman Arena. Anyone wishing to be tested must sign-up by April 8. Contact Marty at mcrucickshank2@unl.edu or 402 441-7180.

A second testing is scheduled for Tuesday, April 29, 5:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Event Center in the Amy Countryman Arena. Sign-up deadline for the April 29 testing is April 22.

Remember, all other horsemanship level requirements must be completed and handed in to Marty before the riding portion can be done.

It is important to note 4-H'ers need to be testing with their own 4-H projects. The horse is being tested (and acclimated) also. In addition, youth testing for level II must have their horses groomed/clipped for show readiness. This is part of the level II test. If youth/horse do not pass this portion, they will need to come back and retest.

Notice from Horse VIPS About 'No Shows' at Level Testings

In the past, there has been a problem with 4-H'ers signing up to test and then not showing up as scheduled. A lot of time and effort goes into preparing for the testings. When those signed up do not show, the testers are giving up unnecessary time, talent and expense.

Lancaster County 4-H Horse VIPS Committee made a decision that 4-H'ers must notify Marty (402-441-7180 or mcrucickshank2@unl.edu) at least 24 hours in advance if they can't make it to a scheduled testing. The group also voted to assess a \$20 fee on anyone who signs up for a testing and then doesn't come or notify Marty before the testing date. The fee must be paid before the 4-H'er will be allowed to test on another date.

4-H Speech & PSA

Contests are open to all 4-H'ers — need not be enrolled in a specific project. Youth may choose to participate in either or both the Speech and PSA contests. For guidelines, and examples, go to <http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/Contest/speech.shtml>. If questions, contact Cole Meador at cmeador2@unl.edu or 402-441-7180.

PSA Contest, Due April 7

In the Public Service Announcement (PSA) Contest, 4-H'ers submit a 60 second "radio commercial" promoting 4-H. Submit a PSA via CD to extension by Monday, April 7. If you do not have the capabilities to record a PSA, contact Cole to set up a recording time. Results and comment sheets will be handed out at the 4-H Speech Contest on April 13. **The 2014 PSA theme is "Making a Lasting Impact."**

New this year, please use .wav or .mp3 audio formats when recording your PSA.

Speech Contest, April 13

The 4-H Speech Contest will be held Sunday, April 13 at the Lancaster Extension Education Center. Registration 1-1:30 p.m., contest begins 1:30 p.m. Register by April 7 by calling 402-441-7180 or emailing cmeador2@unl.edu with your name, speech title, age division, and if it is "Speech for YouTube." **Note new age divisions again this year.**

Note special class added last year: **Speech For YouTube (14-18 years old)** (may enter a regular speech and/or this county-only class) — length: 1-3 minutes, topic: ask adults to volunteer for 4-H by helping start a club, helping teach a project, volunteering at various 4-H activities, etc. Please include "To find out more, go to lancaster.unl.edu or call 402-441-7180." Parent of 4-H participant will need to fill out an image permission form (online at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/Contest/speech.shtml>). Do not use your name in the speech. All speeches will be videotaped and purple ribbon winners' videos posted to YouTube and submitted to Cable 5 City-TV.

4-H Horse Stampede Results

The statewide 4-H Horse Stampede held March 1 at UNL East Campus. More than 100 youth competed in four events; horse bowl, public speaking, demonstration and art contest. Congratulations to all Lancaster County 4-H members who participated! Below are the top Lancaster County winners. Champions are qualified to compete at national 4-H contests.

JUNIOR HORSE BOWL

Lancaster Team – Espirit de Corps (Champion): Anne Cashmere, Cally Dorff, Aussia Stander, Chloe Stander and coach Kate Rawlinson

Lancaster Team (purple ribbon): Emmi Dearmont, Katherine Moyer, Sidney Schlesiger, Jenna Wolfe and coach Andy Dearmont

ART CONTEST

Elementary Division: Emmi Dearmont (Champion), Grace Spaulding (Reserve Champion)



The Junior Horse Bowl Team of Anne Cashmere, Cally Dorff, Aussia Stander, Chloe Stander and coach Kate Rawlinson earned state champion!



Emmi Dearmont's artwork earned elementary champion in the Art Contest.

Livestock Judging Team Earns Reserve Champion at Cattleman's Classic

At the 2014 Nebraska Cattleman's Classic on Feb. 22 in Kearney, the Lancaster County 4-H senior livestock judging team earned reserve champion high team. Team members included Michaela Clowser, Brandon Sieck and Renae Sieck. Individual results included Michaela Clowser placing 5th overall and 5th in reasons, and Taylon Lienemann placing 9th in reasons.

