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Naturally Occurring Elements in Groundwater

Part 1 of a Series – Calcium and Magnesium

By *Becky Schuerman, Extension Domestic Water/Wastewater Associate*

There are naturally occurring elements and minerals within Nebraska geology, and with that, it is not uncommon to find them in Nebraska's groundwater. Calcium, magnesium, iron, manganese, fluoride, arsenic and uranium are among the elements found in Nebraska.

Over the coming months, I will spotlight each of these elements in the NEBLINE newsletter. While every day should be "Groundwater Day" in Nebraska, March 7–13, is National Groundwater Week this year. To kick off the celebration, this month's featured elements are calcium and magnesium.

Calcium and Magnesium

Calcium and Magnesium are elements that make a water considered "hard." They are common metallic elements found within the soils and rock formations throughout Nebraska's geology. Neither have a health risk affiliated with them. They are generally each considered more of a nuisance element because of their potential to cause mineral build-up/scale layer within hot water heaters, water pipes, boilers and other plumbing fixtures. These minerals also cause poor performance of soap and detergents.

Treating Hard Water

Hard water is most often treated with an ion exchange water softener that has sodium chloride or potassium chloride added to make the water less hard. People who have to watch their salt intake will want to avoid consuming water softened with sodium and either use a potassium chloride product or drink the hard water instead.

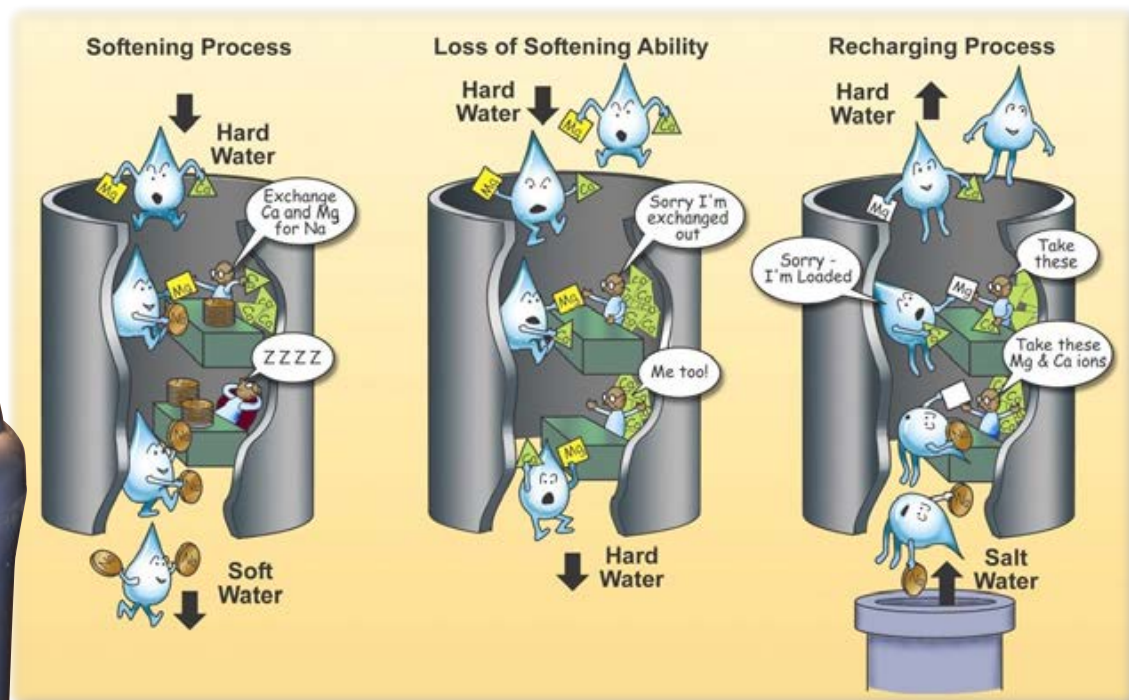
Most hard water contributes a small amount to the total calcium and magnesium required in one's diet, but in some instances, it can be a major contributor. An ion exchange treatment system is considered point of entry (POE) treatment equipment, meaning that it treats all of the water coming into the home or building.

When looking to install a water softener, one should make sure that the unit meets NSF/ANSI 44 technical requirements. This approval means the unit has been rigorously tested and meets the public health compliance standards for residential water softeners that use ion exchange resin, regenerated with a sodium or potassium chloride product to reduce the hardness of water from a private well or public water supply. One can contact a reputable water



Becky Schuerman

An example of a residential water softener.



Nebraska Extension

A simple overview of how the water softening process works. As hard water enters the water softener, it filters through a resin that is supersaturated with a sodium (Na) brine. The calcium (Ca) and magnesium (Mg) in the hard water attach to the resin beads and are exchanged for sodium (Na), thus making soft water for use throughout the home. Over time, the exchange resin becomes saturated with Ca and Mg and has to be regenerated with the Na brine solution so an effective water softening process can continue.

quality professional in their area for water softening needs as well.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For further information about hard water, see Nebraska Extension's NebGuides at <https://water.unl.edu/article/drinking-water/nebguides>.

