10-2009

The NEBLINE, October 2009

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County

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The NEBLINE

October 2009

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4-H KICK OFF
Tuesday, Oct. 6
6 p.m.
Learn how to help form a new club!
—see back page

Extension Helps Establish a Garden at City Mission

David Smith
UNL Extension Technologist

Three years ago, University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County and the People's City Mission formed a partnership to help create a garden for residents at the mission. These garden plots at the People's City Mission are giving homeless men and women opportunities to grow more than fresh fruits, vegetables and herbs.

The garden provides many benefits. Working in the gardens, residents have a chance to have some control over their environment. They learn skills to help them nurture and care for the plants. The garden provides opportunities for residents to socialize in a positive setting. The city mission residents also enjoy the therapeutic solace of the garden, and sense of accomplishment when their hard work pays off with healthy foods. These skills may help them as they look for work in the community and move back into their own homes.

Resident Lorrie W. says, "I've learned that a garden is a lot like life, the more you put into the more you get out of it, and if you take care of it, it's going to grow straight and tall, but if you don't take care of it, it just gets unruly. It's helped me find a lot of tranquility — living here at the city mission, it's chaotic at times. Coming out here has been such a great stress reliever."

When the garden was first envisioned, it was just a grassy plot of ground on city mission property. Extension provided the expertise, manpower, volunteers and networking to establish the garden area, provide the plants and teach residents to care for and harvest the garden crops.

Last year a grant from the Woods Foundation made it possible for the city mission to build a fence around the garden, extend water to the garden space, pay for supplies and support an employee to help in daily activities.

Other agencies also contribute — making this a community effort. The City of Lincoln delivers compost and wood chips each year. Lancaster County staff tills the soil with a tractor in the spring. During the growing season, Extension's Master Gardener volunteers regularly visit the garden to help residents and provide expertise.

Valerie P. says, "My favorite part has been to be allowed to go against all the rules of gardening and just plant things the way I want to and experiment. This was my place to just plant and see what happens. For instance, okra, I had no idea that it was a top of the soil plant — I thought it was a rooted plant. I found that I could actually grow a lot within my small area. I will always garden if I have a small spot to be able to do that. [Gardening is] being close to nature — it's solitude, solace and meditation."

This past year, over 30 men and women living at the city mission participated in gardening. They grew tomatoes, peppers, lettuce, herbs, melons, pumpkins, okra, beans, peas, cucumbers, beets, flowers, squash, radishes and spinach. Residents shared the produce with their families and some of the produce went to the city mission's kitchen to be included in meals.

For the residents, the garden has meant much more than just fresh food. It means a fresh start on each new day.

Lois K. says, "It's a place where you can get away from the mission to a place where it's quiet and be with your own thoughts and not have to hear anybody else." Her favorite part of gardening has been "seeing what you can produce after the plants have grown and it's just starting to come to fruition."

Extension Technologist David Smith and city mission residents meet weekly to work in the garden.

Residents have 4 feet by 10 feet plots in the garden.

Photos by Vicki Jedlicka, UNL Extension in Lancaster County

Children at the city mission also enjoy the garden.

Nutrition Classes Focus on Produce from Garden

UNL Extension in Lancaster County Nutrition Education Program has taught classes at the People's City Mission for nearly five years. This summer, the classes incorporated the garden experience with learning about healthy eating and stretching food dollars. The major focus was learning about the health benefits of the vegetables growing in the garden and how to use them in recipes. At the end of each nutrition class series there was a "Cook and Lunch" celebration where the participants prepared foods using vegetables ready for picking. One class participant said, "I usually never eat vegetables, but this is good. I guess you just need to know how to fix them."

—Dana Willeford, Extension Assistant

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How to Reduce Energy Cost for Grain Drying

Tom Dorn
UNL Extension Educator

With energy prices up dramatically in recent years, grain producers are asking how to reduce the cost of drying grain on the farm. We will discuss some methods to reduce energy cost for grain drying and suggest some management techniques that result in maintaining grain quality.

It goes without saying, the least cost method of drying corn is to let the grain dry naturally in the field for as long as possible. Given good drying conditions (low humidity, wind and warm temperatures), corn can lose one-third to one-half point of moisture per day. At this drying rate, the corn would dry naturally in the field from 18–15 percent moisture in about the same amount of time as if the corn were harvested and dried in the bin using natural (unheated) air with an airflow of one cubic foot per minute per bushel (1 cfm/bu) airflow. Producers with grain drying facilities usually hedge their bets and protect against the possibility of adverse weather later in the fall and start harvest early and mechanically dry part or all of their grain.

Grain Drying 101

All mechanical grain drying systems use a fan to push air through the grain mass. The time required to dry grain is a function of the initial and final moisture content of the grain, the rate of airflow through the grain (cubic feet per minute per bushel, cfm/bu) and the air properties, temperature and initial humidity level.

In deep-bed drying systems (in-bin drying), air is normally pushed through the grain from the bottom of the bin and is exhausted out the top of the bin. As the air moves through the grain, moisture evaporates from the grain into the passing airstream. Eventually, the moisture content of the grain on the bottom of the bin (the first grain the air passes through) comes into equilibrium with the incoming air and no further drying takes place. The zone where moisture is evaporating into the air is called the drying zone. The bottom of the drying zone is the depth where the last bit of moisture is being evaporated from the grain into the airstream under the current air property conditions. The top of the drying zone is the point at which air passing through the grain has picked up all the moisture it can hold and no more drying can take place. The moisture content of the grain above (downstream from) the drying zone remains unchanged or may be slightly wetted by the saturated air passing by. The drying zone moves through the grain in the direction of airflow.

Natural Air Drying

Natural air drying uses unheated air to dry grain. It can take several days to several weeks to dry a bin of corn using natural air. Nevertheless, natural air drying can be the least expensive drying method and usually results in the highest quality grain of any mechanical drying method. The minimum recommended airflow rate in Nebraska for in-bin natural air drying of corn is 1.0 cfm/bu for corn up to 18 percent moisture, 1.25 cfm/bu for corn up to 20 percent moisture and 1.5 cfm/bu up to 22 percent moisture.

If the airflow rate is too small to meet the recommendation above when the bin is full, the bin should be partially filled when drying grain. The shallower grain depth results in less static pressure for the fan to overcome, which translates into more airflow output (cfm) from the fan. Since partially filling the bin results in fewer bushels in the bin, you are pushing more cfm through fewer bushels, thus significantly increasing cfm/bu. For information on reducing grain depth to speed drying, see the Sept. 8, 2006 Crop Watch article *Reduce Grain Depth to Save Time/Energy When Drying Grain,* http://cropwatch.unl.edu/archives/2006/Crop21/bin_size.htm

Stirring System Management When Drying with Natural Air

Research has found stirring grain being dried with natural air actually prolongs the time required to dry the grain because it disrupts the drying zone, resulting in exhaust air leaving the grain mass less saturated. Considering the long drying times associated with natural air drying, continuous stirring can also cause significant damage to the grain and results in costly wear to the stirring device.

If a stirring device is installed in a bin being dried by natural (unheated) air, the stirring device should be run during the filling period to reduce the pack factor from the filling operation, to redistribute fines and to level the grain. Stirring should then be discontinued to allow a drying zone to develop in the grain. Since the bottom of the bin will be somewhat over-dried by the time the drying zone approaches the top of the bin, a final stirring just before the drying zone is pushed completely through the bin will help to equalize the moisture content of the grain in the bin.

Heated Air Drying

Weather reports use the term relative humidity when describing the degree of moisture saturation in the air given the current temperature. For example, if air is 37% relative humidity, it is holding 37% as much water vapor as it could hold at that temperature. The hotter the air temperature, the more total water vapor the air can hold. When ambient air is heated, its relative humidity is reduced so it is able to pick up more moisture from the grain per unit volume air passing through the bin.

When adding supplemental heat, the relationship between temperature rise and relative humidity is not linear. **Table 1** presents the effect on the relative humidity when adding supplemental heat. All values shown in the table assume the dew point temperature (a measure of the absolute water vapor content of the air) is a constant 41.4 degrees F.

A rough rule of thumb is the relative humidity drops by one-half for each 20 degrees F rise in temperature. For example, natural air at 60 degrees F and 50% relative humidity will have a relative humidity of 25% if heated to 80 degrees F. Adding another 20 degrees F to raise the temperature from 80 degrees F to 100 degrees F cuts the relative humidity by about half again and results in a drop to 13.5%. The third 20 degrees F rise to 120 degrees F lowers the relative humidity by about half again to 7.6%. The notable point is the second 20 degrees F increment of added heat results in half as much reduction in relative humidity (half of half) and the third increment results in only one-eighth as much reduction (half of half of half). To minimize energy cost for drying grain, keep the temperature rise to a moderate level. The biggest savings in drying time versus energy input for in-bin drying systems is achieved with the first 20-40 degrees F rise in air temperature.

Table 1. Effect on relative humidity of raising the temperature of air.

Air Temperature	Relative Humidity
50	72
60	50
70	35
80	25
90	18
100	13.5
110	10
120	7.6
130	6
140	4

Assumptions: Elevation 1,000 feet. Dew point 41.4 degrees F.

High Speed — High Capacity Dryers

High speed batch or continuous flow dryers have the highest bushel capacity per hour of any of the systems mentioned in this article. Temperature, grain bed depth and airflow rates are vastly different in high speed, high-capacity dryers compared to deep-bed, in-bin drying systems. Air temperatures of 120-140 degrees F are typical in high-capacity dryers. Column widths of grain being dried are measured in inches (10–20 inches) in batch or continuous flow dryers as opposed to feet (4–20 feet) for in-bin drying systems. Airflow rates of 50–100 cfm/bu are common in high speed dryers as opposed to 1.25-2.5 cfm/bu for deep-bed, in-bin systems.

There are two limiting factors that affect the efficiency of high-capacity systems. The first limiting factor is the rate moisture can migrate from the interior of the kernels to the surface where it can evaporate into the air stream. The second limiting factor is the short contact time the air stream has with the grain. High volumes of very hot and dry air moving through shallow beds of grain result in the air leaving the grain mass much less saturated compared to deep-bed, in-bin drying systems. This is reflected in higher energy cost per point of moisture removed per bushel as compared to in-bin systems. Some high-capacity dryers recover some energy by channeling the air used to cool the grain back into the drying chamber air stream or by re-circulating a high percentage of the previously heated air back through the grain mass.

High temperatures and uneven moisture content within the kernel result in a much higher incidence of stress cracks as compared to in-bin drying. Stress cracks created in the dryer result in a much higher percentage of broken kernels upon subsequent grain handling.

