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Family Meals Nourish Body and Soul

LaDeane Jha & Alice Henneman
Extension Educators

If you're like most families, you're caught in a time crunch. Adults

and youth may all hold jobs. There's sports practice, dance lessons, music lessons, homework, a house to clean, clothes to wash, perhaps an older parent or relative to care for, and...

One way to maintain communication in a busy family is through family meals. University of Nebraska Family Life Specialist, John DeFrain, researches characteristics of strong families and has found one attribute of emotionally healthy families is they spend time together. This includes eating meals with one another on a routine basis.

The theme for the annual University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension sponsored "NU for Families" month in November is "Eat with Your Family." All Nebraska families are encouraged to eat meals together as part of building a strong family.

Just sitting together at the table doesn't always lead to fascinating family conversations or warm mealtime memories, however. Here are some ideas for building family traditions, improving nutrition, and enhancing communication:

- *It's Not "What" but "How" You Feed Your Family.* Simple foods served with love and laughter will outshine gourmet goodies almost any time.

- *It Doesn't Have to be Hot to be Healthy!* Tuna sandwiches, a salad and some frozen yogurt can be just as healthy for your family as something you slaved over at the stove.

- *Start Slow, Learn as You Go.* Don't try to go from no meals to nightly meals. Start with one meal together weekly. Find what works for your family and go from there.

- *Take Turns Talking with a "Talking Stick."* If everyone in your family talks at once, take a tip from the Winnetka Alliance for Early Childhood. They suggest borrowing the "talking stick" idea from Native Americans. They only allow the person holding the stick to talk. You might have a "talking cup" or other special item that gets passed around.

- *Don't Answer the Phone During Mealtime.* How often are your meals

interrupted by the phone? If you can't stand to ignore a ringing phone, either unplug it or turn off the ringer. Use your answering machine or voice mail if it's hard to refrain from responding to a call. If there are some calls you need to answer immediately, such as those from an ill parent, get caller I.D.

- *Turn Off the TV.* Encourage family members to star in their own lives and relate to each other rather than to some image on the TV screen. If there is an "absolutely must see" show that occurs during dinnertime, tape it for later viewing.

- *Get Children Involved in Making Meals.* Children, especially younger children, tend to tune in more to meals they help prepare. If everyone's hungry and in a hurry when they get home at night, try cooking together with children over

the weekend. Or, prepare something for the next day AFTER you've finished eating.

- *Cook it Quick but Eat it Slow.* Check out the many cookbooks and Internet resources that give tips for putting together healthy meals in a hurry. Though you may hurry meal preparation time, allow ample time to enjoy the meal with your family. For starters, check the Lancaster Extension "Cook it Quick" Web site at: <http://www.ianr.unl.edu/ianr/lanco/family/ciq.htm>

- *Table Talk Tips.* Share positive things that have happened during the day. One family had a mealtime ritual where everyone told one new thing they learned that day—including mom and dad! Some families have a night where there's an assigned table topic. Here are some popular ideas:
 - Describe something that happened recently that made you feel really happy.
 - Someone gave you \$1,000. You have to spend some of it on your family before you can buy anything for yourself. What would you buy for everyone?
 - If you could live in a different time and place, where and when would you want to live?
 - If you could spend an afternoon with a famous person (living or dead) who is your pick?

If there's little time for you and your family to enjoy food and fellowship together, here's a final thought: Imagine viewing a movie through your VCR on "fast forward." You could "see" several movies in the time it takes to watch one at the normal speed. But, would you enjoy them as much? If your family's life is being lived in "fast forward," maybe it's time to hit STOP! Or PAUSE—for several meals a week!



In this issue...

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Horticulture
—page 2



Environmental Focus
—page 3



Farm Views
—page 4



Acreage Insights
—page 5



Food & Fitness
—page 6



Family Living
—page 7



4-H & Youth
—pages 8-9

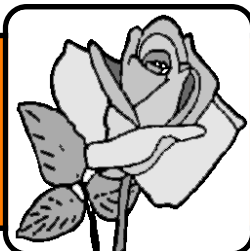


Community Focus
—page 10

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University of Nebraska
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Horticulture

Houseplant Problems

Living plants of various kinds are a popular addition to the decor of many homes, restaurants, and other business places. Foliage and flowering plants serve as accents and helps soften hard architectural lines and wall surfaces. They improve quality of living.

Although less harsh in many respects, the average indoor environment presents some unique problems for normal plant growth. Light intensities in homes tend to be low, especially during fall and winter. Low light results in small leaves, pale color, long spindly stems, and flower failure. Lowered atmosphere humidity from the heating of homes causes rapid loss of moisture from plant surfaces, the soil surface and the outside surface of porous clay pots.



There are a number of other stress-inducing factors that may cause problems. Most people over water their houseplants. This can cause root rots that impair ability to replace moisture loss. A plant may outgrow the pot so its top is out of balance with the amount of soil in which the plant is growing. Such plants quickly exhaust the supply of water present in the soil and must be watered more frequently. Constant watering sometimes compacts the soil and reduces air space, which deprives the roots of adequate oxygen. This can reduce root development and plant growth. The soil may become "channeled" so water drains too rapidly and fails to thoroughly wet all of the soil in the container.

Determining the cause of some houseplant problems may be difficult and require skilled laboratory diagnostic procedures. Other problems are relatively simple to diagnose. Described below are some of the more common disorders and diseases, their possible causes and suggested corrective measures.

Leaf spots are quite variable in appearance, depending upon the cause. Spots caused by injury from direct sunlight on shade-requiring plants usually are large with margins. Each spot may involve the entire portion of the exposed leaf. The injured area appears bleached, gradually turning tan to brown, and eventually collapsing. Leaf spots resulting from chemical injury or exposure to temperature change due to droplets of

cold water usually are smaller. They generally are yellowish at first with margins conforming with the shape and size of the drops of chemical solution or water that caused the injury. A number of leaf spot diseases are caused by fungi and bacteria. Symptoms usually are small, water soaked spots, gradually enlarging and turning brown. There also may be considerable yellowing around the margins of the spots.

These diseases rarely develop under the dry atmospheric conditions prevalent in most houses. They are most common on plants recently brought into the state from southern propagating areas. Leaf spots occasionally develop in the vicinity of feeding injury caused by sap-sucking insects, such as aphids, scale, and mealybug. Plant surfaces in the vicinity of these insects often are

covered by a glistening, sticky honeydew. To control leaf spot you can: remove and destroy affected leaves, avoid sprinkling water on the foliage, provide adequate air circulation. If insects are involved, correctly identify the pest causing the problem. Control sap-sucking insects by washing leaves, petioles, and stems with a damp cloth or treating with a commercially-prepared pyrethrin spray for houseplants. Rubbing alcohol may be applied to insects such as mealybugs with cotton swabs. Systemic insecticides will control sucking insects.

Yellowing leaves are often caused by nutrient deficiency, especially nitrogen, but also may occur as a result of a sudden reduction of light intensity. Dieffenbachia, dracena, and rubber plant are especially susceptible, as are larger pot-bound specimens of other plants. Applications of nitrogen fertilizer may reverse the development of this condition when yellowing has just started. Be cautious about fertilizing plants during the winter months. Plants growing under low light intensities easily are injured by over-fertilization.

Leaves and succulent shoots that become limp or wilted, usually recovering when water is supplied. This may be evidence of water shortage or overabundance of water followed by the development of root rot. To control wilting: check drainage, check for root rot, check for conditions promoting unusually rapid loss of water, alter watering schedule.

Proper care of your houseplants will insure you will be able to enjoy your plants for years to come. (MJM)

Holiday Safety for Your Home

The holiday season is here! If you are like me, you are excited about the holidays and have already started or maybe even finished decorating the house and yard.

Many of you put your Christmas tree up right after Thanksgiving. This year you may have decided to have a real tree. Be sure to select a fresh tree. If you cut the tree yourself you know the tree is fresh. But if you do not cut your own tree, be sure to ask when the tree was cut and check it closely for drying needles. Dry greenery and Christmas trees can be a fire hazard this time of year in your home.

The stump of your Christmas tree should be cut fresh before placing the tree in the tree stand. Keep an adequate supply of fresh water covering this fresh cut at all times. Check the water level daily, and refill

when needed. The cooler you can keep the room where you have the Christmas tree, the longer it will stay fresh and green. Do not place the tree near a heat vent, wood stove, or fireplace.

At the first sign of needle drop and drying you should dispose of the Christmas tree. A single spark can ignite a dry tree. Use some of the discarded tree material as a mulch over dormant perennials or as a haven for wildlife in a nature area.

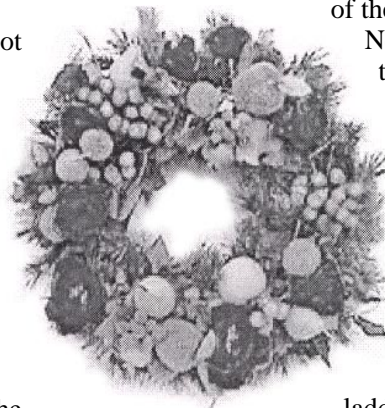
Holiday greenery used for decoration should also be watched very carefully for signs

of drying. Evergreen boughs and wreaths can dry in just a few days. A cigarette ash or match could easily start a fire in one of these centerpieces.

Never leave an unattended candle burning. Blow out candles in these centerpieces after the meal is over.

When decorating landscape trees and the exterior of the house, be careful. Make sure

you have a sturdy ladder and someone to help hold the ladder when you are stringing lights in high places. When you are on a ladder, do not lean out or reach. Climb down and move the ladder to a better location. Please have a safe holiday season. (MJM)



Gifts for The Gardener

Need an original or unique gift idea? Here are some gift suggestions for the gardener in the family or someone who just appreciates the outdoors.

Holiday plants are always a welcome gift to any home. They add color and holiday accents to interior surroundings. The traditional red poinsettias are popular, as are the newer flower colors of pink, white, and yellow. Other possibilities are Christmas cactus, red gloxinia, and kalanchoe.

The outdoor gardener might like to receive a certain tool to make the job of spring gardening easier. Soil working tools like rakes, hoes, and spades may be difficult to wrap and still be a surprise but they are always welcome. Pruning tools, like hand shears and small saws, are easier to wrap and may be needed later this winter.

Don't overlook the possibility of a gardening magazine or plant book as a gift. Many larger book stores have well stocked sections on these and

related topics. Garden centers and nurseries offer a variety of titles on individual plants as well as cultural practices. Someone with a new home might like a book on plant materials and landscaping. While people with a well established garden and landscape might better use information on maintenance and pruning practices.

If you have a non-gardening friend or relative you want to introduce to gardening, consider a total package with plant, container, and growing media along with a book on plant care.

