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Bioterrorism and the Biosecurity Measures We Can Use to Reduce our Risks

Lance Cummins-Brown
Extension Educator,
Saunders County

Anthrax, smallpox, plague and foot and mouth disease, many of these are again becoming household names due to the recent terrorist attacks on the United States.

These attacks have not only increased our awareness of bioterrorism tactics and agents, but they have also produced a large amount of quality information on the biosecurity measures we can implement to reduce the risk of a bioterrorism attack on us and our food supply.

The University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension currently has more than 15 NebGuides and NebFacts (see sidebar below) and three satellite programs (available from Saunders County Extension) that provide up-to-date information on bioterrorism and the biosecurity measures that can be implemented to protect you and your livestock.

In the following paragraphs, I will highlight some of the information presented in these publications and satellite programs.

Anthrax

In this current round of bioterrorism attacks, anthrax has been the "weapon" of choice. There is a plethora of information on anthrax and the best resource I have found is the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) Web site on bioterrorism which is www.unmc.edu/bioterrorism/. This site provides a large amount of information on anthrax and other potential bioterrorism diseases and tactics.

Dr. Steven Hinrichs is a professor and director in charge of the Nebraska Public Health Laboratory located at the Medical Center in Omaha. He is considered an expert in the bioterrorism field and on this Web site he offers some advice for individuals concerned about anthrax.

Hinrichs states, "Influenza virus infection kills several thousand people each year and it is a much more significant threat

• If there is an unrecognizable return address, especially if the return address and postmark do not match.

In either case, throw the mail away immediately. Finally, if you would happen to open an envelope with a suspicious substance in it, **do not** take the envelope to the authorities. Call the authorities and have them come get it.

Another thing to consider is

California. The most recent outbreak in Nebraska was isolated to 23 animals on one operation.

Similar to humans, these animals were given a high amount of antibiotics which were extremely effective. All animals that did perish were buried so that the anthrax would not spread to more animals or humans. It is reassuring to know that there is a standard operating procedure in place here in Nebraska to fight an anthrax outbreak in our state's livestock.

Small-Pox and Plague

There was a great deal of information presented on the UNMC satellite conference about small-pox disease and the plague. It would suggest that even though they should be considered a threat, the likelihood of a bioterrorism attack using small-pox or the plague is very unlikely for many reasons.

Regardless, there are several precautions being taken and plans being developed to minimize the impact of an attack using these diseases. For more detailed information on these diseases, please contact your local physician or you can refer to the UNMC satellite program on the Web at www.unmc.edu/bioterrorism/minimed.htm or available at Saunders County Extension.

Bioterrorism and Livestock (Ag-Terrorism)

This spring, thousands of animals were slaughtered throughout Great Britain because of foot and mouth disease. Even though it never reached the United States, it did provide a warning for many livestock producers who were not practicing

see *BIOSECURITY* on page 11



This feedlot is one of many in the region already implementing biosecurity measures.

to people in Nebraska. We currently do not have a single case of anthrax in Nebraska. Even traffic accidents are a bigger concern."






Even though this is true, during the recent satellite program held at UNMC, one panelist suggested, "If you ever needed a reason to throw away junk mail immediately, now you have one." During this satellite, two biosecurity recommendations were made for the immediate disposal of mail.

• If there is no return address on the piece of mail.

the threat of our livestock to an anthrax attack or outbreak. I feel obligated to inform you there was an anthrax outbreak in a western Nebraska cattle herd in 1994. This **was not an act of bioterrorism**, but a natural occurrence that has happened several times in Nebraska's history due to the rare presence of anthrax spores in our soils.

This is not limited to Nebraska as it happens throughout the United States, most recently occurring this spring in North Dakota and this fall in

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Lancaster County Extension
PROGRAMS & EVENTS HOTLINE
 **FINGERTIPS 323-1784**
featuring up-to-the-minute information

Lancaster County Extension
WEBSITE
lancaster.unl.edu
featuring extensive online resources

Biosecurity Related NebGuides and NebFacts

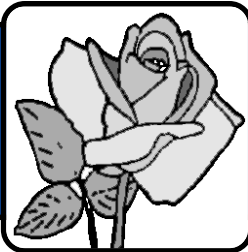
The following NebGuides and NebFacts are available on the Web at www.ianr.unl.edu/pubs/index.htm or through your local Cooperative Extension office. In Lancaster County, call 441-7180 or stop by the office at 444 Cherrycreek Road.

- Biosecurity: Protecting Your Health and the Health of Your Animals (NF484)
- Protecting Livestock From Terrorism (NF492)
- Biosecurity Basics for Cattle Operations and Good Management Practices for Controlling Infectious Diseases (G1411)
- Biosecurity Principles for Livestock Producers (G1442)
- Guarding Against Contagious Livestock Diseases From Farm Visitors (NF471)
- Attending Fairs: Safeguarding Your Health and Nebraska's Livestock Industry (NF483)
- Selection and Use of Disinfectants (G1410)
- Biosecurity and Disease Prevention for the Ratite Grower (G1206)
- Information About Foot and Mouth Disease for Nebraska Residents (NF454)
- Information About Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy for Nebraska Residents (NF455)
- "Banned Mammalian Protein"—What Does it Mean? (NF482)
- Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome Virus (G1286)
- Observations From Anthrax Outbreak in Sheridan County Herd (NF128)
- Control and Eradication of Pseudorabies in Swine (G848)

Lancaster County 4-H Council
University of Nebraska
Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County
444 Cherrycreek Road • Suite A
Lincoln, Nebraska 68528-1507

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Horticulture

Deicing Salts Harmful to Plants

Deicing salts can save your neck this winter but they can spell disaster for landscape plants. Whether the salt is sprayed on the plants from passing traffic near the road, or is shoveled onto plants near the sidewalk, the salt can cause damage.

Salts can adversely affect plants in several ways. Salts deposited on the surface of twigs, branches, and evergreen leaves can cause excessive drying of foliage and roots. They can be taken up by plants and accumulate to toxic levels. Salts can also cause a nutritional imbalance by changing the chemistry of the soil and can directly harm soil structure.

The most apparent damage from salts is death of buds and twig tips as a result of salt spray. As the tips of the plants die the plant responds by growing an excessive number of side branches. But accumulation

damage is more slowly manifested and may not be noticeable for many months. Sodium salts are the most common type used for deicing while calcium salts are used to a lesser extent.

Effects usually appear as stunting, poor vigor, dieback of growing tips, leaf burn or leaf drop. Winter and spring rains and large amounts of snow can help prevent accumulation by diluting the salt and helping to wash it out of the root zone.

Protect roadside plants by constructing burlap or durable plastic screens to shield them from traffic splash. If screening from traffic is not practical, try to use salt tolerant plants such as junipers or Siberian pea shrub.

Avoid throwing sidewalk residue onto nearby plants including shrubs and ground cover. Use alternatives, such as clean cat litter, sand or sawdust, to help improve traction on ice. (MJF)

Houseplant Problems

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

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

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

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

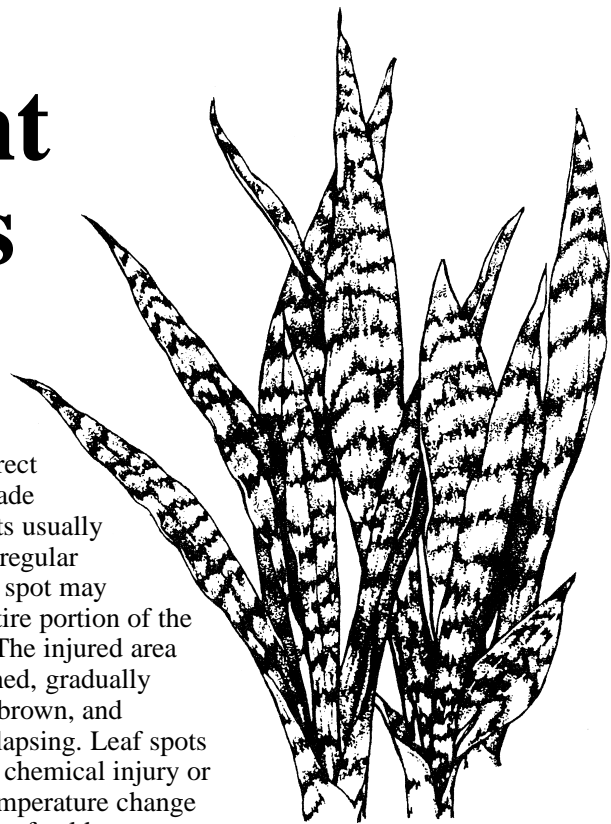
Leaf spots are quite variable

in appearance, depending upon the cause. Spots caused by injury from direct sunlight on shade requiring plants usually are large with regular margins. Each spot may involve the entire portion of the exposed leaf. The injured area appears bleached, gradually turning tan to brown, and eventually collapsing. Leaf spots resulting from chemical injury or exposure to temperature change due to droplets of cold water usually are smaller. They generally are yellowish at first with regular margins conforming with the shape and size of the drops of chemical solution or water that caused the injury.

A number of leaf spot diseases are caused by fungi and bacteria. Symptoms usually are small, water soaked spots, gradually enlarging and turning brown. There also may be considerable yellowing around the margins of the spots. These diseases rarely develop under the dry atmospheric conditions prevalent in most houses. They are most common on plants recently brought into the state from southern propagating areas.

Leaf spots occasionally develop in the vicinity of feeding injury caused by sap sucking insects, such as aphids, scale and mealybugs. Plant surfaces in the vicinity of these insects often are covered by a glistening, sticky honeydew.

To control leaf spot you can: remove and destroy affected leaves, avoid sprinkling water on the foliage, provide adequate air circulation. If insects are involved, correctly identify the pest causing the problem. Control sap sucking insects by washing leaves, petioles and stems with a damp cloth or treating with a commercially prepared pyrethrin spray for houseplants. Rubbing alcohol



also may be applied to insects such as mealybugs with cotton swabs. Systemic insecticides also will control sucking insects.

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

Leaves and succulent shoots become limp or wilted, usually recovering when water is supplied. This may be evidence of water shortage or over abundance of water followed by the development of root rot. Over fertilization also can cause wilting. To control wilting, check drainage, look for root rot, check for conditions promoting unusually rapid loss of water and alter watering schedule.

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

Horticulture information center

NUFACTS
24 hours a day, 7 days a week
1-800-832-5441; or
441-7188 in the Lincoln area



To listen to a NUFACTS information center message, call the number above on a touch-tone phone, then enter a three-digit number listed below.

NUFACTS
210 Amaryllis
212 Swedish Ivy
214 Houseplant Insects
217 Boston Fern
218 African Violet Care
222 Winter Houseplant Care
223 Repotting Houseplants
224 Houseplant Artificial Light

Growing Cacti and Succulents

Looking for an interesting new houseplant? Beginners and experts can find many good choices among the cacti and succulents.

The term succulent refers to a broad, loose category of plants, including cacti, which have developed thick fleshy leaves or stems. These serve as water storage organs to insure survival under arid conditions. Succulents are found worldwide. Besides cacti, they include many familiar plants: jade plant (*Crassula arborescens*), medicine plant (*Aloe barbadensis*), century plant (*Agave americana*), flowering Kalanchoes (*Kalanchoe blossfeldiana*) sold as gift plants as well as sedums (*Sedum* sp.), and hens and

chicks (*Sempervivum* sp.) that are common in the perennial garden.

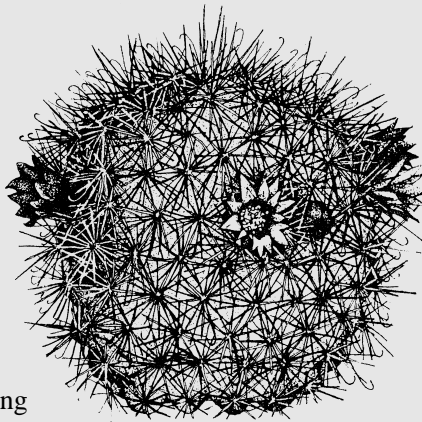
Many cacti and succulents are extremely well adapted to living in houses where the relative humidity is low, 10 to 30 percent. They require only modest amounts of water and fertilizer, but do need abundant light. They should be placed in a bright, sunny window.

In nature, most cacti and succulents are found growing in open, well-drained sandy soil. These conditions should be duplicated indoors. A mix of one part potting soil and one part coarse sand is usually porous enough. A good test is to moisten the mixture and squeeze it in your hand. On release, the soil should fall apart. Both pot and growing medium should be

sterile. Ideally, these plants should be grown in pots with drainage holes because excess water trapped in the soil will result in rotting and decay in a very short time.

During the low-light winter months, cacti and succulents should be watered only enough to prevent shrinking and withering. When watering, do it thoroughly. Water should flow through the drain holes, and the excess should be discarded after a few minutes. A series of repeated shallow sprinklings often results in distorted growth. As the amount of light increases in the spring, so does the plant's need for water. The soil, however, should always be allowed to dry out between watering.