Dryeration

A variation using high-capacity dryers is known as dryeration. Dryeration is the name given to a system where hot grain is removed from the high-speed dryer a point or two above desired storage moisture then transferred to a bin where it is allowed to temper for four to six hours before starting the fan for final cooling. The final one or two points of moisture are easily removed in the process of cooling the grain because the moisture deep inside the kernels has had time to redistribute during the tempering period. This method of grain drying increases the throughput capacity of the dryer and results in higher quality grain with fewer stress cracks than drying followed by rapid cooling.

Combination Drying

Another intermediate system using both the high-temperature dryer and in-bin aeration is called combination drying. With combination drying, you "take the edge off" high moisture corn by drying the grain to 20–22 percent moisture with the high-temp, high-speed dryer and then move the grain hot to a bin where the aeration fan can push at least two cfm/bu of unheated air through the grain mass to complete the process. This cuts the reliance on heat and decreases the load on the high-speed dryer even more than dryeration. It also cuts the energy cost if the heating fuel is the higher cost energy source.

If you have been completely drying and initially cooling your corn in the high-speed dryer but have bins equipped with mesh floors and high-capacity aeration fans, either dryeration or combination drying can result in faster throughput, higher-quality grain and lower energy costs.

UNL Researcher Seeks Alfalfa Fields to Study Pocket Gophers

Photo by Dallas Virchow

Stephen Vantassel, UNL wildlife project coordinator, is finishing up a research project to determine the most efficient trapping method for controlling pocket gophers. He is looking for area farmers willing to give him permission to trap pocket gophers on their non-irrigated alfalfa fields.

To be included in the study, fields must have pocket gophers present and have had no pocket gopher control measures (of any kind) for at least one year. The study site must be accessible by a vehicle. Stephen is looking for fields (ten acres minimum) within a 1-1/2 hour drive of Lincoln. If you would be willing to help Stephen with this study, please contact him at 472-8961.

Tree Planting for Success

Justin Evertson
Nebraska Statewide Arboretum

Proper planting is critical for the establishment of healthy, thriving trees. The following planting guidelines have been developed to help new trees get off to a successful start. The recommendations are based on nationally recognized standards as well as experience compiled by the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum and the Nebraska Forest Service. The recommendations assume an appropriate tree has been selected for the planting site and the site is suitable for planting.

Digging

Dig a saucer-shaped hole wider than the root system but no deeper than the root mass. Most holes do not need to be deeper than about one shovel's depth (10-14 inches). The bottom of the hole should be firm enough to prevent the tree from settling deeper after planting. Using an auger is not recommended since trees often settle too deep and the sides of the holes become glazed. If using an auger, don't drill deeper than needed and loosen the sides of the hole.

Planting

Plant so the base of the trunk is at original ground level or slightly higher. The first lateral roots should end up just under the soil surface (1-2 inches deep) and the trunk should flare visibly at ground level.

- Always locate the first main lateral roots and remove any excess soil above them before setting the plant in the hole. The first main roots are often several inches below the top of the container or root ball.
- All graft unions should be visible above the soil line.
- Remove all pots and containers before planting.
- For balled and burlap (B&B) stock, try to remove the wire basket and burlap before placing the tree in the hole. If maintaining the integrity of the soil ball is important, then remove the bottom part of the burlap and wire basket before setting the plant in the hole and then remove the remaining burlap and wire basket after stabilizing the tree in the hole. Remember to check for and remove any excess soil at the top of the root ball before planting.
- Loosen and spread circling roots before backfilling (especially important for potted trees). It may be necessary to cut larger roots that cannot be straightened to prevent girdling, but this should be done with caution. Reject plants with severely circled or girdled root systems.
- For potted trees, try to remove as much of the original growing medium as possible before planting to help achieve good soil-root contact. Dunking in water or spraying with a hose will help in this effort.

Backfilling

Backfill with the original soil dug from the hole. Large clods and soil chunks should be broken up as much as possible. Adding water during backfilling can help remove air pockets and better moisten the roots.

Mulching

Mulch individual trees with a 2–4 inch layer of wood mulch extending from the trunk to at least the drip line of the tree. Where possible, mulch trees and other plantings together en masse to help separate from surrounding turf. Don't pile the mulch deeply over roots or against the base of the trunk and don't mulch with rock or use plastic weed barriers under the mulch.

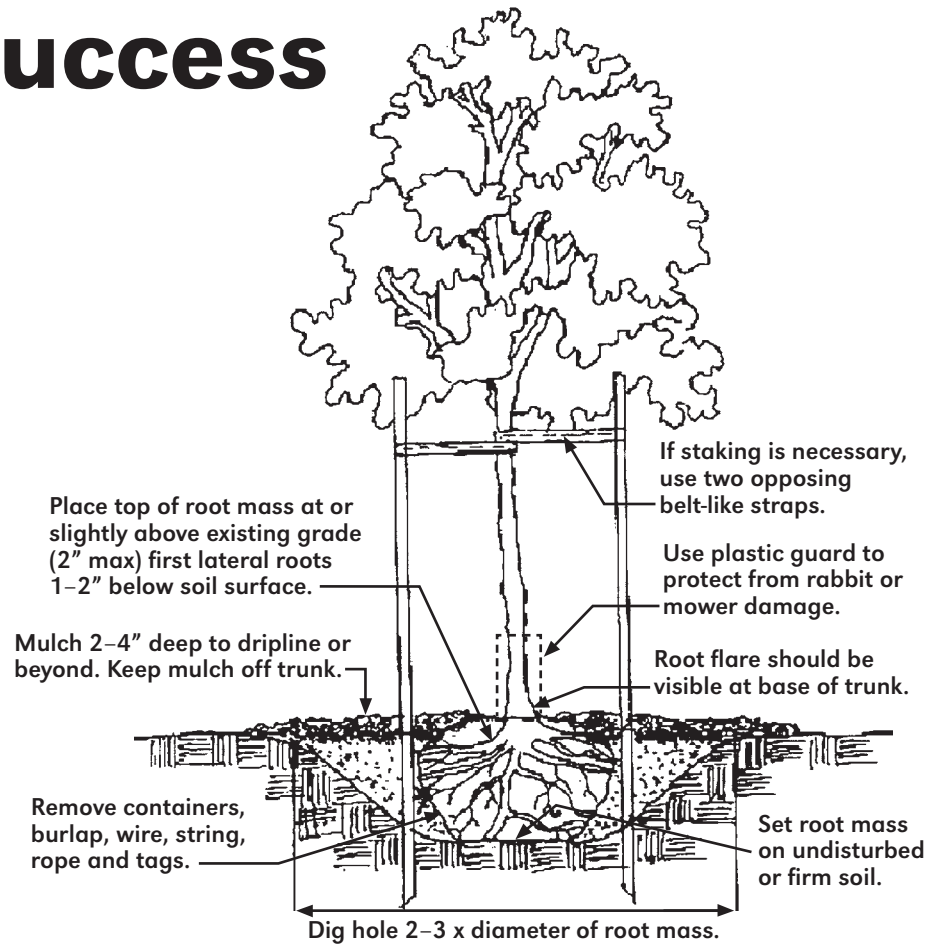
Staking and Bracing

Brace the tree if it might dislodge or blow over in the wind (most trees typically benefit from staking). Some sway should be allowed in the tree after staking. Use only broad, belt-like materials to attach the bracing to the trunk to help prevent rubbing injuries. Do not brace with wire, rope or wire through hose. Remove staking within one year.

Once the tree is planted, there's still work to do. Here are some tips on post-planting care:

Watering

After planting, keep the root zone moist but not water-logged. In general, a newly planted tree should receive about one inch of moisture per week, including rainwater, during the first growing season. Check the root zone frequently for moistness—don't just guess. Many trees are lost to either under- or over-watering. Containerized trees often need more watering than bare-root or B&B stock, because the porous growing medium they are potted in dries out faster.



TYPICAL TREE PLANTING DETAIL
(no scale)

Fertilizing

If the right tree was selected for the planting site, fertilizer is generally not needed. If fertilizer is desired, use only a slow-release, low-nitrogen fertilizer applied to the soil surface after planting.

- Never add fertilizer to the planting hole since it can damage newly transplanted roots. In addition, excess nitrogen in the soil can cause newly planted trees to add top growth at the expense of proper root development.
- Address major soil problems before planting. Adding organic matter to the planting site before planting can be very beneficial for poor, inorganic and/or compacted soils.

Pruning

At planting time, prune only to remove dead or damaged branches and to correct structural defects. Never cut back healthy branches or trim the tree to try to "balance" the top with the roots. The tree will benefit from having as many food-producing leaves left on as possible. Also, try to leave lower branches on a tree for as along as possible after planting. Lower branches help protect the trunk from cracking, sunscald and animal damage and they aid in developing good trunk taper. If needed, limb the tree up gradually over a matter of several years after planting. Monitor the tree when young and prune, sparingly but properly, to prevent structural defects.

Successful Composting

Don Janssen
UNL Extension Educator

Leaves falling from trees along with vegetable and bedding plants dying off as the season closes means there can be lots of plant material accumulating around the yard. That means now is the ideal time for starting a compost pile.

Composting is not difficult. Composting offers more than just a way to get rid of plant material. Compost is an excellent way to improve yard and garden soils, in particular the clay soils which dominate our area. Composting is also an excellent project for kids.

Follow a few simple rules and the compost project should be a success. Start by constructing some type of bin to hold the materials. Bins may be as simple as poultry wire cylinders held up with a few stakes or elaborate constructed wood and wire bin systems. Piles need to be a minimum of about 3 cubic feet to function well. Bins also need to be constructed so air can reach the compost materials.

Mixing green and brown materials together is the basic rule to get the compost process going. Green materials, such as grass clippings or fresh green plant parts, supply nitrogen. Brown materials, such as dead leaves, are high in carbon. Mixing the two assures good conditions for microbes, which actually decompose the composting material. The smaller the plant materials are, the faster they will decompose. Shredding them before putting in the bin is helpful.

Moisture and air are also required for the composting process, and too much or too little of either one can cause problems. Compost materials should be about as moist as a wrung-out sponge. If kept too wet, compost piles encourage anaerobic bacteria and start to smell. If too dry, the pile "just sits there."

Assure adequate air by designing a sturdy bin and turning the pile frequently. Turning helps mix the materials well and also is a good way to monitor progress of the bins. Tend to your compost pile often to keep the process moving. The finished compost product is worth the small amount of effort!