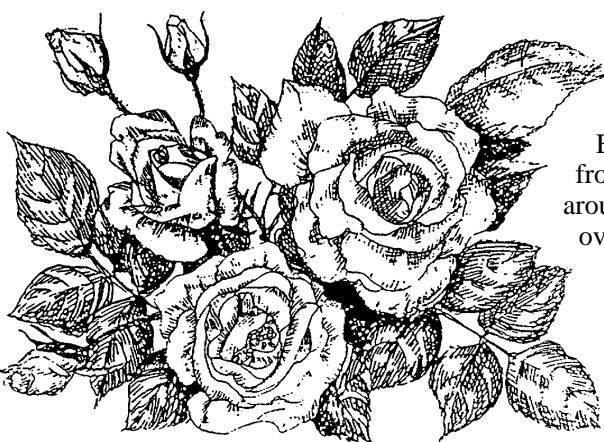
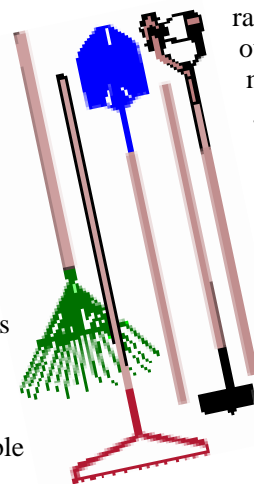
There are many gift ideas for people who like to spend their time at the many state parks in the area. To make their adventure more enjoyable consider giving them a 2001 state park car pass to get into the park, a compass, and identification books on wildflowers, birds, insects, butterflies, trees, tracks, or mammals. Other useful items would include

binoculars to look for things far away, pocket magnifier to see small things close up, sports or explorers watch, canteen for water, camera with film, hiking boots, sunscreen, and insect repellent.

Gifts for people who appreciate the outdoors in their own backyard might like bird feeders with bird seed or a compost bin. Other gifts might be a bird bath, bird or bat house, butterfly raise/release kit, outdoor thermometer, rain gauge, wild flower or native grass seed.

Some people may just wish to sit back, relax, and enjoy the outdoors. Gifts for them may include a

porch swing, garden bench, hammock, and a subscription to NEBRASKAland magazine. (MJM)



Winter Protection for Roses

Hybrid teas, floribundas, grandifloras, miniatures, and climbing roses need protection from low temperatures and rapid temperature changes to prevent winter injury or possible death.

Bush type roses are protected by hilling or mounding soil around the base of the plants.

Begin by removing fallen leaves and other debris from around each plant. Mound soil 8 to 10 inches around the canes. Place wood chips or shredded leaves over the soil mound for additional protection.

Providing winter protection for climbing roses is a little more difficult. The canes must be removed from the trellis and carefully bent to the ground. Cover the canes with a few inches of soil and then mulch with wood chips.

Winter protection should be in place by late November. The materials should be removed before growth begins in the spring, usually early April. (MJM)

Invisible Bites and Itches

Barb Ogg
Extension Educator

After temperatures become cold enough for the furnace to kick on, we start hearing more folks complaining about itches and bites from unknown “bugs.” These itches and bites are real enough for some clients to bring samples into our office for identification.

With the exception of a few different mites, all the arthropods that bite humans can be easily seen with the naked eye and identified. This includes lice, fleas, bedbugs, and spiders.

Even though the itches and biting sensations are real to the people who contact us, sometimes we cannot identify the cause of the discomfort and will refer clients to other professionals who can help them solve their problem.

One invisible mite is the scabies mite. Scabies are usually found in the area of the body where the skin is very thin, like the hands and wrists. Scabies burrow under the skin and cause excruciating itching. Because the elderly and young children have thin skin, scabies are often more of a problem with these groups of people. However, the extension office does not have the diagnostic tools to diagnose scabies. Clients who believe they

have scabies should see their physician or a dermatologist who can determine if they have scabies and can prescribe medication.

There are tiny mites that feed on small animals or birds and sometimes bite people even though humans are not their preferred host. If the mites are infesting a cat, for example, the pet owner or other family members may get bitten when the cat sits on their lap or when they share furniture. A veterinarian can diagnose if a pet has mites and prescribe medication to eliminate the infestation. Roosting birds, like pigeons, can also carry mites that can bite people. The logical method of control is to remove the roosting birds.

If neither of these scenarios are a possibility, it is possible there is an allergy to an environmental situation, food, medication, cosmetic, cleansing product, or pet hair/dander. The cause can be very hard to identify unless the client enlists the help of an allergist who may be able to help pinpoint the cause of itching.

Dry skin should not be discounted. Because we see an increase in the number of these cases during the fall of the year, we suspect static electricity and dry skin may be a contributing factor.

Sometimes folks complicate their problem by using substances to solve what they perceive as a “bug” problem, but which result in an allergy problem. We have heard of people saturating their skin with pesticides, alcohol, bleach, disinfectant, skin creams, ointments, and other home remedies. These substances can make an allergy or skin inflammation worse.

There is still another possibility. We occasionally see people who claim they are being bitten, but no insect is ever found. It is difficult to help them because they are steadfastly convinced they are being bitten by an insect and cannot be convinced otherwise. Severely disturbed people, suffering from delusory parasitosis, actually can “see” and describe the offending parasites in great detail. Dry skin may play a part in triggering this condition because complaints seem to be more frequent during the winter months. Counseling with a mental health professional might be helpful in these cases.

We can identify most of your insect problems. If not, we can probably point you in the right direction to get help. Bring samples to the Lancaster County Extension office, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., weekdays, or call 402-441-7180.

Environmental Focus



America Recycles Day

Wednesday,
November 15, 2000

Recycling is everyone's business. From industry to government, from schools to our very own households. America's commitment to recycling has helped keep our communities clean and our economy strong. Working together, there is even more we can do. By bringing new partners to the recycling efforts of businesses and families across the nation, we will better protect our natural resources, improve our quality of life, and strengthen our economy.

The theme for the fourth annual America Recycles Day is “For Our Children's Future...Buy Recycled Today.” Maybe you're already putting plastic bottles in your recycling bin. But did you know you may be wearing them or walking on them?

Some t-shirts are made from EcoSpun, a fiber made completely from recycled plastic soda bottles. Recycled milk bottles, tires, diapers, cardboard, soda bottles, and more are used to make shoes. Some writing papers are made from recycled blue jeans or old money.

So, celebrate America Recycles Day all year round by closing the loop and buying recycled products. Look for the reduce, reuse, and recycle label and the percentage of recycled materials used in each item you purchase. It will surprise you more manufacturers are using recycled materials. (ALH)

Voracious Voles

What do chain saws, beavers, and voles have in common? They all can damage trees. With fall and winter are quickly approaching, questions about voles increase.

Voles are small, chunky rodents with short tails, blunt noses, and bead-like eyes. Voles damage trees by gnawing the

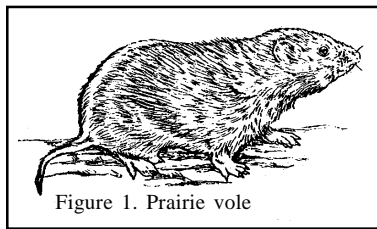


Figure 1. Prairie vole

bark near ground level. Some species of voles can weaken trees and other plants by gnawing on their roots.

Voles often are confused with moles or shrews. It is important to know what animal you are dealing with because control methods vary depending on the animal.

Shrews eat insects—some even eat voles. They should be left alone in the garden or lawn.

Moles are often blamed for the damage done to yards and plants by voles. Moles eat grubs, earthworms, and other insects—they rarely feed on plants. You can distinguish a mole from a vole just by looking at its paws. Moles have large, wide front paws designed for digging. Moles have pointy snouts and look like they don't have eyes or ears. Voles have little paws and you can see their beady black

eyes.

Identifying Vole Signs

Teethmarks: Vole marks are very tiny and irregular, occurring in various angles and in random patches (see figure

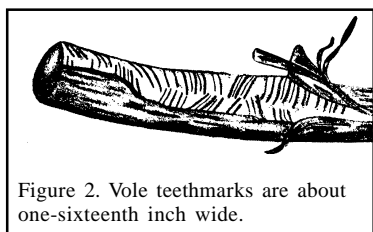


Figure 2. Vole teethmarks are about one-sixteenth inch wide.

2). While teethmarks from rabbits are larger and more uniform.

Tunneling: Some voles make “clipped paths” through grass lawns and tunnel just under the surface of mulched areas (see figure 3). Voles do not hibernate in the winter so they can reach their food sources by tunneling through the snow.

Disappearing plants: If the bulbs you planted this fall don't come up next year, or your other

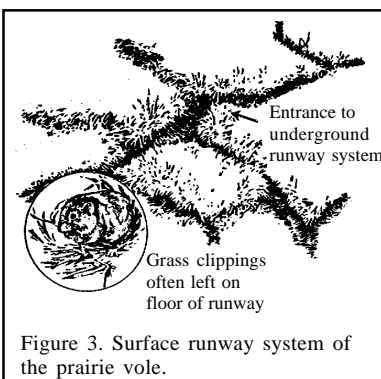


Figure 3. Surface runway system of the prairie vole.

plants begin to disappear, you could have a problem with

voles.

Controlling Voles

Trapping: Set mouse traps near holes or in their clipped paths. Bait the traps with peanut butter mixed with oatmeal. If you want, cover the traps with a small box or flower pot, making sure the traps can still close. This will keep non-target animals from getting into the trap. I'm reminded of the gentleman who called, very distressed, to know the trap he intending to catch voles with caught a male cardinal instead.

Exclusion: Fencing is a practical method of protecting trees, shrubs, and other plants. Fencing should be buried

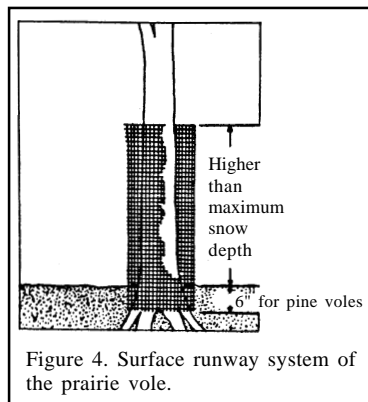


Figure 4. Surface runway system of the prairie vole.

slightly in the ground and extend higher than the maximum snow depth. If you are also having problems with rabbits, the fence should extend another two feet above the snow.

Toxicants: In severe cases, toxicants may have to be used to control voles. These products may be available at lawn and

garden centers. All toxicants used to control voles can be hazardous to humans, pets, livestock, and non-target wildlife, if used improperly. Only use products registered for voles. Make sure you read the label and follow the label directions. Source: Controlling Vole Damage (G887) and

Several kinds of insects may be found in firewood, but only rarely would any cause an infestation in furniture or your house structure. Some insects found in firewood are carpenter ants, wood-boring beetles, wood roaches, silverfish, and other insects that pass the winter in sheltered locations under bark. Termites are never found in firewood stored outside when temperatures are below freezing. Termites generally overwinter deep in the soil below the frost line.

Carpenter ants nest in wood that has gotten wet and started to decay. Firewood that has been stored for several years may house a carpenter ants nest. It is best to inspect your wood carefully before bringing it into the house. Decaying wood makes poor firewood.

