7-1996

The NEBLINE, July 1996

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**PRIORITY PROGRAM INDEX**

The mission of the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County is to help people address issues and needs related to their economic, social and environmental well-being through educational programs based upon scientific knowledge.

Look in this box each month to spot articles addressing Extension priority initiatives. Specific program areas are highlighted with a corresponding icon.

- **Agricultural Competitiveness and Profitability**
- **Natural Resources and Environmental Management**
- **Youth and Family Initiative**
- **Nutrition, Food Safety and Quality**
- **Strengthening Neighborhoods and Communities**

**Integrated Pest Management**

If you are a home gardener who routinely uses resistant varieties, garden sanitation, biological pest controls, and careful surveillance of your plants to minimize plant health problems and avoid use of chemical pesticides, you have been practicing Integrated Pest Management. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is both a philosophical and practical approach to pest control. IPM looks at the interrelationships of plants and their environment, and then uses a holistic approach to manage pests.

With IPM, pesticides are an option, but they are just one choice of the many things that a gardener can use to effectively manage pests. An IPM approach tries to prevent problems and minimize the need for controls. Home gardeners who plant resistant or tolerant varieties, reduce pest pressure, and replace crops around the vegetable garden to prevent carryover of disease organisms in the soil and clean-up garden debris in the fall to eliminate overwintering insects and disease organisms are already practicing some aspects of IPM. Managing soil fertility and watering keep plants growing vigorously and help them resist attack by insects and diseases. Drought or lack of nutrients stresses plants and makes them more vulnerable to pests. Therefore, soil sampling, fertilizing and watering are also important aspects of IPM. Controlling weeds is an important part of an IPM approach to gardening, too, because weeds compete with crop plants for water, nutrients and sunlight; they can be reservoirs of disease organisms and insects. Monitoring crops for insect problems, properly identifying both pests and beneficial insects present, and making control choices based on the likelihood of serious damage and ability of natural enemies to control pests are major features of IPM.

The aim with IPM is not trying to eradicate insects but keeping damage within reasonable limits. Many home gardeners are willing to tolerate some damage if it means saving the crop. A balanced approach to pest management not only saves the gardener time and energy, but it does the same for the environment. 

**See Pest Management-Page 12**
Compost for disease control

For 20 years, scientists have been exploring the possibility that compost may help control some diseases. The addition of compost to reduce disease levels in potting mixes. Damping off and root rot diseases were reduced significantly with the addition of compost. Compost added to alfalfa fields resulted in healthier root systems and thicker plant stands. Phytophthora, a serious disease in soybeans and numerous other plants, has been reduced through the addition of compost and other cultural practices. Rhizoctonia, root knot nematodes, and bacterial spot were reduced on experimental plots of peas and beans. Compost added to tomato fields reduced early blight, bacterial leaf spot and nematodes. Other research has shown reduced mosquito virus spread by white fly and control of brown rot in tomatoes.

Gardeners who have regularly used compost in their gardens know the benefits of compost. The addition of compost to their soil reduces the need for fertilizer, conserves soil moisture and may actually help in disease control. The possible reduction in disease problems is another excellent reason to begin your own compost pile. A word of warning—before adding your own compost to the garden, make sure it is mature and fully composted. Immature compost pulls nitrogen away from plants until it is mature. Also, do not add diseased plant material to your compost pile. Compost science and soil microbiology are secrets of compost’s actions. (D.J)

July garden hints

* Snapdragons should be pinch back after blooming to promote a second flush of growth.
* Cut back and fertilize delphinium and phlox to encourage a second flowering.
* Many plants are easily propagated by layering. Verbenas, euonymus, English ivy and climbing roses are a few plants that will root if their stems are fastened down and covered with soil.
* Cutting flowers is best done with sharp shears or a knife that will avoid injury to the growing plant. A slanting cut will expose a larger absorbing surface to water and prevent the stem’s base from resting on the bottom of the vase. It is best to carry a bucket of water to your garden for collecting flowers rather than a cutting basket.
* Divide and transplant bearded irises using the vigorous ends of the rhizomes. Discard the old center portion. Cut the leaves back to about 6 inches.
* Tall flowers should be staked to prevent damage by wind. Use stakes that are large enough to support the plant but are not too conspicuous; use soft twine or twist ties to secure them.
* A brown or grayish cast over a lawn can be caused by dull or improperly adjusted mower blades that shed grass rather than cut it.
* Store pesticides in a safe place away from original containers, away from children and pets. Use pesticides carefully in your garden. Read the labels and follow all the directions. The warnings and precautions are for your protection.

Get summer patch disease off your turf

Summer patch is a persistent and devastating turf disease. The fungus resides in soil and when the grass plants become stressed it attacks the roots and forms crowns. If summer patch was a problem in your lawn last year, it is likely to occur again this summer. Chemical control is most effective when fungicides are applied as preventative rather than curative treatments. Make the first application no later than early May and repeat if needed. Treatment after mid-August is usually not needed. Benomyl is a recommended fungicide.

Vacation care of plants

Your lawn and garden do not take a break when you go on vacation. To keep things under control while you are gone, include provisions for landscape and garden care in your vacation plans.

Arrange to have your lawn mowed regularly. A shaggy lawn is a tip-off that no one is home. Letting the grass grow long and then cutting it short is also rough on turf.

A neglected garden is another indication that you are away. Though it may seem like a lot of even good friends to expect them to weed the garden, you can probably find someone willing to harvest it for you. regularly pick encumbrances, peppers and summer squash is necessary to keep them producing. Keeping up with the harvest means there is less overripe or rotting produce to attract insects.

To keep the weeds from taking over while you are gone, eliminate as many of them as possible before you leave and put down a thick mulch between the rows. A thorough watering before you mulch will help crops withstand any dry weather that occurs while you are gone. (D.J)

The Herb Garden

Don Jansen
Extension Educator

Rosemary

Rosemary comes in many forms; the same cultivar grown on the West Coast may look very different when grown in Nebraska. Since seedlings can take months to grow, it is best purchased as a potted plant for most home gardens. Outdoors it likes full sun and can be kept on the dry side. The pungent, curved needle-like leaves have many uses. They are easily dried by hanging woody stemmed bunches in a warm place. The leaves can then be stripped off and bottled. Rosemary is a very pungent herb; it is best used sparingly on bland foods. In cooking, it is frequently used with chicken; in baking, it can be used in breads.
Biosolids? What are biosolids?

Biosolids are the processed, organic material that results from the wastewater treatment plant. Some people refer to this material as sludge; the word sludge can refer to types of material other than organic residuals from a treatment process.

The three, white, egg-shaped storage tanks, south of Cornhusker Highway at the Salt Creek bridge west of 27th Street, are an important part of the process of converting sludge into biosolids. These storage tanks, called anaerobic digesters, process wastewater from the Theresa Street Wastewater Treatment Plant so that the biosolids are greatly reduced and much safer. After this process, the material can be processed to dry it to fertilizer or feed grains like corn and grain sorghum.