Fall Composting Workshops

Learn how to be successful with composting by attending a composting workshop sponsored by UNL Extension in Lancaster County and the City of Lincoln Recycling Office. No cost to attend. Composting workshops will be held:

- **Tuesday, Oct. 6, Gere Library, 2400 S. 56 St. 6:30 p.m.**
- **Wednesday, Oct. 7, Eiseley Library, 1530 Superior St., 6:30 p.m.**
- **Thursday, Oct. 8, Anderson Library, 3635 Touzalin Ave., 6:30 p.m.**

Healthy Eating
Enjoy Nebraska Foods!

By Alice Henneman, MS, RD, UNL Extension Educator

Black Bean & Rice Salad

Serving size: 1 cup; Yield: 3 servings

Alice's Note: This is a great basic recipe — adjust the ingredients according to your preferences. For example, include fewer onions if you prefer. (I enjoy using a sweet onion in this recipe.) Instead of making a dressing, you might substitute 1/3 cup of your favorite oil and vinegar dressing. I tossed in a cup of chopped tomatoes when I made this salad. If you cook your own beans, substitute 1-1/2 cups of beans for 1 can (15 ounce) of drained and rinsed black beans. This salad tastes equally good if made the day before!

1/2 cup chopped onion
1/2 cup chopped green or red bell pepper
1 cup cooked and cooled brown or white rice
1 can (15 ounce) drained and rinsed black beans

Dressing:

1/4 cup rice vinegar or white wine vinegar or lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon dry mustard powder or prepared mustard
1 chopped clove garlic or 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
2 tablespoons vegetable oil

Instructions:

1. In a mixing bowl, stir together onion, red or green pepper, rice and beans.
2. In a jar with a tight fitting lid, add vinegar, mustard, garlic, salt, pepper and vegetable oil. Shake until dressing is evenly mixed.
3. Pour dressing over bean mixture and stir to mix evenly. Chill for at least one hour. Serve cold as a side dish or main dish.

Source: Adapted from: Montana Extension Nutrition Education Program Website Recipes, Montana State University Extension Service (http://www.montana.edu/nep/recipes.htm) and available at Food Stamp Nutrition Connection Recipe Finder http://recipefinder.nal.usda.gov

$tretch Your Food Dollar by Making Your Own Mixes

NEP Nutrition Education Program

Helping limited-resource families learn to prepare nutritious and safe foods while stretching their food dollars.

Emily Hulse
UNL Extension Assistant

I don't know about you, but I am always looking for different ways to save money on my grocery bills. One of the ways I have tried to do this is to make various foods myself and buy less "convenience mixes." A simple way to save money is by making your own mixes and even seasonings. It's easy to do and then you have them on-hand, ready to be used at any time. In addition, preparing homemade convenience foods allows you to control the final product and the nutritional value by limiting the fat, sodium, sugar and amount of additives. For example, one way to make those "convenience mixes" more nutritious is if a recipe for a mix calls for white flour try substituting at least half of it with whole wheat flour.

Here are some recipes for homemade convenience mixes.

The recipe for casserole sauce mix can be substituted for canned condensed soup called for in many recipes and has less calories, fat and sodium. The casserole sauce mix can be stored in the refrigerator for six months.

Below are quick and easy recipes using the "Master Mix" recipe. Master Mix is an excellent way to save time. Master Mix can be stored in an airtight container at room temperature for two months or in the refrigerator or freezer for six months.

Casserole Sauce Mix

2 cups nonfat dry milk
3/4 cup cornstarch
1/4 cup instant chicken bouillon
2 tablespoons dried onion flakes
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1 teaspoon dried basil, crushed (optional)
1 teaspoon dried, crushed thyme (optional)

Combine all ingredients and store in an air-tight container. To use as substitute for one can condensed soup, mix 1/3 cup of the dry mix with 1-1/4 cups water in a saucepan. Cook and stir until thickened.

References: Hedstrom, Nellie. Saving Money with Homemade Convenience Mixes. 2009. http://www.umext.maine.edu/onlinepubs/htmpubs/4029.htm Food Preparation Manual. NEP Handout 1 BL7.

Master Mix

(13 servings)

4 cups all-purpose flour
4 cups whole wheat flour*
1-1/3 cups non-fat dry milk
1/4 cups baking powder
1-1/2 cups vegetable shortening

Stir dry ingredients together until well mixed. Cut in vegetable shortening until well mixed. Store in closed, covered jar or can. Stir lightly before using in recipes.

**Enriched cornmeal or rolled oats can also be substituted for all or part of the whole wheat flour.*

Biscuits

2 cups Master Mix
2/3 cup milk

Preheat oven to 425° F. Stir Master Mix and milk with fork for 25 strokes. Spoon dough on ungreased baking sheet, one large tablespoon per biscuit. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes or until golden brown.

Pancakes

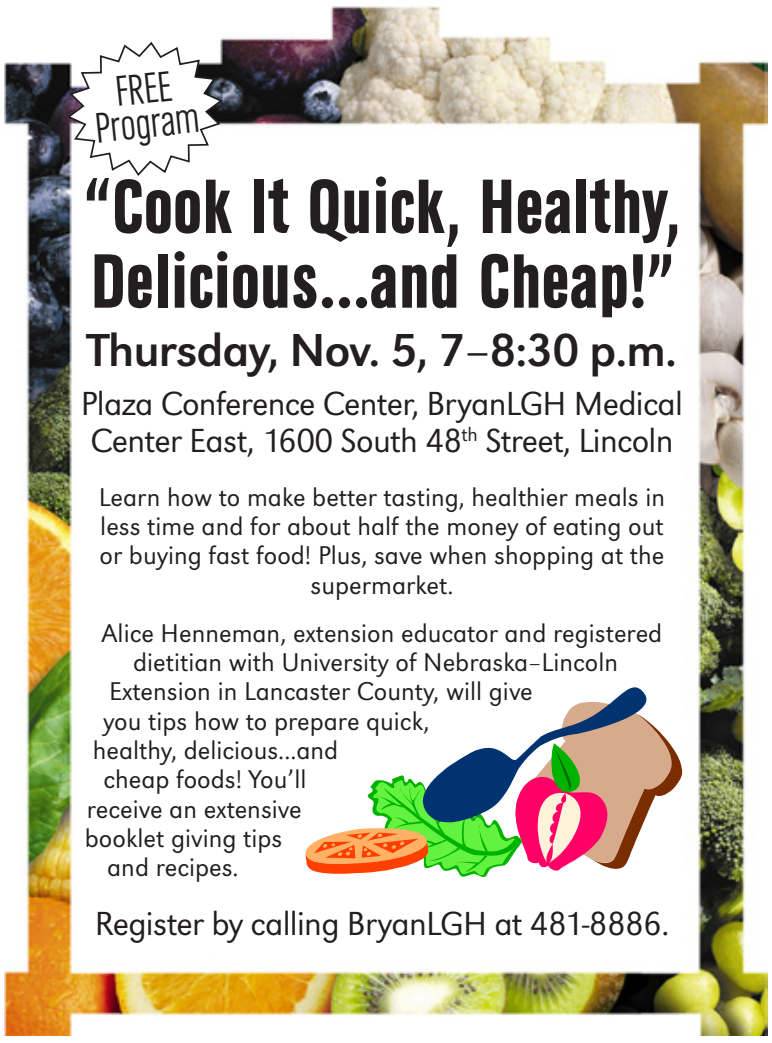
3 cups Master Mix
1-1/2 cups milk
1 egg

Combine milk, egg and Master Mix. Stir until blended. Spoon batter onto greased hot griddle. Turn over when bubbles form on top of pancakes, cooking until second side has turned a golden brown color.

Muffins

2 cups Master Mix
2 tablespoons sugar
2/3 cup milk
1 egg, beaten

Preheat oven to 425° F. Add sugar to Master Mix and mix well. Mix milk and beaten egg. Add to mix. Stir until the flour is moistened. Batter will look lumpy. Spoon batter into greased muffin pan, fill 2/3 full. Bake in oven for 20–25 minutes.



Slow Cookers and Food Safety

Opening the front door on a cold winter evening and being greeted by the inviting smells of beef stew or chicken noodle soup wafting from a slow cooker can be a diner's dream come true. But winter is not the only time a slow cooker is useful. In the summer, using this small electrical appliance can avoid introducing heat from a hot oven. At any time of year, a slow cooker can make life a little more convenient because by planning ahead, you save time later. And it takes less electricity to use a slow cooker rather than an oven.

USDA/FSIS

Reminders:

- **Fill cooker no less than half full and no more than two-thirds full.**
- **Add desired amount of liquid.**
- **Keep the lid in place.**

Is A Slow Cooker Safe?

Yes, the slow cooker, a countertop electrical appliance, cooks foods slowly at a low temperature — generally between 170°F and 280°F. The low heat helps less expensive, leaner cuts of meat become tender and shrink less.

The direct heat from the pot, lengthy cooking and steam created within the tightly-covered container combine to destroy bacteria and make the slow cooker a safe process for cooking foods.

Safe Beginnings

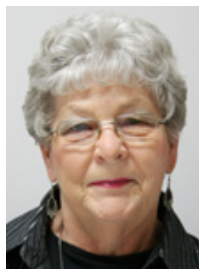
Begin with a clean cooker, clean utensils and a clean work area. Wash hands before and during food preparation.

Keep perishable foods refrigerated until preparation time. If you cut up meat and vegetables in advance, store them separately in the refrigerator. The slow cooker may take several hours to reach a safe, bacteria-killing temperature. Constant refrigeration assures bacteria, which multiply rapidly at room temperature, won't get a "head start" during the first few hours of cooking.

see SLOW COOKERS on next page

FAMILY & COMMUNITY EDUCATION (FCE) CLUBS

President's View — Bonnie's Bits



Bonnie Krueger
FCE Council Chair

October is the month nature wears its brightest colors. The sign summer is gone. The frost is on the pumpkin and autumn weaves a fairyland over our fields and goods.

Oct. 12 is Columbus Day, celebration honoring Christopher Columbus first voyage to America in 1492. Not all states observe this holiday. In 1892, teachers, preachers and politicians used Columbus Day to teach the ideals of patriotism; these were framed around themes such as a support for war, citizenship boundaries, loyalty to the nation and celebrating social progress.

Halloween, also called All Hallow's Eve or All Saints' Eve, has roots in the Celtic festival of Samhain and the Christian Holy Day, All Saints Day. Halloween is celebrated Oct. 31, the day is often celebrated with the colors of orange and black and is strongly associated with jack-o-lanterns, trick-or-treating and lots of scary stories and carving those pumpkins. Halloween is not celebrated in all countries and regions of the world and those that do the traditions and importance of the celebration vary significantly. Celebration in the United States has had a significant impact on how the holiday is observed in other nations. May you all have a safe and Happy Halloween.

Hope you are planning to attend our annual Achievement Night on Monday, Oct. 26 at 6:30 p.m. with a dessert followed by our program. We will also recognize our members for years of membership. Remember to bring food or paper products for our annual FCE Food Bank drive.