Wood-boring beetles leaving firewood are also unlikely to infest your home. Many species of wood-boring beetles may infest wood, and they range from 1 1/2 inches to 1/8 inch long. Often these beetles (or their larval stage) leave the wood after it is cut; some may die as the wood starts to dry out.

If insects start to emerge from your firewood, do not panic! Get out the vacuum cleaner and sweep 'em up. Insecticide treatment of firewood is definitely not recommended because dangerous fumes may arise when you burn the wood. The best way to eliminate a potential insect problem is to keep the firewood outside until you get ready to burn it. And, only store or buy enough wood for one season's use. (BPO)

Moles, Voles, and Shrews (Penn State University).

For more detailed information on controlling voles, moles, or to get additional information on shrews, contact the extension office at 441-7180. (SC)



Farm Views

Grain Stubble Rental Rates

Occasionally, we get a question about fair rental rates for grazing stubble fields. Several factors should be considered when setting a fair rental rate. One factor is what it costs the landowner to allow the stubble to be grazed. A second factor is stubble has a value as a feed and could be considered a part of the income stream from the crop; just as the grain is a part of the same income stream. The landowner should, therefore, try to maximize his return from both the grain and the stubble.

Looking at the other side of the ledger, one needs to calculate what benefit the animal owner gains by grazing the stubble. Obviously, the rate the animal owner can pay should not exceed the cost he/she would incur if alternative feed sources were used, including any differences in labor and depreciation on vehicles and machinery. A "fair" rental rate, it would seem, is a rate that more than covers the landowner's costs (and therefore contributes to his income stream from the crop) without exceeding the value of the benefits to the animal owner.

Considering the cost to the landowner, the most obvious cost is associated with the loss of plant residues. If the land is being grazed, some of the carbon, nitrogen, and other minerals contained in the leaves and shucks will be utilized for animal growth and maintenance and are lost from the plant/soil system. An advantage to grazing over machine harvesting forage is much of the nutrient content in the stover is directly returned to the field in the manure. The landowner benefits by the reduction in voluntary crop plants next season which would require additional expense and management to control.

A secondary consideration is whether residues are needed

to control soil erosion. Depending on the land classification, some minimum level of crop residue might be required to meet farm program specifications.

It is this author's opinion, when downed grain is present in the field, the value of the nutrients lost is generally offset by the benefit of reducing volunteer plants next season. The value of the nutrients lost by grazing stubble is not a big factor when setting a fair rental rate. The major consideration is the value of the stover as a marketable product to be sold as part of the income from the crop. The comparison becomes what will the market bear, considering the alternative feed sources available.

Given the variability between fields and weather conditions, probably the fairest way to rent stubble fields is to pay on a head-per-day basis. The amount the renter pays is more or less based on the amount of feed available and on the openness of the weather.

As is true for many products, one could say stubble is worth what people are willing to pay. Surveys have been conducted by university farm management specialists to determine the prevalent rental rates for stubble grazing. The latest survey was done seven years ago. In the 1993 survey, the average rate for six southeast Nebraska counties was \$0.27 per head per day.

Another comparison would be to calculate the cost per head per day to feed alternative forages as opposed to renting stalks. A mature dry cow, in the middle third of pregnancy, would have her dry matter, protein, and energy requirements met by feeding 22 pounds of mature alfalfa hay (13.5 percent crude protein, 51 percent TDN [Total Digestive Nutrient]) per day. At \$40 per ton, this would cost

See **RENTAL** on page 11

Biosolids Cuts Production Costs and Improves Yields

Now that harvest activities are over, are you thinking about ways to improve production and cut production costs? You can reduce your out-of-pocket fertilizer costs, improve poor soil, and probably see a yield increase next year by using municipal biosolids. This material is high in organic matter and has all nutrients that are needed by crops to grow. The city of Lincoln is paying up to \$.65 per cubic yard for application. If you don't have spreading equipment, you can rent a spreader from the city for a reasonable cost.

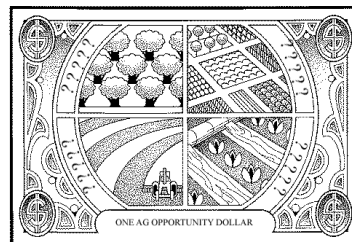
Cooperators must have a loader and be able to apply the materials in a timely way. Biosolids cooperators must return paperwork to the extension office for biosolids delivery in 2001 by January 15. Current cooperators will be receiving next year's application forms through the mail. Call Barb Ogg or Dave Smith at the Lancaster County Extension Office for more information about this program (402-441-7180). (BPO)

Assessing Alternative Ag Opportunities

Every farmer is interested in improving farm profitability. There are many approaches including cutting expenses, increasing yields, expanding acreage, marketing, improving crop and variety choices. Adding value to the crop is another alternative which becomes even more important when commodity prices are low. There are many levels and definitions of "value-added" crops.

Value added generally refers to adding more labor or management to the farm operation to increase the value of the product being sold. This would be the flip side of adding more land and machinery. It could refer to adding livestock to market grain as meat rather than as grain. It could refer to switching to organic farming to sell grain with higher market value. It could be the growing of fruit, vegetables, Christmas trees, or specialty grains to command a higher market value. It could be raising a higher quality product which can be sold for seed or meets export demands.

In all cases, it probably requires more labor, management, and marketing skills. In most cases, the success of value-added products hinges on finding a 'niche' in the market where the consumer is willing to pay more than what would be possible with adding value. These markets are usually small, easily oversupplied, and may have high risks.



The first step in finding a value added enterprise is to match consumer demands with products you can produce efficiently on your farm. The second step is to find methods of insuring a sale for the product, usually through contracts. The contract not only obligates a buyer, it also obligates you to meet some quality standards. It is usually the higher quality standards which will require additional labor and management skills. The third step is to plan for the crop, including getting a source of seed, proper machinery, and land area which best suit crop needs. Generally, choosing a new crop which you have never raised before is a high risk venture. For example, crops such as sunflower, safflower, pinto bean, crambe, canola, sesame, and castor would all present first time growers with a multitude of challenges with insects, diseases, fertility, machinery demands, and weather which would almost assure a disaster the first year. A safer option might be to look for variations of current crops which may be used for specific purposes. Examples of this might be soybean varieties which can be used in the oriental market for

tofu, natto, sprouts, etc. In the case of corn, it might be white corn, high-oil corn, or food-grade corn. For wheat, there are now some opportunities for white wheat which can meet some export and domestic demands.

Before planting any of these options, do your homework. You need to know where you are going to sell the crop and how much premium will be paid. (Consider potential crop yields, which may be significantly less than commodity grains.) You need to have a contract which assures the premium prices and states the quality standards and your options if the quality standards are not met. You need to know what other costs you may incur from seed, fertilizer, pesticides, and additional harvest expenses. If these costs are covered and leave an opportunity for some profit, then it would seem worth pursuing value-added crops.

Editor's note: Regular readers of this newsletter know Lancaster County Extension has been helping to organize a non-profit marketing cooperative called SNAP (Southeast Nebraska Area Producers) whose purpose is to assist growers with the contracting, quality assurance, and delivery of value added grains. Contact Tom Dorn at the extension office for more information. Source: Lenis Nelson, Extension Crop Variety Specialist (TD)



Irrigation well information is among the growing amount of data available through the World Wide Web.

Information about the state's 81,407 registered irrigation and many domestic wells is available on the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources web site and can be accessed through the Lancaster County Extension web pages.

The data includes the well's registration status; natural resources district in which it was drilled, legal description of its location; date drilled, replaced, or abandoned; number of acres irrigated; gallons per minute pumped; static and pumping water levels; pump diameter and

Irrigation Well Data Available on Internet

depth; and well depth. Information can be accessed by owner name, well location, or other criteria.

Since 1957, state law has required all irrigation, municipal, domestic, and industrial wells be registered. Until now, the information was available only by hard copy at the State Office Building in Lincoln. Attempts were made to automate

not completed. Finally, advances in computer hardware and software technology has made it possible to automate the process and make it readily available to the public. The system is easy and quick to use and should be a valuable source of information to well drillers, environmental or consulting engineers, as well as individuals.

To access well information, go to the Ag & Acreage web site at: <http://www.lanco.unl.edu/ag/> Click on the "crops" button under the Nebraska Production Ag icon, then click on "irrigation." The database is linked under the Wells and Pumping Plants heading.

SOURCE:

Michael Jess, associate director/water resources engineer, Conservation and Survey Division/School of Natural Resource Sciences, NU/IANR (TD)

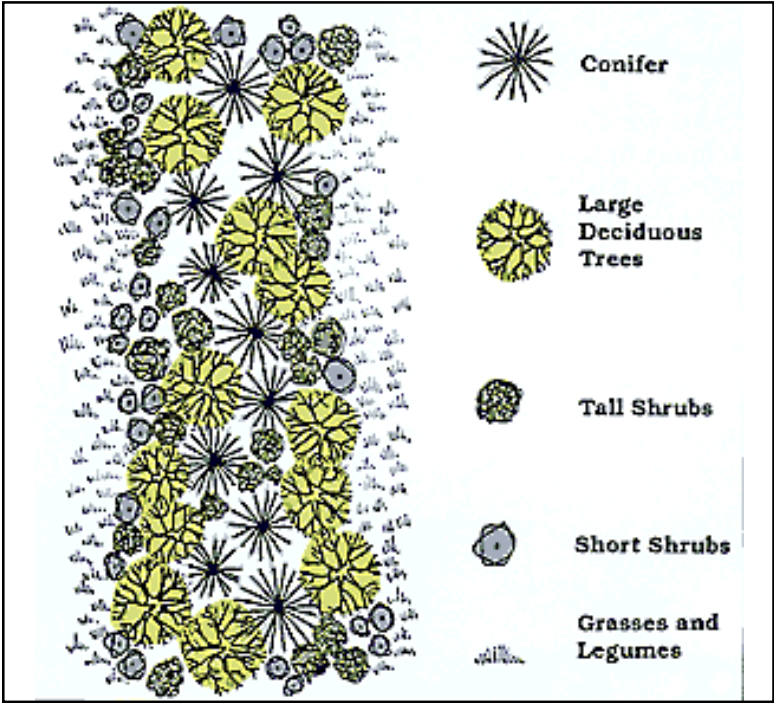


Planting Designs With Wildlife in Mind

Windbreaks are planted to protect farmsteads, livestock, roads, or crops. The additional goal of providing wildlife benefits can be added without compromising the primary purpose. In developing a plan, select a design, plant materials, and location to meet your specific windbreak needs but include factors that benefit wildlife.

Below are some designs cover reduces soil erosion and, on the leeward side of windbreaks, wildlife have a food source in a sheltered spot.

- Consider planting or leaving herbaceous vegetation such as a mixture of grasses and legumes, grain, or stubble as a border, 20 to 50 feet wide, along the edges of windbreaks, but avoid competition with new plantings by keeping a clear area next to the trees. This provides



with tips on improving windbreaks for wildlife.

