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Visioning Process Can Help Communities Shape Their Future

By Yelena Mitrofanova
 UNL Extension Educator

Small communities throughout Lancaster County, as well as throughout the whole country, have experienced demographic and physical changes. These changes affect not only land use patterns of the particular community, but also social needs of its residents. For instance, an aging and increasingly diverse population means many communities must re-evaluate how and what they provide in terms of housing, education, social services and infrastructure. Because change happens all the time, a community must decide the specific criteria they will use to judge, manage and even direct change.

In the 1980s, many local governments began long-range planning efforts and created comprehensive development plans to provide a road map for community growth. As a rule, comprehensive plans consisted of evaluating present conditions, identifying problem areas and suggestions on how to overcome existing problems and manage change. The majority of Lancaster County communities now have obsolete comprehensive plans which were developed 25 to 30 years ago and did not articulate community values or provide a rational sense of direction.

Many Lancaster County communities today experience requests for re-zoning, demands for affordable housing and needs to provide better infrastructure. Unfortunately, decisions about these issues are frequently made in the absence of a real vision of how residents want their communities to look in the future.

Thus, the new concept of public participation called **community visioning process** has emerged in the last decade. Visioning is a process by which community defines the future it wants. Through public involvement, communities identify their purpose, core values and vision of the future, which are then transformed into a manageable set of community goals and an action plan.

Visioning process does not replace other forms of community planning: comprehensive plan, land use, transportation and capital improvement plans. Actually, visioning is a useful tool in comprehensive planning and can be easily included in the comprehensive planning process. Moreover, it can occur parallel to data collection, analysis and provide



Bennet residents involved in Community Visioning Project

a foundation for developing community goals and objectives.

A planning process must be participatory, but usually community residents are involved in the last stages of comprehensive planning. For a planning process to be effective, it must incorporate the people's vision, not only the planners or local community officials. The goals and action plans should be firmly rooted in the goals and values of the local community residents.

What is Visioning?

- A process by which the community defines its future.
- A citizen-based process to identify core community values, goals and strategies.
- It is a foundation to develop a community comprehensive or strategic plan.
- A process identifying desirable changes for the future.
- A process visualizing what community *could* be like or *should* be like in 10 to 15 years.

Why Visioning?

- Emphasizes community assets rather than needs.
- Assesses community options and opportunities on the basis of shared purposes and values.
- Stresses early and continuous public involvement in the process.
- A visioning process brings a community together as people recognize their shared values and purposes; creates a sense of ownership in community residents and serves as a foundation to comprehensive plan.

When is a Visioning Process Needed?

- When there is a confusion about where the community is heading.

see *VISIONING* on page 10

Bennet is First in Nebraska to do Visioning Process

The Village of Bennet is the first community in Nebraska going through a community visioning process. Bennet is a small, rural community (about 600 people) located 18 miles southeast of Lincoln.

Last year, members of the Bennet Planning Commission started updating its comprehensive plan and wanted to have broader public input in the process. They contacted the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension office and asked for assistance. Extension Educators Yelena Mitrofanova, Dennis Kahl and Phyllis Schoenholz offered to facilitate a community visioning process.

First Town Hall Meeting

The first Visioning Town Hall Meeting was held in September at Bennet Elementary School. About 75 people participated in the meeting and learned what a visioning process is and why it is important.

Community residents then set up three commit-

tees/task groups: logistics, communication and research. Each committee consisted of five to six people. The logistic committee was responsible for setting dates, inviting participants and the physical arrangements of listening sessions, town hall meetings, etc. The communication committee was responsible for getting the word out and informing public and local media about upcoming visioning events and results/reports of these events. Finally, the research committee worked with Hanna-Keelan Associates planners — hired to update Bennet comprehensive plan — and assisted them in information gathering.

The Extension Educators facilitated the work of committees/task groups and conducted nine Listening Sessions held in December and January.

Listening Sessions

It is very important for both planning and visioning processes to get as diverse
 see *BENNET* on page 10



First Visioning Town Hall Meeting



By Alice Henneman, RD, UNL Extension Educator

Enjoy the delicious and easy-to-make recipe below using leftover hard-cooked eggs.

For free egg recipes, egg decorating tips or information related to eggs and food safety, contact Mary Torell, Public Information Officer, Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Poultry & Egg Division at mtorell2@unl.edu or call (402) 472-0752 or go to <http://www.nebraskapoultry.org>

Lemon Dill Egg Salad

- 6 hard-cooked eggs, chopped
- 2 green onions, finely chopped
- 1 stalk celery, chopped
- 2 strips bacon, crisply cooked and crumbled
- ½ cup red bell pepper, chopped
- ½ teaspoon lemon pepper
- 1 teaspoon dried dill weed
- ¾ cup reduced fat ranch salad dressing



Toss all ingredients together and chill for at least 1 hour. Good with sliced tomatoes and lettuce leaves on a French roll. Serves 4.

Recipe Source: Iowa Egg Council

Have You Tried Kohlrabi?



A kohlrabi plant at left and prepared kohlrabi slices at right.

Alice Henneman
UNL Extension Educator

The National Cancer Institute's 5 to 9 A Day for Better Health program advises eating five to nine servings of fruits and vegetables a day to promote good health. Among the recommendations are to eat cabbage and other cruciferous vegetables several times a week to help reduce the risk of certain cancers, such as colon and rectal cancer.

Cruciferous vegetables — other than cabbage — include broccoli, cauliflower, kohlrabi, bok choy, kale, Swiss chard, Brussels sprouts and beet and mustard greens.

One cruciferous vegetable many people may enjoy, but frequently haven't tried, is kohlrabi. One cup of raw kohlrabi has only 40 calories and is high

in vitamin C.

Kohlrabi looks a little like a creature from outer space. It is crispy, sweet-tasting and delicate in flavor. It is somewhat like a cross between cabbage and turnips.

Kohlrabi may be cut into strips and eaten raw. Or, toss it into salads. Stir-frying is another possibility. Here are a few tips to help you choose and use kohlrabi:

- A small- or medium-sized kohlrabi (under three-inches in diameter) may be most tender.
- Trim the bulb and pare all traces of the fibrous underlayer beneath the skin before eating.
- Remove the leaves and store kohlrabi in a perforated plastic bag in the refrigerator crisper. It may maintain good quality for about one week.

Easter Egg-Handling Tips

Easter eggs can be decorated in so many ways. Be sure and include the children and make it a fun, family event. Eggs can be decorated with food coloring or commercially available egg dyeing kits. There is literally no end to the creative possibilities for individual expression on an eggshell.

Egg Handling and Safety Tips

There are some important safe handling methods to remember this time of year when you're decorating, cooking or hiding those eggs since eggs are handled a great deal more than usual around Easter. Remember to:

- Wash your hands thoroughly with warm soapy water and rinse them before handling the eggs when cooking, cooling, dyeing and hiding them.
- Be sure and inspect the eggs before purchasing them, making sure they are not dirty or cracked. Dangerous bacteria may enter a cracked egg.
- Store eggs in their original cartons in the refrigerator.
- As long as the eggs are NOT out of refrigeration over two hours, they will be safe to eat.
- Do not eat eggs that have been out of refrigeration more than two hours.
- If you are planning to use colored eggs as decorations, (for centerpieces, etc.) where the eggs will be out of refrigeration for many hours or several days, discard them after they have served their decorative purpose.

Easter Egg Hunt

When hiding eggs, consider hiding places carefully. Avoid

areas where the eggs might come into contact with pets, wild animals, birds, reptiles, insects or lawn chemicals. Refrigerate your eggs again after they've been hidden and found. Discard any cracked eggs. Make sure you find all the eggs you've hidden to eliminate the chances of animals eating spoiled eggs.



The Perfect Hard-Cooked Egg

The FRESHER eggs are, the HARDER they are to peel, so you'll want to buy your eggs a week or two in advance. Whether hard- or soft-cooked, this method is incorrectly called boiled eggs. Although the cooking water must come to a boil, eggs should not be boiled because high temperatures make them tough and rubbery. Place eggs in a single layer in a saucepan. Add enough water to come at least one inch above the eggs. Cover and quickly bring just to a boil. Remove pan from heat and let eggs stand 15

minutes. Immediately run cold water over the eggs until cool.

A greenish-gray ring may appear around a hard-cooked egg yolk. It's unsightly, but harmless. The ring is caused by a chemical reaction involving sulfur (from the egg white) and iron (from the egg yolk), which naturally react to form ferrous sulfide at the surface of the yolk. The reaction is usually caused by overcooking, but can also be caused by a high amount of iron in the cooking water.

Eliminate the ring by avoiding overcooking and by cooling the eggs quickly after cooking. Run cold water over the just-cooked eggs or place them in ice water (not standing in water for long period) until they have completely cooled. Then refrigerate the eggs in their shells until you're ready to use them. Hard-cooked eggs in the shell can be refrigerated up to one week.

Egg Salad Week

After you've gathered the eggs at the Easter Egg Hunts, remember the week after Easter is **Egg Salad Week**. It is a week dedicated to the dozens of delicious ways to serve hard-cooked eggs. Try some easy and elegant salads, deviled eggs, or egg salad sandwiches. When left in their shells, hard-cooked eggs will remain edible in the refrigerator for one week.

Source: Adapted from information provided by Mary Torell, Public Information Officer, Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Poultry & Egg Division

Food Bank Needs Volunteers, Donations



Hilary Catron
UNL Extension Assistant

The Food Bank of Lincoln is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to alleviate hunger by collecting and distributing food through a network of over 200 non-profit programs in Southeast Nebraska. Food is donated by the food industry, producers, wholesalers, retailers and grocery chains. Food is inspected for safety by the donor and again by the Food Bank to ensure safety. The Food Bank provides free food to nonprofit agencies and organizations for a minimal warehouse handling fee.

In 2005, the Food Bank of Lincoln served 209 agencies, providing the equivalent of

5,634 meals per day. To learn more, go to <http://www.lincoln-foodbank.org> or call 466-8170.

To Volunteer

The Food Bank has 11 full-time employees and depends on the help of volunteers to aid in all aspects of food distribution. Because of the loss of a food distribution partner, the need for volunteers has increased this year.

Volunteers are asked to volunteer for two-hour time periods. Times are available 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m.

Volunteers can help:

- Pick-up donated food
- Sort, stock and repack food
- Deliver promotional materials
- Prepare mailings
- Telephone follow-up
- Speak to groups
- Work at special events, such as upcoming food drives on May 13 (Postal Food Drive) and Aug. 9 (Dine Out to Help Out)

If you are interested in volunteering, call Cheri at 466-8170, ext 106.

To Give Donations

The most needed items include:

- canned meats
- canned fruits and vegetables
- cereal
- peanut butter
- coffee
- toilet tissue
- diapers

The Food Bank accepts anything which can help with the distribution of food such as:

- shelving
- vehicles
- coolers
- freezers

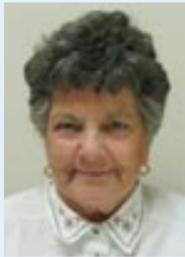
Monetary donations are also accepted. All contributions to the Food Bank are tax deductible.

Donations can be taken directly to the Food Bank at 4840 Doris Bair Circle, Lincoln, Monday through Friday between 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m. The Food Bank also holds several annual food drives with drop-off barrels for donations at various locations.

FAMILY & COMMUNITY EDUCATION (FCE) CLUBS

President's Notes — Alice's Analysis

Alice Doane
FCE Council Chair



I was in Phoenix, in January, for the national wool contest where our Nebraska junior contestant was in the top 13 out of 30. The weather was as nice there as it was here. Makes me wonder what spring is going to be like.

Our next Council meeting will be Monday, March 28, 7 p.m. (Note the change in date from the yearbook.) Although, we have only eight clubs, the 65 members and seven independent members are involved in community projects as a council, as well as individual clubs.

Some of our projects...

- To promote a creative writing contest for fifth graders.

The theme is "My Favorite Nebraska Landmark."

- To promote a poster contest for third graders. The theme is "What Things Can We Recycle?" Essays and posters are due

to the extension office by April 15.

- The Council sponsors a \$300 scholarship to a student majoring in Family and Consumer Science or a health occupation at a college. Call the extension office for more information, due May 1.
- The Council and individual clubs supports and promotes community activities, such as, the Food Bank, the Gathering Place, Teddy Bear Cottage, Cedars Home,

Friendship Home, **earth wellness festival**, etc.

I hope members are working on their heritage skills entries. This year's categories are rug making, spinning/weaving, handcrafted toy or poetry. Bring them to the June Council meeting.

Tuesday, July 11, 6 p.m. will be our annual Sizzling Summer Sampler. Clubs are

asked to make baskets which will be raffled off. The proceeds will go to our scholarship fund. Watch for details.

Mark Monday, Oct. 16 for our Achievement Night. Bring a friend — it was 39 years ago at Achievement Day I met ladies from Waverly and joined their club.

See you March 28, 7 p.m. for the Council meeting.



FCE News & Events

Leader Training Lesson, March 23

The next community and FCE leader training lesson "Care Giving: Challenges and Rewards" will be given by UNL Extension Educator Lorene Bartos on Thursday, March 23, 1 p.m. This lesson will examine how a person can best meet the needs of an elderly parent or disabled person. Utilizing community resources, maintaining the personal health and satisfaction of care givers and determining ways to help with environmental and health needs will be addressed. Relationship dynamics of the person in need and the care giver, in addition to other important issues are discussed to aid in

making preliminary plans.

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

Council Meeting March 27

The FCE Council meeting will be Monday, March 27, 7 p.m. (Note the change back to Monday for an evening meeting.) The program will be making Easter embroidered cards. Supplies will be furnished, cost will be \$3.50 payable at the meeting. All FCE members are invited to attend. Call Pam at 441-7180 by March 20 so supply packets can be prepared. Beltline and Live and Learn Clubs are hosting the meeting.

FCE Scholarship Applications Due May 1

A \$300 scholarship provided by the Lancaster County FCE Council is available for a graduate of a high school in Lancaster County or a permanent resident of Lancaster County majoring in Family and Consumer Science or a health occupation. This is open to full-time students beginning their sophomore, junior or senior year of college in the fall of 2006 or who have completed two quarters of study in a vocational school. Applications are now due May 1 (note new date) in the extension office.

Tease-Proof Your Child

Teasing is part of growing up for both the teaser and the teased. The more parents know about this troubling behavior, the more a parent can help their child endure and survive these incidents.

