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## Southeast Research and Extension Center 5-Year Issue-Based Review

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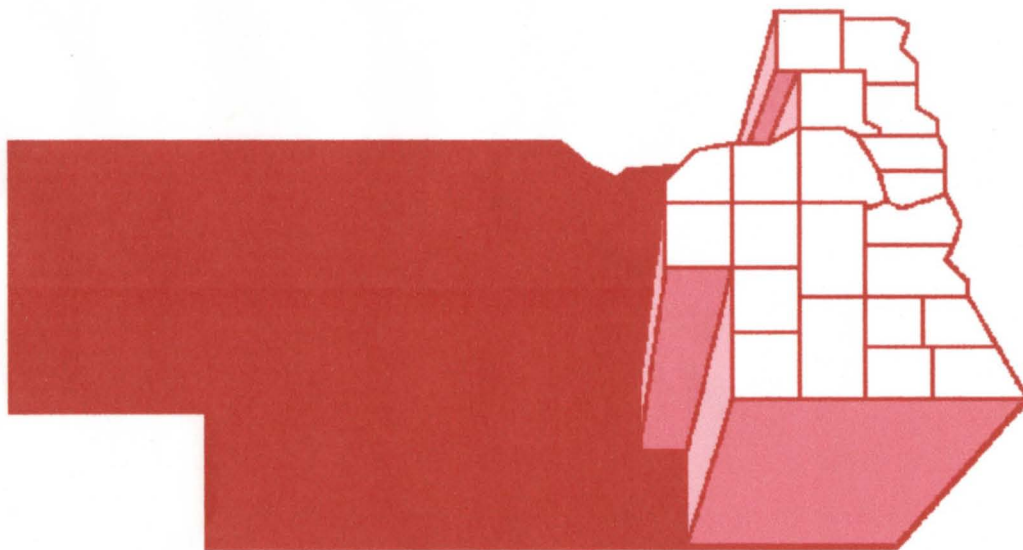
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# **Southeast Research and Extension Center 5-Year Issue-Based Review**

*A Comprehensive Study of the Southeast District of  
Nebraska Cooperative Extension*



University of  
Nebraska  
Lincoln



Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources

# Table of Contents

Page	
1	Director's Introduction
4	Demographic and Economic Profile of Southeastern Nebraska
5	■ Geography and Organization
7	■ Population
12	■ Agriculture
19	■ Income and Poverty
20	■ Commuting
21	■ Race and Ethnicity
23	Preface - Writing Team
24	Agriculture Issue Team Report
24	■ Acreage Team Report
27	■ Small/Medium Farm Team Report
31	■ Large Farm Team Report
37	■ Agribusiness/Consultants Team Report
40	■ Structure of Agriculture Report
40	■ Crops
42	■ Animal Agriculture
44	■ Agribusiness
44	■ Public Policy
48	Community Visions: Urban/Rural Issue Team Report
62	Environmental Sustainability Issue Team Report
77	Family Life Issue Team Report
88	Healthy Lifestyles Issue Team Report
93	■ Food Safety
96	■ Healthcare in Communities
99	■ Nutrition Education Program
102	■ Nutrition Through the Lifecycle
106	Youth Issue Team Report
117	Research in the Southeast District
119	■ Final Report of Focus Group Research <i>by Richard A. Krueger, Ph.D</i>
125	■ Implications and Recommendations
131	Director's Closing Remarks
133	Personnel Listing
143	Glossary
146	Notes

## Director's Introduction

The five-year issue based review process provides an important opportunity for the faculty and staff of Nebraska's research and extension centers to reflect upon our accomplishments, our resources, our environment, and our future. While strategic planning certainly should be an ongoing process, the five-year issue based review causes us to pause, reexamine our assumptions and commit our planning to print for others to review. Rather than being a bureaucratic hurdle, this review is the reward for our planning efforts, and we look forward to the insights that the review team will provide.

The Southeast Research and Extension Center (SREC) began this process in June 1999, with the formation of a steering committee consisting of 14 faculty members. At our first meeting, the steering committee established four goals for the review. They are:

- The review process will generate a usable plan which will improve how Cooperative Extension functions in the Southeast District.
- The review process will be the catalyst for ongoing planning in the Southeast District.
- The review process will generate a public relations document for use in the Southeast District.
- The review process will generate a document to meet our reporting needs to extension administrators.

As we began our review process, the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR) had just completed a series of listening sessions with Nebraskans representing both the geographic and economic diversity of the state. These sessions were not without sampling error. However, they were recent and often well attended. The steering committee carefully examined the results of those sessions held in our southeastern region, and these provided a sound basis for identifying the issues of concern to the people, communities and businesses we serve. The listening sessions also provided a strong sense of how the public perceived both the strengths and the weaknesses of the University of Nebraska, IANR and Cooperative Extension.

From listening session reports, the steering committee identified 11 trends or conditions in the state and the university that Nebraskans saw as overarching, and that would influence how we address issues over the next five years. The committee determined that these should be considerations in all of the planning that would follow.

The eleven considerations are:		
Internal Structure/Actions	External Characteristics of Audience	Goals for All Issue Teams
Marketing extension	A commuting population	Developing leadership
Using technology	A diverse population	Developing volunteers
Multi-area resource sharing/structure (staff, facilities, etc.)	Urban sprawl	Enhancing economic stability of audiences served
Acting in a political world		Community viability

The steering committee also reviewed the existing IANR and Cooperative Extension strategic plans. Under the direction of the steering committee and with the leadership of unit leaders, a listening session was held with members of each EPU or county extension board. Extension board members were carefully selected and appointed to represent or speak for extension clientele. By considering both public input and the mission and priorities of our institution, we identified six broad issue areas for further examination. These are:

YOUTH	AGRICULTURE	FAMILY LIFE
Including all aspects of traditional and nontraditional, formal and nonformal youth development.	Including acreages, small farms, large farms, the changing agriculture structure and agribusiness.	Including family strengths, parenting, child care, aging and financial management.
HEALTHY LIFESTYLES	ENVIROMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	COMMUNITY VISION: Urban/Rural
Including food safety, nutrition, health care, time management and aging population, etc.	Including water quality, waste management, air quality, horticulture and pest and wildlife management.	Including diversity, urban/rural issues, brain drain/retention, infrastructure and housing.

Guided by the steering committee, and through a process of self selection, virtually every extension educator, extension assistant and extension aide had the opportunity to contribute to the review. The pages that follow consist mainly of the work of those teams. Only one specialist participated on an issue team, but specialists were represented at focus groups dealing with research.

In addition to the IANR listening sessions, existing strategic plans and extension board listening sessions, the six issue teams sought detailed information from specific groups of stakeholders regarding the issues that had been identified. Various methodologies, including focus groups, mailed surveys and one-on-one interviews, were used to obtain this information. The issue teams also reviewed the most recent available sources of secondary data from state and federal sources, looking for regional trends that might distinguish southeastern Nebraska from the rest of the state and thus require system-wide priorities and programs to be modified or regional programs created to best meet specific regional needs.

The SREC also examined the state of, and priorities for, research in the district. As you will see, the nature of faculty research appointments in the SREC is unique among the five research and extension centers in Nebraska. Research was addressed through a series of focus groups.

We also compared our findings to those of the Cooperative Extension in the 21st Century Task Force final report. That report raised many of the same questions and issues we identified. While that is gratifying, it also adds to a growing awareness of the complexity and urgency of identifying strategic solutions to those issues, solutions that will serve our institution and the citizens of southeastern Nebraska.

The final product of an undertaking that involves so many contributors, both internal and external to the host organization, is never easy to predict. Each perspective is in some ways unique and, as in any voyage of discovery, we found surprises along the way. We believe this review document demonstrates a shared sense of purpose and a commitment to making changes in our organization and in ourselves that will strengthen our ability to achieve our mission: putting knowledge to work for the people of southeastern Nebraska.

The steering committee wishes to express appreciation to the review team for the time and commitment needed to conduct this review.

We also wish to thank all of the issue teams for their efforts in preparing this report, the faculty and staff of Nebraska Cooperative Extension and the University of Nebraska for their contributions and advice, Dr. Richard Krueger of the University of Minnesota for his assistance in conducting focus groups with faculty researchers, and all of our friends and colleagues both inside and outside the University of Nebraska who contributed their insights to this process.

If you would like to see the manner in which this work progressed, all draft reports and meeting minutes can be found at the SREC Web Site.

<http://ianrwww.unl.edu/ianr/serec/5yr/homepage.htm>

Steering Committee	
Gary Bergman	Randy Cantrell
Jim Carson	John Fech
Janet Fox	Larry Germer
Leanne Manning	Mary Nelson
Amy Peterson	Deb Schroeder
Ed Siffring	Sharon Skipton - Chair
Dave Varner	Susan Williams

## Demographic and Economic Profile of Southeastern Nebraska

The steering committee and issue teams working with this review spent a great deal of time seeking secondary data that could be used to not only describe the district and its subregions, but also differentiate it from other regions of the state. Both state and federal data bases were analyzed, with most data coming from the U.S. Bureau of the Census. Frequently, we had to rely on various estimates for population numbers, and in some cases we found no good substitute for the arguably outdated counts from the 1990 Census. Unfortunately, much of the 2000 Census data will not be available for another two years, and we can only assume that the patterns and trends demonstrated in 1990 are still valid today. Our collective observations suggest this is true, and many of the indicators of concentration of population and economic activity in southeastern Nebraska are stronger today than they were in 1990.

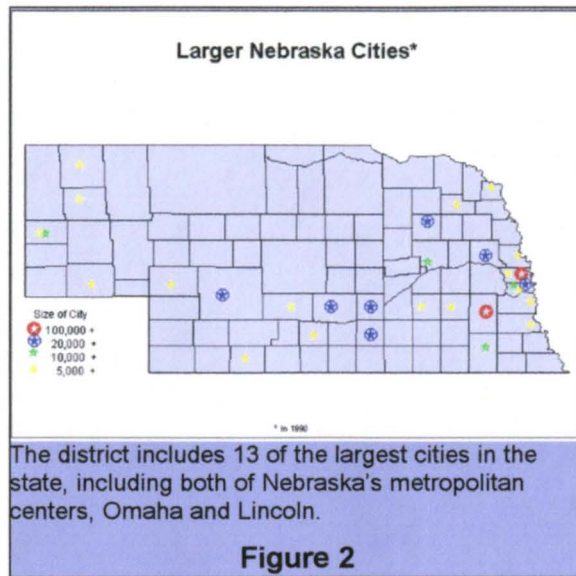
As difficult as finding timely and accurate data often is, making sense of the numbers is even more complicated. The Southeast Extension District is quite diverse in terms of population, human ecology and economy. Averages do not tell a very useful story in such a diverse system. Often a numerical presentation of demographic data is more confusing than informative. Even graphic representations of such data can become very difficult to interpret.

For this review, we chose to make extensive use of maps in our research. Since our work is largely county-based, we mapped counties as the basic unit of analysis. County maps offer an alternative to other kinds of demographic presentations. It will be apparent if counties cluster together naturally in a region. Likewise, counties that diverge from the regional pattern will also be apparent. Readers often find maps help them identify reasons for regional variation, since comparing a series of maps gives clues to correlations between various social and economic variables.

The following pages include maps of Nebraska in which, with only a few exceptions, county-level data have been arrayed in quartiles. That is, these maps identify which counties fall within each quarter of all Nebraska counties on various characteristics. Interpretation of these maps must be made cautiously, as the quartiles are based on county counts and the data themselves can be quite skewed within those quartiles. Still, maps provide a good place for the district to begin its demographic analysis.

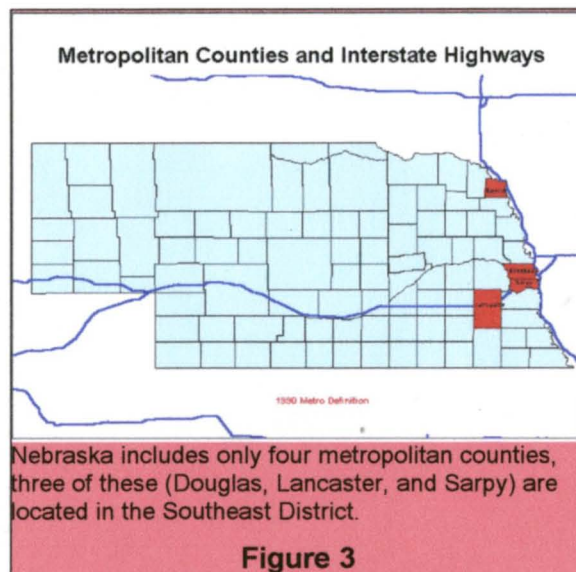






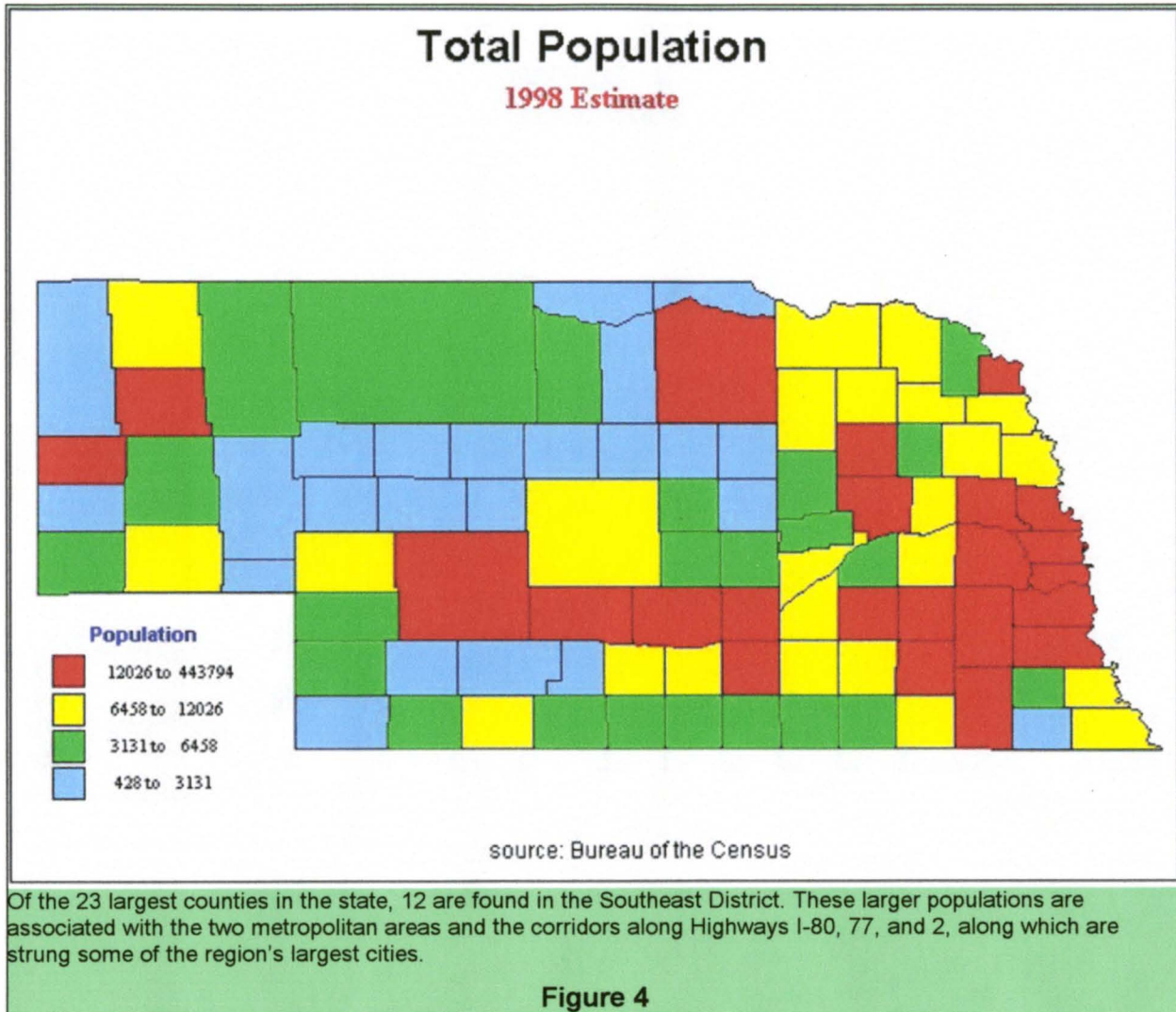
As of July, 2000, the district includes a program staff of 108 persons. The staff is comprised of 56 extension educators, 50 extension assistants, associates and aides, and one extension specialist (although six other extension specialists and a forester are assigned by their departments to provide services to the Southeast District), and a district director. Funding for these positions is received primarily from state and federal sources. However, three educators and eight assistants are entirely funded by grants and contracts, and 31 assistants, associates and aides are funded by counties. The majority of the county-funded positions are in Douglas/Sarpy and Lancaster counties.

The district's total budget, including grants and contracts, is slightly more than \$3.5 million. The budget has grown slightly over the past five years, with the majority of that growth attributed to salaries and support of educators funded by grants and contracts (new positions).

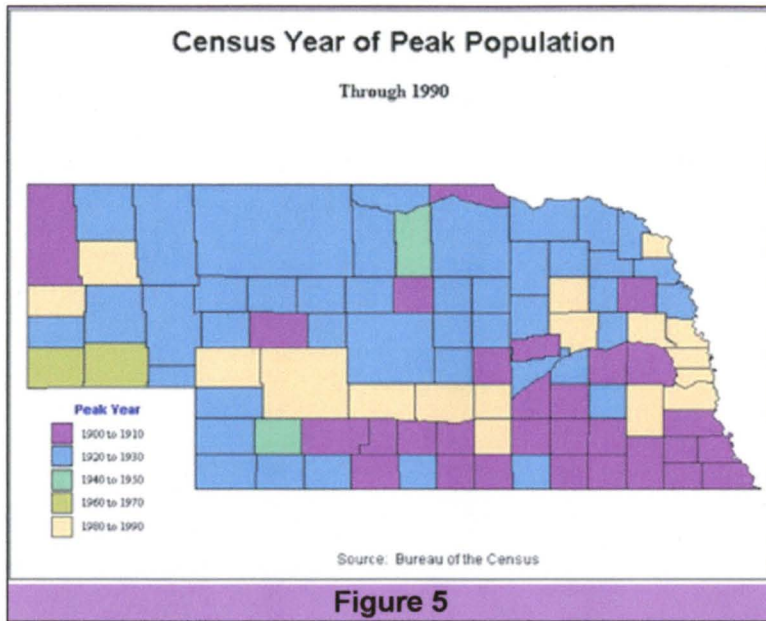


# Population

Estimates from the U.S. Bureau of the Census for 1999 indicate a population for the district of 1,042,996 persons. That population is equal to approximately 63 percent of Nebraska's total estimated population of 1,666,028. Three counties, Douglas, Lancaster and Sarpy (the Omaha and Lincoln Metropolitan Areas), were home to 806,379 persons in 1999, and accounted for 77-percent of the district's and 48-percent of the state's total population.

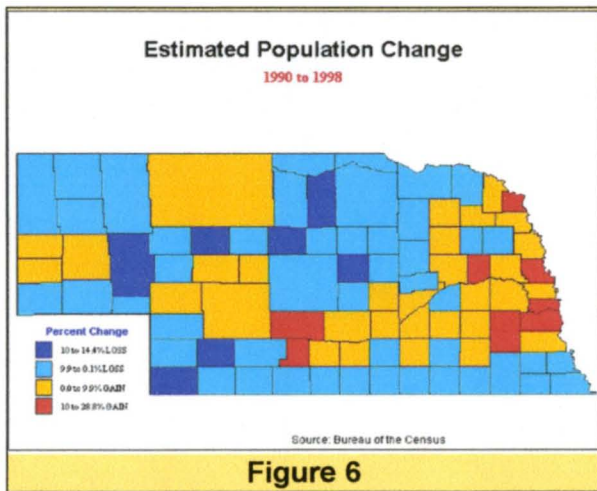


This concentration of population in Eastern Nebraska is part of a trend that has been visible since the early 1900s. The map in Figure 5 shows the census year in which the population of Nebraska counties was at its historical high (population estimates through 1998 do not indicate that this map will be altered by the 2000 Census, at least not as it applies to the Southeast District). Growth in farm size and resulting reductions in farm numbers, along with



**Figure 5**

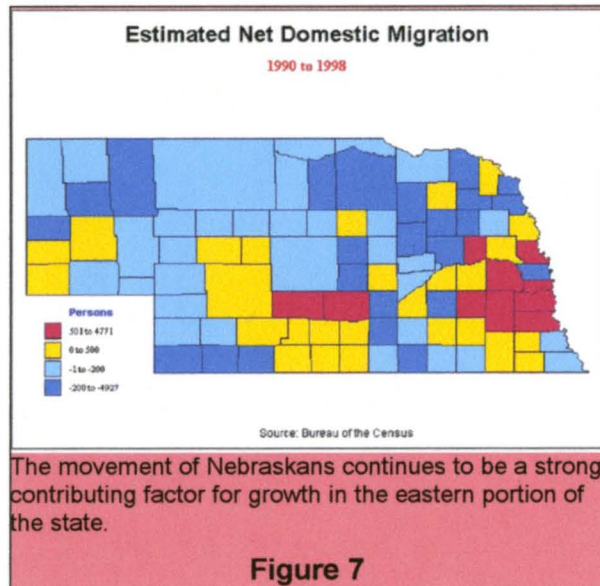
limited growth in non-farm employment opportunities, have contributed to out-migration in rural areas. Population losses in rural portions of the state have been offset by growth in trade centers and urban areas, generally located along major transportation routes where growth in non-farm employment historically has been stronger. Until recently, Nebraska was a net population loser as a state. Most of the growth seen in urban areas is the result of a redistribution of Nebraskans rather than in-migration from other regions.



**Figure 6**

since 1990 has occurred in the growing counties of the Southeast District. As a whole, the Southeast Extension District is estimated to have grown 8.3 percent since 1990. However, as in the state as a whole, that growth is not evenly distributed among the district's 21

Urban growth has been especially strong in and around the Lincoln and Omaha metropolitan areas. Ninety-two percent of Nebraska's total estimated population growth



The movement of Nebraskans continues to be a strong contributing factor for growth in the eastern portion of the state.

**Figure 7**

counties. The fastest growing county in the district (and indeed in the state), Sarpy County, grew by more than 19 percent and neighboring Cass County by more than 16 percent during the decade. On the other hand, Richardson County in the extreme southeast corner of the state is estimated to have lost more than six percent of its population during that time. In fact, only seven counties in the district (Sarpy, Cass, Washington, Lancaster, York, Douglas and Seward, in order of growth rate) grew at a rate faster than the state as a whole, while five counties grew more slowly and nine counties declined in population. This diversity in population trends can pose significant problems for district-wide planning and priority setting.

Of the 10 counties with in-migration of more than 500 persons from other parts of the United States (including other counties in Nebraska), seven are located in the Southeast District. International in-migration is very important in some Nebraska localities. However, it has involved much smaller numbers and is more scattered, showing a tendency to concentrate around rural trade centers in several parts of the state, as well as Omaha and Lincoln.

Since migration tends to involve relatively young people, it generally has significant implications for the age structure of the areas in which it occurs.

In Nebraska's counties with the oldest average populations, 21 percent or more of the total population was estimated to be 65 years of age or older in 1997 (the last year for which such estimates were done by the Census Bureau). Four counties in the Southeast District are among that group, and all four have been characterized by a century of out-migration (fig. 8). Conversely, in the counties with the youngest average populations, 15 percent or less of the population was estimated to be over age 65 in 1997. The five

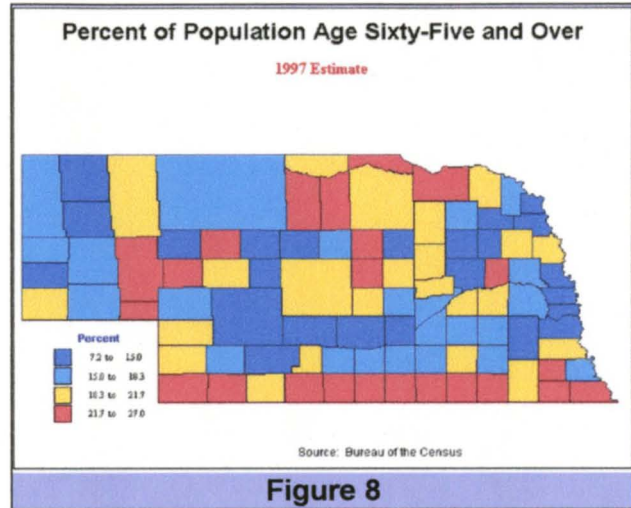


Figure 8

southeastern counties in that group are among the district's most rapidly growing, and are either metropolitan counties or adjacent to such counties.

As the population ages on average beyond childbearing years, the birth rate declines. In 11 southeastern counties, deaths outnumbered births in the last decade (fig. 9). Again, these are among the most rural counties in the region. The rate of natural population increase (the excess of births over deaths) exceeded 500 during that time for four of the region's fastest growing counties. In Sarpy County, the state's fastest growing county, natural population increase accounted for a population growth nearly 14,000 people.

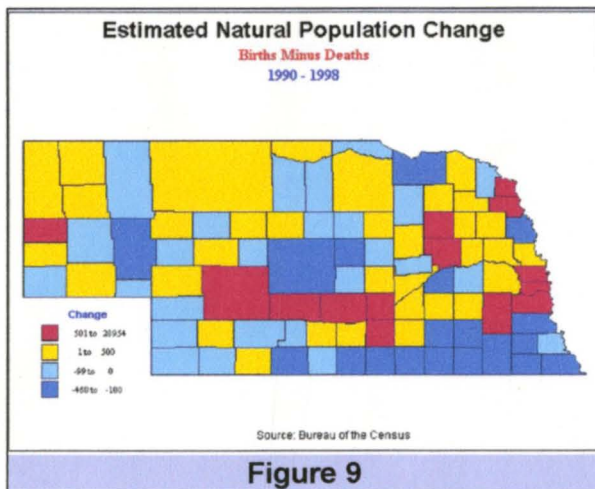


Figure 9

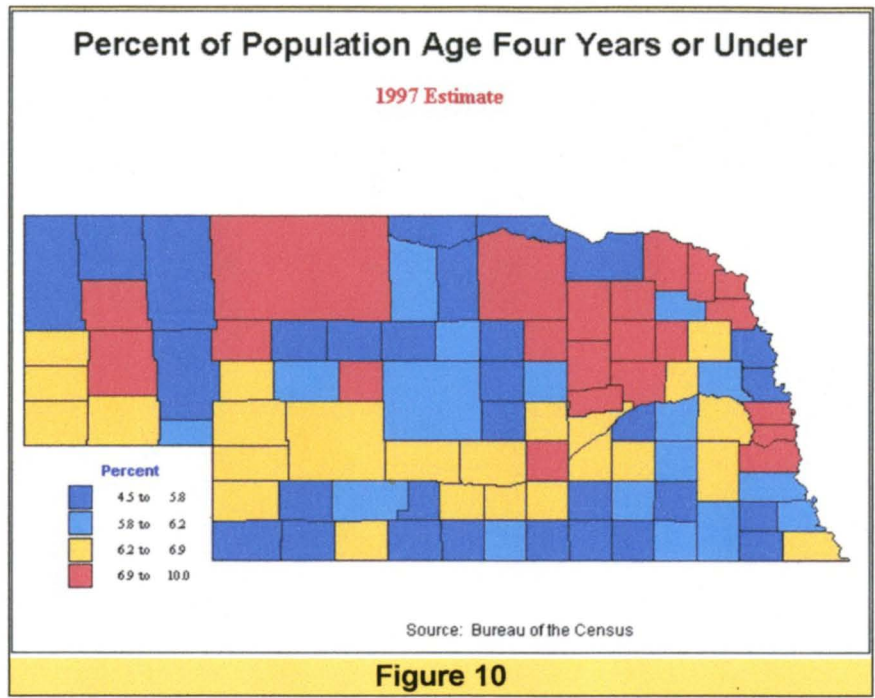
These variations in age structure are of tremendous significance for programmatic planning in the Southeast Extension District. However, the marked diversity found in these indicators means that setting district-wide priorities is very difficult. Because a great deal of Extension programming is delivered through our 4-H and youth development activities, the population under 18 years of age is critically interesting to our planning. Again, the Southeast District, and especially the metropolitan portion of the district demonstrates a significant concentration such persons (Table 1).

Population by Age: 1997 Estimate					
US Bureau of the Census					
County	Total Population	Population Age		Population Age	
		0-4 Years	Percent 0-4	5 - 17 Years	Percent 5-17
Burt	7998	464	5.8	1611	20.1
Butler	8680	528	6.1	1877	21.6
Cass	24486	1755	7.2	5200	21.2
Cuming	9993	651	6.5	2084	20.9
Dodge	35333	2178	6.2	6774	19.2
Douglas	443794	31919	7.2	85852	19.3
Gage	22666	1366	6	4078	18
Jefferson	8378	503	6	1534	18.3
Johnson	4564	266	5.8	854	18.7
Lancaster	235589	15436	6.6	40419	17.2
Nemaha	7697	458	6	1418	18.4
Otoe	14787	910	6.2	2908	19.7
Pawnee	3131	178	5.7	533	17
Polk	5631	321	5.7	1194	21.2
Richardson	9420	607	6.4	1720	18.3
Saline	12966	757	5.8	2467	19
Sarpy	120785	10026	8.3	27408	22.7
Saunders	19245	1288	6.7	4093	21.3
Seward	16299	1004	6.2	3197	19.6
Washington	18661	1063	5.7	3939	21.1
York	14512	1005	6.9	2858	19.7
<b>District Total</b>	<b>1044615</b>	<b>72683</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>202018</b>	<b>19.3</b>

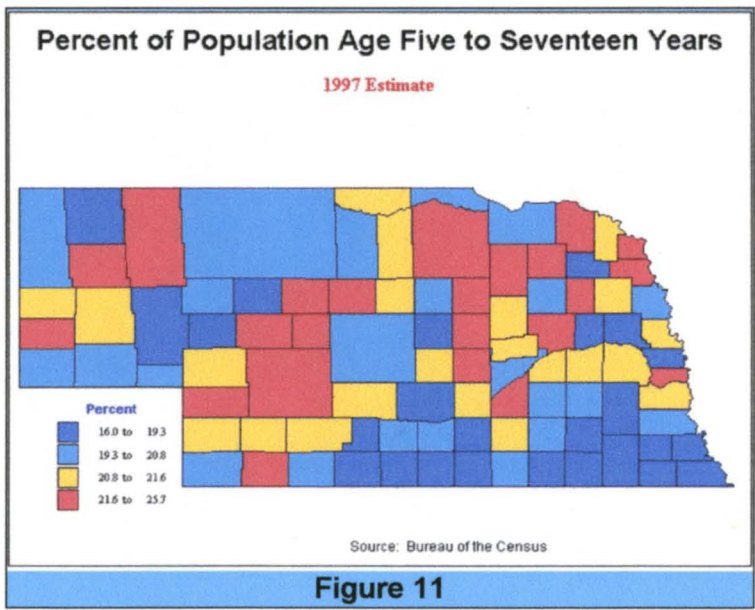
**Table 1**

Census Bureau estimates for 1997 indicated that Nebraska was home to 114,653 persons age four years or under, accounting for 6.4 percent of the total state population. Of those young children, 63.4 percent (72,683) resided in the Southeast District, and almost half (58,381) were found in the three metropolitan counties of Douglas, Lancaster and Sarpy.

District-wide, seven percent of the population was estimated to be under the age of five years in 1997, and over eight percent of the Sarpy County population was in that age group (Fig. 10)

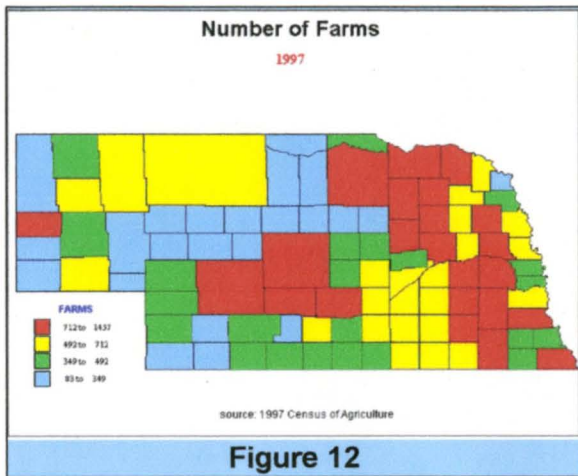


A slightly different pattern is seen in the 1997 population estimates for persons age five to 17 years (fig. 11). The 202,018 such persons found in the district comprised 61 percent of the state's total population of people in that age group, and 19.3 percent of all persons in the district. While the proportion of persons in the five to 17 year age group is as high as 22.7 percent in Sarpy County, it is actually considerably higher in some rural counties outside of the Southeast District. The three metro counties were home to 46.4 percent of the five to 17 year olds in the state in 1997, and that is a slight under-representation given the total size of those populations. This apparently interesting departure from the trends that we have observed in other demographic characteristics does not change the fact that, in actual numbers, persons aged five to 17 years are heavily concentrated in and around the Metro Counties. Within the district, the three metro counties account for 76 percent of the total population of five- to 17-year-old residents.