- "Drinking Water: Hard Water (Calcium and Magnesium)" (G1274)
- "Drinking Water Treatment: Water Softening (Ion Exchange)" (G1491)

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Celebrate National Nutrition Month®

By Alyssa Havlovic, MS, RDN, ACSM EP-C, Extension Educator in Lancaster County

March is National Nutrition Month® and this year's theme is "Personalize Your Plate." There is no one-size-fits-all approach to health and nutrition. We all have different bodies, backgrounds, health goals and taste preferences. With the help of a Registered Dietitian, you can personalize a healthful eating plan that is as unique as you are!

Vary Your Diet

Personalize your plate by including foods you prefer from each food group. Including a variety of foods can help ensure your body gets the nutrients it needs to stay healthy. Use MyPlate as a guide and choose foods from all five food groups: fruits, vegetables, protein, grains and dairy. Start by filling half your plate with fruits and vegetables, then select lean proteins, whole grains and low-fat or fat-free dairy products. Avoid distractions while eating and take time to enjoy your food. Doing so will help you become more mindful of your body's signals of hunger and satiety.

Hydration is also important. Make it a goal to drink at least half of your body weight in ounces of water each day (ex: If an individual weighs 150 pounds, they should aim for at least 75 oz of water each day). Plain water is always best to hydrate your body. If you don't like drinking plain water, try adding lemon or lime slices or chopped fruit in it for a little extra flavor.

Meal Planning

Set aside time to plan your meals and snacks each week.



Involve your family members in the process of meal planning, so everyone has the opportunity to choose the healthful meals you will enjoy together. Take note of food items you have on hand and incorporate them into your weekly plan. Use a grocery list to shop for healthy foods your household enjoys and stick to your list. Keep a well-stocked pantry and freezer to make healthful meals simple. For tips on what to keep on hand for quick, healthy meals, see the sidebar at right, "Keep a Well-Stocked Pantry." For simple, budget-friendly recipe ideas to help build your weekly meal plan, visit <http://food.unl.edu>.

You may choose to dine out sometimes when celebrating a special occasion or just need a break from a week of cooking. When dining out, be menu-savvy. Plan ahead, ask questions, and review nutrition facts information when available. Select menu choices that are grilled, baked, broiled and steamed for healthy options that fit your nutritional needs.

Cook & Prep

Learn skills to create tasty meals at home. Explore Extension's Nutrition Education Program's "The Dish" series for cooking tips, health information and recipe demos: <https://food.unl.edu/>

nutrition-education-program/dish-videos. Keep healthy foods in plain sight in your pantry or refrigerator. Make healthy eating the simple choice by washing and cutting up fresh vegetables when you bring them home from the grocery store. Remember to wash hands before cooking and eating and follow proper food safety guidelines when preparing meals and snacks.

Share meals together as a family as often as possible. Incorporate meals that are traditional to your family and background. Some food traditions are passed down from generation to generation and may not always be the most nutritious. Just add a new,

healthy twist to make it fit your healthy eating plan or save those dishes for special occasions.

Visit an RDN

If you have special nutrition needs, consult a registered

dietitian nutritionist (RDN). An RDN can design a customized eating plan that is as unique as you! For a referral to an RDN in your area, visit www.eatright.org.

Reference: www.eatright.org/food/resources/national-nutrition-month

KEEP A WELL-STOCKED PANTRY

Items to keep on hand in your pantry and freezer for quick, healthy meals:

- Dried or canned beans, peas or lentils (such as black, garbanzo, kidney, pinto and white beans).
- Canned vegetables with no added salt (tomatoes, green beans, corn and peas).
- Whole grains (brown rice, oats, quinoa, whole wheat pasta)
- Canned fish and chicken.
- Olive, canola or other vegetable oils.
- Dried herbs and spices.
- Frozen vegetables (broccoli, cauliflower, carrots and brussels sprouts).
- Frozen fruits (berries, mangos and pineapple).
- Whole wheat pizza dough.
- Frozen poultry or seafood



RECIPE OF THE MONTH

By Alyssa Havlovic, MS, RDN, ACSM EP-C, Extension Educator in Lancaster Co.

Looking for a quick, budget-friendly weeknight dinner? Add this Egg Roll in a Bowl recipe to your meal plan. Serve with a side of brown rice for a more balanced meal.

EGG ROLL IN A BOWL

(Makes 4 servings)

- 1 pound lean ground beef**
- 6 cups shredded cabbage* or coleslaw mix**
- 4 cloves garlic, gently rubbed under cold running water, minced**
- 1 Tablespoon fresh ginger, gently rubbed under cold running water, minced or 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger**
- 1 Tablespoon low-sodium soy sauce**
- 1/4 cup green onion, gently rubbed under cold running water, chopped**
- 1 Tablespoon sesame oil or vegetable oil**

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Heat a large skillet over medium heat. Add the ground beef and cook, stirring often to crumble, until cooked through and temperature reaches 160°F on a food thermometer. Drain fat.
3. Add the cabbage, garlic, ginger, and soy sauce to the skillet with the ground beef. Cook for 3–4 minutes or until cabbage has softened.
4. Remove from the heat and top with the green onions and drizzle with oil.
5. Store leftovers in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to four days.

Notes: For a lower cost option, use vegetable oil instead of sesame oil. For a more balanced meal, serve with 1/2 cup brown rice.
*1 medium sized green cabbage weighs about 2 pounds and yields about 8 cups of shredded cabbage.