Overall Guidelines

- Choose trees and shrubs that have wildlife benefits, but are adapted to the local climate. Generally, native species are the best because they are adapted and familiar to wildlife.
- Include a variety of trees and shrubs in the windbreak planting. This gives a more natural landscape appearance, improves wildlife values for more species, and reduces the chances of disease or insect pest problems.
- Where appropriate, select a site that connects to a larger habitat block such as a river corridor, woodlot, wetland, woody draw, or similar area.
- Consider planting a wildlife food plot or leaving grain fields unplowed. The

nesting, loafing, and foraging cover for pheasants, quail, meadowlarks, and others. On the windward side, such cover also improves wind protection and shields newly

planted trees from desiccation and abrasion caused by blowing soil. Mowing, if needed, should be late in the season to avoid

nesting wildlife (e.g. August) and limited to every three to four years to maintain standing cover for early nesters.

- Consider adding a row of shrubs to the windward side to trap snow before it gets to the main windbreak and to improve wind protection near the ground.

Field Windbreaks. These windbreaks are often planted across productive cropland to reduce wind erosion, distribute



snow, conserve soil moisture, and increase net crop yields. They can provide benefits as travel lanes and as feeding, loafing, and/or nesting sites for birds such as pheasants, quail, mourning doves, and songbirds. To enhance the value of field windbreaks for wildlife:

- Choose a variety of trees adapted to the site and that have wildlife benefits, and plant them so there is a mix of tree types within and among rows.
- Alternate trees and shrubs within the row, or consider adding a shrub row immediately next to the tree row on the leeward side. Stagger the tree and shrub rows to better fill gaps. Shrubs will provide critical ground cover and add foraging and nesting sites near the ground.
- Where possible, add a row of shrubs around the field edges to connect the windbreak rows. These provide safe travel lanes plus additional foraging and nesting sites.

Farmstead and Livestock Windbreaks. Windbreaks with four or five rows are commonly used to protect farmsteads or livestock. Greater width may be necessary for wildlife protection in winter in northern climates. For example, eight-row windbreaks have been recommended for wildlife protection in Minnesota, and more than eight rows may be needed to provide ample winter protection in Manitoba and North Dakota.

In contrast, one- to three-row windbreaks are commonly



used farther south in areas such as the Texas panhandle. In general, greater width provides better winter protection. An ample ground cover layer, availability of food resources, and connections with larger blocks of protective cover are also critical factors in winter survival for pheasants, quail, and other wildlife. If an established windbreak fills with snow or otherwise does not offer adequate winter habitat, consider adding the needed plantings to improve it. Below are some design tips for a five-row windbreak.

- On the windward side, often the north or west side, use two rows of evergreen trees such as eastern redcedar, Rocky Mountain juniper, or other native conifer species. Spruce

Acreage Insights



Sweet Dreams Little Tractor



For the simplest case where you can get by with putting the tractor to bed for the winter, you can follow the normal winterizing procedures.

- They are:
- Run all the gas out or drain the tank.
 - Drain the carburetor.
 - Remove the plugs and put a few drops of oil in each cylinder then replace the plugs.
 - Seal up the distributor or magneto to keep moisture out.
 - Place the entire machine on secure and stable blocks to preserve the tires.

- Disconnect the battery cables and place the battery in a safe and temperature controlled storage location.
- Check the coolant with a hydrometer to be sure it can handle any freezing and adjust or replace anti-freeze as indicated.

With these simple procedures, you should be able to bring the tractor back to life in Spring with no damage or adverse affects. To restore it back to functioning condition, you remove the blocking, fill the tank, replace the battery (maybe with a 24-hour trickle charge), and remove anything you have done to seal or cover the machine and components. After allowing time for the carburetor float bowl to fill, it should come to life as easily as it did before you winterized it. This is by far, the best scenario if you don't have need of your tractor for winter chores.

Space Heater Cautions

As temperatures drop, space heater use will rise. Fuel, carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, electricity, and heat all create safety concerns and require special precautions when using space heaters.

According to Dave Morgan, safety engineer, NU/IANR, "Fuel-burning space heaters should not be used indoors. If you do operate a heater inside, always install a carbon monoxide detector."

Carbon monoxide, a deadly, odorless, colorless gas is produced whenever a fuel is burned. These heaters also require an adequate supply of combustion air. Oxygen always is consumed when any fuel is burned, and must be replaced.

Space heaters also need extra caution if toddlers and young children are in the house. The outside surfaces are hot. Keep space heaters away from flammable materials. Many space heaters are taller than they are wide, making them easy to tip over. Refueling heaters also is dangerous.

Space heaters should be allowed to cool down before being refilled. Always shut off and cool down any liquid or gas-fueled space heater before fuel containers are replaced or filled. A glowing hot element in the heater will easily ignite liquid fuel or vapors.

Electric space heaters also may be dangerous. A well-designed electric space heater won't allow the electrical element to come in contact with combustible materials, but still keep combustible materials away. Newer units have automatic shut-off features for over temperature and tipping. Old or damaged space heaters may give electrical shocks or cause accidental burns from surfaces that get too hot.

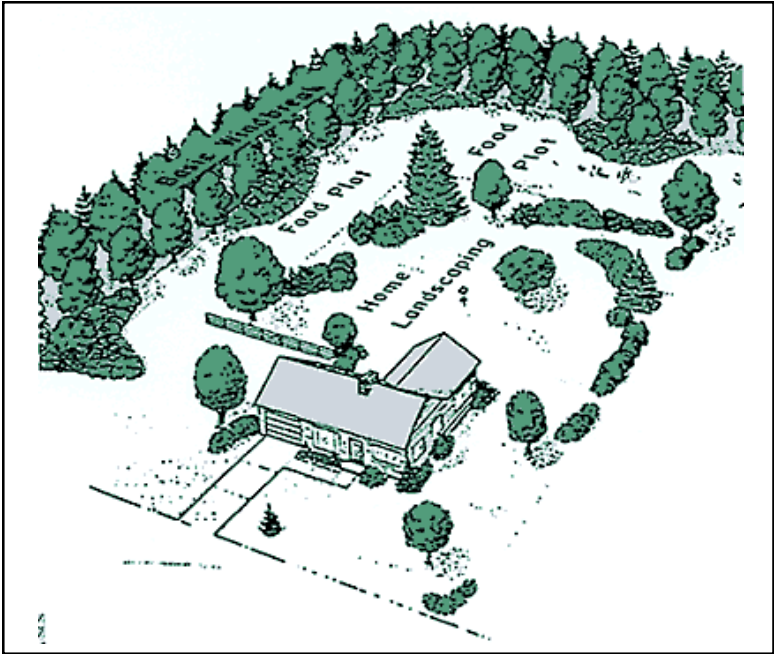
Rather than use a space heater to warm a chilly room, low-cost home improvements really could be the solution. Improve the weather stripping of windows and doors and covering windows with a plastic film is safer and a more cost-effective way to warm a room. (DJ)

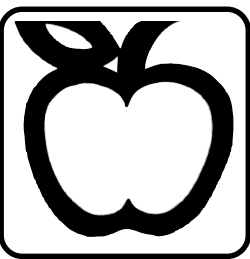
and fir are recommended for more northern sites. Stagger the trees in the two rows so that all spaces are better occupied.

- For the middle row (or middle two rows), use tall deciduous trees. A variety of deciduous trees mixed through these rows provides more

benefits to more wildlife species.

- Add a row of tall shrubs and a row of short shrubs on the leeward side. Planting a variety of shrub species with high wildlife values is the best approach. (DJ)





Food & Fitness



Enjoy Nebraska Foods!

Alice Henneman, RD, LMNT, Extension Educator

Here's a delicious recipe using leftover turkey from Mary Torell, Public Information Officer, Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Poultry and Egg Division.

TURKEY CRESCENTS (Serves 4)

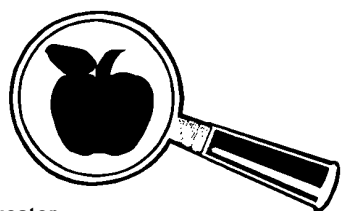
3/4 cup seasoned stuffing mix
1/2 cup finely chopped walnuts
8 ounces cream cheese, softened
4 tablespoons butter or margarine, softened
1/8 teaspoon pepper
2 cups diced cooked turkey
1 tablespoon chopped green onion
2/3 cup chopped mushrooms
2 8-ounce cans crescent rolls
3 tablespoons melted margarine

Crush stuffing mix with the nuts; set aside. Cream together cheese, softened butter or margarine, and pepper. Add turkey, onions, and mushrooms. Separate crescent roll dough to form four rectangles. Place 1/2 cup turkey mixture on each rectangle and fold to cover filling; seal edges. Dip each into melted butter or margarine and roll in stuffing mixture.* Place on baking sheet and bake 18-20 minutes at 400 degrees F until golden brown.

• To reduce the fat content, this step may be eliminated.

Hint: For best results, use brand name crescent rolls. (AH)

Focus on Food



Alice Henneman, RD, LMNT, Extension Educator

Q: Where can I obtain more information on fixing a turkey for Thanksgiving?

A: I checked with Mary Torell, Public Information Officer, Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Poultry and Egg Division and here are some suggestions from her:

Just in time for Thanksgiving, the National Turkey Federation has provided Thanksgiving meal preparation tips on their web site at www.eatturkey.com. It doesn't matter if your turkey is fresh or frozen, this site provides the answers to all of your holiday turkey questions. Whether you're planning a traditional roasted turkey or trying the trendy deep fried version, you can turn to the web site's main page, click on "Consumer," and then click on "Holiday Cooking Tips" to find

tips and recipes for creating a scrumptious, stress-free Thanksgiving feast.

You can also access the Norbest web site at www.norbest.com and you'll find helpful turkey cooking tips and recipes for utilizing those holiday leftovers.

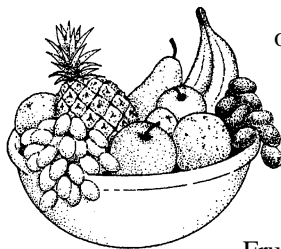
If you don't have access to the Internet, you can request a user-friendly, consumer-oriented brochure to ensure a safe and delicious turkey dinner. To request "Take the Guesswork Out of Roasting a Turkey," and for free recipes and ideas on how to utilize turkey leftovers, contact Mary Torell by calling 472-0752. Each caller will receive a \$2 off coupon for a turkey from NORBEST, a Nebraska grown product. (AH)



Clean Hands Campaign

Have fun using "glo-germ" to teach handwashing to youth and adults. Receive handouts for your group and a copy of reproduction ready handwashing activities. Call Alice Henneman (441-7180) to schedule a time to checkout the Clean Hands Kit and receive your materials. Kit must be checked out and returned within the same week. Available on a first come, first served, basis. This activity can be used with any number and takes about 20 minutes, depending on the size

Eat More Fruits for Good Health



Fruits are rich in vitamins, fiber and other nutrients that help your body grow and stay healthy.

Fruits contain vitamins. Most fruits have vitamin C. Vitamin C keeps your gums healthy. It also helps your body heal wounds and cuts.

Fruits also contain fiber. Fiber helps keep your digestive track healthy. Fruits are low in calories.