Teasing can be far more painful than broken bones and some kids never completely recover. Kids who are targets of persistent teasing may have difficulty studying, sleeping and eating, often suffer from severe stomachaches and dread going to school. Left unchecked, teasing can ruin a child's peer relations.

The reasons for teasing usually stems from a lack of the teaser's own self-esteem and lack of confidence. Often it's a way of expressing worries and vulnerabilities. Teasing usually begins in preschool and could carry on into high school. However, in high school, it sometimes becomes cool to tease one particular kid, and the cumula-

tive effect of the teasing can be oppressive and even abusive.

Many different lessons can be taken from being teased. Some lessons may even result in positive changes in behavior. Teasing also may alert parents to ways in which their child is set up to be odd or different from his peers. Most parents hope their kids can learn less-painful lessons about fitting in. For a loving parent, it's difficult to see their child endure teasing.

Parents can help the situation by encouraging their child to talk about it. Most kids are reluctant to talk about a teasing incident because it is embarrassing. Make sure your child is comfortable to reveal what happened. A parent might respond with, "Wow! I can tell you're really upset about this," or "That must have hurt your feelings a lot."

Parents should share their own memories. Kids benefit from hearing other's stories

about being teased as a child. Children will see someone they love and respect survive the teasing and turned out all right.

Children need to be self protective. Kids who wear their feelings on their sleeve can become the victims of ongoing teasing. It's important to teach children not to shrink or back off. Instead, they need to stand up straight and look the teaser right in the eye.

Help children become proactive. Work on a plan to help your child let the teaser know how he or she feels about the teasing.

Responding well to teasing takes practice. Once the parent and child settle on some approaches, rehearse. Kids have to feel confident with the technique before they can go out and use it.

It's vital for children to develop his or her own coping skills. The best thing parents can do is to be there for them.



by Lorene Bartos, UNL Extension Educator

Benefits of Disinfecting Household Surfaces

- Regular cleaning products do a good job of removing soil, but only disinfectants or disinfectant cleaners (also known as antibacterial cleaners) kill the germs that can cause many illnesses.
- Surfaces like kitchen and bathroom counters, door knobs, toilet seats and children's toys may be contaminated with bacteria even when they're not visibly soiled.
- Germs can be spread to other surfaces on dirty cleaning cloths and sponges.
- Products that claim to kill germs must meet efficacy requirements and guidelines established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and must be registered with EPA and carry an EPA registration number on their label.
- In order for surfaces to be effectively disinfected, the instructions on product labels need to be followed carefully.

Poison Prevention

Poison Prevention is important year round. Poison Prevention Week draws attention to these facts:

- U.S. poison control centers handle an average of one poison exposure every 15 seconds.
- More than 90 percent of poison exposures occur in the home.
- Of the more than two million poison exposures, 52.7 percent occurred among children younger than age six.
- The most common poison exposures for children were ingestion of household products such as cosmetics and personal care products, cleaning substances, pain relievers, foreign bodies and plants.
- For adults, the most common poison exposures were pain relievers, sedatives, cleaning substances, antidepressants and bites/stings.

Poison Prevention Tips

Basic poison prevention tips to follow are:

- Keep all chemicals and medicines locked up and out of

sight.

- Use child-resistant packaging properly by closing the container securely after each use or choosing child-resistant blister cards, which do not need to be re-secured.
- When products are in use, never let young children out of your sight, even if you must take them along when answering the phone or doorbell.
- Keep items in original containers.
- Leave the original labels on all products and read the label before using.
- Do not put decorative lamps and candles containing lamp oil where children can reach them. Lamp oil can be very toxic, if ingested by young children.
- Always leave the light on when giving or taking medicine. Check the dosage every time.
- Avoid taking medicine in front of children. Refer to medicine as "medicine," not "candy."
- Clean out the medicine cabinet periodically and safely dispose of unneeded or outdated medicines.

Save this number.
You might save a life.



Call 1-800-222-1222 for emergency treatment advice, for questions about medicines, and for information about poisons in your home, outdoors, or at work. Health care experts are standing by 24 hours a day. And call to request free magnets and stickers that display the poison hotline number.

Acreage Insight Clinic: Horse Nutrition & Management, April 13

Acreage Insights – Rural Living Clinics, presented by University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension, are designed to help acreage owners manage their rural living environment. Horse Nutrition & Management will be held Thursday, April 13, 7–9 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln.



This clinic will cover basic horse nutrition and efficient feeding-management practices. Topics include:

- Nutrient requirements of horses at different ages, activity levels and stages of production
- Determining body condition and how feeding management can change the body condition
- Effectively using different feeds and roughages (such as hay) to meet nutrition requirements

Pre-registration is \$10 per person and must be received three working-days before the program. Late registration is \$15 per person. For more information or a registration form, go to <http://acreage.unl.edu> or call extension at 441-7180.

Oats for Extra Pasture, Hay and Silage

Bruce Anderson

UNL Extension Forage Specialist

Pasture and hay could be sparse again this spring unless we receive lots of rain. Planting oats might be one of the surest ways to have something for your cattle to eat.

With dry subsoils and pastures weakened by several years of drought, growing extra forage this spring might be wise. I think oat forage could be more important than ever this spring.

I like oats for several reasons. First, oats can be grazed earlier than anything else you plant this spring, often ready about a month after planting. It grows during cool spring weather when we are most likely to receive some rain and when soil moisture is used most efficiently to produce forage. So risk is low and seed is relatively cheap. Plus, you can use oats several ways.

If you don't need the

grazing, make hay that's ideal for young livestock by cutting when oats just begin to head out. Or, you can increase yield by about one-third and cut oats in the milk stage for hay that's excellent for stock cows.

If you get lucky and receive enough rain so that neither hay or pasture are needed, you still can cut oats for grain and straw. Or, oats planted under irrigation, can be grazed or cut for hay early enough to permit double cropping to soybeans or a summer annual forage crop or even to corn for silage.

Drill about three bushels per acre by late March and oats will be six to eight inches tall and ready to graze in late April or early May. With good soil moisture and 30 to 60 pounds of nitrogen, oats can provide a couple months of grazing for one or two cows per acre.

You probably need a cheap and reliable temporary feed source this year. Oats may be your best option.

Effect of Increasing Energy Prices on Farming Costs

Tom Dorn
Extension Educator

Farm delivered diesel prices increased from \$0.90 per gallon in the spring of 2003 to \$1.30 per gallon in the spring of 2004 to \$1.65 in the spring of 2005 and now \$2.20 in 2006. What effect has this had on production costs?

To answer this question, you need fuel consumption estimates for farm operations. If you routinely track fuel use for

various tractors and combines while performing farming operations, you probably already have the information you need. Simply multiply your historical fuel consumption by the former price per gallon and by current price and compare.

Most folks don't track fuel consumption by field operation and need a research-based fuel use estimate to compute the effect a rise in price will have on overall production costs. A good reference that lists fuel use estimates is the Minnesota

Farm Machinery Economic Cost Estimates (see footnote for Web site information). Using the fuel consumption estimates presented in the Minnesota publication, the estimate of fuel consumption per acre for field operations is presented in the table. Note: tillage implements with a wider swath width require more horsepower overall but the horsepower hours per acre covered and the fuel consumption per acre remain unchanged.

INCREASED FUEL COST PER ACRE FOR FIELD OPERATIONS.

Field Operation	Estimated Diesel gallon/acre	2003 Cost/Acre @ \$0.90	2004 Cost/Acre @ \$1.30	2005 Cost/Acre @ \$1.65	2006 Cost/Acre @ \$2.20	2003-06 Increased Fuel cost \$/ac
TILLAGE						
Field Cultivator	0.33	\$0.30	\$0.43	\$0.54	\$0.73	\$0.43
Tandem Disk	0.47	\$0.42	\$0.61	\$0.78	\$1.03	\$0.61
Tandem Disk (HD)	0.76	\$0.68	\$0.99	\$1.25	\$1.67	\$0.99
PLANTING EQUIPMENT						
Row Crop Planter	0.34	\$0.31	\$0.44	\$0.56	\$0.75	\$0.44
Minimum Till Planter	0.53	\$0.48	\$0.69	\$0.87	\$1.17	\$0.69
Grain Drill	0.49	\$0.44	\$0.64	\$0.81	\$1.08	\$0.64
Presswheel Drill	0.63	\$0.57	\$0.82	\$1.04	\$1.39	\$0.82
No-till Drill	0.81	\$0.73	\$1.05	\$1.34	\$1.78	\$1.05
CROP MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT						
Cultivator	0.46	\$0.41	\$0.60	\$0.76	\$1.01	\$0.70
Rotary Hoe	0.18	\$0.16	\$0.23	\$0.30	\$0.40	\$0.24
Boom Sprayer	0.11	\$0.10	\$0.14	\$0.18	\$0.24	\$0.14
Anhydrous Applicator	0.55	\$0.50	\$0.72	\$0.91	\$1.21	\$0.61
Stalk Shredder	0.74	\$0.67	\$0.96	\$1.22	\$1.63	\$0.96
HARVESTING EQUIPMENT						
Mower conditioner	0.40	\$0.36	\$0.52	\$0.66	\$0.88	\$0.52
Hay Swather	0.35	\$0.32	\$0.46	\$0.58	\$0.77	\$0.45
Hay Baler PTO (twine)	0.40	\$0.36	\$0.52	\$0.66	\$0.88	\$0.52
Round Baler (1500 lb)	0.77	\$0.69	\$1.00	\$1.27	\$1.69	\$1.00
Combine (various heads)	2.00	\$1.80	\$2.60	\$3.30	\$4.40	\$2.60

Fuel consumption information taken from Minnesota Farm Machinery Economic Cost Estimates for FO-6696, by William Lazarus, University of MN and Roger Selley, University of Nebraska. Links to the 2000, 2001, 2003 and 2004 versions of this publication can be found on the Lancaster County Extension Web site - Machinery Page at <http://lanaster.unl.edu/ag/crops/machine.htm>.

Consider Burning Shelled Corn as an Alternative Heating Fuel

Tom Dorn

UNL Extension Educator

Shelled corn, a relatively new heating fuel, is a heating alternative worth consideration. Like wood stoves, corn stoves can save people a few extra dollars in energy costs as temperatures drop this winter.

Shelled corn is appealing for two reasons. First, dry, shelled corn is abundant. Corn with a moisture content of 15 percent or less ensures a higher heat value per unit weight and moves more freely through the auger than high-moisture corn. Second, the corn does not have to be top quality, but stoves require corn free of fines and pieces of cobs.

Manufacturers make stoves specifically designed to burn dry granular fuels such as shelled corn. In common designs, the fuel source is kept in a storage hopper and fed into



Pennsylvania State University Photo Services

the burning chamber by a small auger. The speed of the auger can be adjusted to regulate the amount of corn burned and heat produced. A small fan blows oxygen into the chamber and allows combustion to take place. Outside air is normally used for this to preserve air inside the room that has already

been heated.

As combustion continues, a heat exchanger removes heat from flue gases. These gases are used to heat room air pushed through the stove by a fan and back out into the room.

Corn burning stoves are sold in a variety of styles and sizes. They can be sold as space heaters, hot-air furnaces or boilers for use in hot water radiator systems. However, the greatest difference is the size of the fuel hopper. Some hoppers hold only enough fuel for one day while others may hold up to a 10-day supply.

Some manufacturers are developing stoves that burn corn at the bottom of the hopper to radiate heat into the surrounding room. Because electricity is not required to stoke the fire and move the heat,

electrical outages will not cause these stoves to shut down.

Although a corn-burning stove has many advantages, it is important to make sure such an investment is worthwhile. Before purchasing a stove for personal use, consider the following:

- How much heat is needed to maintain the desired temperature? Different stoves have different levels of heat output.
- Does the layout of the house allow heat to move from room to room? A corn-burning stove should not be expected to heat an entire house if the floor plan doesn't allow it.
- How often does the fuel hopper need to be filled? Will it be convenient to fill and clean on a regular basis? Upkeep of a stove is vital to maximum heat efficiency.
- Does the stove have exposed surfaces that could become extremely hot? Such conditions expose both children and adults to serious burns.

- Does the stove vent through a chimney or fresh air vent pipe? Make sure the house can accommodate the stove.
- Can any other granular solid fuels be burned in this stove? A change in economy could cause corn to become less attractive as an energy source and force users to find an alternative fuel.
- Will the stove be used as a primary or secondary heat source? Small stoves and fuel hoppers cannot be expected to warm an entire house for long periods of time.
- Where will corn be stored for winter operation? Space is required to keep corn dry when not in use.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

A longer version of this article appears in the UNL Acreage & Small Farm newsletter online at <http://acreage.unl.edu/newsletter/Dec2005.htm>.

Tornado – Will You be Ready?

Whether or not you decide you need a shelter in your house, you can take two important steps to protect yourself and your family during a tornado: prepare an emergency plan and put an emergency supply kit together.

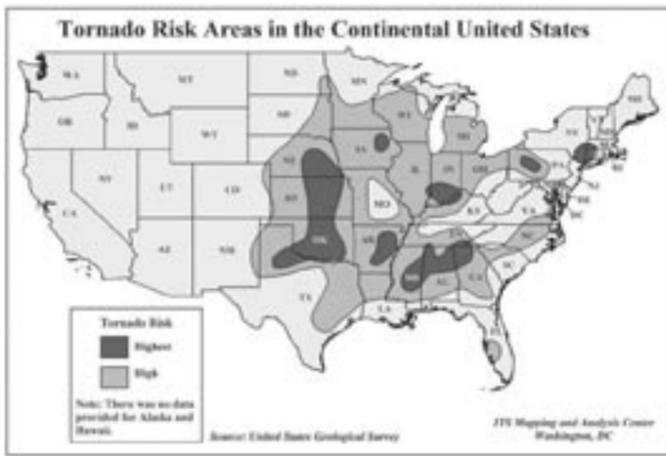
If you decide to build a shelter, your emergency plan should include notifying local emergency personnel and family members or others outside the immediate area you have a shelter. This will allow emergency personnel to quickly free you if the exit from your shelter becomes blocked by debris.

Emergency Supply Kit

You should also prepare an emergency supply kit and either keep it in your shelter or be ready to bring it with you if you need to evacuate your house. Prepare the kit in March so it has fresh supplies ready for the upcoming tornado season.