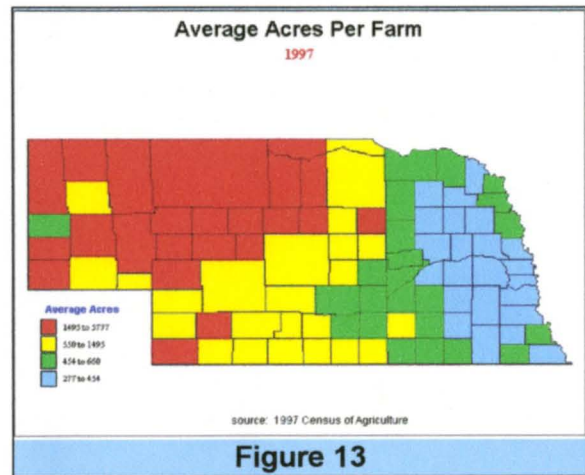


# Agriculture

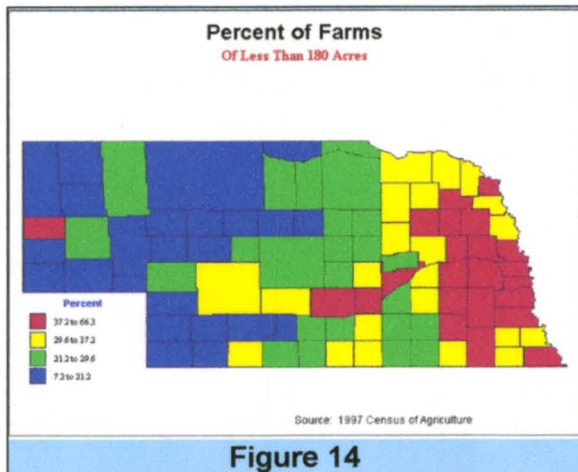
As in all of Nebraska, agriculture is very important to the Southeast District, with agricultural products in the 21 counties having an annual market value of more than \$2.3 billion (about 24-percent of Nebraska's \$9.8 billion in agricultural products). According to the last Census of Agriculture (1997), the region was home to 15,530 farm operations, or 27 percent of all operations in the state. However, these farms tend to be smaller than the average Nebraska farm, and the 6,342,246 total farm acres in the district comprise only 14 percent of Nebraska's total farm land. Southeastern farms average 408 acres as compared to Nebraska's average of 885 acres. The 37 percent (5,803 farms) of all Southeast District farms that are smaller than 180 acres make up 40 percent of all such farms in the state. This pattern may be clearly seen in Figures 12, 13, and 14.



**Figure 12**

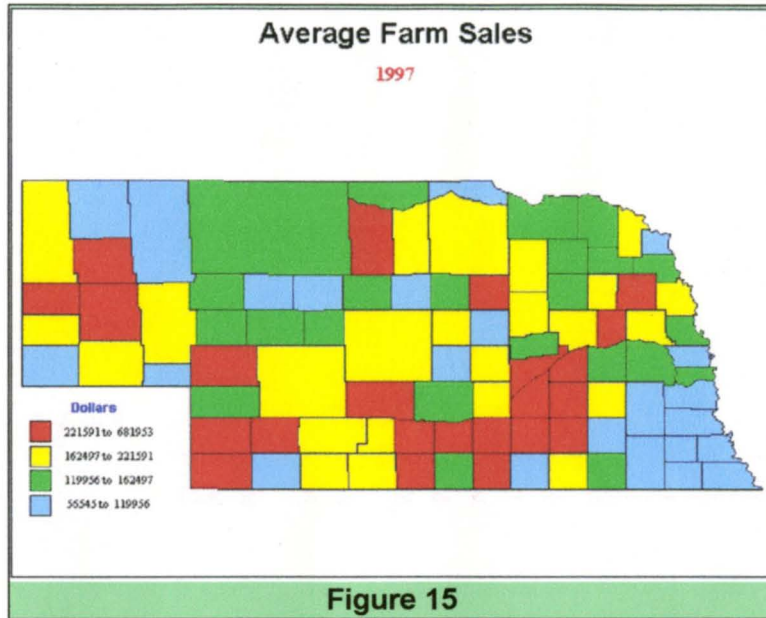


**Figure 13**



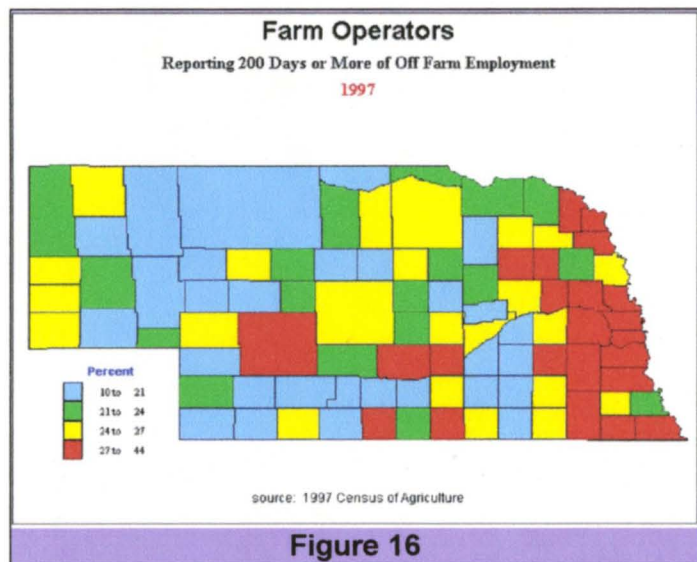
**Figure 14**

Lancaster County is the extreme case in this regard. Metropolitan Lancaster County has the largest concentration of farms in Nebraska, with 1,457 operations. Those farms are, however among the smallest in the state, averaging only 289 acres. While 54 percent of all Lancaster County farms are under 180 acres, there are also 106 farms of over 1,000 acres in the county. Those larger farms produce the majority of the agricultural sales in the county.

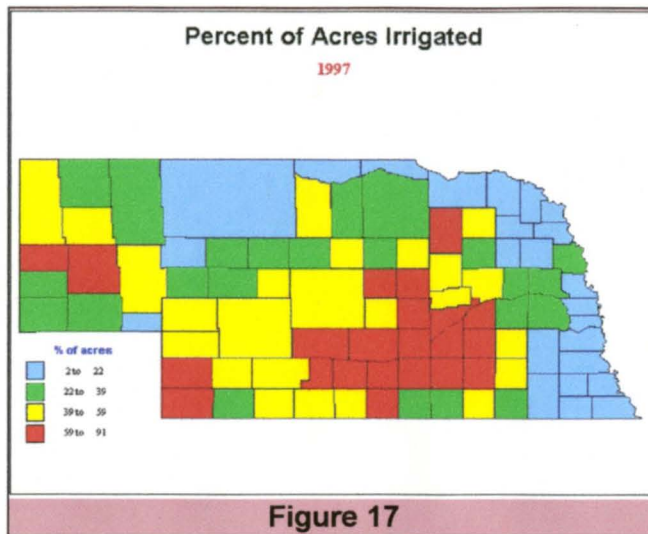


Average farm sales are notably low in the southeastern corner of the Southeast District (fig.15). Indeed, in 1997 Lancaster County ranked 93rd among counties in the state on this indicator, with average farm sales of only \$56,545. Six counties in the district had average sales of less than \$100,000, compared to a statewide average of \$191,074 and a district average of \$152,178.

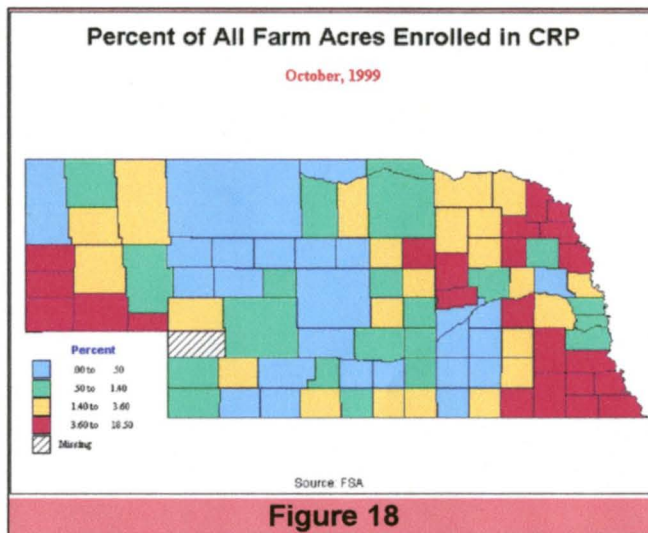
Farmers in the Southeast District are only slightly more likely than other Nebraska farmers to report off-farm employment, with 30 percent of all operators in the region reporting 200 or more days of annual off-farm employment as compared to 26 percent of operators in the state. At the extremes for the district are Lancaster County at 43 percent and York County at 17 percent. For the District in general, off-farm employment appears to be related to proximity to a metropolitan area and lower than average farm sales. (Fig. 16)





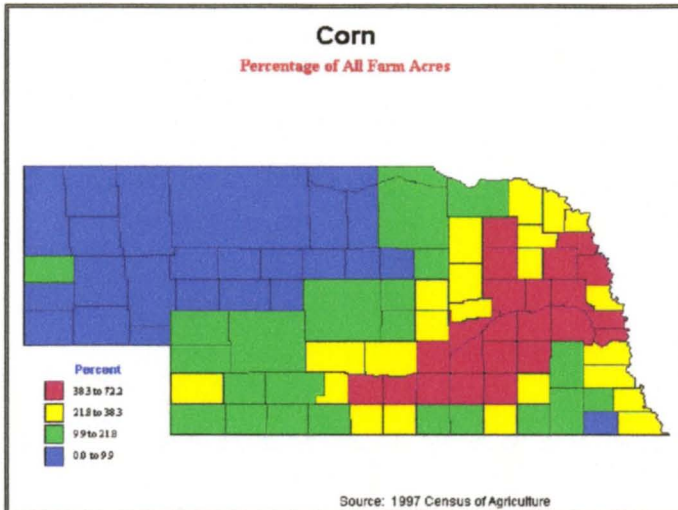


A similar pattern is found when looking at farms with land enrolled in the CRP (fig. 17). For the district, just over four percent of all farm acres are enrolled in this program. The range is from over 18 percent in Johnson County to less than 0.1 percent in York County. This reflects the relatively high proportions of highly erodible land found in the southeastern portion of the district.

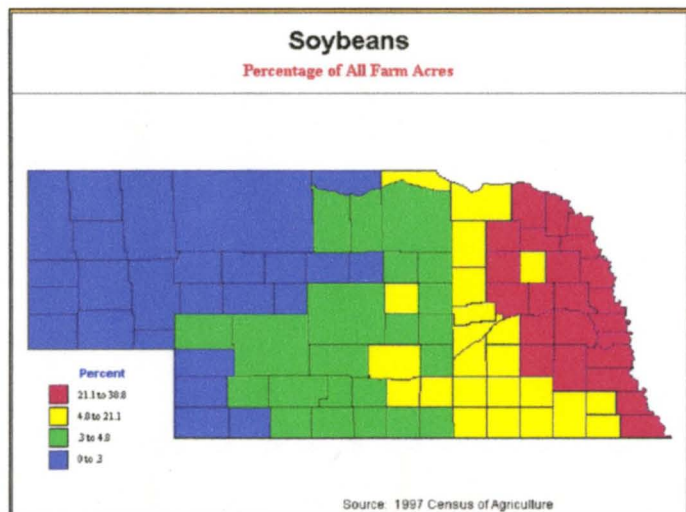


Another characteristic of eastern Nebraska is a relative scarcity of irrigated farmland. More than 16 percent of all crop land in the district was irrigated, according to the 1997 Census. This is very similar to the state's 15 percent. However, the range on this indicator is from less than one percent in Richardson County, the district's most southeastern member, and more than 16 percent in York County, the district's westernmost (Fig. 18). Contributing factors include average rainfall and availability of groundwater.

The following series of maps illustrates the patterns of crop and livestock production in the Southeast Extension District compared to the rest of Nebraska.



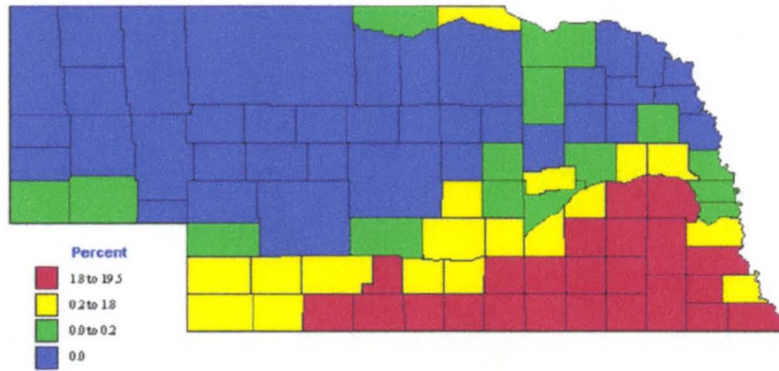
There are several important agronomic crops grown in the southeast. Corn is principal among these. According to the 1997 Census, the 2,125,258 acres planted to corn in the Southeast District represented nearly 26 percent of all corn acres in the state.



While fewer acres are planted to soybeans in the southeast region, the 1,692,226 reported by the census represent just over half of all soybean acres in the state.

## Sorghum

Percentage of All Farm Acres

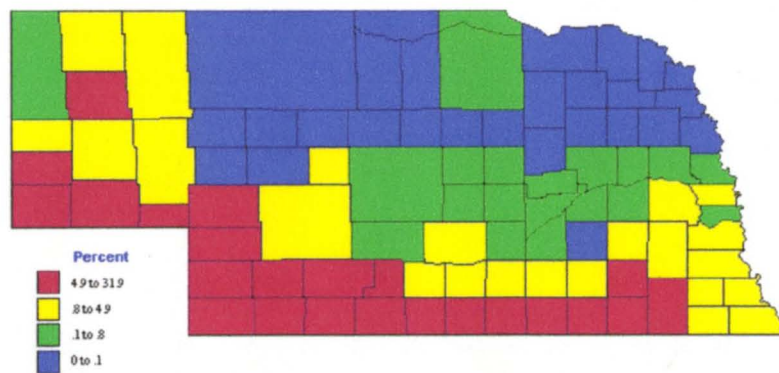


Source: 1997 Census of Agriculture

Similarly, the Southeast District's reported 404,480 acres of sorghum which represented 56 percent of all sorghum acres in the state.

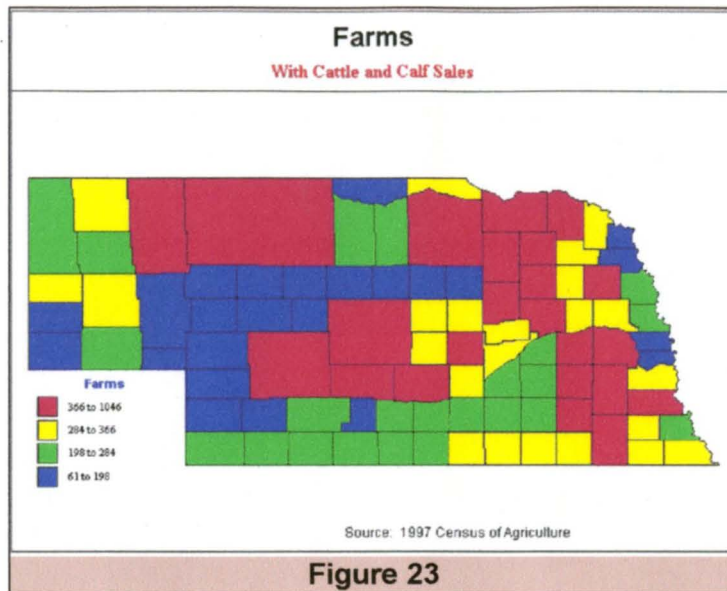
## Wheat

Percentage of All Farm Acres

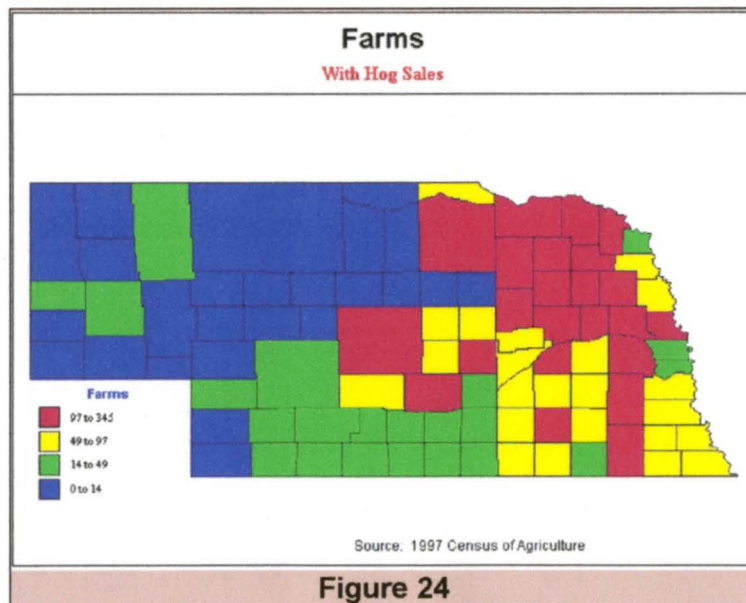


Source: 1997 Census of Agriculture

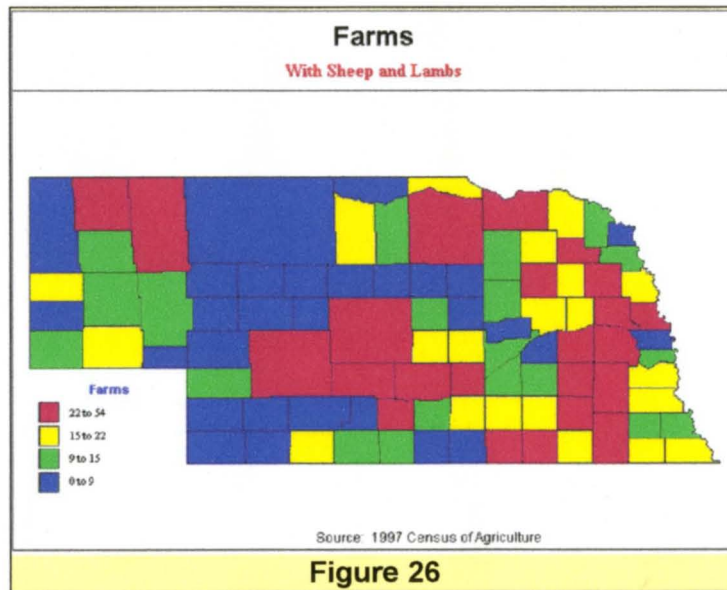
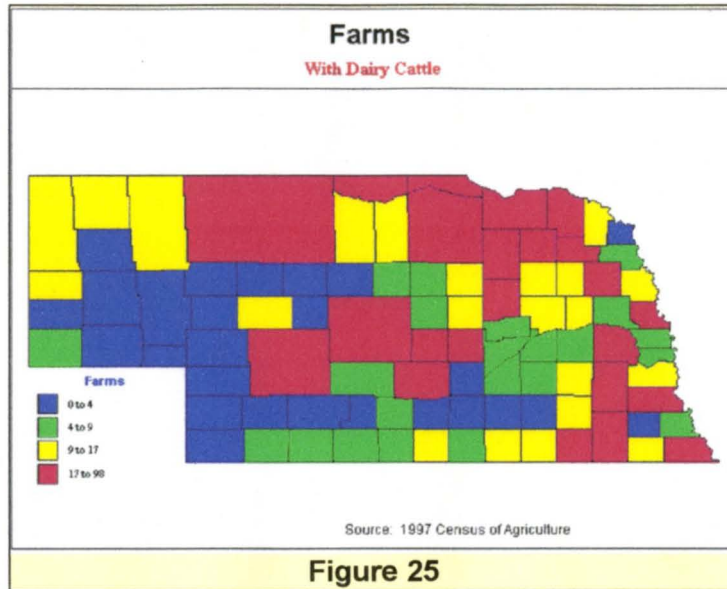
In 1997, wheat was reported as a relatively minor crop for the Southeast District, with approximately 146,000 acres planted, about eight percent of Nebraska's wheat acreage. Still, for those southeastern counties most involved in wheat production, more than seven percent of all farm acres were planted in that crop.



Livestock also plays an important role in the agriculture of the Southeast District. According to the 1997 Census of Agriculture, 37 percent (5,716) of all southeastern farm operations included beef cattle, and 14 percent (2,135) included hog production. In 1997, the census reported the market value of livestock in the district to be over \$1.25-billion. Unfortunately, we are only able to estimate changes that have occurred in both beef and swine production since 1997. From our observations and from trends that have developed in the industry over the last three years we expect these numbers to be down considerably, particularly in swine.



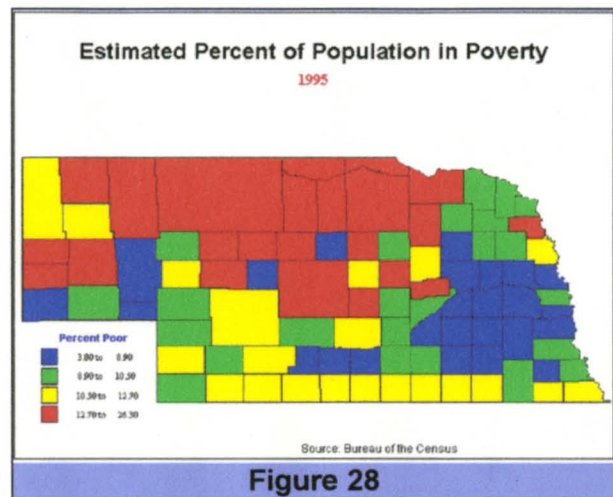
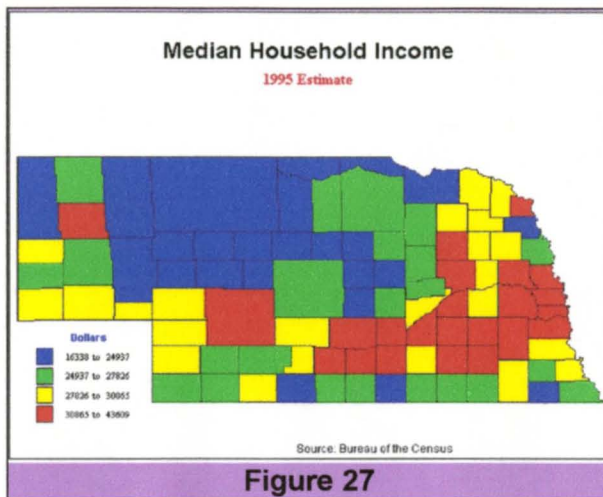
Dairy operations and the production of sheep and lambs comprise a relatively small share of agricultural production in Nebraska. However, 368 farm operations in the Southeast District included a dairy enterprise and 503 produced sheep and lambs, according to the 1997 Census.



Poultry production does exist in the Southeast District on a limited basis. The 1997 Census reported 12.7 million birds were sold by all operations in the region (about 18-percent of the state total), and 10 counties in the district reported no poultry production whatsoever.

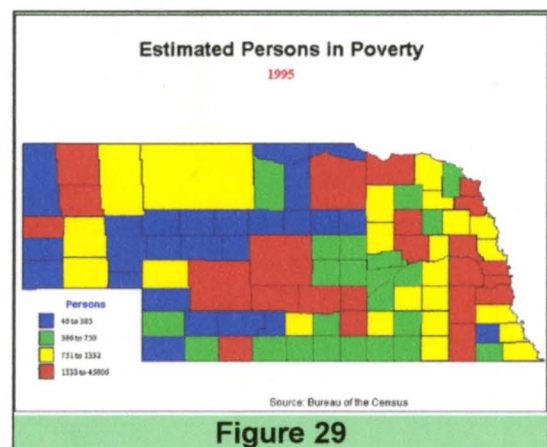
## Income and Poverty

Many counties in the Southeast District enjoy relatively high median household incomes (fig. 27). This is especially true in the metropolitan counties and those contiguous to them. According to the most recent (1995) estimates from the Census Bureau, the highest median income in the state was found in Sarpy County (\$43,609). Also found in the top quartile of counties on this indicator are the heavily irrigated, larger farm counties of Polk and York in the western portion of the district. Pockets of lower median household income are found in the counties furthest removed from metropolitan centers. The lowest median household income in the district is found in Pawnee County (\$22,037).



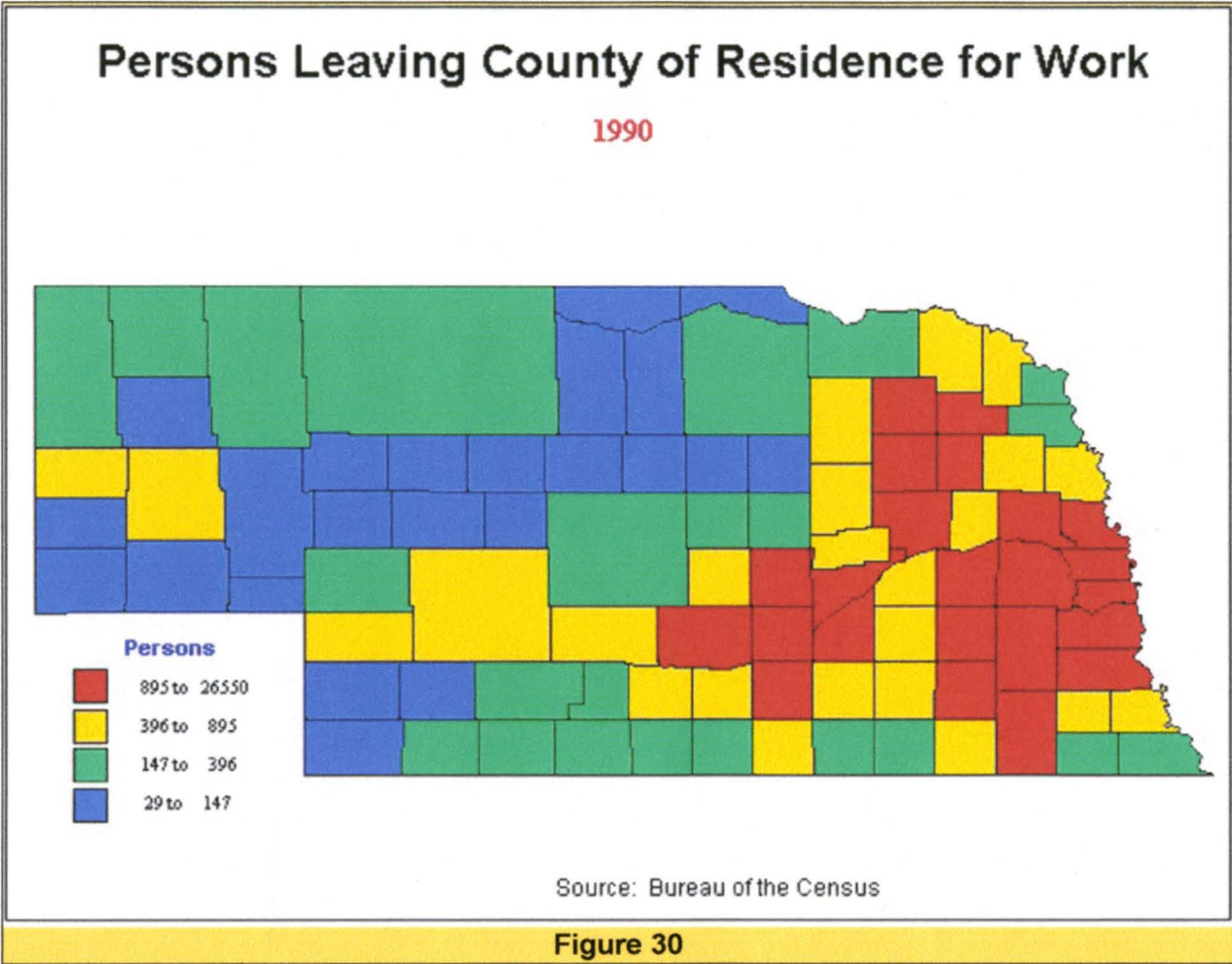
As one might expect, higher incomes are associated with relatively low poverty rates (fig. 28). Poverty rates in most southeastern counties are among the lowest in the state. The lowest poverty rate in the District (3.8 percent) is found in the county with the highest median household income, Sarpy County, while the highest poverty rate (12.7 percent) is found in the county with the lowest median household income, Pawnee County.

Overall, the district's average poverty rate of 8.7 percent is comparable to the state average of 9.2 percent. However, larger populations in southeastern counties means that even with relatively low poverty rates in metropolitan areas such as Sarpy County, the number of people living in poverty is quite high (fig. 29). The estimated 90,900 poor persons in the district make up roughly 60 percent of all the poor in Nebraska. Fully half of all of the poor in the district are found in Douglas County.



# Commuting

Southeastern Nebraska is characterized by relatively large numbers of people who leave their county of residence for employment (fig. 30). In 1990, over 26,000 Sarpy County residents left their home county for employment each day. While these data do not reflect the destination point for these commuting workers, it is logical to assume that Omaha and Lincoln attract a significant portion of them. Unfortunately, we are confined to 1990 Census data for this variable. The numbers will have changed in the intervening decade, and perhaps significantly. Observation would suggest that they are now larger. However, that assumption cannot be proven from these data.



## Race and Ethnicity

Nebraska is not particularly diverse in its racial composition, although recent indicators show significant changes in this characteristic for many parts of the state. This is largely attributable to a sizeable in-migration of people of Hispanic background. The most recent estimates from the Census Bureau indicate that there are about 164,000 racial minority residents in the state, including about 72,000 Hispanics. This makes up just under 10 percent of the state's total population.

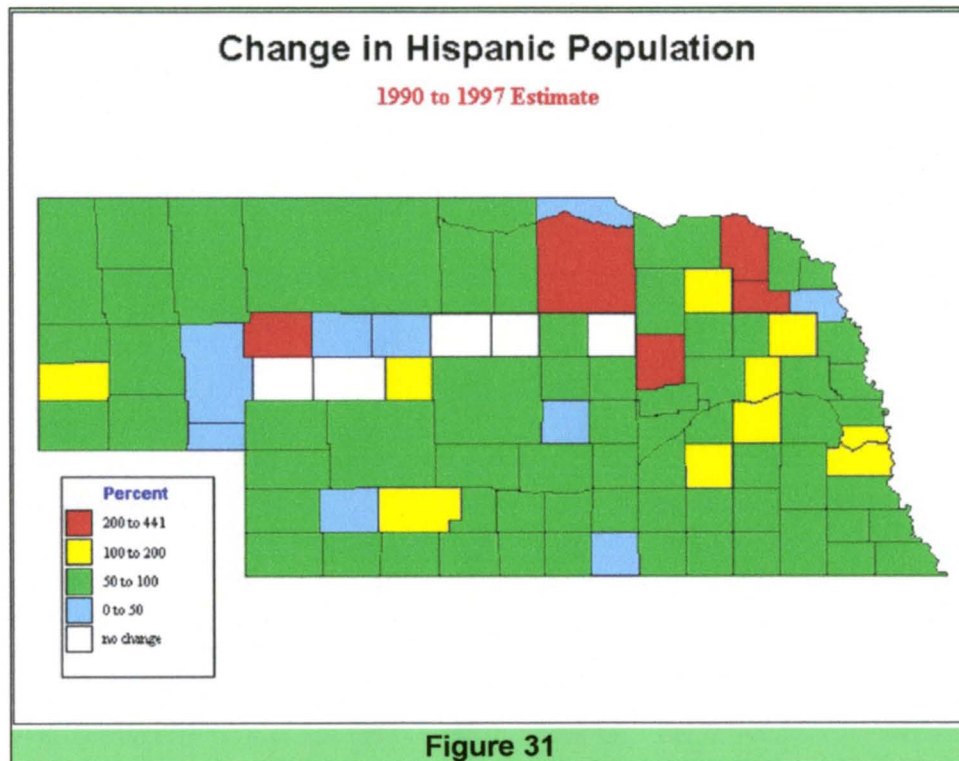
In the Southeast District, 122,010 minority individuals make up about 11.8 percent of the total population. This constitutes about 75 percent of all minority persons in Nebraska. According to the 1997 estimates, the district is home to 38,551 Hispanics, 64,424 African Americans, 6,401 Native American and 17,196 Asians and Pacific Islanders. Minorities are heavily concentrated in the more urbanized areas of the state. Ninety-seven percent of all African Americans in Nebraska reside in the district, and 80 percent of these live in Douglas County. While less dramatic, similar concentrations can be found among Native Americans, Asians and Pacific Islanders (Table 2).

U.S. Census									
	Total	Total	White	Total	White	African	American	Asian &	Total
		White	non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	American	Indian	Pacific Islander	Minority
NEBRASKA	1656870	1554800	1492935	67850	61865	66193	14841	21036	163935
Burt County	7888	7770	7656	133	114	7	88	23	232
Butler County	8589	8535	8499	41	36	11	16	27	90
Cass County	24002	23641	23279	404	362	55	157	149	723
Cuming County	9973	9903	9873	36	30	9	29	32	100
Dodge County	35125	34689	34316	422	373	116	126	194	809
Douglas County	441006	379666	361012	21319	18654	51489	3170	6681	79994
Gage County	22877	22597	22404	202	193	51	107	122	473
Jefferson	8393	8352	8226	132	126	7	23	11	167
Johnson County	4573	4380	4309	88	71	5	20	168	264
Lancaster	233319	220435	213720	7470	6715	5659	1624	5601	19599
Nemaha County	7816	7723	7688	36	35	64	14	15	128
Otoe County	14582	14472	14288	196	184	29	31	50	294
Pawnee County	3172	3164	3135	29	29	3	1	4	37
Polk County	5828	5594	5544	56	50	4	13	17	84
Richardson	9557	9341	9269	72	72	6	192	18	288
Saline County	13026	12804	12675	137	129	18	31	173	351
Sarpy County	118571	107753	101690	6990	6063	6643	528	3647	16881
Saunders	19152	19023	18839	200	184	19	56	54	313
Seward County	16282	16165	16016	151	149	24	35	58	266
Washington	18470	18232	18044	201	188	116	58	64	426
York County	14607	14348	14116	236	232	89	82	88	491
Southeast	1038608	948587	914598	38551	33989	64424	6401	17196	122010

Table 2



Much recent discussion has surrounded the observable in-migration of Hispanics to both urban and rural areas of the state. Census estimates suggest that most Nebraska counties have seen at least a 50 percent growth in Hispanic population since 1990, with several counties experiencing increases of 200 percent or more. Four southeastern counties are estimated to have had increases in the Hispanic population of over 100 percent (fig. 31). Some observers think these numbers have been understated, and the methodological problems associated with developing racial population estimates suggest that this may be true. Moreover, the actual numbers of individuals involved may be very small. Pawnee County is, for instance, estimated to be home to only 29 Hispanic persons. Obviously even a small change in that population will appear to be significant when reported as a percentage. Understanding of trends in the Hispanic population is further complicated by the fact that Hispanics are not reported by the Census as a racial group. Their numbers may thus appear in estimates of both white persons and persons of color. This can result in either double-counting or under-counting persons of Hispanic origin if one is not cautious. Unfortunately, we need 2000 Census data in order to evaluate these changes with real confidence. For now we can only assume changes are occurring, and that they must be considered in our planning efforts.



