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January 2011

444 Cherrycreek Rd., Suite A, Lincoln, NE 68528 • (402) 441-7180 • <http://lancaster.unl.edu>

Tightening Your Belt in Tough Times

Lorene Bartos
UNL Extension Educator

Tightening your financial belt in tough times can be a challenge to everyone. As we start the new year and make resolutions, how can we cut back and still have a comfortable standard of living?

Reducing spending whether the situation is temporary or extended, one needs to get the most for their money. Studies have found many families do not adjust their lifestyle for about six months after their income is reduced — that time period can bring disaster. It is important to make adjustments immediately if your financial situation changes.

Whether streamlining a budget or simply making small habitual changes to save money, the first step is recognizing unnecessary expenditures. Make a list of wants and needs. “Needs” are the things we need to survive. “Wants” are the nice things in life we can survive without. For example, is having cable or satellite TV a necessity? Purchasing only things needed is an effective way to begin cutting expenses.

Before purchasing an item, ask the following questions.

- Do we already own one?
- Can we do without it?
- Can we postpone the purchase?
- Can we substitute something else that costs less?
- Can we use our skills to make it?
- Do we really need the item?

One way to see where your money goes is to assess day-to-day spending. Keep track of every penny spent for a week and then increase the tracking for two, three, and four weeks. It is most important to track the daily spending patterns. The rent, utility bills, and other monthly expenditures aren't the

major concerns when tracking spending. After tracking the spending, find the areas of most consistent spending. Is it food, recreation, clothing, etc.? Two areas where most families can cut is food and clothing.

Controlling spending can be a challenge. Families can develop a sound financial plan by working through their expenditures, reducing wasteful spending, and following a budget.

All family members need to work together to reduce spending. Communication among family members is very important during difficult financial times. Children need to know the family's financial situation. So they understand why they cannot purchase or have things others have. Teaching children about money and how to handle money should be a top priority.

In order to have the standard of living one is accustomed to during hard times it may be necessary to reduce spending, give up a want, or find a second income. The second income may be another job or using a skill such as baking, making a craft or other items to sell.

Most families have a goal of wanting to get better at saving money. Being a wise spender allows people to save for a special vacation or to put money away for children's college expenses.

Following a household budget takes practice, and some families never quite accomplish using a budget. By setting priorities and watching spending, most families can live a comfortable lifestyle.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

UNL Extension's Web site, “Managing in Tough Times,” has resources, information and ideas. Go to <http://toughtimes.unl.edu>.

10 Tips for Saving Money

- 1 Set priorities for spending.** Make short, medium, and long term goals. Develop a savings plan for reaching the goals.
- 2 Limit small spending.** How much money is being spend on \$5 lattes, pop, candy, cigarettes, and other items?
- 3 Look at services you are paying for but not using.** Do you have health-club memberships, phone service, magazines, newspapers, unwatched cable packages, and other expenses that can be eliminated. Eliminate items not being used. Don't pay long distance fees on a landline if you use your cell phone for long distance calls.
- 4 Food** — take your lunch to work a couple days a week. Try scaling back on fast food and eating out. Use coupons or watch for specials.
- 5 Clothing** — Children often outgrow their clothing before wearing them out. This can be an expensive and frustrating experience, so don't let their wardrobes get too large. Watch for sales or share clothes with relatives.
- 6 Recreation** — Look at inexpensive ways to do things with the family. Search out free activities, concerts, parks, and community events. Plan a family night which includes playing board games, cards, etc. Rather than spending money at the movie theater, check out movies from the library, watch a movie on TV, or borrow one from a friend.
- 7 When buying a house or renting an apartment,** select one you can afford.
- 8 Consider ways to cut down on utility bills and energy usage.** In the winter, set the thermostat no higher than 72°F when you are home. Lower the thermostat when you are away for more than four hours or asleep. You can save approximately 10 percent on heating bills by turning the thermostat back 10–15 degrees for eight hours a day. In the summer, set the thermostat at 78°F. Save energy by unplugging chargers when the charged item is removed. Switch out incandescent bulbs for compact fluorescent bulbs — the initial cost is more but there is savings in the long run.
- 9 Another area of expense for families is pets.** Many families want and enjoy pets but don't realize the cost of keeping a pet. On the average it cost approximately \$1,000 a year to have a pet. One must consider food, vaccinations, boarding, treats, and other items necessary for keeping pets whether it is a cat, dog, bird, or other pet.
- 10 Be a wise shopper and check the sale ads.** Make a list and stick to it at the grocery store. Go shopping as few times as possible. Many trips can add to costs and purchasing unnecessary items.



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**UNL Extension
in Lancaster
County
2009–2010
ANNUAL
REPORT**



Private Pesticide Applicator Certification Opportunities

Federal and state law states a private pesticide applicator must be certified and licensed to buy, use, or supervise the use of a Restricted-Use Pesticide (RUP) to produce an agricultural commodity on property they own or rent — or — on an employer’s property if the applicator is an employee of the farmer. No pesticide license is needed if the applicator will only be applying General Use Pesticides (GUPs) or if you hire a commercial applicator to apply RUPs to your property.

If you do not have a current private pesticide certification and you plan to buy or apply any RUP products, you will need to receive the same certification training as described below for people who need to be recertified. All training sessions meet the requirements for both initial certification or recertification as private pesticide applicators.

If your private applicator certification expires in 2011, you will receive (or have already received) a notification letter from the Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA). Be sure to keep the letter from NDA and bring it with you to the training session you choose or when you pick up home-study materials. The NDA letter contains a bar-code form which tells NDA what they need to know about you.

Regardless of the certification method chosen, all applicants will receive an invoice from the NDA for the \$25 license fee. Note: we cannot collect the license fee at the extension office. The certification and license is good for three years, expiring on April 15, 2014 for those who certify this spring. You should receive your new license within three weeks.

Private pesticide applicators will have four alternative methods to obtain either recertification or initial certification.

Traditional Training Sessions

Three private pesticide applicator training sessions have been scheduled in 2010 at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road in Lincoln.

- The dates and times are:
- Thursday, Jan. 27, from 8:30–11:30 a.m.
 - Saturday, Jan. 29, from 8:30–11:30 a.m.
 - Wednesday, Feb. 2, from 6:30–9:30 p.m.

A \$30 extension training fee will be collected at the training session (make checks out to Lancaster County Extension).

Self-Study Option

The second option is to pick up the self-study book and associated materials at the extension office. You are expected to read the chapters, then you must answer the written test questions in the back of the book. When you bring the book back to the office, the test will be graded by our staff while you wait (usually about five minutes). You will have an opportunity to see the test results and see the correct answers to any questions you have answered incorrectly.

The \$60 training fee for this method of obtaining certification will be collected when the home-study book is picked up.

Testing Option

The third option is to take a written (closed-book) examination given by the NDA. Please contact NDA at (402) 471-2394 for dates of testing. There is no training fee if you choose this option. You will need to pay the \$25 license fee. You should receive your new license within two weeks after you receive a passing grade on your written test.

Certify at a Crop Production Clinic

The former Crop Protection Clinics have been restructured with an extended range of topics and are now called Crop Production Clinics. For most of the day, participants will make choices between two or more topics being presented concurrently. Private applicators may receive initial certification or recertification by attending the full day and attending the mandatory sessions to certify as a private applicator.

There will not be a clinic in Lincoln in 2011. The Crop Production Clinics held in southeast Nebraska will be:

- Tuesday, Jan. 11 — Beatrice (Beatrice Country Club, 1301 Oak St.)
- Wednesday, Jan. 12 — York (The Auditorium, 612 N. Nebraska Ave.)
- Thursday, Jan. 20 — Fremont (Midland University Event Center, 900 N. Clarkson St.)

Note: all clinics start at 8:45 a.m. If you are planning to receive certification as a private applicator at the clinic, be sure to arrive early and register with NDA at the check in table. They need proof you were there for the full day.

In addition to the normal \$50 registration fee for the Crop Production Clinic, an additional \$30 fee will be assessed if you will be receiving private applicator certification.

Soil Fertility — Phosphorus

Nebraska soils are generally well supplied with phosphorus, but only a small fraction of the total phosphorus is in a form which plants are able to take up and utilize. Total phosphorus contents in eastern Nebraska soils average about 4,700 pounds of P₂O₅ per acre for each foot of soil. Most Nebraska soils contain about 28,000 pounds of total phosphorus as P₂O₅ in the top six feet of soil. If our crops could use all of this phosphorus, we would have a 500-year supply for growing 150 bushels of corn per acre per year.

Even with many tons of total phosphorus present in the root zone, available phosphorus may be deficient for maximum crop yields. By testing the soil, our goal is to determine the amount of **available** phosphorus already present in the soil and decide how much additional phosphorus fertilizer is needed to maximize economic crop returns.

In addition to chemical analysis values, soil test labs categorize the levels of the

various nutrients on a relative scale.

Very low and Low ratings indicate, based on field correlation studies, expect a yield response to an application of the nutrient a high percentage of the time, provided the other essential nutrients are adequate for optimum yield. When the soil test ratings are low or very low, most soil test labs will recommend the application of sufficient amounts of phosphorus to replace the amount extracted by the crop, based on the yield goal, plus an extra amount to slowly build the soil test level.

Medium ratings indicate a yield increase would be expected part of the time. The amount of the nutrient recommended varies depending on the philosophy of the lab. Some labs recommend based on replace and build philosophy, others recommend applying only the amount shown to result in a significant yield response based on widespread field correlation studies.

High ratings indicate the

nutrient is present in the soil in sufficient amounts so expect a yield increase from additional fertilization only rarely.

Very high ratings indicate the nutrient is not expected to be a limiting factor.

For annual crops, such as wheat, corn, milo, or soybeans; the most efficient way to apply phosphorus is to apply it in a band at the time of planting. An alternative is a broadcast application before planting when it can be incorporated into the soil. Generally, band applications of phosphorus fertilizers require only one-half the rate of phosphorus per acre to achieve the same yield results as broadcast and incorporated applications because the more concentrated band is not converted to unavailable forms (fixed) as quickly.

Top dressing phosphorus can be effective for perennial crops such as alfalfa and brome-grass. These crops have very vigorous crowns from which many fine roots originate, thus phosphorus uptake can occur
see PHOSPHORUS on page 11

Land Owners Update Meeting, Jan. 24

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County is sponsoring a Land Owners Update meeting on Monday, Jan. 24, 8 a.m.–Noon at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln.

Cost is only \$20 to cover refreshments, handouts, and materials. Registration is required by Jan. 17 and space will be limited to the first 60 participants. For a registration form, call (402) 441-7180 or go to <http://lanaster.unl.edu/ag> and look under “Upcoming Workshops.”

Understanding the trends in land ownership and management is critical to success in today’s farming industry. If you are a land owner, how has your land investment changed over the

past several years? If you are a grower, have you been as efficient as possible in managing your land input?

The objective of this program is to provide practical information and strategies to help Nebraska land owners, managers, and farm operators understand the recent trends in agricultural land values and rental rates. We will also take a look down the road to see how land management will be the key to future success in farming.

Topics include trends in ownership — who is buying and why. We will also seek to understand how far the market has come in a short period of time and where we might be headed in the future. Participants will receive additional strategies for sizing

up the potential land opportunity and how to deal with the volatility in what has become a sellers/renters market.

If you are a grower, learn strategies on how you can stand out to a potential land owner. If you are a land owner, learn how to pick the best renter that offers you both stability and sustainability in your market investment.

Speakers include Tim Lemmons, UNL Extension Educator for Northeast Nebraska, Allan Vyhnaelek, UNL Extension Educator from Platte County, as well as others.

For more information, contact Tom Dorn, Extension Educator from Lancaster County, at (402) 441-7180 or tdorn1@unl.edu.

Financial Recordkeeping Training, March 3

One of the most popular in-depth extension programs, a Computerized Farm Financial Recordkeeping Training will be offered Thursday, March 3, 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road in Lincoln. Pre-register before Feb. 18. Preregistration with payment is required to hold a spot.

The concepts taught in this training are applicable to several inexpensive computerized record keeping software programs, with slight modifications in procedure.



This training will be taught hands-on using Quicken Deluxe in the classroom. All instruction will be presented in a hands-on teaching style with participants sitting at computers performing the tasks being demonstrated. To save time, much of

the instruction on generating reports will be done using sample data files created to represent a typical crop and livestock farming operation. Participants will receive step-by-step written instructions for all tasks being demonstrated. Many folks comment the handouts are one of the best

aspects of the training. For a brochure with detailed information and registration form, visit the extension office, go to <http://lanaster.unl.edu/ag> and look under “Upcoming Workshops,” or call (402) 441-7180.