When used carefully, this material, called a high-solid content conditioner/fertilizer with 65% organic matter) can be used so it will not endanger the environment. The beneficial application of biosolids to cropland is the best end-use of this material. The land use of biosolids does not take up valuable landfill space and is more economical than other disposal methods. It just so happens that the City of Lincoln has approximately 10-15% extra biosolids this summer and fall for land application. If you would like to try this material on your cropland, you will need to apply it with a manure spreader or have someone apply it for you. You may have your labor cost partially defrayed as the city is currently paying farmers $0.65 per cubic yard toward their application costs. For more information about how to get into this land application program, call Extension Educator Barb Ogg. (BPO)

Waverly/Greenwood area water and nutrient management tour

Farmers, acreage owners and others living in the Waverly/ Greenwood area are invited to participate in a twilight tour July 1 beginning at 6 p.m. Activities will focus on the use of nitrogen (162nd and Raymond Road), continue at 100th and Green­wood (102nd and Northwestern), and conclude at the Farmers Cooperative in Waverly with dinner at approximately 9 p.m.

Tour participants will be some of the first to bear specific designation of the Lower Platte South Natural Resources District's Groundwater Management Plan. Past experience with water quality challenges in the Waverly/Greenwood area made these growers very interested in improved water and nutrient management.

Demonstrations will be conducted to show how irrigation, seeding, and pasture management can be improved to save water and nutrients. The demonstration will focus on the prevention of water loss from pastures and the best use of water and nutrients in crop production. The evening will conclude with an overview of the Waverly/Greenwood area by the University of Nebraska Water Center and a brief overview of the Groundwater Management Plan by the Lower Platte South Natural Resources District's staff.

Door prizes— including soil probes, sprayer calibration kits, and ideas about how to reduce spraying—will be given away at the conclusion of the program. Tour sponsorship includes University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension, Lower Platte South Natural Resources District, Farmers Cooperative Company in Waverly and the Greenwood Farmers Cooperative. For further information, contact Dave Varner at 441-7180. (DV)

Summer pasture weed control

Ward Shires
Extension Educator

Early in mid-June is a popular time to spray pasture and woody plants; though that is not always recommended. Why do we spray weeds in pastures? Is it to kill plants that are causing an overall problem? Sometimes; but by the same token, let's not kill the weeds we will be good feed if grazed when they are young and tender.

In fact, anytime a pasture is sprayed, it indicates that grazing has not been as effective as it could be or that the owner wants a quick fix. First, if a pasture is to be profitable, it must have high quality forage. Many good grasses are controlled dollar input. Spraying costs money.

Second, livestock eat many plants we call weeds. When they do, these plants are no longer weeds. In fact, most weeds can be good feed if grazed when they are young and tender. Third, unpalatable weeds usually become established in pastures after grass is weakened by severe grazing. These weeds thrive when grazing management fails to encourage vigorous grass growth.

Finally, unless pasture and livestock are managed to benefit both the land and the animals grazing it, the weeds will be back despite your spraying. So why spray pastures? If you graze properly but wish to hasten the process of replacing unneatened weeds with vigorous grass, that is one good reason. Otherwise, spraying may be simply cosmetic and a waste of money.

Some protection from summer sun

The Nebraska Department of Health's Harvest for a Lifetime project is a cancer control program for farmers, farm workers and their families. It promotes healthy eating and lifestyle behaviors that can reduce the risk of certain kinds of cancer.

In July, Harvest for a Lifetime has used a community-based approach to its educational efforts, and has joined with agricultural, educational and health organizations in local communities to promote cancer prevention and early detection. County Extension educators have been instrumental in disseminating information and coordinating community programs. During the summer months, Harvest for a Lifetime focuses on the prevention of skin cancer among rural residents.

Since farmers and farm families have high exposure to the sun's harmful rays, here are a few important tips to reduce the risk of skin cancer due to overexposure to the sun:

- Use a sunscreen product with an SPF of 14 or higher to protect the skin from sun damage. People may be aware of the preventive value of protective clothing. In one study, 30 percent said they always or sometimes wore protective clothing when outside on a sunny day for more than 1 hour. Baseball-style hats do not offer the best protection because the ears and neck are still exposed to the sun.

While farm work requires long hours in the sun, there are additional ways to reduce the risk of skin cancer.

When purchasing farm equipment, consider the benefits of sun protective features, like enclosed cabs. Try to limit exposure during the intense midday sun (10 a.m. to 3 p.m.).

Find ag/acreage info in cyberspace!

You can now access agricultural and acreage information via two Lancaster County Internet Web sites. "Ag/Acreage" targets commercial farmers and can be found at http://ianr.unl.edu/lancaster while "Agriculture and Small Farm Insights" (designed for smaller operations) can be found at http://ianr.unl.edu/lancaster/agacreage.

Visit these sites the next time you are surfing on the Web. You will find quick and easy access to Extension publications, educational programs and much more. Questions may be communicated through this page via e-mail directly to Extension staff. We also link you to many other sources of information on the Internet.

Our goal is to provide you with the reliable information you need in a timely and efficient manner. Give us some feedback on our website by e-mailing your comments via the Internet. We look forward to meeting you in cyberspace! (DV)

Rural Sense

Crop Management and Diagnostic Clinics at ARDC in July!

There will be two 2-day Crop Management and Diagnostic Clinics in July at the University of Nebraska Agricultural Research and Development Center at Ibahca, Nebraska. Sessions will be July 15-16 and 24-25 from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. These clinics are designed for industry personnel, extension educators and government agencies, and crop managers and producers.

The first day will include weed, insect and disease identification and management; day two will focus on soil fertility, compaction and water management issues. Organizers have applied for Continuing Education Units in the Certified Crop Advisor Program in the areas of soils and water management, soil fertility, pest management and crop production.

Dr. Dale Flowerday, Professor Emeritus of Agronomy at UNL, is coordinating the field activities of these two-day training sessions. UNL faculty teaching at the clinic will include John Foster, Ken Frank, Dr. Lynn Hay, Paul Hay, Paul Jasa, Alies Jones, Dave Keith, Les Nelsen, Z B Mayo, Alex Martin, Steve Mason, Jim Peterson, Rick Waldron, John Watkins, Kelly Wertz, John Witkowski, Bob Wright and Dave Wysong.

Cost for each two-day clinic will be $225 if you preregister before July 1. After July 1, the cost will be $250 per clinic. Participants will receive training materials including a reference notebook. As most of this training will be in the field, participants should bring rain gear, if needed. On day one, participants will congregate at the new Research and Education Building at 8:30 a.m. to register. For more information about this clinic or for a registration form, call Keith Glewen (402-624-8803) or Barb Ogg (402-441-7180). (BPO)
Poison Ivy can be an itch

Each year people come in contact with poison ivy and it is usually because they do not recognize the plant. Not coming into contact with poison ivy is always the best prevention, but plants themselves can be controlled by either mechanical or chemical methods.

