

11-2015

NEBLINE, November/December 2015

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Chill Out Over the Holidays by Freezing Foods Ahead

Alice Henneman, MS, RDN, Extension Educator, Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County
Joyce Jensen, REHS, CP-FS, Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department

Do you feel like you're in a holi-DAZE during the holidays? A simple quick-cooking technique is to make extra food at one meal for future meals. Or, to prepare food ahead and freeze for a later time. This can free up valuable time for you when cooking for family and friends over the holidays.

One easy method of freezing foods — including liquid foods such as soups and stews — is to freeze them in freezer bags. Following are some general freezing tips, followed by specific tips for freezing in freezer bags.

- If you're making extra food at one meal for future meals, separate and refrigerate the portion to be served later BEFORE you put the food on the table. This keeps food quality higher by preventing "planned-overs" from becoming "picked-overs." It also helps keep food safe.
- Keep an appliance thermometer in your refrigerator and in your freezer to assure they stay at 40°F or lower (refrigerator) and 0°F or lower (freezer).
- Refrigerate perishable foods so the TOTAL time they're at room temperature is less than two hours (or one hour in temperatures above 90°F). At room temperature, just ONE bacterium in perishable foods could grow to 2,097,152 bacteria in seven hours! As a general guideline, eat perishable foods within four days or freeze them. Perishable foods include:
 - meat, poultry, fish, eggs, tofu

- dairy products
- pasta, rice, cooked vegetables
- fresh, peeled and/or cut fruits and vegetables
- Freeze foods in portion sizes you'll need for future meals. For example, if there are two in your family and you each eat a cup of rice for a meal, freeze in two-cup portions.

Step 1. Cool Foods "slightly" at room temperature before refrigeration

It is not necessary for a food to be completely cool before it is refrigerated. To help food cool slightly before refrigeration:

- Place a shallow container of food on a cooling rack to allow air to circulate all round the pan for about 20 to 30 minutes.
- Limit depth of food to 2 inches.

Step 2. Complete cooling of foods in the refrigerator

Cool foods to refrigerator temperature before bagging them for your freezer. It is OK to refrigerate foods while they're still warm.

LOOSELY cover food upon refrigeration. This allows heat to escape and protects the food from accidental contamination from other foods during cooling.

Step 3. Pack foods into freezer bags

Use "freezer" bags, not "storage" bags for storing food in the freezer. Freezer bags are

thicker than storage bags and will keep the food fresh longer.

Speed freezing and hasten thawing by freezing foods in a thin, flattened shape in freezer bags. A rounded shape takes longer to thaw through to the middle. Flatter packages also will stack better in your freezer.

Step 4. Label foods

To avoid mystery meats and other foods of unknown age and possibly origin, label foods using freezer tape, gummed freezer labels or permanent marking pens/crayons. Include:

- name of food;
- packaging date;
- number of servings or amount;
- additional helpful information, such as form of food (sliced, chopped, etc.), any special ingredients.

Step 5. Put in freezer

It is helpful to place filled freezer bags on a flat surface in your freezer, such as a metal pan. Do not stack freezer bags until frozen so they will freeze faster. After they are frozen solid, the bags may be removed from the pan and stored, stacked, directly on the freezer shelf. Or turn them on their edge and store them vertically. This is an especially good idea when freezing liquid foods, such as soups and stews.

Step 6. Thaw and cook frozen foods

DO NOT thaw perishable foods at room temperature. If perishable foods are left at room



temperature too long, bacteria may grow and produce heat-resistant toxins that can cause food-borne illness. Cooking may not be able to destroy these toxins.

It's best to plan ahead for slow, safe thawing in the refrigerator. Small items may thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Up to 5 pounds of food should thaw in about 24 hours.

If there is the possibility a thawing package might leak, you may want to thaw it on a plate or a pan.

If food is thawed in the microwave, finish reheating it right away. Unlike food thawed in a refrigerator, microwave-thawed foods reach temperatures that encourage bacterial growth. Cook immediately to kill any bacteria that may have developed and to prevent further bacterial growth.

- Food may be transferred from a freezer bag to a microwave safe container for thawing in the microwave.

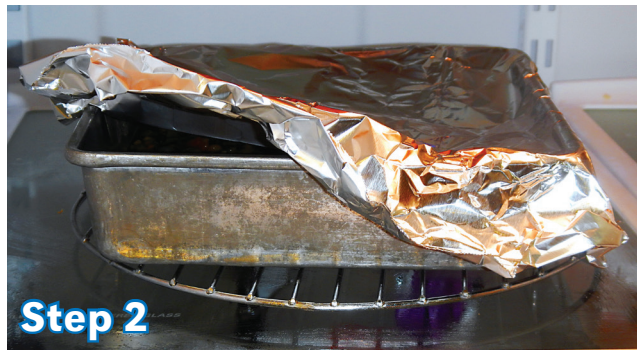
- If the freezer bag manufacturer says it is OK to thaw foods directly in their freezer bag, follow manufacturer's directions for such things as venting, recommended heat settings, types of foods suitable for microwave-thawing, etc. for the specific bag. Also, follow manufacturer's directions for your microwave.
- While you may be able to satisfactorily defrost food in some freezer bags in the microwave (check manufacturer's directions), DO NOT cook the food in the freezer bag — unless recommended by the freezer bag manufacturer. At the higher temperatures used in the microwave cooking process, it is possible for the plastic to reach melting temperatures.

ON NEXT PAGE

- Foods that do not freeze well
- Recipe for pictured lentil soup (if you have leftover holiday ham, toss chunks of it into this soup as you heat it)



Step 1



Step 2



Steps 3 & 4



Step 5

Photos: Alice Henneman

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Foods That Do Not Freeze Well

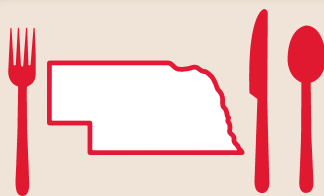
FOODS	USUAL USE	CONDITION AFTER THAWING
Cabbage*, celery, cress, cucumbers*, endive, lettuce, parsley, radishes	As raw salad	Limp, water-logged, quickly oxidized color, aroma and flavor
Irish potatoes, baked or boiled	In soups, salads, sauces or with butter	Soft, crumbly, water-logged, mealy
Cooked macaroni, spaghetti or rice	When frozen alone for later use	Mushy, tastes warmed over
Egg whites, cooked	In salads, creamed foods, sandwiches, sauces, gravy or desserts	Soft, tough, rubbery, spongy
Meringue	In desserts	Soft, tough, rubbery, spongy
Icings made from egg whites	Cakes, cookies	Frothy, weeps
Cream or custard fillings	Pies, baked goods	Separates, watery, lumpy
Milk sauces	For casseroles or gravies	May curdle or separate
Sour cream	As topping, in salads	Separates, watery
Cheese or crumb toppings	On casseroles	Soggy
Mayonnaise or salad dressing	On sandwiches (not in salads)	Separates
Gelatin	In salads or desserts	Weeps
Fruit jelly	Sandwiches	May soak bread
Fried foods	All except French fried potatoes and onion rings	Lose crispness, become soggy

* Cucumbers and cabbage can be frozen as marinated products such as “freezer slaw” or “freezer pickles.” These do not have the same texture as regular slaw or pickles.