Lancaster County 4-H'er Colter Tietjen participated as a junior individual.



The Lancaster County 4-H senior livestock judging team earned reserve champion at the Cattleman's Classic.

Livestock Quality Assurance Certification Must be Done Online by June 15

All 4-H/FFA members wanting to show market beef, market sheep, market swine, meat and dairy goats, dairy cattle, poultry and rabbits at county fair, State Fair, or the Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Stock Show must complete Quality Assurance training. Horse exhibitors and livestock exhibitors showing only breeding animals do not have to complete it.

Again this year, the Quality Assurance certification is online. In the past youth must have completed an in person training; now everything is online. This new format is more user friendly,

youth complete activities that pertain to their age, and youth are able to complete the trainings at their own pace and time allotment.

As always this must be done by June 15.

Instructions are online at <http://4h.unl.edu/qualityassurance>. Please pass along all of this information to youth in your club who will need to be QA certified. If you have any questions regarding this new format, contact Cole at cmeador2@unl.edu or 402-441-7180.

New in 4-H at Fair

See the Fair Book for detailed information about each of the following:

- **Special County Exhibit: Fair promotional exhibit** — exhibit should promote the Lancaster County Super Fair. Include information describing exhibit, inspiration for it, etc.
- **Photography:** Unit II - Career exhibit print (pet photographer), Creative editing display, Favorite photos taken with smartphone or tablet display; Unit III - Career exhibit print (editorial photographer), Favorite photos taken with smart phone or tablet display
- **Clothing:** Textile Arts Garment or Accessory - a garment or accessory constructed using new unconventional materials. Examples: rubber bands, plastic, duct tape. A description of the design process must accompany the entry or it will be disqualified.
- **Home Environment:** Design My Place replaces Create Your Corner. All new classes
- **Food & Nutrition:** Six Easy Bites — Bar Cookies
- **Woodworking:** Unit 3 & 4 — Recycled Woodworking Displays
- **Cat Show:** Record book keeping — books will be judged on completeness.
- **Poultry Show:**
 - Exhibitor can enter a total of 15 pens
 - Judging Contest — This contest allows the contestants to place a class of four to six poultry, giving written reasons for their placements. Written comments may be used as tie-breakers.
 - Breed Identification Contest — Each competitor must correctly identify six to ten breeds. Points are awarded for each correctly answered I.D. In case of a tie, there will be tie-breaker questions for bonus points.
- **Horse Show:**
 - Ranch Horse Versatility — Ridden and judged individually. Designed to show how broke/responsive your horse is to cues, the pattern requires a walk, trot & lope in both directions, stop & back.
 - All who participate in the live cattle events must have a level II in horsemanship.
 - To participate in a jumping class, riders must have passed all aspects of Level I. Not open to Walk-Trot competitors.
 - Hunter Hack Jumper Show — heights have been lowered and new Green Horse/Rider Division
 - WDAA Western Dressage classes



JULY 31-AUG. 9, 2014

4-H & FFA EXHIBITS & EVENTS JULY 31-AUG. 3

LANCASTER EVENT CENTER

4-H/FFA Fair Books Have Been Mailed

The Lancaster County 4-H & FFA Fair Book contains entry information for 4-H & FFA members exhibiting in 4-H/FFA. Fair Books have been mailed to all 4-H & FFA families. It is also available at the Extension office and online at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/Fair>. Many fair handouts, forms and videos are also on this website.

Open Class entry information and schedule will be online by May 1 at www.superfair.org. Anyone can participate in open class categories.

4-H/FFA Sheep & Meat Goat Weigh-In, May 1

4-H/FFA members planning to exhibit market sheep and meat goats need to have their lambs and goats officially tagged and weighed on Thursday, May 1, 6-8 p.m. at the Lancaster Event Center - Pavilion 2. For more information, call Cole at 402-441-7180.

4-H Bicycle Contest Superintendent Needed

Do you enjoy riding your bike and helping youth? Here is a great opportunity to do both. A 4-H Bicycle Contest Superintendent is needed for the annual contest usually held in June. Training and direction provided. If there is no superintendent, there will be no contest. If interested, contact Tracy at 402-441-7180.

Sheridan Swotek at National 4-H Congress



Sheridan Swotek (second from left) was one of 12 youth on the National 4-H Congress Youth Leadership Team.