Nutrition Information per Serving (1/2 cup): Calories 140, Total Fat 7g, Saturated Fat 1g, Cholesterol 0mg, Sodium 5mg, Total Carbohydrates 21g, Fiber 3g, Total Sugars 9g, includes 7g, Added Sugars, Protein 1g, Vitamin D 0%, Calcium 6%, Iron 6%, Potassium 8%

Source: Nutrition Education Program



Craig Chandler, UNL Communications

2021 All-America Selections Vegetable Winners

Echalion, Creme Brulee

This echalion, a cross between a shallot and an onion, is the first to win the AAS Winner designation. Growing this from seed is fun and unexpectedly easy. Creme Brulee is easy to peel and the single-centered bulbs have a bright coppery pink outer skin and a pretty rosy-purple interior with thick rings. The sweet tender bulbs are earlier to mature than the comparisons and have a slight citrusy flavor when eaten raw.



Photos courtesy All America Selections

Pepper, Pot-a-peno

Pot-a-peno is a fun new jalapeño pepper with a compact habit. It is

perfect for growing in containers and hanging baskets. Plentiful small, green jalapeño fruits have a traditional spicy zip taste. Leave the fruit on the plant a few extra weeks and they will ripen to red for a sweet, spicy flavor. This variety is earlier to mature than other jalapeños giving

you a head start on your garden's harvest. A unique trait of Pot-a-peno is how the fruit hangs down beneath the plant making it very easy to harvest.

Squash, Goldilocks

Once upon a time, there was an acorn squash named Goldilocks. In summer trials all across North America, this plant was vigorous, had high yields, disease tolerance and rich nutty flavor. The bright orange fruits with uniform shape and color make this squash an excellent choice for ornamental decoration during the fall season.

Source: All-America Selections

Starting Seeds Indoors

By Sarah Browning,
Extension Educator in
Lancaster County

For many home gardeners, it's fun to get a head start on the upcoming garden season by starting seedlings indoors, with the goal of producing short, stocky and dark green transplants.

The containers and soil must be free of disease organisms. The easiest option for home gardeners is to use a commercially prepared soil-less media, such as Miracle Gro or Jiffy Mix.

When to Start Your Seeds

The correct indoor sowing dates for several popular flowers and vegetables are:

- Early March — cabbage, broccoli and cauliflower.
- Mid-March — pepper, eggplant, petunia and salvia.
- Late March — tomato,

marigold and zinnia.

- Early April — muskmelon, watermelon, squash and cucumber.

If unsure of the sowing date, check the seed packet.

Sowing Seeds

Fill the pots or flats with growing media to within 1/2 to 1 inch of the top. Firm the growing media, water thoroughly, then allow it to drain. Fine seeds are usually dusted on the surface of the seedbed, then lightly pressed into the growing media. Very small seeds can be mixed with a small amount of sand to make disbursing them easier. Large seeds should be covered with growing media to a thickness of one to two times their diameter.

Watering from below prevents the washing of seeds off the soil and prevents seeds from being buried too deeply in the soil through the movement of water. To do this, after sowing the seeds, place

the seed pots in a larger tray or container of water. Allow water to wick up through the growing media from beneath; this will take some time so be patient. When the surface becomes wet, remove the seed pots from the tray of water and allow them to drain.

When sowing seeds into individual containers, plant two or three seeds per container. Place the containers in a flat and water.

Care During Germination Phase

To ensure uniform moisture during germination, cover the seed flats with a clear plastic cover, plastic wrap or place it in a clear plastic bag. Poke a few holes in the plastic wrap or bag to allow for some air circulation. This cover conserves moisture and promotes quick germination. Once seedlings appear, the cover should come off to reduce the likelihood of damping-off, a fungal disease,

and to keep seedlings from becoming spindly.

Keep growing media moist but not sopping wet — if it's allowed to dry out completely, germinating seeds may be killed. If seedlings get so dry they wilt, their growth will be retarded for several days. Too much water causes root rot or damping-off. Roots need air as well as water and will not survive long in saturated soil.

Set the container in bright light, but out of direct sunlight. A medium temperature of 70–75°F is adequate for the germination of most flowers and vegetables. Remove the plastic covering or bag as soon as germination occurs.

FOR MORE INFO

- See "Recycled Containers for Seed Starting," at <https://go.unl.edu/containers>
- Post Germination Care, <https://go.unl.edu/startingseeds>

GARDEN GUIDE

THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH

By Mary Jane Frogge, Extension
Associate in Lancaster County

March is a good time to start transplants indoors of tomatoes, peppers and eggplant. Some annuals, such as verbenas, snapdragons and petunias, take 70–90 days to bloom. They should be started indoors in early spring.

How are your houseplants doing? Check all five growing factors if your house plants are not growing well. Light, temperature, nutrients, moisture and humidity must be favorable to provide good growth.

Buy a notebook and use it to keep all your gardening information. List what you plant in the garden. Include the name of seed companies, plant name, variety, planting date and harvest date. During the growing season keep notes on how well the plant does. If the variety is susceptible to disease, record what was used to treat any problems. All this information will be helpful in planning future gardens.