Many cacti and succulents benefit from spending the



summer months outdoors. Once the weather warms up they should be placed in a semi-shaded, protected area of the yard and then gradually moved to a sunnier location. Avoid locations where they will receive the hot, intense sunlight from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Once outdoors, these plants will require more water and should be checked regularly.

Cacti and succulents are not

troubled much by pests. If they have mealybugs or scale, the problem can be controlled by wiping them off with cotton swabs dipped in rubbing alcohol. Fungal or bacterial rots can almost always be prevented by maintaining adequate cultural conditions, which are bright light and proper watering.

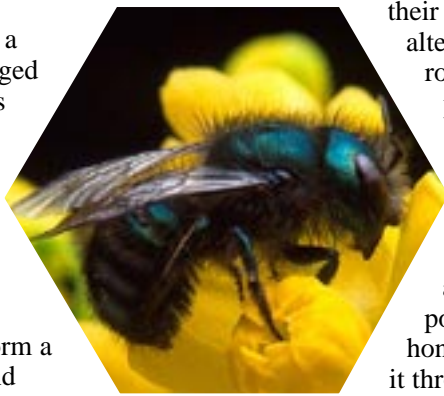
Cacti and succulents can be propagated easily by stem cuttings. Many succulents will form new plants from leaves which have been broken off. Allow the cutting wound to air dry before sticking the cutting into slightly moistened, sterile sand. Water sparingly since moisture retention is not a problem. When the roots have formed, transplant into the regular sand and potting soil mixture. (MJF)

How Do Honey Bees Survive the Winter?

Insects that live in temperate climates have evolved survival mechanisms to avoid death by freezing. Some find shelter in the soil, under bark or leaves, or, like the pesky box elder bug, even find shelter in our homes. Many insects produce glycerol or other chemicals which act as a natural antifreeze and keep them from freezing. The monarch butterfly has an unusual strategy for an insect: it actually migrates to a warmer climate to avoid cold temperatures.

The survival tactics that honey bees use are different from most other insects because they stay active in their hives even on the coldest winter days and nights. How do they do this?

First, the temperature in a properly managed hive never falls below 63 degrees F, even when the outside temperature drops to -20 degrees F. The worker bees form a tight cluster and surround the queen bee. The workers use stored honey as fuel and shiver to generate metabolic heat. The bees on the outside of the cluster, insulate the cluster while the innermost bees generate heat. They continually rotate



their position, alternating their role as a heat producer and heat retainer. A typical honey bee hive needs about 60-70 pounds of honey to sustain it through the winter. A well-managed bee hive in a good location will produce much more honey than it needs to maintain itself. What the bees don't need is harvested by the beekeeper and available for us to enjoy. (BPO)

Looking for a New Hobby? Learn to Manage Bees and Produce Honey!

In Nebraska, approximately 700 beekeepers manage about 115,000 colonies of honey bees. The annual honey production ranges from five to 11 million pounds, depending on flora availability and weather conditions. With optimal weather conditions and flora availability, a properly managed colony can produce 100 pounds or more of honey. A more realistic six-year average for honey production is about 75 pounds per colony.

Honey bees play an important role as pollinators of many fruit, vegetable and seed crops.

If you are a serious gardener, you may want to keep bees for the pollination benefits

alone. Some Nebraska crops requiring bee pollination are: alfalfa, clover and vetch seed, sunflowers, canola, melons, squash, cucumbers and pumpkins, apples, cherries, pears and raspberries.

Bees also pollinate many plants important to wildlife and soil conservation as well as wildflowers that beautify the landscape.

For the beginner, buying new equipment with packaged bees is the best way to start. An established hive can be over-

whelming for the beginner who won't know how to handle swarms, re-queening and colony defensiveness. Buying new equipment will eliminate any possibility of disease transmission and allow the beekeeper to learn the individual parts of the hive while putting it together. With packaged bees, you can gain valuable experience working with a small colony and gain experience as the colony grows. Two to four colonies are ideal for beginning beekeepers.

You can learn about beginning beekeeping in two 3-hour classroom sessions from 6:30-9:30 pm on March 18 and 19 at the Lancaster County Conference Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln. On April 6, you will learn how to install packaged bees, handle bees, put hives together and learn about extracting equipment at a practical lab session at the Agricultural Research and Development Center, near Mead.

Know somebody who would like to learn about bees or is interested in beekeeping? Give them a Christmas gift by pre-registering them for this workshop by Dec. 20 and you will receive a gift certificate to put in their Christmas stocking.

Registration for this workshop is \$20 and will include reference materials. For more information, call 441-7180. (BPO)

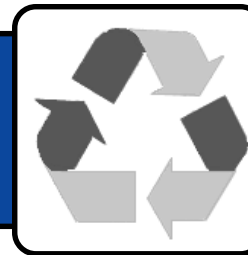


Did you know....

- Honey bees must tap two million flowers to make one pound of honey?
- Each honey bee visits 50-100 flowers during one collection trip from the hive?
- From one hive, bees fly 55,000 miles to bring you one pound of honey?
- The average worker honey bee makes only 1/12 teaspoon of honey in her lifetime?
- A honey bee flies 15 miles per hour?
- It would take one ounce of honey to fuel a bee's flight around the world?
- North American natives called honey bees "white man's flies" because they were brought to North America by European colonists?
- Bees have been producing honey from flowering plants for 10-20 million years?
- USDA estimates that there are three million colonies of bees and 211,600 beekeepers in the US? Most (95 percent) of these beekeepers are hobbyist beekeepers who manage less than 25 hives.

Source: National Honey Board.

Environmental Focus



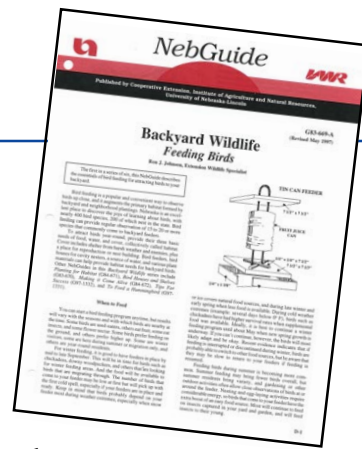
Nothing Brightens up a Winter Day Like the Song of a Bird

Chick-a-dee-dee-dee...the song of the Black-capped Chickadee. Who hasn't heard its cheery voice in the cold of winter? These feathered acrobats are among the friendliest birds in the neighborhood. Our winter landscape is brightened by cardinals, American Goldfinch, blue jays, juncos, nuthatches and, of course, chickadees who are frequent visitors of backyard feeding stations.

Feeding stations can be simple and inexpensive to make. Scrap lumber, tin cans, plastic soda bottles, milk jugs and cartons and plastic buckets are easy to find. All it takes is a little creativity and knowledge about

the birds you're trying to attract.

Many birds we enjoy at our feeders have specific seed preferences or prefer suet. Location of feeders and number of feeders is also very important. The feeders should be protected from strong winds, preferably near shrubbery or conifers. Recycle your Christmas tree by propping it up by the feeder to give the birds added shelter. With several feeders in your backyard, more birds will have an opportunity to feed at the same time. (SC)



Extension Resources on Feeding Birds and Wildlife Habitat

University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension has several publications available on feeding birds and on wildlife habitat. Visit your local extension office to pick up a copy or check out the Lancaster County Web site at www.lancaster.unl.edu for these materials and much more related to birds, birdfeeding and habitat.

Backyard Wildlife: Feeding Birds (NebGuide G669 - free) — the essentials of bird feeding for attracting birds to your backyard.

Backyard Wildlife: Making it Come Alive (NebGuide G672 - free) — "how-to" ideas for getting the most enjoyment from your backyard wildlife.

Backyard Wildlife: Planting for Habitat (NebGuide G671 - free) — information on planning and planting habitat for wildlife in your backyard.

Backyard Wildlife: Tips for Success (NebGuide G1332 - free) — tips for success in bird feeding, adding water, birds to expect, dealing with nuisance wildlife and

others. **House Finch Eye Disease (NebFact 355 - free)** — Feeding stations cause unnatural concentrations of birds and thus increase the potential for transfer of disease from one bird to another. A watchful eye and good judgment will often prevent disease problems before they occur.

Build a Nest Box (Lancaster County Fact Sheet 24 - free) — Learn how to successfully attract birds by building an inexpensive, simple, six-sided box. Everything from house wrens to American Kestrel's and Woodducks.

Shelves, Houses and Feeders for Birds and Mammals (RP338 - \$4) — You'll get plans and information on constructing bird and mammal houses, shelves, a variety of feeders and a special section on building feeders and houses from recycled materials. (SC)

Fungus Gnats Are Nuisance Often Found in Soil of Houseplants

Adult fungus gnats are delicate, gray, dark-gray, or black fly-like insects about an eighth-inch long. They are often seen running over the wet soil surface of houseplants. They also are seen as you water when they swarm up out of the plant. Fungus gnats are attracted to light and in a severe infestation will swarm over the

windows.

Adult fungus gnats do not damage plant materials but are objectionable and a nuisance to the homeowner. The immature fungus gnat lives in the soil and are white, translucent larvae with shiny black heads. The larvae feed on any organic matter and can attain a length of about a forth-inch.

Female fungus gnats lay up

to 300 eggs on the soil surface which hatch in five to six days. Plants grown in a growing media containing a high percentage organic matter such as peat will have more problems with fungus gnats.

Once fungus gnat adults and larvae are discovered on the plant, a non-chemical control can be achieved, but it will take some patience. For infested

plants, allow the soil to thoroughly dry between watering. This will kill the larvae through desiccation as well as help prevent future problems.

The best way to prevent new or future infestations of fungus gnats is to follow proper watering practices for your plants. Houseplants in the winter normally do not require as much water as at other times of the

year. Fungus gnats are more of a problem in the winter, most likely due to over zealous watering. Whenever possible, allow soil surfaces to dry completely between watering. A wet environment is an open invitation to fungus gnats as well as a host of other problems such as root rot and stem rot. (MJF)



Farm Views

Producer Question — Should I Aerate my Pasture?

Tom Dorn
Extension Educator

I received this call from a Lancaster County stockman and hay producer some time back. I thought it might be a good topic to present in THE NEBLINE but waited until now so it would be more timely in terms of planning actions one might take.

After visiting with the producer, I called Extension Forage Specialist, Bruce Anderson. He had this to say about aerating pastures and haylands. "Some grasses, especially brome, can get root-bound a.k.a. sod-bound which decreases the ability of water to penetrate into the soil. This generally happens under conditions where the pasture has been heavily pastured or continuously mowed for hay and where the soil is compacted and where the pasture has been under fertilized."

The caller also said that his neighbor aerated one pasture and fertilized another pasture in the spring of 2000 and felt that he benefitted more from aeration than fertilization. Dr. Anderson and I discussed this as well. Remembering that we had a very dry spring in 2000, this may have indeed been the case. Basically, water, not fertility could have been the limiting

factor in 2000. According to Anderson, "The improvement in water penetration in the aerated pasture may have had a bigger benefit than fertilization on the other pasture, given the conditions that existed in 2000."

Additionally, if the nitrogen source was urea or if it contained urea (either dry 46-0-0 or 28 percent UAN liquid) and if it was applied at a time when no rain fell for a couple of weeks or more, nitrogen volatilization loss from surface applied urea may have been quite large, further reducing the benefit of fertilization.

The conclusion ... aeration can be of benefit on grass pastures (especially brome) under certain conditions.

Dr. Anderson recommended one use a disk that is set so that it is cutting but not turning over the soil. If it is set to cut three inches deep and leave a slot about one-half inch wide, a disk will do a good job of aerating a sod while causing the least amount of damage.

The benefits of aerating a sod are increased water and air penetration into the soil. The downside to aeration is the expense for the disking operation and risk of increased weed growth in the disturbed soil. The best time to aerate a sod, according to Anderson, is late March to early April. (TD)

Biosolids Improves Soil and Cuts Production Costs



Extension Technologist Dave Smith takes GPS readings on a field participating in Lancaster's Biosolids Management Program.

Now that harvest activities are over, are you thinking about ways to improve production and cut production costs? You can reduce your out-of-pocket fertilizer costs, improve poor soil and increase yields by using municipal biosolids. This material is high in organic matter and contains all the nutrients that are needed by crops to grow. Most cooperators see a yield benefit for three to four cropping years after an application.

To defray the cost of application, the city of Lincoln is paying up to \$.65 per cubic yard for application. If you don't have spreading equipment, you can rent a spreader from the city for a very reasonable cost.

Cooperators must have a loader and be able to apply the materials in a timely way. If cooperators are interested, they should sign up for biosolids before Jan. 15, 2002. They will be eligible for biosolids after soil tests are taken in the spring of 2002 and their field has been approved for application.