Effect of Freezing on Spices and Seasonings

- Pepper, cloves, garlic, green pepper, imitation vanilla and some herbs tend to get strong and bitter.
- Onion and paprika change flavor during freezing.
- Celery seasonings become stronger.
- Curry develop a musty off-flavor.
- Salt loses flavor and has the tendency to increase rancidity of any item containing fat.
- When using seasonings and spices, season lightly before freezing, and add additional seasonings when reheating or serving.

Information courtesy of “So Easy to Preserve,” 5th ed. 2006. Bulletin 989, Cooperative Extension Service, The University of Georgia, Athens. Revised by Elizabeth L. Andress, Ph.D. and Judy A. Harrison, Ph.D., Extension Foods Specialists. Available at http://nchfp.uga.edu/how/freeze/dont_freeze_foods.html



HEALTHY EATING

ENJOY NEBRASKA FOODS!

Alice Henneman, MS, RDN, Extension Educator

SLOW COOKER LENTIL SOUP

(6 servings)

6 cups water
1/4 cup parsley (chopped fresh, or 2 tablespoons dried parsley), optional
2 teaspoons beef bouillon (or 2 cubes beef bouillon)
1-1/2 cups lentils (dry)
2 carrots (medium, sliced)
1 onion (medium, chopped)
2 celery stalks (sliced)

Mix all ingredients together in slow cooker. Cook on LOW for 8–10 hours or HIGH for 4–5 hours. Serve hot with crackers or bread.

Recipe source: Montana State University Extension Service. Montana Extension Nutrition Education Program Website Recipes and available at What’s Cooking – USDA Mixing Bowl, www.whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/recipes/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap/slow-cooker-lentil-soup

ALICE’S TIPS:

- I omitted adding the parsley to the soup while it was cooking. Rather, I added fresh parsley as garnish when serving the soup.
- For added flavor, I added 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme and 2 finely chopped garlic cloves along with the other ingredients.
- I used a 4-quart slow cooker to cook the soup.
- To lower the sodium level of this soup, use low or reduced sodium beef bouillon cubes or powder. Or, substitute 2 cups of low sodium broth for 2 of the cups of water.
- Unlike dry beans, dry lentils do not need to be soaked before they are cooked.

Make-Ahead Freezer Meals

Thursday, Nov. 19, 6:30–8 p.m.

Bryan Health East Campus
Plaza Conference Center, 1600 S. 48 St.

Presented by
Alice Henneman, Extension Educator
Pre-registration is required by calling 402-481-8886.

Wouldn’t it be nice to come home and know dinner is assembled and “in the bag,” ready to be cooked? Alice Henneman, Registered Dietitian Nutritionist, will share tips, recipes and an extensive handout for creating “Make-Ahead Freezer Meals.” Learn which foods freeze well, freezing techniques that maintain best food quality, how to freeze healthier meals than you can buy, and how you can save time and eat better with these meals.



USA Rice Federation

How to Take Care of Your Child if They Are Sick to Their Stomach

Jaci Foged
Extension Educator,
Seward County



“Mommy, I think I am going to be sick,” my nine year old, Allyson said this morning shortly after 2:30 a.m. Uh-oh, here we go again. I spent all day yesterday cleaning up after her 5 year old sister, Joslyn. Sometimes I wonder, “Why are my kids so great at sharing?!”

The truth is, no parent wants their child to get sick, ever. But if you are a “cup’s half full” kind of person, you will be happy to hear, each time your child gets a little cold or a mild case of diarrhea or vomiting, their bodies will start to recognize the illness and learn to fight it off more quickly the next time.

It is important to point out here I am NOT talking about the “flu.” The flu or influenza causes sore throats, runny noses and aches and pains. Rarely will influenza cause stomach issues. So, what is the best way to care for your little one when they are sick to their stomach? I went straight to the source and asked my nine- and five-year-olds.

Top 10 list from a child’s perspective with additional comments from me:

10. Watch TV — (notice this just barely makes the top 10) Normally I would never suggest you turn on the television for a big chunk of the day, however, watching TV or reading a book will help your child relax. Your child isn’t being lazy — they are letting their body repair the damage caused by the virus or bacteria.

9. Take a nap — Getting plenty of rest will help your child’s body heal. Allyson hasn’t moved off of the couch and keeps asking me why she is so tired. One reason is she has been up all night. The other is her body is working hard to fight the illness, even though she is just laying there.

8. Eat crackers and chicken noodle soup — These are staple items to serve when you have a sick one at home. The BRAT diet —

bananas, rice, applesauce and toast are known for being pretty bland which means ideally they will not upset tummies further. Other items you could serve include yogurt and apple slices. Foods should be introduced slowly. You will want to make sure your child is choosing whether to eat or not. Never force them to eat — they will know when they are ready.

7. Keep a bowl next to you — Joslyn disagreed with this one stating seeing the bowl made her tummy rumble. The bottom line is, if you don’t want to clean up the sofa, floor, car or other area your child may be when they get sick, provide a small trash can or bowl and let them know what to do with it should the need arise.

6. Be calm — I am fairly sure your little one will not feel like running around the block if they are sick to their stomach. I also know they will not want to have siblings or friends running around the house playing and being loud when they feel so crummy. Keep the noise level down. This will make it easier for your child to get some much needed rest.

5. Have mommy rub your back and be with you when you are sick in the bathroom — I remember my mom rubbing my back or stomach after I was sick and I do the same for my girls — and they appreciate it enough to include it in their top 10 list! There is a certain power in human touch. Just being with someone, feeling you are not alone when you feel so terrible makes it just bearable enough to get through. I encourage you all to be there for your child when they are sick.

4. Have a toy to snuggle with — most parents cannot stay sitting on the couch or lying in

bed all day when their children are ill. When you are not available to snuggle, make sure your child has a special toy or blanket to cuddle with.

3. Drink Pedialyte — The biggest danger with stomach issues is dehydration. Offer plenty of fluids. Pedialyte and water are your best bet with Pedialyte being the best choice because it replaces important electrolytes (salt and minerals) lost during diarrhea and vomiting. Sports drinks boast electrolyte replacement, but is not recommended for younger children. Do not offer milk, orange juice or drinks with caffeine. These beverages could upset your child’s tummy more than it already is.

2. Wear your PJ’s all day and make a bed on the sofa — Your little ones are going to want to be close to you, but should be kept comfortable too.

1. Snuggle with mommy and daddy — Your child will be most comfortable in the comfort of your arms, in your home, surrounded with their belongings. Make it a priority to get them home or keep them home when they are ill. Keep them home for at least 24 hours after they have stopped vomiting, the diarrhea has stopped or they are fever free without medicine. Please do not take them out when they are ill. They will spread the illness to others as it is highly contagious.

A couple of additional thoughts:

If your child is running a low grade fever try to skip the medicine. Medicine can upset the stomach further.

Most importantly — WASH YOUR HANDS and have your child wash their hands. These types of illnesses are spread fecal to oral. Gross, but that is what happens. Wash hands with warm soapy water for at least 20 seconds every time you use the restroom, before and after meals and any other time you can!

This advice is from the mouth of babes — and their mom, who has had plenty of practice over the years taking care of them!



ASK LORENE FAMILY LIVING TIPS

Lorene Bartos, Extension Educator

Question: Holiday time is approaching. How do I manage to get decorating, shopping and baking done without too much stress?

Answer: Setting priorities and managing our time and energy will help accomplish the tasks to be completed with reduced stress. All tasks can be divided amongst family members.