Some of the items the emergency supply kit should include are:

- an adequate supply of water for each person in your household
- a first-aid kit.
- flashlight (do not bring candles or anything that lights with a flame)
- battery-operated radio
- cellular phone
- extra batteries



- wrench (to turn off household gas and water)
- clothing and bedding
- for babies—formula, diapers, bottles, powdered milk
- for adults—contact lenses and supplies, extra glasses

Shelter Location

There are several possible locations in your house for a shelter. Perhaps the most convenient and safest is below-ground level, in your basement. If your house does not have a basement, you can install an in-ground shelter beneath a concrete slab-on-grade foundation or a concrete garage floor. Basement shelters and in-ground shelters provide the highest level of protection against missiles and falling debris. Another alternative shelter location is an interior room on the first floor of the house.

Researchers, emergency response personnel and people cleaning-up after a tornado have often found an interior room of a house still standing when all other above ground parts of the house have been destroyed. Closets, bathrooms and small storage rooms offer the advantage of having a function other than providing occasional storm protection. Typically, these rooms have only one door and no windows, which makes them well-suited for conversion to a shelter.

The Department of Homeland Security has developed the Ready.gov Web site. You can find emergency planning and preparation guidance for all types of potential hazards. To obtain a copy of, "Preparing Makes Sense. Get Ready Now," go to <http://www.Ready.gov>

Protect Woody Plants Before Planting

However you make your plant buying decisions — whether on the basis of careful research or on impulse at the garden center — plants may arrive before you've had a chance to prepare the planting site.

Maybe you've been looking for a particular plant and bought it when you ran into it, knowing it won't be there if you go back for it later. Or, maybe your mail-order plants arrived before you expected.

Or, perhaps the demands of work or family are such you just can't go right out and plant.

If the plant is in a container, you can simply set it in a protected area and water as needed to keep the root ball moist but not saturated. Wind and sun will cause plants to dry out rapidly, so place plants in a shaded area with protection against the wind.

Bare-root or balled-and-burlapped plants are more

susceptible to drying than plants in containers and need to be checked daily and watered as needed to keep the roots moist. If they have to wait more than three or four days to be planted, group them in a shaded, sheltered spot and cover the roots with compost or some other organic material. Keeping the mulch moist will prevent the roots from drying until you can plant.

Septic Tanks Must Be Pumped By Certified Professionals

By Sharon Skipton
UNL Extension Educator

As of January 1, 2004, it is illegal for anyone to pump septic tanks, including homeowners pumping their own tank, unless they are certified by the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ). Homeowner pumping of septic tanks and land-application of the septage has been a common practice in rural Nebraska areas. The new law makes it illegal without proper certification. Septage that is improperly handled and applied can be a public health hazard due to the pathogens it contains, and can be harmful to the environment if pathogens, organic matter or nutri-

ents enter lakes, streams or groundwater. There are also Federal regulations and recordkeeping requirements for the proper disposal, including land application, of septage.

The Private On-site Wastewater Treatment System Contractors Certification and System Registration Act requires anyone who works on a septic system to apply to NDEQ to become certified to perform the work. The requirement for certification includes pre-installation tasks such as doing a site evaluation, a soil evaluation or a percolation test. It also covers all aspects of working on a system including designing, installing, inspecting, repairing or altering. And, it includes pumping and disposal of the septage.

Hire a certified professional to install, inspect, repair and pump a septic tank system. Over 500 individuals throughout the state are currently certified to engage in work related to on-site systems in Nebraska, including over 200 certified to do septic-tank pumping. NDEQ has posted a list of certified professionals on their Web site at <http://www.deq.state.ne.us/>. Contact NDEQ at 471-2186 for additional information regarding the new state regulations. Sharon Skipton (472-3662) or Jan Hygnstrom (472-9614), both of University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension, can help with questions regarding septic systems for rural homeowners.

GREEN ACRES

Financial Resources and Skills

Don Janssen
UNL Extension Educator

Note: This is part of a series of articles related to acreage enterprises.

When committing to a hobby or for-profit farm, a number of financial resources and skills are necessary for success.

Finances

Farming, like any business, involves financial risk. All crops require you to spend money in advance to establish the crop. What is returned when the crop is harvested is determined by the skills of the farmer, the weather and what happens in the market. Some crops, such as tree fruits, might require several years before any income is realized.

Knowing in advance where you stand financially and your capacity for risk taking will influence the types of choices that best fit your situation. Consider these questions:

- What can you invest in startup and operating costs without putting your family in financial risk?
- How long can you wait for the crop to begin to create some cash flow? How long can you wait for the crop to generate some profit?
- How much can you afford to risk financially to fluctuations in the market? If the market price is high when you plant but low when you harvest, what will happen?
- How much time and money can you allocate toward "selling" your crop? Most farmers will not plant a crop that does not have a reasonably predictable market.
- What financial obligations are you taking on with the farm? Make up cash flow and enterprise budgets and evaluate them against your experience often.

Credit

Many people think there is money waiting to be given to "exciting" new farm ideas. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The farm credit crisis of the early 1980s took some banks totally out of agricultural lending and made the remaining banks much more selective. The federal government sometimes is a lender of last resort, but that role has diminished greatly.

For most small farmers, financing is available only after they can show several years of successful experience. If you are a new farmer, expect to finance your enterprise from other resources for several years. If you have a good track record with

one or more crops, you might be able to get a loan to try a new crop.

When you do decide to seek financing, what are some of the issues you face?

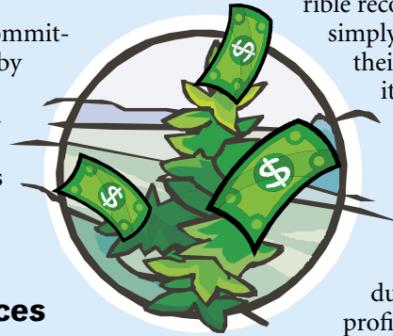
- Many small farmers are terrible record-keepers and simply cannot back their claim to creditworthiness on their production capabilities. Lenders want tangible evidence that you can produce and sell at a profit.

- Experience is the hardest quality to prove and the most difficult one for a lender to assess. A documented three-year progressively successful personal track record for the crop in question is the best information you can bring to the table. Learn to keep meticulous records and analyze them from a business perspective.

- Small farmers represent a large part of the potential credit market in terms of numbers but not in loan volume.
- From a bank's perspective, the earning potential from a large loan is much greater than that from a small one. (The same time and paperwork are needed for both.)
- It probably takes a farm loan of at least \$50,000 to be profitable for a bank if it isn't secured as a personal loan (since a farm loan requires asset appraisal and significant financial analysis). On the other hand, personal loans of any size are hard to get without a strong credit history and a stable non-farm income flow.
- Many small farms lack "bankable" equity. A small farm might be well capitalized with two incomes but have little hard collateral or a loan history.
- If the first mortgage on a property is large relative to a conservative estimate of liquidation value, it might be tough to get operating capital as well.
- Lenders look for a capacity to weather mistakes, market changes, etc.

It is not impossible, by any means, to secure credit, but it takes a lot of planning, no fiction and a solid record. As a practical matter, many small farms expand into new crops on personal credit cards. This method is risky and expensive, but often the only path available.

When you obtain money, make it work productively for you in the business. Analyze every decision. Don't buy a tractor because you like to smell diesel. Any asset (time, money, skills or equipment) needs to be employed for the greatest benefit of the business.



All-America Selection Flowers for 2006

Zinnia 'Zowie! Yellow Flame'

Flower Award Winner



'Zowie! Yellow Flame' is the first semi-tall zinnia with a unique bicolor pattern. Each bloom flames with a scarlet-rose center and yellow petal edges. There is no other zinnia with this fiery design. In addition, this bicolor pattern is consistent from one plant to another. As expected, there are more desirable traits from 'Zowie! Yellow Flame.' Gardeners will be glad to learn 'Zowie! Yellow Flame' is easy to grow from seed or young bedding plants. 'Zowie! Yellow Flame' will prove its long flowering season with dazzling blooms from early summer to final killing frost. During this season-long color, 'Zowie! Yellow Flame' blooms can be cut for bouquets. The University of Maryland conducted cut flower trials and found 'Zowie! Yellow Flame' had a flower vase life of up to two weeks.

Salvia farinacea 'Evolution'

Flower Award Winner

'Evolution' is the first Salvia farinacea with lilac flower



spikes. From a distance, 'Evolution' flowers are several shades lighter than its closest comparison. This new color is desirable for garden use as it widens the color choices for blue flowering annuals. Belonging to the mint family, 'Evolution' is easy to grow. Gardeners can begin with seed or young bedding plants with the confidence 'Evolution' will provide continuous color from early summer to the first hard frost. 'Evolution' is low maintenance. No deadheading is needed for all season color. Relatively disease and pest free, 'Evolution' will perform best in a full-sun location. There are two more advantages 'Evolution' offers gardeners. The plants are quite adaptable and can be grown in patio containers or ceramic pots. The lilac flower spikes can be cut, dried and used as everlasting flowers for bouquets, decorations or craft projects. 'Evolution' deserves a sunny spot in your garden for its non-stop color.

Ornamental Pepper 'Black Pearl'

Flower Award Winner

'Black Pearl' is a handsome plant with black foliage. But the standout quality is 'Black



Pearl' looks better as the summer season progresses. The plants branch, producing more clusters of black, pearl-like, shiny peppers. The plant grows taller and wider developing into a black pyramid shape without pinching, pruning or grooming. 'Black Pearl' is exceptionally heat tolerant and requires minimal water and fertilizer. It is easy to grow from seed. There are no serious insect or disease problems. As the plant matures, the black peppers turn red, adding a new color to the plant. While edible, the peppers are very hot. Use with care! 'Black Pearl' is an effective background plant particularly with silver, white or pastel flowering annuals in the foreground. Never out of bloom, 'Black Pearl' has already been selected as a "most popular" new plant by consumers visiting a trial ground. Its foliage, color and low care will attract many gardeners. It performs exceptionally well in containers and deserves to be featured as the centerpiece.

Dianthus 'Supra Purple'

Bedding Plant Award Winner



'Supra Purple' fills garden space with color. This plant is strong and will flower under hot summer growing conditions. 'Supra Purple' plants remain under a foot in height, but they are vigorous and continue flowering through the growing season. 'Supra Purple' plants adapt to different growing conditions. They are recommended for containers and rock gardens.

They will add continuous bloom to a perennial border. 'Supra Purple' was tested as an annual and won the award based on the first year performance, but similar to other dianthus, it may overwinter and flower next spring. The 'Supra Purple' single flowers have highly fringed petal edges. The color is closer to a rosy-purple than the dark, almost black-purple, seen on some plants. 'Supra Purple' may become one of your favorite new plants.

Nicotiana 'Perfume Deep Purple'

Bedding Plant Award Winner



'Perfume Deep Purple' flowers are shaped like stars. The stars shine at night and this is when 'Perfume Deep Purple' begins its performance. The unique quality is the strong fragrance which scents the air in the evening. The fragrance is not wasted during the day when many people are working. The nightly release of the perfume will encourage gardeners to relax and linger in their gardens. The rich, lavish deep purple flower color is another unique trait, distinct from other nicotianas. 'Perfume Deep Purple' is easily grown from seed, young bedding plants or flowering pot plants. Nicotiana needs a sunny location and is perfectly adaptable to container culture.

Diascia 'Diamonte Coral Rose'

Cool Season Bedding Plant Award Winner

'Diamonte Coral Rose' is an improved variety in a class was relatively unknown five years ago. Diascia is native to South Africa. 'Diamonte Coral Rose' flowers are tubular with backward pointing spurs. The five-lobed blooms have broad lower lobes. 'Diamonte Coral



Rose' plants have a spreading habit and are perfectly designed for any container. Planting them close to the lip will encourage the plant to cascade over the side. Needing a full sun growing location, 'Diamonte Coral Rose' combines well with other cool tolerant annuals, such as snapdragons or dianthus. Exceptional garden performance can be expected from 'Diamonte Coral Rose.'

Viola 'Skippy XL Red-Gold'

Cool Season Bedding Plant Award Winner



'Skippy XL Red-Gold' is the first Viola cornuta to earn the prestigious AAS Award. Three improvements were exhibited in AAS trials. The unique combination of colors is first to be observed. 'Skippy XL Red-Gold' flowers are ruby red with a violet red shading below the golden yellow face containing whiskers. This combination is found only on 'Skippy XL Red-Gold'. The flower shape and size are definitely improved. The round 1.5-inch flower is similar to a pansy and larger than many viola blossoms. The lasting and enduring flower color provided by 'Skippy XL Red-Gold' is another notable trait. The freedom of bloom is attributed to the plant's ability to bud and flower under a wide range of temperatures. It is this adaptability that results in continuous bloom.

Source: www.all-americanselections.org



Garden Guide

THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH

By Mary Jane Frogge, UNL Extension Associate

Consider planting flowers which may be dried for winter arrangements. Some of the best are strawflower, statice, celosia and globe amaranth.

Do not restrict yourself to buying plants in bloom. Petunias that bloom in the pack are often rootbound or overgrown and after planting will actually be set back and cease to bloom for about a month. Plants without blossoms will actually bloom sooner and will grow better as well.

To extend the blooming period of gladiolus, plant early, middle and late-season selections each week until the middle of June. Choose a sunny location and plant the corms 4-6 inches deep and 6-8 inches apart.

Seed bare spots in your fescue or bluegrass lawn.

Scatter annual poppy seeds in flower borders. The fine seeds need not be covered. The plants grow rapidly and provide colorful flowers in early-summer.

In a sunny location with poor soil, plant nasturtiums for a colorful show. They require warm soil to sprout and start blooming in about 50 days. Too much water and fertilizer produces excess leaves and few flowers.

When chrysanthemums show signs of life, dig up and divide large plants. Discard woody portions and replant divisions 12-15 inches apart.

Cut flower stalks back to the ground on daffodils, hyacinths and other spring flowering bulbs as the flowers fade. Do not cut the foliage until it dies naturally. The leaves are necessary to produce strong bulbs capable of reflowering next year.

Do not add organic matter to the soil when planting trees. It does not help the plant become established and it may create conditions that encourage the roots to stay inside the planting hole instead of spreading to surrounding soil. Do dig a large planting hole, but fill it with the original soil removed from it.

The last Friday in April is National Arbor Day. Plant a tree or support an organization which does.

Prune spring blooming shrubs such as forsythia and spirea after they have completed flowering.

Remove sticks, rocks and other debris from your lawn to prevent damaging your lawn mower or injuring yourself when mowing. Check your lawn mower and other lawn-care equipment in preparation for the coming season.