Young poison ivy plants can be pulled out in the early spring, if the soil is moist. If the soil is dry, the roots will break off in the ground and sprout new plants. Be sure you wear protective clothing such as gloves and a long-sleeved shirt when working around or removing poison ivy. Snakes growing up a tree should be severed at the base of the plant and the vine removed from the tree if possible. Destroy or burn the plants, but do not burn them. Smoke can carry the poison oils in a dispersed form through the air.

Chemical herbicides, such as products containing 2,4-D can be used to control poison ivy. Mix the herbicide according to label instructions and thoroughly wet the leaves, stem, shoots and bark of the plants. For best results, spray as soon as the plant is fully leafed out in the spring. To prevent drift problems, spray early in the morning when there is little wind. Retreatment may be necessary. (MDM)

Is an inch too much? Are two too many?

In the summer months, most water used in residential areas is applied to landscapes. By learning how much water your irrigation system actually needs, you can reduce your water use and lower your irrigation costs. (LB)

The average American generates more than 1,200 pounds of trash annually. That is 196 million tons of garbage every year—enough to fill the New Orleans Superdome from top to bottom, twice a day, every day! This includes: 2 billion disposable batteries* enough aluminum to build the commercial airliner fleet four times* enough office and writing paper to build a wall 12 feet high from Los Angeles to New York City* enough copper to make copper and wires—enough to fill the Twin Towers of New York’s Trade Center every 2 weeks 2,400-260,000 million cups and containers underwater* 2.5 million plastic bottles every hour (you figure the annual amount)* 500 million disposable cigarette lighters (that is 1,369,863 every day)

The amount of trash we throw away has more than doubled in the past 30 years while the population has increased by only 38 percent. (LB)

Chiggers: the bitey mites of summer

Chiggers are the tiny, immature stages of insects that feed briefly under the skin of vertebrate animals and humans. A mite is a small insect. It becomes active around July 4—people who camp or picnic in woods and meadows in midsummer are likely to experience chiggers. Chiggers are picked up from grasses, weeds and bushes during movement. They tend to crawl upward and eventually feed where clothing fits snugly against the skin. Most chigger bites will occur on the legs and ankles of someone who walked or stood in vegetation. A person sitting or lying on the ground will more likely be bitten around the waist and upper legs where underwear elastic is tight against the body. The use of an insect repellent applied to clothing offers the best way to prevent chigger bites. Be sure to read and follow all label directions when using any type of repellent. The intense itching is caused by an allergic response your body produces to the fluids the mite produces during its feeding. By the time you notice that you have been bitten by a chigger, the mite has already finished feeding and has dropped off your body to continue its life cycle.

There is no good cure to stop the intense itching of chigger bites. If you can keep from scratching them, they will heal faster. Reduce chigger populations in your yard by keeping your grass mowed short to reduce humidity. (RPV)

A guide to ultimate wildlife watching

We have all had it happen. You look up from the trail just in time to see an animal dive out of sight—a swoop of a wing, a flash of color that slaps of beaver’s tail. Fortunately, there are simple ways you can help blend into any animal’s surroundings. If you return, you will be treated to a wildlife show that makes your heart pound and your senses hum.

The ultimate wildlife watching experience is behavior watching—viewing animals without interrupting their normal activities. Instead of just a glimpse, you have an encounter—a chance not only to identify the animal, but to interact with it. Follow these tips from experienced wildlife watchers. With the right combination of patience and know-how, you will be able to witness wildlife without starting them or sapping their energy. It is a feeling you will never forget!

Viewing tips

Work to make your presence unnoticeable to the animal. Sometimes you don’t even have to leave your car to see wildlife up close!

1. Aim for pictures of the season—aven and overhead shapes in a leaving shape on a tree branch. 2. Give your child a straw balloon? 3. Give your child a clear drinking cup with a closed end. 4. Take a clear drinking cup and fill it 5. Tilt the cup so that some air is floated taking its place. 6. Lift the cup out of the water. What happened to the water? 7. The water produced to the fluids the mite produces during its feeding. By the time you notice that you have been bitten by a chigger, the mite has already finished feeding and has dropped off your body to continue its life cycle. There is no good cure to stop the intense itching of chigger bites. If you can keep from scratching them, they will heal faster. Reduce chigger populations in your yard by keeping your grass mowed short to reduce humidity. (RPV)

Earth Day trash trivia

The average American generates more than 1,200 pounds of trash annually. That is a total of 196 million tons of garbage every year—enough to fill the New Orleans Superdome from top to bottom, twice a day, every day! This includes:

- 2 billion disposable batteries
- Enough aluminum to build the commercial airliner fleet four times
- Enough office and writing paper to build a wall 12 feet high from Los Angeles to New York City
- Enough copper to make copper and wires—enough to fill the Twin Towers of New York’s Trade Center every 2 weeks
- 2,400-260,000 million cups and containers underwater
- 2.5 million plastic bottles every hour (you figure the annual amount)
- 500 million disposable cigarette lighters (that is 1,369,863 every day)

The amount of trash we throw away has more than doubled in the past 30 years while the population has increased by only 38 percent. (LB)
Skeeters driving you crazy?
What the heck can you do?

Mosquitoes are annoying, biting insects that thrive when rainy conditions allow stagnant pools of water to collect. Nebraska’s May rainy period produced these stagnant pools of water. Female mosquitoes emerging from water must have a blood meal to produce fertile eggs. They lay their eggs in standing water or in containers that fill with water after it rains.

Prevent mosquitoes by emptying containers after it rains. Container breeding can be killed with BT, a bacterium that kills mosquito larvae, but is non-toxic to animals that drink the pond water. BT products come in wafers or domes and are found at many garden centers. The number of BT donuts needed for control will depend on the size of your pond.

Unfortunately, some adult mosquitoes can fly several miles, so dumping containers and treating ponds will not completely eliminate the problem. For most people, personal repellents containing DEET are often the most effective way to prevent mosquito bites. However, products that contain DEET can break down to DEET, so if you are in a very old, very young or sensitive individual who should not use them on bare skin. Check the label for this ingredient. The chemical name of DEET is diethyltoluamide or something similar.

Another substance that has a slight repellent effect against mosquitoes is citronella. Citronella is added to candles and found in some products that are marketed as mosquito repellents. You can also purchase burnable coils that will repel mosquitoes. These coils contain a pyrethrin-type insecticide and should be used outdoors or in well-ventilated areas. Be sure to read and follow all label directions when using a repellent or a product intended for insect control. (BPO)

Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department
1996 Hazardous Household Waste Collection

Reminder: These collections are for households only; not for businesses. Only residents of Lincoln and Lancaster County can bring items to collections.