Meet Spots: Lincoln’s Bed Bug-Sniffing Dog

Barb Ogg
UNL Extension Educator

Spots is the perfect employee. He’s low to the ground and doesn’t mind being on all fours. He is doggedly tenacious. He never whines about working conditions. And best of all, he works for kibble. Spots is a bed bug-sniffing dog.

Well-trained bed bug-sniffing dogs are extraordinarily accurate and much more accurate than humans at finding bed bugs. Entomology researchers at the University of Florida reported well-trained dogs can detect bed bugs with 96 percent accuracy. Spots was trained in Kansas at Iron Heart High Performance Working Dogs.

One of the biggest difficulties in controlling bed bugs is finding infestations when they are small and easier to control. Because bed bugs feed at night and hide during the daytime, people often do not know they have an infestation. They may attribute a few bites to other causes. Most of the time, people do not see live bugs until the infestation is well established. When that happens, bed bugs are harder to control.

Finding a small infestation can be tough. Inspecting requires



Spots, a rat terrier, sticks his nose between the mattress and box springs to smell the live bed bug placed there by his owner. When he detects bed bugs, he has been trained to sit, point and bark.

dismantling a bed, removing the sheets, flipping over the mattress and examining the inside of the box springs. It is even more difficult to find bed bugs in a sofa or easy chair.

An easier and more accurate inspection can be executed with a dog — one specifically trained to detect bed bugs. These special dogs are trained alongside dogs that sniff out narcotics, explosives, or cadavers.

James and Amy Pelowski are Spots’ owners. As good as Spots is, the dog handler is just as important. James went through extensive training with Spots and is a certified dog handler.

Every day, James puts Spots through a series of bed bug detecting exercises to maintain his training. He gets fed only when he finds live bed bugs. He is truly a working dog.

Spots has been trained to only detect live bed bugs and bed bug eggs. This is important because he won’t key on dead bugs killed by previous treatments.

If a person knows he has bed bugs, it doesn’t make sense to hire Spots. But it might make sense to hire a dog:

- if it is important to know if other bedrooms are infested or whether the sofa needs to be treated or discarded.



James Pelowski, Spots’ owner, demonstrated to bed bug workshop attendees the exercises he puts Spots through each day. One vial has a live bed bug; the others are empty. Spots is fed if he detects the correct vial.

- if the neighboring apartment has bed bugs and the landlord wants to know if bed bugs have moved into neighboring units.
- if a person wants to make sure the bed bug infestation has been eradicated. (James says you must wait 30 days after a chemical treatment for Spots to accurately find bed bugs.)
- when bed bugs are suspected in locations where bed bugs might be scattered, like office buildings, hospitals, schools, and movie theaters. Earlier this year, a movie theater company in New York City received complaints about bed bugs in

their theaters. They hired a dog who found bed bugs in only two of the 4,700 seats, saving treatment costs and preventing unnecessary insecticide exposure.

- to inspect vacant apartments before new tenants move in. It would also make sense to use a dog to inspect hotel and motel rooms on a regular basis.

Spots is the first bed bug-sniffing dog in Nebraska. We are fortunate he lives in Lincoln. To find out how much James and Spots charge for an inspection, call (402) 613-0889 or go to www.k9bedbugdetect.com.

You Can Still Enjoy Feeding Birds Even on a Budget

Soni Cochran
UNL Extension Associate

If finances are tight, you can still find ways to enjoy watching birds and bird feeding without busting your budget. Try these tips:

1. Learn about birds and wildlife found in our area. By learning about birds and wildlife found in our area, you’ll make the best choices when it comes to selecting bird seed, feeders and plants to add to your landscape.

Bird and wildlife field guides are not overly expensive and make great gifts. Be sure to purchase guides especially written for birds and animals found in your region. Field guides can be checked out from the library. Bookstores also carry field guides. And if you are lucky, you might find one at a garage sale or thrift store. For an inexpensive, fun

family outing, consider a trip to one of these sites to learn more about feeding birds and wildlife found locally:

- Pioneers Nature Center in Lincoln; <http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/parks/naturecenter>.
- Spring Creek Prairie, south of Denton, <http://springcreek-prairie.audubon.org>.

2. Shop around for bird seed. Check sales flyers from pet stores, farm supply stores, nurseries, specialty wild bird feeding stores, discount stores, and more. Stock up when prices are lower. You can also check on-line for stores with competitive prices, but remember to figure in shipping and handling costs. If you only feed birds during fall/winter, make sure you use up the seed so you don’t have to store it over the summer.

3. Offer better seed. Avoid mixes of seed containing fillers like milo. These bags of seed may seem less expensive,

but you’ll quickly find out birds waste most of the seed. They kick the filler seed right onto the ground where it spoils. If you use Niger seed and hulled sunflower chips, you’ll get much less waste and have fewer seed hulls to clean up. Black-oil sunflower seeds and safflower are also a good combination for many birds in our area.

4. Buy bird seed in bulk. Larger bags or buckets of bird seed are usually sold at a better price-per-pound of seed. And by buying in larger quantities, you make fewer trips to the store.

If you are buying in bulk, store your bird seed in rodent-proof containers. Purchase or use a clean, metal garbage can with a tight-fitting lid. Keep the seed bin in an unheated garage or outside shed to help discourage pantry pests from infesting the seed. These pests *see BIRDS on page 11*



Niger seed

Hulled sunflower chips

Black-oil sunflower seeds

Safflower seed seeds

Cluster Flies and Face Flies Indoors

Barb Ogg
UNL Extension Educator

Cluster flies and face flies overwinter as adults. In the late summer, these flies begin to crawl into small cracks and crevices of structures. These small openings are often found around window frames, door frames, and under siding or eaves. The flies hibernate in the walls or attics to survive until springtime.

These flies appear during warm periods in the winter or when sun heats up exterior walls where the flies are hibernating.

Once these flies crawl into cracks and crevices, they cannot be prevented from entering the structure. Sealing cracks and crevices is the best and most permanent solution to this insect problem. This effort will also help keep out Asian lady bird beetles and boxelder bugs.

These flies buzz around windows because they are attracted to outdoor light. They can become a problem in virtually any structure, but older homes that have ill-fitting windows and siding are especially at risk.

Catch these flies with fly tape or other fly traps in front of

uncurtained windows. In attics or other unoccupied portions of the house, a fogger may be helpful.

Cluster flies — These flies are larger than a house fly and recognizable because they are very slow moving and sluggish.

They are dark gray and have irregular lighter patches on the abdomen. The wings overlap at the tips when sitting on a surface.

Cluster flies are earthworm parasites. Throughout the spring and summer, they lay eggs singly in cracks in the soil. After an egg hatches, the emerging maggot penetrates the body of an earthworm. There are several generations of cluster flies each summer.

Face flies — The face fly is nearly identical to the house fly. Homes with face fly infestations in the winter are often in rural areas near livestock pastures, because this fly breeds in animal manure.



(L-R) Adult cluster fly and face fly shown approximately twice size.

Jim Kalisch, UNL Department of Entomology

FOR MORE INFORMATION

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County article “Flies in the Home” is available online at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/pest/resources/Flies015.shtml>



Alice Henneman, MS, RD, UNL Extension Educator

Beef Stew with Vegetable “Gravy”

Makes 6 servings

IMPORTANT:
Read recipe, including Alice’s Tips, before starting to prepare stew.



This soup looks like it has a rich gravy, but it’s really nutrient-rich pureed vegetables! The use of herbs, low-sodium beef broth and the onion add flavor without the necessity of adding much (if any) salt to this recipe.

- 1 pound lean beef stew meat, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 3 cups low fat, low-sodium beef broth
- 1 medium onion
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped OR 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper, preferably freshly ground
- 1/4 teaspoon salt, if desired
- 1 pound potatoes
- 1 pound carrots

Heat oil in large saucepan or Dutch oven. Add meat and sauté until browned on all sides. Add beef broth, onion, garlic, thyme, pepper and if desired, salt. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer for about an hour until meat is tender.

While the meat is cooking, wash, peel, and cut the carrots and potatoes into 1-inch chunks.

When meat is tender, add the cubed vegetables. Bring mixture to a simmer and cover. Cook for about 20 more minutes or until vegetables are tender.

Remove about half the vegetables (but no meat) with a slotted spoon and puree in a blender until smooth. Add broth from the stew, if needed, to aid in pureeing the vegetables. Return pureed vegetables to the stew and stir to combine. If needed, thin broth with water or beef broth.

Alice’s Tips:

- Cooking Light* magazine (3/2003) warns when blending hot liquids to use caution as steam can increase the pressure inside the blender and blow the lid off. They advise filling the blender no more than half full and blending in batches, if necessary. And, while blending, hold a potholder or towel over the lid.
- Round red potatoes and Yukon gold potatoes hold their shape well when cooked in a stew.
- A pound of carrots and a pound of potatoes EACH are equal to about 3 cups of cubed/diced vegetables.
- An easy way to temporarily prevent peeled potatoes from darkening is to immerse the WHOLE peeled potato in cold water. Cut the potatoes into pieces just before you add them to the stew.
- If you have extra beef broth that wasn’t needed to make the stew, try using it as part of the liquid when making rice. Plan to use extra broth for a meal within a day or two after opening the container. Or, freeze broth in ice cube trays for later use; transfer to a freezer bag after broth is frozen.
- Transfer any leftover stew to shallow containers to speed cooling; keep perishable foods (such as this stew) at room temperature no longer than a TOTAL of 2 hours. You can place loosely covered foods in the refrigerator while still warm; cover when the food is completely cooled. Plan to eat leftovers within 3 to 4 days or freeze for longer storage.

Alice Henneman, MS, RD
Extension Educator

Salt is in the news a lot lately. Most reports say Americans are consuming too much of it. How much do you REALLY know about salt? Test your “salt savvy” with the following quiz!

Before you read further, you may wonder, “What’s the difference between ‘salt’ and ‘sodium’?” According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention⁽¹⁾:

- Sodium chloride is the chemical name for salt.
- The words salt and sodium are not exactly the same, yet these words are often used in place of each other. For example, the Nutrition Facts Panel uses “sodium,” whereas the front of the package may say “low salt.”
- Ninety percent of the sodium we consume is in the form of salt.

In the following questions and answers, the terms “salt” and “sodium” will be used interchangeably.

Questions:

- How much salt/sodium does the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies of Science recommend people strive to eat daily?
 - a. 1,500 mg
 - b. 2,300 mg
 - c. 2,400 mg
 - d. 3,000 mg
- What is the approximate average daily sodium intake for persons age 2 and up in the United States?
 - a. 800 mg
 - b. 1,500 mg
 - c. 2,300 mg
 - d. 3,400 mg
- Which of the following are benefits from reducing the amount of sodium in our diets?
 - a. Lowered blood pressure
 - b. Reduced risk of heart disease

- c. Reduced risk of stroke
- d. Reduced risk of gastric cancer
- e. All of the above

4) Approximately how much of our sodium comes from processed foods?

- a. 45%
- b. 55%
- c. 65%
- d. 75%

5) How much sodium is in a teaspoon of salt?

- a. 1,300 mg
- b. 2,300 mg
- c. 3,300 mg

6) Can foods can be high in salt without tasting salty?

- a. Yes
- b. No

7.) Based on the Nutrition Facts label below, how much sodium is in 1 cup of the food?

- a. 30 mg
- b. 250 mg
- c. 470 mg



Answers:

- a. 1,500 mg.** *The Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2005* recommended consuming less than 2,300 mg of sodium for the general population 2 or more years of age. The 2005 Guidelines also identified at-risk subgroups within the general population — persons with hypertension, African Americans, and middle-aged and older adults — and recommended a sodium intake no greater than 1,500 mg per day for them. New analysis of the National Health and Nutrition Examination Data shows this 1,500 mg recommendation would apply to 69 percent of U.S. adults with the 2010 Dietary Guidelines

Advisory Committee (DGAC) now recommending 1,500 mg per day be the guideline for the general population. The DGAC recommends this change occur gradually as time is required to adjust taste perception in the general population.