Buy More Fruits for the Family

Fruits should be an important part of your family's diet. To take advantage of the fiber in fruits, eat them with the skin whenever possible. Fruit juices have vitamins but no fiber.

Fruits Make Good Snacks and Desserts

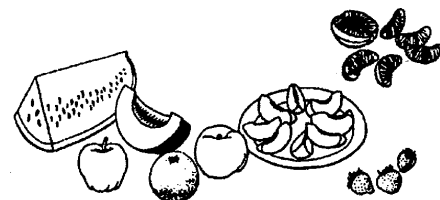
Give your children fresh fruits to take to school instead of candy or sweets. Keep a bowl of whole or sliced fruits in the refrigerator. Have them washed and ready to eat as snacks.

Begin and Finish the Meals with Fresh Fruits

Serve whole or sliced fruits or fruit salad for breakfast, lunch, or dinner.

Use fruit with cereals and pancakes. Also prepare them as a dessert for lunch or dinner.

Eat 2 or more servings of fruit every day. (KS)



Serve Food Safely at Holiday or Party Buffets

A popular way to celebrate holidays or any party occasion is to invite friends and family to a buffet. However, this type of food service where foods are left out for long periods leave the door open for uninvited guests—bacteria that cause foodborne illness. Festive times for giving and sharing should not include sharing foodborne illness. Here are some tips from the USDA's Meat and Poultry Hotline to help you have a SAFE holiday party.

Foodborne Bacteria

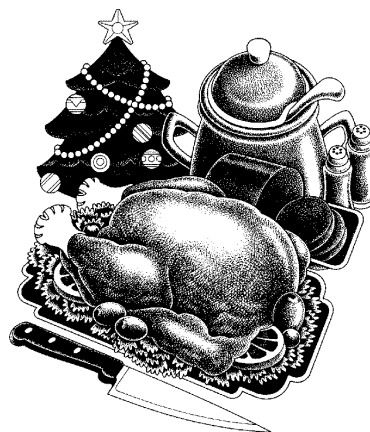
Bacteria are everywhere but a few types especially like to crash parties. *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Clostridium perfringens* and *Listeria monocytogenes* frequent people's hands and steam tables. And unlike microorganisms that cause food to spoil, harmful or pathogenic bacteria cannot be smelled or tasted. Prevention is safe food handling.

If illness occurs, however, contact a health professional and describe the symptoms.

Staphylococcus aureus

Staphylococcus ("staph") bacteria are found on our skin, in infected cuts and pimples, and in our noses and throats. They are spread by improper

food handling. Prevention includes washing hands and utensils before preparing and handling foods and not letting prepared foods—particularly cooked and cured meats, cheese, and meat salads—sit at room temperature more than two hours. Thorough cooking destroys "staph" bacteria but



staphylococcal enterotoxin is resistant to heat, refrigeration, and freezing.

Clostridium perfringens

"*Perfringens*" is called the "cafeteria germ" because it may be found in foods served in quantity and left for long periods of time on inadequately maintained steam tables or at room temperature. Prevention is to divide large portions of cooked

foods such as beef, turkey, gravy, dressing, stews, and casseroles into smaller portions for serving and cooling. Keep cooked foods hot or cold, not lukewarm.

Listeria monocytogenes

Because *Listeria* bacteria multiply, although slowly, at refrigeration temperatures, these bacteria can be found in cold foods typically served on buffets. To avoid serving foods containing *Listeria*, follow "keep refrigerated" label directions and carefully observe "sell by" and "use by" dates on processed products, and thoroughly reheat frozen or refrigerated processed meat and poultry products before consumption.

Safe Food Handling

Always wash your hands before and after handling food. Keep your kitchen, dishes, and utensils clean also. Always serve food on clean plates—not those previously holding raw meat and poultry. Otherwise, bacteria which may have been present in raw meat juices can cross contaminate the food to be served.

Cook Thoroughly

If you are cooking foods

See **HOLIDAY** on page 11



**YOUR
information
center...
around the
clock**

NUFACTS

NUFACTS offers information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In the Lincoln area call 441-7188; for the rest of Nebraska call 1-800-832-5441. When directed, enter the 3-digit number of the message you wish to hear.

320 Should You Refrigerate Pumpkin Pie?
335 Thawing a Turkey
349 Can You Freeze Fresh Meats in Supermarket Wrappings?

and many more...

Cook It Quick!

Tips and recipes for cooking healthy foods in a hurry:
www.lanco.unl.edu/food

FREE monthly Food Reflections e-mail newsletter.

To be added to the mailing list, e-mail Alice Henneman at AHENNEMAN1@UNL.EDU

Clarice's Column

Clarice Steffens
FCE Council Chair



As I begin to write this November column, we are on the road north of Lubbock headed for Lincoln. We have been away from Nebraska for ten days and have seen only two full days of sunshine. We were in Albuquerque for the Balloon Festival and saw very few balloons until the morning we left—five days of weather causing many cancellations of balloon activities before that. As we left, the sky was full of balloons! By then we were headed for Lubbock for the Nebraska/Texas Tech football

game. We stayed dry for the game, but as we left Lubbock it was again cloudy and foggy. We experienced great variances in temperatures—low 30's to near 90 degrees. Incidentally, in spite of the weather, we had a really good time!

We were privileged to have the Lancaster County Chorus perform at the September Council meeting. Our thanks to them for the most enjoyable music. Several of the poster and literacy contest winners also attended along with their families. We appreciate their efforts and enjoyed meeting them. Thanks to our host clubs for an enjoyable evening.

By the time you read this Achievement Day will have come and gone ending the major

FCE activities for the year 2000 and plans for 2001 will be underway. Please contact any of the county officers with suggestions you may have to help us have a successful 2001.

As I begin to plan for the Thanksgiving holiday, it seems to be a good time to reflect on the many things I have to be thankful for including family, friends, good health, and a comfortable home. As we hurry through our lives, it is easy to forget about and take for granted the things that are special and meaningful. However you may spend your holiday, take time to share with those for whom you care and be thankful for the things that make yours the good life.

Happy Thanksgiving!

- FCE News -

FCE Member Recognition

FCE (Family and Community Education Club) member were recognized at the Achievement meeting for 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 40 and 50 years of membership.



(left to right)
15-Years: Adelaide Low, Gateway Gourmet
25-Years: Beverly Traudt, Gateway Gourmet;
Verna Deinert, Emerald
Not pictured:
25-Years: Virginia Kersten, Home Service
20-Years: Dorothy Lococo, Beltline

(left to right)
10-Years: Twyla Lidolph, Salt Creek Circle
5-Years: Fae Hinrichs, Emerald; Clarice Steffens, Salt Creek Circle
Not pictured:
10-Years: Mariana Hill, Forty-Niners
5-Years: Ruby Engle, Helpful Homemakers; Nancy Ludwig, Gateway Gourmet



(left to right)
40-Years: Alice Doane, Individual
50-Years: Marie Rockenbach, Busy Bees
30-Years: Shirley TenHulzen, Individual
Not pictured:
30-Years: Alice Sittler, Home Service



Family Stories: Shared Memories

LaDeane Jha
Extension Educator

Each time our family gathers, it doesn't take long to start sharing tales of when we were children. A vacation we took to Disney World (from Idaho) with all nine members of our family—big station wagon with a home-manufactured trailer for luggage is the basis for many favorite stories. The

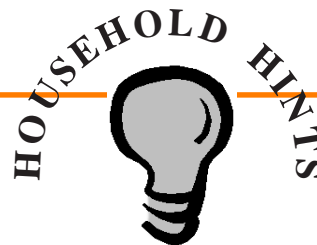
youngest were twins, age 18 months (before disposable diapers). Everything from eating ice to keep cool, bologna sandwiches to save money, and checking into motels where we needed three rooms are stories we never tire of retelling. Coming home through the desert in the middle of Nevada at night with a leaking fuel line that Dad kept trying to hold together with band-aids is the stuff of family memories.

In sharing family stories we communicate beliefs, attitudes, feelings, customs, and traditions among generations. Telling family stories is a good way to gain an appreciation of the past, pride in your present family, and a rich legacy for the future. Many of the stories are also hilariously funny and make for fun family times.

How many of you have enjoyed telling your children

See MEMORIES on page 12

Family Living



by Lorene Bartos, Extension Educator

Holiday Stain Removal

Beverages (Wine, Alcohol & Soft Drinks): Sponge with cool water. Soak for 15 minutes in 1 quart of luke-warm water, 1/2 teaspoon liquid dish detergent and 1 tablespoon of white vinegar. Launder. If stain remains, soak in an enzyme presoak for 30 minutes.

Candle Wax: Scrape excess from fabric with a dull knife. Spray or sponge with dry-cleaning solvent, then rub with heavy-duty liquid detergent before washing. Pressing the wax between paper may set the candle dye more permanently by making it harder for the solvent to penetrate the wax. Launder using hot water and chlorine bleach if safe for fabric.

Gravy: Sponge with dry-cleaning solvent or use prewash stain remover. Rinse with water. Air dry, then apply heavy-duty liquid detergent to stain and launder. OR Soak in warm water and enzyme presoak for 15 to 30 minutes. Launder. (LB)

Family Traditions

The holiday season brings many families together and is a good time to reconnect and share traditions. Increased time together increases communication, closeness and strength within the family.

Family celebrations offer members of the family time to relax and enjoy one another's company. This time can ease stress and tension and is useful for sharing memories or creating new ones such as playing games or baking.

Family traditions pass from one generation to the next. Most families have some traditions they enjoy with each holiday or birthday. These traditions make the family unique and can lead to a sense of unity. Think about forming new traditions during holidays or other celebrations. Family celebrations are a good time for parents and older family members to share cultural traditions with younger family members and educate them about their cultural roots. (SS)



CHARACTER COUNTS! Corner

Caring

To be a person of good character and follow the six pillars, people must be caring. To care about others, we must first care about ourselves. Michael Josephson of the Josephson Institute of Ethics defines caring as showing love, regard and/or concern for the well-being of others and ourselves. Caring people are compassionate, empathetic, giving, kind, loving, considerate, forgiving, and thankful. To feel accepted, loved, and cared about is a human need.

Showing you care about someone does not require a grand gesture. A simple "Hello" with a smile can do the trick. Sending a card or cooking dinner for someone who just experienced a death in the family speak volumes about caring. A hug or pat on the back also shows caring. Parents who are involved with their children's lives communicate "I care" to their children. Treat others as you want to be treated is an important principle for caring. If we want others to care about us, we need to be caring to others. (SS)





4-H & Youth

4-H Bulletin Board

• Teen Council meeting is Sunday, November 12, 3 to 5 p.m. All teens interested in joining Teen Council are invited to attend, or call Tracy at 441-7180. See you there! (TK)

Holiday Gifts



Holiday gifts needed. There is always a need for helping the less fortunate, especially around the holiday season. Lincoln Public School Headstart Program is in need of over 300 gifts for three and four year old children. New, handmade, or purchased

items such as books, stuffed toys, dolls, cars, trucks, markers, puzzles, etc., are needed.