FCE News & Events

Council Meeting Sept. 28

The September FCE Council meeting will be Monday, Sept. 28, 7 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center. Attorney Andrew Loudon will present the program on Estates, Wills, Trusts and Medicare. The business meeting, including election of officers, will follow the program. All FCE members are invited to attend.

Reorganizational Packets

Presidents of FCE clubs can pick up their packet to reorganize for 2010. There are October deadlines within the packet. If you have questions, call Lorene or Pam at 441-7180. It is time to look forward and plan an exciting and educational year for FCE.

Achievement Night, Oct. 26

The 2009 FCE Achievement Night will be Monday, Oct. 26 at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, starting with dessert at 6:30 p.m. Everyone is asked to bring canned food or paper products for the annual FCE Food Bank Campaign. Clubs and members will be recognized for years of membership. If you plan to attend, call the extension office at 441-7180 and leave your name at the front desk.

HOUSEHOLD HINTS

by Lorene Bartos, UNL Extension Educator

End-of-Summer Cleanup

Tips for Getting Things Ready for Storage

Spend some end-of-summer time returning items to their best possible state before you store them away. This will prove to be a time saver when you want to use them again next spring.

Musty beach towels: Launder, using the hottest water safe for the fabric. Add a small amount of fabric softener to the final rinse. Machine-dry thoroughly.

Sandy sleeping bag: Turn the bag inside out. If the sand is damp, let the bag air out until the sand is dry. Shake the bag to remove as much loose sand as possible; then brush or vacuum away the remaining residue. If the bag is soiled, clean according to the sleeping bag's care label instructions.

Muddy tennis shoes: Let the mud dry completely. Then take the shoes outside and bang the soles together to remove as much of the dried mud as possible. Using a solution of warm water and hand dishwashing liquid and an old toothbrush, scrub gently to remove the remaining dirt. For stubborn dirt marks, scrub with a nylon pad. Wipe with a damp sponge or damp paper towels. Stuff the tennis shoes with clean paper towels and let them air-dry.

Grungy plastic tablecloths: A wipe-down with a soapy sponge may clean the top of the tablecloth, but not the flannel backing. To clean the whole thing, machine-wash, using the gentle cycle. Machine-dry on the delicate cycle for about 15 minutes. This is just enough time to remove the creases caused by machine washing, but not long enough to harm the vinyl. If the cloth is still damp, line-dry.

Grubby molded-resin outdoor furniture: Clean with a mild detergent and water. Avoid abrasive powders, chlorine bleaches and silicone cleaners.

Soiled outdoor cushions: Acrylic, polyester and cotton fabrics should be spot-cleaned by sponging with a solution of liquid dishwashing detergent and lukewarm water. Rinse with clear water and air-dry.

Dirty plastic pool toys: Mix 3/4 cup of chlorine bleach per gallon of warm water. Soak the prewashed toys for five minutes. Rinse and then air-dry. If the toys aren't used during the winter, store them in a closed container so they'll stay clean and dust-free.

Slow Cookers

continued from previous page

Thaw Ingredients

Always thaw meat or poultry before putting it into a slow cooker. Choose to make foods with a high moisture content such as chili, soup, stew or spaghetti sauce. If using a commercially frozen slow cooker meal, prepare according to manufacturer's instructions.

Use the Right Amount of Food

Fill cooker no less than half full and no more than two-thirds full. Vegetables cook slower than meat and poultry in a slow cooker so if using them, put the vegetables in first. Then add the meat and desired amount of liquid such as broth, water or barbecue sauce. Keep the lid in place, removing only to stir the food or check for doneness.

Settings

Most cookers have two or more settings. Foods take different times to cook depending upon the setting used. Certainly, foods will cook faster on high than on low. However, for all-day cooking or for less-tender cuts, you may want to use the low setting.

If possible, turn the cooker on the highest setting for the first hour of cooking time and then low or the setting called for in your recipe. However, it's safe to cook foods on low the entire time — if you're leaving for work, for example, and preparation time is limited.

While food is cooking and once it's done, food will stay safe as long as the cooker is operating.

Power Out

If you are not at home during the entire slow-cooking process and the power goes out, throw away the food even if it looks done.

If you are at home, finish cooking the ingredients immediately by some other means: on a gas stove, on the outdoor grill or at a house where the power is on.

When you are at home, and if the food was completely cooked before the power went out, the food should remain safe up to two hours in the cooker with the power off.

Handling Leftovers

Store leftovers in shallow covered containers and refrigerate within two hours after cooking is finished. Reheating leftovers in a slow cooker is not recommended. Cooked food should be reheated on the stove, in a microwave, or in a conventional oven until it reaches 165°F. Then the hot food can be placed in a preheated slow cooker to keep it hot for serving — at least 140°F as measured with a food thermometer.

Source: United States Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Inspection Service (retrieved Aug. 31, 2009 at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/factsheets/Focus_On_Slow_Cooker_Safety/index.asp)

10 Tips for Parent-Teacher Conferences

It's one call from school that parents dread: "We need to schedule a parent-teacher conference."

"Sometimes these are routine — a teacher wants to offer you a face-to-face assessment of your child's progress and goals," said James Marshall, assistant professor of family life with the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture. "Sometimes, there are more serious issues at the heart of the call."

Marshall and LaVona Traywick, assistant professor for the division, have 10 pointers for parents to make sure the time spent with teachers is productive and the outcomes will be what are best for the child:

- Ask your child if there is anything he/she would like you to discuss with the teacher. "Even though the child will not be at the conference, it's important he or she not be left out," Marshall said. "Be his or her voice at the table."
- Jot down everything you want to talk about at the conference. "It helps the conversation to be organized from the outset," Traywick said. "Know what issues you'd like to address and write them down."

Other tips from Marshall and Traywick:

- Arrive promptly or a few minutes early.
- Begin with positive comments about the teacher or classroom.
- Avoid lengthy discussions of topics not related to the purpose of the conference.
- Be open-minded to suggestions from the teacher.
- Keep your emotions under control.
- Take notes about what has been discussed to share with your child.
- Express appreciation for the conference.
- Do not stay beyond your allotted time.

Traywick said it's important not to expect a quick fix. "If there was a quick fix, the teacher would have already done it and there would not be the need for the phone call," she said. "Take time to think about the concern of the teacher and talk with your child about the issue."

It's also important not to place blame. "Try not to get defensive," she said. "The conversation is to help your child, not blame anyone for the situation. The teacher needs your support to help resolve the situation."

Source: University of Arkansas Extension, Ole Wendroth, 859-257-4768

Drying Gourds

Harvest gourds when the vine and stem dries and begins to turn brown. Be sure to complete your harvest before the first hard frost. Immature gourds will not cure correctly and rot, so only harvest mature fruit.

After harvest, wash the gourds in a mild bleach solution and dry off with a soft cloth. Discard any bruised, diseased or damaged fruit. To dry, place gourds on slatted trays or chicken wire fencing. Make sure they do not touch each other and are located in a warm, dry, well-ventilated location.

Curing can take one to six months, depending on the type of gourd. The outer skin hardens in one or two weeks, while the internal drying takes at least an additional month. Poke a small hole in the blossom end of the gourd to quicken internal drying. Occasionally turn the fruits, checking for uneven drying or soft spots. When you shake the gourd and hear the seeds rattling, it is cured and ready for a coat of paint or varnish, if desired.

— Mary Jane Frogge, UNL Extension Associate

Garden Guide

THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH

By Mary Jane Frogge, UNL Extension Associate

Plant spring flowering bulbs such as tulips, daffodils and crocus.

Cut down stems and foliage of herbaceous perennials after two or three hard frosts and when leaves begin to brown.

Fall is the time to control broadleaf weeds in the lawn, such as white clover, dandelion and ground ivy.

Dig and bring in cannas, dahlias and gladiolus. Dry, clean and store in a cool location free from frost.

After several hard frosts add mulch to your perennial flower garden. A one inch layer of straw or chopped leaves will help conserve soil moisture and protect the root system.

When deciding on new trees or shrubs to plant around your home, remember to select varieties that will fit the location when they are at their mature height. This will greatly reduce pruning and other maintenance in the future.

Pick bagworms from evergreen shrubs. This will eliminate the spring hatch from over wintered eggs.

Remove leaves from lawn to reduce lawn problems. Compost or shred and use them for mulch.

Make a note of any particularly productive or unsatisfactory varieties of vegetables you planted this year. Such information can be very useful when planning next years' garden.

Remove any diseased or insect-infested plant material from your garden, it may harbor over wintering stages of disease or insect pests. If you leave this plant material in your garden, you are leaving diseases and insects which will begin to reproduce again next spring and add to next years' pest problem.

Cure pumpkins, butternut and hubbard squash at temperatures between 70 to 80°F for two or three weeks immediately after harvest. After curing, store them in a dry place at 55 to 60°F.

Use dried herbs to make fragrant wreaths and dried flower arrangements.

Clean up the orchard and small fruit plantings. Sanitation is essential for good maintenance. Dried fruits or mummies carry disease organisms through the winter to attack next years crop.

Nut trees are a fine addition to the home landscape. They may accent the house, provide shade in the summer and even become a food source.

Christmas cactus need special care now to get its beautiful flowers this December. Buds will form at 50 to 60°F or if the plant is exposed to at least 13 hours of complete darkness each night.

Fall is an excellent time for taking soil samples in your lawn and garden. Soil tests will measure the pH of the soil, organic matter content and the levels of some of the major elements required for plant growth, such as phosphorus and potassium.

Growing American Bittersweet

American bittersweet (Celastrus scandens) is an easy-to-grow vine famous for a striking display of seedpods and berries each fall. Often used in wreaths or decorative displays, this ornamental vine adds value and interest to the garden all year long. Chinese bittersweet (Celastrus orbiculatus), is considered an invasive plant and not recommended for planting in landscapes.

American bittersweet is a deciduous, perennial vine native to North America. Often found growing over fences or climbing up trees, their typical habitat includes rocky upland woodlands and along shady riverbanks of the central and eastern United States. American bittersweet has smooth, 2 to 4 inch long green leaves.

The vines produce tiny greenish-white flowers in June and in early fall, orange-yellow seed husks peel back to reveal scarlet-colored fruit. Bittersweet fruits are not safe for human consumption, but when left on the vine, they provide a much appreciated source of late winter food for many birds and small animals.

Fall is a good time to plant American bittersweet. If mulched and protected over winter during its first year, bittersweet will remain maintenance free for most of its long life.

Mary Jane Frogge, UNL Extension in Lancaster County

Because of their climbing habit, bittersweet needs a very sturdy support.