Turn the compost pile.

Complete the pruning of shrubs, ornamental trees before growth starts, except for spring flowering shrubs like lilac. Prune those which bloom in spring as soon as they finish flowering.

Buy some new perennials for your flower border. Spring is a good time to renew and add variety to your landscape.

Finish repairing and painting of window boxes, lawn furniture, tools and other items in preparation for outdoor gardening and recreational use.

Do not plow your garden when the soil is wet. It will form clods which are difficult to break up and interfere with cultivation during the summer.

Rake the lawn to remove leaves and twigs.

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

Place birdhouses built this winter outdoors this month. Birds will begin looking for nesting sites soon.

Planning for Spring Calving Season

By Connor Biehler, Beef Systems Extension Educator

Winter is here, fall breeding is completed, spring calving cows are in their third trimester and the next big event on the farm (with exception of the winter chores everybody loves) is spring calving. This is arguably the most crucial time of year for most operations, so it is pertinent to be prepared to have calves hitting the ground at least a month prior to your first calving date. The subsequent practices should be considered when preparing for the upcoming calving season.

One of the first things to consider, is getting together all the supplies you will need for

calving, otherwise known as a calving kit. This kit should include things such as: mild liquid soap, paper towels, at least two clean buckets to be later filled with warm water, obstetrical sleeves, lubricant, iodine, a notepad to record calf details and any possible dystocia issues and calving assist tools (such as chains, handles or head snare) which should only be used by experienced professionals.

Calving facilities should also be prepared well in advance of calving season. If these are single-use areas that have not been used in months,

make sure to inspect all alleys, gates and head catches. For a multi-purpose area, ensure the space is ready for calving. Have good lighting and have replacement bulbs on hand. These facilities should also have



Photo by Troy Walz

clean, dry bedding and be in good working order. Dirty and muddy bedding is a breeding ground for bacteria and, as a result, can be detrimental to the health of newborn calves.

The final trimester is a great time to vaccinate cows with a killed-virus vaccine to promote immune health. This boost of immunity from the vaccination creates antibodies that pass from the cow to the calf through colostrum. This brings me to my final point of ensuring that each calf consumes at least one quart of colostrum within 6-12 hours of birth. Absorption of immunoglobulin found in colostrum drastically decreases after this window, making it critical to insure

adequate consumption during this time. If there are any issues with the quality or quantity of colostrum, other sources, such as a nurse cow or store-bought colostrum replacements can be utilized. If outside sources of colostrum are being introduced in the herd, it can promote disease transfer, so it is best to use colostrum from within your own herd.

FOR MORE INFO

For more information on planning for calving season reach me at my office 402-424-8007 or my cell 402-413-8557 or follow my twitter page @BigRedBeefTalk for more information on Nebraska Beef Extension.

Chemigation Trainings

Chemigators have two options to be certified in 2021 including online self-study or in-person trainings. Check when your chemigation applicator certification expires to make sure you need to take the training again, since you get 4 years on your applicator license for chemigation.

Online Chemigation Trainings

The online chemigation training takes about 3 hours, which is the same time commitment as the in-person version. All information about the online training is at <https://water.unl.edu/article/agricultural-irrigation/chemigation>.

- Chemigation course instruc-

tions (part 1 and 2) — please read these first!

- Watch the short “how-to” online training video.
- Digital versions of the manual and workbook.
- Link to the online chemigation training through eXtension.org.

If you have questions about the online training, contact 402-472-1632 or pested@unl.edu.

In-Person Chemigation Trainings

Free in-person trainings will be held only if current COVID-19 conditions permit. Pre-registration will be required due to room capacity limitations. Attendees will be required to wear face coverings

at these trainings.

You must pre-register for these in-person trainings at <https://go.unl.edu/chemtr>. Day-of, walk-in registration will not be permitted!

- Monday, March 1, 1–4 p.m. at Jefferson County Fairgrounds 4-H Building, 56885 PWF Rd., Fairbury.
- Friday, March 5, 1–4 p.m. at Gage County Extension Office, 1115 W. Scott, Beatrice.
- Monday, March 15, 1–4 p.m. at Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Rd., Lincoln.
- Wednesday, March 17, 1–4 p.m. at Saline County Extension office, 306 W. 3rd St., Wilber.

2021 Nebraska On-Farm Research Annual Results Update Meetings

Nebraska Extension’s annual on-farm research results update meetings will be offered in-person and online in 2021. Nebraska farmers conducted over 100 on-farm research studies in 2020. Learn from these farmers and network with other innovative producers.

The meeting will be offered two days (you choose which date works for you) and will be held 9 a.m.–12:30 p.m. Online option will be via Zoom.

There is no cost to attend, but pre-registration is REQUIRED. Seating is limited. Visit <https://go.unl.edu/2021on-farmresearch> for registration, details and program updates.

Thursday, February 25

- 4-H Building Nemaha County Fairgrounds, 816 I St., Auburn.
- Gage County Extension Office, 1115 W. Scott, Beatrice.

Friday, February 26

- Kimmel Orchard Education Building, 5995 G Rd., Nebraska City.
- Harvest Hall, Seward County Fairgrounds, 1625 Fairgrounds Circle, Seward.
- Saline County Extension Office, 306 W. 3rd St., Wilber.