Interested in biosolids, but want to know more? An education program is being planned in February to explain how biosolids improve fertility and increase yields. Contact Barb Ogg or Dave Smith at 441-7180 for details. (BPO)

Management Pays Better than Labor

Tom Dorn
Extension Educator

Late fall and early spring is the time of year when agricultural producers look ahead. They spend time considering how to make the best use of the time, labor and equipment at their disposal. They develop balance sheets, cash flows, crop budgets and make arrangements for financing. Top managers also allocate time to attend educational programs to learn new skills, hone their old ones and to keep abreast of new developments.

In my opinion, the time spent on these activities is the most valuable time a producer spends all year. One should give this part of the job a high priority. It shouldn't be relegated to late night hours or only when weather or other circumstances make it impossible to do other things.

If one has any doubt whether quality management time is important, they should look at the way large corporations are structured. At the very top of the corporate ladder is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The main job of the CEO is to know where the company has a competitive edge and to research new endeavors the company should undertake in the future. Sometimes, the CEO must identify what isn't working and discontinue the money losers.

Below the CEO in the corporate structure, one finds a layer of middle managers. It is the middle managers, not the CEO, that oversee the day to day operation of the company. Under middle management, are the people involved in actual production. In all cases, the laborers, as important as they are, are at the very end of the chain of command and at the bottom of the pay scale as well.

Every organization must strike a balance between labor and management. Too many managers without an adequate labor force will topple a company. On the other hand, a company with a large labor force but inadequate management and planning, is just as doomed to failure.

Agriculture is somewhat unique in the business world. Instead of dividing the various levels of management over many individuals, one or a very few individuals' time often must be divided over the various levels of management. Someone in the farm operation must serve as CEO looking for opportunities to capitalize on any competitive edge that their human resources, geographical location or capital assets might provide. Most times, these same people must simultaneously serve as middle



Photo courtesy of United States Department of Agriculture

management. In this capacity, they do the job of the vice presidents in charge of: finance, promotion, personnel, production and marketing. Finally, the farmer, family members and hired labor must also be highly skilled and efficient producers of the products that ultimately support the farm and provide a family living.

Farmers are hard working and industrious people. However, I have noticed in my 20 plus years in extension that many farmers tend to spend far too much time performing the low paying production jobs and

**"Plan your
work.
Then work
your plan."**

far too little of their time on the high paying management jobs. Of course, there are exceptions to this generalization. I remember a successful and respected farmer who was fond of repeating something that his father would tell him when he was a young man, "Plan your work. Then work your plan." My friend's life and success reflected the fact that he lived by that credo.

If you recognize that you may be a little short on time spent in management but can't think of any high level jobs to tackle, the following year-end list can get you started:

If you are raising crops, calculate the average cost of production per acre and per bushel. Then analyze the results. Did the average price received more than cover the cost of production and provide profit to cover family living expense? If not, can you identify which fields are most profitable and which were not profitable?

If you are raising livestock, do you know your five-year average death loss percentage, rate of gain and feed conversion ratio? Are these in line with similar farm operations? What is your cost of production per head or per pound?

Do you manage risk by forward pricing when there are opportunities to lock in a profitable price?

Knowing your profit centers is essential. The long term success of any business depends

on being able to expand profitable ventures and eliminate perpetually unprofitable ones. Can you calculate the profitability of individual fields that you farm or livestock enterprises that you have? If you have identified which fields, crops or livestock operations were not profitable this year, do you know "what went wrong?" Have you identified what you can do to make the unprofitable enterprises more profitable in the coming year?

If you can't answer the questions raised above, perhaps you might consider improving your record keeping skills. Extension has been offering a well-received computerized financial record keeping workshop series for a number of years. This series will be offered again this spring in selected locations. Watch THE NEBLINE for the workshop announcements. Alternatively, (or concurrently) have you considered joining the Nebraska Farm Business Association (NFBA)? The NFBA can help you keep records and will analyze them and show you how your farm compares to similar operations. Call the extension office for more information.

Lastly, have you set goals for your operation? Are you planning to bring partners or family members into the operation in the next few years? How big (or small) do you want to be in five years? What enterprises would you like to get into or phase out of? Have you anticipated which pieces of equipment will need to be overhauled or replaced in the next year or two? Have you prioritized the repair/replacement list and factored these costs into your cash flow plan?

Looking at a longer time frame: Do you anticipate that urban growth will be taking some of your farm land? How is that going to affect the way you farm or even whether you can continue to farm? When do you want to retire and how will you finance your retirement? The list could go on indefinitely.

If your operation isn't paying you as well as you would like, maybe you should give yourself a promotion and spend more time in management. Remember, management always pays better than labor.

The Legends and Traditions of Holiday Plants

There are many traditions associated with the holidays. Many involve plants. Evergreen trees, poinsettias, holly and mistletoe played important roles in ancient legends and rituals, but have evolved into traditions associated with the Christmas season.

The Christmas Tree

The Christmas tree is a tradition which began in Germany in the 17th century. There are several legends concerning the origin of the Christmas tree. Historians know the primitive cultures of northern Europe believed that evergreen trees possessed godlike powers. The evergreen tree also symbolized immortality. The Germanic people would bring evergreen boughs into their homes during winter to insure the protection of the home and the return of life to the snow-covered forest. As Christianity spread throughout Europe, eventually the evergreen tree was transformed into a Christian symbol.

Some believe the Christmas tree evolved from the Paradise Tree of the Middle Ages. During the 14th and 15th centuries, evergreen trees played an important role in miracle and mystery plays. One such play dramatized the fall of Adam and Eve and was performed on Dec. 24. On stage during the play was a Paradise Tree (an evergreen with red apples hung from its branches).

Others believe that the Christmas tree began in the 16th century with Martin Luther. According to the legend, Martin Luther was inspired by the beauty of evergreens one Christmas Eve. He cut down a tree, brought it home, and decorated it with candles.

The first record of a Christmas tree is in Strasburg, Germany in 1604. German immigrants and Hessian soldiers hired by the British to fight the colonists during the American Revolution brought the Christmas tree tradition to the United States.

Winter Burn

Evergreen foliage is killed during late winter. The sun thaws the foliage, which then refreezes rapidly when the sun is blocked or at sunset and the foliage temperature rapidly drops. Thawed foliage may lose water that can't be replaced by roots in frozen soil, so the plant dries out. The symptoms are browned foliage in the spring, especially on the south or

southwest side of a planting or plant.

Prevent the problem by shading susceptible plants. Use burlap screens, discarded Christmas trees or any other simple shade source. Because injury usually occurs in late winter, you need not apply the protection until after Christmas. (DJ)

Poinsettias

Poinsettias are native to Mexico. They were cultivated by the Aztec Indians. The colorful bracts were used to make a reddish purple dye. The Aztecs also made a fever medicine from the poinsettia's milky sap.

After the Spanish conquest and the introduction of Christianity, poinsettias began to be used in Christian rituals. Franciscan priests used the poinsettia in their nativity processions.

Poinsettias were first introduced into the United States by Joel Robert Poinsett, the first U.S. Ambassador to Mexico.



Photo courtesy of University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

Poinsett had plants sent to his home in South Carolina. He then distributed plants to horticultural friends and botanical gardens. The Ecke family of California has been instrumental in the development of today's poinsettia.

Initially poinsettias lasted only a few days in the home. All had red bracts. Today's varieties are more compact, durable and long-lasting. Red, pink, white, gold, marbled and variegated varieties are now available.

Mistletoe

Mistletoe is a semi-parasitic plant with small, leathery leaves and small, white berries. Mistletoe plants manufacture their own food, but must obtain water and minerals from the host plant.

American mistletoe (*Phoradendron serotinum*) can be found growing in deciduous trees from New Jersey and southern Indiana southward to Florida and Texas. It is the state flower of Oklahoma. Most mistletoe is harvested in Oklahoma and Texas.

Traditions involving mistletoe date back to ancient times.

Druids believed that mistletoe could bestow health and good luck. Welsh farmers associated mistletoe with fertility. A good mistletoe crop foretold a good crop the following season. Mistletoe was also thought to influence human fertility and was prescribed to individuals who had problems bearing children. Mistletoe has also been used in medicine. It has been used as treatment for pleurisy, gout, epilepsy, rabies and poisoning. Mistletoe also played a role in a superstition concerning marriage. It was believed that kissing under the mistletoe increased the possibility of marriage in the upcoming year.

Although mistletoe has been used in the treatment of several ailments, the berries are poisonous. Individuals using mistletoe during the holiday season should keep the sprigs out of the reach of children. For safety reasons, many companies have replaced the berries with artificial, plastic berries.

Holly

Holly was considered sacred by the ancient Romans. Holly was used to honor Saturn, god of agriculture, during their Saturnalia festival held during the winter solstice. The Romans gave one another holly wreaths, carried it in processions and decked images of Saturn with it. During the early years of the Christian religion in Rome, many Christians continued to deck their homes with holly to avoid detection and persecution by Roman authorities. Gradually, holly became a symbol of Christmas as Christianity became the dominant religion of the empire. (DJ)

Urban Agriculture



Protecting Water from Freezing

One of the challenges of surviving a winter is keeping the water you use from freezing. A little bit of science and a healthy dose of trial and error have yielded ideas for avoiding the hassles of unwanted ice. Let's look at some advice regarding winter protection for water pipes, tanks and dishes.

Keeping water thawed is simply a matter of conservation of heat. You need to keep the temperature of the water above freezing. Now, HOW you do that is a more complicated issue. The three most common methods are: adding heat with a heating device, insulating to conserve heat and adding heat by bringing in warmer water.

Draining Water Lines

Any water lines that can be drained for the winter (sprinkler lines, empty buildings, pasture water lines, garden hoses, etc.) should be disconnected and drained. Compressed air can help remove water from some low spots, but separating connections at the low points is the surest way to make sure water doesn't get trapped in low spots. Remember to remove garden hoses from hydrants and outside faucets on your home. Connected hoses can trap water and cause freezing even in faucets designed to be "freeze-proof."

Water Pipe Insulation

Household water pipes in exterior walls can freeze in extreme weather. Check to see that there is sufficient insulation between the outside of the wall and the water pipes. Removing insulation between the warm room and the pipes can let more heat get to the pipes. Even leaving doors ajar on the counter under the kitchen sink can allow a little extra room heat in to keep pipes warmer. In extreme cases,

letting a trickle of water run all night will constantly replace the cold water in the pipes with warmer water from the basement or well.

Water Pipe Heaters

Water pipes in exposed locations will need extra added heat. In a small enclosed space like a well pit or pump house, you might consider a small electric heater or heat lamp. For \$30 to \$50 you can even add a thermostatic control to turn a heater or lamp off when it isn't needed.

Remember to keep fire and electrical safety in mind when selecting and installing heaters or lamps. Adding insulation to the pump house or well pit cover can help conserve the heat that is already present. Many people use hay or straw bales to insulate over a well pit. This works, but hay and straw attract rodents and hold moisture. Insulating inside the pit and covering with materials like fiberglass may be a better plan.

In open areas like unheated buildings or crawl spaces, you may need to localize the heat directly to the pipes. Long strips of heating element (heat tape) may be the answer. Heat tapes can be wrapped around the pipe to add heat directly to the pipe. Some heat tapes include built-in thermostats to turn them off in warmer weather. Be careful to follow manufacturer's instructions when installing heat tape. Never apply heat tape over itself (double wrapping) or over or under pipe insulation unless specifically recommended by the manufacturer.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) estimates 2,000 fires and 10 deaths every year related to

see WATER on page 11

Recycling Christmas Trees

Nebraskans will buy thousands of Christmas trees this holiday season. After the holidays, there are several ways to dispose or recycle your tree. (Before recycling your Christmas tree, remove all tinsel and ornaments.) Some suggestions are:

- Place the tree in the yard or garden for use by birds and other wildlife. The branches provide shelter from strong winds and cold. Food can be supplied by hanging fruit slices, seed cakes or suet bags on its branches. You can also smear peanut butter and seeds in pine cones and hang them in the tree.
- Prune off the branches

and place the boughs over perennials as a winter mulch.

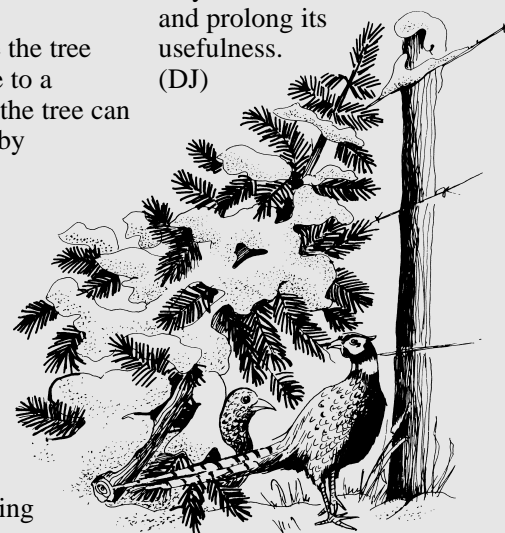
- Chip the tree and use as a mulch around trees, shrubs or in flower beds.