- A checklist of tasks to be complete will help to make holiday preparation easier.
- Share the duties of preparing for the holidays with family and/or friends. Don’t try to do it all yourself.
- Have a decorating day or weekend and include all family members.
- Plan a baking day for cookie and holiday treats.
- Prepare a schedule for baking and meal preparation.
- Don’t let being a perfectionist interfere with you enjoying the holidays. Family and friends are coming to visit you. Do only what you can without feeling guilty.
- Keep all receipts for gifts in one place. This will save frustrations after the holidays if items need to be returned.
- Prepare the table for meals the night before to save anxiety at the last minute.
- Have plenty of batteries and other items you may need on-hand to save last minute stress.

Co-Parenting Classes

Nebraska Extension offers “Co-Parenting for Successful Kids” classes to help separating and divorcing parents develop plans for respectful, responsive and responsible co-parenting. These research-based classes meet Nebraska court-mandated requirements. The class is offered at on-site locations across Nebraska and online. Cost is \$50.

A six-month follow-up survey indicated over 90 percent of class participants are using strategies they learned in the class to keep their child(ren) out of the middle of the conflict with the other parent.

In Lincoln, classes are taught at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, on the following Thursdays:

- Dec. 3, 9:30 a.m.–1 p.m.
- Jan. 14, 9 a.m.–12:30 p.m.



Co-parenting for
Successful Kids

- Feb. 11, 9 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
- Mar. 10, 9 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
- Apr. 14, 9 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
- May 12, 9 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
- Jun. 9, 9 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
- July 14, 9 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
- Aug. 11, 9 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
- Sep. 8, 9 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
- Oct. 13, 9 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
- Dec. 8, 9 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

For more information about the statewide on-site and online classes, go to <http://child.unl.edu/divorce> or call 855-308-8037. To register for classes in Lancaster County, call 402-441-7180.

Tips to Keep the Holidays Safe and Healthy

To enjoy the holidays, it is important to practice safety and make healthy decisions. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) suggests the following:

Wash your hands — Keeping hands clean is one of the most important steps you can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. Wash your hands with soap and clean running water, and rub them together for at least 20 seconds. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don’t have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hands.

Manage stress — The

holidays don’t need to take a toll on your health and pocketbook. Keep your commitments and spending in check. Balance work, home and play. Get support from family and friends. Keep a relaxed and positive outlook. Make sure to get proper sleep.

Travel safe — Whether you’re traveling across town or around the world, help ensure your trip is safe. Don’t drink and drive, and don’t let someone else drink and drive. Wear a seat belt every time you drive or ride in a motor vehicle. Always buckle your child in the car using a child safety seat, booster seat or seat belt appropriate for his/her

height, weight and age.

Watch the kids — Children are at high risk for injuries. Keep a watchful eye on your kids when they’re eating and playing. Keep potentially dangerous toys, food, drinks, household items, choking hazards (like coins and hard candy) and other objects out of kids’ reach. Learn how to provide early treatment for children who are choking. Make sure toys are used properly. Develop rules about acceptable and safe behaviors, including using electronic media.

Prevent injuries — Injuries can happen anywhere

and some often occur around the holidays. Use step stools instead of climbing on furniture when hanging decorations. Wear a helmet when riding a bicycle or skateboarding to help prevent head injuries. Keep vaccinations up-to-date.

Most residential fires occur during the winter months. Keep candles away from children, pets, walkways, trees and curtains. Never leave fireplaces, stoves or candles unattended. Don’t use generators, grills or other gasoline or charcoal burning devices inside your home or garage. Install a smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector

in your home. Test them once a month, and replace batteries twice a year.

Eat healthy and be active — With balance and moderation, you can enjoy the holidays the healthy way. Choose fresh fruit as a festive and sweet substitute for candy. Limit fats, salt and sugary foods. Find fun ways to stay active, such as dancing to your favorite holiday music. Be active for at least 2-1/2 hours a week. Help kids and teens be active for at least 1 hour a day.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

UNL Animal Science Open House

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Department of Animal Science will host an Open House for youth and their families on Monday, Oct. 26, 6–8 p.m. at the Animal Science Commons on East Campus. Events include:

- information about careers with companion animals, horses and livestock,
- demonstrations and hands-on events,
- meet faculty and students,
- meet with representatives of student organizations, and
- tours of the Animal Science Building.

UNL “Recipe to Reality” Seminars

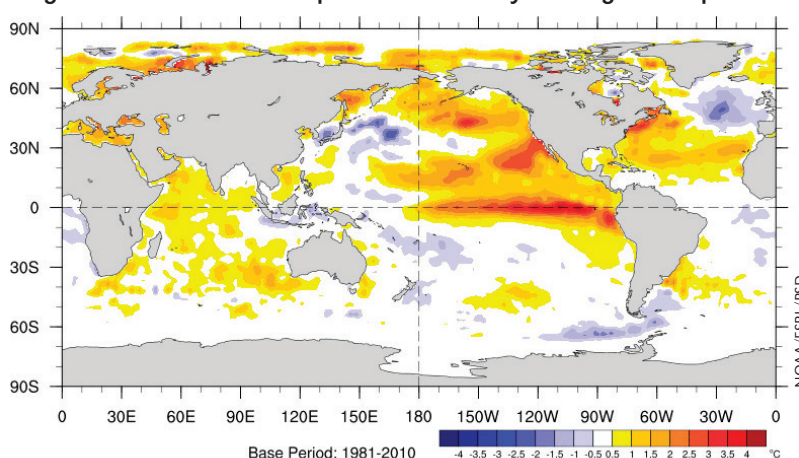
The UNL Food Processing Center has announced the 2016 “Recipe to Reality” seminar dates: Jan. 16, April 2, June 11, Aug. 13 and Oct. 8. The one-day seminar informs attendees of the issues to be considered when starting a food business. Topics include market research, product development, food safety, regulatory issues, packaging, legal and insurance issues, pricing, promotion and sales. Pre-registration is required. For more information, go to <http://fpc.unl.edu> or contact Jill Gifford at 402-472-2819.

Will El Niño Make an Impact This Winter?

Tyler Williams
Extension Educator

The big weather story this summer and fall has been the development of an El Niño in the Pacific Ocean (see figure 1).

Figure 1. Sea surface temperature anomaly for Aug. 30–Sept. 26.



In short, an El Niño refers to the large-scale ocean-atmosphere climate phenomenon linked to warm sea-surface temperatures in the central and eastern Pacific. El Niño is not just the warm sea-surface temperatures, but the secondary, atmospheric impacts from the abnormally warm waters. The warm ocean waters enhance convection over the equatorial Pacific, which alters the upper-atmospheric circulation pattern and can have global impacts.