Houseplants: Simple Solutions to Plant Pests

By Kait Chapman, Extension Educator in Lancaster County

As we eagerly anticipate spring and the outdoor planting season, some of our indoor plants have become home to insects and their relatives. These plant pests often come into the home on newly purchased plants or on plants that have spent the summer outdoors. Some of these pests may go undetected until houseplants begin to look unhealthy.

Control

When you notice a pest on a houseplant, your first step should always be to isolate the plant from others. This will help prevent the pest from moving to other, healthy plants in the home. Infested plants should remain separated until the infestation is eliminated.

Aphids, mealybugs, whiteflies and spider mites all feed on plant sap, causing yellowing, stunted growth, distorted leaves and, occasionally, plant death. Spider mites additionally cause speckling on leaf surfaces and



Aphids

Spider mites

silky webs in heavy infestations. Infestations can be controlled by:

- Removing or “squishing” individual insects.
- Spraying plants, including the underside of leaves, with soapy water or an insecticidal soap once-a-week until the infestation is under control.

Fungus gnats are more often a nuisance to people than a plant pest. The small black adult gnats are found near the soil surface of over-watered plants. The white larvae will occasionally feed on plant roots in addition to organic matter in the soil. To control fungus gnats:

- Allow the soil of the houseplant to completely dry

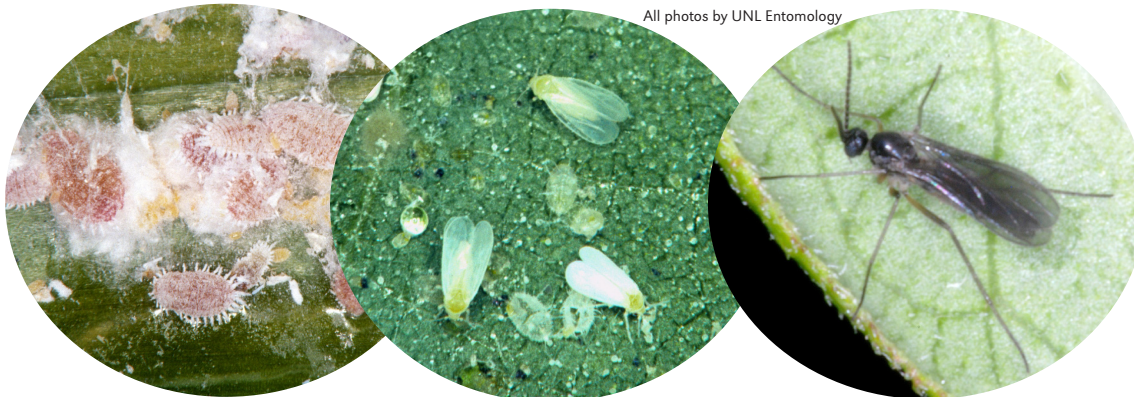
in-between watering to kill larvae.

- Place yellow sticky cards around infested plants; cards are available at garden stores.

Prevention

Stressed houseplants tend to be more susceptible to pest infestations, so be sure to provide your plant with the best possible growing conditions including adequate light, nutrients and a proper watering schedule. Always check newly purchased plants for signs of pests.

For pest identification or control recommendations, contact me at 402-441-7180 or kchapman13@unl.edu.



Mealybugs

Whiteflies

Fungus gnat

All photos by UNL Entomology



2021 Lincoln Early Childhood Conference

Cost is Free

SATURDAY, MARCH

20

8:30–11:30 a.m.

PRESENTED VIA ZOOM

(A ZOOM LINK WILL BE EMAILED PRIOR TO THE EVENT)

For more information or questions, contact Cara Small at cara.small@esu6.org or 402-761-3341

Register at www.esu6.org by March 14

Cari Ebert, MS, CCC-SLP Making Sense of Sensory



Understanding that sensory input drives motor and behavioral output provides the foundation for this course. The way young children take in and respond to sensory information can significantly impact their learning, development and behavior. During this presentation, early childhood professionals will increase their knowledge related to the impact of sensory-motor issues on speech, language and social-emotional development. Participants will examine the benefits of using multisensory activities to help young children interact more effectively with their environment.

This conference is sponsored by the Southeast Early Learning Connection.



HEART OF 4-H VOLUNTEER AWARD

Whitney Lehn

Lancaster County 4-H is proud to announce Whitney Lehn of Lincoln as winner of the March "Heart of 4-H Award" in recognition of outstanding volunteer service.

She has gone above and beyond her duties as FFA advisor of Raymond Central to help with 4-H/FFA events and activities.

She has volunteered with 4-H over 13 years — since aging out of 4-H. Whitney helps in the showing during the 4-H/FFA Beef Show at the Lancaster County Super Fair.

She helps in numerous counties coaching Livestock Judging teams, helping with livestock shows, judging herdsmanship, judging static exhibits and more.

"I enjoyed 4-H when I was growing up," she says. "This gives me a chance to give back and help others with what I learned in 4-H. My favorite experience as a 4-H volunteer is being in the showing helping the youth and coaching teams. Livestock (beef cattle specifically) is my background and it is always a great day seeing everyone excited for show day to see all their hard work. My 4-H and FFA experiences are a major reason why I became an agriculture teacher and FFA advisor."