- If you can't use the tree yourself, take the tree to a collection site where the tree can be chipped and used by someone else.

- Conservation groups may be another option. Some hunting and fishing groups collect trees and use them to provide habitat for fish and wildlife.

For many, selecting and decorating

the Christmas tree is one of the highlights of the holiday season. After the holidays, recycle the tree and prolong its usefulness. (DJ)





Food & Fitness



Alice Henneman, RD, LMNT, Extension Educator

Pumpkin is a good source of beta-carotene, a nutrient that may help reduce the risk of developing certain types of cancer, and offers possible protection against heart disease.

Pumpkin Ice Cream Pie

Makes 8 servings

1 can (15 to 16 oz.) pure pumpkin puree
1/4 cup sugar
1-1/2 to 2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice, depending on how "spicy" a flavor you enjoy
1 quart (4 cups) vanilla ice cream or frozen yogurt, softened
1 package (9 oz.) 9-inch prepared graham cracker pie crust
Whipped topping, if desired

Directions

Note: Read "Cook's Tips" at the end BEFORE preparing this recipe

- Mix the pumpkin, sugar and spice until well blended.
- Quickly mix pumpkin mixture with the softened ice cream.
- Pour into crumb crust and freeze, uncovered, until firm—a couple of hours.
- When pie is frozen, cover with plastic wrap and then cover with freezer-quality foil or place in a freezer bag and squeeze out the air.
- Thaw pie slightly before serving. Top with whipped topping, if desired.

Cook's Tips

- ☞ Use nonfat ice cream or frozen yogurt and fat-free whipped topping for a lighter version.
- ☞ The Good Housekeeping Web site (www.goodhousekeeping.com) advises "the best way to soften ice cream is to let it sit out at room temperature for about 15 minutes or in the refrigerator for 30." They also note "low-fat ice creams and frozen yogurts melt faster than full-fat varieties. Avoid repeatedly softening and refreezing ice cream as it gets icy."
- ☞ Be sure the package says it's a "9-ounce" pie shell.
- ☞ If you don't have pumpkin pie spice, for **each teaspoon** of pumpkin pie spice, you can substitute a combination of
 - 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
 - 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
 - 1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
 - 1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
 Additional uses of pumpkin pie spice are as a flavoring for sweet potatoes, acorn squash and French toast. Or, add it to baked products such as banana bread, zucchini bread and carrot cake—use about a 1/2 teaspoon per cup of batter.

FREE Brochure on Preparing Roast Beef

For a free brochure to help you prepare the perfect beef roast during the holiday season, call the Nebraska Beef Council at 1-800-421-5326. "Savor the Season" features beef roast selection and tips plus the four easy steps to a perfect roast. It gives carving and serving steps plus a roasting timetable. It includes some great beef recipes—appetizers, impromptu entrees, elegant entrees and how to make the most of leftover roast. (AH)

Cooking Ahead for Holiday Meals

Alice Henneman
Extension Educator &
Registered Dietitian
and
Joyce Jensen
Lincoln-Lancaster County
Health Department & Registered
Environmental Health Specialist

Gathering round the table for a special meal with family and friends can be a source of joy and feed both body and soul. Cooking late into the night before your meal, however, can greatly diminish the pleasures of the table. Cooking too far ahead can decrease the quality and safety of your food.

Here are some tips to put the focus back on family and friends rather than frenzied (and possibly unsafe) food preparation.

Limit Selection

Begin by limiting the number of foods you serve to a few favorites, so you have less to prepare. For example, do you need two (or more) desserts? Remember: desserts spelled backwards is S-T-R-E-S-S-E-D.

The Day Before

Unless food will be frozen, it's safest to start preparing most perishable foods no more than a day before a meal. For example:

- Assemble a vegetable casserole a day in advance, refrigerate and then bake the day of your dinner. Plan 15 to 20 minutes additional heating time for the refrigerated cold casserole. Heat until it's hot and

steamy throughout.

- Cut washed fruits and vegetables within a day of your meal for salads and relish trays. Note: Wash fruits and vegetables under cool running tap water. Store all **cut** fruits and vegetables covered, such as in storage containers or one time use plastic bags in the refrigerator. Store fresh-cut produce above raw meat, poultry and fish and below cooked items. Avoid leaving cut and/or peeled fruit

"Ponder well on this point—the pleasant hours of our life are all connected by a more or less tangible link, with some memory of the table."

~Charles Pierre Monselet,
French author (1825-1888)

and vegetables at room temperature for more than two hours. This includes the **total** of preparation time and serving time.

- Keep cut fruits, such as apples, pears, bananas and peaches, from turning brown by coating them with an acidic juice such as lemon, orange or pineapple juice. Or use a commercial anti-darkening preparation with fruits, such as Ever-Fresh™ or Fruit-Fresh®; **Follow the manufacturer's directions for timing and method of application.** Cover and refrigerate cut fruit until ready to serve. Note: Bananas don't keep as long as the other fruits mentioned—cut close to serving time.

- Nonperishable foods such as cakes and cookies can be prepared a few days in advance and still will taste good. Or, they can be frozen for longer storage. For more information on freezing baked goods, such as pies, cookies, cakes, etc. read "Chill Out Over the Holidays: Bake Ahead & Freeze!" at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/food/>

ftnvdc99.htm

Handling Meat

Special tips for handling meat:

- As a general rule-of-thumb, purchase fresh raw meat, poultry or seafood no more than 1 to 2 days before your holiday meal. Freeze for longer storage. These foods taste freshest if cooked the day of your meal.

- If you have frozen your meat, poultry or seafood, plan time for safe thawing in your refrigerator. Allow approximately 24 hours for each 5 pounds of weight. For turkey, make sure you remove the bag containing the neck and giblets from the body cavities.

- To prevent cross-contamination, thaw or store a package of raw meat, poultry or seafood on a plate on a lower shelf of your refrigerator to prevent its juices from dripping on other foods.

- If you prepare meat, poultry or seafood the day before your meal, divide it into small portions. Then refrigerate in loosely covered shallow containers within 2 hours of cooking; limit depth of meat, etc. to about 2 inches. You can place loosely covered foods in the refrigerator while still warm; cover tightly when food is completely cooled. On the day of your meal, reheat thoroughly to a temperature of 165 degrees F until hot and steaming throughout.

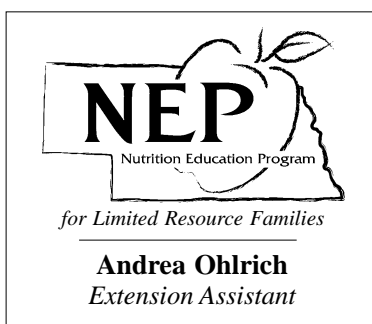
The Pumpkin Pie

Preparing pumpkin pie ahead of time:

- Pumpkin pie is especially popular around the holidays. A pumpkin pie is a form of custard and must be kept in the refrigerator at 40 degrees F or cooler. Foods which contain eggs, milk, and a high moisture content

see COOKING on page 11

Monthly Meetings Go Global



"I like the crunchy vegetable which reminds me of a potato," said a NEP participant at Touchstone who sampled a jicama.

The population and racial background of Lincoln is ever-changing, as with many places in Nebraska. These changes are seen in many aspects of life in Lincoln. As just an example, there are over 30 languages spoken in Lincoln Public Schools from students who come from 50 countries. Besides language, the new cultures also bring with them different foods and food practices.

Ethnic foods were recently featured as the Nutrition Educa-



tion Program monthly lesson which was presented to 10 groups throughout the community. The hands-on educational experiences include nutrition, food safety and resource management as related to the monthly topic.

Participants began by sharing their favorite foods that are 'typically' American. The NEP staff encourage the groups to explore why they eat the foods they eat. They also explored why it is important to

new Americans to continue food traditions from their home countries. In the next step they examined African, Arabic, Asian and Hispanic cultures. They divide into small groups and dive into a new culture. Each group receives a 'kit' for their culture containing pertinent information about the culture,

sample foods and pictures. The real learning then begins as the peers teach each other about the new culture.

Each meeting ends with a food experience which included ethnic fruits and vegetables. Participants said this was the first time they had tried fruits and vegetables such as the Asian pear, mango and jicama and they liked the new flavors and textures. They appreciated expanding their knowledge about foods of the world.

2000–2001 **ANNUAL REPORT**



A REPORT TO THE RESIDENTS OF LANCASTER COUNTY

Your Local Experts



Greetings,

University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County is a relevant, responsive and credible educational resource in our community.

In our mission of "Putting Knowledge to Work," we've collaborated with more than 240 agencies, organizations, businesses and schools to develop and deliver educational programs that impact individuals, their families, businesses, farms and local communities.

Here are some examples:

- Our youth education programs reached more than 28,000 youth.
- Lancaster Extension's Web site received 1,000,000+ hits.
- Lancaster Extension responded to nearly 30,000 phone calls from the public requesting information.
- 2,223 volunteers contributed 32,877 hours through Lancaster Extension programs.
- The biosolids program saved the county \$425,000 by keeping waste out of the landfill.
- A Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) partnership to develop a Head Lice Policy and educational package resulted in a 70% reduction in head lice cases in LPS.
- 76% of Nutrition Education Program (NEP) graduates adopted better nutrition habits and learned better ways to spend their food dollars.

I am pleased to share this annual report and hope you will note the value Cooperative Extension brings to the community.

Gary C. Bergman,
Extension Educator and
Unit Leader

University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension provides research-based information and extends the university's resources to urban and rural residents for use in everyday life in the areas of:

- **Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability**
- **Children, Youth and Families**
- **Food Safety and Quality**
- **Health and Wellness**
- **Strengthening Nebraska Communities**
- **Water Quality and Environment**

Cooperative Extension has 83 offices throughout the state providing counties with a locally available resource for individualized information and expert advice.

One recent caller to the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County commented that extension was helpful to him in many areas of his life and he could call about everything from "bugs to bananas!"

Cooperative Extension has extensive diagnostics capabilities. Residents are able to bring in plant or insect samples for identification and receive specific information for care, treatment or control methods.

Community groups and organizations often ask extension staff to present educational programs customized for their groups.

Because extension staff are locally based, they are able to be responsive to specific community needs and concerns.



University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County fulfills its mission of "Putting Knowledge to Work" through a wide variety of outreach programs and methods. Volunteer Master Gardeners such as Cindy Gabelhouse (above right) and Susan Fertig (above left) are available by phone during the growing season. Residents can bring in insects for identification (at left, Extension Associate Soni Cochran examines a millipede on a digital microscope). Extension professionals present countless programs, workshops and demonstrations, such as Alice Henneman's "Nutrition and Osteoporosis" presentation.



How Much is Expert Advice Worth?

University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County prides itself on being a reliable source of research-based information.

How much can this information be worth? For one Lancaster County farmer, the answer is \$8,000.

Larry Geiger, a part-time farmer, had been raising llamas on a Kentucky 31 tall fescue pasture for two years without any successful live births. A heartbreaking string of stillborns indicated a serious problem.

Geiger sought advice from other llama breeders, both locally and nationally. He even tore down his old barn and built a new one to eliminate any chance his llamas might be ingesting lead-based paint.

Geiger eventually contacted Extension Educator Tom Dorn, an expert in agriculture.

After hearing the llamas' symptoms, Dorn suspected the problem was related to the grass in the pasture. He recommended immediately removing the herd from the fescue pasture and feeding alternative forage. He also suggested a sample of fescue from the pasture be sent to a lab to test for fescue endophyte, which can be toxic to livestock. The tests came back positive.

Geiger killed the old pasture grass and replanted with a grass mixture that did not include Kentucky 31 fescue. Roughly one month after removing the herd from the fescue, the females began producing offspring. After one year, Geiger's herd has produced



Extension Educator Tom Dorn (right) inspects Larry Geiger's (left) pasture for fescue, which could contain a fungal endophyte toxic to livestock.

eight young llamas, now almost ready for sale.

Geiger told Dorn "I was getting so discouraged before you came out I was considering selling the herd. Now they are producing babies right and left. These babies will bring \$750 to \$3,000 each when we sell them. Your advice has made us at least \$8,000 in the first year."

Dorn has done much education about endophyte infested fescue in the past year, including working with UNL's Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources to develop a news release that went to Nebraska media.

This is just one example of the impact, economic and otherwise, that Cooperative Extension has in our communities.



Scott Young of the Food Bank of Lincoln inspects an Indian meal moth pheromone trap, which Lancaster Extension helped set up.

The Buzz on Controlling Insects and Other Pests

Who are you going to call when you have a pest in your home or yard? Animal Control? Except for a few select animals such as dogs, cats, skunks or bats, Animal Control refers callers to University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County!

Lancaster residents access extension's extensive pest management resources via the phone, the Web site, workshops, various publications or by bringing specimens to the office for identification.

This past year, Lancaster Extension purchased a digital microscope to assist with insect identification and for use in developing publications.