Demographics researched and compiled  
by Dr. Randy Cantrell

## Preface - Writing Team

**S**outheast faculty and staff worked in six teams to prepare reports on different subject areas. These were: Agriculture, Community Visions: Urban/Rural, Environmental Sustainability, Family Life, Healthy Lifestyles, and Youth.

While it is obvious that these areas are interrelated (for example, it is difficult to imagine agricultural or environmental issues without considering the other), each report in this section can stand alone. These documents were prepared by different teams, each of which has ownership of, pride in, and responsibility for the reports. We, the writing team, respect that.

The reports also reflect different needs and concerns expressed by faculty and staff working in different areas. To understand this, please refer to introductions, demographics and other general information. In addition, some reports will refer the reader to the teams report on the website. There will also be oral reports from each team, and the review team will have opportunities to ask questions at the time.

Writing Team Members	
Gary Bergman	Ray Calderon
Randy Cantrell	Mary Nelson
Myrna Powell - Chair	Ed Siffring
Sharon Skipton	John Wilson

# Agriculture Issue Team Report

## Acreage Team Report

Acreage - A rural property site of, but not limited to, 1-20 acres used as a rural living environment and/or production of specialty enterprises.

**A** special place in the country is often a long-awaited dream. For many it communicates freedom, open space, clean air and unique opportunities to enjoy hobbies, nature and quiet living at its best. Rural acreage owners will be coexisting with new neighbors whose lifestyles and values may differ from their own.

### Acreage Development

In response to an increase in requests for information regarding acreage development in Lancaster County, the City-County Planning Department conducted a study of residential land use in Lancaster County outside of the City of Lincoln. The study found there were 9,526 residential parcels of land. These were grouped into four categories: acreages, lots, farms with residential use, and parcels within towns or villages in Lancaster County. Of the 9,526 residential parcels, 29 percent were acreages, 25 percent were lots, and 21 percent were farms with residential use. The "lot" classification was applied to those parcels in subdivisions-style developments. This demonstrates that Lancaster County is changing from an area dominated by agriculture to one more urban in character. Our observations suggest this is true for other counties in the Southeast District that are urban in character or are economically dependent on the urban counties. One example:

[http://deal.unl.edu/extension/ears/view/view\\_ears.cgi?RECORD=984](http://deal.unl.edu/extension/ears/view/view_ears.cgi?RECORD=984)

### Points of Interest

- Less than 4 percent of the acreage residents report income from their property.
- Homeowners rely on wells for water and on-site waste water treatment systems. Often, these systems are not properly sited or not properly maintained. It is estimated that 40 percent of such systems in Nebraska are failing.
- Population growth will be a major factor in acreage development over the next several decades. This increases the possibility of population shifts away from cities and suburbs to the countryside.
- Families can make important and valuable contributions to the economic and social quality of family life on farms and acreages. Youth that are productive – who contribute

to the success of the property – would seem more likely to grow up with self-esteem, pride in accomplishment, and self-confidence.

## **Why Statements**

Home sites outside of an urban community require a source of safe drinking water. Proper care and maintenance of the water source will ensure a safe and reliable water supply.

- Support Research Sources:
  - Biological Systems Engineering Dept.
    - Farm\*A\*Syst Program
    - Home\*A\*Syst Program
- Strong winds against an uninsulated building can reduce the heating or cooling system's efficiency. Reducing air infiltration will increase heating or cooling efficiencies.
  - Support Research Sources:
    - School of Natural Resource Sciences
    - Nebraska State Forester
- Rural living puts added responsibility on how people handle waste materials. Many of the conveniences associated with waste removal and recycling in urban settings are not always available in the country. Proper handling of generated wastes is imperative.
  - Support Research Sources:
    - Biological Systems Engineering
    - School of Natural Resource Sciences
- Protecting water resources, whether natural or constructed, needs to be a high priority. We all have the responsibility to use our water resources wisely and to protect them from contamination. Wise use of pesticides and reduced soil erosion will limit water resource contamination.
  - Support Research Sources: Biological Systems Engineering
- Many acreages include more property than utilized for the home lawn. This encourages problems with weed control and volunteer trees and shrubs. Proper management of these areas encourages wise stewardship of the land.
  - Support Research Sources:
    - School of Natural Resource Sciences
    - University of Nebraska - Lincoln Department of Agronomy and Horticulture
    - Nebraska State Forester
- Acreage owners desire the ability to participate in activities that improve their family's quality of life. These activities would include but are not limited to gardening, landscaping, livestock care or development of wildlife habitat.

- Support Research Sources:
  - School of Natural Resource Sciences
  - Biological Systems Engineering
  - University of Nebraska - Lincoln Department of Agronomy and Horticulture

## Small/Medium Farm Team Report

Small Farms - They generate sales up to \$250,000 annually. This is arguably a group of farmers that we need to devote more time to since they tend to be sandwiched between two higher profile groups (acreages and large farms). The intent is to capture most of the farm operators who are attempting to generate the majority of their income from the farm operation.

### 1. Five Year Review of Previous Extension Work in the Southeast District:

The Southeast Research and Extension Center has been and continues to be a leader in innovative extension programs in a wide variety of agricultural topics. Topics range from educational programs on computer assisted farm record systems to a Soils Home Study Course, to the Nebraska Soybean and Feed Grains Profitability Project, to handling livestock waste systems. Extension Educators and Specialists in the Southeast District have had major input into these projects. All have value for the small and medium sized farm.

Some of the major programs completed in the past five years in the Southeast District are as follows: This is just a sampling and does not do justice to all of the programs designed for agriculture in the Southeast District.

#### **A. Eastern Nebraska Grazing Management and Beef Cow Production Shortcourse:**

This course was a four day workshop designed to provide beef cow producers an opportunity to review their current grazing program and explore management techniques that could be used to improve forage utilization and increase profitability. Participants representing 840 cow-calf pairs estimated that they saved from \$15 to \$50.00 per cow-calf pair per year with an average savings of \$28. It was estimated that \$23,500 was saved through this program.

([http://deal.unl.edu/extension/ears/view/view\\_ears.cgi?RECORD=44](http://deal.unl.edu/extension/ears/view/view_ears.cgi?RECORD=44))

**B. Mid-Nebraska Water Quality Demonstration Project:** Demonstration projects were developed in the Southeast District to demonstrate best management practices for nitrogen and irrigation management. In surveys taken of producers attending field days, 42 percent responded that the Mid-Nebraska Water Quality Demonstration Project had influenced the way they schedule their irrigation. Many indicated that they had utilized the data to adjust their fertilizer program.

([http://deal.unl.edu/extension/ears/view/view\\_ears.cgi?RECORD=410](http://deal.unl.edu/extension/ears/view/view_ears.cgi?RECORD=410))

#### **C. Soils Home Study Course:**

During the past five years, a soils home study course was developed and distributed state wide. Extension educators from the Southeast District played a leading role in the development of this program. In evaluating the course, participants completing a survey reported that in all ten lessons of the course, they had significantly increased their knowledge of soils at the five percent level of significance.

**D. Nebraska Soybean and Feed Grains Profitability Project:** As the end of 1998, a total of 34 producers were participating in this project. The project is a cooperative, applied on-farm research program among Nebraska Farmers, private industry representatives and the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension. Participants in this project have the opportunity to do on-farm research, look at marketing strategies, do record analysis, and participate in continuing educational programs just for NSFGPP participants. Those evaluating the project were asked what their primary reason for participating in the project were. They reported such areas as "Increased Profits"; "Improving Practices and Marketing Skills"; and "Idea Exchange and Networking." One producer said, "This program has been a very intensive program. It has been an information carrier between university and extension personnel and producers. This program has helped producers hone leadership skills, production skills, economic advantage, environmental and conservation awareness."

([http://deal.unl.edu/extension/ears/view/view\\_ears.cgi?RECORD=416](http://deal.unl.edu/extension/ears/view/view_ears.cgi?RECORD=416))

**E. Computerized Financial Record Keeping Service:** A number of computerized record keeping educational programs have been conducted in the Southeast District over the past five years. The results of one survey done in Saunders, Dodge, and Lancaster County indicated that four to six weeks following the workshops the number of people keeping a set of financial records on the computer had increased from 64% to 71%. Another 29% indicated they expected to begin keeping computerized records within the next year.

([http://deal.unl.edu/extension/ears/view/view\\_ears.cgi?RECORD=1015](http://deal.unl.edu/extension/ears/view/view_ears.cgi?RECORD=1015))

**F. Nebraska Plastic Pesticide Container Recycling Program:** This state wide program was well emphasized in the Southeast District for the past five years. Statewide, in 1999, 52 sites in 31 counties collected a record 100,413 pounds of plastic representing 137,550 containers. One example:

([http://deal.unl.edu/extension/ears/view/view\\_ears.cgi?RECORD=572](http://deal.unl.edu/extension/ears/view/view_ears.cgi?RECORD=572))

As was mentioned earlier, there were many other programs conducted in the Southeast District in the agricultural area. Those listed are examples of the type of programs that have been presented.

## **2. Demographic Data:**

Agriculture in the Southeast District can be characterized by demographic data showing a large number of farms, but farms that are not large in size. Ten of the 21 counties in the southeast fall in the top quarter of all counties in farm numbers, and 15 counties fall into the top half. As far as farm size is concerned, sixteen of the 21 counties fall into the bottom quarter in the state while all counties are in the bottom half.

This characteristic of small farm size is illustrated better by the farm sales category. Half or more of all farms in 15 of the 21 counties in the district had sales of less than \$50,000. Only two counties in the district were characterized by relatively large number of farms with sales of \$100,000 or more.

Because of the small size of farms found in the Southeast District, a fairly large proportion

of those farming seek work outside of farming. In seventeen counties in the Southeast District, 29 percent or more of all farm operators report that their primary occupation in 1996 was something other than farming. Twenty seven percent of the operators in 17 Southeast Counties reported that they had worked off of their farm for at least 200 days during 1996.

### **3. Why Statement:**

As shown, a large proportion of farms in the Southeast District are small or medium in size. The district has benefitted from this group of farmers because they maintain diversity in farm production and provide stability in rural areas through community involvement and leadership.

Today, these farms have difficulty generating enough income through market channels to maintain a reasonable standard of living. Producers need to identify and develop management skills, enterprises, and markets that will generate higher incomes.

### **4. Prioritizing Programmatic Needs:**

- A. Beginning Farmer Programs
- B. Providing Educational Programs on "How to Make a Living on a Small Farm"
- C. Developing Alternative Agricultural Opportunities
  - 1. Enterprise Selection
  - 2. Management, Marketing Skills and Employee Relationships.
  - 3. Regulatory Aspects of Alternative Agriculture
    - a. Food Safety Issues
    - b. Liability Issues
  - 4. Working with Consultants
- D. Family Relationships, Goal Setting and Estate Planning.
- E. Targeting Public Research to Small and Medium Farms
- F. Development of Small and Intermediate Size Farm Advisory Groups
- G. Leadership Development and Public Policy
- H. Urban/Rural Interface.

### **5. Developing an Action Strategy:**

**A. External Characteristics of Audience** - In developing the educational program for these producers, it must be remembered that many in this group have and do commute to a job and farm on the side. This is particularly true for the producers in the Southeast District where job opportunities do exist at a fairly close proximity as compared to other



areas of the state. As shown in the demographic data, twenty-seven percent of the operators in 17 Southeast District reported that they had worked off of the farm for at least 200 days during 1996. Educational programs will have to be geared to providing opportunities for these part-time producers as well as for the full time producers. In addition, educational programs need to be geared for farm couples. Producer's spouses are becoming a big part of the farming operation and need to be included in any educational opportunity that is provided.

**B. Internal Structure/Actions** - The marketing of educational programs by Extension Educators of these programmatic needs will be done through a wide variety of methods. These will include the more traditional Extension Educational programs mixed with programs utilizing the latest in technology.

Study tours, informational programs including series of informational meetings, mass media, on farm research, twilight tours, along with other more traditional methods of Extension work will be utilized in the next five years to help small and medium size farmers. These methods have proven to be effective in the past and will still remain effective in the foreseeable future. Although more and more in this group are investing in computer technology, there are still a large percentage of producers fitting into this category that have not been trained or cannot afford computer technology.

The use of technology will be a large part of the action strategy. Techniques utilizing technology will include the NUFACTS Information Center ([http://deal.unl.edu/extension/ears/view/view\\_ears.cgi?RECORD=1001](http://deal.unl.edu/extension/ears/view/view_ears.cgi?RECORD=1001)), internet newsletters, Internet courses (both for credit and non-credit), enterprise specific mailing lists, and listservs.

Extension will work with other groups to provide the best possible educational opportunity for small and medium size farmers. These groups could include the Community Colleges in the area, the vocational agricultural programs within schools, and groups such as the Farm Bureau, Grange, and others. By doing this, more resources can be brought together providing the best possible educational program for all producers in this category.

**C. Goals** - The goal of the educational program for small and medium size producers will be to enhance the economic stability of these producers in their agricultural profession.. The goal is that these producers will be stable enough in farming that they will not be required to have a second job outside of farming unless they desire to do so. This would be measured by surveys of the target audience as well as through demographic data indicating a slowdown in the loss of the small and medium size producer. The results of such a goal will be felt throughout the community. Since these producers generally trade with the local community, the economic stability of the community will be stabilized and developed.

With this stabilization of the community, it would be natural that leadership be developed from amongst the small and medium size producers. One of the educational opportunities for Extension in this area would be to help these producers become better leaders. Volunteers would also be developed from this audience. This would include volunteers for such groups as agriculture commodity groups, schools, youth programs, religious groups, and government.

## Large Farm Team Report

Large Farm - A farm that generates greater than \$250,000 in annual sales of agricultural products. 1,636 Nebraska farms have sales of \$500,000 to \$1,000,000. They account for about 5 percent of all farms, but 55 percent of the state's agricultural sales.

### Why should Cooperative Extension work with large farms?

Because large farms are mainly family farms.

- The Nebraska Farm/Ranch Business Management Association publishes a yearly summary reporting the financial analysis data for the farms and ranches enrolled in both the Nebraska Farm Business Association (NFBA) and the Nebraska Farm and Ranch Management Educational Program. The 1999 summary included data from 161 farms and ranches. (*Nebraska Farm/Ranch Business Management 1999 Report*, May 2000.)
- The average 1999 family living (including taxes) was \$45,077. For the five-year period 1995-1999 participants in these programs had an average net farm income ratio of 12.5 percent (net income divided by gross income expressed as a percentage). Therefore, the average family farm would require a gross income of \$360,616 to provide \$45,077 for a family living, (if no off-farm income were used to supplement the family living). Since USDA defines a large farm as one that generates greater than \$250,000 in annual sales of agricultural products, based on NFBA averages, a would be classified as a large farm if it were generating sufficient income to provide a family living without off-farm income.
- According to average net returns on gross sales reported by Nebraska Farm/Ranch Business Management Association. The average farm family would need gross sales of over \$350,000 to make a family living from the farm without off-farm income. Therefore nearly all family farms would be classified as large farms by USDA. Many farms that rely partially on off-farm income would also meet the \$250,000 gross sales criteria for a large farm as well.
- Farm size does tend to be smaller in southeast Nebraska compared to other parts of the state due in part to the predominant mix of enterprises which include row crop grain production and confinement feeding and dairy operations. It is also the due in part to off-farm employment opportunities which make part-time farming feasible. Finally, it is due in part to the number of people employed in full-time off-farm jobs who desire to live in a country setting, thus resulting in a huge number of acreages in the Metro area.
- Statistics were not available on the number of farms by county in the district that exceed \$250,000 in annual gross sales. However, in the Southeast Extension District, 32 percent of the farms produce over \$100,000 in agricultural sales. (*1997 Census of Agriculture*, data taken from the County Summary Highlights for each of the 21 counties in the Southeast District.)
- Considering land area as a measure of farm size, in the Southeast Extension District,

29 percent of the farms are over 500 acres in size, with 10 percent over 1000 acres in size. (Farm size is listed by owner, not operator. Many farm operators lease from multiple landowners.) (1997 *Census of Agriculture*.)

Because large farms have a great influence on the agricultural economic base in Nebraska.

- A minority of the farms in the state are classified as large farms but they produce the majority of agricultural production in Nebraska. By targeting large farms, Extension can have a profound effect on the state's economy. (1997 *Census of Agriculture*, Table 2. Market value and farms by SIC.)  
<http://govinfo.library.orst.edu/cgi-bin/ag-list?02-state.nes>
- The top 14% of farms (those producing over \$250,000 of agricultural products) produced 72% of the state's total agricultural production (\$7.06b of the total \$9.8b) (1997 *Census of Agriculture*, Table 2. Market value and farms by SIC.)  
<http://govinfo.library.orst.edu/cgi-bin/ag-list?02-state.nes>
- Assuming large farm production expenses are in roughly the same proportion as their market share, large farms would provide \$218 million in direct employment in Nebraska. (This estimate is probably conservative given the need for more hired labor on larger farms as compared to smaller operations.) (1997 *Census of Agriculture*, Table 3. Farm Production Expenses.)  
<http://govinfo.library.orst.edu/cgi-bin/ag-list?03-state.nes>
- Agriculture is a significant source of property tax revenues in Nebraska, especially in rural areas. A total of \$200 million is paid annually on agricultural property in Nebraska. A proportional share of property taxes would be \$144 million from large farms. (1997 *Census of Agriculture*, Table 3. Farm Production Expenses.) <http://govinfo.library.orst.edu/cgi-bin/ag-list?03-state.nes>
- Subtracting labor and property taxes from total production expenses leaves \$5.1 billion spent by large farms on other production expenses. This money supports the agri-chemical, fertilizer, seed and seed stock, livestock feed, petroleum, banking, and other related industries. (1997 *Census of Agriculture*, Table 3. Farm Production Expenses.) <http://govinfo.library.orst.edu/cgi-bin/ag-list?03-state.nes>

Because large farms are in a position to implement change.

- Extension is an agent for change. Large farms may be more likely to have the economic and management resources to implement changes than smaller units with fewer resources.
  - For example: Large farms will be better equipped to lead the transition into the production of value-added grain crops, because most large farms have the on-farm facilities to handle, store and ship the grains and keep them identity-preserved.
  - Another recent example is precision farming. Due to the expense of Global Positioning System equipment and GIS software and the special management skills required to utilize the information, larger farms are adopting this technology at a much higher rate than smaller operations.

Because large farms support local communities.

- Farmers that make their living from the family farm may support local communities to a greater extent than farmers that rely on off-farm employment for part of their family living because they are not traveling outside the local trade area daily.

## **Outreach methodology for large farms**

### **Traditional Extension educational opportunities**

Large farmers are more likely able to attend traditional extension meetings than part-time farmers and acreage owners who must take time off from work to attend meetings or who may have pressing duties on the farm that must be done during the evenings or weekends. However, even full-time farmers are finding it increasingly difficult to attend structured meetings. To compete for producers' time, extension offerings must meet certain criteria.

- Workshops must present relevant, up-to-date information.
- Workshops should be offered for people at beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels of understanding. One size does not fit all.
- As a result of environmental concerns and legislation, farmers are required to obtain certification in several areas, such as: Pesticide application, Chemigation, Nitrogen management, and livestock waste management. The value of producers' time should be recognized and duplication of effort should be minimized. Criteria should be developed to judge CEU content of extension programs, similar to how it is done for CCA credit for Certified Crop Advisors. Producers should receive CEU credits by attending various Extension programs or completing home study courses. These CEUs should apply toward certification requirements.
- On farm demonstration and research is a valuable educational tool that has been used since the inception of Extension programs.
  - One example is the NSFGPP. A recent EARS report demonstrated the effectiveness of this project in the following statements. Forty percent of members said that the NSFGPP was the "best" agricultural education opportunity available to them. The remaining sixty percent of members indicated that considering all of the agricultural educational opportunities that are available to them they would rank the NSFGPP "above average." Farmers estimated that the NSFGPP project improved their profitability by an average of \$7,216/operation annually.
  - Another example is University of Nebraska - Lincoln Cooperative Extension variety test plots. These are used both to conduct research on crop varieties and as field demonstrations. Public field days are generally held at the plot sites with interactive discussion between producers and university researchers.
- Farmland Rental and Leasing Information
  - Although it seems unusual, Extension Educators in urban settings tend to answer a greater number of questions each year regarding farmland leasing arrangements than their counterparts in rural settings. This is due in part to the

large number of acreages in the Metro area. Many acreage owners wish to rent out a portion of their land as a source of income and to lesson maintenance requirements. Many producers in the area rent land from a dozen or more landlords. In addition, many retired farmers who have moved to the larger cities retain ownership in the family farm for a time, using rental payments as a source of retirement income. Also, second generation landowners living in the urban setting manage farmland for elderly parents or have inherited land in an estate. As new technology is developed and new products become available, there is an increasing need for Extension to be able to explain how this affects the landlord/tenant relationship. The second generation landowners many times have not lived on the farm as adults and have limited understanding of farming practices. This brings a unique educational opportunity and can result in a better understanding of rural/urban issues.

- Extension is seen as an unbiased source of information by both producers and landowners. We are called on to provide an estimate of average rental rates being paid and examples of typical leasing arrangements.
  - Rental arrangement meetings are conducted annually, teaching producers and landowners alike about leasing arrangements and establishing fair rental rates.
    - An average of 150 people attend rental arrangements meetings annually in the Southeast District.
    - Rental rate surveys are conducted each year by the Ag Economics Department at University of Nebraska - Lincoln. Results are published in the Cornhusker Economics newsletter and in Nebraska Agricultural Real Estate Developments Extension Circular.
    - About 1500 clientele call Extension offices annually to learn the results of the rental rate survey and to ask about average prices paid for farmland in SE Nebraska.

## **Non-Traditional Extension programs**

### **Home study courses:**

Home study courses are available through University of Nebraska Extension. Examples include:

- Beef Cow Production
- Soils Home Study
- Irrigation Home Study.

Using this approach, producers can receive instruction when time is available. Some of these courses are now offered via the internet which makes communication with the workshop provider even more convenient.

### **Working with producer groups:**

Producers are beginning to see the value of joining forces to accomplish things that cannot be done effectively on an individual basis. Extension can provide valuable leadership to producer groups.

- Low commodity prices have increased interest in learning to capture better prices and managing price risk through more effective use of marketing contracts (available both in the cash and futures markets). Extension should develop leadership and provide educational materials and educational opportunities to producer marketing groups.
- There is increased interest in producing and marketing value-added products. Some producers are forming alliances and cooperatives to produce and market value-added products which enhance profitability. Extension should provide assistance and leadership to these groups as they move through the process of defining a mission, setting goals, and organize into a business.

Extension should be a source of research-based information and provide educational opportunities to producer groups on a continuing basis.

- Many specialty and value-added crops have not been adequately tested in university yield trials. Extension should conduct variety trials of value-added crops to determine which varieties are best suited to the area of the state.

### **Electronic information management:**

- Computerized financial management workshops have been led by extension educators for many years. Producers learn to keep computerized records and also learn valuable management skills. Follow-up surveys six weeks after a series of workshops were completed found that 61 percent of the participants were presently keeping a set of financial records on the computer and all of the remaining 39 percent expected to do so within one year of completing the workshop. Sixty six percent of the participants expected to save money on tax preparation, 69 percent expected to be able to analyze which enterprises are most profitable and 94 percent indicated that they expected to be able to keep a more accurate set of records as a result of attending the workshop. (UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA - LINCOLN EARS reporting system: *Computerized Financial Record keeping 1998 and 1999*. Author: Thomas W. Dorn. Co-authors: David Varner and Robert Meduna.) <http://deal.unl.edu/extension/ears>
- Master Navigator and similar programs have been conducted in the district, demonstrating internet technology to participants. The workshop was presented in six locations with 135 participants.

### **Assessment of electronic information:**

- Farmers with large farms use electronic information retrieval methods for timely, up-to-date information, convenience, and 24 hour access. In the fall of 1998, internet use

among U.S. corn farmers of all sizes was 21 percent, while nearly 40 percent of the nation's largest farmers were on the Net. These numbers have no doubt increased in the intervening 18 months. Extension must continue to develop web pages for production agriculture clientele. (Survey by Novartis Seeds, quoted in CTIC Partners, November/December, 1998).

- Electronic information multiplies the effectiveness of extension personnel. One example of staff time saved through the use of web pages for information delivery is the ag/acreage portion of the Lancaster County web site. This site received 22,701 "hits" in federal fiscal year 1998-99.
  - Each top-level and second level page on this site contains an average of 25 links to extension publications in Nebraska or to databases of extension publications found elsewhere, yet counts as a single hit no matter how extensively each page is explored. If each hit on this site provided information that substituted for a 10 minute phone conversation with an extension educator, nearly 3800 hours of extension staff time (equivalent to 1.8 FTE ) was saved by providing information electronically. Additionally, if each hit resulted in two publications being downloaded by the clientele that would otherwise have been printed by the University system at a cost of \$0.25 each and mailed from an Extension office requiring one first-class stamp for both publications, nearly \$11,400 in printing costs and \$7,500 in postage would have been saved by providing the information electronically. (*Annual Report of Faculty Accomplishments 1998-99*, Thomas W. Dorn.)

## **Agribusiness/Consultants Team Report**

This is a growing audience that consists of crop consultants, seed corn representatives, bankers, farm managers, etc. These are the people that have been the predominant audience at the University of Nebraska - Lincoln Summer Diagnostic Clinics and ICM winter programs at the ARDC. They are also the primary audience attending the crop protection clinics across the state.

### **Base Line Statistics**

Cooperative Extension has a rich tradition of conducting educational programs and providing service to agricultural businesses in the Southeast Research and Extension District. We have documented that there are 2,479 agricultural businesses representing 138 subject matter areas in the twenty-one county area of the Southeast District. This information was obtained from Info USA, America Business Lists Division.

### **Historical Programing Perspectives**

Educational programing in the SREC for agri-industry takes the shape of two forms. The first is that of IANR Departments and their direct relationships with Agri-businesses in Southeast Nebraska. Numerous educational initiatives have been implemented by campus departments that provide training of employees and in some cases provide services in an attempt to strengthen those businesses. The second form of programing is directed from the district office and/or county offices within the SREC. The programs that are developed and implemented can originate from an inquiry from industry or are pro-active in their nature in that extension is out in front leading the way.

Agriculture is a very diverse industry in SREC district. It takes on the shape of being very large – such as meat packing and seed industry – to very small – a local meat processor or a business that packages herbs. Because of this diversity in size and product, and the lack of subject matter specialists in the district office and in the counties, it is difficult to have an orchestrated effort in providing educational programs to agri-businesses. Agribusinesses demand subject matter expertise and are reluctant to deal with generalist. Many are willing to support a fee based approach to education and training. However, our experiences would suggest that their expectations are much different than the average citizen who would attend our traditional Extension programs.

The other factor that has become more pronounced in recent years is the competition that we must face as private industry becomes more involved in on educational and/or training arenas. In some areas we have turned over to private sources traditional educational opportunities for agribusinesses. In other cases we have accepted the challenge and are competing effectively in the market place. The niche that we still have is the fact that the foundation of our programs are researched based and unbiased in nature. This in turn provides us as a creditable source of information. An example of being responsive to industries needs in the Southeast District is the development of the Crop Management and Diagnostic Clinic programs and the Integrated Crop Management Programs at the ARDC.



Starting in 1996 Extension Educators formed a management team and have provided training at the ARDC to hundreds of crop production professionals representing millions of acres from across the state and surrounding states. Participants report average economic impact of approximately \$10.00/acre. In many cases these professionals require continuing education units. The number of Certified Crop Advisors (CCAs) in the SREC has grown dramatically in recent years. In 1993 there were 81 CCA's in Nebraska and in 1999 the number had grown to 807. Figures are not available for the SREC.

The Integrated Crop Management Winter Program offerings has seen a respectable amount of growth as well in attendance by industry professionals.

### **Why is Agribusiness Education Important?**

Agribusinesses are requesting educational training for employees that range from entry-level crop scouts to seasoned professionals.

Rapid advancements in crop production in crop production technologies advancements require more advanced training for professionals who may be selling or wanting to use these technologies.

To compete in the marketplace, many agribusinesses are encouraging or requiring employees to become Certified Crop Advisors. The Certified Crop Advisor Program requires continuing education units (CEUs) in four competency areas and in-depth educational training.

The size of farms will continue to increase. There will be a continued increased reliance by crop producers on information from and services of professional agribusinesses, like crop consultants, certified crop advisors, agrochemical businesses and seed dealers. Accurate, science-based information from the University of Nebraska should continue to be readily available to these field professionals.

The number of genetically enhanced plant characteristic will likely increase in the coming years.

Professional agronomists will require a greater understanding of the best management practices for each variety, which will be both profitable for the producer as well as environmentally sound. Resistance management of crops to pests and chemicals will likely become an increasing topic of extension programs, in conjunction with university research.

The use of site specific management and remote sensing technologies will increase. It will require many agronomic professionals to become more technologically proficient and to understand how to solve agronomic problems using these technologies.

### **Future Actions - How do we get there?**

Train-the-trainer programs are the most effective method of changing practices or making positive impacts. There is a trickle down aspect to many of these programs.

It is the belief of the SREC Agri-business review team that structural changes are necessary for Cooperative Extension to effectively be competitive in addressing the

educational needs of agricultural related industries in Nebraska. Currently there is no plan in the Cooperative Extension System that the committee is aware of to address this situation. The committee feels there is a lack luster attempt to address industry training. The efforts to date lack coordination from a central point and therefore in some cases are not on a competitive keel with private industry. To underscore the above there are some internal situations that must be addressed. Simply put, "the left hand doesn't seem to know what the right hand is doing". Current efforts usually do not include a professionally developed marketing plan, broad public relations effort and do not provided for a evaluation of the programs. Experience has shown that many agribusinesses are looking for a turn key (completely pre-packaged) event. The other situation we have that undermines our organized extension efforts, is where faculty are a part of the training program that is organized and facilitated by a company who's business competes with Cooperative Extension.

The committee suggests that a task force be organized to address some of the above issues as well as the following items:

- Consider a change in institute, district and department policies that would allow for a centralized coordination of programs that address agribusiness training, with the realization of the subject matter diversity that exists between western and eastern Nebraska.
- Develop a marketing plan that factors in the differences of industries and business in comparison to the producer and/or consumer. Emphasize that extension educational programs are based on unbiased research.
- Addresses fee structures, program logistics, program delivery methods for training industry and/or agribusinesses.
- Address faculty commitment, incentives and reward issues.
  - Develop a set of goals consistent with the institute, departments and CE action plan processes to assure impact can be documented.
- Involve industry in the task force process.
- Address how distant education and new technologies may change the way we train industry professionals.
- As a result of faculty deficiencies, consider teaching linkages with both private industry and other Land Grant Universities.

## Structure of Agriculture

Increasing vertical integration of agriculture (i.e. swine industry), government program changes and using biotechnology on the family farm etc. will significantly impact SREC agriculture.

## Crops

### Current Situation Statement

The Southeast Research and Extension Center area has a strong presence in the production of Nebraska crops. A review of the Website will show the strength in the production of dryland and irrigated crops like corn, soybeans, grain sorghum, alfalfa, and wheat. Farms today are growing larger. A full-time person on the farm needs to generate \$200,000 in gross income to yield a \$25,000 job. The larger better managed and better financed farms are growing and many smaller farmers are retiring or farming as a sideline to full or part-time off-farm employment. Nearly 85 percent of Nebraska producer's spouses are employed off farm.

As in other businesses, the production agriculture sector is being restructured by management skill levels and market access. The chart below shows the top four-firm concentrations in both grains and livestock.

Four-Firm Concentration Ratios			
Food Industries, 1992		Meat Industry, 1998	
SECTOR	RATIO	SECTOR	RATIO
Cereals	85%	All Cattle	70%
Wet Corn Milling	73%	Steers & Heifers	81%
Soybean Mills	71%	Hogs	56%
Meat Packing	50%	Sheep & Lambs	68%
Poultry	34%		
Cheese	42%		
Powdered Milk	43%		
Fluid Milk	22%		

The 1997 Ag Census divides Agricultural producers in Nebraska this way:

- Average Farm sold agricultural products worth \$191,074.
- 866 farms sold products worth more than \$1,000,000 (44.1 % of all sales).
- 1636 farms sold between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000 (11.2 % of all sales).
- 15,601 farms sold between \$100,000 and \$500,000 (34.8 % of all sales).
- 33,249 farms sold less than \$100,000 (9.9 % of all sales).

## **Future Situation Statement**

### **Production**

- More emphasis on management details.
- Larger more integrated farms.
- Development of contract speciality crops.
- Marketing agreements will dictate production practices and delivery specs.
- Farms operated by professional managers.
- Some improvement of marketing strategies for commodities.
- Need for technical trained employees for farming, scouting, spraying, etc.
- Identifying weed and insect shifts due to biotech crop development and providing information to producers on alternative options.
- Information needs of emerging generation of landowners not tied to the land by past farming experiences.

# Animal Agriculture

## Current Situation Statement

The four-firm charts, in the last section, indicate the concentration of the meat industry. There is also a concentration or vertical integration on the production side in poultry, eggs, swine, and sheep. The demands of the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP), Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), and Sanitation Standard Operation Practices (SSOP) programs and the desire for a uniform consistent consumer product affect every aspect of the production chain. The most dramatic recent change has been the loss of 50% of the pork production in Nebraska in the past 8 years. The size of commercial livestock production operations are increasing.

## Future Situation Statement

### Swine

- Further decline in production likely to some new equilibrium point perhaps 40 percent of 1985-90 production levels.
- Further decline of Nebraska infra-structure i.e packing, feed, vet services, extension support, etc.
- Need for improved manure management.
- Support to properly handle dead animal disposal.
- Need for employee training.
- Most counties will have less than 5 moderate size operations.
- 100 percent contract production with some small speciality operations emerging.

### Beef

- Poised for major restructuring.
- Extension needs to monitor situation closely and be very pro-active in helping clients before any industry free-fall like pork where small producers lost substantial capital before they could react.
- Need to aid in the development of alternate uses for small grass areas i.e. biomass, wildlife fee hunting, etc.
- Cooperative Extension educational programs need to help producers understand and respond to the processor's product needs.

## Dairy

- Recent modest gains paint positive light, but income levels from recent University of Nebraska herd monitoring project study of 12 herds show very modest income returns for the capital and labor invested.
- Continued consolidation to herd size of 1000 and more.
- Moderate movement of new owners to Nebraska.
- Information needs on heifer development, manure management, technical employee training, nutrition, mastitis control, stray voltage, clean electricity, and energy costs.