This global circulation pattern during an El Niño can be quite complex, but I heard an analogy that compares the impact of an El Niño to the

impact of a construction project in your town. Think how this construction zone can alter the flow of traffic in your town and your neighborhood, with people being re-routed and side roads getting more traffic. Not every neighborhood will

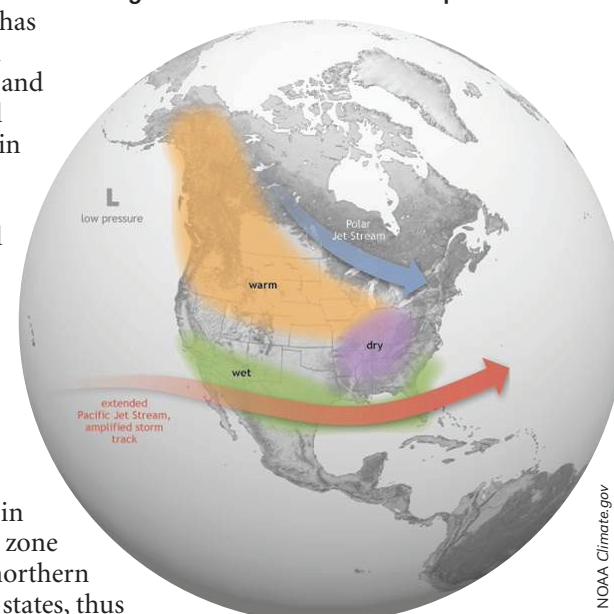
be affected equally and you may see more traffic at certain times of the day. This is similar to the impact from an El Niño, where the warm ocean waters alter the upper air circulation pattern; however, the spatial and temporal changes of this pattern are difficult to predict.

There is a lot more to be said about the atmospheric physics behind an El Niño; however, we want to focus on the impact it might have in the central U.S. The Climate Prediction Center (CPC) provides monthly and seasonal outlooks, and they often use typical El Niño patterns to aid in the forecast. The overarching pattern in the winter

during an El Niño (see figure 2) has above normal temperatures and below normal precipitation in the northern states with below normal temperatures and above normal precipitation in the southern states. As you all know, Nebraska lies in the transition zone between the northern and southern states, thus the long-term predictability using these patterns is low in the middle part of the U.S.

This El Niño is much different than previous El Niños, so we don't know how the interaction with the moisture in the south and warm temperatures in the north will play out. In Nebraska, there seems to be a stronger signal for above normal temperatures in an El Niño winter, which does add some confidence in seeing warmer-than-average temperatures for the season. The precipitation pattern this summer and fall has been a continued flow of moisture from the south/southwest U.S. into our area. If this continues, we could see the enhanced moisture from the El Niño make it further north into Nebraska this winter. This would most likely lead to above normal

Figure 2. Wintertime El Niño pattern



precipitation and would possibly decrease the average temperature below what we might see during an El Niño. Right now, the winter outlooks from the CPC have increased odds for above normal precipitation for the southern and central plains, and above normal temperatures for Nebraska and areas further north.

The current El Niño will have an impact on the North American winter. We just don't know exactly how it will look for Nebraska. We will still have our stretches of very cold temperatures and abnormally warm days, but the increased odds for above normal precipitation may be the main story. No two El Niños are alike and neither are their impacts.

Upcoming Green Industry Conferences

NEBRASKA TURFGRASS CONFERENCE

JANUARY 12–14, 2016

NEBRASKA TURFGRASS ASSOCIATION
Location: Embassy Suites Omaha-La Vista/
Hotel & Conference Center, La Vista, NE
402-472-5351 • www.nebraskaturfgrass.com/events/nebraska-turf-conference

Nebraska Turfgrass Association

GREAT PLAINS GROWERS CONFERENCE

JANUARY 7–9, 2016

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. 7 workshops: Greenhouse & Hydroponic Production, Tree Fruit, Cover Crops, Soil Health, Honeybees, Scaling Up
- Jan. 8–9 general tracks: Tree/Small Fruit, Conventional & Organic Production, Vegetable IPM, Alternative Crops, Cut Flowers, Food Safety/GAPs

Contact Buchanan County Extension Office
816-279-1691 • www.greatplainsgrowersconference.org



NEBRASKA GREAT PLAINS CONFERENCE

JANUARY 18–19, 2016

NEBRASKA ARBORISTS ASSOCIATION AND
NEBRASKA NURSERY & LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION
Location: Ramada Plaza Omaha Convention Center
402-476-3865 • www.nearborists.org • www.nnla.org



Be a Master Gardener!

2016 Training for New Master Gardener Volunteers in Lancaster County Begins in February. Please Join us!



- Do you want to learn more about vegetable gardening and landscaping?
- Do you have a passion for tree planting?
- Do you enjoy volunteering and sharing your knowledge with others?
- Master Gardener volunteers serve an important role to extend horticulture education and outreach from UNL Extension.



For more information about becoming a Master Gardener, contact: Mary Jane Frogge, UNL Extension in Lancaster County 402-441-7180 or visit <http://lancaster.unl.edu/mastergardener> to apply online.

Kids Fun Winter Gardening Projects

Mary Jane Frogge
Extension Associate

BEE HOUSE — Make a solitary bee nest bundle. Collect hollow stems from the yard, like sumac and elderberry, or purchase paper straws and bamboo poles to cut 6 inches in length. Cut sections just below a node or fill one open end of the straw or hollow stem with craft clay. Place them so that the open ends all face in the same direction. Bundle them together and tie with twine. In the spring, place the bundles out in the yard, in a protected area, horizontal to the ground, facing southeast.



An easy solitary bee nest youth can make.

FAIRY GARDEN — Start with a container — any size or type. Be creative. Select several small scale plants like ferns,

wooly thyme, Irish moss, baby's tears, sedum or fairy vine. Use small tile pieces or small, flat river stones to make a walkway. Add a tiny fence, miniature bench, trellis or bridge. You can make this garden as simple or elaborate as you want.

NATURE JOURNALING — All you need is paper and a pencil. Look out your window or if it is nice, go outside to your backyard, neighborhood park or favorite outdoor space. Sit down and look around. What do you see? Make a list or draw a picture of what you see. Write down what you are feeling and your thoughts. Write a poem. There is no one way or right way to make a nature journal. This journal is about what you see. When winter is over, take it with you on all your outdoor adventures.

FEED THE BIRDS — Roll pine cones in peanut butter, then birdseed, to make simple bird feeders. Keep a record of all the species of birds that come to the feeders.

PLANT PEOPLE — Draw or paint faces on clay pots, then fill with soil. Plant grass seed, water and watch the "hair" grow. Use safety scissors to trim the grass hair.

WINDOWSILL GARDENS — When frigid weather keep your kids inside, try growing a windowsill garden. All you need is a sunny location, seeds and a few containers of

soil. Herbs, like basil, are an excellent choice for windowsills.

WATCH SEEDS SPROUT

— Line a glass jar with a damp paper towel and insert several bean or squash seeds between the glass and the towel. Place a lid on the jar, leave it on the counter and check the paper towel every day to make sure it is still moist. Seeds should sprout in a few days.

READ A BOOK — Books like *The Tiny Seed* or *Sunflower Houses* can spark your child's interest in gardening. See the "Gardening Book List for Kids" at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/hort/youth/booklist.shtml> for more ideas.

GET READY FOR SPRING

— Plan a visit to your local garden center to buy seeds. Let your child help select varieties from the seed catalogs. Start seeds indoors in March and later plant outside after the last frost.

TERRARIUMS — Place soil and a few mosses and ferns inside a large jar or small fish bowl. Keep your indoor garden moist with a water bottle sprayer and cover the opening with clear plastic wrap.

GROW A TREE — Start an avocado seed in water by inserting three toothpicks around the seed, half way down the side. Fill a small glass or canning jar with water and place the seed in the glass so the toothpicks rest on the brim and the base of the avocado rests in the water.



GARDEN GUIDE

THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH

Mary Jane Frogge, Extension Associate

Inspect trees and shrubs for bagworm capsules. Remove and destroy them to reduce next year's pest population.