Lancaster Extension works increasingly with community organizations and professionals in disseminating pest control resources and assistance. Some of these agencies are Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department, Lincoln Public Schools and Lincoln Housing Authority.

Educators in other counties, states

and universities are using materials developed by Lancaster Extension staff. *The Cockroach Control Manual* was written as a reference for the Cockroach Combat Workshop, but more than 786 copies have been sold and thousands of people have accessed the information free on the Internet. K Sharpe of Cornell University wrote, "I examined your manual on the Web and find it to be one of the best references on cockroach control ever done. I was a professional pest control operator for five years and have never seen such a clear and concise presentation of cockroach control information."

Real estate licensees can receive continuing education credits from the Nebraska Real Estate Commission by attending termite workshops led by Lancaster Extension staff and held in cities throughout eastern Nebraska. Termite in-service trainings are also held across the state

for other Extension Educators. A manual, *Subterranean Termites: A Handbook for Homeowners*, was updated this past year for use by homeowners.

Lancaster Extension's entomology staff also provides workshops to farmers and agribusiness professionals regarding crop insect pests.

In addition to insects, Lancaster Extension provides pest management education on wildlife and other animals.



This image of a varied carpet beetle larva was taken with extension's new digital microscope for an in-house fact sheet and the Web site.



Extension Helps Food Bank Pinpoint Source of Moths

Last year, the Food Bank of Lincoln had a serious Indian meal moth infestation in their warehouse. They contacted Lancaster Extension for information, which led to an on-site inspection by Extension Educator Barb Ogg. She recommended the purchase of nontoxic Indian meal moth pheromone traps and showed food bank staff how to locate infestations using a triangulation method. Two separate infestations were eventually located and controlled.

The Lincoln Food Bank now routinely uses pheromone traps as a monitoring tool for early detection of moth infestations. Executive Director Scott Young says, "We monitor the traps weekly to prevent future infestations, thanks to extension. What great use of a resource — to the benefit of everyone."

Head Lice Video Gains Attention



Removing Head Lice Safely is an 8-minute video developed last year by Lancaster Extension staff in cooperation with other partners. This video is available free on the Web and is the most requested video on 5 City-TV. It has aired on Lincoln Cable Channel more than 20 times per month. 1,000 copies of the video have been sold to educators, health care workers, cosmetologists and parents. Lincoln Public Schools have asked to have the video translated into other languages — translations into Spanish and Arabic are underway.

Lincoln Public Schools reports a 70 percent reduction in head lice cases and Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department reports a 57.7 percent reduction in public health cases.



A still from the educational video, *Turf Establishment and Renovation*, developed by Lancaster Extension Educator Don Janssen (left) and Douglas Extension Educator John Fech (right).



Darren Binder demonstrates screening compost through a 1/2-inch screen.

Horticulture Programs Growing in Depth and Outreach

Cooperative Extension plays a vital role in teaching the community about horticulture issues customized for local weather, water, soil and pest conditions.

In 2001, Cooperative Extension in Lancaster horticulture staff:

- Answered more than 6,500 telephone calls
- Presented 86 educational programs to groups and through other venues such as home and garden shows
- Disseminated information through the media, such as

"Garden Gossip," a weekly column in the *Lincoln Journal Star*; *Backyard Farmer* on Nebraska ETV; *Lincoln Live* on KFOR radio; and Lancaster Extension's Horticulture Web pages

- Diagnosed problems via samples brought to the extension office or on-site

Lancaster Extension Educator Don Janssen teams with Douglas County Extension Educator John Fech to provide

Commercial Horticulture Clinics to educate employees in the horticulture industry about plant identification, problems and care of those plants. These employees are then able to pass this knowledge on to customers.

This year, Janssen and Fech developed two educational videos, *Turf Establishment & Renovation* and *Rose Culture and Care*. These videos will be used as training tools for the commercial horticulture industry and will be available for use at conferences and television broadcasts.

Composting Demonstrations Teach Community to Recycle Yard Waste

Lancaster Extension collaborated with the City of Lincoln Recycling Office to develop, establish and maintain a composting demonstration site at University Place Park, 50th and Colby Streets.

Last year 18 hands-on composting presentations were

conducted throughout Lincoln to teach citizens how to successfully compost yard waste in their own backyards. 920 residents attended these presentations.

The demonstration site has an informal, self-guided tour which an estimated 5,000 residents participated in.

Lancaster Extension also educates the public on the benefits of mulching through a "Bag-No-More" grass clippings campaign.

The City of Lincoln Recycling Office estimates these educational programs will extend the life of the present landfill by 3 to 5 years over the next 25 years.

Volunteers Tend To Master Gardener Program

The Master Gardener Training Program is a volunteer program where people are given training by University of Nebraska personnel and then in return provide 40 hours of volunteer time to educational extension programs such as:

- Answering horticulture phone calls
- Presenting educational

- programs and workshops
- Assisting in 4-H and other youth programs
- Establishing and maintaining community beautification projects

Extension Associate Mary Jane Frogge coordinates the Master Gardener program for Lancaster Extension.

The City of Lincoln Parks and

Recreation Department offer support to the Master Gardener trainings and in return, Master Gardeners provide educational information at public gardens.

In 2001, 40 Lancaster County Master Gardeners logged 1,868



Master Gardeners receive training (above) in exchange for volunteering their time to extension programs.

volunteer hours and had 9,693 direct clientele contacts.



Farmer Brad Moser (left) is one of many participants Extension Educator Corey Brubaker (right) works with on the Olive Creek Watershed Project (aerial view below superimposed with graphic detailing land use in the watershed).

“Lancaster County Extension has nationally recognized programs and staff. We are fortunate to have such a high caliber at the local level.”

—Wayne Heyen, president of Lancaster County Extension Board



Salt Valley Clean Lakes Project

University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County collaborates with 12 partners on the Salt Valley Clean Lakes Project, initiated in 1993.

The primary focus this year was on the Olive Creek Lake Watershed Project. Seven landowners in the watershed area have completed 10 conservation projects, with eight more projects pending. These projects include water and sediment control basins, tile outlet terrace systems, farm ponds and grass filter strips adjacent to stream channels.

The process is currently underway to begin similar conservation projects for the watershed above Wagon Train Lake.



LANCASTER COUNTY EXTENSION 2000-01 HONORS AND AWARDS

Computerized Financial Record-Keeping Workshop — National Association of Agricultural Agents' Search for Excellence in Farm and Ranch Financial Management, national finalist

earth wellness festival — Lincoln Public Schools' Volunteer Program Award, 4000 hour club

Nebraska Nutrition Education Program — National Health and Human Services' Food and Nutrition Programs, recognition award

THE NEBLINE (monthly newsletter) — National Association of Agricultural Agents' Team Newsletter, national winner

Removing Head Lice Safely video (developed by Barb Ogg and Soni Cochran) — national Telly Awards, finalist

Lorene Bartos, Deanna Karmazin, and Tracy Kulm — Nebraska Cooperative Extension Association's 4-H Section Team Award for 4-H marketing piece (county fair insert in THE NEBLINE)



Soni Cochran — University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension's Distinguished Associate Award

Lance Cummins-Brown — National Association of County Agricultural Agents' Search for Excellence in 4-H and Youth, regional winner and national finalist

Tom Dorn — National Association of Agricultural Agents' Distinguished Service Award

Arlene Hanna — Lincoln Public Schools Ventures in Partnerships' Pioneer Award

LaDeane Jha — University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension's Distinguished Educator Award

Deanna Karmazin — UNL Collegiate 4-H's Friend of 4-H; and Nebraska Cooperative Extension Association's 4-H Section Communicator Award for safety curriculum on fire safety

Virginia Piening — UNL Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources' Outstanding Employee Award

Agricultural Programs Remain Essential Part of Extension

Lancaster County has more farms than any other county in Nebraska according to the United States Department of Agriculture, with farm products bringing in more than \$82 million dollars.

University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension continues to make agricultural profitability and sustainability a priority issue.

Lancaster Extension fulfills this goal in part through several educational activities, including: private and commercial pesticide applicator certification training sessions, a chemigation certification training/testing session, a Crop Protection Clinic, an Irrigation Management Home Study Course and Computerized Financial Record-Keeping workshops. One participant of the latter said, "The income reports let me know how much I am actually making compared to my expenses. This lets me see if I need to budget my money better."

Following the 2000 drought,



Farmers learn better methods of record-keeping at two-day Computerized Financial Record-Keeping workshops.

there was increased interest in irrigation development. Lancaster Extension developed a spreadsheet called IRRIGCOST to assist farmers in estimating annualized costs of owning and operating an irrigation system.

Many agriculture producers access information from Lancaster Extension via the phone, Web site, in-house fact sheets and other publications.



Students at Norris learn water sampling techniques.

Local youth learn about Nebraska agriculture through programs such as the Agricultural Awareness Festival, the Ag Awareness Program and precision ag classes.

Pesticide Container Recycling

Lancaster Extension Educator Tom Dorn manages the Pesticide Container Recycling program for a 10-county area. In this program, pesticide containers are collected, ground into small chips to be recycled into parking lot tire bumpers, fence posts, traffic lane markers and more.

In Lancaster County last year, more than 3,600



A farmer returns empty pesticide containers for recycling.

pesticide containers were collected. Overall the program has diverted about 52 tons of plastic from area landfills.

Biosolids Program Merges Precision Ag With Waste Recycling

While most of extension's programs are educational in nature, the Biosolids Management Program is a program in which University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County coordinates distribution and application of biosolids to agricultural cropland for the City of Lincoln Wastewater and Solid Waste Division.

Biosolids are an excellent source of organic fertilizer for crops not in the human food chain.

Lancaster Extension makes use of the latest technologies in precision agriculture to ensure biosolids are applied in an environmentally sound method:

- Global Positioning System (GPS) measures exact field area and record soil sample and



City of Lincoln "digesters" (above) process sewage into a suitable organic fertilizer for crops. Extension Technologist Dave Smith (right) takes soil samples to determine the amount of biosolids to apply per field. After transport to the fields (right center), the biosolids are applied to the fields (far right).



storage sites.

- Soil samples are taken to test existing levels of nitrates, which determine how many loads to apply per acre.
- Application equipment is

calibrated to ensure appropriate application rates.

- A computer database, Geographical Information System (GIS), is used to keep records of the entire process.



Last year, more than 25,000 tons of biosolids were delivered and applied to 29 fields. This saved taxpayers \$425,000 by keeping this recyclable waste out of the landfill.



The City of Fremont is planning to use Lincoln's model of having extension coordinate the Biosolids Program for their wastewater treatment facility currently under construction.

Helping People Put Knowledge

University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension extends the university's research-based information to Nebraskans while engaging with people in putting this knowledge to work. As the front door to the university, extension is committed to being relevant and responsive to the evolving needs of local communities and their citizens.

Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County utilizes the newest technologies and multiple media avenues to be *your* source of information around the clock.



Publications



Presentations, Demonstrations, Programs and Workshops



2,000+ Pages of Web Content!

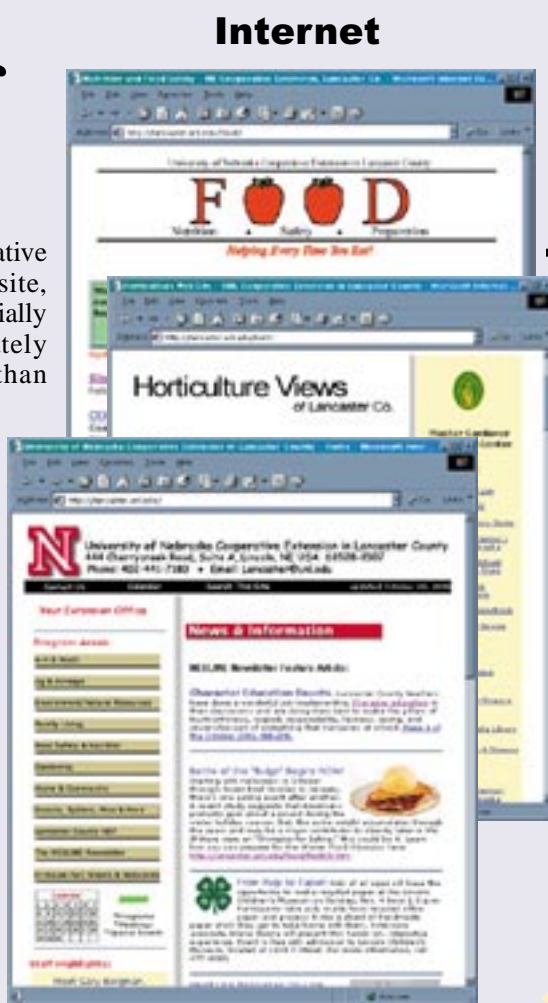
The University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County's Web site, lancaster.unl.edu, has grown substantially since 1998, from receiving approximately 100,000 total hits annually to more than 1,000,000!