Date | Location | Time
--- | --- | ---
Saturday, July 27 | State Fair Park, parking lot northwest of Ag Hall | 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
Saturday, September 21 | Nebraska Wesleyan University, parking lot, 56th & Huntington | 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
Saturday, November 2 | Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department, 3140 N Street, south parking lot | 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Household Hazardous Waste Collection will take:

**Pesticides**—weed killers, garden sprays, wood preservatives, roach powder, pet flea and tick control, household insecticides, and rodenticides.

**Items Containing PCBs**—Ballasts from old fluorescent lamps and small capacitors from old appliances including radios, motors, and televisions.

**Solvents**—Mineral spirits, tape removers, paint strippers and thinners, varnishes, stains, polishes, and waxes.

**Heavy Metals**—Wastes containing mercury such as thermometers and fluorescent bulbs. (Most batteries can now be recycled locally.)

Keep products in the original container and keep the label intact. If the label is already destroyed or unreadable, label the products to the best of your knowledge. Open, leaking or rusted containers should be placed in a clear plastic bag during transport to a collection. Do not mix chemicals!

Do Not Bring

- Latex Paint
- Medicines
- Fertilizers
- Explosives and Ammunition
- Antifreeze
- Used Oil
- General Household Trash or Business Waste
- Alkaline, Carbon-zinc, Zinc-air and Vehicle Batteries

If you have questions on how to dispose of these items, call the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department, 441-8040. (LB)

Night-time noises: Explore the chorus of nature with your kids

When looking for a good family night outing, consider investigating night sounds. Seeking the source of sounds can blend the excitement of a hunt with the curiosity of the unknown.

Crickets that make sounds change throughout the season and offer a variety of viewing opportunities. Plus, kids will remember this type of family activity for a long time.

Chorus and cricket frog season is extended into June, although chorus frogs will continue singing throughout the summer after heavy rains. The chorus frog has three dark stripes or rows of dots along its back and sometimes has a dark triangle between its eyes. The sound they make resembles crisp notes like running a fingernail over the fine teeth of a stiff comb. The chorus frog is found statewide in shallow water from roadside ditches to permanent wetlands.

The cricket frog (with a solid, dark, triangular mark between its eyes and a stripe on the back of its thigh on its rear legs) is found in the eastern two-thirds of the state, around the marshy borders of streams and ponds. They make a gick-gick sound, like two pebbles clicking together, beginning at about one gick per second and gradually accelerating.

The equipment needed to go on a sound hunt is minimal: flashlights, old shoes or knee-high boots for wading in shallow water, and a jar to capture the little sound-maker for a closer look. Seek an area where people will not be startled to see the flashlights, or at a local nature center.

Stand very quietly and try to locate the direction of the sound.

The vocalizations are made by the male frogs as they fill and then collapse a vocal sack that generates the sound as the air rushes out. As the chorus frog’s vocal sack touches the water, little waves will generate. Panning the water with a flashlight will help locate the frog. Once located, keep the light shining on the frog. Look closely, because the frog’s cryptic coloration will blend him in his surroundings. The light will “hide” you from his view—the observer may be able to reach down and grab him before he dives.

These frogs sing day and night. They can be scoped out in the daytime before the night visit. The kids will enjoy the night hunt even more if they are in on it, too.

As the season progresses, a wide variety of insects sing in backyards and the countryside. Many belong to the katydid or tree cricket families and are very enjoyable to watch sing after they are located. The exact direction that an insect song is coming from can be very difficult to determine because of its high frequency pitch.

Have adults and children spread out and approach the sound from different angles. This “triangulation” process will help pinpoint the sound’s source. But, the insect may detect humans and stop singing—you must be patient and wait quietly until it resumes its singing.

When the soundmaker is found with the flashlight, it will continue to “sing” while being watched. Remember, all of these soundmakers are really males singing to attract a mate. Without the call of the critters in their courtship ritual, the night would be quiet and much less interesting.

Source: Tom Seibert, UNL Extension wildlife specialist, youth. (BPO)

Missouri River again on endangered list

For the second year in a row, American Rivers (an environmental group based in Washington, D.C.) has included the Missouri River on its list of endangered rivers. The Missouri River again has been declared endangered due to the contamination from industrial discharges and agricultural herbicides, according to the group. American Rivers also said the damming and channelization of the river have eliminated or endangered habitat for fish and wildlife.

Source: Water Current. (BPO)

Environmental Focus

Plant a reverse garden

Biodegradable. That is a big word for little children. If you have a compost pile, it takes time, but your youngsters can begin to decompose (or rot)? What items do not seem to show any change? Explain to your children the meaning of biodegradability (when an object is capable of being broken down

by living microorganisms present in the soil). Is there any evidence that some items are biodegradable? Replant one more time and continue to water regularly.

4. After an additional 2 weeks, uncover the objects for the last time. Are there any items that have almost completely rotted away? Which items are still intact? From your original list of items, sort the objects into two groups: biodegradable and not. What can you conclude from this experiment? (ALH)
Food brings families together and summer is the ideal time for children to learn some important cooking skills.

Cooking provides children with fun, hands-on ways to use reading and science skills which sometimes become rusty over the summer. Children are becoming more self-reliant at earlier ages and increasingly responsible for what they choose to eat. A 1991 Gallup survey found that 87% of fourth through eighth graders sampled make some of their own meals.

Children learn their eating habits from adults. Like adults, they often choose foods because of availability rather than preference. Some families post their grocery list in a place (such as on the refrigerator) which gives all members the opportunity to add items to the list. The family or individual who actually do the shopping make the decision on which items are actually purchased.

Some families enroll in 4-H food projects as a way to teach their children basic food and nutrition skills. Children do not need to be enrolled in a 4-H club to take part in the learning experiences. Contact the Extension office to learn which projects would be most appropriate for your family.

Here is a checklist which upper elementary children may use to evaluate their kitchen safety and cleanliness practices.

Place an “X” in front of each item that you do when working in the kitchen.

I always wash my hands with soap and water and clean my fingernails.

I wipe up any spills on the floor.

I keep the cabinet doors and drawers closed so someone doesn’t bump into them.

I refrigerate leftovers as quickly as possible.

I use a cutting board and knife safety.

I plug in appliances with wet hands.

If you have permission to use the stove, do you do the following?

I avoid putting any metal, twist ties or colored paper products in the microwave.

I never operate the microwave empty.

I use microwave safe dishes (Glass or paper).

I vent the food to be cooked in the microwave to avoid steam burns and always open microwave popcorn packages carefully.

When you have permission to use the stove, do you do the following?

I always turn pan handles to the inside.

I always open pan lids away from me.

I always use hot mitts when handling heated pans and skillets, and always keep the mitts away from any heat source.

All of these kitchen safety standards are good tips to follow if you did not check one or more of the statements listed above, try to improve your kitchen safety by following what that statement suggests. If you did “X” all the statements, congratulations! You are doing a great job for being kitchen safety wise.

Source: • "On Your Own In Rural America" by Deb Schroeder and Susan Williams, UNL Extension Educators.