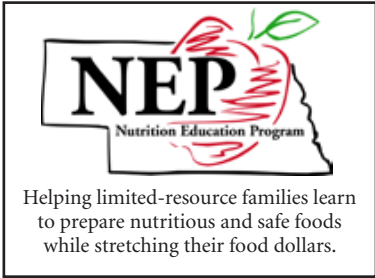
Unfortunately, there isn’t an easy test to determine whether a person is salt sensitive and whether reducing salt intake now would be beneficial later. Whether or not a person reduces salt intake to 1,500 mg, some reduction in salt is probably a good idea for most of us.⁽²⁾

- d. 3,400 mg.** The average daily sodium intake for age 2 and up is 3,436 mg. This amount equals about 1.5 teaspoons of salt per day.⁽³⁾

- e. All of the above.**⁽⁴⁾

- d. 75 percent.** The natural sodium content of food, on average, accounts for only 10 percent of total intake. Discretionary salt use (i.e., table and cooking salt) provides another 5 to 10 percent of
- see SALT SAVVY on next page

Nutrition Facts			
Serving Size 1 cup (228g)			
Servings Per Container 2			
Amount Per Serving			
Calories 250		Calories from Fat 110	
		% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 12g			18%
Saturated Fat 3g			15%
Trans Fat 3g			
Cholesterol 30mg			10%
Sodium 470mg			20%
Total Carbohydrate 31g			10%
Dietary Fiber 0g			0%
Sugars 5g			
Protein 5g			
Vitamin A			4%
Vitamin C			2%
Calcium			20%
Iron			4%
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.			
	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g



Julie Rasmussen
UNL Extension Associate

Have you made your New Year’s resolution? Why not center one around family meals? If you aren’t eating meals together, now is the time to find ways to make it happen. If you are eating together, think of ways to make the meal time even better.

There are many benefits to eating together. Family meals tend to be more nutritious. We often give a little more thought to meals when it is a meal eaten

as a family. It is also a great time to communicate and have a good time as a family.

Here are some ideas to make family meals work for your family:

• Make meal times enjoyable

Family meals will be more successful if it is something your family wants to do. Be positive. Think of ways to include family members in conversation. Look for ways to make it a special time for your family.

• Take a look at schedules

One difficulty with family meals is finding the time. Look for times when most family members will be home. Some days the best time for a family meal might be breakfast.

• Limit distractions

Turn the television off and only take phone calls if it is an emergency.

• Start traditions

Maybe Sunday night is spaghetti night or Friday night is pizza night.

• Have the family help

Share the mealtime chores. Have age appropriate tasks for family members. One person can set the table, another can help prepare the salad, and all can help with clean up.

• Set a good example

Teach manners by using good manners. Your children are more apt to like their vegetables if you are eating them.

• Keep it simple

Family meals do not need to mean more work. A good meal can be simple and easy.

Think of a New Year’s resolution that would work for you. Cook together. Eat together. Talk together. Make mealtime a family time.

Family Meals Have Many Benefits

FAMILY & COMMUNITY EDUCATION (FCE) CLUBS

President’s View — Irene’s Items

Irene Colborn
FCE Council Chair

Thanksgiving is past and I hope it was a good one for you. We should all be thankful for many things. On my list is being thankful to be living in this country with all the freedoms



we enjoy and being able to make choices whether they be good or bad. Also, I am thankful the Christ of Christmas is a part of my life. With the birth of the New Year, I am reminded of hearing Lou Holtz say on your



next birthday, don’t count the years but make the years count. Sounds like a good idea to me. We will have Council meeting on Monday, Jan. 24. Planning on having some soup and a craft. Hope you all can come.

FCE News & Events

2011 Training Lessons

The schedule for next year’s Family & Community Education (FCE) and community leader training lessons are being planned. All lessons will be presented at 1 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln.

Non-FCE members or groups should call Pam at (402) 441-7180 to register for these lessons so materials can be prepared.

- Chocolate — A functional Food? — Wednesday, Jan. 5
- Healthy Meal Planning on a Budget — Wednesday, Jan. 26
- Fun to Play — Ready to Learn Wiring: Infants and Toddlers for Success! — Wednesday, Feb. 23
- Brain Blitz — Wednesday, March 23
- Legally Secure Your Financial Future — Wednesday, Sept. 28

Leader Training Lesson, “Chocolate — a Functional Food?,” Jan. 5

The FCE and Community Leader Training Lesson “Chocolate — A Functional Food?” will be Wednesday, Jan. 5, 1 p.m. Extension Educator Alice Henneman will present the lesson. This lesson will help you learn about the different types of chocolate, explore the health benefits of chocolate and demystify the functional food jungle in the grocery store.

Leader Training Lesson, “Healthy Meal Planning on a Budget,” Jan. 26

The FCE and Community Leader Training Lesson “Healthy Meal Planning on a Budget” will be Wednesday, Jan. 26, 1 p.m. Extension

Educator Alice Henneman will present the lesson. This lesson will teach participants how to plan healthy, delicious meals, consistent with the dietary guidelines, while on a limited budget.

Council Meeting, Jan. 24

The January FCE Council meeting is scheduled for Monday, Jan. 24, 12:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center. A soup luncheon will be held. Following the business meeting members will make a Forever Card. All FCE members are invited to attend. Call (402) 441-7180 to register.



Lorene Bartos, UNL Extension Educator

Make cleaning often-forgotten places your new year’s resolution

1. Inside bottom of dishwasher door — Spray a non-abrasive, all-purpose cleaner along it, then sponge clean it. You’ll be amazed at what you pick up!

2. Interior walls and shelves of refrigerator — For health and cleanliness, always remember to wipe up spills immediately. This keeps your refrigerator looking its best, and helps prevent the growth of bacteria. Use a non-abrasive, all-purpose cleaner or a solution of baking soda and water.

3. Insides of light fixtures — Even a thin coat of dust can cut down on light output. First, unplug the light and allow to cool. Then, use a disposable dust cloth to clean.

4. Tops of ceiling fan blades — Capture all the dust with special dusting mitts or dusters designed for getting to these hard-to-reach surfaces.

5. Ovens — Cleaning spills as you go will make this tough job easier. First, allow surfaces to cool before cleaning. Then, use an oven cleaner; however, don’t use an oven cleaner on a self-cleaning or continuous cleaning oven because it may damage the surface. Always read the product label directions before using.

6. Exterior cabinet of range — Again, allow cooking surfaces to cool before cleaning. Then, use a non-abrasive, all-purpose cleaner.

7. Telephone receivers, door handles, computer keyboards — Use disinfectant wipes on these surfaces to whisk away dirt and germs!

Unclutter That Desk!
Resolve to Clean, Organize Your Desk

Who says all New Year’s resolutions have to be made on Jan. 1? Jan. 12 is National Clean Off Your Desk Day — the perfect day to resolve to get the desktop clutter under control. Before you begin, assemble a few boxes, some trash bags and a magic marker. Label the boxes “Immediate” (as in Immediate Attention Required), “Not Sure,” “Read,” “File,” “Recycle,” and “Shred.” Now you’re ready to attack the desk.

Sweep clean: The first order of business is to get everything off the top of the desk that doesn’t have anything to do with your desk’s basic purpose. Coffee cups, food items, paper napkins, and the like should go in the sink or in the trash. Remove framed pictures and other personal mementos, as well as pencil holders, tape dispensers, staplers, and other pieces of equipment littering your desk. Set them aside for later evaluation.

Set aside: Magazines, journals, newspapers, periodicals, and catalogs take up valuable space on your desktop. Move them to the “Read” box and deal with them during a separate organizing session or put them in the “Recycle” box.

Sort: As you remove the rest of the items from the top of your desk, deposit them in the appropriate box or trash bag.

Shred: If you have a shredder, use it as you sort to discard papers that contain personal information or anything valuable to an identity thief. If you don’t

own a shredder, put them in the “Shred” box and make it a priority to have them thoroughly destroyed.

Review: Go back to the “Not Sure” box. Now that you’ve gone through everything on your desk, you should have a better handle on priorities. Reevaluate what’s in this box so when you’re done, the box is empty.

File: Everything in the “File” box should be put in labeled folders and stored in a file drawer.

Clean: Make sure the top of the desk is thoroughly clean before you put anything back on it. Since there are probably coffee stains and food stains lurking amidst the dust, use an all-purpose cleaner with a disinfectant.

Organize: The “Immediate” box should contain items you’re currently working on. Think about the best way to have them handy on the top of your desk. You may need to invest in a desktop storage tower or a tabletop file for easy access.

Evaluate: Take a look at the personal items. Do you really need all those photos and mementos cluttering the top of your desk? Then take a look at the equipment. Is it just a habit to keep the tape dispenser on your desk or do you really use it every day? Would it be better to keep some of these items handy in a drawer?

Reform: Set aside a few minutes at the end of each day to tidy up your desk.

Subscribe to a FREE Parenting Electronic Newsletter!



Receive your free newsletters by email — monthly for children 1 to 12 months of age, then every other month for children 1 to 5 years old. Just go to www.extension.org/parenting.

Salt Savvy

continued from preceeding page the total. About 75 percent is derived from salt added during processing by manufacturers. The most effective strategies for reducing sodium, therefore, are reducing sodium during food processing, and for individuals to choose more fresh, less processed items and to use less salt during food preparation.⁽⁴⁾

- 5) **b. 2,300 mg.**⁽⁴⁾
- 6) **b. Yes.** For example, a food can taste sweet and still contain a significant amount of salt. The best way to determine the amount of salt in a food is to check the Nutrition Facts Label.⁽⁵⁾
- 7) **c. 470 mg.** When reading nutrition labels, it is important to check the amount of sodium in the serving size you are consuming. For example, if you ate 1.5 cups of this food, you would consume 705 mg of sodium.

To Reduce the Salt in Your Diet, Try These Tips

- Check food labels for salt and compare brands and varieties for those lower in salt. Many manufacturers are in the process of producing lower salt foods — continue to check labels periodically for lowered amounts of sodium in foods.
- Eat more fresh foods (fruits, vegetables, lean meats, seafood, and poultry). Frozen vegetables are typically lower in sodium than canned vegetables.
- Look for low-sodium products or foods without added salt to replace regular higher-sodium foods. For example, check for no-added-salt or low-sodium versions of broth, vegetables, etc.
- Avoid salting food during cooking or reduce the amount of salt you add in cooking. An exception might be yeast breads where the salt works together with the yeast in the rising process.

- Request salt not be added to your food when eating out.
 - Use flavorings other than salt, such as spices and herbs, citrus juices and zest, and flavored vinegars.
- ⁽¹⁾ Source: Sodium: the facts at http://www.cdc.gov/salt/pdfs/Sodium_Fact_Sheet.pdf and accessed Dec. 1, 2010.
- ⁽²⁾ Source: Strategies to Reduce Sodium Intake in the United States, 2010 at http://books.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=12818&page=17# and retrieved Dec. 1, 2010 and Report of the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010 at <http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/Publications/DietaryGuidelines/2010/DGAC/Report/A-ExecSummary.pdf> and retrieved Dec. 1, 2010.
- ⁽³⁾ Source: Americans Consume Too Much So Sodium [Salt], Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at <http://www.cdc.gov/Features/dsSodium/> and retrieved Dec. 1, 2010.
- ⁽⁴⁾ Source: Report of the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010 at <http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/Publications/DietaryGuidelines/2010/DGAC/Report/D-6-SodiumPotassiumWater.pdf> and retrieved Dec. 1, 2010.
- ⁽⁵⁾ Source: Consensus Action on Salt & Health at http://www.actiononsalt.org.uk/health/salt_and_health.htm and accessed Dec. 1, 2010.

Nebraska Earth-Kind® Roses are Low-Maintenance, High Performance



Barn Dance



Carefree Beauty



Earth Song



Knock Out

Earth-Kind® Roses are low-input roses that combine outstanding performance and superior disease tolerance. Less water, fertilizer, and pesticides are needed to grow these beautiful landscape roses.

To prepare the site: Till in three-inches of compost. Plant the roses in a location that receives eight or more hours of direct sunlight each day and away from structures/plants that impede air flow. Maintain three-inches of mulch over the planting bed and replenish it as it decomposes. Roses should be watered one-inch per week for the first growing season; one-inch per month during the second growing season; and not watered at all from the third growing season on.

Ten rose varieties received the Earth-Kind® designation in trials conducted by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension Master Gardeners and the Omaha Rose Society.

Barn Dance: 36 inches by 60 inches; pink/orange flower color; fragrant; prolific blooms; recovers quickly from blackspot; blossoms resemble those of a hybrid tea rose.

Blushing Knock Out: 34 inches by 54 inches; pale pink flower color; slightly fragrant; no blackspot; some winter dieback.

Carefree Beauty: 54 inches by 80 inches; pink, double flower; fragrant; prolific large blooms; some winter dieback.

Earth Song: 52 inches by 70 inches; pink, double flower; fragrant; prolific blooms; recovers quickly from blackspot.

Knock Out: 34 inches by 47 inches; cherry red flower color; not fragrant; significant winter dieback but does recover; no blackspot; introduced in 2000.

New Dawn: 95 inches by 110 inches; blush pink flower color; fragrant; vigorous climber; blooms spring and fall; introduced in 1930; very slight blackspot.

Pink Knock Out: 32 inches by 60 inches; medium pink flower color; not fragrant; some winter dieback; no blackspot; very shiny leaves.

Princess Verona: 64 inches by 74 inches; medium pink, double flower; fragrant; upright plant; prolific blooms; orange-red hips in fall.