Easter Lily Care

Mary Jane Frogge
UNL Extension Associate

When buying an Easter lily, look for a plant with flowers in various stages of bloom from buds to open or partially opened flowers. Foliage should be dense, rich green in color and extend all the way down to the soil line. This is a good indication of a healthy root system. Look for a well-proportioned plant, one about two times as high as the pot. You also should check the flowers, foliage and buds for

signs of insects and disease.

At home, keep your lily away from drafts and drying heat sources such as appliances or heating ducts. Bright, indirect light is best with daytime temperatures of 65 to 75 degrees F. Water the plant only when the soil feels dry to the touch, but do not over water. To prolong the life of the blossoms, remove the yellow anthers (pollen-bearing pods) found in the center of each flower.

Do not throw away your Easter lily after it is done blooming. You can save the

bulb and plant it outdoors. Easter lilies can be replanted outside after the blooms are gone. Plant outdoors as soon as the ground can be worked. Select a sunny site with well-drained soil. Set the top of the bulb six-inches below the soil surface. Cut off the old flowers, but leave the stem and leaves. Do not cut back the stem until it dies down in the fall, then cut it off at the soil surface. After the soil surface freezes in late fall, mulch the soil and do not remove the mulch until new growth begins in the spring.



2006 RESOURCE CONSERVATION GUIDE

- ✓ Reduce
- ✓ Reuse
- ✓ Recycle

A SPECIAL PULLOUT SECTION OF THE NEBLINE

Prepared by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County and the City of Lincoln Recycling Office



Earth Day Reminds Us to “Think Globally and Act Locally”

Saturday, April 22, is the 36th anniversary of Earth Day. It is a day set aside to reflect about our environment and how we affect the environment. In the 1970s, environmentalists used the slogan “think globally and act locally.” That sentiment is still important today. Each of us in our daily actions impact the environment either positively or negatively. The purpose of this guide is to help you think about our environment and offer tips on how we can become better resource managers.

The U.S. lifestyle accounts for 40 percent of the global consumption of resources! People around the world want a similar lifestyle, but there are simply not enough resources in the world to provide six billion people with the goods and services we enjoy here.

These economic pressures along with hurricanes in the gulf region played a role this past winter when natural gas prices jumped by 50 percent and fuel prices for our automobiles have reached an all-time high. Is it possible for us to maintain our lifestyles while using fewer resources? We must rethink our bad habits.

Our challenge is to “think globally and act locally” to bring about simple changes that allow us to save money and conserve resources. Are there things you can do to save energy? For example, turning your thermostat down a degree or two in the winter and up a degree or two in the summer. Are there things in your daily life you can do to conserve water? For example, reducing your time in the shower or using a low-flow shower head. Are there things you can do to reduce the waste you generate? For example, buying items at the grocery store in bulk rather than individual packaged items.

Please take this insert and put it in a place you can refer to during the year. This Earth Day make a pledge to become a better resource manager.

The Important First Step is “Reduce”

We all know how important it is to recycle. But let’s stop and think about why we recycle. For many people, it’s to reduce waste and save landfill space. By recycling, we don’t have to throw things away, helping us to conserve our precious resources. Recycling is working, but recycling alone cannot solve all of our solid waste problems.

Remember the three “R’s”: reduce, reuse and recycle. Which one comes first? It’s reduce. And it’s first for a reason. **It’s better not to create waste than to have to figure out what to do with it.** As Benjamin Franklin said, “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”

In order to reverse the trend of resource depletion, we need to take the lead, rethink our lifestyle and become less wasteful.

While being more important, waste reduction is perhaps the most difficult of the three R’s. It requires us to change our lifestyles and rethink how our daily actions impact the environment. In 1960, when the globe had half the current population, the average American produced approximately 2.5 pounds of trash per day. Today the average American produces more than 4.5 pounds of trash per day. The American lifestyle is the most resource intensive on the planet. Even with higher recycling rates, we have not been able to keep up with consumption.

Did you know in 2004, City Solid Waste Operations staff estimate roughly 310,500 tons of waste was disposed of by Lincoln and Lancaster County residents? This represents 2,353 pounds of garbage per person for the year. In 2000, we produced 2,314 pounds of garbage per person for the year. The rate of garbage disposal is growing faster than our population growth rate. More waste is generated per person in Lincoln than cities in European countries such as

Germany or in Pacific Rim countries such as Japan.

Remember when we only got one telephone directory? Today we get four from different companies. Help stop the waste. Choose a directory you want to use and contact the other firms and ask them not to deliver a directory to your home or business.

We should not only be concerned about the volume of solid waste we generate each year, but we should also be concerned about the toxicity of our waste. According to USEPA, Americans generate 1.6 million tons of household hazardous waste each year. The average American home has accumulated as much as 100 pounds of household hazardous waste. This household hazardous waste can also cause health problems. Over five million poison exposures occur each year in the U.S. Roughly 92 percent of these poisonings occur in the home and 53 percent involve children under the age of six. **Much of this waste and many of the injuries could be eliminated through the purchase of less toxic alternative materials.**

Shop S.M.A.R.T (Save Money and Reduce Trash)

Waste reduction begins when you make purchasing decisions. Decisions you make while shopping can save you money and reduce the amount of trash that goes to the landfill. A family of four can save approximately \$3,000 a year by buying products in the largest size they can use and by buying reusable items.

Avoid Unnecessary Packaging

More than \$1 of every \$10 we spend on food goes toward packaging. One-third of the trash from households is product packaging. Product packaging has its purpose, such as making products safer and supplying information. But many items are overpackaged.

- Large-quantity items usually have less packaging per unit, lowering your costs. This could include purchases such as laundry soap, shampoo, toilet paper, pet food and cat litter. For food items, select the largest size you can use before spoilage would occur.



Express your Opinion

- Buy cereal in a large box instead of in individual serving size.
- Buy juice in concentrates and use reusable containers instead of single-serving packages.
 - Reject excessively packaged products.
- Contact manufacturers about packaging. If you believe a product has too much packaging, write the manufacturer. Go a step further and compliment manufacturers who use the minimum amount of packaging needed.
- Also, ask store managers to stock products you prefer.

Buy Reusable and Recyclable Products

- Buy reusable products. Disposables such as razors and

paper towels create unnecessary waste unless safety is a factor.

- Buy and use returnable or refillable products. Refillable water containers and shopping bags are two examples of reusable products.
- Buy products made from “post consumer” recycled materials. These materials were used by a consumer before being recycled. Buying products made with recycled materials creates a demand for recyclable materials. This raises their value, making them more appealing for future recycling efforts.
- Buy products which can be recycled such as glass, tin, aluminum, newspaper, cardboard and some plastics.

Rent or Borrow Items You Only Need Temporarily

- Rent products you only need temporarily. Sometimes a borrowed or used item is available and would better fit your needs rather than buying a product.
- Renting reusable dishware and linens for events and gatherings can prevent waste from disposable cups, plates and silverware.
- Renting items can save you money and time, and it can reduce the amount of trash created at an event.



In 2004, roughly 310,500 tons of waste was disposed of by Lincoln and Lancaster County residents — this represents 2,353 pounds of garbage per person for the year.

Energy Saving Tips

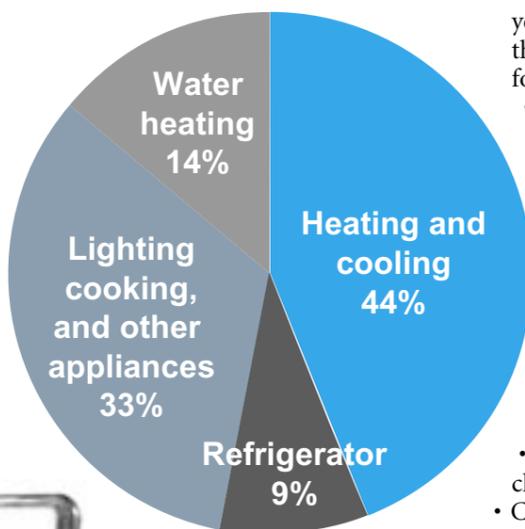
Energy savings start with an energy reduction plan. Considering the average family spends \$1,300 a year on energy bills, finding ways to cut energy is important. Tips for energy conservation include:

Lighting

- Turn off non-essential lights and appliances.
- Install dimer switches on lights.
- Use outdoor lights with photocell units or timers to go off during the day.
- Replace lights in high-use areas with florescent. By replacing 25 percent of your lights; you can save about 50% of your lighting energy.
- Use task lighting instead of brightly lighting an entire room

Heating and Cooling

- Check the insulation in the attic, ceiling, exterior and basement walls, floors and crawl spaces to see if it meets the levels recommended for your area. Suggested R-values include: ceilings below ventilated attics, R-49; cathedral ceiling, R-38 to R-60; walls, R-18 to R-28; floors over unheated crawlspaces, R-25; crawl spaces if dry, ventilation blocked and floor not insulated, R-19; slab edge, R-8, basement interior walls, R-11 to R-19 and basement exterior walls, R-10 to R-15.
- Double-paned windows and proper



How we use energy in our homes (based on national averages)

insulation will reduce your heating and cooling costs.

- Insulate ducts—many are so leaky; more than 35 percent of the conditioned air is lost before it arrives at the target room the duct is trying to reach, wasting more than 20 percent of the energy used to condition the air.
- In the summertime, close window coverings during the day to hold out heat.
- Open window coverings in the winter to let in solar heat.
- Close shades and blinds at night.
- Caulk and weatherstrip windows and doors that leak air.
- Install programmable thermostats—you can save as much as 10 percent a



year on heating and cooling by turning the thermostat back 10 to 15 percent for eight hours.

- In the winter, turn your thermostats down to 68 degrees or below.
- During the heating season, close unoccupied rooms.
- Whole house fans help cool the home by pulling cool air and exhausting warm air through the attic.
- Watch placement of lamps or TV sets near air-conditioning thermostats.
- Keep fireplace dampers closed unless a fire is going.
- Clean and replace furnace filters once a month or as needed.
- Plant trees or shrubs to shade air-conditional units.

- Keep windows on the south side of your house clean to maximize solar gain.
- Use windbreaks to deflect winter winds from your house.

Appliances

- Purchase energy saving appliances.
- Wash full loads of dishes in the dishwasher but don't overload.
- Letting your dishes air dry or using energy save dry—adds up to significant saving.
- Clean the condenser coils



- on your refrigerator once a year.
- Use electric pans or toaster ovens for small meals rather than heating the large stove or oven.
- When doing laundry—adjust water levels in washing machines. Switch water temperature from hot to warm to cut the energy use in half. When washing clothes 80-85 percent of energy used is heating the water.
- Install low-flow faucets and showerheads.
- Lower the thermostat on your water heater—115 degrees Fahrenheit provides comfortable hot water for most uses.
- Build Energy Star Homes which include tighter construction, tight ducts, improved insulation, high performance windows and energy efficient heating and cooling systems.



Who To Contact For More Information

CITY OF LINCOLN

- Recycling Operations (recycling hotline) – 441-8215
 - Solid Waste Operations (landfill disposal information) 441-8102
 - Wastewater Operations (wastewater or sewer assistance) 441-7961
 - Water Production & Distribution (water distribution, quality or conservation steps) – 441-7571
 - Watershed Management (storm drain, erosion control or mud in street) 441-4959
 - Parks and Recreation Department (parks and green space) – 441-7847
- <http://lincoln.ne.gov>

LINCOLN-LANCASTER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

- Hazardous Waste (assistance for households and businesses) 441-8021
 - Air Quality – 441-8040
 - Keep Lincoln and Lancaster County Beautiful – 441-8035
- <http://lincoln.ne.gov>

WASTECAP OF NEBRASKA

- (Business recycling assistance) 436-2383
- <http://wastecapne.org>

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN EXTENSION IN LANCASTER COUNTY

- (Information on recycling, yard waste alternatives, agricultural pesticide container recycling, and more.) 441-7180
- <http://lancaster.unl.edu>

Reduce Hazardous Waste For Home

The best way to protect your home from toxic materials is to keep them out of the home. To keep these materials out of the home, buy less hazardous materials.

When deciding which products to buy, read the labels on the products. If the product label says the product can be cleaned up with water, the product probably is not toxic or hazardous. A good example of this type of product is latex paint. The paint can label will say you can clean brushes and your hands with soap and water. Latex paint is less hazardous and less toxic.

Hazardous Products

Products are considered hazardous if they are:

- **Flammable or Combustible:** They can easily ignite.
- **Explosive or Reactive:** They can detonate or explode through exposure to heat, sudden shock or pressure.
- **Corrosive:** They can cause a chemical reaction that can burn or destroy living tissue or other materials.
- **Toxic:** They are capable of causing injury or death through ingestion, inhalation or skin absorption.

Read the Label

Labels of hazardous products are required by law to include certain warnings. Hazardous product labels often list the principal hazards such as “flammable,” “causes burns to skin and eyes,” or “vapor harmful.” Key words to look for are called “Signal Words.” Signal words indicate the level of toxicity of the

product. Purchase the products with the safest or lowest level of hazard.

- **No Word:** if the labels contain no signal word or special warnings, or if it explains you can use water or soap in clean up, the product is safe to use.
- **Caution:** the product is slightly toxic. This product with this signal word on the label is not as safe as the first product but is safer to use than products with any other signal word on the label.
- **Warning:** the product is moderately toxic. This product is more hazardous than one with “caution” on the label.
- **Danger:** The product is highly toxic, corrosive or extremely flammable.
- **Poison:** The product is highly toxic.

Minimize Your Risk

Make sure the product you want to buy poses the lowest level of risk by reading and understanding the label. Purchase the product with the lowest

level signal word. If the label does not contain words like “Flammable,” “Corrosive,” “Explosive,” “Reactive,” “Poison” “Toxic,” or “Hazardous,” the product may be safe to use.

The words “natural” or “organic” do not indicate a safe product. A product labeled “all natural ingredients” can still contain hazardous materials. If you feel uncomfortable with the ingredients or the instructions for use, do not purchase the product.

Accidental ingestion of certain products or breathing fumes can cause injury or death. Keep away from small children and pets. If you can't keep children or pets away from it, do not buy it. Many labels will specifically say to keep out of the reach of children. Many lawn products warn to keep children and pets off the lawn for a period of time after applying product.

Businesses Toxics Reduction

The best way for businesses to avoid the health risks and costs of hazardous materials is to reduce or eliminate the materials.

The first step is to reduce the amount of hazardous materials businesses own or use. Some people will read the directions on a product and use twice as much as is recommended. They believe more is better or will work faster. The amount not needed to do the job is waste. A smart choice is to buy material just before it is needed. Don't buy large quantities and store them on site, doing so invites dangerous accidents. Buying what is needed when it is needed, reduces the risk of accidents.