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



Meet 2020–2021 4-H Council



Lancaster County 4-H Council, comprised of adult and youth volunteers, is responsible for determining long- and short-term goals and policy for Lancaster County 4-H. Council also raises funds to help support 4-H programs, activities and scholarships. Extension Educator Tracy Anderson is the staff liaison. This year's 4-H Council is comprised of the following:

Officers: Sara Hansen (President), Nathan Gabel (Vice-President), Madelyn Kreifels (Secretary) and Brenda Nepper (Treasurer and ex officio Extension Board representative).

Members: Cathy Babcock, Samuel Babcock, Mary Ann Gabel, Kylie Hansen, Abigail Kreifels, Sheri Ramirez, John Sump, Mitch Sump, Ava Wharton, Phil Wharton and Cindy Woledge.

Pick-A-Pig Club Accepting New Members

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 with a strict deadline to join by March 15. For additional information, contact Harry Muhlback at 402-430-7304.

4-H Rabbit Show, March 20

The 4-H Spring Rabbit Show is currently planned for Saturday, March 20, 9 a.m. at the Lancaster Event Center Fairgrounds – Exhibit Hall. Open to all youth ages 8–18. This is a great opportunity for youth to talk to other 4-Hers about where to purchase a good rabbit for a 4-H project! Show flyer is at <https://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/companionanimal>. For more information, call Bob at 402-525-8263 or the Extension office at 402-441-7180.

4-H Resources Anyone May Use at Home

Lancaster County 4-H has compiled a list of 4-H resources and activities youth, families and volunteers may use at home. Go to <https://lancaster.unl.edu/4Hathome>. You do not need to be enrolled in 4-H to use these resources. Recent Nebraska 4-H resources:

- Winter 4-H Fun Pack.
- COVID-19 Jeopardy Game.
- Companion Animal Webinar Series.

Watch Chicks Hatch on EGG Cam <http://go.unl.edu/eggcam>



UPCOMING DATES

Day 14 candling: Feb. 23, 1 p.m.
Hatch date: March 1–2
Eggs set in incubator: April TBA



4-H Announcements FOR 4-H'ERS AND VOLUNTEERS

See the 4-H e-newsletter at <https://go.unl.edu/Lan4Henews> for complete details. The 4-H Youth Development Program is open to all youth ages 5–18 and free to join in Lancaster County. If interested in joining or volunteering, call 402-441-7180.

4-H ACHIEVEMENT VIRTUAL CELEBRATION, FEB. 23

Lancaster County 4-H and 4-H Council invite ALL 4-H'ers, 4-H families and volunteers to the 4-H Achievement VIRTUAL Celebration on Tuesday, Feb. 23, 6:30 p.m. Interact with the festivities on Zoom (preferred) at <https://go.unl.edu/4HZoom>. Watch the festivities on YouTube at <https://go.unl.edu/4HAchieve>. The award recipients are posted at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/achievement>.

GOVERNOR'S AG EXCELLENCE AWARDS DUE MARCH 1

Each year, 25 4-H clubs are awarded \$500 to be used as described in the award application form completed by the club. Clubs may use the award dollars for different kinds of programs. A few examples are: community service projects, trips or tours for club members and community improvement projects. Forms are due by March 1. Applications are online at <http://ne4hfoundation.org>.

4-H HORSE STAMPEDE ENTRIES DUE MARCH 5

The statewide 4-H Horse Stampede is planned for Saturday, March 27 on UNL East Campus. This event offers a variety of 4-H horse contests that don't require live horses, including public speaking, demonstration, quiz bowl, art and photography. Some changes have been made for 2021 in accommodation with health restrictions and guidelines. All entry forms are due to county offices by Friday, March 5. Lancaster County 4-H Council will pay entry fees for Lancaster County 4-H youth. More information and entry forms can be found at <https://4h.unl.edu/horse/stampede>.

4-H/FFA MARKET BEEF WEIGH-IN, MARCH 9

4-H and FFA exhibitors showing market steers or heifers at the Lancaster County Super Fair for participation in rate of gain must weigh-in their projects at the 4-H/FFA Market Beef Weigh-In on Tuesday, March 9, 6–7 p.m. at the Lancaster Event Center Fairgrounds – Pavilion 2. Exhibitors planning on exhibiting market beef at State Fair must have DNA sampled. It is strongly encouraged to have DNA hair samples collected and EID tagged at the time of weigh-in. Current DHM's will be followed during this event. For more information, call Calvin DeVries at 402-441-7180.

4-H SPEECH & PSA CONTEST, MARCH 10 DEADLINE

In the Public Service Announcement (PSA) Contest, 4-H'ers submit a 60-second "radio commercial" promoting 4-H. Submit a PSA as a .wav, .mp3 or .m4a file electronically to kpulec3@unl.edu or on a CD to the Extension office by Wednesday, March 10. The 2021 PSA theme is Opportunity 4 All. The 4-H Speech Contest is currently planned to be held Sunday, March 14 at the Lancaster Extension Education Center. Check-in between 1–1:30 p.m., contest begins at 1:30 p.m. Register by Wednesday, March 10 by calling 402-441-7180 or emailing kpulec3@unl.edu with your name, speech title and age division. For rules, helpful resources and examples, go to <https://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/speech>. If you have questions, contact Kate Pulec at kpulec3@unl.edu or 402-441-7180.