Safe handling of fruits and vegetables

Fruits and vegetables are a mainstay of the American diet. Consumers should eat more fruits and vegetables as part of a healthy lifestyle. Here’s how you can ensure that produce is safe and wholesome.

At the Store

Trust your senses. Look for fresh looking fruits and vegetables that are not bruised, shriveled, moldy, or slimy. Don’t buy any produce that looks bad. Don’t buy packaged vegetables that look slimy. Some fruits will have the rind or skin (such as apples, potatoes, and mandarin citrus) are stored in the refrigerator and some vegetables are packaged in water, and that’s OK.

What you need to know.

Most fresh fruits and vegetables are not “stock-up” items. Some, such as apples, potatoes, and mussel citrus can be stored at home, but most items should be bought to be used within a few days.

Handle produce gently at the store. Keep produce on top in the refrigerated section of the store. Some items that seem hardy, such as cauliflower, actually are very delicate and bruise easily.

At Home

Put produce away promptly. Keep most of your produce in the crisper. It has a slightly higher humidity than the rest of the refrigerator, and this is better for fruits and vegetables. Remember to keep all cut fruits and vegetables covered in the refrigerator.

Throw away any produce you have kept too long— if it is “moldy or slimy, if it smells bad, or if it is past the “best if used by” date.

One you’re ready to eat your fresh fruits and vegetables, you need to handle them properly. Germ Avoid contamination of the surface of produce and can be passed to the flesh when the item is cut or handled. There is one more important thing you can do wash all fruits and vegetables in clean drinking water before eating.

This applies to all fruits and vegetables, even if you don’t eat the rind or skin (such as melons and oranges). Remember to wash produce just before you use it, not just when it first arrives. The one exception is leafy greens, such as lettuce, which should be rinsed before eating to maintain their crispness.

You should not use detergent when washing fresh fruits and vegetables because you might eat detergent residues left on the fruits and vegetables. Produce items are porous and can absorb the detergent. Detergent is not labeled by the Food and Drug Administration for use on produce.

In addition to washing, you should peel and discard outer leaves or rinds. Sort heart vegetables, such as potatoes and carrots, if you want to eat the fiber- and nutrient-rich skin.

Clean surfaces, intensifies, and hands after touching raw meat, poultry, and seafood. If you use them on fresh produce.

Keep refrigerators clean and check that the refrigerator produce you have cut.

Wash your hands thor­oughly with soap and water after touching raw meat, poultry, or changing diapers, and before preparing food.

Read and follow label instructions, such as "keep refrigerated" or "use by (a certain date)." This information is on most items prestigous for you at the store.

Hold prepared fruit salads and cut hard fruits and vegetables in the refrigerator until just before serving. Discard cut produce immediately. Store all remaining produce in the refrigerator for four hours or more.

Most importantly, enjoy your fresh fruits and vegetables—a great tasting way to good health. Source: Produce Marketing Association

Drop in on our nutrition & food safety internet website

Visit our county Nutrition and Food Safety website at:  
http://lanrwww.unl.edu/lanc/o/family/safety.htm.  
Learn about extension programs; Access Extension publications. Connect to other reliable internet sources of nutrition and food safety information.

Send an e-mail message directly from our web site to Alice Henneman with your comments on how we can make this site most helpful for you.
Adolescents’ free time seen as unsupervised, unproductive

Millions of American adolescents spend much of their free time without supervision, a Carnegie Corporation report says. The report offers a bleak description of young people who rarely read but often devote themselves to watching television and involvement in drugs, gangs, violence and sex.

The most detailed examination yet of how adolescents use their free time, cited some unsettling statistics: One study indicated that adolescents spend an average of just five minutes a day in one-on-one interaction with their fathers and 20 minutes of such time with their mothers. “By any standards, America’s young adolescents have a great deal of discretionary time,” the report said. “Much of it is unstructured, unsupervised and unproductive for the young person.”

Making ice cream without raw eggs

Alice Heneman, Extension Educator

Protect yourself from the danger of possible Salmonella infection by using a homemade ice cream recipe that doesn’t call for raw eggs or one with a cooked egg base. Egg mixtures used in making cooked bases for ice cream are safe if they reach 160°F when tested with a thermometer. At this temperature, the mixture should coat a metal spoon.

Another option is to use your regular recipe and substitute cooked egg base, such as “pasteurized” egg substitutes, such as Egg Beaters®, in place of the raw eggs.

Here are two suitable recipes, one made without eggs and the other with a cooked base.

Eggless Vanilla Ice Cream

1 cup sugar
2 teaspoons vanilla
Combine ingredients and stir briskly, about two minutes, until sugar is dissolved. (Uncooked sugar crystals may be a cause of large ice crystal formation.) Pour into a 1-gallon ice cream freezer and freeze according to manufacturer’s directions.

Cooked Egg Homemade Ice Cream

With this basic stirred custard recipe, courtesy of the American Egg Board, you can prepare your own vanilla or peppermint ice cream.

A stirred custard, also known as a soft curd or a custard sauce, is cooked on top of the range to a creamy, but not porridgey, consistency and then allowed to cool to make the mixture in a double boiler over hot water; a heavy saucepan over low heat works as well. A stirred custard is the base for this homemade ice cream recipe.

2 cups milk
3/4 cup sugar
2 whole eggs
1 tablespoon flour
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 cup half and half
1 cup heavy cream
In a large saucepan, beat together milk, sugar, eggs, flour and salt. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly until mixture reaches 160°F or until it just coats a metal spoon. Cool quickly by placing pan in bowl of ice cream or cold water; continue to stir mixture. Add half and half and heavy cream; combine well. Add desired flavorings. Freeze according to ice cream maker’s instructions. Makes 2 quarts.

Vanilla Ice Cream: Add 2 teaspoons vanilla extract.

Peppermint Ice Cream: Add 2 tablespoons peppermint extract. As mixture begins to freeze, add 15 crushed peppermint candy rounds and 8 to 10 drops red food coloring (optional). (AH)

Kitchen spills? Sponges to the 'em

Sponges are often better than pads or cloths for cleaning kitchen and bathroom surfaces. They hold more liquid and distribute the cleaner faster and more evenly. These materials are easy to throw away after being cleaned. A bonus is that they’re easy to hold and you can even cut them to fit your hand size.

Cellulose sponges are great for wiping down kitchen and bathroom areas. Backed sponges are helpful for tougher jobs where you need a firmer cleanser. To avoid transferring soils and germs from heavily soiled areas to lights, sponges offered to food preparation areas, use different colored sponges to clean different areas of the kitchen—countertops, sinks, floors, toilets, etc.

Launder sponges frequently to remove soils and germs.

When wiping up juices from meats and poultry, use paper towels. Clean up juices then discard the towel. Disinfect cutting boards or surfaces contaminated by the meat/poultry.