The second step is to reduce the hazard. Buy materials least hazardous or toxic possible to do the job. Many manufacturers now make citrus-based or water-based solvents. Buy latex and water-based paints. Avoid products that have the words “warning,” “danger” or “poison” on the label. If a product requires users to have special training or protective equipment, that is a potentially hazardous product.

Solvent substitution information is available on several Web sites:

- Enviro\$en\$e at <http://es.epa.gov>
- The Solvent Alternative Guide (SAGE) at <http://clean.rti.org>
- The Western Regional Pollution Prevention Network (WRPPN) at <http://www.wrppn.org/irta>

When deciding which products to buy, read the labels on the products.

Take the “Waste” Out of Yard Waste

Routine lawn and yard maintenance is usually on every homeowner’s to-do list. Keeping the lawn neat and green can become a neighborhood goal, with everyone competing for the title of “best-kept lawn.” Reducing resources and minimizing waste in a landscape should be another worthy goal. Reducing yard “waste” is the route more people are taking, while finding more satisfaction in routine yard care at the same time. Here’s how you can reduce yard “waste” and transform it into yard “wealth.”

Use Organic Mulches—

Recycle leaves, wood chips, grass clippings and other yard trimmings as mulch to retain soil moisture, reduce weed growth, moderate daily and seasonal soil temperatures and reduce soil erosion.

Plant Ground Covers—

Reduce impractical lawn areas (steep slopes, shady areas, low spots) and keep tree roots moist and cool. Less lawn means fewer grass clippings. It also can reduce the amount of pesticide and fertilizer use.

Direct Down Spouts into Planting Beds or Lawns—

Reduce

runoff from down spouts directed onto paved surfaces which can contribute pollutants to lakes and streams. Redirect this precious natural resource to your yard rather than the pavement.

Try Natural Landscaping—

Naturalize at least a portion of your yard to reduce maintenance, grass clippings, pesticide and fertilizer usage. Enjoy the attractive alternatives as your property contributes to a richer ecosystem.

Landscape the Border of Your Yard—Perimeter plantings provide a convenient place to recycle tree trimmings, leaves and garden debris. Decomposition is speeded up by cutting twigs and other materials into smaller pieces.

Select Plants for Proper Size and Vigor—Reduce trimmings by selecting dwarf varieties and always plan for the natural height of trees and shrubs before planting. Pest-resistant varieties reduce both chemical usage and the dead wood from diseased plants. Match plants to proper climate, soil, light conditions and topography.

Manage Lawn Areas

Wisely—Recycle nutrients by leaving clippings on the lawn where they belong. If you must collect them, reuse the grass clippings as mulch or compost. Proper care keeps lawns growing vigorously,

which greatly reduces disease and pesticide use.

Fertilize Conservatively and Carefully—Test the soil and reduce fertilizer use to avoid excessive plant growth which contributes to potential yard waste. Reuse fertilizer spilled on paved surfaces which will otherwise pollute lakes and streams via runoff water.

Use Leaves as a Resource—Small amounts of leaves, when shredded with a lawn mower, can be recycled as an organic nutrient source if left on the lawn. This reduces the frequency of raking. Leaves can be reused to mulch perimeter plantings or as an ingredient in compost.

Leave Space in Flower Beds or Gardens to Trench Compost—Recycle nutrients back into the soil by digging a small pit or trench to bury and compost pulled weeds and garden or kitchen wastes.

Create a Compost Pile or Bin—For yard trimmings with no other use, recycle. Using a recycling bin speeds up the natural process of decomposition.

Plan and Evaluate Your Yard—Reconsidering your routines may require a little time and discipline—as opposed to proceeding as usual. The key is to lessen the waste problem in some way by first rethinking, then reduce, reuse and recycle.

Water Conservation Tips

Indoors

- Fix leaky faucets and plumbing joints.
- Check toilet for leaks.
- Shorten your showers.
- Install water-saving shower heads or flow restrictors.
- Run only full loads in the washing machine and dishwasher.
- Keep a bottle of drinking water in the refrigerator.
- Use the garbage disposal less and the garbage more (even better — compost!).
- Insulate hot water pipes for more immediate hot water at the faucet.
- Consider installing an instant water heater on your kitchen sink.



Outdoors

- Water your lawn only as needed. Stop watering your lawn when runoff occurs.
- Don’t water the lawn on windy days.
- Don’t water the sidewalks, driveway or gutter.
- When washing the car, use soap and water from a bucket. Use a hose with a shut-off nozzle for the final rinse.
- Use a broom instead of a hose to clean driveways and sidewalks.
- Choose drought tolerant or drought resistant shrubs and groundcovers for the landscape.
- Group plants according to their watering needs.
- Use a rain gauge to determine how much irrigation your yard has received.

Transform yard “waste” into yard “wealth”!

Lincoln’s Compost, LinGro, Recycles Grass and Leaves

What is LinGro?

LinGro Compost is produced primarily from grass clippings, leaves and wood chips. These materials are blended by the Public Works and Utilities Department, Solid Waste Operations. Constant monitoring is performed on all materials to ensure a consistent and high-quality product.

LinGro Compost is a humus-like material high in organic matter. It is screened with a 1/2 inch screen to ensure uniform texture. It generally has the following characteristics:

- Total Nitrogen (N): 2.6-3.2 percent
- Phosphorus (P): 0.3 percent
- Potassium (K): 1.2-2.0 percent
- pH: 7.2-8.0

Benefits of Using LinGro as a Soil Amendment

The clay soils that exist in Lincoln and Lancaster County can benefit from incorporating LinGro Compost. The main advantage to LinGro Compost is its ability to improve the soil structure. The clay soils found in Lincoln and Lancaster County are improved in the following ways.

- Increased water holding capacity of the soil.
- Addition of beneficial soil micro organisms.
- Decreased bulk density of the soils.
- Increased soil porosity.

Plants will benefit from the use of LinGro Compost when it is properly incorporated into the soil. Among the benefits are:

- Increased root and leaf development.
- Increased flower, fruit or vegetable production.
- Increased health and vigor enabling the plant to better resist attacks of diseases and insects.

Turf also benefits from the use of LinGro Compost properly incorporated



Lincoln’s 16-acre yard waste compost facility receives about 20,000 tons of grass, leaves and brush each year.

into the soil. In addition to the benefits listed above, turf becomes denser and have a darker green color when compost is used. Homeowners can also benefit through water conservation because less water runs off the yard and instead is absorbed into the root zone of the turf. Building soil health—the structure,

organic content and diverse life of the soil—is the key to growing healthy, vigorous grass that out-competes most weeds, resists disease, stands up to drought and is easy to care for.

How to Obtain LinGro Compost

Each spring the City of Lincoln sets aside a certain quantity of LinGro Compost for distribution to the public at no cost. The material is available at the 48th Street Transfer Station, 5101 North 48th Street. The material is available on a first-come, first-served basis and individuals must self-load the compost.

Individuals and businesses may order a minimum of 10-cubic yards of LinGro Compost directly from the



City of Lincoln’s compost facility. There is a \$6 per cubic yard charge for the compost plus a delivery fee of \$50 per dump truck load. Delivery will be made anywhere in Lancaster County. Individuals may

also arrange their own transportation of the material. Individuals will need to pre-pay for the material and delivery. Persons can place an order by calling any of the following:

- Bluff Road Landfill and Compost Facility: 441-8102
- Compost Operations Supervisor: 441-8336
- Recycling Coordinator: 441-7043

Woodchips Also Available

Woodchips can also be obtained directly through the City of Lincoln’s compost facility. There is a \$5 per cubic yard charge for the woodchips plus delivery. For more information, call 441-8102.

LinGro Compost Recommended Application Rates

LinGro Compost is the natural choice for improving the quality of your soil and turf. LinGro Compost should be incorporated into the root zone of plants and turf to be most effective. For every inch of compost applied, till into six inches of soil. In heavy clay soils, it is recommended the soil be tilled first, then apply compost followed by another rototilling. This ensures the compost is thoroughly dispersed in the root zone.

Established Lawns—Aerate the lawn and broadcast spread LinGro Compost approximately 1/8 to 1/4 inch deep and water thoroughly. Some professionals use a 60/40 mix of compost and sand or topsoil, which is heavier than pure compost and settles into aeration holes or thatch layers more readily. Repeat spring and fall

on cool season lawns. One cubic yard of LinGro Compost will cover 1,296 square foot area.

New Lawns (prior to seeding or sodding)—Apply one-inch of LinGro Compost over the area to be seeded or sodded. Additional compost may be applied. For every inch of compost, till 4 to 6 inches into the soil. One cubic yard of LinGro Compost will cover a 325 square foot area. Many times home builders will dig out a basement for the home and apply the soil on the homeowners lot. For heavy clay soils it is recommended the clay soils be rototilled prior to application of the compost.

Flower and Vegetable Gardens—In spring or fall, apply a one to two inch layer of LinGro Compost over the entire garden area and till into

6 to 12 inches of soil. For established perennial flower beds, apply one inch layer of LinGro Compost and mix lightly with existing soil. When thinning perennials mix compost thoroughly with soil in planting area.

Trees and Shrubs—Apply 1 to 2 inch layer of LinGro Compost on the surface of the ground in a radius not to exceed the drip line of the plant. For best results aerate prior to application.

House Plant Potting Mix—LinGro compost generally has an alkaline pH. It may be necessary to add aluminum sulfate or some other form of water soluble acidifier in potting mixes for pH sensitive plants. Mix thoroughly (amounts listed by volume): two parts LinGro Compost; three parts top soil; two parts peat moss; one part sand or vermiculite.

Recycling is Easy and Conserves Resources

One of the easiest things for people to do to help conserve resources is to recycle. If you currently don't recycle, please start. If you recycle aluminum cans or newspapers, you can recycle other items such as glass bottles, #1 or #2 plastic containers, cardboard or junk mail. If you recycle at home, consider starting a recycling program at work. If you recycle at work, consider starting to recycle at home.

In fiscal year (FY) 2004-05 a total of 6,550 tons of recyclables were collected at the recycling drop-off sites in Lincoln and Lancaster County. This represents an 8.4 percent increase over the 6,042 tons of material collected in FY 2001-02. The amount of material recycled last fiscal year represents an all-time high for the amount of recyclables collected through the drop-off program.

Not only does recycling conserve limited resources, it also saves valuable landfill space. Since 1992, government sponsored recycling programs have added close to 4 years to the life of the landfill. If we stopped recycling and let everything be buried in the landfill we would close the landfill seven years sooner, in 2023 instead of the current projection of 2030.

In the first two years of the decade we saw a 5 percent decline in the amount of material recycled at the drop-off sites. **We are very pleased we have reversed that trend and more material is being recycled.** We'd like to continue this increase, and in order to accomplish it, we need your help. Make a pledge and increase the amount of material you recycle and buy recycled-content products.

For more information on recycling, please check our Web site at www.lincoln.ne.gov. Type in the key-word recycle. You can also contact the recycling office at 441-8215.

Recycling of aluminum cans saves 95% of the energy required to make the same amount of aluminum from its virgin source. One ton of aluminum recycled saves the energy equivalent of 40 barrels of oil.

do the right thing... do the recycle thing!

It's Easy to Recycle in Your Neighborhood!

There are 5 Newspaper Only and 18 Multi-Material Recycling Drop-Off Centers located in Lincoln and 5 Multi-Material Sites in the County.

Here's what materials are acceptable at the Multi-Material Recycling Sites.



	YES	NO
Newspapers 	Inserts OK Put newspapers in paper bag	No other paper
Cardboard Boxes 	Flatten cardboard paperboard (i.e. cereal boxes) OK All boxes must be flattened and placed inside recycling containers	No packing material No dirty boxes No waxed cardboard
Cans 	All food and beverage cans Rinse, clean and flatten aluminum and tin cans and place in separate recycling compartments	No aluminum foil No aluminum pie pans No metal cookware No scrap metal
Glass Bottles and Jars 	All food and beverage glass Green, brown and clear glass OK Labels OK Rinse clean. Take off lids. Separate by color and place in separate recycling compartments.	No drinking glasses No window glass No dishes No light bulbs No ceramics No lids
Plastic #1 and #2 Containers 	All #1 and #2 plastic bottles and containers Labels OK Rinse clean. Take off lids. Place in separate recycling compartments.	No motor oil containers No plastic toys No other plastic bottles or containers
Residential Mixed Papers 	Mail, magazines, office and school paper and telephone directories Put clean paper together in a paper bag. Keep newspapers separate.	No tissue paper No milk cartons or juice boxes No paper plates No newspaper



Contact 441-8215 for more information on proper separation of recyclables.