## Poultry

- Stable to modest gains in turkey, eggs, and broilers.
- Need community development support with agriculture to capture egg expansions and support turkey and broiler growth.
- Broiler and to lesser extent turkey production at the greatest risk.
- Need for extension information on manure marketing and use, disease identification and control, specific help to solve business problems, i.e. engineering, composting, business planning, water quality needs, nutrition of specific feeds resources, etc.

# **Agribusiness**

## **Current Situation Statement**

Farmers work with a variety of suppliers for raw materials. Each supplier provides some service with the sale. Extension provides education for the suppliers along with company representatives. Extension also supplies company representatives with education on new and emerging research and concerns identified by the public.

## **Future Situation Statement**

One stop shopping, single agribusiness companies will supply seed, fertilizer, growing specifications, contract, delivery criteria, field assistance, etc. The personnel of these companies will still need Extension not-for-profit education and problem solving skills. However, this will need to be done in partnership, with both the company and Extension retaining autonomy.

The more consolidated and less flexible companies become, the more opportunity there is for niche markets. Extension will need to serve these people with information.

# **Public Policy**

## **Current Situation Statement**

The USDA farm program has had dramatic effects on farm income and survival ability. The farm program also impacts on local farming practices. The road to more consumer involvement in agricultural policy is very rocky. The public sector has concerns about food safety, environment, wildlife habitats, etc. These concerns are easy targets for opinion to be swayed by untruths, out-of-context conclusions, and information not based on science. The United States has agreed to the Kyoto Agreement on carbon dioxide emissions which is could have profound effects on commodity and biomass production. A nutrient management plan to deal with waste and fertilizer is likely to become part of the national farm program mandates.

## **Future Situation Statement**

### **Farm Program**

- New farm bill with support based on different program.
- Carbon emissions, habitat development, water quality, whole farm plan, nutrient management plan, management constraints, etc.
- Efforts to divide program for large-small, or conventional-sustainable (ecofarms).
- Need for information on how to follow tenants of the farm program and still be

economical, protect natural resources, and manage risk.

#### Consumer Information

- Consumer information on the agricultural industry.
- Food safety information.

#### Carbon and Farming

- Carbon sequestration.

### **Why Statements**

Agriculture income is the most important source of dollars for the economy of Nebraska communities. Animal agriculture is more than 2/3 of the total revenue. While this is true for all communities, this is especially true for Nebraska's rural communities.

Unbiased public research available to all, promotes a knowledgeable consumer base. America is blessed with consumers who believe in the wholesomeness of food. This is due to cooperation of the public research, business, and regulatory base in this country. We cooperate out of respect, challenge, and solution. Cooperative Extension is tied to the research and a key cooperator in helping people and business find solutions.

Cooperative Extension is well placed to carry-out the ever increasing educational demands needed to produce the food we need, in vital communities, with knowledgeable farmers, and environmental challenges, while meeting water quality standards, and protecting soil resources, etc.

### **Sources**

Nebraska Unicameral Agricultural Structure Assessment Taskforce

1997 Census of Agriculture

Agriculture at the Crossroads Conference Presentations

Challenges, Realities, Perceptions: Changing Paradigms for the U.S. Food And Agriculture System, Kristen Allen, University of Minnesota, 1993

Forces and Factors Driving Changes in Colleges of Agriculture, Fred Miller, The Ohio State University, 1995

Consolidation in the Farm and Agriculture System, William Heffernan, University of Missouri, 1999

The Seven Megatrends in Agriculture, Dan Manternach, Professional Farmers of America, Presentation at 1999 National Association of County Agricultural Agents Meeting



# Linkage Chart

Establishing and strengthening linkages and cooperative programming with other partners will continue to be a major strategy in expanding and preserving resources. Listed below are some of the partnerships which the team has formed:

EDUCATIONAL	GOVERNMENTAL	BUSINESS/COMMERCIAL
Natural Resources Districts	USDA	Nebraska Farmers
Community Colleges	• Farm Services Agency	Nebraska Chemical and Fertilizer Institute
Nebraska Farm Business Association	• NRCS	Commercial Pesticide Applicators
Local Civic Groups	Natural Resources Districts	Radio
• Kiwanis	Nebraska Department of Agriculture	Newspapers
• Lions	Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality	Television
• Optimists	Cities/Towns	Banks
Youth	County Supervisors/Commissioners	Businesses
• 4-H	State Legislators	Nebraska Independent Crop Consultant Association
• Farm Safety 4 Just Kids		
Livestock/Commodity Associations	Congressional Staff	Farm Credit Services of America
County Agricultural Associations	County Officials	Chambers of Commerce
Nebraska Natural Resources Commission	• Clerk	Nebraska Well Drillers Association
Dairy Herd Improvement Association	• Planning Commission	Farmer Cooperatives
	• Weed Control Authority	
Nebraska Ag Builders	Farm Bureaus	Implement Dealers
University of Nebraska Medical Center	Farmers Union	Fertilizer/Pesticide Dealers
Local School Districts	Grange	Farm Managers
State Commodity Boards/Associations	Resource Conservation & Development Councils	Hospitals
• Corn	State/County Health Departments	Restaurants
• Soybean	Community Tree Boards	American Society of Agronomy
• Grain Sorghum	Nebraska Seed Advisory Committee	Nebraska Farmer Magazine
• Ethanol	Nebraska Water Resources Commission	
• Nebraska Cattlemen		
• Pork Producers		
• Dairy		
Educational Television Network		
Nebraska Crop Improvement Association		

<b>Agriculture Team Members</b>	
Corey Brubaker	Ken Burgert
Jim Carson, Co-Chair	Tom Dorn
Larry Germer, Co-Chair	Keith Glewen, Co-Chair
Paul Hay	Larry Howard
Don Janssen	Dennis Kahl
Bob Meduna	Colleen Pallas
Jim Peterson	Randy Pryor
Monte Stauffer	Dave Varner, Co-Chair
Morris Weyers	John Wilson
Steve Zimmers	Gary Zoubek

<b>Acreage team</b>		
Corey Brubaker	Jim Carson	Tom Dorn
Don Janssen - Team Leader	Jim Peterson	Sharon Skipton
Monte Stauffer	Dave Varner	Steve Zimmer

<b>Small/Medium Farm Team</b>	
Corey Brubaker	Ken Burgert
Larry Howard	Jim Peterson - Team Leader
Bob Meduna	Ed Siffring
Morris Weyers	John Wilson

<b>Large Farms Team</b>	
Bob Caldwell	Tom Dorn - Team Leader
Larry Germer	Keith Glewen
Larry Howard	Gary Zoubek

<b>Agribusiness Team</b>	
Larry Germer	Keith Glewen - Team Leader
Barb Ogg	Colleen Pallas
Dave Varner	

<b>Structure of Agriculture Team</b>	
Ken Burgert	Jim Carson
Paul Hay - Team Leader	Dennis Kahl
Bob Meduna	Randy Pryor

## Community Visions: Urban/Rural Issue Team Report

**C**ommunity Visions: Urban/ Rural Issues Team Five Year Long-Range Planning Committee evaluated the following topics: the rural/urban interface, rural community development, urban community development, leadership development and diversity training. These subjects are integral to the issues that rural and urban communities are facing today and into the next five years. External input was provided by Milan Wall of the Heartland Center for Leadership Development, Sara Woods of University on Nebraska - Omaha's College of Public Administration, state action teams, Dr. Kate Brown of City Sprouts, demographic reports and research from several universities and governmental sources.

The major issues faced by people who dwell in city neighborhoods and rural counties are not always identical, but they often reflect parallel concerns that are brought about by the same underlying systemic problems such as shifting demographics, shrinking financial resources, racial polarization, and ever-widening economic disparity according to Leon Sharpe of the Center for Community Family and Youth Development.

Although they may seem to be on opposite ends of the spectrum, there are many similarities between urban and rural communities. Information provided by the Urban Issues Visions from the Heartland, a publication of the Heartland Center for Leadership Development Fall/Winter 2000, states, "Interestingly, the most frequently identified issues and concerns of the rural and urban practitioners were nearly parallel." For rural dwellers, the issues are loss of local control of capital, lost sense of community, incorporating and appreciating diversity, education, and access to support programs. Urban challenges include lack of access to capital, need to strengthen citizenship, racism and environmental racism, education, and lack of support services. As one may see the problems for both groups of people are nearly identical although the resources may differ in different parts of the country.

As cities continue to grow and expand, the rural and urban interface continues to be a topic of discussion in many homes, businesses and public forums. "We are facing increasing conflicts in land use as urbanization reaches out into areas of traditional farmland. Acreage developments, malls, beltways and speculation all drive up land values and make it more difficult for agriculture. Long-term loss of farmland soon will become a problem for food production, loss of environmental services from rural landscapes, and escalating conflict among competing interests," according to Chuck Francis (*Keeping Up*, March 10, 2000).

Urban sprawl is a growing concern for many people, but for some it is more devastating than for others. There are negative effects of interface on the urban core of any city in the United States, even though we may be talking about Omaha or Lincoln. The urban sprawl that has characterized American growth patterns for the past 45 years has been held responsible for a host of problems, including: profligate energy use, rising municipal infrastructure costs, the loss of agricultural and wetlands, the loss of community values, the erosion of current or potential tax bases in urban centers, and the decline of urban environmental quality.  
<http://www.crest.org/efficiency/nrdc/mobility/sprawl.html>

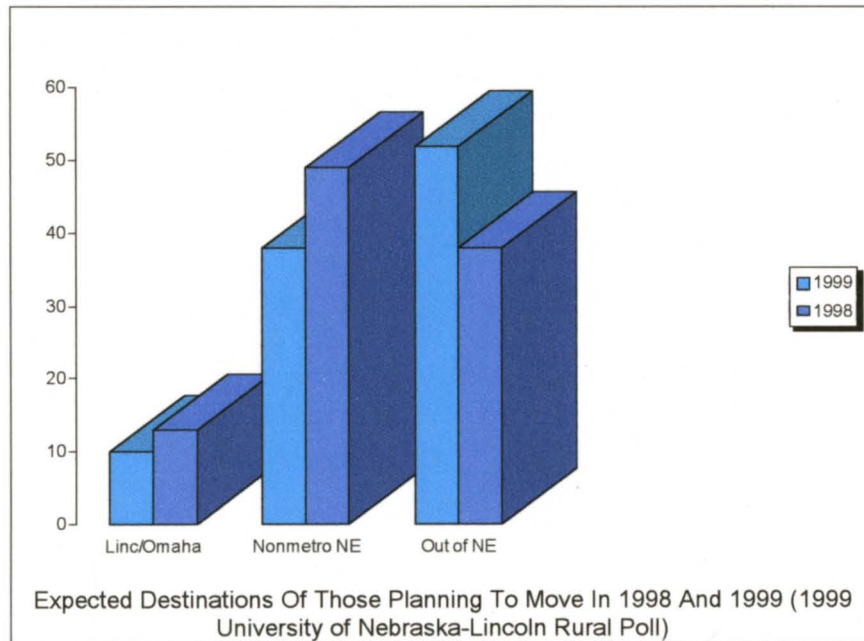
The goals and objectives for rural and urban community development are to enhance the quality of life for all people in the Southeast District through research-based education and

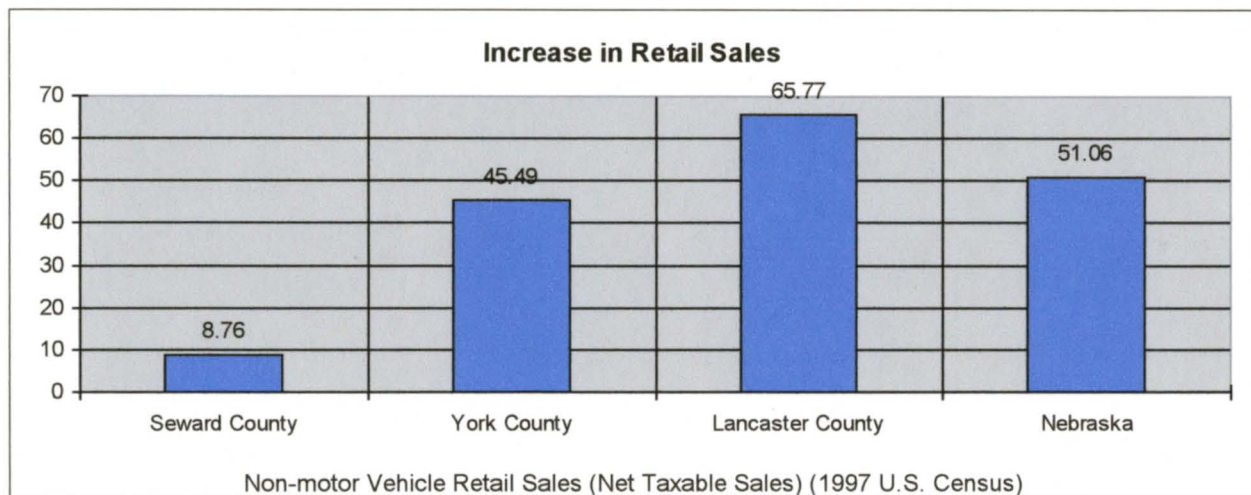
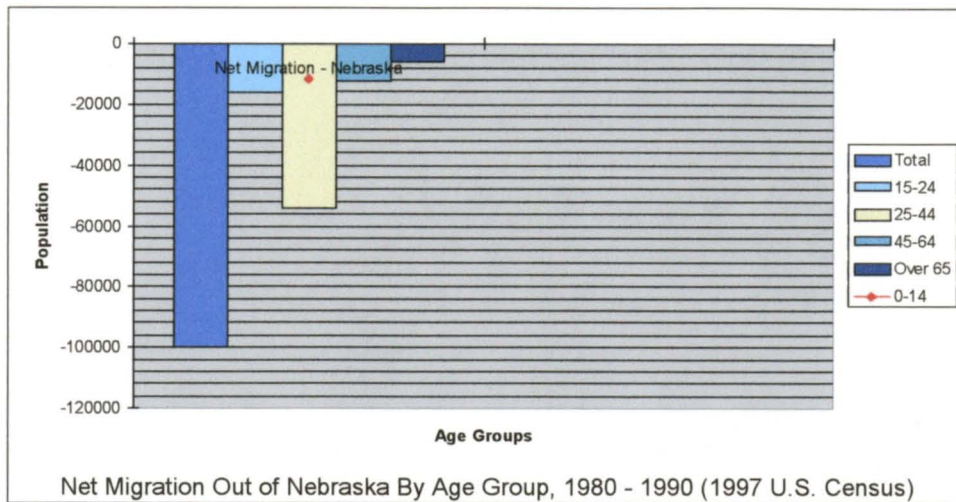
services; to maintain viable communities by utilizing the resources of the University and Cooperative Extension and to use the unique network systems of Cooperative Extension relating to problem solving, leadership development and collaboration with other agencies.

Some examples of this is the facilitation of inter-local agreements, conferences, entrepreneurial projects, land use planning, industry development, acquisition of grant funding, information technology committees, public policy forums, and Master Navigators. Why do we need rural community development programming? Revitalization creates economically and socially viable rural communities by educating people in communities, accessing grant funding, encouraging rural development, developing leadership and obtaining resources and information.

Those affected by declining economic viability feel the immediate impacts of the rural to urban shift in population and resources. Some demographics are needed to interpret the changes that are occurring in rural Nebraska. Those include the community changes, agriculture trends, and examples of successful small towns.

### Community Trends





Employment is another community trend which should be addressed. The average work commute is 45 miles. Seventy-five percent of mothers of children under six work outside of the home. Of children under the age of six, 69.8 percent have working parents.

Agricultural trends, as well as community trends are interesting to review. The average farm operator household income was about equal to that of all U.S. households in 1996. Only 16 percent of farm household's income, however, came from farming, according to the Individual Identity and Commitment to Community by Cornelia Butler Flora. Twenty-seven percent of farmers or ranchers felt they were better off than the previous year compared to 55 percent of those with professional occupations, according to the 1999 University of Nebraska - Lincoln Rural Poll.

Some small towns have been successful in keeping people in the community and

contributing to the betterment of their communities in rural Nebraska. About 55 percent of all new jobs arise from the expansions of existing businesses, and 44 percent are created by startup companies (*1999 National Center for Small Communities Report*). Small firms using the Internet for marketing and purchasing are growing 9.8 percent per year compared to a growth of 5.5 percent by those not using computers (*1998 Southern Illinois University Study*).

What do one hundred new manufacturing jobs mean to non-metro Nebraska? One hundred direct manufacturing jobs, 174 secondary jobs are created totaling 274 jobs. This results in aggregate personal income of \$7,754,500 and retail sales amounting to \$3,722,200 annually.

The rural revitalization process develops leadership and motivation within the community, organizes community leaders to take action, identifies key players to support direction of the project and measure project results.

Cooperative Extension could take part in rural revitalization projects such as encouraging community beautification, facilitating the development of industry recruitment, training merchants in e-commerce, educating leaders about grant opportunities, and enabling communities to set goals by identifying future possibilities and identifying strengths and/or weaknesses.

The goals and objectives of the rural community development team are to encourage extension staff to actively collaborate with University of Nebraska - Lincoln's Center for Applied Rural Innovation, local community colleges, The Heartland Center for Leadership Development, The Resource and Community Development Organization, Nebraska Sustainable Agricultural Society, and other community agencies on existing projects. Additionally, staff should encourage both formal and informal forms of distance education and market Cooperative Extension resources to community groups. Extension staff will collaborate with community leaders on issues of mutual concern and encourage counties in the Southeast District to review and develop comprehensive plans for land use and zoning. Extension will continue to advocate to small businesses, housing development contractors, and investors for the reuse of land space in towns, on environmental and economic scales.

These goals may be accomplished by utilizing asset mapping in communities and supporting employment opportunities. Cooperative Extension can establish an interest group to address the advancements in technology and how small towns can benefit from educational programming such as e-commerce, the EDGE program, Master Navigators, and distance education, which can provide opportunities for education in a local community.

As a result of University of Nebraska - Lincoln's efforts there will be less migration out of rural communities and the state of Nebraska. More employment opportunities will sustain towns; for example, telecommuting for rural dwellers. With a viable community and stable economy, citizens can spend more time as active leaders creating more local opportunities.

Urban community development is an untapped opportunity for Cooperative Extension. Current programming which supports urban community development includes the Nutrition Education Program, 4-H, the urban gardening program, service learning, and neighborhood leader training.

Urban community development is essential to the sustainability of a city. As Nebraska's cities continue to grow in population and consume more useable farmland, it is an opportunity

for Cooperative Extension to provide research-based education and services to people living in currently established or older communities and neighborhoods, some of which may be susceptible to neglect, decay and abandonment.

The nation and Nebraska continue to grow in population. The Census Bureau defines "urban" for the 1990 census as comprising all territory, population, and housing units in urbanized areas and in places of 2,500 or more persons outside urbanized areas. According to the Statistical Abstract of 1999, "The US population tripled in the 20th century from 76 million to 274 million; the rural share of the population fell from 60 to 25 percent and the white share of the population fell from 88 percent to 62 percent." <http://www.census.gov/statab/www/>

Prior to the end of WWII most urban people lived within walking distance of their jobs, religious centers, grocery stores, and educational and recreational facilities. The Eisenhower Interstate Highway System and the housing shortage for returning soldiers and their families changed all that.

Urban trends are changing in Nebraska as well. In 1910, the total population of the state was 1,192,214. The urban population comprised 31.3 percent of the total population while the rural population was 68.7 percent. In 1990, the total population equaled 1,578,385 maintaining an urban population of 66.1 percent, and a rural population of 33.9 percent.

Urban sprawl has both positive and negative effects on the environment, people and economy surrounding and including the urban core. Some of the positive effects are an increase in the tax base for cities and more jobs available to support infrastructure. It encourages new businesses and industry to locate in an area. The negative effects are that it consumes more useable farmland; for example, according to Lynda McDonnell, between 1982-1992 Minnesota lost 2.3 million acres of useable farmland. Urban sprawl increases air and water pollution, strains existing infrastructure, increases taxes to support annexation, and segregates people into similar socioeconomic housing developments thereby decreasing diversity.

As a city continues to sprawl outwardly, a symptom occurs in any city where the emphasis is placed on expansion and not on existing neighborhoods. The doughnut effect is characterized by the concentric circularization of development observed in many American cities. While the city expands, it's inner core suffers as residents leave to live in the suburbs. Those who are left are usually renters or the elderly, not able to invest in the future of their community. North Omaha is a prime example of the doughnut effect.

For example, in North Omaha the dollar is turned over one time before it leaves the community, while in rest of city it turns over seven times. In 1993, according to the University of Nebraska - Omaha's Public Administration Study, \$81 million was spent by North Omaha African-American households, but less than a quarter of the spending was made in this area.

University of Nebraska - Omaha's College of Public Administration research in 1993 polled citizens in North Omaha. Those who participated said the worst aspects about the community were dilapidated houses and yards, street maintenance/sewers, no sidewalks, streetlights covered, gang activity, and lack of child supervision. To illustrate North Omaha's poor environment, City Sprouts lists more than 3,000 vacant lots and a multitude of abandoned and condemned buildings.

According to the respondents, the top four areas to be addressed were gang activity, dilapidated houses and yards, drugs and crime, and lack of child supervision. What is Cooperative Extension's role in addressing these issues?

One of the many organizations assisting people to elevate their economic status is Habitat for Humanity. According to this non-profit group there are many benefits to home ownership, because homeowners generally enjoy better living conditions than renters; accumulate wealth as their investment in their homes grows; strengthen the economy by purchases of homes, furniture and appliances; and tend to be more involved in promoting strong neighborhoods and good schools than renters. This is a prime time to incorporate Cooperative Extension's programs into their daily life to better the lives of people in that community.

As mentioned before, North Omaha has more than 3000 empty lots. This is a prime location for illegal activity to take place, either by gang members, drug dealers, or corporations or industries that do not have legal permits to dump waste products. But how does a community turn itself around, when facing such problems as gang activity and lack of parental influences? The process of reclaiming neighborhood is three-fold. Starting with concerned citizens identifying empty lots and abandoned buildings, then petitioning the city to locate owner and identifying sites as condemned or uninhabitable and finally, applying for a neighborhood clean-up grant. This collaboration among neighbors working together increases a sense of community and pride in the community is established or elevated.

The doughnut effect and impoverished communities are not the only concerns for urban dwellers. Cooperative Extension can help deter urban sprawl by empowering citizens to utilize existing infrastructure and increasing minority entrepreneurial businesses within urban core. As a result, crime is reduced due to neighborhood watches and fewer places for criminal activity to take place. There is an increase in the monetary value to property and an increased tax base, according to Habitat for Humanity. Omaha's 100 Habitat homes accrued \$3,139,900 in assessed tax value for the 1999 year.

The goals and objectives for urban community development are:

- To collaborate with the University of Nebraska - Omaha's College of Public Administration, local community colleges, The Heartland Center for Leadership Development, and other community agencies on existing projects by targeting or marketing to neighborhood community groups via the president(s) and offer classes within the community through Cooperative Extension.
- To develop leadership through workshops, mentoring, and networking in urban communities.
- To devote more of Cooperative Extension's time to impoverished communities and targeting the people living in them as contacts and clientele.
- To provide information to small businesses and housing development contractors and investors to promote the reuse of land space in urban centers, on an environmental and economic scale.



## Leadership Programming

The Southeast District supports many programs that support the acquiring, teaching and practicing of leadership among both staff and clientele. Successful programs include:

Train-the-Trainer Programs	
Master Navigators	ServSafe
Master Gardeners	CHARACTER COUNTS!
Master Canners	Youth leadership programs
Family Community Leadership	Citizen Washington Focus (CWF)
Service learning	SERIES (A peer teaching science program)
4-H Officer training	

Community Leadership Programs	
Community public policy forums	Communities Working Together on Today's Issues conferences
Neighborhood leadership development institutes	Family Community Leadership
Information technology (IT) committees	

Other Leadership Training	
Motivation workshops	Grant writing
Full Range Leadership	Power and Leadership
Real Colors Matrix and Meyers-Briggs Behavioral Indicator	4-H Council training
Extension and county board training	Other leadership courses

## Why Leadership?

Effective community leaders influence behavior that leads to extra effort, more productive workers and team members, higher satisfaction and greater effectiveness in communities and organizations. Leadership is critical for initiating change and promoting workforce productivity, community vitality, reduced job turnover, and community sustainability. Extension staff are found in every county, are vested in those communities, can focus on local needs, and provide research-based, reliable, non-biased and non-commercial information and education. It is the responsibility of Cooperative Extension staff to acquire skills needed to teach and practice leadership in each community.

Leadership strengthens the capacity of communities and organizations to meet goals. It empowers people to become active in their neighborhoods, communities and community organizations and helps people access needed information and resources.

For communities to function effectively today, people and organizations must practice visioning, consensus building, collaboration, inclusiveness, respect, creativity, flexibility and empowering others. These capacities are vital at home, at work, in school and in our communities of faith. It is imperative to develop these skills and practices if we are to develop communities that can solve problems and create an improved quality of life for all (*The Kellogg National Leadership Program*).

Economic development concerns people in both urban and rural communities and includes issues of employment opportunities, poverty and leadership development. The need continues for broad-based leaders who can work effectively and knowledgeably in complex decision-making areas and situations where expertise in a single discipline or skill is not enough.

### **Challenges of Community Leadership**

"Today's community leaders face a set of challenges that, in many ways, is quite different from the challenges that were common to previous generations" (The Heartland Center for Leadership, *Visions from the Heartland*, Spring 1999). For example we are faced with:

- Doing more with less.
- Implementing mandates from "above".
- Navigating the "rapids of change".
- Dealing with complex issues.
- Changing economic realities in institutions.
- Social and cultural unrest.
- Loss of confidence.
- A fear of "assassination" if we step forward.

So what are the implications of these challenges? Today's leaders need to expand their knowledge about how to lead and increase their skills to become more effective in their leadership role. All communities should be encouraged to sponsor formal leadership programs for current and emerging leaders (The Heartland Center for Leadership, *Visions from the Heartland*, Spring 1999)

### **Goals for the future in leadership**

To promote effective leadership in communities and among extension staff it is vital that we:

- Offer leadership development training for both staff and community members.
- Utilize technology to deliver basic leadership training.
- Advocate staff training in community development, and public policy relating to urban and rural issues.
- Train community leaders in teaching and leading public dialogue.
- Collaborate with existing community leadership programs such as:
  - Nebraska LEAD program
  - Center for Applied Rural Innovation
  - Heartland Center for Leadership Development
  - NU System
  - City and local leadership programs
- Encourage development of new leadership programs.
- Utilize skills of those who have participated in leadership programs.

As staff members we will learn to care for ourselves and one another, learn to celebrate and refuel so we can maintain the mental and physical stamina required to lead others through change.

### **Leadership and Diversity**

Leadership is key to making certain that organizations, communities and agencies are sensitive to diversity issues. Billy Vaughn, DTUI President, developed the following list to help identify leaders who care about diversity. Those who care:

- Want to do more than talk about diversity.
- Want to do more than make themselves look good.
- Are willing to experience the changes their organization will need to experience to seriously commit to diversity and inclusion.
- Are willing to be trained or coached themselves in order to become fully aware of their own diversity-related shortcomings and work through them.
- Understand that inclusion means improving race relations, reducing stereotypes, and designing structures that work for diverse people.
- Are willing to ask the tough questions about diversity and assist in coming up with ways to address the answers.
- Understand that promoting diversity will lead to tension in the organization, but be willing to manage the organization as it achieves its goal.
- Place those with leadership abilities on diversity teams or committees.

- Assure that correspondence concerning actions of the diversity team has the leader's name represented.
- Seek to consider diversity goals in all major decisions about an organization or community.

### **Past and Current Programming which supports Diversity Training**

• Poverty Simulation	• Communities working on diversity issues
• Real Colors Matrix	• Multicultural fairs
• Hispanic Health Fair	• Multicultural training for professionals

### **Why Diversity Training?**

The University of Nebraska is an equal opportunity educator and complies with national educational standards. An increasingly diverse population in Nebraska creates opportunities for individuals and communities which need to be addressed by Cooperative Extension to address. (See Demographics section of this report.)

Based on figures from Cooperative Extension statistical reports submitted quarterly, numbers of contacts with clients and numbers that represented minority were identified in both 1995 and 1999. In 1995, 12.59 percent of contacts were identified as minority (49,166 minority contacts of 390,538 total). In 1999 for undetermined reasons, the number of minority contacts was substantially less. A total of 444,023 contacts of which 44,335 were minority or 9.98 percent. In spite of an increase in total clients, the number of minorities reached declined. This represents a decline of nearly 5000 minority contacts.

### **Goals and Objectives for Diversity**

The Southeast District must continue to be aware of diversity issues and actively pursue relevant programming. Some ways to do this include:

- Recruitment of persons of diverse background for staff and volunteer boards.
- An option of three paid days a year for extension staff to volunteer their time in ethnic centers, economically disadvantaged groups, senior citizen groups or homes, etc.
- Increase by 25 percent the number of minority educational contacts by:
  - Offering training to staff and community leaders on the importance of diversity within the community and organization.
  - Providing culturally relevant educational materials, equal in quality to those distributed to the general population.

- Targeting and educating to new or under served audiences with educational programs.

We expect to see all extension staff aware of:

- diversity issues,
- the impact of industry and it's effects on populations and societal trends and,
- the impacts of urban sprawl on rural and urban communities.

The team recommends five extension staff to be trained and certified in community and leadership development within the Southeast District, to facilitate and coordinate, the advancement of economic, social, and political well-being in all urban and rural communities.

### **Urban/Rural Perspectives**

The Southeast Extension District has interesting dichotomies. Within its boundaries are the state's two largest metropolitan communities. In contrast, the district includes many traditional rural agricultural communities, some with thriving small towns and others with depressed communities, suffering from a shrinking and aging population with limited incomes.

Within the district, Lincoln and Omaha, it's largest cities, are also unique to Nebraska. Aside from being large population centers by Nebraska standards, they are part of counties that are also quite diverse. For example, Lancaster County has the highest number of farms of any Nebraska county in addition to more than 3500 acreages of 20 acres or less.

Cooperative Extension must be relevant, responsive and respected in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Addressing extension programming in a rapidly growing diverse urban community is not a new challenge to the Lancaster and Douglas/Sarpy county staffs. It does require different methods of operation from some of our traditional modes. While sometimes subtle, differences between urban extension offices and smaller rural extension offices can be quite distinct.

To do justice to a comprehensive five-year district review, some members of the review team thought that differences and unique aspects of urban and rural extension programming should be examined. This includes determining extension's role and level of involvement in higher populated areas and urban centers as well as more traditional office locations.

### **Contrasts between urban and rural areas**

- Population density (neighborhoods compared to towns, villages and rural residences).
- Transportation considerations (public/private).
- Diversity of audiences (race, economics, culture, religion as well as interests and expectations).
- Sense of community (sometimes not as apparent in urban areas).
- Commuter population (programming implications).

- High school dropout rates (higher in urban areas, creating social and workforce preparation issues).
- Economic growth rates (slower in rural areas).
- Availability of employment opportunities (displaced farmers, lack of training opportunities, adequate living wages).
- Diverse cultural mixture more typical in urban areas (living in concentrated areas, ethnic centers established to serve minority needs).
- Program delivery (use of mass media, www, train the trainer, and networking with other agencies are critical in urban counties because of difficulties in directly interacting with a large percentage of the population).
- Income and education levels (typically higher in urban areas).
- Poverty, crime and social issues (more frequently concentrated in urban areas).
- Political aspects (more complex in urban communities — neighborhood groups, business groups, developers, school districts, and governmental agencies and departments all add to consideration of protocol and to the decision-making communication requirements in urban areas).
- Volunteer differences (*Rural and Urban 4-H Adult Volunteer Leaders' Motivation and Preferred Forms of Recognition*, study by Fritz, Karmazin, Barbuto, Burrow).
- Agency positioning (in rural areas, Cooperative Extension may be the only organization dealing with certain problems or issues; in urban areas, there may be many working in similar areas)

#### **Uniqueness of urban extension offices**

- Ratio of extension staff to population is lower in urban than in rural areas. More program delivery resources are generally available in urban areas. Programming is influenced by both these factors.
- Urban extension offices have larger staffs and resources for specialization, (pest management, horticulture, school enrichment programs, urban 4-H, internet presence, nutrition and food safety; staff positions also support technical, publication and marketing needs).
- Partnerships and interlocal agreements with other agencies in urban extension offices are often more complex. For example, Lincoln's Human Services Federation has more than 85 member agencies, including extension. Agencies also compete for resources and duplicate services.
- Urban extension staff are confronted with considerable external agency hierarchy and protocol.
- Nutrition Education Programs are multi-staffed with multiple funding sources.

- Volume of requests for information, such as horticulture, urban pest and home owner management requests is higher, with some subject areas not sufficiently supported by the university.
- School enrichment program size varies. (Douglas/Sarpy unit has more than 150 schools in its area, not including home schools and some small private schools.)

#### **Parallel areas for urban and rural extension programs**

- Education, health care, youth, economic development, environmental quality.
- Urban/rural interface (urban sprawl, urban-rural understanding and relationships).
- Urban people moving to acreage properties and increasing need for “basic information”.
- Competition for youth time.
- School enrichment as a significant public and parochial/private school program.
- Addressing issues relevant to local areas beyond traditional extension programming.
- Utilization of partnerships and interlocal agreements.
- Agricultural and natural resource literacy decreasing among youth and adults although all people, regardless of where they live, are consumers of food.

Issues related to the food and fiber system, protection of our natural resources, and recognition of the interdependence of rural and urban residents are important to all consumers. Extension needs to move from thinking in terms of urban vs. rural to terms of urban-rural interdependence. (*Urban Extension: A National Agenda*, USDA, May 1996).

Acknowledging the similarity and uniqueness of urban and rural extension programs can help the Nebraska Cooperative Extension system address challenges listed in the 21st Century Task Force report. Cooperative Extension, particularly the Southeast District, is well positioned to further involve university departments and faculty members who have not previously been a part of extension for public benefit. Extension programs can also address efforts to bring Nebraska together as one homogeneous state and help eliminate the undesirable urban versus rural mentality.