Princess Verona



Sea Foam



The Fairy

Sea Foam: 23 inches by 75 inches, creamy white flower color; not fragrant; a great groundcover rose; rose petals don't self-clean; significant winter dieback but does recover.

The Fairy: 26 inches by 60 inches, pink flower color, not fragrant; introduced in 1932; diminutive one-inch flowers in large clusters; some winter dieback.

Source: Kathleen Cue, Extension Associate, UNL Extension in Douglas/Sarpy Counties

All photos by Master Gardener Anita Eckley, UNL Extension in Douglas/Sarpy County



Garden Guide

THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH

By Mary Jane Frogge, UNL Extension Associate

Use sand instead of salt for icy spots on the sidewalk.

Do not wait until late in the winter to order seeds. Many varieties sell out early.

Avoid heavy traffic on the frozen, dormant lawn. The crown of the plant may be severely damaged or killed.

Brush snow from evergreens as soon as possible after a storm. Use a broom in an upward, sweeping motion. Serious damage may be caused by heavy snow or ice accumulating on the branches.

Check young trees and shrubs for rodent or rabbit damage. Prevent injury with fencing or protective collars.

Add garden record keeping to the list of New Year's resolutions. Make a note of which varieties of flowers and vegetables do best and which do poorly in your garden.

Review your vegetable garden plans. Perhaps a smaller garden with fewer weeds and insects will give you more produce.

When reviewing your garden catalogs for new vegetable varieties to try, an important consideration is improved insect and/or disease resistance. Watch also for drought-tolerant types.

Analyze last year's planting, fertilizing, and spraying records. Make notes to reorder successful varieties as well as those you wish to try again.

Check stored fruits and vegetables such as potatoes and apples for bad spots which may lead to decay. Remove and use those which show signs of spoiling. Separate others into slotted trays or bins to increase air circulation and reduce decay possibilities.

To prolong bloom, protect poinsettias from drafts and keep them moderately moist.

Turn and prune house plants regularly to keep them shapely. Pinch back new growth to promote bushy plants.

Check all house plants closely for insect infestations. Quarantine gift plants until you determine they are not harboring any pests.

House plants and holiday gift plants should not be placed on top of the television. This location is too warm and in most homes too far from windows to provide adequate light.

During the winter most houses are too dry for house plants. Humidity may be increased by placing plants on trays lined with pebbles and filled with water to within one-half-inch of the base of the pot.

2011 Perennial Plant of the Year: Arkansas Blue Star



Arkansas Blue Star (*Amsonia hubrichtii*,) flowers in late spring to early summer (left). The leaves are bright green in spring and summer (above), but turn bright yellow-gold in Fall (below).



The 2011 Perennial Plant of the Year has lots of color, beautiful foliage, and will fit right in Nebraska perennial flower gardens. "**Amsonia hubrichtii**," also known as **Arkansas Blue Star**, grows 36 inches tall and 36 inches wide in a mounded form. This hardy perennial grows in hardiness zones 4 through 9 and is a versatile North American native. Amsonia offers a variety

of features throughout the seasons. From late spring to early summer, two- to three-inch wide clusters of small, light blue, star-shaped flowers top the ferny foliage. The alternate-arranged leaves are bright green in spring and summer, but turn a bright yellow-golden color in the fall. Arkansas Blue Star thrives in full sun to partial shade. This plant does best in average, moist soil but tolerates less moisture.

Once it is established it can tolerate drier conditions. This perennial for the seasons is an asset in borders, native gardens, cottage gardens, or open woodland areas. It is best when mass planted. Arkansas blue star is attractive when mixed with ornamental grasses and plants that have attractive seed heads.

Source: Perennial Plant Association

2009–2010

ANNUAL REPORT

444 Cherrycreek Rd., Suite A, Lincoln, NE 68528 • (402) 441-7180 • <http://lancaster.unl.edu>

Extension Strengthens Nebraska by Extending the University's Research-Based Resources

Land-grant universities work with the people they serve. University of Nebraska–Lincoln teaches, discovers new knowledge through research, and extends this research-based information across the state through extension programs. UNL Extension in Lancaster County develops and delivers educational programs which strengthen individuals, families, businesses, and communities. For example:

▶ Since 2001, Extension Educator Tom Dorn has helped present 15 Computerized Farm Financial Recordkeeping Trainings to representatives from **202 farming operations** in southeast Nebraska. Past evaluations indicate 96% of participants learned how to create reports to retrieve and organize financial information which will **help them make better management decisions in the future**.

▶ Since 2000, the Nutrition Education Program School Enrichment Kits have increased nutrition education in local classrooms from an average of two hours to 11 hours per classroom/year. To date, **35,879 students from 1,893 classrooms (grades K–8) have benefited from 20,000 total hours of teaching**. Teachers have noticed students choosing healthier foods and improving their eating habits.

▶ Extension Educator Barb Ogg is known as a bed bug expert. She has been quoted by newspapers and appeared on TV and radio. This year, Barb organized **four bed bug workshops which had 337 total attendees** (landlords attending manage more than 5,500 units total) and gave **20 presentations to agencies, businesses, and non-profit organizations with approximately 1,110 total attendees**.

▶ This year, Extension Educator Maureen Burson presented 25 Guardianship Trainings to 286 guardians in Lancaster and nearby counties. Based upon a 90% statewide return rate, evaluations indicate: **95% better understand their responsibility to the court**, compared to 25% prior to the class; and **98% better understand their responsibility to their wards** compared to 48% prior to the class.

▶ In March, 131 child care providers who care for approximately 1,520 youth participated in a child care conference organized by Extension Educator Lorene Bartos and other Lincoln agencies. Evaluations by past attendees indicate: **67% increased hands-on activities**, and **54% increased daily learning activities**.



Computerized Farm Financial Recordkeeping Training



Nutrition Education Program School Enrichment Kits

Extension helps you know how—and know **now**.



Bed Bug Workshop



Guardianship Training

▶ In November, Extension Educator Alice Henneman presented “How to Add a Little Spice & Herbs (and Less Salt, Fat, Sugar, and Calories) to Your Life” at BryanLGH to **270 attendees**. Web resources “Add a Little Spice (and Herbs) to Your Life!” were **accessed 3,103 times** this year.

▶ Staff responded to approximately **37,500 phone calls, walk-ins, and emails** from the public requesting information.

▶ The Web site <http://lancaster.unl.edu> continued to expand, receiving more than **11.2 million hits** this year (see next page).

▶ UNL Extension coordinates distribution and application of biosolids* to agricultural cropland for the City of Lincoln. Over the last 18 years, **more than 500,000 tons of biosolids have been recycled**, increasing soil nutrients, organic matter, and crop yields. This biosolids recycling program will **increase the life of the North Bluff Landfill by 4.9 years**.



*Biosolids are organic solids separated from wastewater and biologically processed to make them safe to use as an organic fertilizer for crops not in the human food chain.

Know how. Know **now**.



“I know how to look for bed bugs and what preventative measures to take so we can provide the best possible services to our clients.”

—Alan Radke, Bed Bug Training for Agencies attendee and American Red Cross volunteer



“I know how to safely wash clothing exposed to pesticides.”

—Gracie Bohmont, Family & Community Education (FCE) member



“I know how to eat healthy and spend less on food.”

—Karla Hobbs, Nutrition Education Program graduate



“I know how to choose which days to run my grain dryer to save energy.”

—Russ Robertson, ag producer



“I know how to communicate better with my daughter and how important it is to have fun together.”

—Susan VanBibber, Strengthening Family Treasures: Mother/Daughter Camp participant



“I know how to help with gardening questions or direct callers to the proper resources.”

—Teresa Hendricks, UNL Extension Master Gardener volunteer



“I know how to help a team keep a positive attitude and overcome challenges.”

—Philip Hanigan, 4-H member and First Lego League team participant

Benefits of Land-Grant Universities



Without question, our nation has enjoyed tremendous social and economic benefit from land-grant universities. Providing educational opportunities for all people, these universities have fueled our nation's capacity to create an enormously productive food and agricultural enterprise system.

Land-grant universities, over time, also transformed our country through the dissemination of researched-based knowledge to not only those enrolled as university students, but to those earning a livelihood and raising their families. Given educational opportunities to improve production techniques and practices, more and more people improved their lives and levels of income.

In 2007, an independent study found the University of Nebraska–Lincoln's Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR), of which extension is an integral part, provides at least a 15-to-1 return on the state tax dollars Nebraska invested.

It was President Lincoln who signed the Morrill Act in 1862 which led to the creation of "colleges for the people." At the time, federal grants of land helped establish land-grant universities. Like many other states, Nebraska formed a land-grant university two years after statehood in 1869.

While previously only for the elite, higher education was now available to everyone. In subsequent years, legislative milestones such as the Hatch Act in 1887 and the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 would bring about the **teaching, research, and extension system** we all benefit from today.

Over the years, I've witnessed how other countries have admired and tried to replicate our extension model through dissemination of non-biased research-based information to the people. It really is a system envied throughout the world. Usually, about once a year, our extension office hosts an international group interested in knowing more about our programs and delivery systems.

Your local extension staff is proud to be part of University of Nebraska — the state's only land-grant university system. We are equally proud of making a positive contribution to our community by teaching and advising on foods, nutrition, home and family environment, horticulture, pest management, and agricultural business and production. Engaging youth in experiential learning through 4-H is also rewarding.

We look forward to serving you and your family this new year.

Gary C. Bergman
UNL Extension Educator & Unit Leader

Lancaster Extension Education Center Conference Facilities

As part of extension's commitment to community learning, the conference facilities are made available to other nonprofit and governmental organizations at a nominal cost. Last year, more than **4,800 hours of conferences and meetings** were held at the Lancaster Extension Education Center.

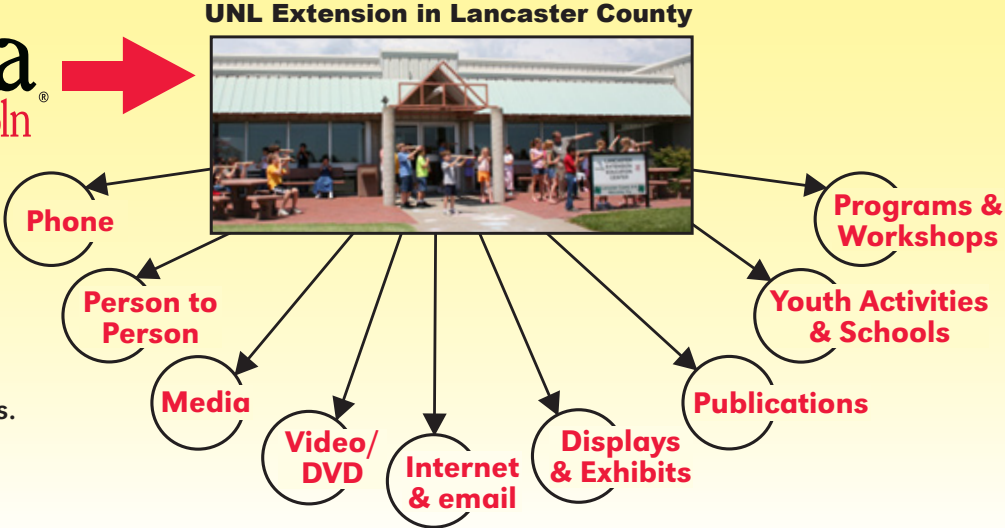


Nebraska Agribusiness Meeting

UNL Extension Utilizes Multiple Delivery Methods to Impact People in Lancaster County and Beyond



University of Nebraska–Lincoln extends research-based knowledge across the state through a network of local extension offices.