"for our families for our future"

Designed by Citizen Information Center 01/2006

RECYCLING

In Lincoln

Drop-Off Site Locations

North

- 1 N.W. Roundhouse Dr. & W. "P" Streets
- 2 UNL Food Stores Warehouse, 122 N. 17th Street
- 3 University Place, 47th & St. Paul Streets
- 4 Gates of Praise Church, 70th & Vine Streets
- 5 Russ's Market, 63rd & Platte Avenue
- 6 Centro Plaza, 48th & "R" Streets
- 7 Southeast Community College, 88th & "O" Streets
- 8 48th Street Transfer, 5101 N. 48th Street
limited hours of operation
- 9 Air Park Recreation Center, 3710 N.W. 46th Street
- 10 Highlands Fire Station 5435 N.W. 1st Street

South

- 11 Leon's Food Mart, 32nd & South Streets
- 12 Union College athletic field parking lot, 53rd & Calvert
- 13 East High School Seacrest Field parking lot, 70th & "A" Streets
- 14 Hamilton College parking lot, 19th & "L" Streets
- 15 Trabert Hall, 12th & South Streets
- 16 Pepsi Cola Distribution Facility 1901 Windhoek Drive
- 17 Russ's Market, 1550 S. Coddington
limited hours of operation
- 18 Russ's Market, 33rd & Highway 2

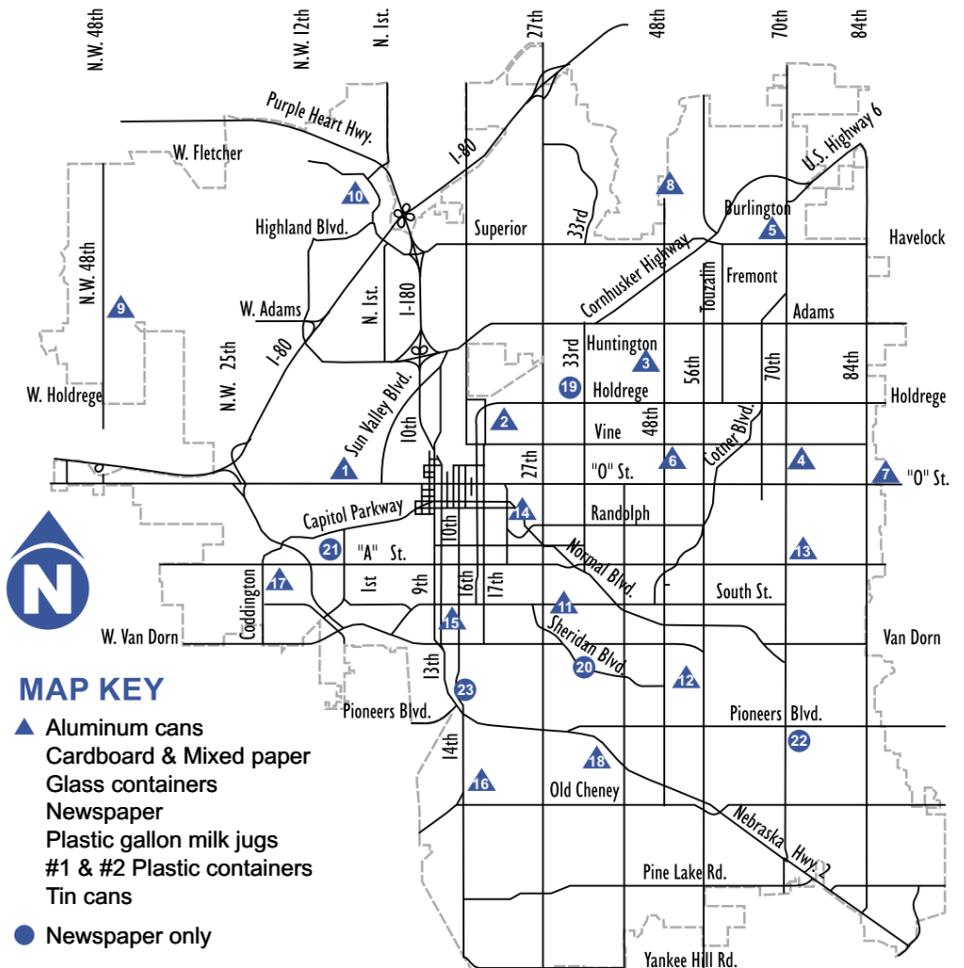
NEWSPAPER ONLY Drop-Off Sites

North

- 19 UNL East Campus Parking Lot Behind Fire Station No. 2 33rd & Holdrege Streets

South

- 20 St. John XXIII Center 3700 Sheridan Boulevard
- 21 Willard Community Center Folsom & West "B" Streets
- 22 All Saints Lutheran Church 8251 Pioneers Boulevard
- 23 Indian Village 13th & High Streets



It is against the law to deposit any material other than what is accepted.

Call 441-6500 if you see persons depositing material illegally.

Additional Communities

- Bennet Refuse Transfer Station
- Davey Refuse Transfer Station
- Firth Community Center
- Hickman City Park
- Panama Refuse Transfer Station
- Waverly, Waverly Plaza

Private Curbside Recycling

The following recyclers provide the convenience of curbside recycling for a monthly fee:

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Midwest Refuse | 475-0244 |
| Recycling Enterprises | 421-6655 |
| Star City Recycling | 890-4320 |

The following refuse handlers recycle in their customer area:

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Kurtzer Bros. Refuse | 423-6191 |
| Schaaf Refuse Service | 423-2705 |
| Weber & Sons | 423-8204 |

Clover Mites Invading Local Homes Already

Barb Ogg
UNL Extension Educator

With the recent warm sunny days, people are already reporting clover mite invasions. Watch for this tiny pest crawling in windows and doors, especially where the sun warms the house.

The clover mite is an eight-legged relative of spiders and ticks. It is slightly smaller than a pin head and has a reddish-brown body. They have an unusually long pair of front legs, which distinguishes them from other mites (see photo). They appear as brick-red specks crawling around windows, drapes, curtains and furniture.

Clover mites do no damage or injure humans. They are so tiny they come through tiny cracks accidentally. They cannot survive inside. Outdoors, they feed on turfgrass and other plants, but do not seem to cause any damage.

Management Strategies

Outdoors—Effective control means preventing entry into buildings in the spring or the fall. The best way



Clover mite adult and eggs (highly magnified view).

Jim Kellisch, UNL Department of Entomology

to prevent entry is to remove grasses and weeds in a three-foot strip around foundations, although mites may cross mulch and pea gravel to enter the home anyway.

A chemical barrier outside the home may help reduce or prevent infestations inside the home. Treat five to ten feet out from the base of the foundation and a few feet up on the walls. Successful chemical control requires a very thorough treatment and may need to be repeated because many products on the market registered for clover mite control

are short-lived. Treat when daytime temperatures will be at least 60 degrees F because chemical effectiveness may be reduced with cooler temperatures.

Indoors—Clover mites inside are best controlled with a vacuum cleaner. Avoid crushing or smearing the mites, especially on fabrics, because they may leave a red stain. It is not recommended to use chemicals indoors for clover mites. A vacuum cleaner works just as well and eliminates pesticide exposure.

Whitney Cranshaw, Colorado State University entomologist, suggests putting a fine layer of dust around windows, in cracks and other areas where clover mites may enter. Try using talc-containing baby powder, diatomaceous earth and even baking soda. The mites coated with the fine dust will die in the barrier.

Clover mites are so tiny they stick easily to almost any type of sticky tape. Place double-sided masking tape on window sills or other areas where mites are entering to catch the tiny mites as they cross the tape. When the tape becomes filled with mite bodies, simply peel it up, throw it away and replace, if needed.

Swarming Ants are Reproductives Ready to Start New Colonies

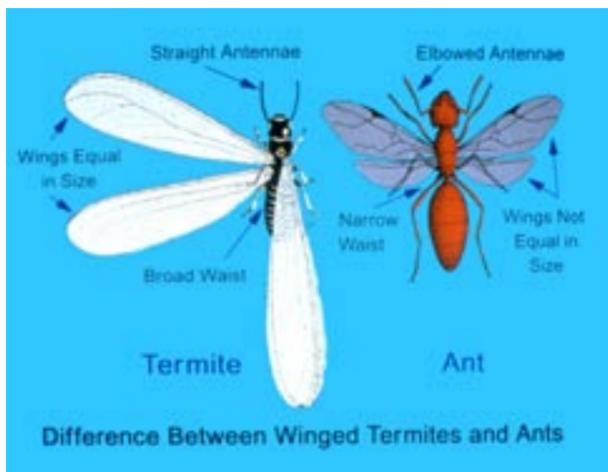
Barb Ogg
UNL Extension Educator

Many people think all ants are wingless, but ant colonies eventually produce ants with wings. These are the reproductives—the queens and kings—that fly away to start new colonies.

Queens and kings do not keep their wings very long. After they have found a new colony location, they shed their wings.

Swarming occurs when colonies are mature and there is plenty of food so the colony can afford to put extra resources into swarmers. Most of the colony stays in the original location—only the swarmers leave.

Some ant species even swarm in the wintertime—usually when the ant colony is under the slab of a house or in



Winged ants differ from termites in type of antenna, shape of body and length of wings.

a warm location. In Nebraska, most ant colonies swarm during the spring and summer months.

Ant swarming is a natural phenomenon that occurs regularly, but most

people don't notice, unless it occurs under the basement slab or in the walls of the house. When this happens, it might be a good idea to have the ant species identified to make sure it isn't an ant species which damages wood, like carpenter ants.

Vacuuming swarmers is safer than using insecticides and just as effective. If they swarm inside the house, they die quickly, even if you don't do anything.

Sometimes people think swarming termites look like swarming ants. See figure at left to see how they are different.

Bring specimens to the UNL Extension in Lancaster County, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A, for identification, between 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays.

Springtime Bird Frequently Asked Questions

Barb Ogg
UNL Extension Educator

Q. Why are woodpeckers beating on my house?

A. In the spring, male woodpeckers mark their territory with a rhythmic pecking sequence, known as *drumming*. In addition to establishing territories, drumming also attracts female woodpeckers. Drumming is predominantly a springtime activity that will stop once nesting behaviors begin. Woodpeckers do not hurt themselves with this activity. Drumming seldom results in damage to wood or metal surfaces other than possible paint removal.

Woodpeckers can do more damage to wood-sided homes when they are feeding for insects or excavating nesting cavities. Exclusion methods are best because they are consistently effective.

Place lightweight, plastic bird-type netting or use metal sheathing over damaged areas.

Q. Grackles are putting droppings in my birdbath (swimming pool). Why?

A. After their young hatch, grackles become very tidy in order to prevent predators from finding the nest. Fecal matter from the young birds is covered with a sac-like membrane which enables the adults to dispose of the waste easily away from the nest. Birdbaths and swimming pools are an attractive disposal site because the water reduces the smell from the fecal matter.

Q. Blue jays and swallows have been attacking our cat and have even swooped down on us! Why are they doing this? How can we protect ourselves from these dive-

bombing birds?

A. Birds are very territorial when they have a nest of babies. When a cat, dog or human comes anywhere close to their nest, they see a predator that is a threat to their babies. This dive-bombing behavior is an effective scare tactic meant to drive predators away from their nest of young. Until the baby birds are on their own, you may want to stay away from the nest site. This may mean using other entrances around your house or areas in your yard. Dive-bombing is very effective, although the birds are unlikely to hurt you. Wearing a hat or carrying an open umbrella over your head may make you feel safer.

Q. Swallows have been trying to build a mud nest above our door. How do we discourage them?

A. Barn swallows tend to nest as single pairs and build a nest beneath an

Spring Turkey Hunting Workshop, March 23

A Spring Turkey Hunting workshop will be held Thursday, March 23, 6:30–9:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln. If you are interested in hunting turkeys in the spring season, this is a workshop you can't miss.

Experts will share information about turkey biology, behavior and hunting tips that will make you more successful. Topics covered will include turkey calls, camouflage, using ground blinds, choosing the best shot load, field dressing, guns, safety and state regulations.

This free seminar is offered by Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, but seating will be limited, so **reservations are required**. Call 471-5558.

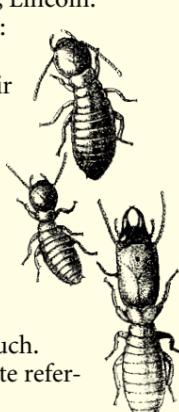
Everything Homeowners Need to Know About Termite Control Workshop, May 18

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension will present a workshop, Everything Homeowners Need to Know About Termite Control, on Thursday, May 18, 6:30–9:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln.

Attendees will:

- Learn to identify termites and their damage.
- Learn unbiased information about effective treatments, based on research results.
- Learn why treatments cost so much.
- Receive up-to-date reference materials.
- Be informed consumers and make better decisions.

Cost is \$25 and includes reference materials. Call 441-7180 for more information.



overhang. A covered porch is ideal. Four basic conditions are needed by nesting cliff and barn swallows:

- a fresh water source for drinking.
- an open habitat for foraging.
- a supply of mud of the proper consistency for nest building.
- a suitable surface for nest attachment beneath an overhang or ledge.

Assuming that nothing can be done about these first three conditions needed to nest, the best control tactic is altering the suitability of the attachment site. There are several ways this can be done (see figures 1 and 2 on page 11).

1) Removal of a rough surface of a wall and/or overhang makes a site less attractive for swallows. Wood, stucco, masonry and concrete surfaces are favorable surfaces for nest attachment. Nests are rarely attached to metal. Cover attachment surfaces with slick surfaces

continued on page 11



April



Kitt Saathoff

Lancaster County 4-H is proud to announce Kitt Saathoff as winner of April's "Heart of 4-H Award" in recognition of outstanding volunteer service.

Kitt has been a 4-H volunteer for 6 years and is organizational leader of two 4-H clubs, The American Gals and Crazy Clovers. Members in both clubs complete a wide variety of projects, including clothing, food, celebrate art and photography. She has also been an instructor at Clover College for several years.

"I have enjoyed being a leader and watching my daughters and their friends having fun doing the things I remember enjoying as a 4-H'er," says Kitt. "I enjoy spending time with kids. 4-H provides activities for my daughters and I to enjoy together. Most of the activities I enjoy as an adult, I learned from 4-H."

A Lancaster County 4-H alumnus, Kitt was a 4-H Ambassador and camp counselor. Her mother, Linda Dempsey, was leader of Kitt's club. Linda still volunteers for 4-H, assisting with Kitt's 4-H clubs and Clover College classes.

Kitt lives in Lincoln with her husband Steve and their daughters Elle and Annaliese. She is owner of A Page In Time scrapbooking store. Kitt also volunteers at their church and their daughters' schools.

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

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



Speech & PSA Contest

The 4-H Speech and Public Service Announcement (PSA) contests are open to all 4-H members — need not be enrolled in a specific project. Register by Friday, April 7 by calling extension at 441-7180. For more information, contact Deanna Karmazin.

PSA Contest, April 20

The PSA contest will be held at the Lancaster Extension Education Center on Thursday, April 20 at 6:30 p.m. PSA's must be 60 seconds; topic is 4-H. Emphasis is on the presentation of a PSA for radio. Contestants must give their PSA in person, no prerecorded tapes allowed. After the contest, youth qualifying for districts will record their PSA's on tape with the help of extension staff. Tips for writing successful PSA's can also be found online at <http://4h.unl.edu/programs/communication/psa.htm>.

Speech Contest, April 23

This year's Speech Contest will be held at the Lancaster Extension Education Center on Sunday, April 23 at 1 p.m. Please note the contest location has changed from past years. Topics can be anything, but a 4-H theme should be maintained. Length depends on division:

- Novice (ages 8–9): 2 min. or less
- Junior (ages 10–11): 2–3 min.
- Intermediate (ages 12–13): 3–5 min.
- Senior (ages 14–19): 5–8 min.

More information is online at <http://4h.unl.edu/programs/communication/speech.htm> and click on "As You Speak, 4-H Public Speaking Guidelines." When registering please know what age division you are in and the title of your speech.



4-H Partners with Lincoln City Libraries



The Lancaster County 4-H program will be working with the Lincoln City Libraries, this summer, to spread the word about 4-H and to promote reading.