To get the vine to produce brightly colored berries, you will need to plant both sexes of the vine within close proximity of one another. When purchasing plants from a nursery, be sure the sex of the vines are properly identified. The female vines produce the berries, but the sexes are impossible to tell apart until the plants are mature. One male plant will easily produce enough pollen for 6 to 8 female plants and bees are the main pollinators. It will take several years for the vines to produce fruit.

Bittersweet can be bought from a nursery or propagated from seeds or cuttings. Seeds sown in the spring need to be placed in containers of moist sand or peat and kept in the refrigerator at 34 to 41°F, for 3 months to break dormancy.

Bittersweet vines grow

In early fall, orange-yellow seed husks peel back to reveal scarlet-colored fruit.

well in both full sun and shade, although full sun is critical for fruit production. These vines are not particularly fussy about soil quality and pests seldom bother them. Because of their climbing habit, bittersweet needs a very sturdy support, either an upright trellis or a lateral fence. Do not let it climb up a tree, however, because the twining nature of these vines could easily girdle the trunk.

Occasional light pruning will keep plants tidy and help reign in their size. Pruning can be done in late winter or early spring.

American bittersweet is ready to harvest when you see the first orange capsules of the fruit split open to reveal the orange-red fruit inside. Cut stems to the length you desire and tie them into small bundles. Hang the bundles to dry in a warm, dark room. As the fruit dries, more unopened capsules will split open to reveal the fruits inside. Once dried, the vines make an attractive botanical display that will last for several years.

Source: Ellen Brown, Garden Columnist

Storing Vegetables

Mary Jane Frogge,
UNL Extension Associate

After a successful garden season, you may have vegetables you would like to store until you are ready to use them. Here are suggestions to help you store your vegetables properly.

- **Carrots:** Trim carrot tops to one inch. Layer unwashed carrots in a container of moist sand. Carrots can be stored in a cool place, 35 to 40°F for 4 to 5 months.
- **Onions:** Store cured onions in a dry location at 35 to 40°F.
- **Potatoes:** Cure fresh dug potatoes 1 to 2 weeks in a dark, dry location at 50 to 60°F. Store cured potatoes in a dark location at 40°F for 5 to 6 months.
- **Sweet potatoes:** Cure fresh dug sweet potatoes at 80 to 85°F for 10 days. Store cured sweet potatoes in a dry, dark location at 55 to 60°F for 4 to 6 months.
- **Turnips:** Trim turnip tops to one inch. Layer unwashed turnips in a container of moist sand. Turnips can be stored in a cool place, 35 to 40°F for 4 to 5 months.
- **Winter squash:** Cure vine ripen winter squash for 10 days at 80 to 85°F and high humidity. Store mature, cured winter squash in a dry location at 55°F for 2 to 6 months. Acorn squash will keep well in a dry place at 45°F for 35 to 40 days. Do not cure acorn squashes before storing them.

Storing your vegetables and fruit properly will insure you will have good quality produce to enjoy in the months ahead.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

UNL Extension NebGuide G1264 "Storing Fresh Fruits and Vegetables" available at the extension office or online at http://www.ianrpubs.unl.edu/sendIt/g1264.pdf

Sign Up for Free E-mail Horticulture Newsletter

HortUpdate is a FREE e-mail newsletter from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension which provides timely information to the lawn and landscape industry. This e-mail includes current lawn and landscape problems with control recommendations and a seasonal 'To Do' list. To subscribe, go to http://extensionhorticulture.unl.edu

Praying Mantids: Garden Carnivores

Barb Ogg
UNL Extension Educator

A praying mantis is a truly remarkable creature with a striking appearance and interesting habits. Mantids are active throughout the summer, but become more obvious by late summer when they become larger.

Mantids found in Nebraska include the Carolina mantid (*Stigmomantis carolina*), a native species and the Chinese mantid (*Tenodera aridifolia sinensis*). The larger Chinese mantid has been in North America since 1869 when it was introduced to control insect pests. The Chinese mantid is the species often sold through nurseries and garden catalogs.

The praying mantis is named for its prominent forelegs, which are bent and held together at an angle that looks like it is praying. But, these forelegs are dangerously equipped with sharp spines for grasping their prey. Typically brown or green, mantids are well camouflaged on the plants among which they live. They sit motionless, patiently waiting for their prey to wander close enough to be snared. The mantid strikes quickly — about 1/20th of a second — you may not be able to see it happen. Watching the mantis feed is not for the faint-hearted...the mantis usually eats its prey while it's still alive and it starts eating the head first!

Mantids do not discriminate in their choice of food. They feed on moths, crickets, grasshoppers, flies and other insects. They may even eat other mantids. The most famous example of this is the notorious mating behavior of the adult female, who sometimes eats her mate after mating. This cannibalistic behavior is not common and occurs only if the female is starved.

After mating, the female will lay eggs on branches, siding or rocks. The eggs are laid inside a "foamy" liquid called an *ootheca*, that hardens and looks a little like a "packing peanut." Inside this protective egg case, eggs are insulated and survive freezing temperatures.

In the springtime, eggs hatch and nymphs emerge, looking like tiny, wingless versions of their parents. Often, their first meal is a sibling. Nymphs will molt six to nine times, before becoming an adult. Most mantid species produce winged adults. Males are more likely to fly than females.

Some insect enthusiasts suggest keeping mantids as pets, which can be an interesting thing to do. It can also be a lot of work, especially obtaining large numbers of tiny insects for the tiniest mantids to eat. Because of their predatory behavior, mantids must be housed individually. Information about rearing mantids is readily found by searching the Internet.

Did You Know?

- There are about 1,800 praying mantid species worldwide. Only 20 species are found in North America.
- Mantids are some of the largest insects. One Asian species is 10-inches long.
- Praying mantids have excellent eyesight. Their large compound eyes can see movement up to 60 feet (18 meters) away and helps them estimate distances accurately.
- Mantids are the only insects able to turn their triangular-shaped heads 180 degrees (from side to side).
- Like most other insects, female mantids are larger than males.

Photos by Vicki Jedlicka, UNL Extension in Lancaster County

Adult Chinese mantid (above) and egg case known as an *ootheca* (at right) shown approximate size.

(Left) Carolina mantid nymphs emerging from the ootheca (highly magnified).

Adult Carolina mantid (above) and egg case known as an *ootheca* (at right) shown approximate size.

Problem Squirrels in Buildings

In a building, damage by squirrels is usually easy to identify. Signs include droppings, gnawed holes, leaves, twigs, shells, hulls, pits, shredded insulation or nesting materials inside an attic.

Property owners frequently hear scurrying in the ceiling shortly after dark and before dawn. Acorns that are crushed, as opposed to being opened at one end, also are a clue to the presence of fox and gray squirrels.

Squirrels can squeeze through holes 1.5 inches in diameter and will enlarge smaller holes by gnawing. Squirrels can climb vertical brick or masonry walls with a roughened surface. They can enter through vents, chimneys, broken windows, knotholes and gaps in construction under eaves or gables. Tree squirrels most often enter attics and spaces along the gutter line or through vents.

If damage on a building is noticed, see if there is any squirrel activity before attempting repairs. You never want to trap a wild animal in a building because they may cause even more damage. Plug the suspected entry holes with newspaper. If the newspaper isn't moved by a squirrel for five consecutive days during good weather, then it's reasonably safe to secure the opening.

To reduce future problems with squirrels in buildings, prevent their access by inspecting and repairing small holes before they become large enough for squirrels to enter. Never secure an opening unless you are certain it is no longer being used by an animal. Prevent air movement by filling gaps with caulk or expanding foam before covering openings with metal flashing, weave hail screen or other permanent material. From the outside of the building, secure air vents with quarter-inch hardware cloth. Paint the mesh to match the color of the vent to reduce its visibility. Secure roof vents with professionally manufactured stainless-steel screens. Consult with a roofer on proper installation techniques to prevent leaks. Ask a professional for assistance installing a chimney cap to prevent animal access to the chimney.

If a squirrel has been trapped in a building, never try to capture a squirrel by hand. They are evasive and have a powerful bite. Try darkening rooms to encourage squirrels to move towards the light coming from the opening where they entered the building. If needed, create barricades to keep the squirrel moving towards the opening.

Stephen M. Vantassel, UNL Internet Center for Wildlife Damage Management

Squirrel hole is a classic sign.

If you can't guide the squirrel safely back outdoors, live traps and lethal traps are available for capturing squirrels. You may decide it is best to work with a pest management professional (PMP). An experienced PMP has the necessary permits, experience setting the traps, removing the animals and help you make decisions on repairs.

If you want to try to trap the squirrel(s) yourself, farm supply stores, lawn and garden centers may carry traps. You must follow Nebraska laws carefully if you plan to trap squirrels and always check for necessary permits. Avoid trapping in April and May to reduce the risk of orphaning young. In Nebraska, you can not translocate squirrels. Any squirrels caught in a live trap, must be released within 100 yards of the site where they were captured.

In rural areas, problem squirrels can also be safely removed by shooting. In urban areas, ordinances prevent the discharging of firearms because of the obvious dangers to property, people and other animals.

Nebraska Laws Related to Tree Squirrels

- Fox and gray squirrels are classified as small game animals and can be taken by individuals with a small game hunting permit during hunting season. Letters of authorization to shoot or trap tree squirrels out of season can be issued for damage situations by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. Tree squirrels also may be shot or trapped within municipalities by people who possess a valid permit.
- Municipal laws usually are more restrictive than state laws regarding the control of tree squirrels. Some communities forbid the use of lethal traps within their jurisdictions. Find out the laws of your community before attempting any controls or work with a pest control professional.
- Southern flying squirrels are fully protected as a threatened species in Nebraska because of their limited range and low numbers.
- Squirrels must be released within 100 yards of the capture site or they can be euthanized if taken under the authority of Wildlife Damage Control Permit. The permits may be obtained from a local representative of the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission or by calling 471-0641.

Source: Prevent Squirrels from Coming into a Habitat by Stephen Vantassel, UNL Wildlife Damage Project Coordinator; Scott Hygnstrom, UNL Wildlife Damage Extension Specialist; Dennis Ferraro, UNL Extension Educator. Acreage eNews acreage.unl.edu

Specialty 4-H Clubs Invite New Members

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

4-H Teen Council Leadership Organization

The Lancaster 4-H Teen Council is a leadership organization for youth in grades 7–12. Meetings are usually held the second Sunday of each month at 3 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center.

4-H Teen Council members:

- participate in several community service activities
- organize the Ice Cream Social and Cookie Eating Contest at the Lancaster County Fair
- plan, set up and facilitate the annual 4th & 5th grade Lock-In (pictured below)
- are involved in other leadership activities

Contact Tracy Kulm at 441-7180 for more information or to join!