Community Visions: Urban/Rural Issue Team	
Gary Bergman	Randy Cantrell
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Gerald Hopp	La Deane Jha - Co-Chair
Dennis Kahl - Co-Chair	Barbara Micek
Carol Ringenburg	Barbara Schmidt
Deb Schroeder	Erika Tonsfeldt - Co-Chair
Milan Wall (Heartland Center for Leadership)	Carroll Welte
Susan Williams	Sara Woods (University of Nebraska -



# Environmental Sustainability Issue Team Report

**O**ur environmental resources are finite yet support all living things. Mismanagement of our natural resources through over-consumption or degradation endangers the quality of life and life itself. As competition for non-renewable resources increases, environmental sustainability becomes a critical issue. The futures of agriculture, communities, families and our natural resources depend on a healthy environmental resource base.

The primary goal of the Environmental Sustainability Issue Team is to develop curricula and provide training to enable:

- environmental professionals to meet regulatory requirements,
- citizens to become environmental leaders and stewards of their environment,
- decision makers to impact environmental policy.

While natural resource management is interdependent, this report divides the issues of environmental sustainability into six focus areas, for the purpose of discussion. They are water quality, waste management and recycling, air quality, animal management, plant management and soil management.

## Indoor Air Quality

In 1990, southeast district had 59 percent of the housing units in the Nebraska. The growth of the metropolitan areas means that this proportion has increased.

In the last several years, a growing body of scientific evidence has indicated that the air within homes and other buildings can be more seriously polluted than the outdoor air in even the largest and most industrialized cities. Other research indicated that people spend approximately 90 percent of their time indoors. Thus, for many people, the risks to health may be greater due to exposure to air pollution indoors than outdoors.

In addition, people who may be exposed to indoor air pollutants for the longest periods of time are often those most susceptible to the effects of indoor air pollution. Such groups include the young, the elderly and the chronically ill, especially those suffering from respiratory or cardiovascular disease.

Fortunately, there are steps that most people can take both to reduce the risk from existing sources and to prevent new problems from occurring.

During the past 5 years, only a tiny fraction of staff time has been directed to work on indoor air quality problems. Most efforts have been directed toward helping individual clients solve specific indoor air quality problems. Programs to prevent lead and carbon monoxide poisoning in childcare facilities were initiated.

In recent years an epidemic of asthma has been occurring in the U.S. (EPA). Although asthma has become a major health problem affecting Americans of all ages, races and ethnic

groups, children have been specifically affected. The epidemic is most severe among lower income and minority children. Common indoor air quality triggers include insects (dust mites, cockroaches), molds, pollen, animal dander, second-hand tobacco smoke and other smoke from incomplete combustion.

A variety of these and other pollutants have been implicated in cancer, respiratory and pulmonary distress, mental and physical developmental impairment and even death.

Given that 63 percent of the state's population lives in the Southeast District, it seems prudent that more resources be directed to indoor air quality programs.

Education will be provided to enable communities and individuals to control the source, evaluate health risks, and lower exposure to indoor air pollution.

## **Soil Erosion**

Since the arrival of settlers on the Great Plains, native prairie soils have suffered from water and wind erosion. Native prairie soils once had 18" topsoil; today, experts have estimated that topsoil may be only 6" deep and, in some areas, farmers are trying to grow crops on what was once subsoil.

The 21 counties in the Southeast District have Nebraska's largest population centers and nearly two-thirds of Nebraska's population. They also contain more than 5.2 million acres of cropland.

The erosion and degradation of soil resources in the Southeast district is a major concern because:

- A large amount of the land in the district is being used for crop production. Based on data from the USDA's Natural Resources Inventory, approximately 68 percent of the land area in the SE district was used for crop production in 1997. This is down from 72 percent in 1982.
- A significant portion of the land being used for crop production is considered to be "marginal". Approximately one third of the cropland is classified as highly erodible. The estimated annual soil loss in 1997 was greater than the soil loss tolerance factor on 34.3 percent of crop land acres in the SE district.
- The reduction in productivity associated with soil degradation results in higher input costs per unit of production.
- Erosion has a negative impact on surface water quality.

### **Past programs addressing soil erosion have included:**

- Crop Management & Diagnostic Clinic and Winter Programs.
- Salt Valley Clean Lakes Project/Wildwood Lake Watershed Project.
- Omaha area watershed projects.

- Urban Erosion Control and Storm Water Management Workshops.
  - Central Big Blue Water Quality Hydrologic Unit Area

Controlling soil erosion in both rural and urban settings will continue to be an issue, especially as it relates to water quality. Addressing the problem will require the cooperative efforts of Cooperative Extension and other units of the University of Nebraska, Natural Resources Districts, Natural Resources Conservation Service and others. Cooperative Extension should collaborate with other agencies to develop educational programs that support their cost-share and technical assistance programs.

## **Water Quality**

### **Surface water**

According to the 1998 Water Quality Report from the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality, a significant number of the streams and reservoirs located in the Southeast District are considered to be "impaired" water bodies. By definition, an impaired water body is one that is not capable of supporting one or more of the beneficial uses that have been assigned to it. Beneficial uses include recreation, aquatic life, public drinking water, agricultural water supply, industrial water supply, wildlife and aesthetics. Agricultural nonpoint sources are identified as the primary source of designated use impairment in Nebraska. Pollutants associated with agricultural nonpoint source runoff are sediment, nutrients, bacteria and pesticides.

Current programs addressing surface water quality include:

- Salt Valley Clean Lakes Project,
- Omaha area watershed projects,
- Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Workshop,
- Urban Erosion Control and Storm Water Management Workshops and,
- Central Big Blue Water Quality Hydrologic Unit Area.

### **Future programming:**

Protecting surface water resources from further degradation and taking steps to improve surface water quality where it has been degraded should be a primary focus of future programming efforts.

- Educational programs should be developed for both rural and urban audiences that will increase public awareness of water quality issues and concepts including watersheds and nonpoint source pollution.
- Efforts to educate developers and public officials on issues related to water quality and storm water management should continue.

- Efforts to reduce the impact of agricultural nonpoint source pollution should focus on the benefits of riparian buffer strips, developing sound nutrient management plans, proper handling of livestock wastes and proper use of agricultural chemicals.

## **Groundwater**

While groundwater quality problems are a major concern in the central part of the state, there are localized groundwater problems throughout the Southeast District. The primary pollutants of concern are nitrate and bacteria and with the increasing development of acreages in the Southeast District, each with its' own well and wastewater treatment system, the potential for localized groundwater contamination has increased.

Current programs addressing groundwater quality are:

- Mid-Nebraska Water Quality demonstration project.
- Pesticide Container Recycling Programs.
- Pesticide Disposal Programs.

The increasing number of rural homeowners has significantly increased the demand for information on groundwater protection — the source of most rural homeowners' drinking water. Cooperative extension will take a leadership role in developing educational materials and programs that specifically address the needs of this audience.

## **Drinking water**

A safe and adequate domestic water supply is critical to sustain individual homes and communities. Without water, life itself cannot exist. Educating adults and youth in regard to domestic water supply best management practices will sustain life and will support individual homes and communities.

Seventy-eight percent of Nebraska's new private housing unit building permits were issued in Southeast District between 1995 and 1998. A significant portion of new home development has occurred, and will continue to occur in incorporated communities. This rapid development has put a burden on existing, and often very old, community infrastructure. The ability of communities to supply domestic water of the quantity and quality needed to meet increased needs will be challenged in the next five years. Community domestic water users and community domestic water suppliers will need science-based information as they address their water quantity and quality issues.

A significant portion of new home development has occurred, and will continue to occur near urban centers — on acreages, lake-fronts, and river-fronts. In most cases, each home relies on a private well to provide groundwater for their domestic water supply. Most new private well users have limited, if any, knowledge in regard to groundwater, safe water quality, or well-head protection issues. Yet, each assumes the roll of managing his/her water distribution, a role previously assumed by their public water supplier. They are also responsible for assuring a safe and adequate water supply, regulated for public water supplies by the

Environmental Protection Agency under the Safe Drinking Water Act. Private domestic well users will need science-based information to develop the knowledge and skills required to make informed decisions and implement best management practices in regard to their private domestic water supply.

Current domestic water programs include:

- Well Water Testing Programs and assistance in a number of counties.
- Acreage/Small Farm Workshops.
- Abandoned Well Plugging Demonstrations.

Education will be provided to enable communities and individuals to: provide water of a quality that meets or exceeds the Environmental Protection Agency Safe Drinking Water Standards, provide water of a quantity sufficient to meet consumer needs, and protect their water supply through well-head and source-water protection. Education will include locating, constructing, maintaining, and abandoning wells properly, well-head and source-water protection inventory and best management practices, water quality testing and risk assessment, water treatment, and water conservation.

## **Solid Waste Management**

### **Background:**

According to the EPA, each American produces approximately 4.3 pounds of residential solid waste each day. More than 75 percent of residential solid waste is potentially recyclable.

In Nebraska, approximately 76 percent of municipal solid waste is landfilled (*BioCycle Magazine*, 1997). In 1988, EPA regulations established minimum standards for the siting, operation and closure of landfills. The intent of these standards was to prevent environmental contamination, but the result was that many landfills were forced to close because they didn't meet these new criteria. Many smaller communities couldn't afford to build new, environmentally sound landfills and, currently in Nebraska, there are only 22 licensed facilities. In 1992, the 1992 Nebraska unicameral enacted the Nebraska Integrated Solid Waste Management Act (LB 1257) which banned lawn and tree clippings from landfill disposal. The result of these regulations is that waste disposal is more expensive than ever before; between 1985 and 1997, the national landfill tipping fees more than tripled (EPA, 1997). The average tipping fee in Nebraska is \$23.91/ton, less than the national average (~\$30.00/ton), but much greater than a decade ago.

Successful waste management programs often depend on changes in public attitude and behavior through education and community partnerships between municipalities, businesses and agencies. Cooperative Extension has initiated or participated in a number of waste management programs in southeast Nebraska. Many of these programs are supported by external partners, including the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality and/or local municipalities.

## **Recycling:**

The underlying reasons for recycling programs are varied. Recycling saves resources, landfill space and the cost of disposal to anyone who produces waste. When lawn clippings are mulched or composted and organic matter is returned to the soil, homeowners can also reduce the amount of fertilizer and water on their lawn. Recycling can provide employment opportunities for enterprising individuals and can even generate monies to support recycling activities.

Highlights from extension programs include:

- Securing a DEQ grant to purchase a recycling trailer, pole building and finding a permanent recycling drop-off site in Decatur, Nebraska.
- Providing organizational support and an educational campaign to the Washington County Recycling Association (Blair, Nebraska). Between 1990-1997, more than four million pounds of recyclables were diverted from the land fill.
- Establishing composting demonstration sites and educational meetings to provide valuable information to 4,000 Lancaster County residents interested in composting leaf and yard waste. It is estimated that composting can reduce Lincoln's residential waste stream by 10-15 percent and extend the life of the community landfill by 10-12 years.

Horticultural Master Gardeners Training Program has increased its emphasis on solid waste management and integrated pest management practices by encouraging wise use management of turf and ornamental plantings, proper fertilization practices, watering practices and composting. Even greater emphasis is being put on mulching and sources of mulching materials. The impact of this program is the onsite utilization of yard wastes that can reduce the residential waste stream by approximately 10-15 percent and will extend the life of landfills by 3-5 years over the next 25 years.

Because state and municipal partners provide impetus for recycling programs, it is important for Cooperative Extension to continue to be responsive to the needs of local communities. The cost of waste disposal will continue to increase with the cost of landfill operations and the population of southeast Nebraska.

## **Hazardous Waste**

The most important reason for hazardous waste programs is to removal these waste from the waste stream and prevent future environmental contamination. Cooperative Extension involvement in programs include:

- Securing a grant to conduct a Household Hazardous Waste Pick-up Day in Beatrice, Nebraska that netted more than 4800 pounds of pesticides, corrosive, and flammable toxic materials.
- Collecting more than 404,996 pounds of waste pesticide, approximately 30 percent of the total statewide collection, that included EPA-banned products at Greenwood and Plymouth.

- Collecting more than 150,000 pesticide containers at more than 25 sites across Southeast Nebraska since 1994.

Cooperative Extension's efforts to continue removing hazardous waste from the waste stream should continue.

## **Wastewater Treatment, Disposal and Beneficial Use**

### **Onsite treatment:**

Nebraska has an estimated 200,000 to 250,000 onsite sewage treatment systems, with an estimated 1,200 new systems being added each year. The systems range in age from newly installed to more than 50 years old. Onsite systems not only serve individual homes, but also businesses, schools, and other public and private entities. The systems have an expected effective life of 15 years; with proper design and maintenance the effective life can be extended. It is estimated that as many as 40 percent of the existing systems may not be functioning properly. This means that considerable amounts of wastewater are not being properly treated, leading to potential degradation of both surface water and groundwater quality. Public health risks include human contact with untreated wastewater and contaminated drinking water.

During the past 5 years, only a fraction of staff time has been directed to work on on-site wastewater issues. Most efforts have been directed toward helping individual clients solve specific wastewater problems. Localized programs targeting acreage owners have been conducted.

The number of wastewater treatment systems installed each year in the southeast district increases because of growth in urban and rural areas not served by traditional "municipal" systems. In addition, many of individuals purchasing properties with onsite wastewater treatment do not understand the design, operation and maintenance of these systems. Poor management leads to increased levels of pollution.

Onsite system installers are not required to complete any training, show a minimum knowledge level or be licensed. As a result, there is a wide range of capabilities and knowledge among the installers. There is a need to improve the overall capability and knowledge of the installers to insure that proper and effective wastewater treatment is achieved.

Education will be provided to:

- Enable homeowners, designers, installers and maintenance providers, real estate developers, realtors, and agencies to design, install and maintain wastewater treatments systems to protect water quality and public health.

## **Municipal wastewater:**

Biosolids are municipal wastewater solids that have been processed and can safely be applied to land as a soil amendment and fertilizer if applied in accordance with EPA 503 regulations (1993).

- Teaching crop producers to safely apply more than 355,000 cubic yards of biosolids from Lincoln to crop land in Lancaster County since 1992. The value to cooperating farmers exceeds \$500,000; value of landfill space saved is more than \$3.5 million dollars.

## **Horticulture**

Consumers have received tremendous benefit socially and psychologically from the influence of landscape plants in their immediate vicinity. The concept of prospect/refuge and green space have been documented to have a powerful preventative mental health benefit as well as a therapeutic and restorative benefit to the consumer.

People/plant interaction is documented by recent Gallup surveys which indicate that 78.3 million Americans spend significant time engaged in gardening, making it the country's top leisure time activity. In fact, the number of people who garden has increased 30 percent in the past 3 years. Cooperative. The data indicate that all American, from each demographic groups are involved. Cooperative Extension should deliver programs related to this popular leisure family activity.

Extension horticultural activities and programs have included:

- Garden Center Updates used by garden centers.
- Commercial horticulture clinics.
- Festival of Color.
- Put it on Smart.
- Backyard Composting.
- Bag No More!
- Sustainable Landscape Demonstrations.
- Master Gardener Education and Volunteerism.
- Reaching gardeners through radio programs and media.

Based on discussions with training coordinators and managers of garden centers, the future utilization of garden center update videotapes is expected to continue to be a viable delivery method. Commercial horticulture clinics offer the opportunity to deliver in-depth best management practices and research updates. Lawn care services, arborists, garden centers and golf course superintendents will continue to be targeted for technology transfer with clinics. Since this audience offers a very effective method for multiplication of the Cooperative Extension message, we will continue to work with them.



Another effective multiplier audience is the master gardeners who offer very effective "train the trainer" clientele outreach potential. Significant impacts can be made directly with the volunteers, as well as with the persons are the users of their information.

Perhaps the ultimate multiplier vehicle is mass media. With the state's major newspaper, television and radio outlets located in the Southeast District, these will continue to be used to deliver messages of environmental stewardship and sustainability.

Effective citizen outreach programs such as Be Yard Smart, Festival of Color, Put it on Smart, Backyard Composting, Bag No More! And Sustainable/Waterwise Landscaping remain an effective means of delivery of the research-based facts, plant material selection, crucial maintenance procedures, nutrient provision, groundwater protection and overall landscape sustainability. These will be enhanced and promoted extensively throughout the Southeast District in the future.

## **Insect and Wildlife Management**

### **Background:**

Insect and wildlife populations are found in urban settings as well as rural environments because people inadvertently or deliberately provide the necessary ecological requirements that sustain populations. Urban encroachment into rural areas often results in formidable pest problems that plague new acreage owners.

While the frequency of residential pest problems has not changed appreciably, consumer attitudes about pesticides have changed in the in the last several decades. From 1979 to 1997 non-agricultural pesticide use dropped 39.5 percent (from 1.77 to 1.07 pounds active ingredient per person) (EPA; US Census Bureau). Some of this decrease may be from increased usage of products that are effective at lower concentrations, but there is also evidence that people are reluctant to use pesticides in their home. Results of a 1998 survey conducted by the University of Kentucky, indicated that 77 percent of consumers were concerned about pesticides, 66 percent believed that pesticides cause cancer and 83 percent were willing to pay more for treatments that used less pesticide. One primary goal of pest management extension programs is to educate the public and pest control professionals about non-toxic or low toxic pest control methods through workshops, fact sheets, internet web pages and other non-formal educational programs.

Many people find enjoyment participating in wildlife-related activities. According to a 1991 survey (USFWS), 50 percent of the population in the United States participates in hunting, fishing, and/or wildlife-related activities and spend \$101 billion annually on these activities. Sixty-three million Americans feed wild birds, spending \$2.1 billion. Another \$468 million is spent on nest boxes, feeders and bird baths.

### **Pest Management:**

The vast majority of insects and wildlife in and around the home are neutral and do no real damage, but their presence can still be distressing because of the belief that insects inside the

home is a sign of uncleanness. Educating consumers about effective, least toxic control solutions, solves pest problems, reduces pesticide use and often saves money, as well. Other than extension, there are few alternative to give advice to consumers about pest management options.

Americans are concerned about pests that cause health problems. The advent of highly publicized diseases, like Lyme disease, vectored by ticks and hantavirus, spread by rodents, incites fear in many people. According to the EPA's Office of Children's Health Protection, asthma rates have increased 160 percent in the past 15 years and is the leading cause of absenteeism due to chronic illness. Studies have shown that exposure to cockroaches, dust mites, and rodents contributes to children suffering from asthma (*Pest Control Technology*, 1979, 1999).

Citizens are concerned about pests that damage expensive structures or possessions. This concern is real; cost estimates for controlling termites and repairing structures may be as much as several billion dollars each year (*Su and Scheffrahn*, 1990)

### **Wildlife Enhancement:**

Many people find enjoyment in attracting wildlife near their home to add to their sense of well-being and communion with nature. According to a 1997 survey (*University of Georgia*), birdwatching has become one of the fastest growing recreational activities and ranks with gardening in the top two recreational past times. Activities that promote wildlife are bird feeders and nest boxes, feeding squirrels, butterfly gardening and establishing ponds with or without fish.

Highlights from extension programs and activities include:

- After receiving information from Cooperative Extension, survey respondents indicated that they were able to reduce pesticide use (75 percent), save money or protected their property (86 percent).
- Termite workshops developed and delivered by extension educators attracted a non-traditional audience (70 percent had never before attended an extension program). A high percentage of attendees were able to protect their property (98 percent) and save money (82 percent) with the information they received.
- Extension educator participation in a Lincoln Public School Head Lice task force encouraged changes in head lice policies in Lincoln Public Schools. Enlightened school and public health nurses are now promoting the use of nit combs, a non-toxic control, to break the lice life cycle. After policy changes were implemented accompanied by a community-wide educational campaign, countywide cases of head lice across Lancaster County have reduced 58 percent.
- Extension educator involvement in the annual Urban Pest Management Conference since 1993 has helped educate 200 pest control operators annually, food processing workers, public health personnel and others. Evaluation summaries indicated that 70 percent of the pest control personnel would use more non-chemical controls and 72 percent had a greater appreciation for IPM approaches.

- Presentations at Acreage Owner Workshops have included insect and wildlife pest management, wildlife enhancement, pond management sessions that have been well attended.
- Lancaster County Extension's website "Insects, Spiders, Mice and More..." has received more than 215,000 hits from internet users since 1998. Currently there are more than 21,000 hits per month seeking pest management information.

### **Future Activities:**

At the end of 1998, the U.S. Dept of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), estimated that more than 40 percent of American households owned computers, and one-quarter of all households had internet access. This number will continue to rise as computers and the internet become an integral part of the office, home and community. Expanding the internet website with least-toxic pest control options will continue to give the University of Nebraska increased visibility.

Within the last 18 months, several federal legislators have proposed legislation to limit pesticide use or require parental notification prior to pesticide applications in public schools because of the adverse effects on elementary school children. A focus on integrated pest management and least toxic control management of sensitive environments will meet the future needs of administrators of public schools, nursing homes and hospitals and personnel who perform pest control services in these facilities.

As a result of the Food Quality Protection Act, EPA is likely to cancel several of the most widely used insecticides in homes. There will continue to be a need to teach pest control professionals about least toxic control approaches and integrated pest management.

### **Youth Environmental Education**

Science-based environmental programs have been offered to 8-10 year old youth through school enrichment projects, environmental festivals and 4-H camps. Concepts taught include water and soil resource management, waste management, air quality and living resources.

Examples of environmental festivals in the southeast district include:

- Earth Festival, Gage, Jefferson, Saline Counties.
- Earth Wellness Festival, Lancaster Counties (3000 children per year).
- H<sub>2</sub>O Show, York, Seward, Polk Counties.
- Water Works, Douglas, Sarpy Counties.
- Conservation Day, Burt, Cuming, Dodge, and Washington Counties.

A huge effort each year in these festivals and other programs in the Southeast District is given and will continue. History has shown that this is a very effective method of changing attitudes, knowledge, skills, and aspiration.

Extensive efforts to provide youth environmental education will continue because every year there is a new target audience. School enrichment is part of the curriculum in many school systems and varying requests will continue.

### **Issues Influencing the Effectiveness of Environmental Programming**

The lack of quality, current research, curricula and/or pertinent publications prevents staff in SE district from delivering exemplary programming impacting the public's ability to make sound decisions and implement best management practices regarding current environmental issues. To remedy the situation, we recommend the following:

- Develop a clear procedure to enable educators to publish peer-reviewed NebFacts, NebGuides and Extension Circulars through the university system in a timely manner.
- Develop science-based curricula to provide current, pertinent programming for immediate and developing audiences.
- Redirect the Southeast District research monies to fund and support split educator/specialist appointments (75 percent FTE local extension educator /25 percent FTE district research and extension specialist). We recommend the following disciplined-based positions: domestic water and waste, pest and wildlife management, horticulture, urban non-point pollution and storm water management, indoor air.
- Because of the need for environmental education for acreage and urban clientele, we support split educator/program coordinator appointments (75 percent FTE local extension educator /25 percent FTE district program coordinator.) We recommend the following interdisciplinary program coordinator positions: acreage program coordinator, sustainable urban development program coordinator.
- Offer timely in-ser vice training targeting environmental subject matter.

Being a non-traditional program area, environmental programming in urban areas does not receive the same level of support as traditional agriculture, family and youth programming. This results in inadequate resources, preventing us from tapping our potential audience. To remedy this situation, we recommend the following:

- Redirect a greater percentage of extension resources toward environmental issues important to Nebraska.
- Revisit the extension staffing formula and develop a method that more equitably distributes human resources between urban and rural counties.
- Redirect a greater and more equitable percentage of non-human resources toward urban programming.

Because there is no universal policy regarding compensatory time or flex time, some valuable employees have left the organization, some quality candidates have ruled out employment with extension and some employees have chosen not to initiate programs that could have significant impact in order to protect personal and family time. Employee

productivity and innovative programs impact could increase with flexible and or compensatory time. To remedy this, we recommend the following:

- Pilot flex time options.
- Provide administrative support for compensatory time policies.

## Linkages Chart

Establishing and strengthening linkages and cooperative programming with other partners will continue to be a major strategy in expanding and preserving resources. Listed below are some of the partnerships which the team has formed:

Educational	Governmental	Business/Commercial
Local Schools	USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service	Radio Stations
Educational Service Units	USDA Farm Services Agency	Newspapers
Midlands Lutheran College, Fremont	Natural Resources Districts	Metropolitan Utility District
Southeast Community College	Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality	TV Stations
University of Nebraska - Lincoln Horticulture, Entomology, Plant Pathology, and Natural Resources Departments, Conservation and Survey Division, National Drought Mitigation Center, and Water Center	Nebraska Department of Agriculture	Banks
Low Income Ministry	Nebraska Health and Human Services System	Garden and Lawn Centers
Head Start	US Environmental Protection Agency	Lawn Service Companies
Local Civic Organizations	US Army Corps of Engineers	Pest Management Contractors
FCE	Nebraska Game and Parks Commission	Farm Cooperatives
Youth Organizations	Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance	Well Drillers
4-H	Lincoln, Omaha, and other city governments	Wastewater Treatment Contractors
Lighthouse	Douglas County Health Department	Nebraska Fertilizer and Agricultural Chemical Institute
Girl Scouts	Fremont County Parks and Recreation Department	Nebraska Corn Board
Farm Safety 4 Just Kids	Lincoln/Lancaster County Health Department	Nebraska Soybean Board
Character Counts!	Sarpy County Planning and Building Department	Nebraska Pork Producers
Pheasants Forever	Local County Governments	Nebraska Cattlemen
Ducks Unlimited		Local Service Clubs
Omaha Asthma Alliance		

Environmental Sustainability Team Members	
Sarah Browning	Corey Brubaker
Ken Burgert	Jim Carson
Soni Cochran	Kathleen Cue
John Fech	Dennis Ferraro
Keith Glewen	Arlene Hanna
Don Janssen	Steve Karloff
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Barb Ogg	Ed Siffring
Sharon Skipton	David Smith
John Wilson	Gary Zoubek

# Family Life Issue Team Report

## Five Year Review of Accomplishments (see the web site for full reports)

**N**urturing Children programs seek to improve the quality of care given to children by individuals other than their parents. During the past five years extension staff have provided 81 conferences and 1,324 hours of satellite training for 5,037 child care providers. These program efforts impact 42,311 children. To accomplish this task 73 agencies have cooperated with extension. Extension has helped secure \$20,589 in grant dollars and \$19,600 in-kind dollars. Evaluations at conferences show that providers have gained knowledge about building a child's self esteem, ideas for developmentally appropriate activities, ideas to manage anger and behavior problems and ideas to improve safety and health. Self-care programs of youth staying alone after school reached 1,946 youth. These youth and their parents reported skills in handling emergencies, dealing with fear and boredom and preparing snacks in a safe manner.

**Parenting** programs seek to teach skills to parents that help young people become responsible, caring adults. In-depth programs of three to six weeks reached 770 parents during the past five years. These courses included: Parents Forever, Active Parenting, Raising Responsible Children and Community Building. One day or one session events were held for 1,187 parents. These collaborative community events included: Parents University, workshops for school staff, evening classes for parents and symposiums for professionals working with children. Through media efforts such as Parent Paks, NUFACETS and Keeping Families First in Troubled Times over 2,600 parents were reached. Parents reported learning how to communicate better, provide effective discipline, structure meal times, hold a family council meeting, address work overload and have a happier, less stressful life.

**Financial Management** programs seek to help people improve their use and management of financial resources. An estimated 10,436 individuals participated directly in financial management programs sponsored by extension. They reported saving over \$211 million dollars and reduction of debt of \$63,582. Participants also reported increased financial goals for retirement, increased number of budgets established and increased number of dollars for emergency funds. Over 1200 youth have reported learning how to save money, write checks, balance checkbooks and manage money. Specific life changes have been opening and using a savings account, allotting money according to a budget and opening a checking account. Over 100 individuals and agencies helped extension deliver these programs. Participants stated: "I've started a 401K and money market account for reserve fund." "Paid cash for 2 cars, saw 3 financial planners, opened a savings account, cleared up \$40,000 of debt, cut up all credit cards except one." "I changed my annuities which were earning 4.5 percent to mutual funds paying 11percent..."

**Community Building** programs seek to bring private business and community organizations together with family members to work on issues related to families. **Keeping Family First** programs have reached 17,250 families with educational material and fun family activities. Extension has partnered with 398 agencies to help in the educational efforts and generated \$11,400 in grants to encourage families to spend more time together. **The Poverty Simulation** has helped 1,022 community members understand what it might be like to be a



limited resource family. Participants gained new insight into the sense of “Why bother” and the overwhelming problems that face families of limited resource. Extension staff helped write 11 community grants for a total of \$230,000. Staff provide leadership with community groups in needs assessment, grant writing, grant reporting and organizing grant activities.

**Interpersonal Relationships** programs identify families as the foundation of all other relationships and help families create a safe, positive and supportive environment. Educators worked with 510 families in the juvenile diversion project. The six week course strengthened family relationships and communications skills and helped promote taking responsibility for actions. These programs in three counties have proven to reduce recidivism rates, save court costs and reduce the number of youth arrests. Parents commented that they learned the importance of communication both verbal and non-verbal. Adult/Youth mentoring programs have been established in 7 communities reaching 82 youth at risk of poor school performance and poor social skills. Mentors and youth meet each week to work on school projects and social skills. Youth have improved self esteem and their willingness to listen and take help. All of these programs have been conducted in partnership with several community agencies. Strengthening Families reached 23 families with 73 youth with an in-depth program to build relationships and communication skills. Educators are active in helping communities establish local at-risk youth programs including teen pregnancy prevention coalitions, alternative schools and working with juvenile justice programs. These have a variety of unique delivery approaches including Remember Me Dolls and movie trailers in the metro theaters.

## **Why Statements**

**Nurturing Children** Children who have strong ties with parents, kin and others in the community are more likely to want to stay in their community. Positive connections from non-parental adults builds assets in youth.

**Community Building** Successful community projects involve: business, faith communities, public institutions and individuals being served. Working together communities can accomplish goals that may be too difficult for any one group alone.

**Parenting Children** Teaching parents skills will help children become confident, responsible and caring adults.

**Interpersonal Relationships** Couples who have strong relationships with each other are more likely to create a positive environment for children and are more likely to stay in their jobs.

**Financial Management** Families with stable financial situations are more likely to provide for current and future family needs. They are less likely to need assistance and add to the community financial assistance pool.

**Data Supporting Need (Extended demographic/need information is found on the web site):**

- The three most populated counties in the state are located in the District with 63 percent of the residents of the state in the District.
- The average wage for full and part time employment is in the top half of the state as is total personal income. The median household income for 11 of the counties is \$31,000 or above. Growth in personal income was especially strong in the Omaha Metro Area. 16 counties have seen an increase in wage and jobs available.
- The southern tier of counties experiences continued population loss and lower median income.
- A large number of workers commute. In three counties over 40-percent of workers commute and 54 percent of the Sarpy county workers leave each day.
- The female labor force participation rates in Nebraska are among the highest in the nation.
- The fastest growing minority population is Hispanic. Three of the top four counties in the state for numbers of Hispanic populations are in this district.
- In 17 counties 29 percent of the farm operators report that their primary occupation is something other than farming and 27 percent reported that they worked off their farm 220 days during 1996.

**Key Observer Summary (extended information is found on the web site):**

Extension Educators conducted interviews with 54 Key Observers in 12 counties. These respondents were business leaders, educators, social service workers, faith leaders, law enforcement professionals, health professionals and child care providers. The following comments are a summary of that report.

**Child Care**

In response to questions about the impact of child care on them personally or in the workplace, they saw issues that affect employee work performance and attendance include: lack of sick childcare, limited availability of care for shift workers, lack of infant care slots and extended hours for commuting workers. They worried about quality of care. Unattended latch key children are lonely, face safety issues, and are at risk for behavior problems. There is a lack of after school programs due to cost, transportation and willingness of parents to pay for services. The quality and availability of child care is affected by the following: low provider wages, high cost to low and moderate income parents and high staff turnover. Who pays for child care and how child care is regulated are big issues. Some felt child care should be subsidized on both state and federal level. Others felt workplace care could be an option.

Many people noted that when continuing education requirements are increased, the number of providers drop. No one seems to want to pay for child care--parents, business,

government. Social service workers focused on recruitment, kindergarten readiness, developmentally appropriate care, quality control of day care facilities, stipends for parents to stay home for up to 6 months and on-going training. Business persons focused on work attendance and performance, need for more care givers, sick care, and care for non-traditional hours, longer hours, flex time, and technology to enhance alternate work arrangements. Child care providers focused on the need for more providers, pay issues, recognition, credits and incentives for continuing education. Health care providers saw a need for coping skills for parents, regulations by state and financial assistance to parents. Educators were concerned about extended hours, before and after school meals, dealing with children from dysfunctional homes, the need to teach social skills and values.

## **Community Connections**

Respondents were asked to comment on key community connections for families and how the connections should be made and maintained. They were also asked about community services that support families and gaps that they might see in services for families. Families will feel more a part of their community if they have made key connections at school, church and with neighbors. Community connections are best made and maintained by: someone reaching out and asking and working together on projects at church school or in the community. The primary services identified that support families were overwhelmingly church and school. Some of the service gaps identified were services for people just over the income guidelines and who frequently slip through the gaps. Also mentioned by a few were bilingual services, financial counseling, stress management and parent education. It was quite obvious that many felt that people did not know about available services.

## **Parenting**

Respondents were asked to reflect on the things in communities or society that affect a parent's ability to raise and nurture children and the effects of those things on children. A parents' ability to raise and nurture children is affected by: both parents or a single parent working; an emphasis on materialism and "Keeping up with the Joneses"; lack of quality and quantity time with children; divorce and lack of support from extended family; violence on computer games and TV; not having enough money for basic needs; lack of parenting skills and kids involved in too many activities. Children are affected by these societal influences in the following ways: they grow up too fast, have unrealistic expectations, rear themselves, have emotional problems and may become angry, stressed and frightened and lack values, morals, and respect. Communities could help families support children by:

- providing affordable child care,
- providing parent education,
- slowing down and limiting activities—work less,
- effectively using available time,
- forming family support groups,

- living within a family's means, reducing expectations, and
- providing more family-friendly and inter-generational programs.

Respondents felt that the most important things to teach children were: respect for self and others, honesty, responsibility, citizenship, faith in God, good manners and courtesy, love and caring and work ethic. Social Service workers and educators mentioned lack of values, morals and respect and identified communication and problem-solving skills as issues. As a group they expressed concern about the effects on children of parents not accepting parental responsibilities.