Volunteer for Summer Reading Program

Middle-school-age 4-H'ers are invited to spend time at a library as a Summer Reading Program volunteer, helping other children participate in summer reading by signing them up, explaining the program and handing out stickers. 4-H'ers are encouraged to wear their 4-H T-shirts and answer questions about the 4-H program. Scheduling is flexible and interested individuals should contact his or her branch library directly, starting April 1. Each branch will have a limited number of volunteer slots for 4-H'ers, so call early.

4-H Workshops: Crafty Critters

Another way 4-H'ers and/or 4-H clubs can volunteer at the Lincoln City Libraries is by helping with one of the "Crafty Critters" workshops. These workshops will be held at Bennett Martin Library, Monday, July 10 at 2:30 p.m. and at Arnold Heights Branch Library on Wednesday, July 12, 2:30 p.m. Call Tracy, 441-7180 if you are interested in this opportunity.

Reserve Room Space

Did you know your club can reserve community room space for club meetings and activities? Bennett Martin Public Library, Anderson Branch Library, Gere Branch Library, Eiseley Branch Library and Walt Branch Library have community rooms available. To reserve a community room, call Arlene at 441-8503 or go to <http://www.lcl.lib.ne.us> and click on Library Information.

"4-H Discovery Bags" at Bennett Martin Public Library

Anyone with a Lincoln City Library card may check out one of the following "4-H Discovery Bags" from the Bennett Martin Public Library. The bags are a compilation of 4-H project books, library books and other resources.

- The "4-H Discovery Bag for Arts & Crafts" is a one-stop solution for your "Celebrate Art" and "Art in Your Future" project needs. Includes ideas for easy projects that only look complicated.
- The "4-H Discovery Bag for Wildlife" makes wildlife and conservation projects fun and easy. The bag includes information on birds, wildlife and fish.

4-H'ERS IN THE NEWS

4-H member Ian Badeer, won the State American Legion Oratorical Contest held in Grand Island in January. Ian received a \$1000 scholarship award from the American Legion and he will represent the State of Nebraska at the National Oratorical Contest in Indianapolis, Indiana on April 22-23. Ian Badeer was also the Nebraska State Oratorical Champion in 2005.

4-H/FFA COUNTY FAIR NEWS

2006 LANCASTER COUNTY FAIR AUGUST 2-6

A Slice of the Good Life

LANCASTER EVENT CENTER • LINCOLN

New 4-H Projects for 2006

There are several new static exhibit projects and classes. See the Fair Book for detailed information about each of the following:

Quilt Quest — The Quilt Quest project now is state fair eligible. New classes have been added for this quilting project.

Model Vehicles — This county-only project is for youth interested in model vehicles such as cars, trains, boats and planes. There are four classes including scratch built, assembled kit, diorama and restoration.

Fast Foods — Exhibits for this project include coffee cake, microwaved product, cost comparison, food technology, Fast Foods menu planning and Fast Foods baked product.

Youth in Motion — New this year and a companion piece to the Fast Foods curriculum, exhibits include Youth in Motion poster, scrapbook or photo display, activity bag, Youth in Motion healthy snake recipe file, exercise interview and healthy snack.



Fair Books Have Been Mailed Out, Available Online

Fair Books have been mailed to all 4-H families and previous Open Class exhibitors. Extension office has Fair Books and fair forms. The 4-H/FFA portions of the Fair Book and many forms are also online at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/Fair>

Premium Payouts MUST be Picked Up Sunday, Aug. 6, Noon-4 p.m.

Premium payouts to 4-H & FFA exhibitors will be paid in cash on Sunday, Aug. 6, Noon-4 p.m. at the Lancaster Event Center Fair Board Office. Subject to identification, parents, guardians and 4-H club leaders will also be permitted to pick up and sign for exhibitor premiums. No checks will be issued this year! No changes or corrections will be made on premium amounts after 14 days.

Static Exhibit Release Time Sunday, Aug. 6, Noon-2 p.m.

All static exhibits for the 2006 Lancaster County Fair will be released from 12 noon-2 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 6. This includes both 4-H and Open Class static exhibits.

Animal Bedding for Sale at Fair

Absolutely no outside bedding or straw is allowed. All exhibitors must use bedding provided by Event Center (\$6 per bag). All exhibitors must purchase bedding from the farrier office (located in Pavilion 2, enter from courtyard) during office hours, which will be:

- Monday, July 31 — 4-8 p.m.
- Tuesday, Aug. 1 — 7 a.m.-Noon & 6-9 p.m.
- Wed., Aug. 2 — 7 a.m.-2 p.m. & 5-10 p.m.
- Thursday, Aug. 3 — 7-9 a.m. & 5-7 p.m.
- Friday, Aug. 4 — 7-9 a.m. & 5-7 p.m.
- Saturday, Aug. 5 — 7-9 a.m.

What Qualifies as a Home Environment Exhibit?

"Cut and tie" blanket and pillows are not eligible for the State Fair but will be accepted at the County Fair. Following are tips to determine if a Home Environment exhibit qualifies for State Fair: Is it a quality home accessory that can be used several months throughout the year? Has the member shown creativity or learned and applied the design principles and elements in making this item?



Livestock Judging Contest, March 25

All 4-H youth are invited and encouraged to attend the Capitol Pork Producers 5th Annual Livestock Judging Contest. This event will be held Saturday, March 25, 10 a.m. in the Kimmel Building on the Otoe County fairgrounds. A free lunch will be provided. If you plan on attending, please let Deanna know so she can assist in a car pool. If you need anymore information call 441-7180.

4-H Day at Omaha Royals, April 30

The Omaha Royals are hosting the first annual 4-H Day at Rosenblatt Stadium, 1202 Bert Murphy Ave., Omaha. All 4-H members, family and friends will receive half off admission to see the Royals in action against Colorado Springs Sky Sox on Sunday, April 30 at 1:35 p.m. Tickets are \$4. Reservations must be made in advance as a group (minimum 10) by calling Jeremie Larkins at 402-738-5132. All 4-H families and friends are encouraged to wear 4-H gear.

Quality Assurance Training, May 9

Lancaster County will be holding a Quality Assurance training on Tuesday, May 9 at 7 p.m. If you have not attended a training yet through your school or club, please plan to attend. This year's topics for the quality assurance trainings are animal handling, carcass and product quality. Every 4-H and FFA youth planning to exhibit livestock this year must complete this certification class prior to June 15. Call Deanna at 441-7180 for further details.

Jammie Jamboree, June 17

Join us at the Jammie Jamboree and make jammie bottoms on Saturday, June 17, 9 a.m. Bring the Simplicity pattern 5338, prewashed flannel or 100% cotton fabric for the bottoms only and matching thread. Also bring your sewing machine, basic sewing equipment such as scissors, pins, measuring tape, etc. and a sack lunch. Adults are welcome. Sign up by June 12 by calling 441-7180. Open to non-4-H youth. Jammie bottoms may be entered at the fair and styled in the Style Revue.

Clover College, June 20-23

Do you want to learn some new and exciting things? Do you like making projects and meeting new people? Plan to attend one or more of the workshops at the 2006 Clover College! Open to 4-H and non-4-H youth ages 6-18. Look in next month's NEBLINE for a full list of workshops, information and registration forms. A small fee will be required for most workshops. Call Tracy if you have any questions or may be interested in volunteering to assist with various workshops.

Two New Resources for Clubs

Computer CD — A 4-H Resources CD is now available for each 4-H club. The CD provides information on the 4-H career portfolio, officer guides and a 4-H video. Stop by and pick up your copy!

Videotape — The "Winter 4-H Warm-up" 4-H leader training was videotaped and is available for checkout. Helpful handouts are also available. For more information, contact Tracy, 441-7180.

4-H Rabbit Clinic

OPEN TO ALL YOUTH**FREE****Thursday, April 6, 6:30-8:30 p.m.**

Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Rd, Lincoln

Learn about the 4-H Rabbit Program. FREE to attend!**SESSIONS INCLUDE: Buying a Rabbit, Information about Rabbit Breeds, Care of the Rabbit, Tattooing, Showmanship, Static Exhibits**

Spring Rabbit Show

Saturday, April 8, 9 a.m.

Lancaster Event Center, 84th & Havelock, Lincoln, Pavilion 3 Exhibit Hall • Registrations 7:30-8:30 a.m.

Trophies & ribbons will be awarded!**CLASSES: Fancy Rabbits, Commercial Rabbits, Pet Class and Pee Wee Class. REGISTRATION FEES: \$2.50 per rabbit or cavy, \$1 fur class, \$1.50 Showmanship. FREE CONTESTS: Quiz Bowl & Rabbit Breed ID**

Please bring a raffle prize to donate to the 4-H Rabbit Program of Lancaster County. Free exhibit space courtesy of Lancaster Event Center.

For more information, call Rodney at 782-2186 or Marty at 441-7180. Sponsored by Rabbits R Us 4-H Club and Lancaster County 4-H Rabbit VIP5 Committee

Kyle Pedersen is Plant Science State Awards Book Winner

Lancaster County 4-H member Kyle Pedersen is the State Awards Book winner in the area of plant science. Awards Books are a cumulative record of an individual's 4-H and other leadership activities. This honor gives Kyle the opportunity to attend the 2006 National 4-H Congress held Nov. 24-28 in Atlanta, Georgia.



Kiwanis Carnival, April 22

The annual Kiwanis Carnival, a FREE family event is sponsored by the Lincoln Center Kiwanis. This year, it will be held Saturday, April 22, 7-9 p.m. at Elliott Elementary School, 225 S. 26 Street, Lincoln. Elliott school students and their families will be invited to share the fun.

The Carnival features carnival type games for the kids, bingo for adults, prizes, snacks, fun and fellowship. Lincoln Center Kiwanis has sponsored this event for over 50 years providing prizes and snacks.

4-H clubs are needed to provide carnival-type booths. This is a great community service and leadership activity for clubs. If your 4-H club or family would like to have a booth or for more information, call Lorene at 441-7180. Come join the fun.



HORSE BITS

Spring 4-H Clinics

The Horse VIP5 Committee is planning two free clinics for Lancaster County 4-H members ages 8 through 18. To participate in either clinic, please RSVP to Joyce Agena by calling 486-0335 or e-mailing memaagena@wmconnect.com. A limited number of horses and riders will be allowed although all are welcome to come and observe.

Dressage Clinic, March 28

A Dressage Clinic will be held at the Lancaster Event Center on Tuesday, March 28 beginning at 5:30 p.m. Western riders are encouraged to attend as well as dressage riders. Helmets and boots are required.

Felice Rose (2006 county fair dressage judge) is the clinician. Felice who says she rode for a couple of years by the seat of her pants kept thinking that there had to be a better way of doing this! She met and studied under Lowell Boomer who started the USDF. She was hooked on dressage

immediately and has now been riding dressage for 28 years. "It changed my whole perspective on riding. I realized you had to get into your horse's head and be a partner with them. I really enjoy starting horses, the basics, once you have that the rest is easy!"

Trail Clinic, April 25

A Trail Clinic will be held April 25 at the Event Center beginning at 5:30 with a possible follow-up clinic at a later date for those who attend the first session.

Kim Bowen and Kate Knapp are the clinicians. Kim and Kate have schooled State (Ne-Ks-Ok-Tx) and Regional Trail and All-Around Champions. They have schooled, shown or owned Nebraska Hi-Pt horses in various events including Showmanship, EP, HUS, EQ, WP, Horsemanship, Trail and Disciplined Rail. They have schooled Amateur, Novice Amateur and Youth students to Horse of the Year, top 5 National standings in various events including Trail, English Pleasure, Showmanship and Horsemanship.

Attention All 4-H Riders

All Riding Skills Level Tests Must be Done in Group Testings

As of March 18, 2006, all riding skills level tests must be done in group testings. Individual tests done by leaders will no longer be accepted. Test dates, location and times to be announced, will be:

- Saturday April 8
- Wednesday, April 19
- Saturday, May 6
- Tuesday, June 13
- Saturday, July 8

Please RSVP at least one week in advance of the test date to Marty at 402-441-7180 or mcruickshank2@unl.edu. If a rider absolutely can not make one of these test dates they must notify the Extension Office by the end of March so other arrangements can be made. After that date, no exceptions to the test dates will be made.

Working Ranch Horse and Trail Clinic, April 29

A Working Ranch Horse and Trail Clinic will be held at the Washington County Fairgrounds in Arlington, Neb. on Saturday, April 29 from 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

The Working Ranch Horse Clinic will start at 9 a.m. Participants will guide a cow through a prescribed course of obstacles. Rules, class procedures and judging criteria will also be covered in the clinic.

The Trail Clinic will start at 10:30 a.m. and will show participants how to better their horsemanship abilities and the training of their horse. Participants will ride through the trail course while being critiqued and instructed.

There is a \$20 registration fee for the Working Ranch, \$10 for the Trail Clinic or \$25 for both. For more information call Monte Stauffer, 444-7804, Rick Schmidt, 426-4827 or Karna Dam, 426-9455.

Visioning

continued from page 1

- When your community does not have agreement on such issues as growth and change.
- When there is lack of hope and the future looks dim.

Visioning is a useful tool in community planning; it can assist a community in identifying important and current issues, understanding of its strengths, weaknesses and challenges of meeting community needs and pulling community residents together in developing a shared vision based on community values.

Who should determine a community's future, other than its residents? Should it be a consultant hired by the local government to develop a plan, a state or federal agency making decisions about highway bypass or a private developer constructing a residential subdivision or a strip mall? All these implications could have a large impact on a community's future. A small group of individuals in the community may be making decisions about the community's future without input from a broad range of residents.

Community residents need to participate in and actively envision the future of their community; otherwise, it will be determined for them.

Bennet

continued from page 1

and thorough input from the community as possible. Participation makes for a better vision and comprehensive plan: the more people are involved, the more input; the more input, the better quality and quantity of information. With better information better decisions can be made to improve the quality of life.

The Listening Sessions lasted approximately one hour and included the following groups:

- Senior Diner members
- Bennet Elementary School staff
- Business owners
- Youth
- Parents with young children

Each session targeted one specific demographic segment of the community and two listening sessions were held as open public meetings allowing anyone living in Bennet to participate in the process. The participants were asked three questions:

1. What are the major problems and challenges in your community?
2. What are the major strengths and assets of your community?
3. What is your vision of Bennet 10 to 15 years from now?