Household Pets

Want to learn more about your pet? Or get acquainted with new ones? Join the 4-H Household Pets club for youth ages 8–18 and their small animals! Hamsters, gerbils, guinea pigs, mice, snakes, turtles, fish, reptiles, amphibians, caged birds and any animal small enough to put in your pocket is invited. The club meets monthly. For more information, call 441-7180.

Rabbits 'R Us

If you like rabbits, hop to it! The Rabbits 'R Us 4-H club helps youth learn all about rabbits! They usually meet on the last Monday of each month (evenings). They also run a dunk tank at the Lancaster County Fair to raise funds to promote 4-H and for county-wide service projects. For more information, contact leader Kirk Gunnerson at 470-0440.

Star City Llamas

Do you want to learn about llamas and alpacas? This club focuses on the care and maintenance of these animals, and is heavily involved in community service projects. 4-H'ers take their llamas to parades, nursing homes and schools to educate the public. The club also teaches youth entrepreneurship skills by creating products from the wool and marketing them. You do not have to own a llama or alpaca, you can borrow or lease one. For more information, contact Deanna Karmazin at 441-7180.

4-H Leader Training, Oct. 22

All 4-H leaders and 4-H volunteers helping with clubs are encouraged to attend the fall 4-H Update on Thursday, Oct. 22. Attend either the 9:30 a.m. or the 6:30 p.m. update at the Lancaster Extension Education Center. Learn about new 4-H curriculum, opportunities for your 4-H members and more. Also, get tips and ideas for your club through sharing with other 4-H volunteers. You must RSVP by calling 441-7180 by Oct. 20.

Livestock & Dog County Fair Review, Nov. 10

All beef, dairy, sheep, swine, goat, dog and llama 4-H families and volunteers are invited to a fair review session on Tuesday, Nov. 10, 7 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center. We will discuss the new plans for the 2010 Super Fair and will work together to come up with the new livestock show schedule. We will also be reviewing the Fair Book — changes and suggestions will be discussed at this time. Please RSVP to Deanna Karmazin by Nov. 6 (call 441-7180 or e-mail dkarmazin2@unl.edu).

Make It With Wool Contest Deadline Oct. 24

The Make It With Wool contest offers both youth and adults the opportunity to promote the beauty and versatility of wool fabric and yarn. Personal creations in sewing, knitting, crocheting, spinning and weaving of wool fabric, yarn is encouraged. Categories and ages for this contest are: Preteen, 12 & under; Junior, 13–16; Senior, 17–24; Adult, 25 & over; Home Accessories (any age). The District III contest will be held in Lincoln on Saturday, Nov. 7, with registration beginning at 8:30 a.m. Entry deadline is Oct. 24. You may enter any district contest. For more information, call Tracy at 441-7180.

Washington D.C. Group Has Five Openings

Five more spots have opened up for the June 2010 4-H Citizenship Washington Focus (CWF) group. Any Lancaster County youth age 14–18 can join CWF, a summer citizenship program which culminates in a nine-day, intensive trip to Washington D.C. and New York. Youth who sign up now are able to start earning funds through organized fund-raising. A $100 deposit is needed to reserve your spot. For more information, contact Deanna Karmazin at 441-7180.

October

Heart of 4-H Award

Jennifer Cusick-Rawlinson

Lancaster County 4-H is proud to announce Jennifer Cusick-Rawlinson as winner of October's "Heart of 4-H Award" in recognition of outstanding volunteer service. Jennifer was nominated for the award by Susan Frobish, who wrote, "She is very involved in 4-H Council, Horse VIPS and Esprit de Corps 4-H Club. She is very knowledgeable, caring, dedicated and extremely committed to youth!"

Jennifer has volunteered with 4-H for nearly five years and has helped with the Lincoln Broomtails (a horseless horse club) and Esprit de Corps (a horse club). She serves on 4-H Council and on the Horse VIPS Committee (she is currently chairman of fundraising). Her daughter, Kate, is active in the 4-H horse program.

She says "I like being a 4-H volunteer because the kids love 4-H programs and volunteers are necessary to continue offering the programs. I just love watching the kids succeed and grow! We've also loved meeting so many nice 4-H families through the programs."

Congratulations to Jennifer. Volunteers like her are indeed the heart of 4-H!

Nominate your favorite 4-H volunteer by submitting the form available online at http://lancaster.unl.edu or at the extension office. Nominations of co-volunteers welcome.

HORSE BITS

Horse Awards Night, Oct. 1

The annual Lancaster County 4-H Horse Awards Night will be Thursday, Oct. 1, 7 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Rd. Awards presentation includes Incentive Awards, Horsemanship Levels, Horse Course Challenge, All-Around Awards, Herdsmanship, Top County Fair Judging buckles and ribbons and a few surprise awards!

The evening includes a pot luck dinner. Please bring a meat dish and either a salad or dessert and your own table service. Drinks will be provided. Come help celebrate the outstanding accomplishments of the 2009 Lancaster County 4-H Horsemen!

4-H Trail Ride Near Halsey, Oct. 10–11

Nebraskans can ride horseback through some of Nebraska's most scenic country during the 2009 4-H Trail Ride at the Nebraska National Forest near Halsey Oct. 10–11.

Registration deadline for the 11th annual ride is Sept. 25.

The weekend includes four trail rides through the hills and trees, craft making, cowboy breakfast and a fund-raising auction. The Baker Family of Ord will provide cowboy music and entertainment after the Saturday evening steak fry and inspirational services on Sunday morning.

Participants have several choices for lodging that include camping at the trailhead, staying in cabins at the Nebraska 4-H Camp, camping in nearby campgrounds or staying in local motels.

For the non-horseback riders, wagons pulled by teams are available. Wagon riders will enjoy riding along many trails through the trees and hills as well.

Proceeds from the trail ride go to the Nebraska 4-H Foundation to help support many 4-H activities and events.

For more information and registration information, call Sinda Dux at (402) 472-1178 or Marty at 441-7180. Complete information can also be found online at http://www.ne4hfoundation.org/trailridebenefit.htm

Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Youth Expo, Sept. 22–27

The 82nd Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Youth Livestock Exposition will be held Sept. 22–27 at the Qwest Center in Omaha. More than 2,000 4-H families from an eight-state area participate in the Expo. Categories of this 4-H only competition are dairy, feeder calf & breeding beef, horse, market beef, market broilers, meat goats, market lamb, market swine and breeding swine. For more information, go to www.rivercityroundup.org

Shows Broadcast Live on Internet

New this year, watch Ak-Sar-Ben's livestock shows live online at www.dvauction.com. DVAuction is an Internet broadcasting company specializing in live real-time auction and special event broadcasts. Once you complete a easy and free registration process, you can see and hear what is happening.

Additional 4-H Sponsors

4N Angus - Lynette Nelson and **Janet Ball** should have been included in last issue's list of 4-H sponsors.

Lancaster County 4-H thanks all of the businesses, organizations and individuals that sponsored 4-H events, activities, programs and trophies throughout the past year!

Volunteer Forum, Oct. 1–4

The North Central Region 4-H Volunteer Forum will be held Oct. 1–4 at the downtown Holiday Inn in Lincoln. For a schedule, go to http://4h.unl.edu/volunteers/forum.htm

Money Smart Nebraska - 4-H Contests

Money Smart Week is a public awareness campaign designed to help consumers better manage their personal finances. A series of events is planned throughout Nebraska Nov. 9–15 with that goal in mind. Learn more at http://www.moneysmartnebraska.org

This year, 4-H'ers are encouraged to participate in three contests:

- a piggy bank pageant
- Lil' Green page
- developing a savings power point

Top entry in each contest receives a savings bond. Details for are found at http://4h.unl.edu/kids/moneysmart.html . Entries are due by Oct. 15 via e-mail to lmanning1@unl.edu. For more information, call Leanne Manning at (402) 821-2151.

4-H Award & Scholarship Forms Due Jan. 2

Lancaster County 4-H award forms and college scholarship applications are due by Jan. 2. Recipients will be announced at Lancaster County Achievement Night (usually held in February). Forms are available at http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h and the extension office. The online forms are provided as fill-in pdfs, which anyone with Adobe Reader 7 or 8 can fill in, save and print.

Awards

Community Service Awards — all Lancaster County 4-H members are eligible to apply for this award which is based on the number of hours of community service through 4-H. There will be two categories: Five winners in the 14 years of age and over category and 10 winners in the 13 and under.

I Dare You Leadership Award — The award recognizes youth who strive to be their personal best and make a positive difference in their schools, youth groups, 4-H clubs and communities. Anyone can make nominations.

Outstanding 4-H Member Award — presented to an individual 14 years of age or older who has excelled in their involvement with the 4-H program. The basis for selection appraises the variety and depth of 4-H activities. Anyone can make nominations.

Meritorious Service Award — presented to individuals or organizations who have exhibited consistent and strong support of the Lancaster County 4-H program. 4-H members are not eligible. Anyone can make nominations.

Nebraska 4-H Diamond Clover Program — recognizes the accomplishments of 4-H'ers ages 8–18. Youth can progress from Level 1 up to Level 6. At the beginning of the 4-H year, youth choose goals from a provided list and at the end of the 4-H year, fill out a report which documents their accomplishments.*

Nebraska 4-H Career Portfolios — are a record of a 4-H'ers career. Portfolios include a listing of personal growth and leadership experiences related to the knowledge learned, skills gained and community service/volunteer activities experienced through 4-H.*

**Lancaster County deadline for these statewide awards is Jan. 2*

College Scholarships

For graduating high school seniors enrolled in the Lancaster County 4-H program

4-H Council — six $500 scholarships to active Lancaster County 4-H members who have excelled in their involvement with the 4-H program.

4-H Teen Council — two $250 scholarships to 4-H'ers who are active in 4-H Teen Council.

Lincoln Center Kiwanis — two $1,000 scholarships to active Lancaster County 4-H'ers.

Nebraska Association of Fair Managers — $500 statewide scholarships: **Martha & Don Romeo Scholarship** to two 4-H'ers and **Staats Custom Awards** to one 4-H and/or FFA senior. Each applicant must have exhibited his/her projects in a County Fair or at the State Fair within the last four years. Lancaster County 4-H selects county finalists. *Note: Deadline is Dec. 1.*

Nebraska 4-H Scholarships — there are several statewide Nebraska 4-H scholarships. Go to http://4h.unl.edu for more information. *Deadline is March 1.*

Note: Deadline for Lancaster County 4-H camp scholarships is May 1 — preference given to applications submitted by March 1.