You can use sponges for cleaning and clean, dry cotton cloths for drying and shining surfaces. Cloths made from synthetic fibers, such as polyes-
ter or nylon, absorb water as well as cotton.

Cloths are great for getting into those hard-to-reach areas where only a fingertip can reach. An old toothbrush is also great here. There are many small areas or scrubbing heavily soiled areas, such as the grout between tiles in your shower.

Don’t use a fabric soaper when laundering and drying cleaning cloths. The softener leaves a film that can cause streaking on the surface being dried. (LB)

Family

Living

How much is enough water?

Water is high on the list of necessities we cannot live without. Almost all of the body’s living cells need and depend on water to function. Active people who are outdoors a lot, especially need sufficient fluids during the hotter summer months.

Water accounts for 55 to 60 percent of a person’s weight. A fluid loss of as little as 2-2.5 percent of body weight impairs performance. Fluid losses of 7-10 percent of body weight will lead to heat stroke and death.

The U.S. average person, a 2-3 percent fluid loss equates to 3 to 4.5 pounds of body weight. It takes two cups of fluid to replace every pound lost.

Hydrating balance is attained when we ingest the same amount of water as we lose. For most adults, this means consuming approximately 10 cups of water daily. Six to eight cups of this should come through beverages; the rest can be supplied by food.

All foods contain some water. Vegetables have 70 to 90 percent and meat between 40 and 75 percent. While thirst is a fairly good indicator that the body needs to replenish its water supply, it is not a perfect mechanism. That’s why it’s advisable to drink six to eight cups of fluids daily, except thirsty days or during dehydration. When someone is also dehydrated, such as by heat or exercise, alcohol may not be the best drink for quenching thirst. (AH)

Healthy Eating

Each month for the next year, I’ll be sharing a fruit or vegetable recipe from the 5-A-Day program.* Look at the end of the recipe for how to obtain 12 new recipes each month.

Chicken and Rice Casserole with Summer Vegetables - Serves 6

1 cup sugar
2 teaspoons vanilla

Chicken and Rice Casserole

4 medium tomatoes, chopped
1 medium onion, chopped
1 cup vegetable oil
2 medium tomatoes, chopped
1 cup brown rice
3 cups unsalted chicken broth
1/2 teaspoon salt
3 tablespoons freshly ground pepper
3 tablespoons chopped parsley

END

Chicken and Rice Casserole

1 medium onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 red sweet pepper, chopped
Water or chicken broth

Chicken and Rice Casserole

Nutrient analysis per serving: Calories, 262; fat, 6 g; cholesterol, 41 mg; fiber, 3 g; sodium, 255 mg; percent calories from fat, 21%.

For 12 more 5-A-Day recipes (new and different recipes offered each month), send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: 5-A-Day Recipes, #9; Alice Heneman, UNI Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County; 444 Cherry Creek Road, Lincoln, NE 68528-1307.

* Eating lots of fruits and vegetables as part of a low-fat, high-fiber diet may help reduce your risk of cancer. The goal of the National 5-A-Day Program, a collaborative effort between the National Cancer Institute and the Produce for Better Health Foundation, is to increase the per capita consumption of fruits and vegetables in the U.S. from the current average of 2.5-3.5 servings a day to five servings a day by the year 2000.
4-H & Youth

Cindy Blome
Youth Extension Aide

4-H Horse Pre-Fair Briefing— Monday, July 22, 7:00-9:00 p.m.
4-H Youth Arena, State Fair Park. All exhibitors, leaders, parents and volunteers are encouraged to attend.

• 4-H Horse VIPS Meeting—Wednesday, July 7, 10:00-8:30 p.m. Volunteers, project members invited.

• Congratulations to the 4-H Horse Judging Team! They placed 4th at the Fronen Horse Judging Clinic held May 29.

• Melodie Nielsen and their adult preparation for the transport of horse. All exhibitors at the show. (LT)

• Judging Clinics held May 29. Horse owners should contact the county Extension office as soon as possible, 441-7180.

•_preparation for the transport of horse. Correct procedures vary depending on the reason for transportation. Horse owners should consult with sponsors.

• There are two tour times, 9:30-11:30 a.m. and 1:00-3:00 p.m.

• Each tour features the following educational and fun stops: participating in Zone 4-H Fair activities, making a recycled craft, seeing the horse economy and engineering projects and visiting the animals that compete at the fair.

• Want to volunteer to lead a tour on a particular tour stop? Call Lorenne at the Extension office, 441-7180, by July 15. Please indicate if you would be able to help with one or more tours. (LT)

Attention bucket calf exhibitors!

Janice Halling will be holding another workshop to discuss fair preparation July 9 at 6:30 p.m. The workshop will be at the Mitch Schwarzenbach Farm, 1001 N 190th (3/4 mile north of 190th and O Streets). Topics will include what to take to the fair, how to bath your calf, how to tie your calf in the stall, getting ready for the show and showing in the arena. Janice will also answer questions exhibitors may have about record books and interviews. This is an excellent opportunity to ask questions about calf care and the fair. (LT)

Fair Fun Day ’96 volunteers needed

Have you sent back all the information requested in the fair letter that you received a few weeks ago? This includes:

1. Confirmation postcard about assigned food booth times
2. Fair order forms
3. Updated project list (must be in no later than July 15)
4. Must clubs assigned a time to work in the food booth. If for some reason you or your club were not assigned a time, please call Rosie VerMaas at 792-2571.

Thanks for helping the 4-H staff make the Lancaster County Fair educational and enjoyable experience for all!

Words that help kids take pride

As county fair approaches, all of us want our youngsters to feel proud of their accomplishments. Here are some words that validate a child’s feelings and give him/her encouragement.

I/We love you.
That’s great!
Good job!
You look terrific.
You’re very special.
That smile is great.
Let’s talk about it.
You do so well.
You’re such a good worker.
Do the best you can.
You’re going to be just fine.
How can we fix it?
Give it your best.
We can do it together.
What did you like best about today?
Believe in yourself.
I really like being your mom/dad.
You’re so nice to be around today. (AH)

4-H Pre-Fair Flower and Vegetables Show/Workshop

Monday, July 8, 1:00-4:00 p.m.
Entry of exhibits: 1:00-1:30 p.m.
Show results: 3:30-4:00 p.m.

The event will help 4-H members improve their skills at selecting exhibits to show at the Lancaster County Fair and prepare them for the horticulture contest Monday, July 15.

Rules:
1. 4-H members can enter one exhibit, either a flower, herb or vegetable.
2. Follow the rules outlined in the 1996 Lancaster County Fair Book for exhibiting. (MM)

Be a SERIES teen volunteer or adult coach

LaDeane Jha
Extension Educator

A workshop featuring an inquiry-based science program that emphasizes youth teaching other youth is slated for July 9, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln East Campus Union.

SERIES (Science, Experiences, Resources and Informal Education) teaches youth to help others, ask probing questions, use problem-solving approaches to life and give service to their communities.