The Web site, which is updated daily, features more than 2,000 Web pages of content. Online Web resources include:

- News and information section (updated weekly)
- Programs and event calendar
- A searchable database
- Photo pages of extension events
- Information on extension programs, including 4-H and youth, water conservation and Nutrition Education Program
- Horticulture tips and a Master Gardener diagnostic center
- Extensive pest management resources (including multimedia clips)
- Food, nutrition and safety resources including "Cook It Quick"
- Agriculture and acreage information and links
- Online versions of in-house fact sheets, THE NEBLINE and other publications

Lancaster Extension also utilizes other online resources such as e-newsletters, e-mail updates and response to e-mail queries.

The Ag and Acreage Web site was recognized as the national winner in the National Association of County Agricultural Agents Communications Awards Competition last year. The Food Safety and Nutrition section of the Web site has received the highest possible rating by Tufts University Nutrition Navigator — "Among the Best!" Several individual in-house fact sheets have received the Lightspan STUDYWEB Academic Excellence Award.



Internet



Displays, Booths and Exhibits



Video

An "Omnimedia" Presence

With the advent of new technologies, extension staff are now moving towards an "omnimedia" programming strategy, using multiple media formats and distribution channels to meet consumer information needs. This goes beyond "multi," or many, media towards "omni," or combining all media to enhance total impact.



"Thanks for having this information online. It really helped at 11 p.m. last night!!"

—Lisa, www.lancaster.unl.edu Web site user

To Work

“Extension leverages its resources and those of the Lincoln community through numerous local partnerships. This enhances educational opportunities for a broader audience.”

—Shelia Kepler, member of Lancaster County Extension Board



Information Flows Both Ways

Cooperative Extension listens, respects and responds to residents' needs and concerns

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Presentations, Workshops



Phone



Youth Groups, Activities, and Schools



TRAINING THE TRAINERS

In addition to direct outreach, University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension trains individuals who go out into the community and teach others. This includes teachers, business professionals and employees, food and other service industry workers, government employees, health professionals, day-care providers and community volunteers.



VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are a vital part of Cooperative Extension, with Lancaster County benefitting last year from 2,223 volunteers investing 32,877 hours of volunteer time. Independent Sector values volunteer time at \$15.39/hour (for more information see www.independentsector.org), which would put a total value of Lancaster Extension's volunteers at \$505,977.03.

Partnerships

Extension relies increasingly on partnerships. It is through collaboration and engagement that extension is able to reach thousands of Lancaster County residents. The following is a list of organizations, agencies, businesses, schools and more that University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County has partnered with in the past year:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| Agrilance (Farmland and Cenex Land O'Lakes) | Lancaster Event Center | Northeast Family Center |
| Alltel Communications | Lands for the Seventh Generation | Northwood Child Care |
| American Dairy Association/ Dairy Council of Nebraska | Lincoln Action Program | Novartis Consumer Health, Inc. |
| American Heart Association - Lincoln Division | Lincoln Center Kiwanis Club | Oak Creek Valley Bank |
| Americorps/VISTA | Lincoln Christian Schools #1 & #3 | Oak Valley School |
| Amigos, Inc | Lincoln Community Development Block Grant Program | Olsson Associates |
| Arends Interiors | Lincoln Council on Alcohol and Drugs | Otte Oil, Fertilizer, and Propane - Wahoo |
| Asian Cultural and Community Center | Lincoln Housing Authority | Omaha Agri-business Club |
| Asset Building Coalition | Lincoln Indian Center | Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District |
| Audubon Nebraska | Lincoln Interfaith Council | Paragon Sanitation |
| Bennet Public Schools | Lincoln Lancaster County Food and Hunger Coalition | Parent Aid Support Group |
| Blessed Sacrament School | Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department | Parkview Christian School |
| BryanLGH Medical Center | Lincoln-Lancaster Immunization and Vaccination Effort | Partners For A Safer Community |
| Burden Sales, Inc. | Lincoln Literacy Council | People's City Mission |
| Burlington Northern Railroad | Lincoln Medical Education Foundation | Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company |
| Burke Plaza Senior Housing | Lincoln Pantry Network | Pfizer Animal Health, Inc. |
| Cabin Realty & Ag Services | Lincoln Public Schools | Pioneer HiBred International |
| Campbell's Nurseries & Garden Centers, Inc. | Lincoln Solid Waste Management Association | Pioneers Park Nature Center |
| Capitol Aviation, Inc. | Lower Platte North Natural Resources District | Plymouth Coop - Fairbury, Odell, and Wilber |
| Capitol Child Care | Lower Platte South Natural Resources District | Preparation for Adult Living (PALS) |
| Carol Yoakum Family Resource Center | Lutheran Family Service | Professional Lawncare Association |
| Cathedral of the Risen Christ School | Mahoney Manor Mail Plus | Providers Network |
| Catholic Social Services | Malcolm Public Schools | Psychotherapy Associates |
| Cedar Ridge Spraying - Ashland | March of Dimes | Raymond Central School - Valparaiso |
| Cedars Youth Services | Matt Talbott Kitchen Life Skills | Re:Build Associates |
| CenterPointe | McCullough-Landell Implement | Real Estate Owners and Managers Association |
| City of Lincoln Animal Control | Mediation Center | Red Hawk Nursery |
| City of Lincoln Citizen Information Center | Mercy Housing | Retired and Senior Volunteer Program |
| City of Lincoln Parks and Recreation Department | Messiah Lutheran School | Rotary Club #14 |
| City of Lincoln Public Works and Utilities | Milford Elementary School | Sacred Heart School |
| City of Lincoln Recycling Office | Monsanto (DeKalb Genetics and ASGROW Seeds) | SAFE Kids Coalition |
| City of Lincoln Wastewater Division | NASA | Salvation Army |
| City of Lincoln Water System | National Recycles Day Association | St. Elizabeth's Regional Medical Center |
| Clear Choice Water | National Youth Sports Program | St. Elizabeth Burn Center |
| Commodity Supplemental Food Program | NE Ag in the Classroom | St. John's Catholic School |
| Council of Family Centers | NE Agribusiness Association | St. Joseph's Catholic School |
| Crossroads Senior Housing | NE Beef Council | St. Marks Church |
| Doane College | NE Beekeepers Association | St. Mary's Catholic School |
| Eagle Elementary School | NE Cattleman's Association | St. Patrick's Catholic School |
| Earl May Garden Centers | Lincoln/Seward County Affiliates | St. Peter Catholic School |
| Employment First | NE Community Nutrition Partnership Council | St. Teresa's Catholic School |
| Environmental Health Systems, Inc. | NE Cooperative Development Center | Sandhills Publishing Company |
| Experian | NE Corn Development, Utilization & Marketing Board | School Districts #69, #152, #153, #158 |
| Faces of the Middle East | NE Corn Growers | Square D |
| Faith Lutheran School | NE Corn Fed Beef | Southeast Community College - Lincoln |
| Family Service | NE Credit Union League | Southeast Nebraska Area Producers Cooperative |
| Farm Credit Services of America | NE Department of Agriculture | Southeast Nebraska Coop - Beatrice |
| Farmers Cooperative Co. - Waverly and Bennet | NE Department of Education | Southpointe Family Center |
| Farmers National Company | NE Department of Environmental Quality | Southwood Lutheran Church |
| Farmers Union Coop - Gretna | NE Department of Health and Human Services | State Farm Insurance |
| First Plymouth Church | NE Department of Natural Resources | State Fire Marshall's Office |
| Firth Coop - Princeton | NE Environmental Trust | Tabitha Intergenerational Program |
| Folsom Children's Zoo and Botanical Gardens | NE Farm Bureau - State Office and Lancaster County Chapter | Taylor Productions |
| Food Bank of Lincoln | NE Game and Parks Commission | Teaching and Learning with Children (TLC) |
| Food Net | NE Home Builders Association | Teen Pregnancy Prevention Council |
| The Fort | NE Humanities Council | Three Eagles Broadcasting |
| Frontier Coop - Mead and David City | NE LEAD Program | Touchstones |
| Giffard Farm | NE Nurserymen Association | Transitional Living Group - Cedars Youth Services |
| Good Neighbor Community Center | NE Pest Control Association Members | Trinity Lutheran School |
| Goodwill | NE Pork Producers | Trinity United Methodist Church |
| Goodyear Tire Company | NE Real Estate Commission | Turning Point - Cedars Youth Services |
| Gordon Chapelle Hoof Trimming Inc. | NE Restaurant Association | Union Bank and Trust Company |
| Great Plains Girl Scout Council | The NE Rural Development Commission | Urban Indian Center |
| The Groundwater Foundation | NE School Age Childcare Association | US Army Corps of Engineers |
| Hamlow Elementary School - Waverly | NE State Forester | US Environmental Protection Agency |
| Hanna Architects | NE Statewide Arboretum | USDA |
| Helen Hyatt Elementary School | NE Soybean Board | Valentino's Inc. |
| Henry Doorly Zoo | NE Water Environment Association | Ventures in Partnerships |
| Hispanic Community Center | NE Well Drillers Association | Wachiska Audubon Society |
| Human Services Federation | NE Wheat Board | WasteCap |
| Hylina Hatchery | Neighborhood Inc. Youth | Water Environment Federation |
| INFORM | Norris High School | Wausau Insurance |
| Iowa State University | Vocational and Industrial Clubs of America | Waverly Public Schools |
| Indian Center JTPA | Norris Public Schools | Wells Fargo |
| Keep America Beautiful | North American Martyrs School | WIC Advisory Committee |
| Keep Lincoln-Lancaster County Beautiful | | Willard Community Center |
| Keep Nebraska Beautiful | | Williams Garden Center |
| Kinko's | | Women Involved in Farm Economics |
| Lancaster County Red Cross | | World Bird Sanctuary |
| Lancaster County Agricultural Society | | Young Families Program - LMEF |
| Lancaster/Saunders School to Career | | YWCA |

27,676 Lancaster Youth Participated

Since the beginning 99 years ago, 4-H has been established on a community club model. However, 4-H also has organized activities which 4-H members and nonmembers can participate in, and in recent years, 4-H has expanded its outreach to a broader base of youth through School Enrichment programs. 4-H is part of University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension. While 4-H is still well rooted in the historic base of rural America, today's membership is increasingly urban youth. In the past year, 4-H programs reached 71 percent of the youth in Lancaster County — 27,676 — nearly double the state enrollment percentage.

4-H Clubs Remain Heart of the Organization

4-H clubs are open to youth ages 5–19, and members learn practical skills as well as life skills such as solving problems and communicating.

In traditional 4-H clubs, members complete several projects a year, choosing from more than 150 project areas available, including: aerospace, photography, flowers/gardening, cooking, clothing, cats, dogs, rabbits, horses, livestock, woodworking and small engines. There are also nontraditional 4-H clubs which focus on one particular area, such as small pets, rabbits, or chess (see story below). Members may also belong to more than one club or participate in projects individually.

In 2001, Lancaster County had 98 4-H clubs with 1,054 organized members. Shimmering Shamrocks is a typical example of these clubs. Started and led by Becky Vahle who had been a Lancaster 4-H'er in her youth, Shimmering Shamrocks has seven members and meets twice a month. Meetings are held at and rotated among the member's homes. At least one parent of each member attends the meetings with their children. Vahle attributes the support of the members' families as critical to the success of the club.

Shimmering Shamrocks has business meetings once a month in which the officers (currently all members hold an office) plan and decide what projects to work on and accomplish. Members focus on lessons and projects during the rest of the meetings. In the past year, members worked on a variety of projects including clothing units, cooking, rockery, woodworking, demonstrations and table setting.



A scrapbook page from Shimmering Shamrock member Carly Belz' Member's Record.

All of the Shimmering Shamrock members participated in the 2001 Lancaster County Fair, exhibiting a total of 63 projects combined.

For the holidays last year, members of the group went Christmas caroling at Lancaster Manor and gave residents door decorations they had made. The club also made gifts to send to families of the September 11th tragedy.

Vahle says "It has been amazing to watch these talented young people learn life skills which they use to better themselves, their families and our community."

4-H Activities Offer Hands-On Learning by Doing

4-H offers members and sometimes nonmembers a variety of activities and opportunities outside the club level.

The largest activity of the 4-H year is the Lancaster County Fair (see story below). However, there are events throughout the year, such as the annual Speech Contest, Music Contest and Demonstration Contest.

4-H livestock exhibitors have several opportunities to participate in activities across the state, including progress shows, the District Horse Show, State Fair, and the Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Livestock Exposition.

Connie Lemke, a member of 4-H Ambassadors and 4-H Teen Council said, "Since I've been in 4-H I have accomplished many goals, one of my favorite was the Song Contest. There are many other fun opportunities 4-H has to offer, from learning to cook, first aid, livestock, 4-H camps, to meeting people all over the country."

Non-4-H youth can participate in 4-H Clover College, an annual four-day series of workshops, or State 4-H summer camps.