Start reviewing your garden notes to help with next year's plans.

Clean power tools of all plant material and dirt. Replace worn spark plugs, oil all necessary parts and sharpen blades. Store all tools in their proper place indoors, never outdoors where they will rust over the winter.

Check fruits, vegetables, corms and tubers you have in storage. Sort out any that show signs of rot and dispose of them.

Minimize traffic on a frozen lawn to reduce winter damage.

Remove all mummified fruit from fruit trees and rake up and destroy those on the ground. Also, rake and dispose of apple and cherry leaves. Good sanitation practices reduce insects and diseases the following season.

Be sure not to store apples or pears with vegetables. The fruits give off ethylene gas which speeds up the breakdown of vegetables and will cause them to develop off-flavors.

African violets do well when potted in small pots. A good general rule is to use a pot one-third the diameter of the plant. Encourage African violets to bloom by giving them plenty of light. They can be in a south window during dark winter months. They bloom beautifully under fluorescent lights.

Clean and fix all hand tools. Repaint handles or identification marks that have faded over the summer. Sharpen all blades and remove any rust.

After the ground freezes, mulch small fruit plants such as strawberries. One inch of straw or leaves is ideal for strawberries.

Order seed catalogs now for garden planning in January. For variety, consider companies that specialize in old and rare varieties or wild flowers.

Bring out the bird feeders and stock them with bird seed for the birds. Remember to provide fresh water for them too.

House plants with large leaves and smooth foliage such as philodendrons, dracaena and rubber plant, benefit if their leaves are washed with a damp cloth to remove dust.

Help Prevent the Spread of Disease at Bird Feeders

Soni Cochran
Extension Associate

Whenever birds are concentrated in a small area, the risk of diseased birds spreading a disease increases. Think about your backyard bird feeding stations. Birds will come and crowd around where the seed is provided.

A common bird at our feeders in southeastern Nebraska is the House Finch. New research suggests these birds spend large amounts of times at feeders and are able to spread diseases like House Finch eye disease (also called *Mycoplasma conjunctivitis*). Birds with this disease have red, swollen, runny or crusty eyes. Some cases are so bad the eyes of the bird swell shut and the bird becomes blind. Even though birds with this disease have swollen eyes, this is primarily a respiratory infection.

Infected birds may act different than healthy birds. It may sit quietly in one spot in your yard even if you walk up to it. You may see the bird try to scratch its eyes against its own foot or perch. Some of the infected birds recover while others die from starvation, exposure or are captured by predators. Current evidence suggests infected birds that

survive are not immune to the disease and could get it again. House Finch are not the only birds infected by this disease. It has also been found in American Goldfinch, Evening Grosbeaks, Pine Grosbeaks and Purple Finch.

What can you do?

- Space your feeders widely to discourage crowding.
- Use nonporous plastic, metal or glass feeders that are easy to clean.
- If you use platform feeders, keep them clean and only put out enough seed birds can eat in a day or two.
- Clean your feeders regularly with a 10% bleach solution (1 part bleach and 9 parts water). Focus on cleaning around food openings and where birds come in contact with the feeder. Allow your feeders to dry completely before rehanging them. If you can, move the feeders to another area of your yard.
- Rake the area underneath your feeder regularly to remove droppings and old, moldy seed. In winter, you can shovel fresh snow over the seed.

If you see any diseased birds, take your feeders down and clean them with the 10% bleach solution. It would be a good idea to remove feeders for a few days so sick birds leave the area.

People have sometimes asked if there was something they could do to help the sick birds. It is important not to add medications to any bird seed or bird baths under any circumstances. There's no way to know if medications will help the birds and your attempts to help treat the birds may contribute to the disease spread by allowing infected birds to survive longer.

If you find any dead birds, bury them or wrap them in plastic bags and place them in the trash. Be sure to wear gloves and wash your hands, clothes and boots/shoes after handling birds and after cleaning your dirty feeders. This infection poses no known health threat to humans or other mammals. Researchers are trying to learn more about the transmission, genetics and development of this disease.

IF YOU WANT TO REPORT A SICK BIRD

Consider being part of Project FeederWatch. Project FeederWatch is a joint project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Bird Studies Canada. The 2015–2016 season begins Nov. 14. Visit <http://feederwatch.org> to join. In addition to observing and counting birds at your feeders, you can also help document the spread of disease in your area.

Protect Plants in Winter With Fencing

Soni Cochran
Extension Associate

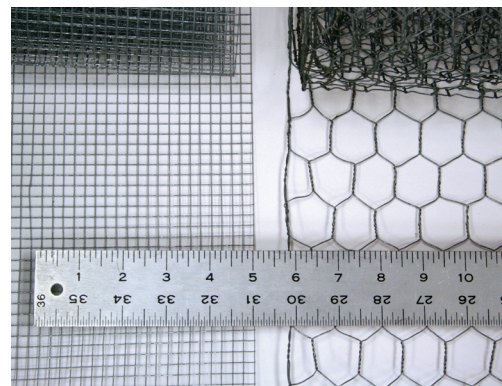
Now's the time to protect newly-planted or young trees, shrubs and perennial plants from rabbits and voles. Cottontail rabbits are plentiful in southeastern Nebraska and once the snow covers the ground, they'll be looking for food. Voles are small rodents that resemble mice, but are stouter. Sometimes they are called "meadow mice."

To protect your plants, you'll want to use wire fencing like hardware cloth. Choose a mesh no greater than 1/4 inch. You can buy hardware cloth at lawn and garden centers, lumber and hardware stores.

Make a cylinder of hardware cloth to go around your plants. Bend the bottom six inches of the fence outwards in an "L" shape (right angle). Bury the bent fence under at least an inch of soil to keep

animals from digging. Your cylinders should be 3–4 feet tall. If you are trying to protect your plants from deer, you may need to go higher. Keep in mind, rabbits will stand on snow banks to feed on plants so if you are planting where snow drifts, the cylinders may need to be even taller.

If you have many newly-planted trees and shrubs, you may be better off trying to fence off the entire area from rabbits using something like chicken wire instead of using individual cylinders. This would be less expensive and less work. Keep in mind voles will still be able to get through chicken wire and could get to your plants.



1/4" hardware cloth on left, chicken wire on right.



HEART OF 4-H VOLUNTEER AWARD

Sherry Wolf Drbal

Lancaster County 4-H is proud to announce Sherry Wolf Drbal as winner of November's "Heart of 4-H Award" in recognition of outstanding volunteer service.

A volunteer for four years, Sherry co-leads the Hunter's Pride 4-H horse club. She helps the club co-superintend the Hunter and Hunter Hack Jumper 4-H horse shows at the Lancaster County Super Fair. Last year, the club hosted two jumping clinics. Each summer, Sherry organizes a one-week horse day camp for Hunter's Pride members. She is also on the Horse Volunteers in Program Service (VIPS) committee.

"I like being a 4-H volunteer because it is so amazing to watch the children progress in their horsemanship abilities and become confident and independent individuals," says Sherry. "I so enjoy watching riders progress from barely getting in and out of the arena for a class, to becoming independent with their own horse, and then helping younger riders. I love to see the older members mentoring younger or newer members and sharing the information they have learned. I am awed by the dedication and commitment of 4-H volunteers and Extension staff to these kids, and want to support the effort. My favorite experiences as a 4-H volunteer are summer camp and the county fair."