4-H JAMMIE SEWING WORKSHOP, MARCH 13

4-H youth ages 8 and older are invited to practice their basic sewing skills and learn to use a pattern to make pajama or lounge wear pants or shorts at the Jammie Jamboree sewing workshop on Saturday, March 13, 9 a.m. until about 12:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road. Adults are needed to attend to help their 4-H'ers. Bring your sewing machine, basic sewing equipment (scissors, pins, measuring tape, etc.), simple elastic waist pull-on, pajama bottom pattern in appropriate size, pre-washed flannel or 100% cotton fabric – see yardage requirement on pattern envelope (no one-way design fabrics or plaids), elastic as recommended by pattern and matching thread. No registration fee. Register by Monday, March 8 by calling 402-441-7180 or emailing Kristin at kristin.geisert@unl.edu.

4-H/FFA FAIR BOOKS WILL BE MAILED IN MARCH

The Lancaster County Super Fair will be July 29–Aug. 7. 4-H & FFA exhibits and events will be July 29–Aug. 1. 4-H Horse Show will be July 28–Aug. 1. The Lancaster County

4-H & FFA Fair Book contains entry information for 4-H & FFA members exhibiting in 4-H/FFA. Fair Books are scheduled to be mailed on March 15 to all 4-H & FFA families who have enrolled through <https://ne.4honline.com>. The Fair Book will also be available at the Extension office and at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/fair>.

4-H FURNITURE PAINTING WORKSHOP, MARCH 27

4-H youth ages 8 and up are invited to participate in the Furniture Painting workshop on Saturday, March 27, 9 a.m. until about noon at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road. No cost to attend. Adults are welcome to attend to help youth. Must register by Friday, March 19 by calling 402-441-7180 or emailing kristin.geisert@unl.edu. 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. Wear old clothes appropriate for painting.

VIRTUAL COMPANION ANIMAL CHALLENGE ENTRIES DUE MARCH 29

The Virtual Companion Animal Challenge offers a variety of 4-H companion animal contests that don't require live animals, including demonstration, essay, art, photography, cat trivia and dog trivia. Online entry forms are being used for 2021 and can be found at <https://go.unl.edu/vcac>. Lancaster County 4-H Council will pay contest entry fees for Lancaster County 4-H'ers. Prior to submitting an entry form, save a copy and submit to the Lancaster County Extension office or email a copy to 4-H Assistant Calvin DeVries at cdevries2@unl.edu by March 29 to have entry fees paid by Lancaster County 4-H Council. T-shirts may be ordered at the cost of each participant for \$15. More information is at <https://4h.unl.edu/companion-animal/challenge>.

4-H MEMBERS AND LEADERS — PLEASE RE-ENROLL BY APRIL 1!

All 4-H members and volunteers must re-enroll for the 2020–2021 4-H year. New members and fair projects may be updated through June 15. The website to enroll or re-enroll is <https://ne.4honline.com>. **You are strongly encouraged to re-enroll by April 1 or you may miss out on communications such as NEBLINE, email reminders, etc.!**

4-H CLUBS NEEDED TO PROVIDE BOOTHS AT KIWANIS KARNIVAL

The annual Kiwanis Karnival, a FREE family event, is sponsored by the Lincoln Center Kiwanis. This year, it will be held Friday, April 9, 5:30–7:30 p.m. at Elliott Elementary School, 225 S. 25th St., Lincoln. The Karnival features carnival-type games for youth, bingo for adults, prizes, snacks, fun and fellowship. 4-H clubs are needed to provide carnival-type booths. This is a great community service and leadership activity. For more information, call Lorene at 402-423-7541 or 402-310-3481, or email lbartos1@unl.edu.

4-H LEADER UPDATE TRAINING, APRIL 22

New leaders, experienced leaders, volunteers and parents are invited to attend the 4-H Spring Leader/Volunteer Update Training on Thursday, April 22, 9 a.m. or 6:30 p.m. (you choose which time to participate). Meeting will focus on NEW 4-H curriculum, static exhibits, opportunities for 4-H members and more. Learn about fair entry, contests and important Super Fair information. Don't miss out on meeting ideas, club tips, door prizes and more! MUST preregister by Thursday, April 15 by calling 402-441-7180 or emailing kristin.geisert@unl.edu.

4-H/FFA SHEEP & MEAT GOAT WEIGH-IN, MAY 11

4-H/FFA market sheep or market meat goat exhibitors planning to participate in the performance class based on rate of gain at the Lancaster County Super Fair must have their lambs and goats weighed on Tuesday, May 11, 6–7 p.m. at the Lancaster Event Center Fairgrounds – Pavilion 1 (east side). Exhibitors planning on exhibiting market sheep or goats at the Nebraska State Fair must have DNA hair samples collected. Current DHM's will be followed during this event. For more information, call Calvin DeVries at 402-441-7180.