Each year, Nebraska 4-H selects youth to represent the state at National 4-H Youth Congress based upon the achievements outlined in the 4-H Career Portfolio. Last November, a Lancaster County 4-H'er attended National 4-H Congress for the first time since 2001.

Sheridan Swotek represented Nebraska for her Leadership and Citizenship 4-H Career Portfolio. She applied for and was selected as one of 12 youth on the 2013 National 4-H Congress Youth Leadership Team AND one of 10 National 4-H Congress 4-H Youth Entertainers. Youth Leadership Team members emceed and assisted with events. As a Youth Entertainer, Sheridan presented her "Crazy 4-H Moms" speech at the Sunday Adult Breakfast (a video of her speech is on the Lancaster County 4-H YouTube Channel at <http://youtu.be/tGsmara2xf0>).

The 2013 National 4-H Congress was held in Atlanta, Ga. Approximately 1,300 4-H'ers from all 50 states, Puerto Rico and Kenya attended. The event included educational workshops, keynote speakers and hands-on community service.

Sheridan says, "National Congress has been the highlight so far in my 4-H Career! Ideas, memories and friendships were shared among the amazing 4-H youth and leaders. I highly encourage other 4-H members to do career portfolios so they can become eligible for National Congress."

Nebraska 4-H'ers Excel at Horse Nationals!



The Lancaster County Horse Bowl Team earned national champions!

In January, more than 900 youth from 30 states, along with Alberta, Canada, traveled to Denver, Colo. to take part in the 4-H/FFA Western National Roundup. Several Nebraska 4-H youth attended the 2013 4-H Horse Classic portion of the Roundup. Each team and individual had to first win the state competition to qualify for nationals.

Team Nebraska (consisting of Lancaster, Douglas/Sarpy and Dawson 4-H'ers) earned 2nd High Overall State Award! The High Overall State Award is given to the state with the overall highest score based on placings in the five different competitions. Top five teams in the nation were, in order of placing: Colorado, Nebraska, Texas, California and Arizona.

The Horse Bowl team of Elli Dearmont, Ivy Dearmont, Kate Rawlinson, Hannah Ronnau and Lexi Wolfe (coached by Kendra Ronnau) earned Overall High Team — National Champions! The competition included one-on-one questions and toss-up questions. Horse Bowl Overall Individuals included Kate Rawlinson placing 2nd, Elli Dearmont placing 5th and Hannah Ronnau placing 6th.

In Horse Public Speaking, Sierra Nelson earned 4th High Individual with her speech "Is He the One to Impress."



EXTENSION CALENDAR

All events will be held at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln, unless otherwise noted.

March

- 20 Commercial Pesticide Applicator Recertification Training..... 9 a.m.
- 29 4-H Spring Rabbit Show, Lancaster Event Center, Exhibit Hall 9 a.m.

April

- 1 All 4-H/FFA Market Beef ID's Due to Extension
- 1 Gardening at Lunch Webinar: 8 Steps to a Better Lawn, *online only*..... 12:05–12:55 p.m.
- 7 4-H Public Service Announcement (PSA) Contest CDs Due/
Preregister for Speech Contest
- 8 Composting Workshop, Bess Dodson Walt Library..... 6 p.m.
- 8 4-H Council Meeting..... 7 p.m.
- 9 AARP Driver Safety Program 9 a.m.–1 p.m.
- 10 Commercial Pesticide Applicator Initial Training and Testing
Session 8:30 a.m.
- 11 Extension Board Meeting..... 8 a.m.
- 12 4-H Furniture Painting Workshop..... 9 a.m.
- 12 Kiwanis Karnival, Elliott School..... 6–8 p.m.
- 13 4-H Speech Contest 1 p.m. registration/1:30 p.m. contest
- 15 4-H Horse Level Testing, Lancaster Event Center - Amy Countryman
Arena 5:30 p.m.
- 15 Composting Workshop, Bess Dodson Walt Library..... 6 p.m.
- 15 Guardian/Conservator Training 5:30–8:30 p.m.
- 26 Spring Affair Plant Sale, Lancaster Event Center - Pav. 1..... 9 a.m.–4 p.m.
- 29 4-H Horse Level Testing, Lancaster Event Center - Amy Countryman
Arena 5:30 p.m.

BACKYARD FARMER

continued from page 1
These programs are now available on the YouTube channel.

Ask Backyard Farmer


If you have a lawn and garden question, send your question to byf@unl.edu. When submitting an email question, give as much information about the plant problem as possible, including specifics such as:

- your location
- plant species
- plant site and microclimate
- soil conditions
- a short history of how you have managed your plant, including year of planting, water and fertilization
- digital photos.