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



Nate Dowding

Lancaster County 4-H is proud to announce Nate Dowding as winner of December's "Heart of 4-H Award" in recognition of outstanding volunteer service.

Nate goes above and beyond as an operations manager at the Lancaster Event Center to help set up for 4-H events held at the facility. There are four full days of 4-H events at the Lancaster County Super Fair and 4-H events throughout the year, such as clinics and shows.

Nate works with the rest of the operations team at the Lancaster Event Center to set up for events (for example: assembling livestock pens, getting tables and display cases from storage, rolling out carpet, setting up sound systems, ordering bedding, etc.). Nate helps during events as additional needs arise.

Cole Meador, extension assistant, says, "Nate never hesitates to gather those last minute things which allow for shows to go on. He is a problem solver and the reason events run smoothly."

Marty Cruickshank, extension associate, says, "It takes a huge cooperative effort to organize and run the Lancaster County Super Fair. Nate is key in helping the fair run smoothly."

Nate says, "I feel that I have a good working relationship with the 4-H staff. Even though the fair is stressful and a lot of work, we still have time to joke around and have a good time."

Lancaster County 4-H thanks Nate for donating his time and talents. People like him are indeed the heart of 4-H!



Outgoing 4-H Council Members

The October 4-H Council meeting marked the final meeting for several outgoing 4-H Council members. Austin Hurt served four years, including one as vice president. Bailey Johnson served four years, including one as vice president. Ann Pickrel served six years, including two as president. Jacob Pickrel served four years. Kylee Plager served four years, including one as vice president and one as secretary. Lancaster County 4-H thanks them for their leadership!

Rabbit Clinic, Oct. 31

A free 4-H Rabbit Clinic will be held Saturday, Oct. 31, 9 a.m.–12 noon at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln. Open to all youth and families. Sessions include feeding and care of a rabbit, how to judge rabbits and showmanship. For more information, call Marty at 402-441-7180.

4th & 5th Grade Lock-In

All 4th and 5th graders are invited to 4-H Teen Council's annual overnight Lock-In, which will be held Friday, Jan. 15, 8 p.m.–Saturday, Jan. 16, 8 a.m. This year's theme will be related to "seasons." More information will be in the January NEBLINE.

Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Results

The 88th annual Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Stock Show was held in September at the CenturyLink Center in Omaha. Currently the largest 4-H Stock Show in the United States, 4-H members from Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wyoming participated. The Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Horse Show was held in September at the Lancaster Event Center in Lincoln. Below are the Lancaster County 4-H purple ribbon winners (rabbit results not available as of press time). Complete results are at www.aksarbenrodeo.com.

Ashtyn Cooper	Market Beef Showmanship (3rd Place)
	Market Beef
Cole Cooper	Market Lamb
Kylie Gana	Market Swine
Isabella Gerlach	Horse – Junior Western Pleasure (3rd Place)
Aubrey Hayes	Horse – Junior English Equitation (Res. Champion)
Brett Heinrich	Swine
Jaclyn Heinrich	Market Swine Showmanship (3rd Place)
	Market Swine
Grace Kim	Horse – Senior English Showmanship (Champion)
	Horse – Senior English Equitation
Cassie Meyer	Horse – Junior Ranch Horse Pleasure (Champion)
	Horse – Junior Western Horsemanship (3rd Place)
	Dairy
Madelyn Scott	Market Lamb Showmanship
	Market Goat
Riley Scott	Market Lamb
Allison Walbrecht	Breeding Beef Showmanship
	Breeding Beef
Caitlyn Walbrecht	Mainetainer Breeding Heifer (Champion)
	Supreme Champion Breeding Heifer (4th Place)
Heather Welch	Senior English Pleasure



4-H Awards & Scholarships

Lancaster County 4-H award forms and college scholarship applications are due Dec. 31. Recipients will be announced at Lancaster County Achievement Celebration on Tuesday, Feb. 9, 2016. Forms are available at <http://go.unl.edu/4has> and the Extension office.

Awards

If you have questions about awards, contact Tracy at tracy.anderson@unl.edu or 402-441-7180.

Community Service Awards — based on number of hours of community service through 4-H

National Leadership Award — recognizes youth ages 15–18 who strive to be their personal best

Outstanding 4-H Member Award — an individual 14 years of age or older who has excelled in their involvement with the 4-H program

Meritorious Service Award — individual or organization who has strongly supported 4-H

Nebraska 4-H Diamond Clover Program — recognizes the accomplishments of 4-H'ers ages 8–18, youth can progress from Level 1–6

Nebraska 4-H Career Portfolios — a record of a 4-H'ers career

Nebraska 4-H Club of Excellence — meet criteria outlined by the state 4-H office

College Scholarships

For graduating high school seniors enrolled in the Lancaster County 4-H program. If you have questions about scholarships, contact Cole at cmeador2@unl.edu or 402-441-7180.

4-H Council — twelve \$700 scholarships

4-H Teen Council — two \$300 scholarships

Lincoln Center Kiwanis — one \$1,000 scholarship

Lane Community 4-H Scholarship — one \$200 scholarship to a 4-H'er attending Raymond Central High School

Nebraska Association of Fair Managers Martha & Don Romeo Scholarship — Note: Deadline is Dec. 1

Nebraska 4-H Foundation Scholarships — Information will be posted at www.ne4hfoundation.org — deadline is March 15



2015 Horse Awards

The 2015 4-H Horse Awards Night, held Oct. 1, recognized top achievements at the Lancaster County Super Fair and other accomplishments throughout the past year. 4-H volunteer Jeff Rawlinson was Master of Ceremonies. The Mini Titans 4-H Club distributed programs and led the Pledge of Allegiance and 4-H Pledge. Additional photos are online at www.flickr.com/photos/unlxtlanco/albums. Congratulations to all Lancaster County 4-H horsemen for their achievements in 2015!

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Shining Star Awards — Michaela Bunz, Arraya Cramer, Samantha Fox, Kali Maytum, Chase McInteer, Porshe Miller, Kate Rawlinson and Corynn Smith

Share Your Shine Awards — Aubrey Hayes, Bailee Sobotka, Bailey Vogler and Jena Wilson

I Do My Own Stunts Award — Emily Cashmere

Special Sportsmanship Award — Sidney Froistad by the Prairie Star 4-H Club

HORSEMANSHIP ADVANCEMENT LEVELS

The Nebraska 4-H Horse Project advancement levels are designed to serve as guides for instruction and evaluation of each member's progress. The correct handling of horses is emphasized from the beginning level to the most advanced level. This year, 57 Lancaster County 4-H'ers achieved new horsemanship levels. Each level is a huge accomplishment.