Youth enjoy the hands-on, interactive nature of the curriculum and quickly get into the spirit of SERIES by designing experiments and answering "why" questions through "messing around." Not only do youth learn science, but take it a step beyond by applying principles learned to community service.

Participants receive training using snacks. Snailing introduces youth to scientific methods and helps them see practical applications of science. For example, if snails react negatively to salt or acids, they might consider a way to keep snails out of a garden.

Other areas of science training will include:

• From Field to Plate: Earth Understudies and Soils
• Recycling: Polymers
• From Ridges to Rivers: Watersheds

Youth then take training into the community by setting up recycling sites, helping with hazardous waste collection or planting trees.

SERIES is for youth in grades 8 and up. Adult volunteers to coach teen teachers are also encouraged to attend training. Cost of registration is $10 for teens and $15 for adults. Science teachers, museum directors and camp leaders would also find the workshop helpful. Registration is due by July 1 and includes a T-shirt and noon meal. Obtain a brochure and registration blank from the Extension office and mail.

4-H district dairy shows

Any 4-H dairy exhibitor interested in showing at the district show should contact the county Extension office as soon as possible, 441-7180. The district shows will be held July 13 in Beatrice, July 22 in Fremont and July 23 in Grand Island. Entries are due to the county holding the show July 8 for Beatrice and July 15 for Fremont and Grand Island.

The forms can be obtained at the Extension office and should be forwarded from here if possible. (LT)

4-H ice cream 4-U! We’re having an Ice Cream Social Saturday, August 3, 2:00-3:30 p.m. at the State Fair Park Demo Mall.

75 cents for a cup or cone to help raise money for 4-H Teen Council youth education programs.

I’d rather be snailing completed form and check to Nebraska State 4-H Office, c/o Kathleen Lodl, 114 Ag Hall, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE 68583-0700.

A celebration of SERIES activities is scheduled for 5:30-7:30 p.m. Displays and recognition of SERIES projects throughout the state will be featured. If you have questions, please call LaDeane at 441-7180.
County fair contests and judging

Everybody do a demo! The Demonstration Contest is one of the best ways to share your expertise and ideas with others! A demonstration can be done in a variety of areas and you don’t have to do a demo on a project you are taking unless you want to. Demonstrations can be done as an individual or as a team.

We have two demonstration contests in order to accommodate everyone’s needs. The first one is Thursday, July 18, at the Lancaster Extension Conference Center. The time will vary depending on the number of entries. Registration for this contest is due by Monday, July 8. The second contest will be held Saturday, August 3, beginning at 8:30 a.m. at the Lancaster County Fair, Demo Complex. Registration for this contest is due Monday, July 15. All parents, relatives and friends are welcome to come and watch both contests!

A workshop will be held Thursday, June 27, 2:30-4:00 p.m. If you have an idea for a demo, have a demo worked out or don’t have any ideas, come and take part in this workshop!

Super table setting

Everybody needs to know how to set the table and plan a nutritious menu, so why not start practicing with the Table Setting Contest! The Home Economics Judging Contest is your chance to be the judge! This contest involves situations based on topics chosen at the state level. The situations are similar to every day problem and then five questions have placing or multiple choice answers. Oral questions are also asked, one in the junior and two in the senior division.

This contest is a lot of fun and you do learn a great deal. The Home Economics Judging Contest will be held Monday, July 15, 1:00 p.m., with registration beginning at 12:45 p.m. The top six individuals in the junior division will represent Lancaster County at the State Home Economics Judging Contest during the State Fair. So, come on out and test your skills as you be the judge.

For more information about the Junior Judging Contest, call Ann Marie at 441-7180. (AMM)

Teaching youngsters to accept differences

A newborn baby does not display prejudice towards any person or race of people; this is something probably learned from the adults in his/her life. Just as a biased attitude may be learned at home, tolerance and love also start there. To help your children establish good feelings about other races and people of different backgrounds and cultures, here are some everyday strategies you and your family can pursue.

• It is normal that all people are different, so help to foster a respect for these differences.
• Avoid jokes and expressions that stereotype people. Even the slightest indication of a biased attitude will be absorbed by children.
• Try to teach your children as much as you can about the cultures of other groups of people. Even with the simplest explanation, children can understand.

Ages 3-5. The Butter Battle Book, by Dr. Seuss. In this story the Yooks, who eat their bread with the butter side down, are engaged in a long-running battle. In an attempt to outdo each other, they develop more and more sophisticated weaponry. A satire of the nuclear arms race that children can understand. Ages 5 and up.

Food booth training

What: A workshop for ALL food booth volunteers. Even if you have attended before, you are encouraged to come this year. Many things have changed!

Where: State Fair Park, 4-H Demo Rooms, just south of the 4-H Rock Cafe in the 4-H Youth Complex. (Check fair book map.)

When: Thursday, July 25, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Workshops: Customer Service Making Change and Taking Orders Food Safety Your Responsibilities as a Volunteer Visit: Food Booths Bonus: Certificate of Completion and lots of fun

July 1996

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Workshops: Customer Service Making Change and Taking Orders Food Safety Your Responsibilities as a Volunteer Visit: Food Booths Bonus: Certificate of Completion and lots of fun

Join us in the "Race Against Hunger" Extension staff will be working to collect collection drums in support of the annual Food Bank Drive.

The "Race Against Hunger" drive is scheduled for July 8-19

You can support this effort by helping fill the collection drums located at the Extension office (8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday).

Last year the office collected over 166 lbs. This year's goal is 250 lbs.

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Tips for summer safety

Summer is the time when many people enjoy the outdoors. Yard work and bicycling are popular pastimes during the summer months. Safety is important in both of these activities.

**Bicycle Safety**
- Teach these bicycle safety rules to youth and follow them yourself.
- Step before riding into traffic from a driveway, sidewalk, alley or parking lot. Look left, right and left again. When there is no traffic, enter the roadway.
- Ride on the right with traffic.
- Obey all traffic signs, including stop signs and red lights. Kids under 12 should walk, not ride, through busy intersections.
- Look back and yield to traffic coming from behind before turning left at intersections.

**Lawn Mower Safety**
Because many youth operate lawn mowers at home or on the farm, it's extremely important for them to learn safety rules. An object hit just right by a mower could be propelled up to 35 feet at almost 200 miles per hour. As with any piece of power equipment, the strength and maturity of the operator should always be the primary consideration when determining who should use lawn mowers and under what conditions.