Nebraska State Fair Results

Congratulations to the Lancaster County 4-H members who showcased their talents at the Nebraska State Fair this year! Below are the Lancaster County 4-H Special Award winners and Rainbow Ribbon Recognition recipients *(as available at press time)*. Complete results are online at http://4h.unl.edu

State PSA winners with Joe Gangwish of KRVN.

Special Awards

Justin Harper — Dairy Cattle - Jersey Reserve Junior Champion
Austin Hurt — Rabbits - Mini Rex Best Opposite
Rachel Hurt — Rabbits - Rex Best Opposite
Koral Gunnerson — Rabbits - Rex Best of Breed
Kourtney Kempkes — Dairy Cattle - Ayrshires Senior Reserve Champion; Ayrshires Junior Champion; Ayrshires Reserve Breed Champion
Tess Klein — Dairy Showmanship 3rd place; Dairy Judging Contest Senior Individual 2nd Place; Dairy Cattle - Holstein Reserve Junior Champion
Jasi Maahs — Rabbits - Florida White Best Opposite; Satin Best of Breed
Cory Peters — Dairy Judging Contest - Senior Individual 4th Place

4-H Horticulture Contest

Grace Farley — 3rd place

Tree Identification Contest

Lancaster County team — 1st place:
Monica Claesson (also received 2nd place individual), Grace Farley (also received 4th place individual) and Kyle Pedersen (also received 5th place individual).

Public Service Announcement Contest

Jessica Stephenson — one of two statewide winners

Rainbow Ribbon Recognition

Rainbow Ribbon Recognition is used to draw attention to the unique items. These may or may not be top placing items, but have used special details.

Cool Clovers 4-H Club — Banner
Honoria Clarke — Dried Fruit
Allison Ediger — Woodworking Article/Finishing Up
Rebekka Erks — Red Potatoes
Briana Gaston — Disaster Kit
Anne Greff — Healthy Baked Product
Kyle Hurt — Pumpkin
Jasi Maahs — Wall Hanging for Living/Dining Room
Christina Mayer — Specialty Pastry
Carlie Reineke — Floor Covering
Paige Roach — Purchased Garment

EXTENSION NEWS

AmeriCorps Member Joins Extension Staff

Sarah Bailey

Sarah Bailey joined the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County staff on Sept. 1 as an AmeriCorps State and National member. AmeriCorps State and National places members in local organizations for one-year terms. Sarah's position at extension is a part of the AmeriCorps Recovery-Go Green Initiative that aims to provide community outreach and service focused on environmental issues.

Sarah is originally from Lincoln and grew up here attending Lincoln Public Schools. She recently attended the University of Nebraska–Lincoln and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Biological Sciences with an emphasis in Environmental Studies. Her primary interest area is in grassland ecology and plant/insect ecology. Over the past two summers Sarah has spent time in the field, researching how nutrients available in grassland ecosystems affect both plant and insect communities. She plans to continue her research interests in graduate school in the near future.

While attending UNL, Sarah was also involved in Roots & Shoots, a global organization through the Jane Goodall Institute, which focuses on community service-based projects that improve the environment. Activities the group pursued sparked Sarah's interest in environmental education and community service projects. She has a strong interest in helping kids connect to nature and in providing others in the community with information on sustainable choices they can make.

During her year with extension, Sarah will be working on a number of different projects in the Lincoln community. Primarily, she will focus on afterschool programs for both elementary and middle school students. She will plan, prepare and lead 4-H projects dealing with the environment, ecology, agriculture, photography, community service and global issues. Sarah will also assist with 4-H school enrichment programs such as Garbology and Trash to Treasure which teach kids about the importance of recycling, and the 4-H Embryology school enrichment program which features chicks hatching in classrooms. Sarah will also help with composting workshops in the community and an extension garden project at the People's City Mission Garden.

Public Notice

The Lancaster County Board of Commissioners seek members of the community to serve on the Lancaster County Extension Board. The vacancies will be filled with terms beginning in January 2010.

Extension Board members represent and assist University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension staff in Lancaster County with priority issue areas including Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability; Children, 4-H, Youth and Families; Food Safety, Health and Wellness, Strengthening Nebraska Communities, and Water Quality and Environment. The Board meets monthly (usually the second Friday of the month at 8 a.m.).

Registered Lancaster County voters interested in serving a three-year term should complete an application for an appointment by Nov. 1, 2009. Additional information and an application can be obtained from UNL Extension in Lancaster County, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A, Lincoln, NE 68528-1507 or phone 441-7180. Applications are also available on the Internet at www.lincoln.ne.gov/cnty/commiss/boardapp.pdf

FREE SPEECH

UNL Speakers Bureau in 15th Year

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Speakers Bureau begins its 15th year this fall with 18 speakers and several topics from which to choose. This free service connects faculty and other university experts with Nebraska citizens through service organizations, schools and other groups who want knowledgeable, interesting speakers on a variety of topics.

Some of the speakers are available on a year-round basis and others during the academic year only. The Web site www.speakersbureau.unl.edu provides access to each speaker's topic information with a form to submit to book a speaker for your event.

For more information or to book a speaker, go to www.speakersbureau.unl.edu or contact Barbara Bowers in the Office of University Communications at 472-0088.

2009–2010 Speakers

Speaker	Speech Topics
DEE AGUILAR Coordinator, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute	**Lifelong Learning: Your Brain or Mine?** **Play: A Lifelong Ambition** **Humor: What's So Funny?**
PATRICE BERGER Professor of History & Director of University Honors Program	**Europe: 2009** **Europe: 1939** **University of Nebraska–Lincoln in the 21st Century**
DON COSTELLO Lecturer, Computer Science and Engineering	**Information Technology – Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow** **Computer Games** **The Birth, Death and Resurrection of Computers in Banking**
KEN DEWEY Professor of Applied Climate Sciences, School of Natural Resources	**Across the Arctic and Down to Hawaii in Search of Global Warming Impacts** **Storm Chasing with the Nebraska Vortex Intercept Team** **North to Alaska and Across the Canadian Arctic: A Photographic Journey**
BOB DIFFENDAL Professor Emeritus, Conservation & Survey	**Geologic Development of the Ogallala/High Plains Aquifer System in Nebraska** **A Non-Specialist's View of Native American Mound Builders Structures in the American Mid-Continent** **Views of the Southern Parts of the Colorado Plateau-National Parks, National Monuments and State Parks**
JAMES GOEKE Research Hydrogeologist, School of Natural Resources	**Nebraska's Water Resources: Past, Present and Future**
MICHAEL HOFF Professor of Art History	**Pirates and Roman: Cities of the Cilician Coast of Ancient Turkey** **Athens Under Roman Domination** **Ancient Roman Religion and Nebraska Football**
ROGER HOY Nebraska Tractor Testing Lab	**The Nebraska Tractor Testing Lab: Past, Present and Future**
PETER LEVITOV UNL International Affairs & Immigration Attorney, NU Central Administration	**International Students in the United States**
NANCY MITCHELL Director, General Education and Professor of Advertising, Office of Undergraduate Studies	**What Nebraska Students Need to Know in the 21st Century**
MAUREEN OSE Communications Coordinator, Textiles, Clothing and Design/ International Quilt Studies Center and Museum	**3,000 Quilts and Counting: UNL's International Quilt Study Center and Museum** **Reading the Quilt: Stories Told in Textiles from the Era of the Civil War**
WES PETERSON Professor, Agricultural Economics	**The Idea of Poverty** **What's Up With the Doha Development Round (DDR)?** **Why is Agricultural Policy so Hard to Change?**
PAUL READ Professor, Horticulture and Viticulture	**Grape Expectations: Nebraska's Developing Grape and Wine Industry** **Gardens of the World**
JOHN W. RICHMOND Professor and Director of the UNL School of Music	**Does Music Make You Smarter? It Depends on What You Mean!** **Thinking About Common Dimensions of Aesthetic and Religious Experience** **Finding the Next Mozart! Music Composition Education in the 21st Century**
JOHN RUPNOW Professor, Food Science and Technology	**History and Agents of Agroterrorism** **It Must Have Been Something I Ate: Issues in Food Safety** **Guru or Gourmet: The Science of Food**
GREG SNOW Associate Professor, Physics & Agronomy	**Did a Giant Asteroid Kill the Dinosaurs?** **$E=mc^2$: The Most Famous Scientific Formula**
SANDRA STOCKALL Professor Emeritus, University of Nebraska Extension	**Wow, That Felt Great!** **Communication is a Contact Sport**
CHRIS TIMM Associate Director, Career Services	**Developing a Top Internship Program** **Using the Web to Effectively Recruit College Students**

EXTENSION CALENDAR

All programs and events will be held at the Lancaster Extension Education Center unless otherwise noted.

September

22 Family & Community Education (FCE) Leader Training "Design on a Dollar" . . . . . 1 p.m.
22 Guardian/Conservator Training . . . . . 1:30–4:30 p.m.
24–25 Termite Applicator Training . . . . . 8 a.m.–5 p.m.
24–27 Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Livestock Exposition, *Qwest Center, Omaha*
26 4-H Horse Level Testing, *Lancaster Event Center* . . . . . 9 a.m.
28 Family & Community Education (FCE) Council Meeting . . . . . 7 p.m.

October

1 4-H Horse Awards Night
4–10 National 4-H Week
6 4-H Kick Off . . . . . 6 p.m.
6 Composting Workshop, *Gere Library, 2400 S. 56 St.* . . . . . 6:30 p.m.
7 Composting Workshop, *Eiseley Library, 1530 Superior St* . . . . 6:30 p.m.
8 Composting Workshop, *Anderson Library, 3635 Touzalin Ave.* 6:30 p.m.
8 Parents Forever . . . . . 5:30–9 p.m.
9 Extension Board Meeting . . . . . 8 a.m.
11 4-H Teen Council Meeting . . . . . 3 p.m.
22 4-H Leader Training . . . . . 9:30 a.m. & 6:30 p.m.
26 Family & Community Education (FCE) Achievement Night . 6:30 p.m.
27 Guardian/Conservator Training . . . . . 5:30–8:30 p.m.

Tax Preparation Volunteers Needed

You can help make a real impact in your community through Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA). VITA is a service where volunteers prepare federal and state income tax returns for low-to-moderate income individuals. Through the VITA program last year, over **5,000** Lincoln households received more than **$5,042,944** in refunds, of which **$1,760,120** was Earned Income Credit. Earned Income Credit is the largest poverty relief strategy created in the history of relief programs, beating out welfare and food stamps combined.

Many more taxpayers could be helped if we had more volunteers who could donate a few hours per week (usually 4–5) from Jan. 24 through April 15. The IRS provides free tax law and software training at various times in December and January. However, volunteer tax preparers will be expected to do some self-study of tax law, whether through the online course at the IRS Web site or through a course book which will be provided to them. New volunteer tax preparers are required to take a one-day e-file class in January to learn the software used for tax preparation.