4-H also offers a wide variety of leadership possibilities, through awards, scholarships, 4-H Ambassadors, Citizen Washington Focus (CWF), 4-H Teen Council and 4-H Council.

Each year, 4-H Teen Council plans, organizes and leads a 5th and 6th grade overnight Lock-In. This year's Lock-In featured a jungle theme, educa-



Bug catching (above) and paper maché (right) are two of 18 workshops kids can choose from when attending the four-day camp, Clover College.



tional activities, food and crafts. Jacob Messick, a member of the 4-H Teen Council, said that organizing the Lock-In was "a lot of fun, and seeing participants come to it shows that kids are interested in 4-H activities and have fun attending them."



JoHanna Madsen

Last year, Lancaster County 4-H'er JoHanna Madsen was selected through the 4-H Record Book Awards Program as one of four 4-H'ers from Nebraska to attend the National 4-H Conference.

Madsen said of the conference, "Through visiting the Department of Agriculture and meeting 4-H'ers from across the nation, national delegates learned the uniqueness of the 4-H program's grassroots structure. At the conclusion of the conference, I felt I had indeed built 'a global community,' as the theme emphasized."



Members of the new Checkmates club challenge each other to a match during a 4-H club meeting.

New Chess 4-H Club

The Checkmates 4-H chess club is a pilot project started in January 2001 by James Walla and Julie Thomson. These parents were already involved in 4-H with their daughter Terra.

James had the idea of a chess club because "chess is objectively a means to help the young mind develop." Julie organized the club with Lancaster Extension 4-H staff and James developed the materials for the program. Nebraska 4-H did not previously have a chess project.

Within one year, the chess club has built up a membership of 30 registered youth ranging in age from 7–14 years. Parents are very supportive, with many attending meetings.

Meetings usually include 15–20 minutes of instruction and then members divide up for informal chess matches. For the county fair, members had a choice of six projects they could enter, including chess-related reports, interviews and posters.

Kyle Pederson, president of The Checkmates, explains his involvement, "I like chess. And I like to play chess with kids my own age because my dad always beats me at it."



"Through this wonderful organization, I have learned how to be an individual and make my own safe/smart decisions. Through 4-H Council, I'm also learning to be a leader."

—Bryce Lemke, member of 4-H Council, 4-H Teen Council and 4-H Ambassadors

County Fair Commitment



Kevin Hajek competed in 16 horse classes at this year's county fair, including Halter (above). Lancaster County is a leading county in registered 4-H horse projects. Active participants learn equestrian skills, a high degree of self discipline and responsibility for care of their animals.

in 4-H Programs Last Year

4-H School Enrichment Programs Head to Classrooms



School Enrichment programs have been a part of Nebraska's 4-H program since 1974 and have focused primarily on science. These programs include teacher guides, videos, books, posters, experiments, games and more. Extension staff develop the programs, train teachers on their use and go into the classrooms for hands-on activities with students.

Currently in Lancaster County, the projects available to teachers are:

- **EMBRYOLOGY** — through incubating and hatching baby chicks in the classroom, third graders study life-cycles
- **GARBOLOGY** — introduces second graders to solid waste management and the three R's: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle



Extension Associate Arlene Hanna (above) teaches fifth graders how pollution affects aquifers as part of 4-H Water Riches.

turning garbage into compost

- **BLUE SKY BELOW MY FEET** — links space technology to the everyday interests of fourth grade students

- **4-H WATER RICHES** — fifth graders determine ways to manage our water supply and commit to water preservation and conservation
- In the past year, 11,470 Lancaster county youth participated in these School Enrichment programs.

“4-H programs are a solid investment in today's youth. 4-H is a proven way to teach young Heads, Hearts and Hands Healthy ways of living.”

—Keith Dey,
4-H Council
President and
ex officio member
of Lancaster County
Extension Board

Nutrition Education Programs for Youth



First grade students at Lakeview make healthy “Yummy Bugs” snacks as part of Nutrition Education Program's 4-H School Enrichment programs.

Cooperative Extension's Nutrition Education Program (NEP) offers several 4-H School Enrichment programs to qualifying limited resource schools.

NEP has developed supplemental kits of hands-on educational experiences designed to enhance first, fourth and fifth grade school health curriculum. Teachers may request these kits for three-week periods, and an extension staff member presents a handwashing and healthy snack food preparation activity in the classrooms as part of the program.

For grades kindergarten, second and third, NEP offers classroom presentations teaching proper handwashing and healthy

eating through the food guide pyramid.

In addition to NEP's School Enrichment programs, NEP provides nutrition programs at a variety of community sites such as summer youth camps, preschool and school-age childcare centers and teen residential treatment programs.

During the 2000-2001 school year, 2,437 Lancaster County youth participated in NEP youth presentations.

Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County collaborates with 12 community partners to present the earth wellness festival, a yearlong school curriculum with a one-day festival offering 2,984 fifth graders hands-on experiences to discover the interdependency of land, water, air and living resources.



Extension Associate Deanna Karmazin (left) assists a fifth-grade student making recycled paper at the annual earth wellness festival.

Character Counts! Youth Development Programs

More than 45 public, private and home schools in Lancaster County have implemented Character Counts! programs in their classrooms. Character Counts! is a character education project developed by the Josephson Institute of Ethics to teach youth the “Six Pillars of Character”: trustworthiness, fairness, caring, respect, responsibility and citizenship.

In Nebraska, Character Counts! is

part of the state's 4-H program and is coordinated through Cooperative Extension. Extension staff, in cooperation with local schools and agencies, provides character education training to teachers, childcare providers and community professionals.

Workshops are also provided to parents to support their children's character education.

Leading with Character Counts! camps are two-day workshops which extension staff lead for middle school youth.

Last year, 18,254 Lancaster County youth participated in Character Counts! programs.



Extension Educator LaDeane Jha (above) teaches students in Real World — Real Decisions.



“The Wall” is part of the TRUST course used in Leading with Character Counts! camps.

Showcases 4-H Members to a Healthy Community

At the 2001 Lancaster County Fair, 3,841 exhibits were showcased by 633 4-H members.

This was the first county fair held at the new Lancaster Event Center. 4-H'ers, superintendents and other volunteers put in long hours prior to the fair making displays, setting up concession stands and preparing the new facilities.

New measures were implemented in the livestock areas to increase biosecurity. These included isolating the swine and disinfecting pens and arenas.

4-H Council managed and staffed the concession stands, raising money for funds which go back into 4-H programs.

The county fair marks the end of the activity year for 4-H members, who work the rest of the year on projects, many of which are exhibited.

Winners at the county level go on to State Fair.



Participants in the 4-H Dog Show take their place before entering the arena.

Volunteers Make a Difference



Extension Educator Lorene Bartos (left) applauds as Barb (center) and Ron (right) Suing are awarded County/City Volunteers of the Month.

Volunteers donate their time and talents to University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County programs through a variety of ways: Master Gardeners, 4-H leaders and superintendents, NEP volunteers, earth wellness festival presenters and assistants, Character Counts! volunteers and Family Community Educational (FCE) Club members. 4-H members often volunteer in community-related projects. In November 2001, two extension volunteers, Barb and Ron Suing were recognized by the Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) and the Lancaster County Board of Commissioners as the County/City Volunteers of the Month. The Suings have served as 4-H leaders a combined 28 years. Lancaster Extension thanks all its volunteers for helping to make a difference!

Nutrition & Food Safety Essential to Health of Community

Nutrition Programs For Health's Sake

Dietary factors are associated with 4 of the 10 leading causes of death (coronary heart disease, some types of cancer, stroke and type 2 diabetes) and with osteoporosis, which affects 1 in 2 women over age 50.

University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County helps people eat healthier through a variety of educational and outreach methods.

"Nutrition and Osteoporosis" was developed as a workshop offered to worksites and community groups. Articles were also distributed via THE NEBLINE, the FOOD Web site, an e-mail newsletter and in-house fact sheets. Response was so positive the Power-Point presentation component was posted on the Internet and subse-

quently downloaded by more than 3,000 educators in Lancaster County and throughout the United States.

The "Cook It Quick" program was created for both onsite presentations and for access over the Internet. Materials stress quick and nutritious food preparation and food safety tips.

Food Reflections is an e-mail newsletter sent to more than 6,300 health professionals, educators and consumers. Each month, a nutrition or food safety topic is discussed in "how-to" language. One subscriber, Suzi, wrote, "Not only do you do creative, high-quality work, but you are generous and share it far and wide! Thank you



Extension Educator Alice Henneman (left) and Mary Torell of the Nebraska Department of Agriculture combine nutrition education and food safety information in a presentation.

for another terrific resource from University of Nebraska Extension."

The "Pyramid Power: the Food Guide Game," which Lancaster Extension staff developed in 1994, continues to be a useful educational tool, with more than 2,000 educators in all 50 states having purchased the game.



Handling Food Safely

Food safety is a farm-to-table issue. Cooperative Extension is the lead agency in Lancaster County for educating consumers about food safety. Lancaster Extension also partners with community organizations in providing training to commercial food service establishments.

Consumers are reached through programs, presentations, booths, Web articles, e-newsletters and news releases through the media. Many consumers call the extension office with home food safety concerns.

Lancaster Extension developed a game, "Don't Get Bugged by a Foodborne Illness," for educators to teach consumers important food safety practices. The game has been recognized by an award from the National Extension Association of Family & Consumer Sciences. Approximately 3,000 copies of the game have been sold to educators nationally and internationally.

The ServSafe Program provides training on safe food handling practices to food service establishments. Lancaster Extension partners with UNL, Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department and the Nebraska Restaurant Association in this program.

Extension also provides yearly training for child care provider directors and cooks in cooperation with the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department and the State Department of Education.

Lancaster Extension and County Benefit from AmeriCorps*VISTA



VISTA member Boshra Rida (left) assists a Norris student at a Leading With Character Counts! Camp

AmeriCorps*VISTA is a national program that places full-time volunteers in local organizations for one-year terms. University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County has two Volunteers In Service To America (VISTA), Ali Alkhazraji and Boshra Rida. Both of these VISTA members assist in developing ways to reach communities not previously covered by extension's programs, with a special focus on character education.

TRANSLATION EFFORTS

With the help of Lancaster Extension Community Coordinator Sief Mahagoub, extension has begun translating educational materials into other languages including Arabic, Spanish, Russian and Vietnamese.

Extension Builds Strong Families and Communities

Leadership and community development, as well as fostering family strengths, are by-products of most of Cooperative Extension programs. Extension also has programs specific to these areas.

Extension partners with a variety of community agencies to present workshops such as Strengthening Families, resource management and basic investing, Real World — Real Decisions, Parents Forever (for divorcing parents) and other Family Strengths programs.

Leadership, teamwork and a better understanding of self and others are developed through Real Colors Matrixx and Myers

Briggs Temperament Inventory (MBTI) Workshops delivered by Extension Educator LaDeane Jha. One participant commented: "Wow, this really opened my eyes. My boss isn't a jerk — he's just different than me."

In addition to direct outreach in these issues, extension provides staff development and training to educators, government officials, agency workers and community groups, both locally and regionally. Some of these workshops include leadership trainings, diversity issues, poverty simulations, Success Outcome Markers for Extension and character education trainings.

Nutrition Education Programs for Limited Resource Families

University of Nebraska's Cooperative Extension's Nutrition Education Program (NEP) helps limited resource families learn to prepare nutritious and safe foods while stretching their food dollars.

In NEP, qualifying adults learn through small groups at agency or community sites, or individually through home visits, mail lessons or phone consultations.

"I've learned how to include dairy foods like cheese and yogurt in my diet to get calcium," says Michelle, a Lancaster County Early Head Start mother who can't drink milk.

This year, NEP teamed up with the Food Bank of Lincoln to educate families on how to use potatoes donated by the Idaho Potato Growers, and with community agencies to provide food preparation and safety information to families receiving holiday food baskets.

Lancaster Extension NEP partners with 87 agencies and coalitions and receives funding from the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) through USDA, the Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program (FSNEP) through Health and Human Services, Lincoln Housing Authority, Early Head Start through Lincoln Action Program, and other sources. Women, Infants and Children (WIC) continues to be a primary partner.

More than 2,426 Lancaster



Nutrition advisors Sandy Phillips (above left) and Patrice Broussard (above right) demonstrate use of perishable foods at Lincoln Action Program.



Extension Assistant Karen Wobig presents "Who Wants to be a Milk-N-Aire" to Mahoney Manor residents.

County residents received NEP education this past year. According to Extension Educator Maureen Burson, extension research shows 76 percent of NEP program graduates adopt better nutrition habits, 76 percent learn better ways to spend their food dollars and 57 percent make food safety improvements.

Family and Community Education Clubs



Longtime FCE members were honored at this year's Achievement Night in Lancaster County, including Donna Gill (above left), a member for 45 years.

Family and Community Education (FCE) clubs are an educational, social and community-oriented program designed to meet the needs and interests of Nebraska homemakers.