**Tips**
- Read the owner's manual before operating.
- Check the lawn mower before it's fueled and started.
- Check the gasoline level and fill if necessary. Never fill the gas tank while the engine is hot, for this is dangerous. Be careful not to spill. If you spill it wipe it up right away. DO NOT START the engine until it is dry because a spark could start a fire.
- Wear hearing and eye protection.
- Always be supervised by an adult.
- Wear proper clothing—stemmed or closed-toe shoes, long pants and sun protection.
- Never allow extra riders. (LB)

West Lincoln youth—making a difference in their community

Planting trees, working at peer teachers, initiating a program for recycling/reusing and planning a community celebration are ways that the youth of West Lincoln plan to make a difference in their neighborhood. A total of $2200 has been made available through two Lancaster County 4-H Tree Planting Grant to help youth carry out projects that will enhance the quality of life in the West Lincoln School area. The youth in the 4-H clubs of the West Lincoln Family Resource Center and youth from Goodrich Middle School are leading the way. With help and support from UNL Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County, the West Lincoln Family Resource Center, Goodrich Middle School and the West Lincoln neighborhood through peer teaching of the SERIES "Recycle/Reuse" curriculum in after school or summer programs. As part of their activities, they will be recycling sites and organize a neighborhood cleanup day.

Through active involvement in community activities, the youth in Goodrich Middle School will develop a deeper understanding of citizenship and their ability to help determine the quality of life in their community. Youth will grow in self-esteem as they lead the way in community development. West Lincoln will benefit from the enthusiasm, leadership and hard work of the youth in their community.

Way to go West Lincoln youth! (LJ)

Its fair time... ready, get set...go!

Diane Fe "4-H Key Leader"

Well, it's that time of year again to be starting—I mean finishing—your 4-H projects for the county fair. Hopefully, everyone has read and reread their 4-H bible and is ready to enter the fair. Be sure and check with your key leader before you have any questions or if you need entry tags or other forms for demonstrations and style revise.

In addition to the many projects 4-H members may enter at the fair, also consider contests and other events that are available for 4-H members to participate in. Some of these are demonstrations, judging contests (Horticulture, Weed & Tree ID and Lifetime Skills), shooting sports, creative style revise judging, judging interview, table setting contest, quiz bowls and the bicycle safety contest. Great way for clubs to be involved is to help at the Stack Shack and Food Cafe. Out club has enjoyed working and having fun volunteering our time for this worthwhile 4-H project.

Community & Leadership Development

Literacy rate affects the community

According to "Workforce 2000," more than 3/4 of those entering the nation's work force between now and the year 2000 will have limited verbal and writing skills. With these limited skills, they will be suited for fewer than half of the jobs being created. We know that literacy requirements rise as a society becomes more technologically advanced. Thus, the $5 billion a year spent nationally to support people receiving public assistance who are unemployed due to illiteracy has a significant impact on the community.

Research has shown that the level of parental education, particularly that of the mother, is a strong factor in predicting the literacy proficiency of children. Findings such as this have laid the groundwork for the development of family literacy programs to attain the goal of literacy that often remains unbroken from generation to generation. Because of this intergenerational effect of the parents' education on the child's, it is unlikely that we would be able to make a major difference in reading skills unless we place equal priority on education for the parent. The Even Start Program is an excellent example of a community program that makes intergenerational literacy a priority.

The magnitude of the literacy problem and the consequences it could have for our nation's economic competitiveness, democratic traditions, and even national defense are frightening realities to business people, policy makers, the media and the general citizenry. It is imperative that we all support programs that make literacy a priority.

Some facts about literacy in the U.S.A.
- Americans who do not complete high school have two-thirds the lifetime earning capacity of those who graduate. Those who do not finish grade school have only one-half the lifetime earning capacity of graduates—U.S. Department of Education.
- 34.8% of women who are heads of households do not have a high school diploma, whereas 24.7% of couples and men who head households do not have a high school diploma—U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau.
- In addition to the 20% functional illiteracy rate, another 34% of American adults are only marginally literate—U.S. Department of Education.
- 73% of unemployed adults have reading or writing difficulties—Jonathan Kozol, Illiterate America.

It is estimated that 15 million adult residents hold jobs today functionally illiterate. Nation's Business Magazine

On average, an illiterate adult earns 42% less than a high school graduate. - Laubach Literacy Action

The average kindergarten student has seen more than 5000 hours of TV, having spent more time in front of the TV than it takes to earn a bachelor's degree. —U.S. Department of Education

People with less than six years of schooling are four times as likely to be receiving public assistance as those attaining six or more years of education.

Nearly 3 million American adults have never attended school. —American Association of Retired Persons
- 60% of America's prison inmates are illiterate and 85% of all juvenile offenders have problems reading—U.S. Department of Education.

It is estimated that the cost of illiteracy to business and taxpayers is $20 billion per year. —United Way, "Illiteracy: A National Crisis! (LJ)

FCE volunteers needed
FCE members and friends are needed to help serve as hostesses or at the registration table for Health Awareness Day. Two-hour shifts are available from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday, August 2.
Call Helen McMahon, chair, at 406-2557 to volunteer.

Travel Tip
When packing for camping trips or outdoor activities, add a stain stick or gel to your camping supplies. This will come in handy when you get stains on clothing and are away from home. Just rub any stains with stick/gel before putting the garment or items in the laundry. The stick/gel is effective for up to a week and will help keep stains from setting. (LB)
The NEBLINE

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Pest Management (Continued)
keeping chemicals out of their garden. So, the IPM approach is well suited to them.

Sometimes chemical controls are necessary. Cucumber beetles, for instance, carry the organisms responsible for bacterial wilt disease in cucumbers and other squash-family crops. There is no cure for this disease except prevention. The only way to prevent it is to stop the beetles from feeding on your young plants and transmit the disease. The only reliable way to do that is to use chemical pesticides. Using a pesticide labeled for cucumber beetle control on your affected crops, mixing and applying it according to label directions is one way to keep the leaf-eaters and empty containers properly reduces the chance of environmental contamination or accidental poisoning of non-target organisms.

Alternatives exist for other pests. Cabbage worms, that plague cabbage and other cabbage-family crops, can be controlled with Bacillus thuringiensis, a bacterial disease of caterpillars that is sold as an insecticide under several trade names. When the caterpillars ingest it, they stop feeding almost immediately and die in a few days. Unlike chemical pesticides, B. thuringiensis can be used right up to harvest with no danger of chemical residues remaining on your crops. It is harmless to humans, animals or insects (other than caterpillars).

A similar product, milky spore disease, is used to control Japanese beetles in landscapes. Insects that prey on other insects can help control pests in your garden. A predator like the lady beetle (which feeds primarily on aphids) will not give the instant control that an insecticide spray gives; over time, it will reduce aphid numbers to tolerable levels.

A problem with chemical insecticides in your garden is that often they are more effective on wiping out the beneficial insects than the pests. Then, when these pests make a comeback, there are few natural enemies to help keep their numbers in check. The result can be a population explosion: a bigger problem than you had originally.

To preserve beneficial insects, learn to identify them. If possible, avoid spraying when they are present.

To make spraying more efficient, learn something about life cycles of insects and use chemicals when they will be the most effective. To prevent damage to sweet corn from European corn borer or corn earworm, for instance, apply a preventive spray to developing ears before the worms chew their way inside. Once there, they are safe from pesticides.