If you are interested, please contact JoAnne Hranac at 430-6034 or jhranac@hsfed.org by the middle of October.

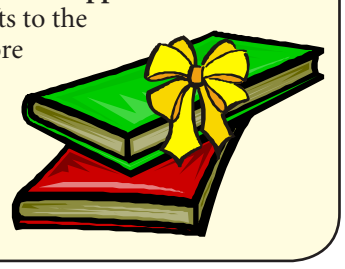
Household Hazardous Waste Collection

Saturday, Oct. 24
9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Woods Park
(31 & J St.)

No latex paint will be accepted. These collections are for household only; not for businesses. Only residents of Lincoln and Lancaster County can bring items to collections. For more information, call the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department at **441-8040.**

Holiday Gifts Needed for LPS Headstart

A good community service project for the holidays is helping the less fortunate by providing gifts for the Lincoln Public Schools Headstart Program. This program is in need of over 500 gifts for children birth to 5-years old. Literacy is being emphasized again this year, so books and items to encourage reading are suggested (such as puppets, puzzles, small toys, etc. relating to story books). The goal is to give each child a book. **Gifts should be unwrapped** and recommended cost is up to $5. Bring gifts to the extension office by Dec. 1. For more information, contact Lorene at 441-7180. This is an excellent project for 4-H, FCE and other community clubs. Individuals are welcome to participate.



Encountering China

E.N. THOMPSON FORUM ON WORLD ISSUES

Both an ancient civilization and a rising power, China presents some of the most complex questions facing the world today. Join the E.N. Thompson Forum on World Issues as we explore China from many perspectives.

Lied Center for Performing Arts, 301 N. 12th Street, Lincoln
Free and open to the public | http://enthompson.unl.edu

Available live on the Web at www.unl.edu, Lincoln cable channel 21 or channel 5, NETSAT 104, UNL campus channel 8 and UNL KRNU radio 90.3 FM.

The E.N. Thompson Forum is a cooperative project of the Cooper Foundation, the Lied Center for Performing Arts and the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.

SHOUTING ACROSS THE CHASM: CHINESE AND AMERICAN NETIZENS CLASH IN CYBERSPACE
Kaiser Kuo
Tuesday, October 6, 2009, 7 p.m.

CHINA: FRAGILE SUPERPOWER
Dr. Susan Shirk
Thursday, November 12, 2009, 7 p.m.

CHINA IN AFRICA: THE NEW SCRAMBLE?
Richard Behar
Tuesday, January 26, 2010, 7 p.m.

CHINA RISING: GOOD OR BAD NEWS FOR U.S. WORKERS, CONSUMERS AND INVESTORS?
Chuck Hagel and T.B.A.
Late February/early March, 2010, 7 p.m.

CHINA ROAD: A JOURNEY INTO THE FUTURE OF A RISING POWER
Rob Gifford
Thursday, April 1, 2010, 7 p.m.

University of Nebraska Lincoln EXTENSION

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.

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County
444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A
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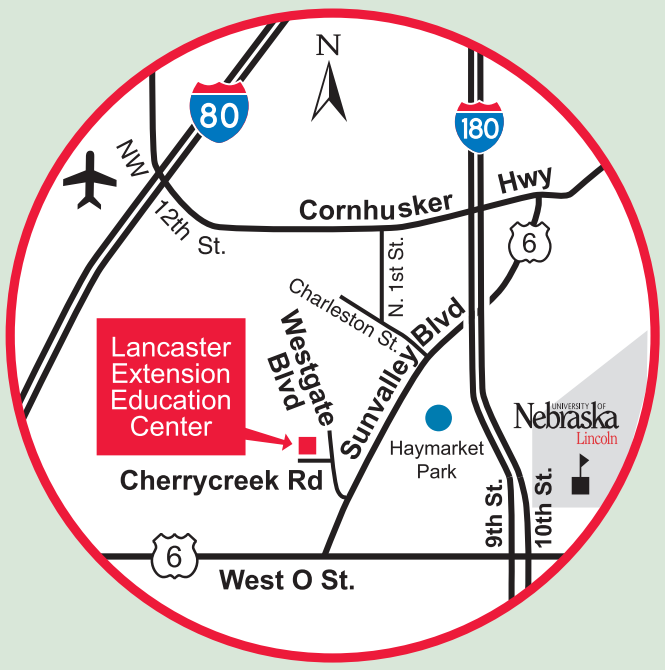
http://lancaster.unl.edu
E-mail: lancaster@unl.edu • Fax: 441-7148

Join us on YouTube, Twitter and Facebook
http://lancaster.unl.edu/media

Lancaster Extension Education Center Conference Facilities
444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln



The Nebline

The Nebline is published monthly (except December) and mailed to more than 11,000 households in Lancaster County.

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Free Subscription

Subscriptions to The Nebline are free to Lancaster County residents. There is an annual $5 mailing and handling fee to addresses in zip codes other than *683–, 684–, 685–, 68003, 68017 and 68065.*

❑ Order subscription ❑ Change of address

Name _____

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Mail to: UNL Extension in Lancaster County
444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A • Lincoln, Nebraska 68528-1507

Experience the Power of Red

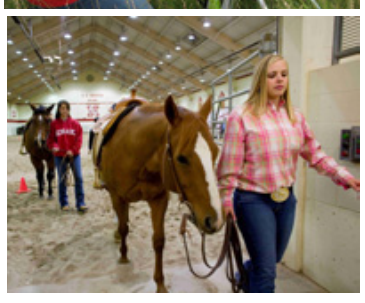
An open house for high school students and their families

Sponsored by the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources

Saturday, Oct. 10

9 a.m.–2 p.m. • Nebraska East Union






- Learn more about how we prepare students for careers in everything from animals to plants, soil to climate, golf to business, mechanization to leadership, food to forensic science
- Meet current students, faculty and staff
- Experience East Campus
- Register for a scholarship and other cool prizes

To register or more information,
(800) 742-8800, ext. 2541 or go to www.casnr.unl.edu

Registration deadline: Oct. 2

There is no charge to attend this even

University of Nebraska Lincoln

Help Start a 4-H Club!

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension 4-H Youth Development Program is open to all youth ages 5–18. Through learning-by-doing, youth gain practical skills and develop life skills.

Currently, there are far more youth wanting to be in 4-H clubs than there are clubs. Families are encouraged to help organize a new club — which is a lot easier than you may think! Starting a 4-H club now gives plenty of time for members to work on projects for next year's county and state fairs.

The Helping Hearts 4-H club was formed this year.

Club Organization

Clubs range from 5 to 60 members and are led (or co-led) by club leaders — often club members' parents. Parents are encouraged to attend meetings.

Volunteers are the heart of 4-H. Adult leaders partner with youth members to complete projects.

Club leaders — Also known as organizational leaders, club leaders coordinate meeting times and agendas. They also are responsible for club enrollment information.

Project leaders — Clubs may or may not have project leaders who provide leadership for specific projects.

Parent Volunteers — Also known as assistant leaders, provide valuable guidance to youth.

Club officers — Youth members choose officers to run their meetings.

Over 150 Projects

Nebraska 4-H has more than 150 project areas. Age-appropriate project manuals are written by university experts. Most project manuals have accompanying leader guides.

In most clubs, members complete several projects a year. Some 4-H clubs focus on one particular project area, such as rabbits. Many youth exhibit their projects at the county and state fairs.

4-H Staff Guidance

4-H staff provides guidance and resources to club leaders. Here's a look at Lancaster County 4-H staff and their areas of responsibilities:

- Tracy Kulm manages all non-animal project areas. This includes clothing, food, home environment, engineering and general areas.
- Deanna Karmazin runs the 4-H livestock and dog project areas.
- Marty Cruickshank manages the 4-H horse, poultry and rabbit project areas.
- Mary Jane Frogge runs the horticulture and conservation project areas.
- Teri Hlava oversees the 4-H after-school program.
- Karen Evasco provides support to all 4-H areas.

Other Resources

Resource materials available to leaders include:

- Regularly-scheduled leader trainings
- The Nebline monthly newsletter 4-H pages
- Lancaster County 4-H Web site at http://lancaster.unl.edu
- Nebraska 4-H Web site at http://4h.unl.edu
- Mailings to club leaders
- County and State Fair can provide numerous ideas and inspirations for projects!

To Get Started

If you would like to help start a 4-H club, call Lancaster County 4-H at 441-7180.

Can You Guess It?

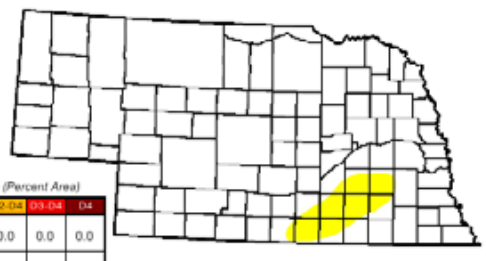
Vicki Jedlicka, UNL Extension in Lancaster County

Did you guess it? Find out at
http://lancaster.unl.edu

Did you guess it from the September NEBLINE?
Damage from Twig Girdlers

U.S. Drought Monitor Map

As of Sept. 8, Lancaster County was not in drought conditions.



Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	95.3	4.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Last Week (09/01/2009 map)	95.3	4.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
3 Months Ago (06/16/2009 map)	79.6	20.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Start of Calendar Year (01/06/2009 map)	89.8	10.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Start of Water Year (10/07/2008 map)	83.0	17.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
One Year Ago (09/09/2008 map)	67.3	32.7	5.8	0.0	0.0	0.0

Intensity:
D0 Abnormally Dry
D1 Drought - Moderate
D2 Drought - Severe
D3 Drought - Extreme
D4 Drought - Exceptional

For the most recent map, visit http://www.drought.unl.edu/dm

Source: National Drought Mitigation Center, University of Nebraska–Lincoln

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension 4-H Youth Development program is open to all youth ages 5–18

University of Nebraska Lincoln EXTENSION

Learn about 4-H!

IANR

4-H Kick Off

Tuesday, Oct. 6

6 p.m.

Q & A!

4-H'ers will share completed projects!

Prizes!

Lancaster Extension Education Center
444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln

Come Find Out How to Join 4-H!

- Help form a new 4-H club
- Be an independent member
- Join an existing 4-H club (limited availability)
- Participate in 4-H activities such as camps

Part of National 4-H Week, Oct. 4–10

4-H is a learn-by-doing program with many exciting projects to choose from. Youth learn practical skills and develop life skills!

441-7180 • lancaster.unl.edu/4h