The panelists love to see pictures of your problem, because it makes diagnosis of the issue much easier. Plus, images can be shared on the show with other viewers, perhaps helping them to identify and solve a similar problem in their own landscape. Make sure your pictures are in focus, and include both a wide shot of the overall plant and a close-up of the problem area.

Help Backyard Farmer Grow

NET provides partial funding for *Backyard Farmer*, but major production costs are covered by UNL Extension, which is also responsible for program content. You can help *Backyard Farmer* continue to serve future generations. To give online, visit the University of Nebraska Foundation website at <https://nufoundation.org>. Type "Backyard Farmer" in the box titled "Give to a Specific Fund" and complete the form. To learn more, contact Ann Bruntz at abruntz@nufoundation.org or 402-458-1176.



Kiwanis Karnival, April 12

The annual Kiwanis Karnival, a FREE family event, is sponsored by the Lincoln Center Kiwanis. This year, it will be held Saturday, April 12, 6–8 p.m. at Elliott Elementary School, 225 S. 25th St., 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!

UNL CASNR Community Night, April 15

All youth 5th grade and younger and their families are invited to a free Community Night presented by University of Nebraska–Lincoln College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR) Week Program Council. The event will be held Tuesday, April 15, 5–7 p.m. in the Great Plains Room at the Nebraska East Union, 1705 Arbor Drive. CASNR clubs will present carnival-type games and prizes. The Horticulture Club will have pots, soil and seeds. There will also be free hot dogs and ice cream.

Discover, Learn and Grow at 4-H Summer Camps

4-H Summer Camps are open to all youth ages 5–18 (need not be in 4-H). With locations at Gretna and Halsey, there are nearly 50 camps ranging from half day to seven days/six nights! Brochures are now available online at <http://4h.unl.edu/camp> and at the Extension office.



**Save 10%
by registering
before April 15!**

EXTENSION NEWS

Sarah Browning Receives Teaching Excellence Award



Sarah Browning (center) with Luann Finke, Extension board member, and Steven Waller, Dean of UNL College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources.

In March, Sarah Browning, extension educator with University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County, received one of four senior faculty Holling Family Awards for Teaching Excellence presented by UNL Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources. The Holling Family Awards are given annually for outstanding teaching in the university's Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources. The Holling Family Award Program was made possible by a gift from the Holling family to honor their pioneer parents.

Sarah develops horticulture and environmental programming for both homeowners and professionals. She uses multiple delivery methods, including traditional classroom programming, webinars, videos, websites, email newsletters and social media. She is also a regular panelist on NET's *Backyard Farmer* and writes a weekly horticulture column for the *Lincoln Journal Star*.

Major program contributions include:

- developed a statewide web-based training for Master Gardeners,
- editor and contributor of Hort Update, an e-newsletter for green industry professionals,
- member of UNL Extension Acreage team and web master of the Acreage Insights website (<http://acreage.unl.edu>) and e-newsletter, and
- member of UNL Extension team which provides training on good agricultural practices for fruit and vegetable growers.

"Lancaster County residents were the winners when Sarah Browning was tapped as Extension's horticulture educator. She has made her way into our homes and gardens with programs like *Backyard Farmer*, THE NEBLINE and Master Gardener training," says Luann Finke, member of the Lancaster County Extension Board and co-owner of Finke Gardens & Nursery.

Grace (Farley) Troupe Receives Statewide Young Adult Award



Grace Troupe (second from left) with UNL Extension in Lancaster County staff members Lorene Bartos, Tracy Anderson and Gary Bergman.

At the Nebraska Association of County Extension Boards' (NACEB) annual meeting in February, Grace (Farley) Troupe received the organization's statewide Young Adult Award for ages 17–25. She was nominated by Gary C. Bergman, Extension Educator and Unit Leader of UNL Extension in Lancaster County. Grace was a Lancaster County 4-H member for 13 years, and recognized as Outstanding 4-H Member in 2009.

Grace is currently a Master's Student at University of Nebraska–Lincoln in Genetics and Plant Breeding with a teaching focus. Her leadership activities include:

- UNL graduate student ambassador,
- Teaching Assistant in Genetics, Crop Science and Plant Science,
- Committee Chair of the Agronomy and Horticulture Grad Student Association,
- volunteer with 2 Pillars Church, and
- presenter at UNL Extension's Big Red Summer Academic Camp, "Crop Science"

Grace has earned numerous honors and distinctions from multiple organizations and her schools.