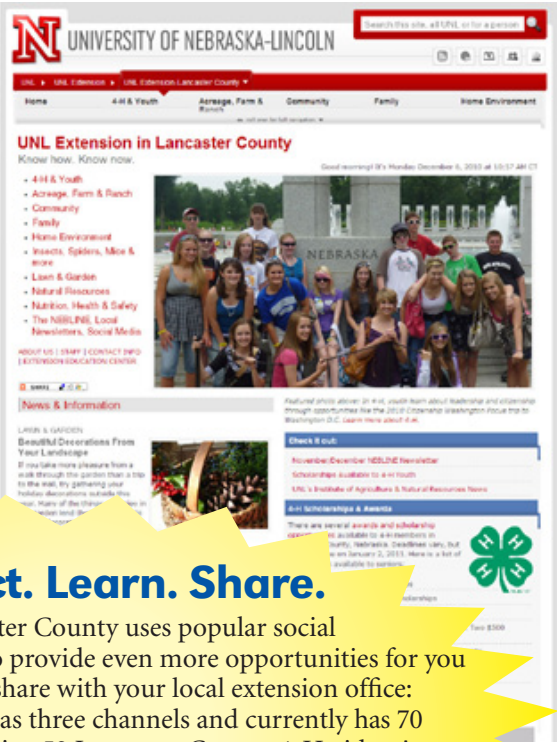
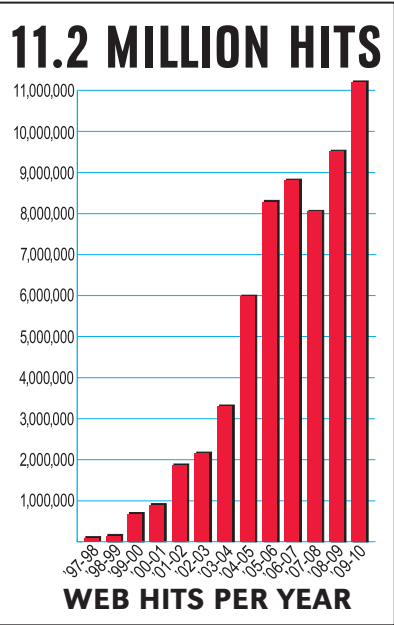
<http://lancaster.unl.edu> is Your 24/7 Local Extension Connection

Through search engines and browsing, hundreds of thousands of people access UNL Extension in Lancaster County's Web site, **<http://lancaster.unl.edu>**, to find "Know How — Know Now" 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Visited by an average of 300,000 unique sites* each month, the Web site received more than 11.2 million hits (accesses) this past year!

The Web site contains thousands of pages of content — featuring extensive resources, educational publications, a searchable database, Egg Cam, YouTube videos, quizzes, Master Gardener Diagnostic Center, outstanding photos, and much more. The site is updated daily.

Not only do Lancaster County residents, Nebraskans, and Americans use the site; the site has Web users from nearly 150 countries monthly.

*unique site = IP address



Connect. Learn. Share.

UNL Extension in Lancaster County uses popular social networking Web sites to provide even more opportunities for you to connect, learn, and share with your local extension office:

YouTube: extension has three channels and currently has 70 videos uploaded, including 52 Lancaster County 4-H videos!

Twitter: follow extension and 4-H by quickly exchanging ideas in a "tweet."

Facebook: 4-H EGG Cam Fan Page — get regular updates, share photos, comments, and discuss what's happening on EGG Cam.

Join us online at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/Media>.

Honors, Awards and Accomplishments

Extension Associate Lorene Bartos

- President of the Family & Consumer Sciences section of Nebraska Cooperative Extension Association (NCEA)

Extension Educator Gary Bergman

- President of the Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center Site Board

Extension Educator Maureen Burson

- part of state team which received 2nd Place national Community Partnership Award (for Guardianship trainings) presented by National Association of Extension Family & Consumer Science (NAEFCS)
- presented a poster session "Participants Indicate Daughter/Mother Camp Strengthens Communication" at the Children Youth and Families at Risk (CYFAR) national conference
- 25 years of service with UNL

Extension Clerical Support Deanna Covault

- 10 years of service to Lancaster County

Extension Educator Tom Dorn

- Treasurer of the Nebraska Agribusiness Club
- Treasurer of Nebraska Cooperative Extension Association (NCEA)
- North Central Regional Vice Chair of the National Search for Excellence Committee, National Association of County Agricultural Agents (NACAA)
- 30 years of service with UNL

Extension Associate Mary Jane Frogge

- 20 years of service with UNL

Extension Educator Alice Henneman

- received a statewide Extension Award of Excellence: Creativity and Vision for Extension Presence at Husker Harvest Days presented by Elbert Dickey, dean and director of UNL Extension
- 30 years of service with UNL

Extension Educator Don Janssen

- retired after 30 years of service with UNL Extension in Lancaster County.

Extension Assistant Vicki Jedlicka

- received the statewide Distinguished Managerial/Professional award presented by UNL Extension

Extension Associate Deanna Karmazin

- President-Elect of Nebraska Cooperative Extension Association (NCEA)

Extension Associate Mardel Meinke

- 15 years of service with UNL

Extension Educator Barb Ogg

- 15 years of service with UNL

Lancaster County 4-H Embryology School Enrichment Program

- received a statewide award presented by the Nebraska Poultry Industries and the Poultry & Egg Division of the Nebraska Department of Agriculture

Lancaster County Nutrition Education Program's School Enrichment (Karen Wobig, Mary Abbott, and Zainab Rida)

- received the statewide Excellence in Team Programming award presented by UNL Extension

Lancaster County 4-H 2009 Year in Review Video

- received the national and regional award for Communicator Award – Video Program presented by the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents (NAE4-HA)



Lancaster County staff received three awards at the statewide extension conference

4-H Youth Develop Positive Skills for Life



A 2009 National 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development by Tufts University shows that children who participated in 4-H for at least one year by 8th grade were 3.5 times more likely to contribute to their families, themselves, and their communities.



This year marked the 15th annual 4-H Clover College, which is four days of hands-on workshops. It has grown to 51 workshops, nearly 70 volunteers, and 741 total class registrations.



Lancaster County 4-H and the Lancaster Horse VIPs Committee hosted a District 4-H Horse Show. 171 exhibitors participated in 449 total entries.



Kyle Pedersen became the first Lancaster County 4-H'er to achieve the Diamond-Level 6 in the Nebraska 4-H Diamond Clover Program. Kyle's service-learning project included transplanting nearly 200 plants to a children's home and starting a 4-H club for the children at the home.



Citizenship Washington Focus is a 4-H leadership program for high school youth to explore and develop civic engagement. Two years of preparation and fundraising for 28 Lancaster County youth culminated in June with a 12-day educational seminar to Washington D.C. Learning experiences included meeting with Nebraska Senator Ben Nelson (left) and Congressman Jeff Fortenberry (in back).



In the past year, Lancaster County 4-H reached nearly:

- 1,742 club members
- 392 independent members
- 958 youth in after-school and summer programs which incorporated 4-H activities
- 18,635 youth in 4-H school enrichment programs

The Lancaster County Super Fair expanded to ten days this year. 4-H & FFA exhibits and events took place during the first four days. Nearly 700 4-H & FFA exhibitors showcased more than 5,000 exhibits (including static exhibits, animals, and contest entries).



New this year, the 4-H livestock booster committee established a 4-H & FFA livestock auction at the Lancaster County Super Fair. A portion of all proceeds was set aside to start a scholarship program for local 4-H & FFA members.



AmeriCorps Member part of Go-Green Initiative

Sarah Bailey spent a year with UNL Extension in Lancaster County as an AmeriCorps State and National member. AmeriCorps places members in local organizations for one-year terms. Sarah was a part of the AmeriCorps Recovery-Go Green Initiative which provides community outreach and service focused on environmental issues. She worked with 4-H after-school programs, 4-H school enrichment, People's City Mission garden, and took the lead in renovating the Culler Middle School courtyard into an outdoor classroom and rain garden.



Approximately 4,000 third graders in 175 classrooms at 53 schools incubate, candle, and watch eggs hatch as part of the 4-H Embryology school enrichment program.



Garbology means the study of garbage. Nearly 3,000 second graders in 147 classrooms at 46 schools participate in the 4-H Garbology school enrichment program which includes hands-on experiments.



“As 4-H'ers work on projects, they develop life skills, leadership, and citizenship. Our communities benefit because youth apply these skills to all aspects of their lives.”

— Quentin Farley, president of 4-H Council and member of Lancaster County Extension Board

Extension Helps You Know How. Know Now.

Nutrition & Food Safety

To help people learn how to eat healthier, extension blends nutrition, food safety, and food preparation information into practical actions people can use in their daily lives.

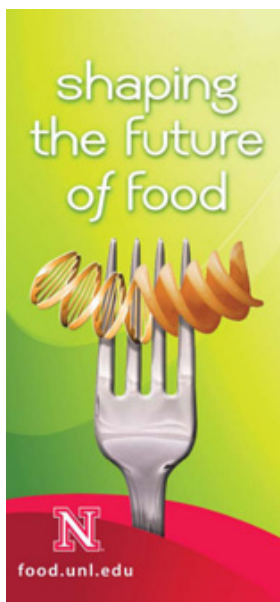
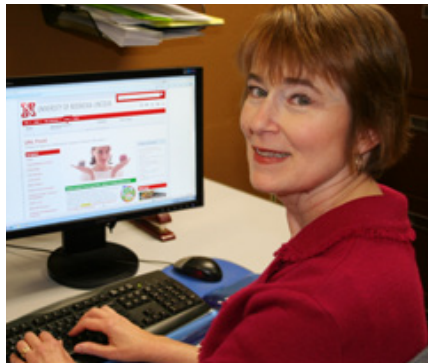
Educational materials developed by Extension Educator Alice Henneman for use in local programs (such as PowerPoints and handouts) are made available on the Internet for around-the-clock access, both locally and nationwide. UNL Extension in Lancaster County's food Web site received nearly 4.5 million hits last year.

This year, Alice chaired a committee of about 30 UNL staff to develop extension's statewide Food Web site at <http://food.unl.edu>. Alice also helped coordinate planning of the display at Husker Harvest Days which promoted the launch of the Food Web Site in September. Topics on the statewide Web site include food safety, food allergies, local foods, meat products, home food preservation, food processing/business development, youth/4-H, and more.

The Lancaster County Nutrition Education Program (NEP) helps limited-resource families learn to prepare nutritious and safe foods while stretching their food dollars. NEP receives funding from the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) through USDA and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed).

Last year, Lancaster County NEP reached:

- 857 enrolled program families (1,430 teaching contacts).
- 7,462 youth (14,214 teaching contacts) at 28 schools and other sites.
- 92 older adults (428 teaching contacts) at 6 senior sites.



Farms & Acreages

UNL Extension continues to make agricultural profitability and sustainability a priority issue. Extension Educator Tom Dorn fulfills this goal through numerous workshops and meetings, educational resources, person-to-person contacts, and an up-to-date Web site. Some of the agricultural programs presented this year include: Private and Commercial Pesticide Applicator Trainings, Computerized Farm Financial Recordkeeping Training, Farmland Leasing Arrangements workshop, and a Corn/Soybean Profitability workshop.

Residential acreages are rapidly increasing in Lancaster County. Extension delivers information on a wide range of issues related to acreages such as proper management of septic tanks and wastewater lagoons, landscape management, and alternative crops profitable for acreages. Extension offers an Acreage and Small Farms Insights Web site.

Production ag and acreage resources are online at <http://lanaster.unl.edu/ag>.

Home & Family Living

Extension Educator Lorene Bartos shares her expertise on home maintenance, indoor air quality, lead paint hazards, safety in the home, shopping smart, and recycling through THE NEBLINE, extension's Web site, her weekly column in the "Lincoln Journal Star," and other outreach methods. She presented or helped present numerous workshops including RentWise, Window of Opportunity Child Care Conference, and Small Steps to Health and Wealth.

UNL Extension is part of the Lancaster County Coalition to assist Children of Parents Experiencing Divorce (COPED), and co-presents Parents Forever and Kids Talk About Divorce classes. Extension Educator Maureen Burson teaches Parents Forever and Guardianship Training classes in Lancaster County. She also organized two Strengthening Families: Daughter/Mother Camps this year.



Two Daughter/Mother Camps were presented.



Last year, UNL Extension in Lancaster County programs benefitted from approximately **2,193 volunteers investing 26,907 hours of time for a total value of \$442,082!*** Volunteers contributed to 4-H, Master Gardener, Nutrition Education Program (NEP), Family Community Education (FCE) and other extension programs. In addition, 4-H and FCE members often volunteer in community service projects.

*Independent Sector values volunteer time in Nebraska for 2008 at \$16.43/hour.

Yard & Garden



28 Lancaster County Master Gardener volunteers logged 1,189 hours this year.



Extension presented nine composting workshops and demonstrations.

UNL Extension plays a vital role in teaching communities horticulture issues designed for local weather, water, soil, and pest conditions. Extension helps property owners develop healthy, diverse and functional landscapes that are energy and water efficient, as well as less dependant on pesticides.

Extension works with the City of Lincoln to educate the public about reducing yard waste through composting, mulching grass clippings, and other yard management practices.

The Master Gardener Training Program is a volunteer program where people are given training by UNL personnel and then in return, provide 40 hours of volunteer service to extension's educational programs. Extension Associate Mary Jane Frogge coordinates the Master Gardener program for Lancaster County.

UNL Extension in Lancaster County helps maintain a garden for residents at the People's City Mission. Extension provides the expertise, networking, and volunteers to teach residents how to care for and harvest garden crops.

Plant and Pest Diagnostic Services



Throughout the year, Lancaster County residents bring plant samples, insects, pests and wildlife "signs" to UNL Extension in Lancaster County. A free service, extension horticulturists and entomologists identify weeds, diseases, and insects in and around the home and garden, and make recommendations about the best way to help manage these problems.