Health Care Professionals expressed particular concern for the hurried lifestyles of many families and the effect of that lifestyle on parenting particularly among single parent families. Some educators felt that expectations for children were too low, that parents abdicated many of their responsibilities and were likely to buy “things” for kids rather than spend time nurturing.

### **Financial Issues**

Families are frequently impacted by financial issues including lack of money, unwise use of credit or unexpected expenses. These pressures frequently result in:

- families moving more frequently because rent not paid,
- stress leading to conflict and divorce,
- substance abuse,
- kids who worry when parents have problems,
- living beyond the means of a family to keep up,
- credit at its limit—especially credit card debt, and
- parents willing to take on debt to give things to kids.

Some reasons for these pressures were mentioned: too much credit and too easy to get; making poor choices—putting wants ahead of needs, maxing out credit, not realizing amount of debt being carried, and having to pay high interest or not being able to pay, not preparing for emergencies or unexpected expenses (not having savings).

All groups of respondents were concerned about the easy availability of credit cards, maximums on credit cards, teens having cards, multiple credit cards and high interest credit. One of the most frequently suggested solutions was to cut up credit cards. Reducing credit card debt was a universal theme. Most felt that people needed to be taught more about finances and budgeting, but few know how to do that. Educators very clearly identified negative impacts on the family as a result of money problems. Specifically they mentioned increases in stress, decreased involvement in community, substance abuse, more frequent moving and difficulties with housing because rent cannot be paid. Educators mentioned pressure on families to give students material things that were sometimes given at the expense of family financial well-being. Social workers seemed to mention divorce more frequently as a consequence of poor financial management and identified housing,

transportation and child care as major issues that resulted in families experiencing financial difficulties.

## **Relationships**

Families build strong relationships by: doing things as a family or couple; communicating; being committed; compromising and listening. Families may be hindered in building strong relationships by:

- emphasis on material things,
- TV, computers, electronic games,
- not being connected to extended family,
- lack of trust, commitment, and honesty
- financial problems, and
- lack of communication skills.

The faith community emphasized church and marriage encounters as a positive influence on relationships. They blamed material things, computers, and TV as causing the problems with relationships. Social Service workers talked about the ability to compromise, knowing when to give advice and having respect. Many of the workers identified time and stress as things that hinder families. A theme of my way or no way came through – self-centeredness and not being there for kids. Health Care providers were very strong on marital relationships, commitment to marriage, friendships, communication. They identified date nights, family nights and church as a way to build relationships and quality time together.

## **Prioritizing Programmatic Needs**

**Theme:** “**Sound Decisions for the Future**” will be designed to help families assess values and establish priorities for financial security and spending time together. “Getting off the fast track” and “Keeping up with the Joneses” were identified as key factors causing family stress and dysfunction. This effort will help families gaining perspective, evaluate what is important set priorities and put the plans in action.

**Goal:** Helping families make sound decisions that positively impact themselves and their families for the future.

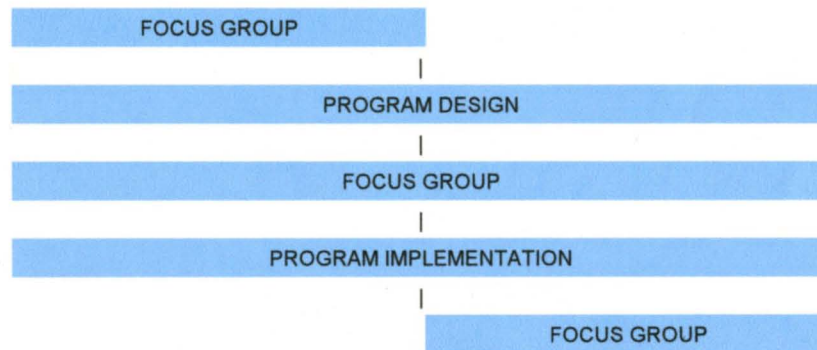
## **Focus Program Areas and Identified Outcome:**

- **Sound Decisions for Financial Future**
  - Reducing credit card debt.
- **Sound Decisions for Quality Child Care**
  - Improve quality of child care given by providers.

- Increasing parents understanding of the importance of quality care.
- **Sound Decisions for Strong Family Relationships**
  - Increase the quantity and quality of family time together.
  - Increase the opportunities for families to spent time together.
  - Increase the families understanding and use of Character Counts
- **Sound Decisions for Parenting**
  - Help parents make sound decisions on limits while nurturing and guiding children.

**Action Strategy**

We plan to use the following model and time table when implementing the identified program areas. We have identified the program needs by listening to the Key Observers. What we need to determine now is the best delivery strategy. Our plan is to design a program and take it to several focus groups to see if they like the design and then implement the program. Following the implementation we will have another focus group meeting to evaluate the success.



Time Table	
2000	Focus on sharing training and marketing efforts as a team.
2000	Implement families relations strategies especially Character Counts!
2000	Implement child care strategies for quality and early brain
2000	Design financial management program.
2001	Implement and evaluate financial management program.
2001	Design parenting program.
2002	Implement and evaluate parenting program.

## **Delivery Strategy**

### **Internal Structure/Actions (marketing, technology, sharing and public policy)**

- Extension will provide leadership in bringing businesses and agencies together to develop programs to enhance the quality of life for families in the communities in southeast Nebraska.
- Each educator will establish an area of specialization and become the team contact for public policy issues.
- Educators share program materials and powerpoint presentations using the Sustainable Families web page.
- We will explore web-based programming—including interactive programs for the entire family, programs for child care providers and programs on financial management.
- New messages will be added to NUFACTS in 2001 including money management and Character Counts!
- Educators will work together to intensely and cooperatively market Sound Decisions for the Future programs to assist families gain perspective and evaluate priorities related to their financial future, strong family relationships, quality care for children and effective parenting.
- Extension will further assess the needs of families in parenting and financial management through focus groups.
- Extension will design 2 or 3 program options for parenting and financial management and present these options to focus groups.
- Extension will deliver new parenting and financial management programs and evaluate and redesign.

### **External Characteristics of Audience (commuters, diversity, urban audience)**

- Extension will study current programs and adjust content to meet the needs of low income families and diverse families.
- Extension will develop an audio tape/CD delivery for a commuter audience—offer a subscription for a selected number of tapes. Market tapes to agencies for use in waiting rooms.
- New messages will be added to NUFACTS in 2001 including money management and Character Counts!
- We will explore web-based programming—including interactive programs for the entire family, programs for child care providers and programs on financial management.
- We will evaluate current extension programs for “family-friendly” focus.
- We will go to where families are for programming opportunities—church, sports events and school.

- We will work with grandparents and older adults on intergenerational activities for families.
- Extension will develop events that bring families together such as family nights with Character Counts!

### **Structure and Leadership Needs**

- Establish work groups on key issues. Participants in these work groups would participate in training then continue to study the issue expanding on the skills learned and practicing these skills in different program areas. The groups would include: (1) delivery strategies, (2) marketing strategies, and (3) public policy. All groups would focus on the unique and specific needs of the Southeast District including the urban, rural and commuting audience.
- Establish a communications network for educators to share programs and work effectively on new projects.
- Identify areas of specializations for each educator, asking that persons provide district support for that program area.
- Identify a district coordinator for family programs by changing an appointment, moving a part time person into that role or identifying a way to rotate the position so the efforts started in this review can stay focused and be completed. This person could also network with the FCS coordinators in the other extension districts.



## Linkage Chart

Establishing and strengthening linkages and cooperative programming with other partners will continue to be a major strategy in expanding and preserving resources. Listed below are some of the partnerships which the team has formed:

Educational	Governmental	Business/Commercial
Early Childhood Training	Health Departments	Chambers of Commerce
Local/Alternative Schools	Health & Human Services	Hospitals
• Teachers	• Agencies on Aging	Goodwill Industries
• Guidance Counselors	• Rural Health & Safety	National Sponsors of Farm Safety Programs
ESU's	• Sanitarians	Curtis & Associates
NE Department of Education	Childcare Food Program	Newspapers
Post-Secondary Institutions	USDA (Rural Developmental)	Radio
• UNK	Regional Behavioral Services	Banks
• Community Colleges	Community Action Programs	Businesses
Local Civic Associations	• Head Start	Nursing Homes
• Lions/Sertomas/Optimists	• Senior Citizens	Credit Counseling
• FCE	Political Entities	Child Care Providers
Youth Organizations	• County Supervisors or Commissioners	Care Centers/Nursing Homes
• 4-H	• State Legislators	AARP
• Girl Scouts	• Congressional Staff	Group Homes Public/Private
• Farm Safety 4 Just Kids	Vocational Rehabilitation/Developmental Disabilities	
• Team Mates	Housing Authorities	
• AIM	Penal System/Court System	
• Character Counts	Couty Attorney/County Court	
Good Beginnings	Juvenile Division	
Alzheimer's Association	Nebraska Women's Prison	
Mentoring Programs	Interagency Councils	
Head Start/Even Start	York Center - York	
Mother to Mother Ministries		
School to Work		

Family Life Issue Team Members	
Lorene Bartos	Gail Brand
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Carol Ringenberg	Deb Schroeder
Dianne Swanson	Rebecca Versch
Carroll Welte	Susan Willaiams

## Healthy Lifestyles Issue Team Report

**N**ebraska is ranked 51st in governmental health spending per capita on community health programs. The Southeast District is more heavily populated than other parts of Nebraska, with the three most populated counties in the state located within the district, and eleven Southeast counties fall into the top quarter of county populations, with more than 12,000 residents in each. Collectively, the District is home to about 2/3's of Nebraska's residents. Cooperative Extension is a major resource in rural communities for linking people to resources for healthy living.

Public-identified health issues are numerous, and due to limited access to time, resources, or staffing, related issues have been combined and prioritized as to how we can be the most effective within our own diverse communities. Team members in the Southeast District are also aware of the possibility of duplications of resources, especially in larger communities, and were cautious to avoid this circumstance. Decreasing resources combined with an increasing demand for services to support the development of healthy lifestyles indicate the need to look for and develop partnerships with other public and private agencies within communities to accomplish programming goals.

Cooperative Extension is frequently identified as a source of information about nutrition, food safety and healthy lifestyle issues in communities. As a result, the local Cooperative Extension office is frequently called upon to develop and deliver customized, grass-roots initiated programs in partnership with other organizations and community groups.

Healthy lifestyle education in the Southeast District impacts both the health and the economy of the majority of the state's population. Many different issues face this diverse group of citizens, including, but not limited to: urban vs. rural issues, race, age, sex, and annual incomes. Healthy lifestyle education and programming supports the IANR and Cooperative Extension Preventive Health and Wellness, Sustainable Families, Youth and Family Responsibilities, Enhancing Food Safety in the Food Chain, and Health Care in Transition Action Plans.

### Questions for the Outside Review Team:

- What are key strategies for motivating clientele in the Southeast District to participate in research based educational Extension programs/efforts to improve their healthy lifestyle choices?
- Does the healthy lifestyle needs in the Southeast district warrant redirecting existing FTE to healthy lifestyle program efforts?
- How do we continue to assess educational needs and develop/deliver healthy lifestyle educational programming?
- How can extension staff in the Southeast District become more skilled in reaching and serving new and under-served audiences?

- How do we expand our abilities to serve diverse populations through securing culturally appropriate education materials and develop delivery methods while also providing the information in a sensitive manner?

**Highlights of the past five years include:**

- Staff in the Southeast Research and Extension District have positioned themselves as leaders in the state regarding such critical health issues as nutrition in the life cycle; public health education, including head lice prevention; cancer education; adult health issues; and lead poisoning prevention. Thousands of children in the district have benefitted from both classroom and hands-on instruction intended to reduce the safety risks associated with life on the farm.
- Educators in the Southeast District have reached thousands of consumers through a variety of teaching methods. "Food Reflections" a free e-mail newsletter which targets an audience of consumers, educators and health professionals to receive information in a timely, cost-effective manner has been developed within the past 4 years. "Pyramid Power: the Food Guide Game" has been a highly successful educational tool for teaching healthy eating habits throughout the district. Diabetes education has been implemented throughout the district, using home study course material and in-depth series. Senior Health and Wellness Education has been implemented through senior centers across the district. Food, Nutrition, and Food Safety Update for Child Care centers has continued to reach child care centers with the importance of feeding younger children.
- The University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in the Southeast District has also helped develop community coalitions and continues to collaborate with local health departments or agencies to help provide access to immunizations, health care, and insurance availability in the district, and assist consumers and communities to make informed health care decisions in a changing health care environment.
- Gage County Cooperative Extension provides at least 50 percent of the volunteers to successfully manage immunization clinics through local volunteers and county Extension staff. They help network and coordinate the clinics and provide some of the funding. This ongoing effort originated many years ago with goals to help increase the percentage of children receiving immunizations and to help reduce costs. Since February 1995, 10,327 children have received 22,886 immunizations, with an average savings of \$968,553 over the cost of going to a private physician.
- The York County Extension was involved in the Nebraska Family Survey and the York County Health Coalition, which helped identify the need to establish a county health department. Goals established included bringing together community resources to enable the community to be a healthier place to live, work, play, and do business by assessing and improving the health and well being of the community.

## **WHY Statement ... Healthy Lifestyles Choices:**

National Health and Human Services Secretary, Donna Shalala, estimates that some 300,000 deaths annually are the result of diseases involving poor diet or inadequate physical activity. Shalala also stated that a balanced diet is the most important thing we can do for ourselves to promote health and long life. The new Healthy People 2010 goals from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services emphasize the importance of nutrition and physical activity in the improving the quality of healthy life for Americans. Cooperative Extension provides research based educational experiences for participants in order that they may make positive lifestyle changes related to nutrition, physical activity, the environment, and health and safety issues to promote good quality lives for their families.

Healthy lifestyles also depend on being able to have access to adequate health care in Nebraska communities. Nebraska is ranked 51st in governmental health spending per capita on community health programs. Health Care is an individual, family and community issue in Nebraska that affects the health of Nebraskans and the health of our communities. Important issues include having insurance coverage both in rural and urban areas. Health care needs to be available to every child in Nebraska, especially vital being the availability of immunizations and basic health care.

## **Demographic data relevant to the issue and supporting the action strategy:**

This year, Nebraska ranked 15th among all states in its health rating, its lowest in the decade. The incidence of heart disease increased, while the risk factors for it decreased. The number of cancer patients had decreased, but infant mortality increased. (UnitedHealth Group, 1999).

One third of adults in the Southeast District reported height and weights that placed them in the overweight category. The proportion of adults who said they had not participated in any leisure-time physical activities in the previous month was 28.1 percent. This is considerably higher than the Year 2000 objective of 15 percent. (Nebraska HHS Systems Southeast Service Area Profile Highlights). <http://www.hhs.state.ne.us/profile/southeast/highlights.htm>

The heart disease death rate for the Southeast District was 111.3 deaths per 100,000 population. The cancer death rate was 148.8 per 100,000 people and deaths due to cerebrovascular disease (stroke) was 21.9. Both cancer death rates and deaths due to stroke did not reach the year 2000 objective for reducing deaths caused by these diseases. The rate of deaths due to chronic lung disease in the Southeast District due to chronic lung disease was 14.0. Diabetes related death rates for the area was 34.8 slightly higher than the statewide rate and did not reach the year 2000 objective for reducing diabetes death rates. (Nebraska HHS System Southeast Service Area Profile Highlights). <http://www.hhs.state.ne.us/profile/southeast/highlights.htm>

An estimated 30 to 53 percent of Americans, some 100 million people use dietary supplements on a regular basis. This translates into \$9.8 billion in annual sales. Statistics show that use of high dose vitamins increased 103 percent and use of herbals increased 380 percent during the 1990's. (American Institute for Cancer Research Science News, December 1999).

The American population will increase by almost 50 percent from 1995 to 2050, while the 65+ age group will increase by 135 percent. The first members of the Baby-Boom generation turned fifty in 1996. Some 75 million Americans were born in the years 1946 - 1964. From 2010-2030, the population of the elderly aged 65 to 84 is expected to grow 48 percent. (American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging, Aging Demographics 1999). <http://www.aahsa.org/public/agingbkg.htm#profile>

Depending on the survey, 53.5 to 62 million Americans surf the Web, or about 30 percent of the U.S. population age 16 or older; 43 percent of U.S. adults look for health information on the Internet. (*American Demographics*, 12/98, 2/99 and *Health*, 1-2/99).

### **Developing an action strategy:**

Provide healthy lifestyle research-based educational programs/activities on such topics as nutrition, diabetes, high blood pressure, cancer, osteoporosis and heart healthy education, indoor air quality (including lead), farm safety, men's and women's health issues, public health concerns, and other related topics (ex: head lice) identified by clientele during input gathering sessions.

Develop coalitions with Health and Human Services in rural communities to (for) identifying clientele needs, and linking people to resources available to meet the communities needs.

Use mass media (radio, TV, newspaper, newsletters) and technology (websites, e-mail and list-servs, NUFACTS, etc.) to inform the general public about issues which impact the healthy lifestyle choices of the clientele in the SREC. Provide the clientele in the Southeast District information about how to evaluate websites and items in media (TV, magazines, radio, newspapers, etc.) with healthy lifestyle claims to determine if the information is based on sound research and is safe for them and their families.

Provide customized nutrition education to callers in individual county offices.

- Provide educational background for the safe use of alternative therapies, such as the ever growing market of herbal therapies, and vitamin and mineral supplementation.
- Provide up-to-date nutrition information for Child Care providers to plan, implement and teach appropriate eating habits for children in their care.

Expand abilities to deliver programs to the clientele in SREC. This includes alternative delivery methods such as independent Home Study courses, point of purchase educational efforts, web-based lessons, school enrichment programs, etc.

Expand abilities to serve diverse populations through securing culturally appropriate education materials and delivery methods, bi-lingual staff and partnerships with agencies who can provide interpreters. The focus will be to provide information in a sensitive manner rather than through cultural invasion.

**Evaluation Efforts:**

Educators will incorporate the statewide evaluation questions developed by Dr. Linda Boeckner and team to evaluate program impact to help provide the collection of uniform data to documented district wide. Evaluation of program impact in the Healthy Lifestyles areas will also include: documented lifestyle changes made by participants, and on-site evaluations from the program participants; number of children immunized, and cost of savings from volunteer participation in immunization clinics; number of hits on the NUFACTS Healthy Lifestyles topics.

*“The ultimate challenge falls to the American people to take responsibility for their own health to improve their diets and increase physical activity. Government can shine the spotlight and direct resources to solving the problems of obesity and poor nutrition. But only individuals can commit themselves to good nutrition and good health.”*

Dan Glickman, Secretary of Agriculture

## **Food Safety**

### **Highlights of the past five years include:**

The district has been teaching ServSafe for about the past four years. PrepSafe and WaitSafe have been added in some counties as supplementary education for food service staff. "Microbes in Food" school enrichment program has been a successful addition during the past three years; Glo-germ hand washing activities for the general public have also been introduced during this time frame. Participation in National Food Safety Education Month in September is growing over the past few years since its initiation three years ago.

### **WHY Statement:**

Food safety is a farm-to-table issue in Nebraska. Production agriculture contributes more than \$10 billion dollars to Nebraska's economy each year; one out of every four Nebraskans depends upon agriculture for employment. Keeping our food supply safe affects the health of Nebraskans and the health of our economy. Safe food handling practices by consumers and food service operations is the final determining factor for preventing food-borne illness. Developing consumer skills will also enhance workplace readiness. (Source of statistics: Nebraska AgRelations Council, Nebraska Bankers Association and Nebraska Department of Agriculture, February, 2000).

### **Demographic data relevant to the issue and supporting the action strategy:**

President Clinton issued a National Food Safety Initiative in July 1997. Recent (9/99) estimates by the Centers for Disease Control are that food-borne diseases cause about 76 million illnesses, 325,000 hospitalizations and 5,000 deaths each year in the United States. <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/EID/vol5no5/mead.htm>

The American Dietetic Association (ADA) cites "the home is one of the most common places for food-borne illness to occur, with reported in-home cases rising by 25 percent in the past five years." A September 1999 survey by Yankelovich Partners for ADA/Foundation and the ConAgra Foundation of household main meal preparers indicated that "knowledge about food safety doesn't necessarily translate into safe food handling practices." <http://www.conagra.com/foodsafety.html>

For example:

- While 45 percent realize that improper hand washing could result in food poisoning, 44 percent consistently forget to wash their hands properly with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds before meal preparation. (Food safety experts tell us that nearly 50 percent of food-borne illnesses could be eliminated if hand washing was done more often.)
- Though 78 percent recognize not washing cutting boards after handling raw meats and then to check the doneness of egg dishes. Though 46 percent believe that eating food



that was stored in a refrigerator with a temperature higher than 40 degrees F is very likely to cause food poisoning, 56 percent do not have a refrigerator thermometer. Of those who have a refrigerator thermometer, less than half (46 percent) know how to monitor for the correct temperature.

- While 74 percent know eating meats and poultry not cooked to proper temperatures may cause food poisoning, only 12 percent always use a meat thermometer to check doneness. Only three percent use a meat thermometer to check the doneness of egg dishes.
- Though 46 percent believe that eating food that was stored in a refrigerator with a temperature higher than 40 degrees F° is very likely to cause food poisoning, 56 percent do not have a refrigerator thermometer. Of those who have a refrigerator thermometer, less than half (46 percent) know how to monitor for the correct temperature.
- Nearly half our meals are eaten away from home according to the National Restaurant Association. While failure to handle food safely at home affects a limited number of people, a commercial food safety mishap affects thousands. The importance of food safety education for food service operations is highlighted by the development of the ServSafe program by the National Restaurant Association.  
<http://www.restaurant.org/research/pocket/index.htm>

Depending on the survey, 53.5 to 62 million Americans surf the Web, or about 30 percent of the U.S. population age 16 or older; 43 percent of U.S. adults look for health information on the Internet. (*American Demographics*, 12/98, 2/99 and *Health*, 1-2/99).

USDA's Economic Research Service estimates that medical costs and losses in productivity resulting from seven major food-borne pathogens in 1993 ranged from \$5.6 billion to \$9.4 billion.

Other related issues:

- Of these costs, \$2.3 billion to \$4.3 billion represent medical costs, and \$3.3 billion to \$5.1 billion were the productivity losses. *The Nebraska economy was negatively affected when 25 million pounds of hamburger from Hudson foods had to be destroyed due to contamination with E. coli.* <http://www.fightbac.org/fbi/cost.htm>

### **Developing an action strategy:**

Based on our internal structure and external characteristics of the SREC district, these are the goals that support the food safety aspect of the Healthy Lifestyles issue team:

- Provide ServSafe and HACCP training to foods service management, health care professionals and childcare providers.
- Teach PrepSafe and WaitSafe to food service workers.
- Educate youth through "Microbes in Food" School Enrichment program.
- Teach sanitation and hygiene to general public through "Glo-germ" hand washing activities.

- Educate the public through National Food Safety Education Month activities.
- Support safe canning procedures through testing canner gauges, answering questions, providing educational materials and working with 4-H youth in food preservation projects.
- Teach the general public about food safety in the home and for temporary food service establishments such as church suppers, fair stands, etc.
- Develop and expand county use of the Internet to promote food safety education and educate the public on reliable sources of food safety information. Use county web sites as the source of links to reliable research-based food
- Use mass media (radio, TV, newspapers, newsletters) to promote safe food handling practices to the general public.
- Promote food safety through NUFACTS phone messages.
- Provide customized food safety education to callers to individual county offices.
- Develop a template for designing personalized posters and handouts to reinforce food safety practices at locally owned fast food and convenience stores.
- Expand abilities to serve diverse populations through securing culturally appropriate education materials and delivery methods, bi-lingual staff and partnerships with agencies who can provide interpreters. The focus will be to provide information in a sensitive manner rather than through cultural invasion.

**Evaluation Efforts:**

Educators will utilize the statewide evaluations by Dr. Julie Albrecht to document program impact. Additional impact will include: number of calls on NUFACTS food safety topics, documented food safety changes made by participants, "hits" on district food safety Internet materials, and testimony from program participants.

## Healthcare in Communities

### Highlights of the past five years include:

Immunization clinics in Gage County: (See Healthy Lifestyles Issue Team Review highlights).

Time	# of Children	# of Immunizations	\$ Saved	\$ Saved per Child
2/95 - 1/96	1658	3534	\$128,515	\$76
2/96 - 1/97	1739	3736	\$153,153	\$88
2/97 - 1/98	2051	6528	\$178,078	\$88
2/98 - 1/99	2821	6528	\$274,320	\$97
2/99 - 9/99	2058	4824	\$234,495	\$114
TOTAL	10,327	22,886	\$968,553	N/A

York County: The York County Public Health Department was organized and put into place in 1998 and 1999 with the following mission: "Providing leadership and partnership with community agencies, support and assistance in referral to health services available in York County which prevent disease and injury, promote and maintain health, and assure protection against environmental hazards for county members." Goals established included bringing together community resources to enable the community to be a healthier place to live, work, play and do business by assessing and improving the health and well being of the community.

### WHY Statement: Health Care in Communities:

Health Care is an individual, family and community issue in Nebraska that affects the health of Nebraskans and the health of our communities. Important issues include having insurance coverage both in rural and urban areas. Health care needs to be available to every child in Nebraska, especially vital being the availability of immunizations and basic health care. The University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in the Southeast District has helped develop community coalitions and continues to collaborate with local health departments or agencies, when they are available, to help provide access to immunizations, health care, and insurance availability in the district, and assist consumers and communities to make informed health care decisions in a changing healthcare environment.

## **Demographic Data:**

Medicare was the expected payer for about the same share of hospitalizations of Southeastern Service Area residents (41.3 percent) as compared to the state overall (41.4 percent). Medicaid accounted for a smaller share (9.2 percent vs. 11.4 percent for all of Nebraska).

## **Developing an action strategy:**

Based on common goals of public health, the goals that supported the origination of the York County Health Department support the Health Care in Communities aspects of the Healthy Lifestyles issue team.

## **Education and Prevention:**

Health Care in Communities will give professional advice and information to all city, village, school authorities and the general public on all matters relating to sanitation and public health by implementing the following:

- Develop educational programs in areas of both high risk and high incidence of our service are including but not limited to lead prevention, reducing the incidence of heart disease, diabetes control, seatbelt usage, motor vehicle accidents, reporting of domestic abuse, agricultural safety, teen drug and alcohol use, etc.
- Provide for health - oriented topics on health and wellness issues for the general public in the area of public health as related to vital county statistics.
- Assure public knowledge of resources available for issues of environmental health, including restaurant food safety, health inspections, weed control, nuisance control, etc.

## **Networking:**

Health Care in Communities will work with many organizations in the county to assist in the development of a coordinated system for health-related services by implementing:

- Work with those agencies that maintain current database on entities, both health and service related, which enhance or promote wellness and assistance for county members.
- Collaboration with other agencies to provide educational programming in the community involving public health issues.

**Evaluations:**

Evaluations will be based upon lifestyle changes and on-site evaluations from the program participants, number of children immunized, and cost of savings from volunteer participation in immunization clinics.

# **Nutrition Education Program**

## **Highlights of the past five years include:**

Limited resource families in 10 SREC counties, through the Nutrition Education Program (NEP) learn about nutrition. Families learn how to extend their food budgets, make healthy food choices, prepare meals, and prevent illness caused by unsafe food. Programs are delivered through group and individual education, fact sheets and home lessons. Program funding includes the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program (FSNEP) and Building Nebraska Families (BNF). In the past five years, NEP has expanded to include funds through FSNEP and BNF for eight additional counties in SREC (Sarpy, Johnson, Nemaha, Pawnee, Cass, Otoe, Richardson, and Cuming). Lancaster and Douglas are funded through EFNEP (past 30 years) in addition to new funding through FSNEP. Local grants have provided funds for staff and supplies to supplement federal and state funding.

In 1998, Nebraska NEP provided education for 7,068 families (26,806 individuals). In addition, NEP programs reached 5,290 limited income youth. NEP successfully delivers educational programs which lead to sustainable behavior changes as indicated by Nebraska impact data (using the National EFNEP Reporting System). In 1998, of Nebraska EFNEP graduates, 82 percent of adults improved nutrition practices, 77 percent food resource management practices and 62 percent improved food safety practices. The benefits are far reaching, not just important in the nutrient intake of a vulnerable population, but also building the basic life skills for those moving into the work force. In addition, the improvement in early childhood nutrition allows children to achieve their full cognitive development potential.

## **WHY Statement – Nutrition Education for Limited Resource Families:**

Everyone has a right to safe and nutritious food for an active and healthy life. In April 1999, Food Stamps provided help for 75,836 Nebraskans to purchase food. Of these, 57 percent, or 43,531 individuals live in counties served by SREC. Many of these families are working poor. Long term negative health and economic consequences occur when limited income families lack knowledge of how to extend food budgets, make healthy food choices, prepare meals, and prevent illness caused by unsafe food.

## **Demographic data relevant to the issue and supporting the action strategy:**

According to a recent analysis of federal data conducted by Tufts University Center on Hunger, Poverty and Nutrition Policy, approximately 34.6 million people in the USA are hungry or experience food insecurity (cutting the size of meals and skipping meals as a result of finances). In hungry households, people are repeatedly unable to afford enough food to avoid being hungry according to the Tufts study.

Nationally, between 1976 and 1996, the number of poor children increased by approximately 3.6 million, with 2/3 of the increase occurring among children in families who

had earned income and no welfare supplements.

In 1996, 12 percent of Nebraska children live in poverty, according to the 1999 Kids Count Date Book. Consequences of childhood hunger include infant mortality; growth stunting; iron deficiency anemia; poor cognitive development and increased chances for diseases.

The American Dietetic Association cites "the home is one of the most common places for food-borne illness to occur, with reported in-home cases rising by 25 percent in the past five years."

Depending on the survey, 53.5 to 62 million Americans surf the Web, or about 30 percent of the U.S. population age 16 or older; 43 percent of U.S. adults look for health information on the Internet. (*American Demographics*, 12/98, 2/99 and *Health*, 1-2/99).

### **Developing an action strategy:**

Based on our internal structure and external characteristics of the SREC district, these are the goals that support the NEP aspects of the Healthy Lifestyles issue team:

- Provide nutrition education programs through group and individual education to support limited resource families to extend their food budgets, make healthy food choices and prepare meals, and prevent illness caused by unsafe food.
- Enhance educational efforts to include physical activity as a part of a healthy lifestyle.
- Conduct a cost analysis study of NEP for limited income in Nebraska in cooperation with neighboring states.
- Expand program delivery through enhanced collaborations external and internal to the University of Nebraska at the local, state and federal level.
- Expand abilities to serve diverse populations through securing culturally appropriate education materials and delivery methods, bi-lingual NEP staff and partnerships with agencies who can provide interpreters. The focus will be to provide information in a sensitive manner rather than through cultural invasion.
- Expand abilities to deliver programs to working poor families. This includes alternative delivery methods such as learn-at-home mail lessons, web-based lessons.
- Educate limited income youth through collaboration with community and school partnerships.
- Expand opportunities for counties not receiving NEP funds to access educational resources targeted for nutrition education for limited income families.
- Develop and expand use of the Internet to obtain nutrition education for limited income families.
- Use mass media (radio, TV, newspapers, newsletters) to inform the general public about issues that impact the nutritional needs of limited income families.

**Evaluation Efforts:**

The National EFNEP Evaluation Reporting System will be used as the primary source of program evaluation. Evaluation will focus on participant's behavior changes in food resource management, dietary practices, and food safety practices.



# Nutrition Through the Lifecycle

## Highlights of the past five years include:

"Food Reflection" a free e-mail newsletter which targets an audience of consumers, educators and health professionals to receive information in a timely, cost-effective manner has been developed within the past 4 years. Nutrition education has been provided for seniors, adults, children, and diabetics, as well as materials for child care centers. (See Healthy Lifestyles Issue Team Review highlights).

## WHY Statement - Nutrition through the life cycle:

Thoughts about eating are changing, the focus has moved from dieting and losing weight to healthful overall eating habits to help you feel good, live well, and prevent disease. Nebraskans are seeking solid, up-to-date advice that separate fad from fact. Cooperative Extension provides research based educational experiences for participants in order that they can make positive lifestyle changes for themselves and their family members.

## Demographic data relevant to the issue and supporting the action strategy:

This year Nebraska was ranked within the top 10 for overweight adults. In Nebraska, the obesity rate rose from 12.5 percent in 1991 to 17.5 percent in 1998, which was a 39.8 percent increase. The ranking suggests that factors contributing to this number include: decreasing physical activity among American adults, including the use of automobiles, labor saving devices, television/video entertainment, and the ready availability of "fast foods." (Mokdad 1999. "The Spread of the Obesity Epidemic in the United States, 1991-1998", *Journal of the American Medical Association* 282:1353-1358, 1519-1522.

According to the report "Dole's Fruit and Vegetable Update: What America's Children Are Eating", children ages six to 12 are eating far too much fat and sweets and only one half of the recommended five servings of fruits and vegetables a day. An analysis of data from a recent national survey shows that children eat only 2.4 servings of fruits and vegetables a day. (MRCA Information Services).

Nearly half of all meals are consumed away from home. Americans are eating at all-you-can-eat buffets more often than some conventional restaurants because they feel they are getting their moneys worth in food. (National Restaurant Association).

Considerable misinformation is presented on the internet and through the media.

### **Developing an action strategy:**

Based on our internal structure and external characteristics of the SREC district, these are the goals that support the Nutrition Through the Life Cycle aspect of the Healthy Lifestyles issue team:

- Provide healthy life style information in these areas; diabetes, weight control, high blood pressure, cancer, osteoporosis and heart disease.
- Provide individualized nutrition education to callers in individual county offices.
- Provide educational background for consumers to assess the safety of alternative therapies.
- Use alternative delivery methods of nutrition information to clientele in SREC.
- Provide age appropriate nutrition education to aging clientele.
- Provide nutrition information for healthy decision making while dining outside of the home.
- Provide education in a culturally sensitive manner.
- Provide up-to-date nutrition information for child care providers to plan, implement and teach appropriate eating habits for children.

### **Evaluation Efforts:**

Evaluations will be based on documented lifestyle changes and on-site evaluations from the program participants.