NEW STATEWIDE 4-H DOG ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

The NEW statewide Nebraska 4-H Dog Achievement Program for 4-H'ers ages 8–18 consists of four levels which require youth to plan and report a broad range of age-appropriate accomplishments. At the beginning of the 4-H year, participants plan what to accomplish and at the end of the 4-H year, they report on their completed accomplishments. Lancaster County 4-H'ers will submit their forms to Lancaster County 4-H and be recognized at 4-H Achievement Celebration, typically held in February. More information and forms can be found at <https://4h.unl.edu/dog-achievement-program>.

Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County
 & Lancaster Extension Education Center Conference Facilities
444 Cherrycreek Road, Ste. A, Lincoln, NE 68528
402-441-7180 • lancaster.unl.edu

Extension is a Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln cooperating with the Counties and the United States Department of Agriculture.

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NEBLINE

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Private Pesticide Applicator Trainings by Zoom

Nebraska Extension will be offering four private pesticide applicator trainings by Zoom in March and April. Each one will have a different agricultural area of focus. The areas to be focused on are corn, soybean, pasture and wheat/alfalfa. Anyone is welcome to attend these trainings.

A few different steps will be required to attend these trainings.

- Preregistration will be required.
 - Monday, March 1 at 6 p.m. — Corn
 - Monday, March 8 at 6 p.m. — Soybean
 - Thursday, March 25 at 1 p.m. — Pasture
 - Friday, April 9 at 9 a.m. — Wheat/Alfalfa
- Training materials will need to be picked up at a county Extension office prior to training.
- Nebraska Department of Agriculture barcode form/bubble form will need to be filled out and submitted when training materials are picked up.
- The training fee of \$50 will need to be paid when training materials are picked up.
- Participate in the training session for which you are registered. No certification will be initiated unless all five steps are completed.

Lancaster County Extension office has the training materials. Before picking up, please call 402-441-7180 and ask for Karen Wedding. Cash or check preferred. Debit/credit card payment is available for an additional fee.

More information and registration links are at <https://cropwatch.unl.edu/2021/private-pesticide-training-offered-zoom>.



EXTENSION CALENDAR

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

February FEBRUARY IS NEBRASKA 4-H MONTH

- 23 4-H Achievement Virtual Celebration 6:30 p.m.
- 24 Early Childhood Training for Childcare Providers – VIRTUAL: Look Who's Hatching 1–2:30 p.m. OR 7–8:30 p.m.
- 25 Commercial Pesticide Applicator Initial Training 8:30 a.m.
- 25 & 26 Nebraska On-Farm Research Network Results Update Meeting – ONLINE 9 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
- 26 ProHort Lawn & Landscape Workshop – VIRTUAL..... 9 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
- 27 4-H Pillow Sewing Virtual Workshop 9 a.m.

March

- 1 Private Pesticide Applicator Training – ZOOM – Corn..... 6 p.m.
- 1 Deadline for Governor's Agricultural Excellence Awards (\$500)
- 2 4-H Council Meeting 6 p.m.
- 3 Private Pesticide Applicator Training – In-Person..... 1 p.m.
- 3 Early Childhood Training for Childcare Providers – VIRTUAL: Planning Summer Experiences 1–2:30 p.m. OR 7–8:30 p.m.
- 5 Lancaster County 4-H Deadline for Horse Stampede Entries
- 7 4-H Teen Council Meeting..... 3 p.m.
- 8 Private Pesticide Applicator Training – ZOOM – Soybean 6 p.m.
- 9 4-H & FFA Market Beef Weigh-In, Lancaster Event Center Fairgrounds – Pav. 2..... 6–7 p.m.
- 10 4-H Public Service Announcement (PSA) Contest Entries Due/Register for Speech Contest
- 11 Commercial Pesticide Applicator Recertification Training..... 8:30 a.m.
- 13 4-H Jammie Jamboree Sewing Workshop 9 a.m.
- 14 4-H Speech Contest..... Check-In 1 p.m./Contest 1:30 p.m.
- 15 Chemigation Training 1–4 p.m.
- 15 Pesticide Applicator Nebraska Department of Agriculture "Appointment Only" Testing Session 9 a.m.–1 p.m.
- 16 Commercial Pesticide Applicator Initial Training..... 8:30 a.m.
- 20 Lincoln Early Childhood Conference – VIRTUAL 8:30–11:30 a.m.
- 20 4-H Spring Rabbit Show, Lancaster Event Center Fairgrounds – Exhibit Hall 9 a.m.
- 23 Early Childhood Training for Childcare Providers – VIRTUAL: Supporting Our Youngest Learners... 1–2:30 p.m. OR 7–8:30 p.m.
- 25 Commercial Pesticide Applicator Recertification Training..... 8:30 a.m.
- 25 Private Pesticide Applicator Training – ZOOM – Pasture..... 6 p.m.
- 27 4-H Furniture Painting Workshop 9 a.m.
- 27 4-H Horse Stampede, UNL East Campus - Animal Science Complex
- 29 Lancaster County 4-H Deadline for Virtual Companion Animal Challenge Entries
- 30 Commercial Pesticide Applicator Recertification Training..... 8:30 a.m.

Upcoming Early Childhood Trainings

The Learning Child Team is currently offering a variety of free or low-cost VIRTUAL trainings for childcare providers. To learn more about the trainings and to sign up, go to <http://go.unl.edu/onlinepd>.