Pests & Wildlife

UNL Extension in Lancaster County has extensive resources to help identify pests and recommend control methods. Emphasis is on low-toxic control methods. Extension Educator Barb Ogg and Extension Associate Soni Cochran assist area residents via phone calls, walk-in requests, email questions, publications, workshops, and radio. Extension's pest and wildlife Web site received nearly 2 million hits last year.

Ogg partners with community organizations and industry professionals in training and disseminating pest control resources and assistance. Bed bugs are a growing problem in Lincoln and other Nebraska communities.

Family & Community Education (FCE) Clubs

The Family and Community Education (FCE) clubs are an educational, social, and community-oriented program designed to meet the needs and interests of Nebraska homemakers. FCE members help strengthen communities and families through education, leadership, and action. Lancaster County FCE's emphasis is on community service and sponsoring a scholarship. Annually, FCE awards a \$400 scholarship.



Five FCE & Community Leader Trainings were held in 2010.

Plants That add Interest or Color to Winter Landscape

Landscapes tend to be dark and gray this time of year, but careful planning can result in subsequent winter gardens being more colorful and interesting. The key is selection of plant material and use of good design. Choose the vantage point from which the garden will be most commonly enjoyed. Select planting sites easily seen from this area.

Green is the easiest color to add to a winter landscape with the use of evergreens like **white spruce**, **Douglas-fir**, or **Japanese yew**. Of course, parts of the plants other than foliage, can be colorful or interesting. Even trees with horizontal branching patterns are interesting if there is snow adding white to the bark color.

Some plants that should be considered for winter landscapes include:

Red Osier Dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*) – The young stems of this plant are bright red during the winter months and become more intensely colored toward spring. Older stems are often pruned out during the spring to encourage more of the young, more brightly colored twigs.

Yellow Twig Dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera* ‘*Flaviramea*’) – This shrub looks much like Red Osier Dogwood except the twigs are bright yellow rather than red.



Red Osier Dogwood (left) and Yellow Twig Dogwood (right)



Winged Euonymus

Winged Euonymus or Burning Bush (*Euonymus alatus*) – This is the shrub that attracts so much attention in the fall because of the flaming red coloration of the fall foliage. However, the stems are also ornamental in the winter due to their winged characteristics which tend to catch and hold snow.



River Birch bark

River Birch (*Betula nigra*) – This tree has very interesting bark. The flaky bark is reddish-brown to peach colored and contrasts nicely with snow.

Source: Ward Upham, Kansas State Extension

Richard Webb, Self-employed horticulturist, Bugwood.org

James H. Miller, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org

Paul Wray, Iowa State University, Bugwood.org

Protect Woodlands from Grazing

Dennis Adams
Nebraska Forest Service

Hardwood (deciduous) woodlands in eastern Nebraska which have a history of livestock grazing are usually not very productive for timber, pasture, or wildlife.

However, if protected and managed, woodlands can produce additional income. Healthy woodland can give landowners an economic return.

Grazing lowers both the quantity and quality of hardwood timber. Direct damage to roots and soil compaction from trampling slows tree growth. Over time, older trees are weakened and begin to decline. Dead tops and other defects are symptoms of grazing injury. A record of logs removed from a heavily grazed area in Tennessee revealed 60 to 70 percent were seriously defective and of no value.

The soil in natural woodland is covered with a blanket of leaves and humus. This rich mulch and loose porous soil containing high organic matter is needed for rapid growth of trees. Grazing destroys this protective covering and destroys soil



heavy grazing. Many undesirable species can withstand extensive trampling and damage. This situation results in a woodland composed of predominately undesirable trees because they are the only species that can survive and reproduce.

Grazing compacts the normally loose soil, disturbs the leaf mold cover and destroys a large portion of the young growth. This causes the soil to become sun-baked and dry, conditions unfavorable to natural restocking. The loss of soil moisture in open, heavy-grazed woodlands is one of the reasons some woodlands fail to reestablish themselves with young trees.

structure, compacting soils so water and air cannot penetrate. The constant trampling and rubbing, if continued, eventually exposes tree roots to injury and drying.

When woodlands are grazed over a period of years, a gradual change occurs from forest to prairie conditions. Under grazing, as older trees die and disappear from the woodland, are not replaced by young trees. Grazing does not allow regeneration, either natural or planted.

Studies show some tree species are more palatable to livestock than others, such as ash, oak, and hickory. Unfortunately, these are usually the desirable timber species. Low-quality trees such as ironwood, honeylocust, and osage orange are seldom browsed, even during

Packed soil, resulting from grazing, also discourages rainfall absorption, allows a much greater runoff, contributes to erosion on slopes, and adds to the danger of floods. Experiments have revealed runoff from grazed woodlands may be around 50 times greater than from an ungrazed one.

In general, desirable hardwood trees and livestock do not mix. For the best return from both, fence the hardwood woodlands from the pastures.

Sheila Day

Check Site Conditions Before Planting Trees

Dennis Adams
Nebraska Forest Service

Spring is an ideal time to add new trees to a home landscape. Once the frost is out of the ground, weather and soil conditions typically are ready to support a healthy tree.



Before purchasing a tree for planting, it is important to look at soil conditions and general lay-out of the area that will surround the new tree. Check for soil nutrient deficiencies and soil saturation levels. Some tree species may do better on wet soils, while others may handle drier conditions. Also consider factors such as wind and sun

exposure. Overall, make sure the species is adaptable to Nebraska conditions.

Take time to visualize the landscape with the new tree. However, keep in mind the mature form and size the tree will grow to. Some trees may grow too large for an area, while small trees may not provide the desired shade cover.

Properly preparing the site for tree planting is important. The following are a few tips to help the process run smoothly:

- Dig the hole one foot wider than the transplanted tree's root ball or root mass.
- Don't plant the tree too deep. The surrounding soil line should not be above the tree's root crown.
- Backfill the hole with the same soil. Don't use soil amendments.
- Don't pack the backfill soil. Use water to settle the backfill soil around the tree roots.
- In areas with prevalent high winds, it may be necessary to stake the tree to keep it free of damage.

Feeding Families Growing Farmers

Community CROPS Growing Farmers Workshops can help you jump start a small farm business. With Classroom learning, presentations from local farmers, and visits to local farms, Community CROPS can help you GROW YOUR OWN BUSINESS.

Come to the
Growing Farmers Workshop Series

Pre-register by
January 14th, 2011

9 Saturday workshops beginning January 29th:

- ✓ Business Plans
- ✓ Financial Planning
- ✓ Crop Planning
- ✓ Equipment
- ✓ Organic Pest Management
- ✓ Marketing
- ✓ and more!

Pre-register at
CommunityCROPS.org
or call **402.474.9802**



January

Brandy Gunnerson

Lancaster County 4-H is proud to announce Brandy Gunnerson as winner of January's "Heart of 4-H Award" in recognition of outstanding volunteer service.

Brandy has volunteered for 4-H the past nine years. She has helped with the Creative Clovers and Rabbits 'R' Us clubs. At the Lancaster County Fair, she has been superintendent for 4-H rabbit static exhibits, volunteered at the 4-H Food Booth, and helped with other set up and clean up activities. She also helps with the statewide Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Program.

"I like being a 4-H volunteer because I was in 4-H from the time I was 8 until I was 18," Brandy says. "Being able to look back at my experiences makes me realize the importance of what 4-H can teach our children. The kids learn so much from everything they try whether it be one thing or many, learning something new or adding to knowledge they already have. Being a part of all that for my own children and others in itself is rewarding. My favorite experience as a 4-H volunteer is watching the kids every year participate at the fair and seeing all their hard work pay off. Watching the kids grow in so many ways from year to year makes every minute worth it."

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

Nominate your favorite 4-H volunteer by submitting the form available at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h> or at the extension office.



4-H/FFA Market Beef Weigh-In, Feb. 3

4-H/FFA market beef weigh in will be held Thursday, Feb. 3, 6-8 p.m. at the Lancaster Event Center - Pavilion 3. Any market steer or heifer planning to show at county fair, state fair, or Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Livestock Show must weigh-in and get DNA processed at this time.

Crocheting Workshop, Feb. 5

All youth ages 8 and up (need not be enrolled in 4-H) are invited to learn how to crochet a washcloth utilizing the single crochet stitch at a free basic crocheting workshop on Saturday, Feb. 5, 9 a.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherry Creek Road, Lincoln. All supplies will be provided. Adults are welcome to attend. Must preregister by Feb. 2 by calling (402) 441-7180. 4-H'ers may enter washcloths at the county fair under 4-H Clothing - Level 1 Knit or Crochet.

Do You Tweet? 4-H Twitters!

LancasterCo_4H is using Twitter. Twitter is a free service that lets you keep in touch with people through the exchange of quick, frequent messages. Join at http://twitter.com/LancasterCo_4H.

4-H Livestock Judging Team Forming

If you are interested in being a member of the Lancaster County 4-H livestock judging team, please call Deanna at (402) 441-7180 or email her at dkarmazin2@unl.edu as soon as possible.

The team will resume practice again in January. We are lucky to have a coach again this year and he is excited to start training the 4-H youth for success. Any 4-H members age 8-18 are welcome to join in on the fun. You do not need to be enrolled in a livestock project to be on the team. Everyone is welcome!

2011 4-H Photography Themes

Every year, state 4-H has a Nebraska theme photography categories for county and state fair exhibits. This year's Nebraska themes are:

Photography - Unit 2: Cutting Edge Agriculture: Take photos that capture the diverse industry of agriculture. Look for unique images of agriculture in Nebraska communities.

Photography - Unit 3: Spelling Bee: Photograph any letter of the alphabet in your surroundings. Find letters in the architecture of buildings, growing in a garden or on items in your own home.

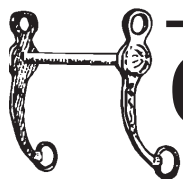
Governor's Ag Awards Due March 2

The Governor's Agricultural Excellence Awards are sponsored by the Nebraska Investment Finance Authority (NIFA) in cooperation with the Nebraska 4-H Foundation. These awards recognize 25 4-H clubs each year for the work of the individuals in the club and the community service work of the entire club. Recognition is in the form of \$500 checks issued to the club's treasury to be used as described in the award application form completed by the club. Forms are due by March 2 and the awards will be presented at UNL's East Campus on June 27. For more information, go to www.ne4hfoundation.org/agexcellenceaward.htm.

Upcoming Sewing Workshops

Save the following dates for upcoming sewing workshops:

- Pillow Party, Saturday, March 12, 9 a.m. All youth ages 8 and up (need not be enrolled in 4-H) are invited to learn beginning sewing skills and make a pillow. Bring your sewing machine.
- Jammie Jamboree, Saturday, April 2, 9 a.m. All youth ages 8 and up (need not be enrolled in 4-H) are invited to learn basic sewing skills and make jammie bottoms. Bring your sewing machine.



HORSE BITS

Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Expo Results

The 2010 Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Horse Show was held last September at the Lancaster Event Center. Below are the Lancaster County 4-H top award winners. Complete results are at www.rivercityrodeo.com.

McKenzie Beach	Junior Barrels	Reserve Champion
Bailee Peters	Junior English Equitation	Champion
Ellie Dearmont	Junior English Pleasure	Champion
	Junior English Equitation	Reserve Champion
Anna Heusinger	Junior English Showmanship	Champion
Bailey Vogler	Junior Pole Bending	Champion
Heather Welch	Junior Pole Bending	Reserve Champion
Chelsea Beach	Senior Barrels	Reserve Champion
Ashley Wiegand	Senior English Equitation	Reserve Champion
	Senior English Showmanship	Reserve Champion
Brooke Preston	Senior Showmanship	Champion
	Senior Western Pleasure	Reserve Champion

Horse Stampede Entries Due Jan. 14

The 9th annual 4-H Horse Stampede will be held Saturday, Feb. 19 at the Animal Science Building on UNL East Campus. The Stampede consists of the 4-H state horse-related competitions: Horse Bowl, Public Speaking, Demonstration, and Art Contest. Stampede contestants must be enrolled in a 4-H horse project with the exception of the art contest. Contestants may participate in all contests. Senior division is ages 14-18, junior division is 12-13. Teams are to consist of three to five youth.

Stampede T-shirts will be available to participating youth. You must pre-order your T-shirt, the cost is \$8. Lancaster County 4-H Council will pay the entry fees for the contests! Stampede Entry forms along with T-shirt orders are due to Jan. 14 to the UNL Extension in Lancaster County office. Forms and additional information are available on line at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/horsenews.shtml>.

2011 Horsemanship Level Testing Dates

Mark your calendars! The 2011 group testings will be held at the Lancaster Event Center on the following dates:

- Tuesday, April 19, 6 p.m.
- Tuesday, May 3, 6 p.m.
- Tuesday, June 21, 6 p.m.
- Tuesday, June 28, 6 p.m.
- Tuesday, July 5, 6 p.m.
- Saturday, Oct. 1, 9 a.m.