*"The best prescription is knowledge."*

Dr. C. Everett Koop, former U.S. Surgeon General

## Linkage Chart

Establishing and strengthening linkages and cooperative programming with other partners will continue to be a major strategy in expanding and preserving resources. Listed below are some of the partnerships which the team has formed:

<b>Educational</b>	<b>Governmental</b>	<b>Association/ Commodity Groups</b>	<b>Business/ Commercial</b>
Local Schools	Community Action	Lincoln Dietetic Association	Nemaha County Wellness Center
Head Start	Commodity Supplemental Food Program	Omaha Dietetic Association	Curtis & Associates
FCE	Food Advisory Committee, Lincoln/Lancaster County Health Department	Central Nebraska District Dietetic Association	Area Newspapers
4-H	Senior Centers	Nebraska Dietetic Association	Area Nursing and Retirement Homes
Lincoln Public Schools	Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services	Nebraska Restaurant Association	Area Hospitals
Providers Network Childcare Provider Group	WorkWell Wellness Council	American Heart Association, Lincoln Division	
Omaha Public Schools	Nebraska Department of Education	Nebraska Soybean Board	
School Districts in Southeast Nebraska	Nebraska Department of Nutritional Science and Dietetics	Nebraska Beef Council	
	Douglas County Health Department	Nebraska Wheat Board	
	Polk County Health Department	Nebraska Pork Producers	
	York County Health Department	Nebraska Dry Bean Commission	
	Nebraska Correctional	Dairy Council of Nebraska	
		Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Poultry and Egg Division	
		Nebraska Grain Sorghum Board	
		American Lung Association of Nebraska	

Healthy Lifestyles Team Members	
Cindy Brison	Maureen Burson
Soni Cochran	Alice Henneman
Jody Jurging	Eileen Krumbach
Amy Peterson, Co-Chair	Lisa Pfeifer
Joyce Reich	Deb Schroeder, Co-Chair

## Youth Issue Team Report

**T**he southeast district extension staff is a proactive team dedicated to developing, evaluating, and implementing flexible and adaptable youth education programs. These programs focus on youth training and development of life skills. 4-H is the youth development component of extension in the Southeast district.

In reviewing the Southeast district's issue priorities, there is significant diversity within each county/EPU, and therefore different priorities exist. Relevant extension programs need to be flexible to meet the changing needs of individual communities. By engaging the local community, cooperative extension is the gateway to the University for the people of southeast Nebraska.

By 1990 Census definition, there were four Metropolitan counties in Nebraska. Three of these counties, Douglas, Sarpy and Lancaster, are located in the Southeast Extension District. Douglas and Sarpy Counties are included in the Omaha Metropolitan Area, and Lancaster County is in the Lincoln Metropolitan Area. Omaha and Lincoln are the only cities in Nebraska having a population larger than 100,000 persons.

The twenty-one counties in the Southeast district have a unique diversity. The Metro EPU has over half of the state's population and two-thirds of the Southeast district's total 4-H enrollment. The remaining counties in the district are characterized with a more rural population. Three counties (Johnson, Richardson and Pawnee) have a population of twenty-five percent or more aged 65 and older. In twelve of the twenty-one counties more than ten percent of children come from single parent families. In Douglas and Lancaster counties that number increases to twenty percent. Negative consequences for children in single parent families include income, education, residential change, stress and family formation. (from John Allen studies) Increasing racial and ethnic diversity will continue to impact the Southeast district. Fifteen of the 21 counties have ten percent or higher poverty rate of children.

Southeastern Nebraska has a relatively large number of people who travel from their community for employment. The importance of the commuter population is emphasized when looking at commuters as a proportion of the county's labor force. In Washington, Saunders and Cass Counties, more than 40-percent of all workers left the county for employment each day, and in Sarpy County commuting involved 54-percent of all workers. This data is nearly ten-years old, and we must make assumptions regarding any changes that might have occurred. However, we do know that female labor force participation rates in Nebraska are among the highest in the nation, and it is entirely possible that commuting will take both parents out of their communities of residence in many suburban family situations. These are contributing challenges to youth programming.

Ten southeastern counties are among the top quarter of all Nebraska counties in the number of wage and salary jobs that they support. As one might expect, large numbers of such jobs are found in and around the Metropolitan Lincoln and Omaha area. Note that, since both full and part-time jobs are counted, the number of jobs actually exceeds the size of the labor force in some areas.

A large number of youth, 14 and older, are employed and have limited time for youth programs. At this age many youth drop out and/or become less active in the 4-H program.

Other activities include competition from school, athletics, clubs and organizations. There are many things that compete for the time of youth.

### **Summary of Previous Review**

Based on issues identified in the 1993 review, the following progress has been made:

- The Southeast District developed and conducted assessment surveys of the PAK10, 4-H clubs, and judging teams. Other districts conducted evaluation of camps and county fairs.
- Children youth and family specialists were determined as a priority need for the district. Unfortunately no positions were filled and county staff assumed the job responsibilities through state-wide priority action teams. Since 1993, action teams assumed an expanding role in addressing programming and priority issue areas.
- The southeast district staff have observed that priority issue action teams are replacing the function of EPUs. Communications network at the district and county levels still need improvement. The youth component was intended to be a part of every issue team, however, it never materialized as envisioned.

### **WHY Statement – Youth Issues**

*“4-H .... A world (community) leader in developing youth to become productive citizens and catalysts for positive change to meet the needs of a diverse and changing society.”*

4-H Youth Development education in the Southeast District Extension Center empowers youth and adults by providing opportunities to develop their unique talents and capabilities. The basis of 4-H is “Learning by Doing.” 4-H provides opportunities for both training (learning) and practice (doing). Through this process, young people develop life skills that are relevant now and in the future. Youth who develop life skills become self-directed, productive, contributing citizens. 4-H Youth Development Education programs create supportive environments for youth and adults from diverse backgrounds and with diverse experience, to reach their fullest potential.

### **Program Needs**

The encompassing areas of priority program needs found by the youth issues team were:

- Character Education,
- Workforce Preparation,
- Natural Resources Education,
- Citizenship/Leadership, and
- Staffing.

Character education has been a significant facet of the Nebraska 4-H program. In the Southeast District, we have seen a large portion of our clientele being trained in character education by using the Character Counts! material. As the area of character education grows, we see the need for staffing patterns to change whether it be by hiring a full-time CC! specialist, or a contract person to help us in the upswing as the demand for character education rises. Also, there is a need for additional human resources who specialize in character education, and more development of character education curriculum especially from the Josephson Institute as some of our institutions have been using the material for 3+ years. As Character Counts! spreads so does the need for more ongoing and/or in depth training, and money to help new partnerships form with civic groups which could easily be incorporating CC!

Workforce preparation is another priority we see. A work ethic seems to be lacking in many of the teenagers, as the job market is tight and many businesses are having to hire employees they usually would not have hired. Mentoring programs are needed to provide positive role models. Preparedness programs are needed on hygiene, public relation skills, the interviewing process, and economic development. Follow-up on credit management, and fiscal responsibility is needed for young people who are making money. Career exploration is another key facet in preparing for the workforce.

The majority of our natural resource education for youth is in the form of school enrichment, camps, special interest, and the traditional 4-H projects. The school enrichment material needs to meet the state and local standards of the school district, must be updated on a continual basis as much of the material we use now is outdated, and have continual training for the major school enrichment material.

Citizenship/leadership resources are seen as a need as the youth of southeast Nebraska are being asked to have community service to meet graduation requirements, and people are being asked to take on leadership roles. Training for Public Adventures Curriculum would be a possible solution to meet the needs schools have in preparing the young person about to perform community service. Community service/service learning could be brought forth if staff had training in service learning and could in turn train our adult volunteers on capitalizing on how to make community service a learning experience. The need doesn't stop with 4-H members, but extends into our local stakeholders. We need resources (human, financial, and marketing) to help make the local governing bodies knowledgeable of 4-H, and assist the local officials in taking leadership roles in/for 4-H.

Staffing was a consistent theme in our meetings. The focus areas were hours, training, and the need for additional specialized human resources. A 40 hour week is not a common error in extension due to the number of projects placed in front of an extension professional. Prioritizing these projects needs to happen before we lose the quality staff we have due to burn out. The district staff recognizes the value of office hours which need to reflect the needs of the local clientele, the needs of the staff member, and the complications of shifting office hours. Hiring specifically for a time frame such as after school programming, or weekends when the extension office isn't open needs to be considered and implemented. The youth committee would like to point out that staff roles continue to change, expectations have changed over the last 20 years. Extension assistants today do the work that 20 years ago were duties of agents. Administration has approved of these changes, which aren't bad, but the university needs to realize that the productivity of all extension staff have risen to very high levels. Defining roles is a continuous process in today's environment.

Staffing needs and program needs are continually changing again in today's environment. Establishing priorities in the past could be reviewed every 5 years or so. Today we must re-evaluate daily as to meeting the needs of our clientele to be that premier youth serving organization. We need to be open and aware to change. Our goals need to be flexible even though our vision remains constant; that we are providing the best youth program in the world.

Staff training is needed in the areas of school enrichment, marketing, etc. and in other areas listed in this document. Mentors for university and county paid extension assistants would be of value, even though not every county does it the same, the assistant could be trained for school enrichment in one county, Character Counts! in another place.

It may be beneficial to hire a grant writer/helper who would write big grants then provide mini grants to the counties or make dollars available to sub-contract new programs.

4-H Camp needs a funding change. The foundation owns the buildings. Dollars need to come from the university for staffing, in addition to the revenue the camp brings from registration fees. Camp reaches lots of people, it is an excellent marketing tool, gives additional ways of delivering environmental education, and provides a unique setting for learning. The camp extends beyond 4-H, less than half of the counselors are not 4-H members.

The Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center reaches over 10,000 youth and adults yearly from across Nebraska and states in the region. These individuals are reached through the summer camp program, environmental education program with schools and youth groups, leadership development programs and T.R.U.S.T. course/team building experiences. 4-H Camp provides unique learning opportunities where youth discover new understandings of self, others and the environment. As part of the camp experience, youth discover within themselves interests and abilities they never thought they had. Camping offers youth opportunities to develop life skills through hands-on experiences, social skill development, leadership awareness and an appreciation for the environment.

## **Action Strategies**

The Southeast district reaffirms the 4-H vision, value set and mission as outlined by the National 4-H Council. (4-H Youth Development Education: A National Model For Recognition in 4-H Programs)

*The 4-H Vision:* 4-H ... A world leader in developing youth to become productive citizens and catalysts for positive change to meet the needs of a diverse and changing society.

*The 4-H Mission:* 4-H youth development education program creates supportive environments for culturally diverse youth and adults to reach their fullest potential.

As part of the model, 4-H believes that youth development is the focus of everything we do, 4-H allows individuals to unlock their potential, partnerships are essential in successful youth development, volunteerism is fundamental, and diversity strengthens 4-H.

The strategies to achieve and fulfill the vision of 4-H are listed through the following categories. We also support the other district teams in their youth programming actions.



## The Learning Experience

In the learning process, we will:

- Conduct staff and volunteer training on marketing methods, new curriculum, and establishing priorities using time management skills.
- Develop and update curriculum for school enrichment, 4-H club projects, Clover Kids, character education, workforce preparation, natural resources, and citizenship/leadership. The changes need to be aligned with educational standards to market properly to the educational institutions.
- Improve communication links between state curriculum committee and field staff using the curriculum on a regular basis.
- Promote virtual 4-H Clubs as a means of engaging 4-H members with special interests.
- Reaffirm the learning, community and recognition value of local fairs, festivals, and special interest events.
- Train staff, leaders, volunteers and parents to work with Clover Kids and understand developmental stages. Many 4-H staff haven't worked with youngsters of this age.

## World Leader Image

To demonstrate the values we deem important, we will:

- Address how 4-H is perceived, and if that perception is consistent with the 4-H Vision.
- Identify a marketing strategy to promote the non-traditional side of 4-H. Examples include workforce prep, life skills (critical thinking, problem solving, managing change and challenges, communication, preparing for a career, community service, healthy life styles, and respecting self, others and the environment career exploration), character education, theater arts, communication skills, etc. The marketing strategies for the district are dependent on the individual counties because of the diversity of the district. Each of the state action teams also have marketing strategies that district staff buy into. The state 4-H office needs to always put forth 4-H as the premier youth organization in Nebraska and in the southeast district. Youth touched by extension are part of 4-H. We need to use the *4-H Clover* to our advantage; when any staff member does any program that includes youth, it is 4-H!
- Train extension staff on marketing techniques. We want more than just a package in the mail, we want hands-on training for promoting 4-H such as writing news articles, taking usable digital pictures, time lines of media, etc... This could come from the partnership with college marketing students.
- Emphasize promotion of National 4-H Week . An example would be having a school enrichment fair during the spring quarter. Design a marketing plan that provides a quarterly promotion to the public.
- Communicate state and national efforts in a timely manner.
- Promote camps.

Omaha Convention and Visitors Bureau	Goodyear Tire Company	Pioneer's Park Nature Center
Nebraska Poultry Industries	Capitol Aviation, Inc.	Rebuild Associates
Alltel Communications	World Bird Sanctuary	Red Hawk Nursery
Hyline Hatchery	INFORM	Taylor Productions
Sandhills Publishing Company	Square D	Valentino's Inc.
National Recycles Day Association	NASA	Ventures in Partnerships
Lands for the Seventh Generation	WasteCap	Women Involved in Farm Economics
Cargill	Runza	Farm Credit Agency
Jones Bank	Cattle Bank	Fabric Fair
Area Chambers of Commerce	Area 4-H Agricultural Societies/Fair Boards	Farmers National Company
Fremont 4-H Fair Board	Farmers Cooperatives	Farm Safety Organizations
Libraries	Pork Producers	Saddle Clubs
Veterinarians	Walmart	Young Farmers Chapters
Senior Citizen Centers	Bridges, Inc.	Teammates
AARP	Hospital Health Fair	Sheep & Wool Growers
Cattlemen's Association		

## **Youth Development Profession**

To provide professional developing training and education opportunities critical to 4-H staff, we recommend Cooperative Extension:

- Implement an on going system to orient and train staff.
- Acknowledge the need of flexible staff scheduling. We must be available to address the needs of the clientele. Hiring people for special projects such as after-school programs could help with non-traditional hours.
- Address the diversity issue by hiring from a diverse audience. Staff may be hired from traditional funding as well as through grants. We suggest continuing training emphasizing cultural awareness and sensitivity for staff.
- Train staff to work with Clover Kids. This is a new age group to which extension has expanded in the past several years.
- Recognize the difference between rural and urban counties in the delivery methods which are most effective. Even though the methods can be used in both settings there will be variations of how curricula is delivered. Examples include school enrichment, where rural counties may do more in-class teaching and urban counties may utilize more teacher in-service.

## **Strategic partnerships**

Since collaborative efforts are essential to the growth of the youth development model, we recommend Cooperative Extension:

- Use college marketing students to help staff with local marketing efforts.
- Obtain grant writing staff to support youth programming efforts in the district and counties. This person would also identify potential funding sources and write proposals for youth program efforts.
- Improve communication links between the state and county staff.
- Enhance relationships with political partners should be enhanced through local coalitions to meet the needs of the community. These partners are the extension boards, school boards, parent teacher organizations, county commissioners, the university, agricultural societies, ESUs, state senators, community organizations, and any other organizations benefitting youth.
- Be a positive force in youth development public policy by modeling effective youth development programs that address the needs of society. This includes juvenile diversion, noncompetitive programs for early elementary students, character development, workforce preparedness, experiential learning models for science education. When promoting the public policy part of extension we need to promote the fact we are the research-based, unbiased, non-formal, nondiscriminating education provider

- Deliver programs for latch key kids. Counties will work with a variety of partners, to implement educational programs, including schools, community centers, etc.

### **Youth Involvement**

Since youth are partners in youth development, we will:

- Involve youth in leadership/citizenship roles (youth governance). Examples include 4-H council, junior leaders, junior fair superintendents, fair committees, project leaders, Clover Kid leaders, and grant writing teams. These prepare the youth involved in 4-H for leadership roles in other community organizations.
- Engage 4-H members in promotion of 4-H . Locally they would recruit members and conduct promotional events. At state levels (through roles at Aksarben, State Fair, Youth Council, the Nebraska 4-H Development Foundation and other groups), they can reach larger audiences while receiving valuable experience.
- Support the development of youth mentors for beginning 4-H Members.
- Camp is an impressionable experience for 4-H members. Promote camp counseling at the local level. Encourage 4-H members to take part in our district camp.
- Promote workforce preparation.
- Promote community service/citizenship and emphasize volunteerism.

### **Volunteer Development**

Since volunteers are the core of 4-H's outreach, they should be provided opportunities to grow and develop, we will:

- Implement and continue volunteer training in a variety of settings.
- Recognize volunteers, using the best methods.
- Enhance the productivity of the volunteers by providing job descriptions.
- Screen and profile volunteers.

### **Summary**

The 4-H youth review team has evaluated the needs of the district, listed those needs, explored possible solutions to meeting those needs, and suggested action ideas to implement those solutions. The implementation of the plans will take place in the state action plans with the support of staff in the district.

## Linkages Chart

Establishing and strengthening linkages and cooperative programming with other partners will continue to be a major strategy in expanding and preserving resources. This list is compiled from several counties; so there may be some duplication nor is this an exhaustive list. It is a summary of several counties, but not all counties:

Educational	Governmental	Business/Commercial
Lincoln, Omaha, Millard, Westside, Bennington, Waterloo, Elkhorn, Valley, Papillion/LaVista, Bellevue, Springfield/Platteview, Gretna, and Ralston Public Schools • FCCLA • FFA • Key Club	City of Lincoln • Animal Control • Recycling Office • Wastewater Division • Water System	Amigos, Inc.
Parochial Schools	Environmental Protection Agency - Region VII	Arends Interiors
Rural and small town schools	Lincoln - Lancaster County Health Department	Audubon Nebraska
Southeast Community College - Lincoln	Natural Resource Conservation Service	Burden Sales, Inc.
University of Nebraska • Cooperative Extension - Biological Engineering • Cooperative Extension - Environmental Engineering • Conservation and Survey • Earth Science Education Network • School of Natural Resource Science • Secondary Science Methods (NERDS) • Soil and Water Resource Club • State Museum • Water Center • State 4-H Office • IANR Communications	Natural Resources Districts • Lower Platte North • Lower Platte South • Papio-Missouri River	Burlington Northern Railroad
Home Schools	Nebraska Department of Agriculture	Campbell's Nurseries & Garden Centers, Inc.
Dairy Council of Central States	Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality	Clear Choice Water
Nebraska Agriculture in the Classroom	Nebraska Department of Water Resources	Environmental Health Systems, Inc.

Nebraska Beef Council	Nebraska Game and Parks Commission	Folsom Children's Zoo and Botanical Gardens
Nebrask Corn Growers Association	USDA • Agricultural Research Service • CSREES Environmental Education • National Agroforestry Center	Great Plains Girl Scout Council
Nebrask Soybean Program	Nebraska Water Environmental Association	The Groundwater Foundation
University of Nebraska Agricultural Research and Development Center	Nebraska State Department of Education	Hanna Architects
UNL College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources	County Attorney/County Court	Henry Doorly Zoo
Nebraska 4-H Youth Development	Douglas County departments	Keep Lincoln-Lancaster County Beautiful
4-H Diversity Coordinator - CASNR Diversity Recruitment	Sarpy County departments	Keep Nebraska Beautiful
University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Dodge, Douglas/Sarpy, and Saunders Counties	Nebraska State Legislators	Kinkos
FFA Chapters	Nebraska Department of Education	Lincoln Center Kiwanis
Adventures in Mentoring Youth Center	Nebrask Rural Health & Safety Coalition	Lincoln Solid Waste Management Association
Concordia College	Community Action Programs • Head Start • Senior Citizens • HUD	Mail Plus
Metro Community College	County Commissioners/County Officials	National Bank of Commerce
Grace University/KGBI radio	Nemaha Natural Resources District	Nebrask Environmental Trust
Educational Service units • Unit #3 • School to Work Coordinator • Lifeskills Classroom • General programming /outreach	Arbor Day Farms/ Nebraska City Leid Center	Nebraska Humanities Council
Farm Safety 4 Kids	Five Rivers RD & C	Nebraska Soybean Board
National 4-H Council		Novartis Consumer Health, Inc.
Peru State College and Technology Center		Oak Creek Valley Bank
<b>Additional Business/Commercial</b>		Olsson Associates
Area Hospitals	Area Radio Stations	Paragon Sanitation
Area Newspapers	Cablevision	Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company
Ameri Corps	Douglas County Convention and Tourism	Pfizer Animal Health, Inc.

Youth Team Members	
Lorene Bartos	Tracy Behnken
Gary Bergman	Danita Diamond
Sarah Efskin-Purcell	Jane Esau
Janet Fox	Carin Gerdes
Arlene Hanna	Pam Hector
Deanna Karmazin	John Kilpatrick
Marci Kline	Ellen Kraft
Tracy Kulm	Wendy Leaders
Diane Mayfield	Carol McNulty
Robert Meduna	Mary Nelson
Gerald "Pete" Peterson	Lisa Poppe
Carol Ringenberg	Barb Schmidt
Mark Simmons	Jackie Smith
Eric Stehlik	Tammy Stuhr, Co-Chair
Russ Tegtmeier	Amy Turner
Vernon Waldren, Co-Chair	Steve Zimmers

## RESEARCH IN THE SOUTHEAST DISTRICT

**H**ome to both the University of Nebraska College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, and College of Human Resources and Family Sciences, the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources ranks among the best Land Grant research institutions. One of the great strengths of Nebraska's extension program is its research and extension centers, which are home to faculty members with joint research and extension appointments. This system helps ensure that research is relevant and responsive to regional issues across the state and that extension programs will have access to that research. Faculty members report to both the director of the research and extension center (for their extension appointments) and to the heads of the appropriate academic departments on campus (for their research appointments). Performance reviews, salary determinations, and promotion and tenure recommendations are made by both administrators through a consultative process. Tenure is held in relevant departments and granted according to departmental procedures.

The Southeast Research and Extension Center is an anomaly among the five research and extension centers in Nebraska, in that it is the administrative home of neither research faculty nor extension specialists. Since 1998, with the exception of the district's 4-H youth specialist (who has no research appointment), all research faculty and extension specialists are administratively responsible solely to the heads of their academic departments at the University of Nebraska.

The logic behind this organizational variation in the Southeast District is based on the district's headquarters location on the East Campus of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. It is possible for research and extension faculty located at the Southeast Center to have daily interaction with their departmental colleagues. In theory, full departmental appointments encourage intellectual discourse and collaborative programming that should strengthen both the research and extension agendas of these faculty members.

In 1998 when extension appointments were transferred into academic units, a number of concerns were expressed, especially by extension educators in the district. If specialists were not held accountable to the district's administration, it was argued, they would be less motivated to conduct research related to issues identified in the Southeast District. Also, they could become a less visible and less available resource for extension programs in the region.

In an effort to resolve such concerns, the job descriptions for these specialists were rewritten to specify that they should give "high priority" to research and extension programs related to the southeastern portion of the state. It was expected that annual accomplishment reports would be provided to the director of the SREC, and the director's input would be sought by department heads as they prepared their annual performance evaluations. However, in spite of this effort to emphasize service to the Southeast District, the question of coordinating departmental and district priorities for research and extension programming has not been resolved.

Recent accomplishment reports from extension specialists with a southeastern emphasis do not suggest a marked drop off in either agricultural research or extension activities relevant to the district. Rather, they indicate the continuation of work in progress. Moreover, the location



of the Agricultural Research and Development Center near Mead and the Dalbey-Hallock Farm near Virginia, both in the Southeast District, means significant agricultural research relevant to the southeastern Nebraska eco-region is being conducted.

Research in the social sciences may be a different story. No specialists from the College of Human Resources and Family Sciences, the Department of Agricultural Economics or any other unit dealing in the social sciences has a priority commitment to the Southeast District. This is especially problematic for the district.

This structural change in the Southeast District has generated several questions.

- Are issues in southeastern Nebraska being effectively addressed by campus-based research and extension faculty members?
- What role have structural changes in the SREC had in supporting or limiting the coordination of research and extension programs in the region?
- Are the research needs in southeastern Nebraska fundamentally different from those in other parts of the state?
- What is the most effective way to develop and pursue research priorities for southeastern Nebraska?
- What should those priorities be?

While these questions are at the heart of this review, they are not easily addressed. We need to know how the current situation is perceived by researchers and specialists who produce the data and programs we use. We also need to know the perceptions of extension educators who seek and apply research-based information in the field. Finally, we need to know what value is placed on research by learners and end users. These issues require a method of inquiry that maximizes the opportunity for diverse opinions to be heard.

Faced with these challenges, the steering committee selected focus groups as the best method to address these complex issues. They retained the services of a well-known evaluator, Dr. Richard Krueger of the University of Minnesota, to conduct them. The following is Dr. Krueger's final report in its entirety:

# Final Report of Focus Group Research

by Richard A. Krueger, Ph.D.

## Background

About a decade ago there were campus specialists who had designated appointments in the Southeast Research and Extension Center (SREC). This arrangement was equivalent to that found in the other Research and Extension Centers in Nebraska. While these faculty members had their tenure homes in academic departments, responsibility for directing and evaluating both their research and outreach work was the joint responsibility of the Director of Southeast Research and Extension Center and the Head of their academic department.

In response to suggestions from external review groups, and in an effort to improve linkages with other campus researchers, the research appointments of these specialists were integrated into campus departments in the early '90's. Specialists then reported to both an Extension administrator and department head, receiving what amounted to a two-part performance evaluation for Extension and Research. In 1998, Extension appointments for campus based faculty members were also transferred to appropriate academic departments. Today, specialists report directly to department heads for both parts of their work, with advisory input only coming from the Director of the Southeast Research and Extension Center. In this arrangement, the departments are to provide research and specialist assistance to the Southeast District, with a priority emphasis on such work being found in the job descriptions of designated faculty members.

## Purpose

The purpose of this study was to obtain insights from various stakeholders as to how well changes made in administration and staffing over the last decade are working. Of particular interest was the relationship between university research and the use of that research by extension educators in the Southeast extension district. Additional questions sought insight about the unmet needs and areas that needed change in the future.

## Methods

In February 2000 a series of six focus group interviews were conducted to provide insight on the status of the Southeast Research and Extension Center. All interviews were conducted on the East Campus of the University of Nebraska. These groups consisted of:

- Administrators in the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources
  - Department heads in CASNR & CHRFS
- Extension educators in:
  - Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources

- Human Resources and Family Sciences
- Extension specialists in:
  - Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources
  - Human Resources and Family Sciences

Dr. Richard Krueger, Professor and Evaluation Leader with the University of Minnesota Extension Service conducted the focus groups. Carol Ringenberg, Extension Educator in Cass County, Ray Calderon, Administration Technician in the SREC, and John Wilson, Extension Educator in the Southeast Extension District, assisted. Carol, Ray, and John were asked to assist because they had all been trained to conduct focus group research.

Most groups consisted of 6 to 8 participants. We also scheduled a focus group with community influentials. Unfortunately, although responses to our invitations suggested that a full group would attend, only one person actually showed up. We conducted an individual interview with that community member. The group discussions were lively and free flowing and lasted between 75 and 120 minutes.

## **Findings**

This report presents an overview of how focus group participants perceived the status of the Southeast district.

## **Strengths**

Participants described strengths of the Southeast Research and Extension Center as well as Nebraska Cooperative Extension:

- District Centers in the other four regions provide high visibility for extension efforts. Northeast, Panhandle, South Central and West Central District Centers serve as hubs of research and extension activity. The physical locations of these centers enhance their visibility. These hubs also provide synergy for interactions among extension educators, specialists, and community members.
- The Southeast District is blessed with an abundance of talented and capable educators. These educators are seen as committed, talented, connected, resourceful, and savvy. They are respected by clientele and campus staff alike.
- Campus faculty are highly regarded for their subject matter expertise. They have a lot of talent and in-depth knowledge to offer the region.
- Extension educators have improved their competencies. Extension educators in the Southeast district have assumed additional responsibilities over the past decade. For example, they have updated and developed curriculums, carried out applied local research efforts, and conducted literature and research reviews. In a number of cases, extension educators are serving as regional researchers and specialists.

## Concerns

Here is an overview of the concerns expressed. These were shared by at least three different groups and a few of these concerns were shared by most categories of participants.

- SREC lacks visibility. The physical location of the SREC is not distinctive and tends to blend in with the rest of the university. By contrast, the other district centers in Nebraska are clearly recognized as hubs of extension and research activity. The SREC gets lost in the complexity of the university.
- Extension educators feel that expectations of them are increasing and support is decreasing.
- Although one of the intentions of the staffing and administrative changes in the Southeast district was to have many more campus experts and specialists available for extension programming, there is little evidence to suggest that this has worked. In fact, there is the perception that fewer campus staff resources are available to extension educators in Southeast Nebraska.
- Priorities of campus staff seem to have changed. There is a perception that campus staff are more concerned about other issues (e.g., state and national research efforts, promotion within their department, meeting the expectations of their research and teaching colleagues, compliance of specially funded efforts that might not be directly connected with local residents' perception of needs). In general, helping extension educators carry out extension programs or applied research in Southeast Nebraska seems to have declined as a priority.
- Working relationships between campus and field staff have deteriorated. There is a disconnect between what field staff and campus staff see as priorities. Problems cited by educators include:
  - Specialists assigned to extension are not visible to staff.
  - Specialists have different levels of responses to inquiries.
  - Relationships between educators and specialists are limited or nonexistent, which limits cooperative efforts to problem solving.
- Problems cited by campus staff include:
  - There is no coordinated plan for outreach in the district.
  - It is sometimes difficult to know how to link into local plans.
  - Extension educators are not taking advantage of campus expertise.
- Budget cuts and retrenchments have reduced the support staff in the SREC to a critical level. This results in more paperwork for extension educators, fewer opportunities for coordination, and more complications and headaches for educators.
- The administrative and staffing changes, along with other changes in job expectation are wearing down the morale of Southeast extension educators. Some educators reflected that the joy and excitement of serving people through extension efforts was fading. Staff fatigue is increasing and educators talked about feeling burned out.

- Communication between extension educators and campus staff is weak. There is limited awareness of the activities, resources and interests of the other partner. There is little joint planning and sharing of plans. There is a danger that field educators and specialists will become increasingly isolated from each other—to the disadvantage of both.
  - Greater support is needed from top leadership. Some participants were proposing a new concerted thrust into urban / metro research and extension programming. However, this would require high-level university support. In the view of many, the total university can and should be involved in the outreach effort. This would require new public funding or redistribution of existing funds. The leadership challenge is to make the effort a “win-win” situation for university units and departments. Top university leadership is currently perceived as having little understanding of, or commitment to, the land-grant philosophy. District leadership, on the other hand, is seen as effective and very capable but unable to make this kind of change without support.

### **Discussion:**

While there are strengths within the current system, something exceedingly valuable has been lost in the last decade. There is clearly a disconnect between campus and field staff. They no longer feel they are working together toward the same goal—supporting one another to get the research of the university to the people of the state. There is a perception that campus staff are now rewarded for things other than serving the Southeast district. In effect, campus staff are in one world, bounded by the walls of their discipline or departmental demands while the extension educators are in another world, responding to local needs. Extension educators feel campus staff have abdicated responsibilities in the Southeast district. As a result Southeast staff have had to develop competencies and fill that void. Some Southeast staff have begun to function as district specialists and regional researchers. Historically in land grant universities it has been campus staff who have provided the quality assurance—the research component—in programming. When campus staff are not involved, there is the potential that program quality and technical expertise are diminished.

### **Future Opportunities**

As focus group participants reflected on the current situation, they offered several suggestions for improvement. Included were:

- Support more locally based applied research conducted by extension educators. From the perspective of a number of focus group participants, the university is less capable of and less interested in conducting multi-county or regional applied research. The emphasis within university departments is to conduct state or national level research thereby enhancing the reputation and prestige of the institution. As a result, locally based applied research tends to be neglected. Support for locally based applied research would presents an opportunity for field educators to develop a research

agenda that would meet needs of local citizens. Staff development and internal protocol will be needed to ensure quality.

- Reach new audiences. In a number of groups there was considerable concern about reaching those not usually reached by university research or extension. Lesser-served populations include people of color, lower income residents and urban-suburban residents. Also there are topics that are of concern to a growing number of residents in Southeast Nebraska, such as in horticulture, turf grass, trees, etc.
- Improve communications. Much could be done to build relationships, understanding, and communication between campus and field staff. To start, participants suggested that extension educators and campus staff make more of an effort to pay attention to each other and communicate. This includes spending more time and effort in listening, planning together, and staying abreast of developments with the other party. In addition, they said the SREC should create protocol and procedures that support communication. The challenge is to do this without burdening campus or field staff. Staff said some simple strategies such as creating and maintaining directories, or sharing plans and staffing assignments would be helpful.
- Improve the program planning process. Several extension educators suggested that an improved program planning process would foster communication and greater team efforts. The process should:
  - Involve local people, extension educators, and campus staff.
  - Assess needs and create programs based on needs.
  - Build alliances.
  - Set goals, hold staff accountable, measure results, and report outcomes.

At present the relevant parties are not adequately involved, there are fragmented visions of program goals, and there is limited accountability.

- Rethink rewards. There is a belief that departments reward state and national level efforts and that they place limited value on local efforts. It is also perceived that research is rewarded over outreach efforts. Consider revising the reward system to provide incentives for campus faculty to engage in applied research relevant to Southeast Nebraska, to develop meaningful curriculum materials and publications, and to be responsive to grassroots needs.
- Consider creating a Metro district. An idea that surfaced in several groups was the creation of a special metro-focused district. The idea generated some enthusiasm in a few groups, but was not deemed beneficial in other groups. Those who suggested the idea had a variety of strategies for how this might be developed. It could consist of the entire Southeast district or portions of the existing Southeast district. Those who favored the idea felt that it should be housed off campus and available to larger range of metro residents. The center would feature educational programs of interest to metro audiences plus demonstrations and test plots of urban concern.