If gifts are wrapped, please indicate what the item is, the cost (\$3 to \$4 recommended) and if the gift is for a boy or girl. Bring gifts to the extension office by December 1.

For more information, contact Lorene at 441-7180. This is an excellent community service program for 4-H, FCE, and other community clubs. Individuals are welcome to participate. (LB)

4-H Volunteer Forum

The Nebraska State 4-H Volunteer Forum will be held February 2 to 3, 2001 in North Platte and March 30 to 31, 2001 in Columbus. This forum is a conference developed by a committee of 4-H volunteers from across the state. Network with other 4-H leaders, exchange successful 4-H programs among 4-H leaders, and be introduced to new areas and projects. There will be numerous workshops, hands-on learning experiences, and new ideas and programs designed to enhance your club. Anyone interested in 4-H is welcome to attend. Scholarships are available through the 4-H Council. For more information, please contact Tracy at 441-7180. (TK)

Are We Producing “Champion” Boys and Girls?



Are we 4-H leaders, producing just “champion” livestock and prize-winning projects? Or are we producing “champion” boys and girls? Have we forgotten 4-H’s purpose: developing better youth through heart, head, hands and health? Maybe some of us are straying a bit, forgetting that projects, records, fairs, and demonstrations are just means to an end, not the end itself.

During this decade, we should pull our programs into perspective and change emphasis from commodity production to youth developing behavioral sciences. Young people today are vitally concerned with world situations and their environment—their quality of living. We can capitalize on this interest and make 4-H relevant to them by encouraging them to examine, for instance, how we can treat waste products to protect our soil, air, and water from further pollution—they’re the ones who’ll eventually have to find answers to problems like these. But they need your leadership now.

What is leadership? Well, maybe it’s working with people, helping them help themselves to reach further maturity. Let’s examine “leadership” a letter at a time.

L-OVE—of doing something for others. Through animal projects you can help 4-H’ers develop this emotion. For instance, some clubs are raising puppies that will later become guide dogs for the blind. Not all dogs make the grade, because they require lots of love. But three of every four puppies started by 4-H’ers develop into guide dogs—the highest success percentage of any group in the country.

E-MPATHY—imaginative projection of your consciousness into your 4-H’ers. A true leader can see another’s point of view.

A-TTITUDES—act as you believe, encourage 4-H’ers to explore, to move up. Help them set goals, but don’t stifle them.

D-IRECTION—help them find direction with obtainable goals. Help them gain new experiences each of their years in 4-H. This doesn’t mean one year’s experience repeated over and over.

E-NTHUSIASM—yours is contagious and transfers quickly to 4-H’ers who eagerly enter activities.

R-ESPONSIBILITY—to realize boys and girls need to be recognized with responsibilities of their own. Relinquish some of your authority to the kids—they can handle it. Why not start by letting older 4-H’ers teach the young ones?

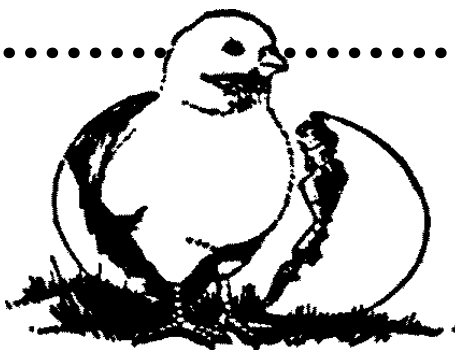
S-ELF DISCIPLINE—carry out your job the best way you know how.

H-APPINESS—true happiness is relevant to kids—they’re constantly searching for it. As a successful leader, you can help develop their own set of values that will help them find satisfaction and happiness.

I-NSPIRATION—You don’t have to be an authority on all topics to inspire your 4-H’ers to explore.

P-URPOSE—to perpetuate leadership itself.

National 4-H New 5/70



Free Chicks!

We will be hatching baby chickens in Lancaster County third grade classrooms the weeks of February 13, March 20 and May 22. If you would like to receive some of these free chicks please call our office at 441-7180 and ask for Ellen. (EK)

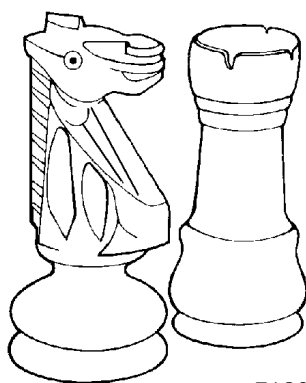
4-H Teens Offering Help

Do you have questions about 4-H projects or subject matter? Do you need some help with demonstrations, judging, and other 4-H events and activities? The 4-H Teen Council and 4-H Ambassadors would like to help you. These teenage youth have been involved in 4-H for a number of years and through their 4-H experiences have gained valuable knowledge they would like to share with others. If you would like to have a Teen Council member or ambassador come to your 4-H meeting, call the extension office and we will help you make arrangements. (TK)

Help Families—Save Pop Tabs

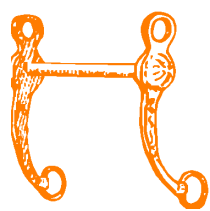
Nebraska 4-H Youth Council is again collecting pop tabs for the Ronald McDonald House in Omaha. The Ronald McDonald House in Omaha was opened in 1994. It provides a home to families whose children, 18 years and younger, are receiving medical care in the Omaha area. The families are asked to pay just \$7.50 per night. This fee, however, does not pay for all of the operating costs of the house, therefore, the Ronald McDonald House recycles pop tabs and the proceeds are used to offset operating costs.

To be a part of this on-going community service project, bring your pop tabs to the Lancaster County Extension Office. (TK)



Interested in Chess?

Interest has been expressed in starting a 4-H Chess Club. Playing chess helps develop critical thinking and organizational skills. If you are interested, please call Lorene at 441-7180. With enough interest, a project will be developed and a club organized. (LB)



HORSE BITS

Budgeting For The Expense Of Horse Ownership

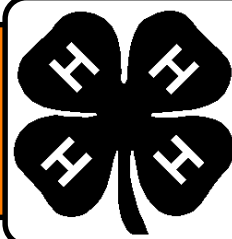
A person considering buying a horse for the first time usually begins by considering the purchase price of the horse. The next consideration goes to the housing and pasturing of the animal. But, as is typical of many hobbies, the greatest expenses are from "all the little things." Prospective horse owners should acquaint themselves with the associated costs of horse ownership before buying. The types of costs will vary because of the diversity of horse uses and ways horses are managed. People using pasture will have large differences in the types of costs involved with feeding a horse and with labor costs. There will be large differences if you are boarding your horse at a commercial stable. Keeping that in mind, a study was done in Oklahoma in 1992 to look at the cost of owning a horse for a year. This study will give some insight into expenses we typically overlook.

Expenses were divided into operating and ownership categories. Operating costs involve day to day, mostly cash expenses. Ownership costs result from owning machinery, equipment, and the horse. From the study done by Oklahoma State University, it was determined that in 1992, operating costs were about triple ownership expenses. The average operating costs that year were \$1459.20 and ownership expenses \$534.57, for a total of \$1993.77 per year.

Used in determining **operating cost** were:

- The cost of *grain, grass hay, salt, and minerals*. A large horse will eat more grain, whereas a smaller horse on pasture would require less. There are numerous sources of minerals, vitamins, and supplements for horses at a wide range of costs, so everyone's feed costs will differ widely.
 - *Farrier costs* included trimming and shoeing the horse approximately every eight weeks at a cost of \$40 each time. Trimming is much less costly than shoeing and the need for shoeing depends on the type and location of activity and owner preference.
 - *Vet medicine* includes health care practices administered by the owners such as two of four scheduled dewormings with a commercially available dewormer product and medicines used for minor wound treatment. *Vet services* are non-injury related care administered by a veterinarian; vaccinations for encephalomyelitis, tetanus, and rabies; two coggins tests and health certificates each year. As with other categories, the amount spent on health care varies among horse owners depending on the frequency of scheduled exams, deworming, and vaccinations.
 - *Horse related utilities* including water, heating, and electricity should be taken into consideration as they consume about \$75.00 per year.
 - *Tack, bedding, entry fees, travel expenses, horse training, rider training, and labor* are all cost items.
 - *Machinery and equipment fuel, maintenance, and repairs* include things such as a pickup, stock trailer, horse barn, fencing, feeding equipment, small tools, and tack.
- Ownership costs** include the cost of the horse itself (assuming the purchase of a 1100 pound horse at \$1445.00), and initial purchase of equipment and machinery. These were calculated using the purchase, salvage, and average investment values of the capital items and standardized rates for length of life, interest, taxes, and insurance. Most people own horses for hobby interests related to family and youth development, enhancement of the quality of life, or entertainment. Budgeting the cost of housing and care before buying a horse will help increase the level of enjoyment of horse ownership. (EK)

4-H & Youth

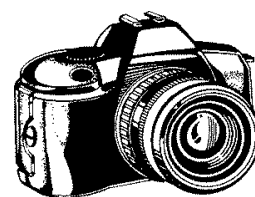
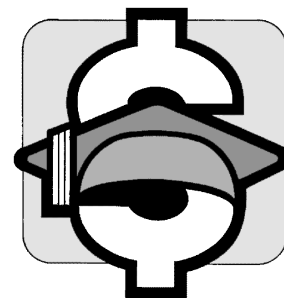


4-H CAN Fight Hunger

In an effort to fight hunger, Nebraska 4-H will be conducting a 4-H CAN Fight Hunger Campaign. The goal is collecting 4000 pounds of food. Collect donated food now until January 5, 2001 and donate it to a charity of your 4-H club's choice. You can also bring it to the extension office and we will donate it to the food pantry. Please report to Tracy the total weight of the food collected, the number of youth and adult volunteers, total volunteer hours, the agencies and/or groups who benefit from the food drive, and any publicity the project received. Call Tracy at 441-7180 for more information and for 4-H CAN Fight Hunger promotional material. (TK)

\$500 Scholarship Opportunity

The Nebraska Association of Fair Managers will be offering two \$500 scholarships to a 4-H boy and girl. The scholarship will be awarded to graduating seniors who are planning to continue their post-high school education. If you would like to receive more detailed information about this scholarship, call Lorene Bartos at 441-7180. (LB)



The Photography themes for 2001 will be Unit II—This Place is a Zoo! Unit III—I've Been Framed!

2000 4-H Teen Council Officers

President - Megan Bergman

Vice President - Kathleen Arends

Secretary - Connie Lemke

Treasurer - Jami Rutt

Historians - Caleb Bucham and Rachel Rentschler

If you would like to become a member of 4-H Teen Council, call Tracy at 441-7180. (TK)



Volunteer Profile

The Lancaster County 4-H Council has endorsed the state mandated 4-H Leader/Volunteer Qualification process, coordinated through the State 4-H Office. 4-H leaders and volunteers are required to complete the Personnel Information Sheet in the Volunteer Profile booklet and covered by \$1 million of liability coverage through the University of Nebraska. If you're working with youth in the 4-H program and haven't already filled out the form, please fill it out and return it to the extension office. As new leaders are designated this year, they also need to complete the form. Forms are available at the extension office.