Please RSVP at least by one week in advance with Marty at mcruickshank2@unl.edu or (402) 441-7180.



Lancaster County 4-H and 4-H Council invite ALL 4-H'ers, 4-H families and volunteers to

4-H Achievement Night

Thursday, Feb. 10 • 6:30 p.m.

Lancaster Extension Education Center

444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln

Evening Starts With a Dessert Potluck

Please bring a dessert to share (plates and utensils provided).

Lancaster County 4-H congratulates all 4-H youth who commit themselves to excellence!

4-H members, clubs and volunteers receiving awards, scholarships, or pins
will be mailed detailed information.



"2010
4-H Year in
Review" video!



2011 4-H Calendar

All events will be held at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln unless otherwise noted.
Lancaster Event Center is located at 84th & Havelock, Lincoln

January

- 2 All Career Portfolios, Scholarships, and Award Applications Due to Extension
- 4 4-H Council Meeting 7 p.m.
- 9 Teen Council Meeting 3 p.m.
- 14 Horse Stampede Entries Due to Extension
- 19 4th & 5th Grade Overnight Lock-In Registrations Due to Extension
- 20 Pick-a-Pig Orientation Meeting, Lancaster Event Center - 4-H Office 6:30 p.m.
- 21-22 4th & 5th Grade Overnight Lock-In 8 p.m.-8 a.m.

February

February is Nebraska 4-H Month

- 1 4-H Council Meeting 7 p.m.
- 3 4-H/FFA Beef Weigh In, Lancaster Event Center - Pav. 2 6-8 p.m.
- 5 Crocheting Workshop 9 a.m.
- 10 Achievement Night 6:30 p.m.
- 13 Teen Council Meeting 3 p.m.
- 19 Horse Stampede, UNL Animal Science Building

March

- 1 Preference Given to 4-H Council Camp Scholarship Entries Submitted to Extension by this Date
- 1 R.B. Warren 4-H Horse Educational and Grand Island Saddle Club Scholarships Entries Due
- 1 4-H Council Meeting 7 p.m.
- 11-13 Nebraska Horse Expo, Lancaster Event Center
- 12 Pillow Party 9 a.m.
- 13 Teen Council Meeting 3 p.m.

April

- 1 All 4-H/FFA Market Beef ID's Due to Extension
- 2 Jammie Jamboree 9 a.m.
- 5 4-H Council Meeting 7 p.m.
- 2-3 2011 Shaggy Horse Dressage Show, Lancaster Event Center
- 9 Kiwanis Karnival, Elliott School TBA
- 10 Teen Council Meeting 3 p.m.
- 12 Sign-Up Deadline for April 19 Horse Level Testing
- 19 Horse Level Testing, Lancaster Event Center 6 p.m.
- 23 Paws On Dog Clinic, Lancaster Event Center - Exhibit Hall 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
- 25 CDs/Tapes Due for Public Service Announcement (PSA) Contest
- 26 Sign-Up Deadline for May 3 Horse Level Testing

May

- 1 4-H Council Camp Scholarship Entries Due to Extension
- 1 Speech Contest 1 p.m.
- 3 4-H Council Meeting 3 p.m.
- 3 Horse Level Testing, Lancaster Event Center 6 p.m.
- 5 4-H/FFA Sheep Weigh-In, Lancaster Event Center 6-8 p.m.
- 7 Furniture Painting Workshop 9 a.m.
- 9 Lancaster County Deadline for District/State Horse Show Entries, ID, Level Tests
- 19 4-H/FFA Quality Assurance Training 6 p.m.
- 26 4-H Leader Training 9:30 a.m. & 6:30 p.m.

4-H SUMMER CAMPS & TRIPS

June-September

open to all youth 5-18 • <http://4h.unl.edu/camp>

BIG RED SUMMER ACADEMIC CAMPS • June 12-17

for high school youth • <http://bigredcamps.unl.edu>

Early Bird
Discount
Before
April 1!

June

- 1 County Fair Horse ID's Due to Extension
- 4 4-H Life Challenge Contest - County-Level Senior Division .. 9 a.m.
- 4 Horse Pre-Districts Show/Fundraiser, Lancaster Event Center ... TBA
- 7 4-H Council Meeting 7 p.m.
- 13, 14 District Horse Shows, Hastings, Columbus
- 14 Sign-Up Deadline for June 21 Horse Level Testing
- 14-17 4-H Clover College
- 15 Club Enrollment Forms Due to Extension - Must List Project Area(s) Each Member Plans to Enter at County Fair
- 15 4-H/FFA Sheep/Goats/Swine/Breeding Beef/ Bucket Calves/Dairy Cattle/Llamas & Alpacas/Rabbits Identification Forms Due to Extension
- 15, 16 District Horse Shows, O'Neill, Chadron
- 19-21 Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Program, Niobrara State Park
- 21 Horse Level Testing, Lancaster Event Center 6 p.m.
- 21 Sign-Up Deadline for June 28 Horse Level Testing
- 22, 23 District Horse Shows, Ogallala, Beatrice
- 25 Bicycle Safety Contest 9 a.m.
- 28 Horse Level Testing, Lancaster Event Center 6 p.m.
- 28 Sign-Up Deadline for July 5 levels testing
- 27-28 Premiere Animal Science Events (PASE)/Life Challenge

July

- 5 All 4-H/FFA Lancaster County Fair Animal Entries Due to Extension
- 5 Horse Level Testing, Lancaster Event Center 6 p.m.
- 9 4-H Life Challenge Contest - County-Level Junior Division .. 9 a.m.
- 10 Teen Council Meeting, Different Location TBA 3 p.m.
- 13 Plant Science Contests: Horticulture/Tree ID/ Grass-Weed ID 10 a.m.-12 p.m.
- 17-21 State 4-H Horse Show, Fonner Park, Grand Island
- 23 Presentations Contest 9 a.m.
- 26 Horse Course Challenge 9 a.m.

August

- 2 Entry Day for County Fair Static Exhibits, Lancaster Event Center - Lincoln Room 4-8 p.m.

Aug. 4-13 Lancaster County Super Fair (4-H/FFA Exhibits & Events Aug. 4-7), Lancaster Event Center

Aug. 25-Sept. 5 Nebraska State Fair, Fonner Park, Grand Island

September

- 11 Teen Council Meeting 3 p.m.
- 13 4-H Council Meeting 7 p.m.
- TBA Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Horse Show (tentative dates 17-18), location TBA
- 22-25 Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Stock Show, Qwest Center, Omaha
- 26 Sign-Up Deadline for Oct. 1 Horse Level Testing

October

- 1 Horse Level Testing, Lancaster Event Center 9 a.m.
- 4 4-H Kick Off TBA
- 2-8 National 4-H Week
- 6 Horse Awards Night TBA
- 9 Teen Council Meeting 3 p.m.

November

- 1 4-H Council Meeting 7 p.m.
- 13 Teen Council Meeting 3 p.m.

December

- 6 4-H Council Meeting 7 p.m.
- 11 Teen Council Meeting 3 p.m.

EXTENSION NEWS

4-H Year in Review Video Wins National 4-H Award

The “Lancaster County 4-H 2009 Year in Review” 9-1/2-minute video was recently recognized by the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents (NAE4-HA) as the national award winner for Communicator Award – Video Program. The following Lancaster County staff contributed to the video: Vicki Jedlicka, Soni Cochran, Gary Bergman, Jim Wies, Deanna Karmazin, Tracy (Kulm) Anderson, Marty Cruickshank, Teri Hlava, and Karen Evasco.

Special thanks to 4-H members Spencer Farley and Jessica Stephenson for narrating the video, and to Quentin Farley for recording the narration and providing technical advice.

The video has been shown at 4-H Achievement Night, 4-H Kick Off, and on local public cable access. It is also on YouTube at www.youtube.com/user/4HLancasterNE.

Don Janssen Awarded Friend of 4-H

Saline County 4-H awarded Don Janssen the “Friend of 4-H Award” for 2010. For 25 years, he served as a judge of 4-H Horticulture exhibits at the Saline County Fair. Saline County 4-H thanks Don for his years of service to the youth of Saline County. Don was an Extension Educator at UNL Extension in Lancaster County before recently retiring.

New Horticulture Educator

In December, Sarah Browning joined the UNL Extension in Lancaster County staff as horticulture extension educator.

Sarah is originally from Omaha, where she attended Benson High School. She received a

bachelor’s degree in horticulture from Northwest Missouri State University in Maryville, Mo. and a master’s degree in plant breeding from University of Nebraska–Lincoln working as part of the buffalo-grass breeding program.

She has been with extension for the past 12 years, providing horticulture education for homeowners, Master Gardeners, youth, green industry professionals, and commercial vegetable growers in Dodge, Saunders, and surrounding counties.

As part of the Southeast District Acreage Team, Sarah has contributed (and will continue to contribute) to the Acreage Insights Web site, <http://acreage.unl.edu> and Acreage eNews monthly email newsletter (available at the above Web site). Sarah also works with other UNL horticulture educators to provide Hort Update, an email newsletter for professionals in the green industry (available at <http://extensionhorticulture.unl.edu> and click on “Hort Update”). She occasionally appears on Backyard Farmer.

Sarah is excited about working with clientele in Lancaster County, so please stop in and say “Hello.”



New Nutrition Staff Member

Lisa Connot joined UNL Extension in Lancaster County in December as an extension assistant for the Nutrition Education Program (NEP). Lisa’s position is part of a USDA grant funded program aimed at teaching healthy and safe food practices for limited income families.

Lisa will coordinate NEP’s School Enrichment program for first, fourth, and fifth grades. NEP works with qualifying Lincoln elementary schools to deliver nutrition kits containing materials for hands-on educational experiences to classrooms. Lisa will present hand washing and food preparation activities in classrooms.

Prior to coming to Lancaster County, Lisa worked with the NEP program at UNL Extension in Hall County (Grand Island). Lisa received her B.S. in Education and Human Sciences from UNL in December 2007, and is currently working toward her Master’s degree in leadership education.



NU Introduces New Web Platform for Distance Education

All of the University of Nebraska’s online education programs can now be accessed at a single location thanks to the University’s introduction of a new Web platform called Online Worldwide.

Online Worldwide – www.nebraska.edu/online – offers more than 80 accredited programs, including bachelor’s and advanced degrees as well as certificates and endorsements, and more than 1,000 courses in a wide range of fields, including agriculture, biology, business, computer science, education, engineering, journalism, public administration, and many more.

By marketing all of NU’s distance programs together under one virtual “roof,” Online Worldwide will better serve Nebraskans looking to further their education and will allow the university to capture a larger share of the rapidly growing national and international market for online learning, NU President James B. Milliken said.

“Online Worldwide offers a tremendous opportunity to students who want a high-quality, affordable education from a reputable institution such as the University of Nebraska,” Milliken said. “Our distance education courses are taught by the same award-winning faculty who teach in classrooms on our campuses — ensuring that students in Nebraska and around the world have access to challenging, relevant curricula developed by experts in their fields.”

Milliken noted that a recent study by the Sloan Consortium found that 1 in 4 college students took at least one course online in fall 2008 — a 17 percent increase over the previous year. In 2009–10, students generated 87,820 credit hours in online courses offered through the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, University of Nebraska at Omaha and University of



Nebraska at Kearney — a 28.3 percent increase over 2008–09, when students generated 68,435 credit hours online.

And there is a broader market to be tapped that extends well beyond campus borders, Milliken said.

“More than 265,000 Nebraskans have completed some college but have not earned a degree,” he said. “Distance learning is a great solution for those Nebraskans.

“More than 265,000 Nebraskans have completed some college but have not earned a degree. Distance learning is a great solution for those Nebraskans.”

— NU President James B. Milliken

It gives them a chance to become more competitive in today’s job market, increase their earning power and improve their quality of life — all while continuing to balance work, family, and other obligations.”

“Furthermore, all of Nebraska benefits when we increase the educational attainment of our citizens,” Milliken added.

Demand for online learning also is growing worldwide because of the convenience of Web-based programs and the increased importance of postsecondary education in today’s knowledge-driven workforce. According to the U.S. Census

Bureau, a person with a bachelor’s degree will earn \$1 million more over a lifetime than a person with only a high school diploma. Also, a December 2009 report from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projected that jobs that require postsecondary education will account for nearly half of all new jobs from 2008 to 2018 and one-third of total job openings in that time period.

President Obama has set a goal for America to have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world by 2020. This aligns with state goals to increase Nebraska’s college-going rate and provide affordable access to higher education to more Nebraskans, Milliken said.