## Messages from Specific Groups

Here is an overview of themes that captured the interest of specific groups:

- **Administrators in the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources.**  
The Southeast district is a special area that needs to be looked at differently from other districts in the state. Clientele are different, delivery methods need to be different, and research needs are different. Youth and family concerns are greater than in other districts.
- **Department heads in CASNR & CHRFS**  
From their perspective, district needs were being met. Department heads felt that staff were available in even greater numbers and even more specialized to give answers. These department heads favored creating a metro district, which would focus attention on metropolitan concerns. Moreover, this center should be located off campus where it could draw greater attention. However, it would need to draw upon a host of campus departments, beyond those traditionally associated with extension.
- **Extension educators in Agriculture & Natural Resources**  
These educators are concerned about the diminishing amount of support they receive from campus. They are frustrated. Attention is needed in program planning, communications and rewards.
- **Extension educators in Human Resources & Family Sciences**  
They say they get inconsistent support from campus. Some subject area specialists are quick to jump in and help but others are not. There is a need for new curriculum and updated resources. Because of the lack of campus help they have relied on each other to a greater extent. Training in research methods would be helpful.
- **Extension specialists in Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources**  
These specialists, across a number of departments, were concerned that they were not familiar with the agricultural priorities in the Southeast district. They felt there was no process that helped coordinate extension efforts the district, so it was difficult to plan how their efforts might support local efforts. Their request was that they be informed of the plan. They also thought a concentrated urban effort should be launched. Their key themes were "We will help if you let us know the plan" and "Get a urban effort going."
- **Extension specialists in Human Resources and Family Science**  
There was a perception that many of the topics of concern to these campus staff are either ignored or overlooked by the larger university. There is increasing need for materials, research and curriculum on topics relating to families, nutrition, youth development, and diversity, particularly in Southeast Nebraska. These staff members are frustrated that new resources are not available to meet these needs and existing resources are locked into agricultural topics.

## **Implications and Recommendations**

The implications of Dr. Krueger's report are provocative, and in some areas they are critical. Upon reading the report, one University of Nebraska - Lincoln department head commented that the issues raised in the report are not unique to the Southeast District or to the University of Nebraska. Instead it reflects national trends in higher education and university research. Reduced support from traditional sources has increased the pressure on faculty members to produce nationally visible research that will lead to increased support from non-traditional sources. This has limited the time available for applied and regionally specific research. This appears to be especially true for junior faculty members as they seek to meet the exceptionally high standards required for tenure in this environment.

Whether what we heard in these focus groups is reflective of larger institutional trends or is specific to the Southeast Extension District is a subject for further inquiry. Our immediate concern is to address these issues as best we can in our own organization.

### **Educators and Field Research**

It was very disappointing that our planned focus group with stakeholders was poorly attended. We had expected a full group to be present. However, we do have the insights of educators in the field and the results of IANR listening sessions to support the hypothesis that applied locally-relevant research is at the top of their priority list. In the Southeast District, some of this research is being conducted by educators, with or without support from campus-based specialists. A fine example of such research is found in the test plots planted each year as part of the Soybean Profitability Project. Specialists support this research regarding design and methodology, but the bulk of the work is carried on by educators and cooperating producers.

We need to find new ways to support such research and to include specialists in assuring the quality of the results. Whether or not specialists are administratively responsible to the SREC, extension has a sizable investment in faculty salaries based on the expectation that research, curriculum and program needs in the district will be met. The problem appears to be that the research priorities of faculty in the field and on campus sometimes differ. The tremendous diversity found in the region means that many research and program needs are highly localized and thus equally diverse. Moreover, the actual personnel resources assigned to the district in any one discipline are limited. It is unreasonable to expect an individual faculty member to be able to support all the research needs related to his or her discipline for the entire region.

### **Suggested Responses**

- Build an expectation for locally-based applied research into the job descriptions of some educators so such efforts may be properly rewarded.
- Provide professional development opportunities for educators interested in enhancing



their research methodology skills.

- Sponsor issue-based meeting opportunities for specialists, educators and other faculty members during which research needs and projects can be identified and discussed.
- Consider “uncoupling” extension assignments from specific specialists in the Southeast District, allowing extension assignments and salaries to move from person to person for fixed periods of time, based on the specific expertise required for specific programs. These assignments would be determined by the departments in consultation with extension educators and the Southeast District director. (The roles of each in such negotiations and consultations should be determined.)

## **New Audiences**

The racial, ethnic and economic diversity of the Southeast District is not matched by the diversity of our extension programs and audiences, although we have made progress in this regard recently. This is an issue that goes well beyond the district and is significant for all of the University of Nebraska.

The research and subject matter support that is most readily available to extension is found within the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources. The Southeast District has enjoyed considerable success in matching that expertise with the needs of some audiences. Horticulture and urban pest management are examples of such success. However, our personnel resources for such efforts are thin and not evenly distributed. They are most heavily concentrated in the metropolitan counties where more staff allows for more specialized expertise. Outside the metropolitan areas, educators often are called on to perform more generalized functions. This requires specialized support from the campus and county colleagues when these educators reach the limits of their expertise in certain areas.

Horticulture is a prime example of the limitation described above. Horticultural information is in great demand, at least seasonally, throughout the district. Most educators in agriculture have acquired some expertise in the field. However, many requests for horticultural information require educators to seek additional information before they can respond. Primarily the metropolitan counties have trained horticulturists on staff, backed by large contingents of Master Gardener volunteers. An extensive informal network for sharing information among educators and specialists has evolved. It works, but the process requires a great time commitment from both those seeking as well as providing specialized information.

We have experimented quite successfully with the concept of a regional horticulturist in the suburban growth area northwest of Omaha. This experiment was funded with grant and contract dollars and has not been institutionalized. We need to find new ways to provide faculty resources to provide programs and information that are in great demand by new audiences.

On the research side, new audiences often raise issues not represented in the research agendas of IANR departments. The research that would effectively address many urban and minority issues is more likely found in departments such as Urban and Regional Planning, Sociology, Ethnic Studies or Education, which are located outside of IANR. We need to identify new ways to create dialogue and partnerships with faculty members from such

disciplines.

Perhaps most importantly, the ethnic diversity of our faculty does not match that of our clientele, despite our best efforts in recruitment. This issue goes beyond the district, as recruitment and retention of a more diverse faculty has proven exceedingly difficult for all of the University of Nebraska. Extension educators in Nebraska are required to have masters degrees.

The competition for qualified individuals is intense. Difficult or not, we need to diversify our faculty and staff and find ways to identify and collaborate with university faculty members who do represent the diversity of our region.

### **Suggested Responses**

- Seek to strategically locate highly specialized faculty in areas where new audiences are concentrated through internal reallocation and acquisition of new resources.
- Sponsor issue-based meeting opportunities for educators and other faculty members from within and outside IANR during which research needs and projects can be identified and discussed.
- Seek partners from outside IANR with whom we can cooperatively solicit funds for research and outreach programs for new audiences.
- Support the creation of a fund within extension for "opportunity hiring" of minority educators.
- Identify ways in which extension assistants from diverse backgrounds can be brought into our system and support their work toward advanced degrees to allow them opportunities for career advancement within Cooperative Extension.

### **Improve Communications**

Communications has been a concern frequently voiced by faculty in this district during the past couple of years. The district director's strategy for facilitating communications has been to cut costs through routine use of electronic channels, including the World Wide Web. For instance, all background information and committee reports related to this review report are linked to the district web page. All faculty and staff in the district, along with the extension administrative team, can be reached with e-mail through a group address. This is maintained and updated immediately for all staff changes. Conferences and planning activities are announced through this channel. This is not achieving the level of communication desired by faculty in the district.

Communications is a recurring theme and is relevant to every program in the district. Opportunities for researchers and educators to interact around issues and program planning are rather limited. The district annual conference, statewide extension action teams, specific program planning activities for major educational programs, and the informal network of relationships between educators and specialists define the opportunities that exist. All are limited by the self-selection of participants. The only specialist who participated on the steering

committee or issue teams involved in this report was the only one who still retains an appointment within the SREC.

There are specialists on campus who say they desire to cooperate in extension programs, but don't know what the programs or issues are. Also, there are educators who have significant programs and are willing to do the great majority of the work themselves, but need at least some technical advice from specialists and are unable to obtain it. This certainly seems to be a communication issue. If everyone is sincere, then simply exchanging information should be an important first step toward improving the situation.

Extension specialists assigned to the Southeast District, along with their area of expertise and FTE assignment to the district, are listed in the Cooperative Extension personnel directory. This appears to be insufficient identification, in the opinion of faculty. A more detailed listing which includes specific research interests and subject matter areas could be constructed. Campus-based faculty members are often resistant to the publication of such listings since they are quickly outdated and may limit questions by permanently identifying individuals with narrow subject matter areas. This is a concern not only for specialists assigned to the district, but in many cases to whole departments.

### **Suggested Responses**

- Continue the work of the district issue teams beyond this immediate review process and clarify with specialists and department heads the expectation that faculty members with assignments to the Southeast District will participate on these teams.
- Aggressively seek participation by campus-based faculty members in district planning activities through personal invitation, regardless of their formal relationship with the SREC.

### **Program Planning Process**

This topic appeared in focus groups enough times to be emphasized by the facilitator. The steering committee considers this review a significant part of a planning process. Our challenge will be to find ways to continue to focus faculty attention on it and to make strategic programming and organizational decisions based on the recommendations of this review.

### **Suggested Responses**

- Sponsor a planning retreat for each district issue team and invite appropriate specialists and other campus-based faculty within six months of receiving the review teams's report.
- Develop a strategy for maintaining the issue teams over the next five years.

## **Rethink Rewards**

The question of whether extension work is rewarded in academic departments is common to virtually all land grant universities. The answer is not one that the SREC can greatly influence. Perhaps we need to rethink the reward structure itself rather than attempting to change the values of higher education. If productivity in extension is accorded lesser stature than teaching and (especially) research in departmental promotion and tenure decisions, then perhaps extension should stop investing in tenured faculty lines and use its resources to augment the salaries of the experts it requires on a consulting basis. The direct approach to rewarding such work may prove to be more motivational than the current system. However, this may present new challenges. Will this decoupling of extension and research have negative results? Will the experts with whom we contract be viewed as neutral and unbiased?

As unlikely as this direct approach is to occur, it does introduce a model that may be a good way to secure the expertise required by extension's current program mix, but is found outside of IANR. The likelihood of finding resources required to expand the specialist concept to other parts of the university appears to be small at this time. Attempting to do so through internal reallocation, inasmuch as it would transfer resources out of IANR, is likely to meet with strong faculty and departmental resistance. A relatively small salary pool would enable us to extend the contracts of faculty members on nine-month appointments or create fixed-term fellowships or internships that could be targeted at subject matter found in any part of the university.

## **Suggested Response**

Through internal reallocation, seek to create a salary pool equal to one faculty FTE for use in securing faculty research and program support from any part of the university on a fee for service basis.

## **A Metropolitan District**

The idea of a Metro District has been raised before, and has merit when seen from several perspectives. The metropolitan counties have the largest staffs in the state. The majority of the state's population resides in Douglas, Lancaster and Sarpy Counties, and they have large spheres of influence. The populations of those counties represent the most significant concentrations of minority and non-traditional audiences in the state. Even the politics of the metropolitan counties is different, providing many opportunities and threats that are less tangible than in most rural areas. Nurturing and maintaining governmental and interagency relationships consumes more time among metropolitan unit leaders than it does for almost any other position in our system.

Creating a Metro District raises a number of organizational and research questions. For instance, who would lead such a unit? In our current system, district directors are expensive and adding administrators is not a popular undertaking within the university at this time. Would the Metro District be organized in the same way as other extension districts or would it be

configured and aligned in some very different way (perhaps with the University of Nebraska - Omaha)?

A Metro District is a concept worth considering.

### **Proposed Response**

Form an ad hoc faculty committee to investigate and offer recommendations related to the formation of a Metro District within Cooperative Extension. The recommendations should focus on all aspects of extension's current mission and priorities, including curriculum development, research support, extended education and student recruitment.

## Director's Closing Remarks

"If you've seen one Extension Office, you've seen one Extension Office."

Anonymous

**T**hat observation likely holds true at the district level as well. The Southeast Research and Extension Center is unlike its four counterparts in Nebraska. It conducts essentially no research, and directs a relatively large portion of its resources to urban populations. The center's market and staff size are the largest in Nebraska Cooperative Extension, yet its visibility is often perceived as relatively low. It reaches large audiences, yet has failed to achieve broad recognition, at least in a marketing sense.

This document has been over a year in preparation, and its writing has involved virtually every faculty and staff member in the Southeast Extension District. The complexity of the document reflects both the complexity of the district and the far greater complexity of the governmental, institutional, economic and social systems in which it operates. In this review, we have attempted to identify emerging issues that will be faced by the individuals, families and communities that we serve. We have also attempted to identify the assets and limitations, institutional and otherwise, that are likely to shape how we respond to those issues. Balancing those needs and resources is the purpose behind this process.

It is important to remember that the document was developed by a number of issue teams operating more or less independently. Certainly many individuals were on several teams, and each team included a member of the steering committee. Thus the opportunity for shared understandings of issues and cooperative approaches to programmatic themes was built into the process. However, the reality of the task was that each team at some point was driven by the requirement of delivering a finished report on a specific issue. The job of pulling all of that into a single document was accomplished by a writing team. Such a division of labor is common in large organizations. The review itself will provide a real opportunity to look at the report in its entirety.

A number of themes seem to appear throughout the document. They can be found repeated from one issue team report to another. These themes are not necessarily revelations. Most have been voiced more than once during the five years since we last conducted a review of this nature. Others, however, innovative and bold. In either case, this is the first time these themes have been committed to print for public discussion. Finding them and understanding what they should, might or will mean for us and our work over the next few years is the next step in this planning process.

Some of the themes noted by the writing team are anticipatory. Demographic trends and the continuing and apparently growing dominance of the state's metropolitan regions are among these. That theme underlies a number of our emphasized issues and contributes to design recommendations for programmatic responses to them. Examples of this are found in

the attention paid to commuting, day care systems, agricultural awareness, cultural and racial diversity, and a number of policy education issues.

Some of the themes are based on our collective understanding of what direction university, institute, extension and district vision and policies are currently taking us. In some instances these suggest as yet unanswered organizational questions. Extended education and the role of extension educators in the delivery of credit and non-credit educational programs is an example of a recurring theme that currently seems to generate more speculation than shared vision.

Other themes seem to be based on a clear vision of changing roles and a preferred future for Cooperative Extension. Such a theme is found in the repeated reference to the potential of educators in very specialized roles such as conducting research in cooperation with members of the research faculty or serving as district- or statewide program coordinators.

Some themes, such as the importance of extension's role in youth development, reaffirm core values of our organization. Others, such as fee supported programming, demonstrate a recognition that some of our traditional values have changed and must change further. The themes of new partnerships and new audiences that are pervasive in the University of Nebraska system are also pervasive in the district.

Other common concerns were communication problems within the district, and organizational options such as flex time and other employment models that would allow us to better serve clientele while meeting staff needs.

This part of the review provides us with a fairly complete view of what we as an extension district see as our role, our resources, and the work before us. Our next step is to stand back with those who we have invited to join us, and ask ourselves if that view is accurate.

This part of the review provides us with a fairly complete view of what we as an extension district see as our role, our resources, and the work before us. The review document raises many questions, and it is our hope that the Review Team can help us address at least some of them. Among those that we feel to be especially critical are:

- Should the Southeast Research and Extension Center be restructured or renamed to more accurately reflect the district's outreach mission, and to recognize the fact that there is no specific district research function?
- Should we consider building an applied research expectation into the job descriptions of Extension Educators? If so, should we target specific areas of research interest?
- Should the district consider restructuring related to its Metropolitan audience?
- How can we construct our programs to best meet the needs of ethnically diverse audiences?
- How can we diversify our faculty and staff, especially in the Metropolitan counties?

These questions represent only a starting point for our review. We look forward to the continuing discussion that it will generate.

## Personnel Listing - August 2000

Action Plans on which staff focus have been identified. Staff may support additional action plans to a lesser degree.

Where no action plan is listed, staff responsibilities may be such that they provide support for all action plans to some degree.

### Southeast Research and Extension Center

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>%FTE</b>	<b>Funding:</b>	<b>Emphasis Area:</b>
Bette Bahr	Support	90	FBA fees	Farm Business
Gary Bredensteiner	Farm Mgt Op.	100	State	Farm Business
Tina Barrett	Farm Bus. Assoc.	100	FBA fees	Farm Business
Ray Calderon	Support	100	State	Administration
Bob Caldwell	Ext. Spec.	Contact	State	Cropping
Randolph Cantrell	Director SREC	100	State	Administration
Jennifer Chaky	Ext. Ed.	Contact	State	Plant Diagnostics
Jeanne Egger	Support	75	FBA fees	Farm Business
Janet Fox	Ext. Spec.	100	State	4-H and Youth
Bill Gustafson	Ext. Spec.	60/40	State	Horticulture/Teaching
Connie Hansen	Support	100	State	Administration
Jeff Hart	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Special Projects
DeLynn Hay	Ext. Spec.	Contact	State	Water Resources and Irrigation
Steven Karloff	Ext. Forester	Contact		Forestry
David Keith	Ext. Spec	Contact	State	Entomology
Kay Klundt	Support	100	State	Administration
Stevan Knezevic	Ext. Spec.	Contact	State	Weeds
Steve Lepert	Support	Contact	State	Computer Support
Richard Lodes	NRD Forester	Contact		Forestry
Troy Pabst	Ext. Tech.	60/40	State	Horticulture/Teaching
Terry Prokop	Farm Bus. Assoc.	100	State	Farm Business
Carol Ringenberg	Ext. Ed.	100	Grant	Community Resource Development
Rick Rasby	Ext. Spec.	Contact	State	Beef
Joyce Rosecrans	Support	100	FBA fees	Farm Business
Jim Stewart	Farm Bus. Ass't	50	FBA fees	Farm Business
Linda Zabel	Support	60	FBA fees	Farm Business
TBA	Coordinator	100	State	Extended Education Learning Center Coordinator



# Gage/Jefferson/Saline EPU Unit

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>%FTE</b>	<b>Funding:</b>	<b>Action Plans:</b>
<b>Gage County</b>				
Jane Esau	Ext. Aide	100	County	Youth & Family Responsibility
Paul Hay	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Integrated Animal Systems Management Integrated Crop Management
Larry Germer	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Integrated Animal Systems Management Integrated Crop Management Community Resource Development Community and Residential Environment
Sondra Germer	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Sustainable Families
Dianne Swanson	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Youth and Family Responsibility Sustainable Families
Eleanor Rector	Support	100	County	
Sandee Bellows	Support	100	County	
Bonita Schuster	Support	100	Other	(NE Farm Business)
<b>Jefferson County</b>				
Barbara Schmidt	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Sustainable Families Community Resource Development Youth & Family Responsibility
Robert Stritzke	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Integrated Animal Systems Management Integrated Crop Management
Joann Kerwood	Support	100	County	
Joan Volker	Ext. Ass't	100	Grant	Nutrition Education Program Food Safety
<b>Saline County</b>				
Leanne Manning	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Sustainable Families Community Resource Development
Randy Pryor	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Integrated Animal Systems Management Integrated Crop Management Youth and Family Responsibility
Eric Stehlik	Ext. Aide	100	County	Youth and Family Responsibility

Lu Hajek	Support	100	County
Beth Horak	Support	100	County

## Southeast Six EPU

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>%FTE</b>	<b>Funding:</b>	<b>Action Plans:</b>
<b>Otoe County</b>				
Jan Mueller	Support	100	County	
Sarah Effken Purcell	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Sustainable Families Preventive Health and Wellness
Arlis Steinhoff	Support	100	County	
Steve Zimmers	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Youth and Family Responsibility Natural Resource and Environmental Management Policy and Public Issues Education
<b>Cass County</b>				
Jim Carson	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Youth and Family Responsibility Natural Resource and Environmental Management Policy and Public Issues Education
Deb Hlavac	Ext. Aide	40	County	Youth and Family Responsibility
Diane Mayfield	Ext. Ass't	80	County	Youth and Family Responsibility
Barb Micek	Ext. Ed.	100	Grant	Sustainable Families (Bldg NE Families)
TBA	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Sustainable Families Youth and Family Responsibility
<b>Richardson County</b>				
Gerald Hopp	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Natural Resource and Environmental Management Policy and Public Issues Education
Jaclyn Smith	Ext. Ass't	100	County	Youth and Family Responsibility

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>%FTE</b>	<b>Funding:</b>	<b>Action Plans:</b>
<b>JNP Unit</b>				
Ken Burgert	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Natural Resource and Environmental Management Policy and Public Issues Education
Travis Dunekacke	Ext. Ass't	100	County	Youth and Family Responsibility
Carin Gerdes	Ext. Ass't	100	County	Youth and Family Responsibility
Pam Hector	Ext. Assoc.	100	County	Youth and Family Responsibility
Mary Ann Holland	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Youth and Family Responsibility Sustainable Families
Joyce Reich	Ext. Ass't	100	Grant	Preventive Health and Wellness (NEP)

## **Blue River EPU**

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>%FTE</b>	<b>Funding:</b>	<b>Action Plans:</b>
<b>Polk County</b>				
Colleen Pallas	Ext. Assoc.	60	County	Integrated Crop Management Youth and Family Responsibility Natural Resource and Environmental Management
Amy Peterson	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Enhancing Food Safety in the Food Chain Preventive Health and Wellness Sustainable Families Youth and Family Responsibility
Judy Sunday	Support	100	County	
<b>Butler County</b>				
Ann Dobesh	Ext. Ass't	100	State	Youth and Family Responsibility
Louise Niemann	Support	100	County	
Ed Siffring	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Community and Residential Environment Natural Resource and Environmental Management Youth and Family Responsibility

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>%FTE</b>	<b>Funding:</b>	<b>Action Plans:</b>
<b>Seward County</b>				
Gail Brand	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Sustainable Families Youth and Family Responsibility
Dennis Kahl	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Youth and Family Responsibility Policy and Public Issues Education Integrated Animal Systems Management Integrated Crop Management
Ginny Koranda	Support	100	County	
Tammy Stuhr	Ext. Ass't	100	County	Youth and Family Responsibility
Sue Yoder	Support	100	County	

**York County**

Sue Gottula	Support	100	County	
Eileen Krumbach	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Sustainable Families Youth and Family Responsibility Preventive Health and Wellness Health Care in Transition
Gerald Peterson	Ext. Ass't	100	County	Youth and Family Responsibility
Susan Stahr	Support	50	County	
Gary Zoubek	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Natural Resource and Environmental Management Integrated Animal Systems Management Integrated Crop Management

**East Central EPU**

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>%FTE</b>	<b>Funding:</b>	<b>Action Plans:</b>
<b>Burt County</b>				
Bonnie Chatt	Support	80	County	
Mary Loftis	Ext. Ass't	56	County	Youth and Family Responsibility
Carroll Welte	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Preventive Health and Wellness Community Resource Development

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>%FTE</b>	<b>Funding:</b>	<b>Action Plans:</b>
John Wilson	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Community and Residential Environment Natural Resource and Environmental Management Integrated Crop Management
Sharon Wimer	Support	100	County	

### **Cuming County**

Jill Carlson	Support	20	County	
Susan Hansen	Ext. Ed.	25	Grant	Preventive Health and Wellness (NEP)
Larry Howard	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Integrated Animal System Management
Mary Jo Lueckenhoff	Support	100	County	
Lisa Poppe	Ext. Aide	100	County	Youth and Family Responsibility
Debra Schroeder	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Sustainable Families Preventive Health and Wellness
Diane Ulrich	Support	50	County	

### **Dodge County**

Annette Alexa	Support	100	County	
Tracy Behnken	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Youth and Family Responsibility
Sarah Browning	Ext. Ass't	100	State/County	Community and Residential Environment
Jodene Jurging	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Sustainable Families Preventive Health and Wellness
Carin Sandman	VISTA	100	Grant	Youth and Family Responsibility
Mary Spath	Support	100	County	
David Varner	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Integrated Crop Management Natural Resource and Environmental Management

### **Washington County**

Karna Dam	Ext. Assoc.	100	County	Youth and Family Responsibility
Jim Peterson	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Integrated Crop Management Natural Resource and Environmental Management
Debbie Saville	Support	100	County	

Mary Snow	Support	100	County	
Rebecca Versch	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Sustainable Families Preventive Health and Wellness

## Metro EPU

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>%FTE</b>	<b>Funding:</b>	<b>Action Plans:</b>
<b>Saunders County</b>				
Sharron Ankerson	Support	100	County	
Cheryl Dunbar	Support	100	County	
Keith Glewen	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Integrated Crop Management Natural Resource and Environmental Management
Deloris Harder	Ext. Ass't	50	State	
Walker Luedtke	Support	100	State	Integrated Crop Management
Robert Meduna	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Integrated Animal Systems Management Youth and Family Responsibilities Integrated Crop Management
Susan Williams	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Sustainable Families Leadership Development
TBA	Ext. Ed.	50	State	Integrated Animal Systems Management Youth and Family Responsibility
<b>Lancaster County</b>				
Lorene Bartos	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Youth and Family Responsibility Preventive Health and Wellness Enhancing Food Safety in the Food Chain Community and Residential Environment
Gary Bergman	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Leadership Development Community Resource DevelopmentPam
Branson	Support	100	County	
S. Corey Brubaker	Ext. Ed.	100	Grant	Natural Resource and Environmental Management (Clean Lakes)
Maureen Burson	Ext. Ed.	50	Grant	Enhancing Food Safety in the Food Chain Preventive Health and Wellness (EFNEP)

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>%FTE</b>	<b>Funding:</b>	<b>Action Plans:</b>
Soni Cochran	Ext. Assoc.	100	State	Community and Residential Environment Natural Resource and Environmental Management Sustainable Families Preventive Health and Wellness
Deanna Covault	Support	100	County	
Linda Detsauer	Nutr. Advis.	100	Grant	Preventive Health and Wellness (EFNEP)
Tom Dorn	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Integrated Crop Management Integrated Animal Systems Management Natural Resource and Environmental Management Enhancing Food Safety in the Food Chain Policy and Public Issues Education
Karen Evasco	Support	100	County	
Marti Franti	Ext. Ass't.	100	Grant	Community and Residential Environment
Arlene Hanna	Ext. Assoc.	100	State	Youth and Family Responsibility Natural Resource and Environmental Management Integrated Animal Systems Management
Alice Henneman	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Preventive Health and Wellness Enhancing Food Safety in the Food Chain
Don Janssen	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Community and Residential Environment Natural Resource and Environmental Management
LaDeane Jha	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Leadership Development Sustainable Families
Deanna Karmazin	Ext. Ass't	100	County	Youth and Family Responsibility Integrated Animal Systems Management
Mary Kolar	Ext. Ass't	100	County	
Ellen Kraft	Ext. Ass't	100	County	Youth and Family Responsibility Natural Resource and Environmental Management
Tracy Kulm	Ext. Ass't	100	County	Youth and Family Responsibility
Mary Jane McReynolds	Ext. Assoc.	100	County	Community and Residential Environment
Mardel Meinke	Ext. Ass't	100	Grant	Preventive Health and Wellness (NEP)
Andrea Ohlrich	Ext. Ass't	50	Grant	Preventive Health and Wellness (NEP)

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>%FTE</b>	<b>Funding:</b>	<b>Action Plans:</b>
Barb Ogg	Ext. Ed.	100	County	Integrated Crop Management Community and Residential Environment Natural Resource and Environmental Management
Sondra Phillips	Nutr. Advis.	100	Grant	Preventive Health and Wellness (EFNEP)
Virginia Piening	Support	100	County/State	
Norman Regier	Ext. Ass't	part-time	County	Community and Residential Environment
Kendra Schmit	Ext. Ass't	50	Grant	Preventive Health and Wellness (NEP)
David Smith	Ext. Ass't	100	County	Natural Resource and Environmental Management
Larry Stoll	Support	100	County	
Jackie Tollman	Ext. Ass't Intern	100	Grant	Youth and Family Responsibility
Donna Weber	Ext. Ass't Intern	part-time	County	Preventive Health and Wellness Enhancing Food Safety in the Food Chain
Karen Wedding	Support	100	County	
Karen Wobig	Ext. Ass't	100	Grant	Preventive Health and Wellness (NEP)
TBA	Ext. Ed.	50	State	Integrated Animal Systems Management Youth and Family Responsibility

### **Douglas/Sarpy Counties**

Mary Anna Anderson	Ext. Ass't.	75	County	Community & Residential Environment
Pat Aus	Support	100	County	
Cindy Brison	Ext. Ed.	100	State/Grant	NEP, Preventive Health & Wellness, Enhancing Food Safety in the Food Chain
Nancy Brune	Ext. Ass't.	40	County	Sustainable Families
Kathleen Cue	Ext. Ass't.	100	County	Community & Residential Environment
Kendra Davis	Ext. Ass't.	100	County	Youth & Family Responsibility
Danita Diamond	Ext. Ass't.	50	County	Youth & Family Responsibility
John Fech	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Community & Residential Environment
Dennis Ferraro	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Community & Residential Environment Natural Resource and Environmental Management
Claudia Johnson	Nut. Advisor	100	Grant	Preventive Health and Wellness (NEP)
Janet Johnson	Support	100	County	
Rosilyn Jones-William	Nut. Advisor	100	Grant	Preventive Health and Wellness NEP)



<b>Name:</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>%FTE</b>	<b>Funding:</b>	<b>Action Plans:</b>
John Kilpatrick	Ext. Ass't.	100	County	Youth & Family Responsibility
Marci Kline	Ext. Assoc.	100	State	Youth & Family Responsibility
Cheri McCool	Support	50	Grant	Preventive Health & Wellness (NEP)
Carol McNulty	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Youth & Family Responsibility
Miller, Elayne	Support	100	County	
Gloria Mitchell	Nut. Advisor	100	Grant	Preventive Health & Wellness (NEP)
Steve Mlynarek	Ext. Ass't.	100	County	
Mary Nelson	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Sustainable Families Youth & Family Responsibility
Linda Nodes	Support	100	County	
Lisa Pfeifer	Ext. Ass't.	75	Grant	Preventive Health & Wellness (NEP)
Myrna Powell	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Leadership Development
Lisa Scholting	Ext. Ass't.	100	County	Youth & Family Responsibility
Mark Simmons	Ext. Assoc.	100	County	Youth & Family Responsibility
Sharon Skipton	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Community & Residential Environment
Monte Stauffer	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Youth & Family Responsibility Integrated Animal System Management Integrated Crop Management
Erika Tonsfeldt	Ext. Ass't.	100	Grant	Preventive Health & Wellness (NEP)
Amy Turner	Ext. Ass't.	100	State	Youth & Family Responsibility
Nancy Urbanec	Ext. Ass't.	100	State	Food Safety in the Food Chain Preventive Health and Wellness
Jan Vallentine	Support	100	County	
Vernon Waldren	Ext. Ed.	100	State	Youth & Family Responsibility Leadership Development
Sonja Walker	Support	100	County	
Mae Williams	NEP Supervisor	100	Grant	Preventive Health & Wellness (NEP)
Rita Wilson	Nut. Advisor	100	Grant	Preventive Health & Wellness (NEP)
TBA	Ext. Ass't.	50	County	Sustainable Families
TBA	Ext. Ass't	50	County	Youth and Family Responsibility
TBA	Ext. Ed./Assoc.	100	State	TBA

## Glossary

**21<sup>st</sup> Century Task Force** - A group of IANR faculty and clientele assembled to take a look at the future of Cooperative Extension in Nebraska.

**AAU** - American Association of Universities

**AkSarBen** - A civic, philanthropical organization which among other projects, sponsors a regional youth livestock exposition.

**ARDC** - Agricultural Research and Development Center

**CCI** - Character Counts (an ethics education curriculum)

**CCA** - Certified Crop Advisors

**CEU** - Continuing Education Units

**City Sprouts** - A non-profit urban gardening organization which promotes the revitalization of communities and neighborhoods in North Omaha.

**Clover Kids** - 4-H program specifically for 5 - 8 year olds

**CRP** - Conservation Reserve Program

**DEQ** - Department of Environmental Quality

**DTUI** - Diversity Training University International

**EARS Reports** - Extension Accomplishment Reports

**Environmental Racism** - The prediction of decisions, practices, and policies on considerations of race and/or ethnic group in maintaining control over that group.

**EPA** - Environmental Protection Agency

**EPU** - Educational Programming Units

**FCS** - Family Consumer Sciences

**Four- Firm** - An agricultural economics term used to describe % of total market controlled by the 4 largest firms in the sector.

**FTE** - Full Time Equivalent

**GIS** - Global Information System

**GMP** - Good Manufacturing Practices

**GPS** - Global Positioning System

**HACCP** - Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (Commercial food safety management program)

**HEL** - Highly Erodible Land

**IANR** - Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources

**Kyoto Agreement** - An international trade agreement

**Master Gardeners** - Volunteers trained in horticulture topics who provide community service through the Cooperative Extension system.

**MRCA Information Systems** - An independent research organization.

**NAE4-HA** - National Association of Extension 4-H Agents

**Nebraska HHS** - Nebraska Health and Human Services

**Nebraska Lead** - An innovative leadership and education program for individuals involved in production agriculture and agribusiness.

**NU** - University of Nebraska

**NUFACTS** - A catalog of educational voice messages provided by Cooperative Extension with an toll-free telephone number.

**NU System** - University of Nebraska System consisting of the University of Nebraska - Lincoln, the University of Nebraska - Kearney, the University of Nebraska - Omaha, and the University of Nebraska - Medical Center

**On-Site Waste Water Treatment System** - such as a lagoon or septic tank

**PAK 10** - A multi-county collaboration for extension youth livestock educational activities.

**Parent PAKs** - A packet of parenting tips for parents of teens put together by Extension Educators.

**PRK** - Professional Research and Knowledge (used by NAE4-HA in developing professional improvement opportunities)

**Real Colors Matrix** - A system or program to help people understand themselves and others in a more complete way.

**Remember Me Dolls** - A program sponsored by the Lancaster Pregnancy Prevention Coalition which provides paper dolls to key community and state leaders during National Pregnancy Prevention Month. Each doll tells the story of a teen in Lancaster County who became pregnant in the last year.

**Search Institute** - A nonprofit, independent research organization based in Minneapolis, Minnesota, has identified 40 concrete, positive experiences and qualities--developmental assets--that have a tremendous influence on young people's lives and choices.

**SERIES** - Science Experiences and Resources for Informal Educational Setting

**SREC** - Southeast Research and Extension Center

**SSOP** - Sanitation Standard Operating Practices

**TRUST Course** - Teams Researching Understanding and Success Together (ropes/team challenge courses)

**USDA** - United States Department of Agriculture

**USFWS** - United States Fish and Wildlife Service

## Notes

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