Level I Ground (new this year for miniature horse exhibitors) — Arraya Cramer, Kyra Hinrichs, Olivia Hinrichs, Tyler Wilson and Olivia Wood

Level I Walk Trot — Jocelyn Cobb, Samantha Fox, Grace Kohnke, Skylar Melbye, Allison Riedman and Shyann Severson

Level I — Michaela Bunz, Rayley Burnside, Melina Cobb, Cally Dorff, Liz Hidalgo, Lauren Kelley, Katie Malina, Abby Manley, Chase McInteer, Marissa Napoleone, Dana Rademacker, Calli Robinson, Harper Rosentiel, Sidney Schlesiger, Maddie Schnase, Corynn Smith and Bryce Teut

Level II — Abigail Baack, Lillie Beach, Kieran Burkey, Trinity Bohaty, Felicity Bowers, Rayley Burnside, Emmi Dearthmont, Cally Dorff, Dani Drbal, Alyssa Fisbeck, Sidney Froistad, Ellie Hula, Harper Lawson, Kali Maytum, Porshe Miller, Katherine Moyer, Sierra Sander, Corynn Smith, Chloe Stander, Alexa Starner, Bryce Teut, Stella Uiterwaal and Emma Jo Whaley

Level III — Brooke Bennett, Emily Burnside and Emily Cashmere

Level IV — Christy Cooper, Kate Cooper and Jena Wilson

HORSE INCENTIVE AWARDS

4-H'ers logged the hours they spent working with or learning about horses. The more hours invested, the more valuable the reward! This year, 42 4-H'ers participated. The Incentive Awards are sponsored by the Lancaster County 4-H Horse Volunteers in Program Service (VIPS) Committee.

Bronze (minimum of 100 hours or points) — Mackenzie Robles

Silver (minimum of 183 hours or points) — Anne Cashmere, Emily Cashmere, Melina Cobb, Christy Cooper, Caidell Davis, Dani Drbal, Kate Erdkamp, Bailey Hampton, Mia Hermanson, Jordan Lesback, Alyssa Loudon, Kali Maytum, Ally Quinn, Calli Robinson, Harper Rosentiel, Sidney Schlesiger, Shyann Severson, Alexa Starner, Cadi Wilbeck, Jena Wilson and Emmaly Wright

Gold (minimum of 366 hours or points, and completed horse record book) — Nicole Ackland, Ellie Bunz, Michaela Bunz, Ashley Clegg, Kate Cooper, Cally Dorff, Sidney Froistad, Megan Hansen, Aubrey Hayes, Lindsay Herrick, Aubrey Kelley, Grace Kim, Cassie Meyer, Porshe Miller, Kate Rawlinson, Emma Sondgeroth, Chloe Stander, Aussia Stander, Stella Uiterwaal and Bethany Wachter

JUDGING CONTEST AWARDS

The Horse Judging Contest (a Lancaster County Super Fair contest) emphasizes how much 4-H members know about horse confirmation as they judge four or more classes of horses. Senior division participants also give oral reasons. Buckles sponsored by the Glenn Umberger family.

Elementary Division — Cadi Wilbeck (Champion), Cally Dorff (Reserve Champion), Julia Soukup (3rd), Chloe Stander (4th), Maureen Sughroue (5th), Harper Rosentiel (6th)

Junior Division — Lauren Kelley (Champion), Kristen Harrison (Reserve Champion), Madeline Polk (3rd), Madison Sobotka (4th), Kate Cooper (5th), Caidell Davis (6th), Katherine Moyer (7th) and Aussia Stander (8th)

Senior Division — Anna Heusinger (Champion), Kate Erdkamp (Reserve Champion), Lucy Polk (3rd), Kathryn Egelhoff (4th), Christy Cooper (5th), Emily Burnside (6th) and Jadin Vogler (7th)

HERDSMANSHIP AWARDS

Herdsmanship at the Lancaster County Super Fair is "the manner in which members care for their animals and display them at the fair." All exhibitors are expected to care for their horses (feed, water and manure disposal) and cooperate in keeping stalls and alleys clean, neat and attractive.

Large Club Champion — Boots N Hooves with a score of 98.8% (leader Teresa Brandt)

Large Club Reserve Champion — Lucky Lopers with a score of 95.6% (leader Katie Cruickshank)

Small Club Champion — Blazing Saddles with a perfect score of 100% (leader Sheila Purdum)

Small Club Reserve Champion — Haltered Hearts with a score of 96.8% (leader MaryAlice Braun)

Independent Champion — Bethany Wachter with a score of 98.6%

Independent Reserve Champion — Zoey Williams with a score of 97.87%

STALL DECORATION AWARDS

Clubs and independent members take pride in decorating their stall areas at the Lancaster County Super Fair.

Large Club Champion — Prairie Star (leader Sally Schedlock)

Large Club Reserve Champion — Esprit De Corps (leader Jennifer Rawlinson)

Small Club Champion — Denim N Dust (leader Tina Sondgeroth)

Small Club Reserve Champion — Buckles and Bling (co-leaders Karen Cooper and Pam Davis)

ALL-AROUND BARRELS

Franklyn Manning Award for fastest time in the Lancaster County Super Fair 4-H Barrel racing competition — Anna Heusinger

ALL-AROUND TRAIL

Dick and Cookie Confer Top Trail Award for all-around champion of the Lancaster County Super Fair 4-H Trail obstacle class — Jadin Vogler

ALL-AROUND RANCH HORSE

Age division awards for All-Around Ranch Horse at the Lancaster County Super Fair are sponsored by Olive Creek Acres Performance Horses — Brian and Shannon Vogler. Brian Vogler made leather, horse-breast collars for the winners. **Elementary** — Hadley Teut (horse "Bunny"); **Senior** — Jadin Vogler (horse "Kenai")

ALL-AROUND COWBOY/COWGIRL

Three age division awards for All-Around Cowboy/Cowgirl at the Lancaster County Super Fair are sponsored by Pro Performance Equine — Dr. Adam Gengenbaugh, Dana and Pam Wolfe, and the Nebraska Roping Horse Association. **Elementary** — Bryce Teut; **Junior** — Kate Cooper; **Senior** — Bailey Vogler

HIGH SCORE DRESSAGE RIDER **NEW!**

Nebraska Dressage Association High Score Dressage Rider Award for high score riders in the 4-H Dressage Show at the Lancaster County Super Fair, sponsored by Hunter's Pride 4-H Club — Cally Dorff (Champion) and Melissa Carlson (Reserve Champion)

ALL-AROUND JUMPING **NEW!**

Lowell Boomer All-Around High Point Jumping Award for the all-around champion in the 4-H jumping classes at the Lancaster County Super Fair — Abby Baack

ALL-AROUND MINIATURE HORSE **NEW!**

Bluestem All-Around Miniature Horse Award for high point 4-H miniature horse at the Lancaster County Super Fair, sponsored by the Bluestem Miniature Horse Club — Kyra Hinrichs (horse "Lilliput Acres Kiowa")

ALL-AROUND CHAMPION

Wilhelmina Wittstruck Memorial Award for Lancaster County Super Fair All-Around 4-H Champion Individual — Clara Bradbury



Horse Incentive Awards - Gold Level



Horsemanship Advancement Level I



Horsemanship Advancement Level II



Horsemanship Advancement Level IV



All-Around Miniature Horse (pictured with Marty Cruickshank)



High Point Dressage Award (presented by Laureen VanNorman of the Nebraska Dressage Association)



Lowell Boomer All-Around High Point Jumping Award (presented by Diane Usher)



All-Around Cowboy/Cowgirl Award



Wilhelmina Wittstruck Memorial Award for All-Around Champion (presented by Dwayne Wittstruck)



EXTENSION CALENDAR

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

October

- 22 4-H Leader Training 9 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.
26 Stepping On Workshop 1–3 p.m.
31 4-H Rabbit Clinic 9 a.m.–12 noon

November

- 3 4-H Council Meeting 7 p.m.
8 4-H Teen Council Meeting 3 p.m.
13 Extension Board Meeting 8 a.m.
17 Guardian/Conservator Training 1:30–4:30 p.m.