The Personnel Information Sheets are sent to the State 4-H Office. The background checks will be conducted by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. This same procedure is being used by numerous youth-serving groups across the state. On the extremely rare chance that the background check is red flagged, persons will be contacted by Dr. Gary Heusel, State 4-H Leader. **THANKS** for your participation and cooperation! (LB)



Community Focus

World Food Day: A Time for Reflection



Each year, the United Nations designates a day in mid-October as World Food Day. This year it was October 16.

It would be nice if we could view World Food Day as a time of celebration. However, with an estimated 800 million people in the world suffering from some form of malnutrition, a festive occasion hardly seems appropriate. Rather, the event mostly calls our attention to a pressing problem.

Malnutrition can occur in any of several different forms. Often, we think of it simply in terms of hungry people who do not have access to enough food. But it is more than that. The poorest of the poor often consume too little protein, a nutrient crucial to muscle development. Their diets also may be short essential micro-nutrients, like iodine and vitamin A. And sometimes poor health caused by unsanitary conditions makes it impossible to metabolize the food they do eat.

For the most part, those suffering from malnutrition live in Africa, South Asia, and Latin America. Television images of

children and infants, often with skinny arms and legs but distended stomachs, typically originate from these regions. The problem worsens with periodic droughts, floods, and earthquakes.

So, what can be done? Obviously, a solution should have been implemented long ago. Unfortunately, there is none. The problem is multifaceted, varying from country to country. Here are some of the challenges:

- Population density typically is high, with disproportionate numbers of infants and children. This not only says much about future food requirements, but education and health care needs as well.
- Food production within the country often is limited by poor soils and/or a hostile climate.
- Per capita incomes are low. In the poorest countries, average incomes are only 1/100th of those of the United States. This does not bode well for buying needed food.
- Internal ethnic, tribal, and religious differences often are so severe many of the country's resources are exhausted fighting each other. Moreover, if the country receives food aid from the developed countries, dominant ethnic groups tend not to share it with minority groups.
- Infrastructure, ranging from warehouses to roads, frequently is inadequate. This means food aid sometimes does

See **WORLD** on page 11

Comparing Urban and Farm Household Expenses: Apples to Oranges

The fact many agricultural producers have hundreds of thousands of dollars in land, machinery and other assets does not necessarily mean they are well-to-do. Expenses are tremendous and when subtracted from the checkbook may leave a modest income at best for the family living expenses.

Ninety-eight percent of the population in this country earns a living off the farm, most by working for someone else. That means bringing in a regular paycheck, the first major difference between farm and urban family incomes. Agricultural producers have irregular and untimely incomes. This makes planning for expenses difficult, as people who own their own business realize. On top of irregularity are the unpredictability of weather,

weeds, and insects which can greatly reduce farm income. This year, for example, many Nebraska dryland producers greatly experienced reduced yields. Still, costs of living and farm business expenses remain the same or even higher than last year.

Some differences between urban and rural family living expenses follow.

- Business expenses: Farm families work with large business expenses. For example, fertilizer, chemicals, and seed expenses often run tens of thousands of dollars or more per year. When land rent, interest expense, machinery, and overhead expenses are included total gross expenses can run several hundred thousand dollars for a

See **EXPENSES** on page 11

Setting Up Your Own Business Spotting Business Opportunities Among Scams

Individuals are starting home-based businesses every day hoping to develop a new way to make a living, become their own boss, or supplement their income. Work-at-home schemes are one of the oldest types of consumer fraud. Individuals considering work-at-home offers should be cautious and ask questions prior to getting involved, especially in ones that promise large profits in a short period of time. If they seem to good to be true, they probably are. If purchase of materials or products is required to get started, be on guard. The following are examples of classic work-at-home scams:

Envelope Stuffing or Other Mailing Schemes. This is one of the oldest and most common scams. According to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), promoters usually advertise that, for a "small" fee, they will tell an individual how to earn money stuffing envelopes at home. Promises of lots of money, a guaranteed salary, or a per-envelope fee are made. Instead, for a fee, a letter giving instructions to place the same "envelop stuffing" ad in newspapers or magazines will arrive. The only way to earn money with this scheme is if people respond to the work-at-home ad.

Assembly or craft work. These scams often require an investment of hundreds of dollars in equipment or supplies. The entrepreneur may be required to spend hours producing goods for a company that has promised to buy them when completed. For example, a requirement might be the purchase of a sewing or sign-making machine from the company, materials or "kits" to make items such as aprons, baby shoes, ornaments, stuffed animals, or plastic signs. However, after the supplies and/or equipment are purchased and work performed, fraudulent operators don't pay for the products as promised. Often companies refuse to pay for the work because it did not meet "quality standards." Unfortunately, no work is ever "up to standard," leaving workers with relatively expensive equipment and supplies and no income. To sell the products, an entrepreneur must find his or her own market.

Internet-Related Business Opportunities. Internet-related business opportunities are promoted on Web sites and through e-mail, as well as through traditional advertising methods such as infomercials, classified ads, newspapers, seminars and direct mail. Although the Internet has great

commercial possibilities, everyone who invests does not automatically strike it rich. Remember a company with a flashy web site is not necessarily legitimate.

Medical Billing Schemes. Because competition in the medical billing market is very strong among a number of large and well-established firms, few consumers are able to find clients and generate income from a medical billing business opportunity. These scams are advertised as pre-packaged businesses. For a "small" investment (often as much as \$8,000), a "business start-up package" including a brochure, application, sample diskettes, a contract or licensing agreement, disclosure document, testimonial letters, video cassettes, and reference lists can be obtained.

business opportunities usually at seminars and conferences. They are almost always from out-of-state. They promote and sell business opportunities such as vending machines, discount travel memberships, vitamins, scholarship search services and estate planning. Few, if any, consumers who purchase these business ventures make any substantial money.

Vending Machine and Display Rack Scams. Some business opportunities servicing vending machines or display racks are legitimate. Others are not. Complaints from persons investing money in these types of scams include: non-delivery of equipment after sending initial payment, no follow-up support as promised, and refusal to refund money as promised. Those considering buying a

vending machine or display rack are entitled to written disclosures as required by the *Franchise & Business Opportunity Rule*. Information must include the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of at least 10 prior purchasers in the area; the number and percent of prior purchasers who have made as much or more sales, income, or profits as the seller claims can be made; and an explanation of how the seller knows how much prior purchasers have made, and how any claims about sales, profits, or earnings have been calculated. If the seller

does not make these disclosures, it is violating federal law.

Wealth-Building Scams. These companies use infomercials to promote "get rich quick" books, audio tapes, video tapes, computer software, etc. Promoters of wealth-building schemes claim that if you follow their methods, substantial sums of money can be made through real estate, investments, and business opportunities. Often these are just empty promises and are essentially worthless.

Additional information about specific scams can be found at the Federal Trade Commission Website [<http://www.ftc.gov>] and the Better Business Bureau Website [<http://www.bbb.org>].

How Not to be a Victim.

Consider the following precautions if you are tempted to respond to one of the previously mentioned schemes:

- Be skeptical about "get-rich-quick" advertising claims.
- Ask companies for written documentation for claims in their presentation, especially about success rates.
- Be aware that "experts"

See **BUSINESS** on page 11

SCAMS

Don't Be A Victim!

Multi-level and Pyramid Marketing Programs.

Multi-level marketing is a system of selling goods and services through distributors. In a legal multi-level marketing company, the main focus is related to product sales. A genuine multi-level marketing business has an end user—a consumer who will actually buy the product or service. In pyramid marketing programs, the major focus is to sign up more distributors, not to sell products or services. According to the Federal Trade Commission, state laws against pyramiding allow payment of commissions for retail sales of goods or services, not for recruiting new distributors.

New pyramid schemes now are on the Internet in the form of cyber chain letters. People pay to join programs with the promise of big profits from membership fees paid by new recruits. Products are offered as part of membership; however, no money is earned for simply selling products or services to consumers, as in legitimate multi-level marketing plans.

Seminars Selling Home-Based Opportunities. Some companies travel throughout the United States selling home-based

How's the Air Inside Your Home?

Consider these points to breathe easier in your home.

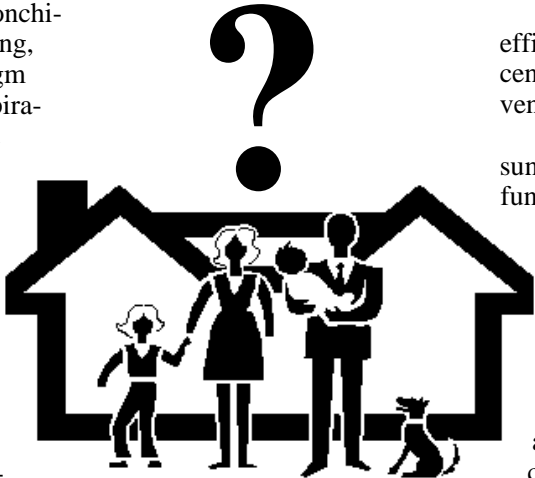
— If you have children, go outside to smoke. Kids exposed to secondhand smoke are at risk for developing lower respiratory tract infections, such as bronchitis and pneumonia. Coughing, wheezing, and excess phlegm are other symptoms of respiratory irritation. Secondhand smoke can cause fluid to accumulate in the middle ear and surgery may be necessary to remove it. Children exposed to secondhand smoke are more likely to develop asthma, and smoke worsens asthmatic children's conditions. Contact your health professional for more information.

— "Triggers" or pollutants in the environment can cause major problems for people with asthma. Vehicle exhaust, industrial emissions, tobacco smoke, pollen, and allergens from pets and insects can trigger an asthma attack. Most people encounter these "triggers" every day, but can minimize their exposure to irritants. Carpool or use public transportation, and stay inside on days when ozone, sulfur dioxide, or pollen counts are high.

— About 4,000 Americans die from asthma each year, and the home is a source of many environmental irritants that can trigger asthma attacks. Use these tips to eliminate some irritants

from your home.

1. Change furnace filters every month or two or according to manufacturer's instructions during periods of use. Consider



installing high-efficiency filters to reduce the number of particles in the air. Combustion gases and particles cause breathing difficulties for people with asthma. Keep combustion-powered equipment and appliances maintained.

2. Keep humidity levels between 30 and 50 percent by using dehumidifiers, exhaust fans, or opening windows when showering, cooking, or using the dishwasher. High humidity promotes the growth of agents that may trigger asthma attacks.

3. Clean and refill humidifiers with fresh water every day.

4. Lower the allergy levels in your home by dusting often, keeping pets out of bedrooms and

using allergen-proof comforters and mattress covers. Wash bedding often in hot water (130 degrees Fahrenheit) and avoid furnishings that collect dust.