“Online Worldwide is one way in which the University of Nebraska is working to make a bachelor’s degree or an advanced degree available to many more people,” he said.

Online Worldwide is the result of several years of extensive study and collaboration by a university-wide Distance Education Coordinating Committee and the Educational Marketing Group (EMG), located in Denver, Colo. EMG produced a report, shared with the Board of Regents in January 2009, that said the university had a

major opportunity to grow its distance learning enterprise. Among the recommendations of EMG and the coordinating committee was that NU market all its distance programs under a single University of Nebraska brand.

Online Worldwide will evolve to meet workforce needs, adding new programs as necessary, according to Director Arnold Bateman.

“The University of Nebraska is committed to growing a talented, competitive workforce in Nebraska, and expanding our distance education offerings is one way we can do this,” Bateman said.

Source: University of Nebraska

UNL Food Entrepreneur Seminar, Jan. 15

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln Food Processing Center is offering a one-day seminar for all individuals interested in exploring the idea of starting a food manufacturing business. The “From Recipe to Reality” seminar will be offered in Lincoln on Saturday, Jan. 15. Pre-registration is required and space is limited. Registration deadline is Jan. 3. Contact Jill Gifford at (402) 472-2819 or jgifford1@unl.edu for an information packet. The seminar will also be held in Lincoln on March 18.

EXTENSION CALENDAR

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

January

- 2 All 4-H Career Portfolios, Scholarships, and Award Applications Due to Extension**
- 4 4-H Council Meeting..... 7 p.m.**
- 5 Family & Community Education (FCE) and Community Leader Training Lesson, “Chocolate — a Functional Food?” 1 p.m.**
- 9 4-H Teen Council Meeting 3 p.m.**
- 14 Extension Board Meeting..... 8 a.m.**
- 14 4-H Horse Stampede Entries Due to Extension**
- 18 Guardian/Conservator Training 1:30–4:30 p.m.**
- 19 4th & 5th Grade 4-H Lock-In Registrations Due to Extension**
- 20 Parents Forever Class 9 a.m.–12:30 / 5:30–9 p.m.**
- 20 4-H Pick-a-Pig Orientation Meeting, Lancaster Event Center - 4-H Office.....6:30 p.m.**
- 21–22 4-H Overnight Lock-In for 4th & 5th Graders..... 8 p.m.–8 a.m.**
- 24 Landowners Update Meeting8 a.m.–Noon**
- 24 Family & Community Education (FCE) Council Meeting 12:30 p.m.**
- 26 Family & Community Education (FCE) and Community Leader Training Lesson, “Healthy Meal Planning on a Budget” 1 p.m.**
- 27 Private Pesticide Applicator Training Session..... 8:30–11:30 a.m.**
- 29 Private Pesticide Applicator Training Session..... 8:30–11:30 a.m.**

Phosphorus

continued from page 2
from the upper portion of the soil profile. Make applications in early spring when crown growth is most active and soil surfaces tend to be moist.
On new alfalfa plantings, if

the soil pH is neutral (pH 6.0 to 7.0), a common practice is to apply triple the annual rate of phosphorus fertilizer and incorporate it into the soil prior to seeding. This should be effective for three to four years for alfalfa growth. For high lime soils,

with high rates of phosphorus fixation, annual or every-other-year topdress applications are suggested for alfalfa.

Source: UNL Extension publication “Nutrient Management for Agronomic Crops in Nebraska” (EC-155).

Feeding Birds

continued from page 3
won’t hurt the birds, but can become a nuisance in your home. If you have smaller quantities of bird seed, you can store it in your freezer.

5. Add bird-friendly plants to your garden. When planning next year’s flower beds, add native grasses and flowers that produce seeds birds and wildlife enjoy. Try growing Prairie coneflowers, black-eyed susan, sunflowers, goldenrods, sedum, zinnias; and grasses like Indian grass and Little Bluestem. Instead of cleaning up these plants in the fall, leave the dried seed heads for the wildlife. You’ll enjoy both the winter beauty of the plants and the variety of birds using them as food sources.

6. Refill Your Feeders Less Frequently. An empty feeder doesn’t necessarily mean hungry birds. Waiting a couple of days to refill your feeders gives birds time to feed on the seed they’ve spilled to the ground.

7. Choose efficient feeders. If squirrels and other animals are raiding your feeders, use feeders designed to keep other wildlife out. You can

also add baffles to deter those tricky squirrels. When buying or making feeders, check to be sure they are easy for you to clean.

8. Make your own bird food. Feeling creative? Make your own suet mix instead of buying. The ingredients are easy to find and inexpensive. You can also buy seed separately and



Suet Feeders: bore 1 inch diameter holes into a small log, fill with suet, and hang. Pinecones covered with suet and rolled in birdseed also make interesting hanging feeders. Commercial suet feeders are also available.

prepare your own seed mix based on what birds are visiting your backyard. Learn more about the birds in your yard and choose seed for the birds you want to attract.

9. Avoid unnecessary use of pesticides. If you feed birds year-round, let the birds do some of your pest control in the garden. Learn about integrated pest management techniques to help reduce the amount of pesticides you use.

10. Remove your feeders. As a last resort, you can remove your feeders. If you love feeding birds, this doesn’t mean you have to give up enjoying wildlife. Add a homemade bird bath, create a small brush pile, plant shrubs that attract birds, make nest boxes out of recycled wood and materials. You can still create a bird-friendly backyard habitat even without adding bird feeders.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Resources on feeding birds and creating a backyard habitat for wildlife are available at the extension office and online at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/pest>.

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Lincoln

EXTENSION

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

**University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension
in Lancaster County**

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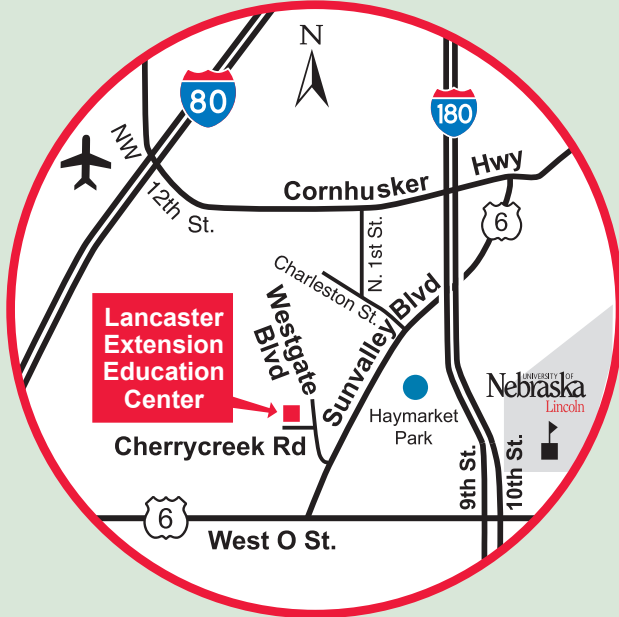
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Tax Preparation Volunteers Needed

You can help make a real impact in your community through Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA). VITA is a service where volunteers prepare federal and state income tax returns for low-to-moderate income individuals. Through the VITA program last year, over 5,000 Lincoln households received more than \$6 million in refunds, of which nearly \$2 million was Earned Income Credit. Earned Income Credit is the largest poverty relief strategy created in the history of relief programs, beating out welfare and food stamps combined. Not only does it provide needed funds for low income house-

holds, but it also puts money back into the Lincoln economy — creating a “win-win” situation for both taxpayers and the community.

Unfortunately, every year hundreds are turned away due to a lack of volunteers. Many more taxpayers could be helped if we had more volunteers who could donate a few hours per week (usually 4–5) from Jan. 22 through April 15. The IRS provides free tax law and software training at various times in December and January. However, volunteer tax preparers will be expected to do some self-study of tax law, whether through the online course at the

IRS Web site or through a course book which will be provided to them. New volunteer tax preparers are required to take a one-day e-file class in January to learn the software used for tax preparation.

If you would like to help but don’t want to prepare taxes, the VITA program also needs Greeters and Administrative Assistants. There is something for everyone!

If you are interested, please contact Hannah Callahan at (402) 875-9351 or hcallahan@communityactionatwork.org or Miriam Bede at (402) 250-2461 for additional information. Registration closes Jan. 5.

2010 Outstanding 4-H Club Awards

The Lincoln Center Kiwanis Club presents Outstanding 4-H Club Awards to the top 4-H clubs participating in the Lancaster County Super Fair. There are three categories based on number of club members. One category winner is awarded the Wayne C. Farmer memorial cup as the overall Outstanding 4-H Club for the year. Clubs receive points based on all members' total county fair exhibit and contest placings. The following clubs were recognized at a recent Lincoln Center Kiwanis meeting and also will be recognized at 4-H Achievement Night on Thursday, Feb. 10.



Star City Llamas/Alpacas 4-H Club located in the Lincoln area is the winner of Category 1 (5–7 members). The club's seven members are enrolled in the llama/alpaca project and entered 32 total exhibits at the fair — including showmanship, obstacle course, and quiz bowl. The club is winning this award for the first time. Danetta Jensen is club leader and Peggy Steward is assistant leader.



Fantastic 4 4-H Club of Lincoln is the winner of Category II (8–13 members) — and winner of the Wayne C. Farmer trophy as overall Outstanding 4-H Club for the year. The club's 11 members were enrolled in approximately 30 projects and entered 177 total exhibits at the fair — including photography, clothing, foods, home environment, citizenship, dog, sheep, swine. This is their second year as an outstanding club and second year as overall club. Jennifer Smith is club leader and Mary Hillebran and Sarah Lanik Frain are assistant leaders.



South Prairie Wranglers 4-H Club of the Hickman area is the winner of Category III (13 or more members). The club's 69 members were enrolled in more than 25 projects and entered 489 total exhibits at the fair — including horse, rabbit, dog, photography, clothing, horticulture, foods, child development, woodworking, and engineering. Several members are Clover Kids (ages 5–7). The club is winning this award for the third time. Kendra Ronnau is club leader and there are seven assistant or project leaders.

Lancaster 4-H'ers Place High at National Horse Contests

Five Lancaster County 4-H horse members represented Nebraska at the national All American Quarter Horse Youth Congress contests held recently in Columbus, Ohio. Elli Dearmont, Megan Luedtke, Bailee Peters, Cory Peters, and Hannah Ronnau qualified by winning statewide 4-H competitions earlier this year. They were coached by Kendra Ronnau.

Cory said, "The overall experience was truly amazing. All the work that it took to get this point was well worth the effort. I would like to thank everyone who helped make this opportunity possible."

In the Youth Horse Judging Contest, the Lancaster 4-H Judging Team of Elli, Megan, Bailee, and Hannah placed 11th High Team Overall. Horse judging emphasizes how much youth know about horse conformation as they determine placings of a class of four horses. In the national contest, youth placed four halter and eight performance classes. Each contestant gave oral reasons and an explanation of their placings for specific halter

and performance classes. Teams presented two halter and two performance sets of reasons.



Communications contest participants.


In the Communications Contests, Cory placed 4th in the Individual Presentation Contest with his demonstration entitled "FYI on AI." Elli and Hannah placed 2nd in the Team Presentation Contest with their demonstration entitled "Gut Reaction."

Kendra said, "All the youth displayed maturity, responsibility, and incredible sportsmanship. Their depth of knowledge is second to none. These are tomorrow's leaders in the industry."


Elli said, "I gained more appreciation for the hard work and dedication that goes into preparing for competitive events. The entire experience allowed me to learn first-hand the importance of setting goals, meeting deadlines, handling pressure, and accepting criticism. I feel fortunate to have had this opportunity."



4-H horse judging team.



Lancaster County 4-H Teen Council
presents its annual...



Overnight Lock-In for 4th & 5th graders


(need not be enrolled in 4-H)

Jan.21, 8 p.m. to Jan.22, 8 a.m.

Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln

This year's theme is...

GET A CLUE




Games!
Movies!
Fun Projects!
Snacks!
Sleep Over!

Bring your sleeping bag, pillow, toothbrush, toothpaste, active wear, sleepwear (sweats) and a friend interested in 4-H!

For more information, call (402) 441-7180 and ask for Tracy (Kulm) Anderson.

Cost \$15/person
Registrations due by Jan. 19



LOCK-IN REGISTRATION FORM

Make check payable (\$15/participant) to Lancaster County 4-H Teen Council and mail with registration form **BY JAN. 19** to:
Tracy Anderson, UNL Extension in Lancaster County, 444 Cherrycreek Rd, Suite A, Lincoln, NE 68528-1507

Name of participant(s) _____ Age _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ Parent or Guardian _____

Special Needs or Other Information (such as food allergies) _____

I give permission to use my child's image in photographs taken at the Lock-In in publications, news articles, advertisements or Web sites pertaining to 4-H. ☐ yes ☐ no

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____