December

- 1 4-H Council Meeting 7 p.m.
3 Co-Parenting for Successful Kids Class 9:30 a.m.–1 p.m.
8 Guardian/Conservator Training 1:30–4:30 p.m.
9 Extension Board Meeting 8 a.m.
13 4-H Teen Council Meeting 3 p.m.
31 All 4-H Award and Scholarship Applications Due to Extension

Specialty 4-H Clubs Invite New Members

Current 4-H members and those interested in joining 4-H are invited to join these clubs!

4-H Teen Council

The Lancaster 4-H Teen Council is a leadership organization for youth in grades 7–12. Meetings are held the second Sunday of each month at 3 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center. For more information, call Tracy Anderson at 402-441-7180.

New Sewing Club

A new sewing club is forming! Learn the basics of sewing and more! Open to all youth ages 8–18. For more information, contact leader Shar Sieck at sharsieck@hotmail.com or 402-440-5651.

Rabbit Clubs

If you like rabbits, hop to it! Two Lancaster County 4-H clubs help youth learn all about rabbits! Open to all youth ages 8–18.

Rabbits R Us club usually meets on the last Monday of each month (evenings). For more information, contact leader Mark Hurt at 402-488-0722.

South Prairie Wranglers has a rabbit club. For more information, contact leader Kaiya Green at 402-440-6416 or green24@icloud.com.

Lincoln Shooting Stars

After completing a safety class, club members can begin with a starter project of BB gun or archery and progress to opportunities including air rifle, air pistol, .22 rifle, .22 pistol, shotgun, muzzleloader and/or hunting skills. Club meetings are Wednesday evenings 6:30–8:30 p.m. at the Nebraska Game & Parks Outdoor Education Center, 4703 N. 44th St., Lincoln. Open to all youth ages 8–18. More information and online calendar is at <http://lincolns shootingstars.wordpress.com> or call 402-413-9876.

The Egg Basket

The Egg Basket 4-H poultry club for ages 5–18 usually meets on the fourth Tuesday of every month. For more information, call Diane at 402-217-9302 or Bridget at 402-432-5064.

Paws & Pals Dog Club

Are you interested in training your dog in obedience and agility? The Paws & Pals 4-H dog club meets Thursday nights, with monthly business meetings, speakers and handouts. Open to all youth ages 5–18.

For more information, contact leader Stephanie Wachter at 402-466-2442.

Pet Pals

Want to learn more about your pet? Or get acquainted with new ones? Join the Pet Pals 4-H club for youth ages 8–18 and their small animals! The club meets monthly. For more information, call 402-441-7180.

Star City Llama & Alpaca

The Star City Llama and Alpaca 4-H club is open to all youth ages 5–18. You can borrow or lease a llama or alpaca. For more information, contact Cole Meador at 402-441-7180.

Pick-A-Pig

The Pick-A-Pig 4-H club is for anyone who wants to learn about pork production and show a pig at the Lancaster County Super Fair. The club is open to all city and rural youth ages 8–18. The club reorganizes in late winter, usually with a deadline to join around March 15. For additional information, contact Harry Muhlbach at 402-430-7304.

Wittstrucks and Hill Receive Ag Society Hall of Fame Award

The Lancaster County Agriculture Society Hall of Fame Award, established in 2009, formally recognizes individuals who have dedicated time and effort to the Lancaster County Agriculture Society beyond the normal volunteer and who have made significant contributions to the establishment, development, advancement or improvement of the Lancaster County Fair.

Chet Hill was elected to the Lancaster County Agriculture Society in 2003, serving as Vice President for many years and spearheading the Lancaster Event Center's Phase II expansion project.



Chet Hill

He was a leader of the Rock Creek Ranchers 4-H club for nine years and served on the Lancaster County 4-H Council and Waverly FFA Alumni Association for several years.

Dwayne and Joan Wittstruck

have contributed to Lancaster County 4-H and agricultural organizations for their entire lives. They served as co-superintendents for the 4-H/FFA Dairy Show at the Lancaster County Fair for nearly 30 years and continue to sponsor the Wilhelmina Wittstruck All-Round 4-H Horse Award each year. For 20 years, they led the Rokeby Dairy 4-H club.

Dwayne served six years on the UNL Ag Advisory Board (one year as president), and Joan was the first female president of the Nebraska Council on Public Relations for Agriculture.



Dwayne and Joan Wittstruck

EXTENSION NEWS

Two New Nutrition Staff



Cally Blake (left) and Meredith Hein (right) teaching a lesson at Mahoney Manor about the importance of a healthy breakfast.

Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County recently hired two new staff members for the Nutrition Education Program (NEP).

Cally Blake began working as an Extension Assistant for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) in December 2014. Cally coordinates NEP's School Enrichment program for 1st, 4th and 5th grades. NEP works with qualifying Lincoln Public Schools to deliver nutrition kits containing materials for hands-on educational experiences to classrooms. Cally presents hand washing and food preparation activities in those classrooms as well. She is originally from Allen, Neb. and graduated from Wayne State College in May 2014 with a Bachelor's of Science in Family and Consumer Sciences: Foods and Nutrition.

Meredith Hein began working as an Extension Assistant for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) in September 2015. She will be working with limited-resource adults and seniors. Meredith will teach nutrition and food safety lessons for a variety of programs including CenterPointe, People's City Mission, Veteran's Transitional Housing and Lincoln Housing Authority senior sites. Meredith grew up in Lincoln. She graduated from Concordia University in May 2015 with a Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science and a Bachelor of Arts in Community Health. She also played four years of collegiate soccer at Concordia.

2015 UNL Service Awards

Recently, University of Nebraska–Lincoln staff reaching an anniversary year of employment were honored for their years of service to the university. The following UNL Extension in Lancaster County staff were recognized:

- **Alice Henneman**, Extension Educator — 35 years
- **Maureen Burson**, Extension Educator — 30 years
- **Mary Jane Frogge**, Extension Associate — 25 years
- **Mardel Meinke**, Extension Associate — 20 years
- **Kristen Houska**, Extension Associate — 5 years

Eighty-eight members of the UNL faculty received emeritus honors during the 2015 Employee Service Awards ceremony, including **Gary C. Bergman**, former extension educator and unit leader for Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County. Emeritus status is the rank awarded by UNL Administration to an employee at the time of retirement in recognition of substantial service rendered to the University in teaching, research, extension or administration in a professional field.

Ag Society Annual Meeting, Dec. 10

The Lancaster County Agriculture Society's Annual Meeting will be held Thursday, Dec. 10 at the Lancaster Event Center, 84th & Havelock, in the Lancaster Room. Voting will take place 5:30–6:30 p.m. for three positions on the Lancaster Agriculture Society Board (three-year terms). Any registered voter in Lancaster County may vote.

Any Lancaster County resident interested in running for a position on the board must submit a short biography by Nov. 18 in order to be placed on the ballot. Send the biography

to: ATTN Trudy Pedley, LCAS Secretary; Lancaster Event Center; P.O. Box 29167; Lincoln, NE 68529. Biographies can also be sent by email to Superfair@lancastereventcenter.org.

The Annual Meeting, starting at 6:30 p.m., is an opportunity for the public to learn more about the Lancaster Event Center. The regular monthly meeting of the Ag Society will follow the annual meeting. Regular monthly meetings are held the third Thursday of every month and are open to the public.