Results of the Listening Sessions

The listening sessions were quite successful and attended by 106 community residents. The answers were recorded by facilitators and analyzed and compiled into a report. Through the report, the major themes were identified:

Major Issues & Concerns:

- Lack of appropriate infrastructure (water quality issues)
- Fear of growth
- Business district development
- Recreation opportunities for all ages

Major assets of Bennet:

- Small town atmosphere
- Great school system
- Rural environment
- Proximity to Lincoln

Vision of Bennet:

- Preserve small town atmosphere
- Improved infrastructure to accommodate commercial & residential growth



Listening Session



Second Visioning Town Hall Meeting

- Controlled growth
 - Business development
 - Increased opportunities for recreation
- The whole report is available at the UNL Extension at Lancaster County Web site at http://lanaster.unl.edu/community/community_Bennet.shtml

Second Town Hall Meeting

A second Visioning Town Hall Meeting was held in February. The results of the listening sessions were presented back to the community. Residents then divided into small groups and discussed the results of the listening sessions.

Afterwards, a Citizen Advisory Committee was formed. The primary role of this committee is monitoring the vision-

ing process, assisting the Village Board and Planning Commission in establishing communication linkages between the citizens and local officials, ensuring incorporation of vision statement and the results of the listening sessions into the comprehensive plan.

Next Steps

Information from the entire community visioning process is being used by local officials and the Citizen Advisory Committee to develop a vision statement. Hanna-Keelan Associates is developing a comprehensive plan for Bennet based on the community input. The comprehensive plan is expected to be finished by the end of April.

Extension Can Facilitate Community Input

In addition to helping facilitate a community visioning process for the Village of Bennet, Extension Educator Yelena Mitrofanova has also worked with the Villages of Roca and Firth to conduct community attitudes surveys. The Firth Village Board has decided to undertake a visioning process.

UNL Extension can be a resource for communities in southeast Nebraska to help gather community input and facilitate citizen participation in the process. For more information contact Yelena at 441-7180.

At Nebraska, this Lincoln Student Works Smarter, not Harder

Alexis Wismer, a junior industrial and management systems engineering major at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and a Lincoln Christian alum, knows there isn't one solution for every problem. In her major, she uses her critical thinking skills to come up with new ways to make work safer, easier and more rewarding. This year, she is redesigning laparoscopic surgical Center and observed surgery, had us work on their tools. It's a research - I have gotten to know



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New City of Lincoln Web Site Addresses Neighborhood Issues

Wondering how to get that pot hole fixed? Tired of the neighbors barking dog? Acting with Citizens to Improve our Neighborhoods (ACTION), a new interactive system on the City of Lincoln's Web site is now available to answer your non-emergency inquiries.

The ACTION system includes a list of about 70 topics, covering issues in all departments. Dangerous sidewalks, special event permits, electrical outages, junk cars and illegal dumping are just a few of the issues covered.

To get answers to your concerns, visit <http://www.lincoln.ne.gov/asp/action/default.asp>



EXTENSION CALENDAR

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

March

- 23 **Community & FCE Leader Training Lesson**
"Care Giving: Challenges and Rewards" 1 p.m.
- 23 **Spring Turkey Hunting Workshop 6:30-9:30 p.m.**
- 27 **Family & Community Education (FCE) Council Meeting 7 p.m.**
- 27 **earth wellness festival, Southeast Community College**
- 28 **4-H Horse Dressage Clinic, Lancaster Event Center 5:30 a.m.**

April

- 4 **4-H Council Meeting 7 p.m.**
- 4 **4-H Horse Knowledge Club Meeting 7 p.m.**
- 6 **4-H Spring Rabbit Clinic, Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road. 6:30-8:30 p.m.**
- 8 **4-H Spring Rabbit Show, Lancaster Event Center, 84th & Havelock. 9 a.m.**
- 9 **4-H Teen Council Meeting 3 p.m.**
- 13 **Acreage Insights: Rural Living Clinic**
"Horse Nutrition & Management" 7-9 p.m.
- 18 **4-H Horse Knowledge Club Meeting 7 p.m.**
- 20 **Commercial Pesticide Applicator Initial Training 9 a.m.**
- 20 **4-H Public Service Announcements (PSA) Contest 6:30 p.m.**
- 23 **4-H Speech Contest, Lancaster Extension Education Center 1 p.m.**
- 22 **Kiwanis Karnival, Elliott Elementary School 7 p.m.**
- 25 **4-H Horse Trail Clinic, Lancaster Event Center 5:30 a.m.**

Bird FAQs

continued from page 7

- like glass, Plexiglas® or sheet metal.
- Install netting over the attachment area or hang strands of monofilament fishing line from the eaves so the swallows will bump into it.
 - Install metal projections along the junction of the wall and eave.
 - Install a concave surface under the eaves.

Nest removal should be initiated at the first sign of nest-building because it is illegal to remove nests with eggs or young. Nests can be washed down with a hose. Persistent swallows may attempt to rebuild nests several times before abandoning this effort.

Frightening swallows is not effective. Repellents are not effective. An adhesive repellent used for roosting birds (Tanglefoot®) may actually improve nest adherence. The use of toxicants, trapping and shooting are against the law; swallows are classified as migratory insectivorous birds under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918.

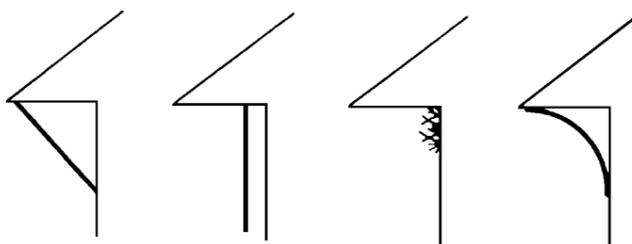


Figure 1. Four methods which may deter swallow nesting. From left to right: Netting attached from the outer edge of the eave down to the side of the building; a curtain of netting; metal projections along the junction of the wall and eave; fiberglass panel mounted to form a smooth, concave surface.

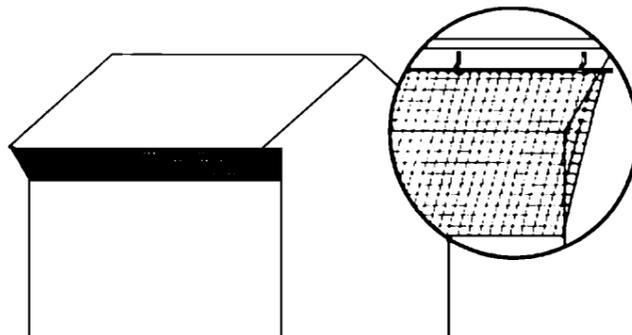


Figure 2. Netting mounted on building from the outside edge of the eave down to the side of the building. Insert shows a method of attachment using hooks and dowels.

Formosan Termites in Wood Mulch? E-mail Rumor is Another Urban Legend

Have you received a recent e-mail about the possibility of Formosan termites in discount store mulch? These e-mails are not providing factual information, but are causing a lot of anxiety.

The facts:

Formosan subterranean termites are more destructive than the eastern subterranean termites that are most common in Nebraska. But, they are a tropical termite species and rarely found above 35 N latitude. They are not likely to survive very well in Nebraska.

Whether Formosan termites could withstand the shredding and bagging process in large enough numbers to form a new colony is possible, but highly improbable.

The possibility of Formosan termites moving in wood damaged by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita was recognized many months ago. The Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry imposed a quarantine to prevent the movement of Formosan subterranean termite in wood debris outside the

quarantined area. According to Bob Odom, Louisiana Commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry, "The email is not accurate and doesn't even mention the quarantines this department put in place last fall to keep Formosan termites from spreading." Woody debris cannot be moved out of quarantined areas without first submitting a plan for treatment.

"I've had my people out looking into these claims to make sure there are no violations of the quarantine. I've also had our invasive pest expert contact the stores mentioned in the e-mail and we've yet to find any validity to the claims in the e-mail," Odom said.

"In my opinion, someone is using the Internet to cause hysteria about a problem that doesn't really exist. If there are people out there who know about someone violating the quarantines, then they need to report it to us. We'll shut the culprits down real quick but it has to be reported," Odom said. "I think the quarantines doing the job, though. We've worked

with the debris contractors, the Corps of Engineers and FEMA to handle the debris and quarantines."

According to snopes.com, a Web site dedicated to dispelling internet urban legends, Home Depot does not get its wood mulch from the New Orleans area.

After reading this, if you are still concerned, use municipal mulch. Many Nebraska municipalities produce mulch from tree trimmings which should be safe and termite free.

If you want to use bagged mulch and are still concerned, lay the bags of mulch out in the warm sun for a few hours. According to Mike Merchant, Urban Entomologist at Texas A&M University, raising mulch temperatures to 120 degrees for an hour or more is generally sufficient to kill all insect life.

A recent press release from Kansas State can be found at: <http://www.oznet.k-state.edu/news/topstory.asp>

The lesson learned is *don't believe everything you read on the Internet!*



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

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension
 in Lancaster County
 444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A
 Lincoln, NE 68528-1507

Phone: (402) 441-7180

Web site: <http://lancaster.unl.edu>

E-mail: lancaster@unl.edu • Fax: 441-7148

Lancaster Extension Education Center
 Conference Facilities
 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln
 Lobby Phone: 441-7170



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4-H'ers Help Install Flower Garden at Northeast Family Center

By Spencer Farley
 4-H member

A special place in Lincoln for me is the Northeast Family Center at Whitehall Mansion. I've grown up going to the Mansion with my mom for meetings and special family gatherings. Whitehall Mansion is a great old house about a hundred years old.

Two new playgrounds were being donated and I wanted to help. The installation was moved from the summer to fall during school hours. Since I couldn't help put the playground in, my mom and I tried to think of other ways to help. We came up with the idea of planting hybrid iris along the playground fence to help beautify the area. Our project started out small, but before we knew it our garden grew to 25 feet by 58 feet and would include plants and flowers that would bloom all season. With a project this



4-H member Spencer Farley (at left) plants hybrid iris.



Members of 4-H Teen Council shaped and placed granite stepping stones in the garden.

big we needed help.

I am a member of the Lincoln Iris Society. I asked my fellow members if they would be willing to help. I was a little nervous getting up and speaking to the whole group but they were wonderful! Not only did they agree to help, but they voted to donate money to the

project! Members also donated hybrid iris, daylilies and other plants.

I called on some local businesses to donate needed chemicals and flowering bulbs. We even got a park bench!

More than 25 4-H Teen Council members and parents helped shape and put granite stepping stones in the garden. Some Teen Council members also helped with planting.

It was really fun seeing all the people come together and work on the project. In all, we had nearly 100 volunteers. Even my best friend, who has never gardened, helped! The garden has nearly 500 flowering bulbs, around 200 hybrid iris, 30 hybrid daylilies and many other flowers and grasses. All donated. It was fun seeing the garden come together. Giving something back to the community feels good.

Note: For more photos, go to the 4-H Web site at <http://lancaster.unl.edu>.



4-H Teen Council members and parents who helped with the project.

Garden Opening Celebration, April 22

The flower garden is located in the carriage way of the Northeast Family Center building, the historic Whitehall Mansion, 5903 Walker Avenue, Lincoln. A formal opening, entitled Northeast Family Center in Bloom, is scheduled for Saturday, April 22, 1-4 p.m. and will include informal tours and activities.

Visit the Garden Anytime

The public is welcome to visit the Northeast Family Center garden and playgrounds anytime. Flowers will be in bloom from April through late fall.

Volunteers Needed to Maintain Garden

Northeast Family Center is seeking volunteers to help maintain the garden throughout the season and give educational tours to requesting groups. If you are interested in helping, please call 471-3700.

Special Thanks

Spencer Farley and his family would like to thank the nearly 100 volunteers who helped with this community service project. Special thanks to Jean Pedersen (a 4-H parent and Extension Master Gardener) who was very involved in the planning, designing and installation of the flower garden.

Cold Pizza for Breakfast

MyPyramid Food Safety Tips for Teens & Tweens Who Cook



Food Safety Tips for Teens Online

If you're a teen, tween or work with this age group, you can download a PowerPoint "Cold Pizza for Breakfast: MyPyramid Food Safety Tips for Teens & Tweens Who Cook" at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/food/pizza.shtml>. To view the PowerPoint directly on the Web, click on the slide show link.

This is a great way to learn about food safety in the kitchen and will complement your 4-H food and nutrition projects! There are LOTS of graphics with teens and tweens giving food safety advice. It ends with a game of "Keep or Toss."

These materials were developed by University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension, Nebraska Department of Education and the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department.

Can You Guess It?



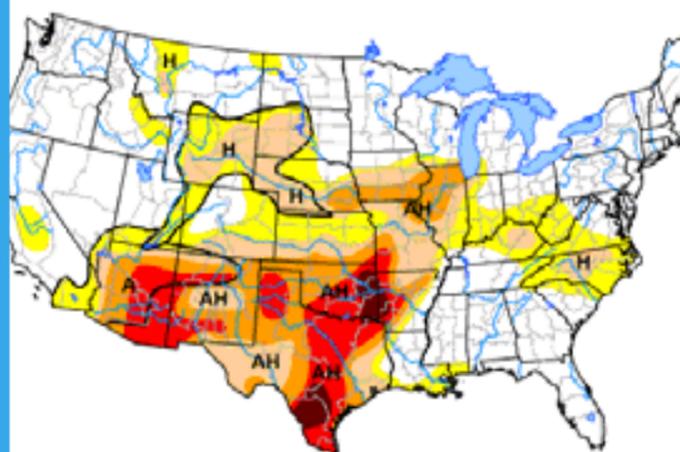
Photo by Jim Kalisch, UNL Entomology Department

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

Did you guess it from the March NEBLINE?
 The answer was Leafy Spurge — a Nebraska noxious weed.

U.S. Drought Monitor Map

As of March 7, Lancaster County was in severe drought conditions.



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

Drought Impact Types:
 P* Cattle and sheep impacts
 A* Agricultural crops, pastures, grasslands
 H* Hydrological (water) (No type = Both impacts)

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

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

2006 Nebraska Agricultural Youth Institute Conference

The Nebraska Agricultural Youth Institute (NAYI) is a conference open to high school juniors and seniors interested in agriculture. The 2006 NAYI conference will be held July 9-13 at the Kauffman Center on University of Nebraska-Lincoln City Campus. The conference is a five day educational exposure to many areas of the agriculture sector.

All meals, lodging and conference fees are paid by the Nebraska Department of Agriculture. Applications and further information can be obtained from the extension office. Applications are due April 19.