5. Consider using a high-efficiency vacuum filter or a central vacuum system that vents to the outside.

— A picnic or hike on a sunny fall afternoon may sound fun, but could make an allergy sufferer miserable because mold and mildew grows on fallen leaves and can trigger allergic reactions. If you have allergies, stay indoors or in sunny, open areas away from trees and avoid raking leaves or cleaning basements. Wearing an air-filtering mask is beneficial.

— Reducing dust, dirt, and moisture from the home relieves allergy symptoms: replace or clean furnace filters as specified by the manufacturer and have a professional check the heating system before it's needed; keep porches, patios, gutters, and down spouts free of leaves; keep windows/doors closed, and screens/glass repaired; use exhaust fans in the kitchens and bathrooms to remove excess moisture from the air; and use dehumidifiers if moisture levels are above 50 percent.

Source: Shirley Niemeyer, Extension Specialist, UNL. (BPO)

WORLD

continued from page 10

not reach those most in need.

In the long-run, the only way to eliminate hunger is for the developing countries to increase per capita incomes. This, in turn, is linked to better

education and health care, cessation of internal conflicts, and an awareness of population pressures. In the meantime, the need for humanitarian food aid from countries like the United

States will continue unabated.

Source: Roy Frederick, Policy Brief, Vol.3, No.41, IANR. (GB)

BUSINESS

continued from page 10

who endorse a product often are paid by the advertiser.

- Be cautious about "testimonials." They may be paid and may not reflect the experience of most consumers.
- Before you buy, decide whether the price reflects a fair market value.
- Be wary of promises of free money or low-interest government loans.
- Do not be pressured to purchase immediately. Good opportunities are not sold through high-pressure tactics.
- Be wary of purchasing a program if company representatives give evasive answers or are not willing to answer questions.

Where to Get More Information and Assistance

Federal Trade Commission (FTC)

Victims of business scams should report them to the FTC. While the Commission cannot resolve individual problems, they can act against a company if it sees a pattern of possible

law violations. Call toll-free (877) 382-4357. [www site: <http://www.ftc.gov>]

United States Postal Service

Under Title 18 of the United States Postal Code, there are four major sections that provide protections related to home-based business opportunities. These include 1) frauds and swindles, 2) fictitious name or address, 3) injunctions against fraud, and 4) false representations; lotteries. These laws relate to the use of the U.S. Postal Service as part of a business opportunity scam or scheme. For additional information, contact the U.S. Postal Service. [www site: <http://www.usps.com>]

National Consumers League

They provide information about how to recognize the different types of fraud targeted to existing businesses and advice about what to do if a business is victimized. Call toll-free at (800) 876-7060. Fraud reports are

relayed to the appropriate law enforcement agencies, including the FTC and state attorney generals' office. [www site: <http://www.natlconsumersleague.org>]

Better Business Bureau

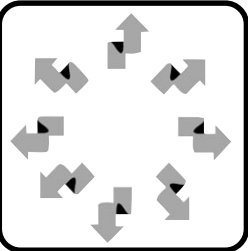
The BBB is a nonprofit organization. Complaints and inquiries about a specific company should be addressed to the BBB where the company is located. [www site: <http://www.bbb.org>]

State Agencies

The Consumer Protection Division of the Nebraska Attorney General's office is a source of information about potential business opportunities as well as an avenue to file complaints when victimized. Call toll-free at (800) 727-6432. [www site: <http://www.nol.org>]

Source: NebFact 437, by Carol Thayer, Extension Specialist, Small-Scale Entrepreneurship. (GB)

Miscellaneous



EXPENSES

continued from page 10

typical family farm. At the same time, the family lives on a fraction of that amount. Averaged over the last five years, farm families enrolled in the Nebraska Farm Business Association retained only 12.5 percent of their gross sales for family living expenses, including food, clothing, housing, school expenses, health insurance, non-farm utilities, transportation, income taxes, and retirement savings.

- Food: Many urban people assume farm families raise much of their own food. Depending on the opportunities the agricultural family may have a portion of their meat and produce come from their own operation, but in these days of mechanized farming, there are fewer diversified farms with livestock. Most farms depend on one or more off-farm incomes to supplement family living expenses which leaves less time for traditional gardening and home food

processing. Surveys show little difference in the percentage of family living income spent on food between farm and non-farm families. Both spend from 8 to 38 percent of their income on food depending on their income level, number of family members and, other variables.

- Taxes: Just like non-farm families, farmers pay thousands of dollars in income and other taxes each year. In a profitable year, an agricultural producer might pay as much in income taxes as a city dweller earns in a year. In years with low yields and/or low prices, farmers pay less income tax but still owe other taxes such as property taxes. In Nebraska, property taxes are the main source of revenue for local government and schools.

SOURCE: Kathy Prochaska-Cue, Ph.D., family economist, NU/IANR (TD)

HOLIDAY

continued from page 6

ahead of time for your party be sure to cook foods thoroughly to safe temperatures. Cook fresh roast beef, veal, and lamb to at least 145 degrees F for medium rare and 160 degrees F for medium doneness. Bake whole poultry to 180 degrees F, poultry breasts to 170 degrees F. Ground turkey and poultry should be cooked to 165 degrees F. All other meat, fish, and ground red meats should be cooked to 160 degrees F.

Use Shallow Containers

Divide cooked foods into shallow containers to store in the refrigerator or freezer until serving. This encourages rapid, even cooling. Reheat hot foods to 165 degrees F. Arrange and serve food on several small platters rather than on one large platter. Keep the rest of the food hot in the oven (set at 200-250 degrees F) or cold in the refrigerator until serving time. This way foods will be held at a safe temperature for a longer period of time. RE-

PLACE empty platters rather than adding fresh food to a dish that already had food in it. Many people's hands may have been taking food from the dish, which has also been sitting out at room temperature.

The Two-Hour Rule

Foods should not sit at room temperature for more than two hours. Keep track of how long foods have been sitting on the buffet table and discard anything there two hours or more.

Keep Hot Foods HOT And Cold Foods COLD

Hot foods should be held at 140 degrees F or warmer. On the buffet table you can keep hot foods hot with chafing dishes, slow cookers, and warming trays. Cold foods should be held at 40 degrees F or colder. Keep foods cold by nesting dishes in bowls of ice. Otherwise, use small serving trays and replace them.

Source: U. S. Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Inspection Service, October 2000 (AH)

RENTAL

continued from page 4

about \$0.43 per day. (Cost of water, vitamins, and minerals not considered in either situation.)

It would seem a fair rental rate would need to be less than the \$0.43 per day incurred by feeding hay, minus the cost of additional transportation, management, etc. that would be incurred by the cattle producer while utilizing the stalks.

A final consideration must be mentioned. Stubble fields can be quite variable in terms of

pounds of stover per acre and in terms of the amount of grain left in the field. There can also be variability on how well animals utilize the residues that are present in the fields due to weather factors. In addition, the condition of fences and the availability of water can vary greatly from field to field, making some fields more desirable than others, from the renter's point of view. (TD)

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Newsletter
Lancaster County

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Gary C. Bergman, Extension Educator–Unit Leader

NOTICE: All programs and events listed in this newsletter will be held at the Lancaster Extension Education Center unless noted otherwise. Use of commercial and trade names does not imply approval or constitute endorsement by the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County.

- Lorene Bartos, Extension Educator
- Corey Brubaker, Extension Educator
- Maureen Burson, Extension Educator
- Tom Dorn, Extension Educator
- Soni Cochran, Extension Associate
- Lance Cummins-Brown, Extension Educator
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- Kendra Schmit, Extension Assistant
- David Smith, Extension Technologist
- Suzanne Spomer, Americorps - VISTA
- Jim Wies, Extension Assistant
- Karen Wobig, Extension Assistant



Phone numbers & addresses:

- Office (leave message after hours)441-7180
- After hours441-7170
- FAX441-7148
- COMPOSTING HOTLINE441-7139
- NUFACTS INFORMATION CENTER441-7188
- EXTENSION OFFICE E-MAIL.....LanCo@unl.edu
- WORLD WIDE WEB ADDRESS.....www.lanco.unl.edu
- OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday



NEBLINE
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Return to:
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444 Cherrycreek Road • Suite A, Lincoln, Nebraska 68528-1507

Extension Calendar

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

November16
Fairboard Meeting 7:30 p.m.

November 23 and 24
Office Closed Thanksgiving Holiday

November 27
Pet Pals 4-H Club Meeting 7 p.m.

December 5
4-H Council Meeting

December 8
Extension Board Meeting 8 a.m.

December 10
4-H Ambassador Meeting 2 p.m.
4-H Teen Council Meeting 3-5 p.m.

Buying Age Appropriate Toys

With the Christmas shopping season right around the corner, many parents and adults begin shopping for toys for children. Young children vary in their abilities at different age groups and need toys that are appropriate for their developmental stage. There are many toys to choose from, but most can be grouped into specific developmental categories: physical or muscle; sensory (sight, sound, hearing, touch); social; and intellectual or creative development.

Infants need toys with bright colors and texture. The toys should be washable,

unbreakable, and large enough so they won’t be swallowed. Babies enjoy toys to look at, feel, chew on, and drop. Ideal toys are rattles, squeak toys, crib mobiles, and stuffed animals or dolls.

Toddlers need “hands on” toys that require little coordination. Ideal toys for this age group are creative: dress-up clothes; play dough; crayons; push-pull toys; balls and simple story books.

Preschoolers enter a stage of development where they are more social and enjoy more realistic toys. Ideal toys are construction sets, puppets, toy

vehicles, books, records, musical instruments and puzzles.

Early school age children begin collections and hobbies. They spend a lot of time with friends and like complicated, crafty and creative activities. They enjoy “active” games and spend a lot of time playing ball games, biking, and being outdoors. Ideal gifts for this age group are board games, science or craft kits, bikes, doll houses, jump ropes, and roller blades.

Finding age appropriate toys for children enable them to grow and develop at a level suitable for them. (SS)



MEMORIES

continued from page 7

about the exploits of your generation. I can just hear the groans as family members respond to the “when I was your age I...” and yet the tales are told over and over again. Stories illuminate a family’s journey and each new experience is fodder for new anecdotes, jokes, and stories.

Stories carry enormous power and can bring a kind of “magic” to your family. You might want to try one of these activities at the dinner table or at your next family gathering.

Family heirlooms or treasures.

What is the story behind the article? Was it carried by hand

from a foreign country? Was it an offering from a husband in the family who had accidentally mowed off the irises 40 years ago? Placing an item on the family dinner table as a centerpiece is the perfect opportunity to talk about it’s history. Hint: when you give family heirlooms write the story of the article and attach it so the story won’t be lost.

Picture a memory
Dig out an old family photo and have family members make up a story about the picture and then tell the real story behind the picture. Family stories, if handed down orally from generation to generation, will

likely outlast photographs.

Happenings
On individual slips of papers write categories such as: the funniest things that ever happened to me; the most embarrassing; the weirdest; the scariest, etc. Then give each person a few minutes to think of an incident. Each person must explain the stories behind his or her statements.

Keep Journals
Journals are a wonderful way to record happenings and to help you remember stories you can share with your family.

Spend time together—tell stories.



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