"Our local extension Office honors the land grant mission of the University of Nebraska. We have progressed as a people because of the educational opportunities and delivery of research-based knowledge through Cooperative Extension."

—Alice Doane, member of Lancaster County Extension Board

Clarice's Column



Clarice Steffens
FCE Council Chair

What has happened to 2001? It is slipping by us so quickly! FCE activities for 2001 culminated on Oct. 23 with the celebration of achievements for the year. Kathy Peters shared her doll collection with us as we shared some of our own collections and



childhood memories with others. Our clubs continue to do worthwhile projects for the benefit of the community. Items for the Food Bank were collected that evening, but other groups such as Friendship Home, Headstart, etc. continue to also benefit from FCE. Our members were most generous in helping build the scholarship fund, so we are assured another member of

the community will receive a scholarship in 2002. As usual, clubs provided us with an excellent variety of programs for our Council meetings and the refreshments were always the best! I hope more members will take advantage of this opportunity to enjoy the programs and get to know our membership.

As 2001 activities are ending, plans are also being made for 2002. Clubs have been reorganized and new committees are being formed. The new schedule of programs will be available in January.

And now we are well into the holiday season. The last few months have certainly been trying, but have also been a time to think about what is important. Too often we take too many things for granted. As members of FCE, family, be it by relationship or association, is a top priority. Even though we think our daily lives are trivial, it is a time to continue to do what we have always done. The trivial may be the things that create the best memories. So take this time to celebrate and enjoy your family and make this a truly great season.
Happy Holidays!

★ FCE News ★

Family Community Education (FCE) Leader Training Lessons for 2002

All leader training lessons will be presented at 1 p.m.

- Aim for Fitness, January 7
- Positive Communication for Families, January 29
- Growing Communities of Character at Work, February 26
- Nutrition and Osteoporosis, March 26
- Energy Isn't the Only Thing You Will Save, September 24

Study lessons available include:

- Long Term Care: Options, Costs and Preparation
- Parents Again: Grandparents Becoming "Grand" Parents
- Servant Leadership
- Telemedicine: The Future is Here
- When a Loved One or Dear Friend Dies

Storing Holiday Decorations

The holiday season is over, the tree is looking a little dry and it is time to take down and put away our seasonal decorations for another year. Since many of our decorations represent an investment in time, money and memories, they deserve proper care and storage and should be cleaned and organized in ways that will best preserve them.

Look all decorations over as they are taken down. Washable decorations, such as tablecloths, should be laundered before storing. Dusty ornaments or other decorations should be wiped clean and tree lights should be dusted and inspected for burned-out bulbs (be sure to unplug before doing this).

Use large, sturdy cardboard boxes for storing bulbs, ornaments and lights. Select boxes that are fairly shallow, but large enough so two or three boxes hold all the ornaments. Wrap

fragile bulbs and ornaments in tissue paper and stack the remaining ornaments (from heavy to light) on layers of tissue paper. Angel hair and tinsel can be stored between ornaments for added protection. Remove hooks and hangers from each ornament, and store them separately in a small box or envelope.

Gather strings of tree lights carefully to avoid tangling. Wrap loosely around a large, flat piece of cardboard. Store the tree stand in its original box.

After the boxes are packed, clearly label the contents on the

outside of each box and then fill the box with the same items from year to year.

Designate an area of a closet, basement, attic or garage, and use the same space every year. Clean the storage area thoroughly each year before returning the decorations to it. Keep boxes off the floor to keep moisture out. If stored in the attic or outside garage, be sure extreme temperature and humidity changes will not harm any of the items in the boxes.

Adapted from an article by Linda Adler, Extension Specialist. (LJ)

Make a Family New Year's Resolution

Very often we all make individual New Year's resolutions and a few weeks later, we've forgotten them or moved on to something else. Why not make a family resolution this year—one you will all be committed to and remind one another about throughout the year?

One suggestion is to decide as a family to focus on improving social justice in the community. Pick an issue your family believes needs improving and work together to make a difference. Read about the social justice issue you have chosen, watch movies that highlight the issue, talk about injustice and figure out something tangible you can do in the community.

As Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

—LaDeane Jha, Extension Educator

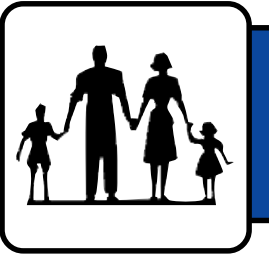
headaches.

Although there are many reasons for depression during the holiday season, one of the most common is unrealistic expectations for the holidays. Popular images, such as those promoted on television, paint an unrealistic image of perfect families having perfect holiday celebrations—an

ideal that few of us attain. For many people, large family gatherings can be depressing because of internal problems such as illness, death, divorce or certain family members simply not getting along with each other. Other major reasons for

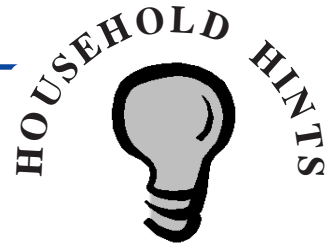
see DEPRESSION on page 11

Family Living



"When you get into a tight place and everything goes against you, till it seems you could not hold on a minute longer, never give up then, for that is just the place and time that the tide will turn."

—Harriet Beecher Stowe



by Lorene Bartos, Extension Educator

Stain removal tips

Beverages (wine, alcohol and soft drinks)

Sponge with cool water. Soak for 15 minutes in 1 quart of lukewarm water, 1/2 teaspoon liquid dish detergent and 1 tablespoon of white vinegar. Launder. If stain remains, soak in an enzyme presoak for 30 minutes.

Candle Wax

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

Gravy

Sponge with dry-cleaning solvent or use prewash stain remover. Rinse with water. Air dry, then apply heavy-duty liquid detergent to stain and launder.

Model the Behavior You Expect from Your Teen

If we want our teens to read and perform well in school, we need to make sure our behaviors support the intended goal. How can we tell our teens to read, if they never see their mom or dad pick up a book? The best way to facilitate these issues is for us to model the behavior we wish to see and work together with our teens. For example, if your teen is struggling with school, you

can make arrangements with your teen to go to the library together. This does not mean we should do the work for our teens. Instead, we should model the desire to learn and, at the same time, demonstrate support for our teens.

Source: Laura M. Stanton, Ohio State University (LJ)

CHARACTER COUNTS! Corner

Caring

To me the holiday season heightens awareness of those around us who may be in need of a little extra care. Purchasing mittens for a mitten tree, donating cans of food to a food bank, buying gifts for "Operation Santa", taking home-baked goodies to a neighbor or shoveling snow from someone's walk are all ways we demonstrate we care. As we put the needs of others before our own, we model caring for our children and help them develop a spirit of giving that strengthens their character throughout life.

—LaDeane Jha, Extension Educator





4-H & Youth

4-H CAN Fight Hunger

In an effort to fight hunger, Nebraska 4-H will be conducting a 4-H CAN Fight Hunger Campaign. The goal is collecting 4000 pounds of food. Collect donated food now until Jan. 5, 2002 and donate it to a charity of your 4-H club's choice. You can also bring it to the extension office and we will donate it to the food pantry. Please report to



Tracy the total weight of food collected, the number of youth and adult volunteers, the number of total volunteer hours, the agencies and/or groups who benefitted from the food drive, and any publicity the project received. Call Tracy at 441-7180 for more information and for 4-H CAN Fight Hunger promotional material. (TK)

4-H Volunteer Forum

The 2002 Nebraska State 4-H Volunteer Forum will be held Feb. 15-16 in Grand Island. This forum is a conference developed by a committee of 4-H volunteers from across the state.

Network with other 4-H leaders, exchange successful 4-H programs among 4-H leaders and be introduced to new areas and projects. There will be numerous workshops

offering hands-on learning experiences and new ideas and programs designed to enhance your club.

Anyone interested in 4-H is welcome to attend. Applications for scholarships from the State 4-H Office are due Dec. 15. Applications for scholarships from the 4-H Council are also available.

Contact Tracy at 441-7180 for more information. (TK)

Fall Rabbit Clinic a Success

The Fall Rabbit Clinic was held on Saturday, Nov. 10 at the extension office. It was a great clinic for both new 4-H rabbit exhibitors and current exhibitors who just wanted some additional information about caring for and showing their rabbits. There was a demonstration on tattooing, and information was shared about different breeds of rabbits,

housing and care of rabbits and how to read the fair book.

Thanks to all of the exhibitors and friends of the 4-H program who assisted and shared their knowledge, including: Teri Bramhall, Lindsay Brinson, Mary Cudaback, Dawn Eggert, Judy Fitzgerald, Kirstin and Rodney Liljestrand, Lance Maahs, Ken Majors and Emily

Morton.

In the upcoming months, look for more information about our upcoming Spring Rabbit Clinic and Show. The clinic will be held at 6:30-9 p.m., Thursday, March 14 at the Lancaster Extension Education Center and the show on Saturday, March 16 at the Lancaster Event Center.

Getting a New Pet for the Holidays?

If you and your family have a pet, or you are thinking about getting one, there are some things that need to be considered. What are the needs of the pet? Who is responsible for feeding and caring for the pet? Where will it play and sleep? It takes a great amount of time and attention to raise a pet, so sit down and discuss the following points with your children.

- You will need to provide your pet with love, food and water, shelter, exercise and the health care it needs.
- If you own a cat or dog, think

carefully about letting your pet have babies. More kittens and puppies are born than there are homes for them. Consult your veterinarian for information about spaying or neutering your pet.

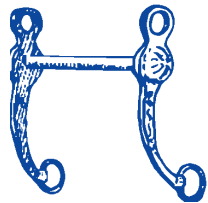
- Does your pet know your name and address? To assure that your pet will be returned to you should it get lost, attach an identification tag to its collar. In Lincoln, all cats and dogs must be licensed.
- Keep your pet safely in your own house or yard.
- Take your pet to see a veteri-

narian regularly. Dogs and cats need yearly examinations and shots to prevent certain diseases.

Loving and caring for family pets is an excellent way to teach responsibility. Most children have a natural affection for animals and are born with a sense of curiosity and fascination about animal life. Taking care of a pet will help children develop the insight and understanding they will need as adults to make personal and political choices beneficial to all creatures. (ALH)

4-H Bulletin Board

4-H Ambassadors will meet at 2 p.m. and Teen Council will meet 3-5 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 6



HORSE BITS



Members of Lancaster County's 4-H Horse Judging Team are (left to right) Patrick Smith of Ceresco, Kelly Heather and Teresa Perrin of Waverly, and Morgan Snyder of Crete.

Area Youth Represent Nebraska at National Contest

The Lancaster County 4-H Horse Judging Team recently competed in the All American Quarter Horse Congress-Youth Judging Contest in Columbus, Ohio. The contest consisted of twelve placings classes and four sets of oral reasons. The Lancaster County team placed 16th in Halter classes, 19th in Reasons and 26th overall.

The Lancaster County Team earned the honor of representing Nebraska as a result of the competition held at the State 4-H Horse Exposition in July.

4-H Horse VIPS Committee Update

It seems as though we just finished with County Fair and here we go again! The 4-H Horse VIPS Committee is planning the new 4-H year and we need everyone's help.

We are organizing a group to present a clinic/conversation for all 4-H club leaders and any interested parents. Some topics we would like to cover are the resources available to club leaders, review of the 4-H calendar year and level testing requirements. Club leaders have received information in the mail and we encourage them to share this with their member's parents. The date for the clinic will be determined, then published in the January NEBLINE.

We are also preparing for the January 4-H Horse VIPS Committee fair planning meeting which will be held 7 p.m., Wednesday, Jan. 9. One of the committee concerns is the low number of people in attendance at the VIPS meetings. The two major consequences of this are:

- You have a very small number of people making the decisions for the 4-H horse program in Lancaster County which will affect 237 exhibitors and their families
- When we plan County Fair and do not have enough volunteers to put on the show, the people in attendance will decide which classes need to be cut.

Neither of these is desirable.

Please mark your calendars and know that the 4-H Horse VIPS Committee meets the second Wednesday of every month except December, and **everyone** is welcome to attend.

4-H Achievement Night Feb. 5, 2002

4-H What's It All About — Achievement Night will held Tuesday, Feb. 5, 2002 at 7p.m.

4-H members will be recognized for their achievements. County awards, Outstanding 4-H Members, I Dare You and Meritorious Service

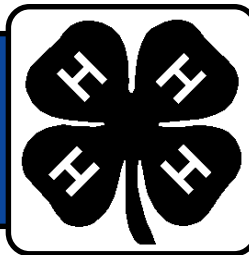
awards will be presented.

There will be presentations and displays of activities that have taken place throughout the year. Come see a demonstration, dance and song groups, judging, speeches, and more!

This is an opportunity for all

clubs, new or established, to see what opportunities 4-H has to offer and how members, leaders, and parents can participate.

Come join the 4-H Council in recognizing 4-H members for a job well done. (TK)

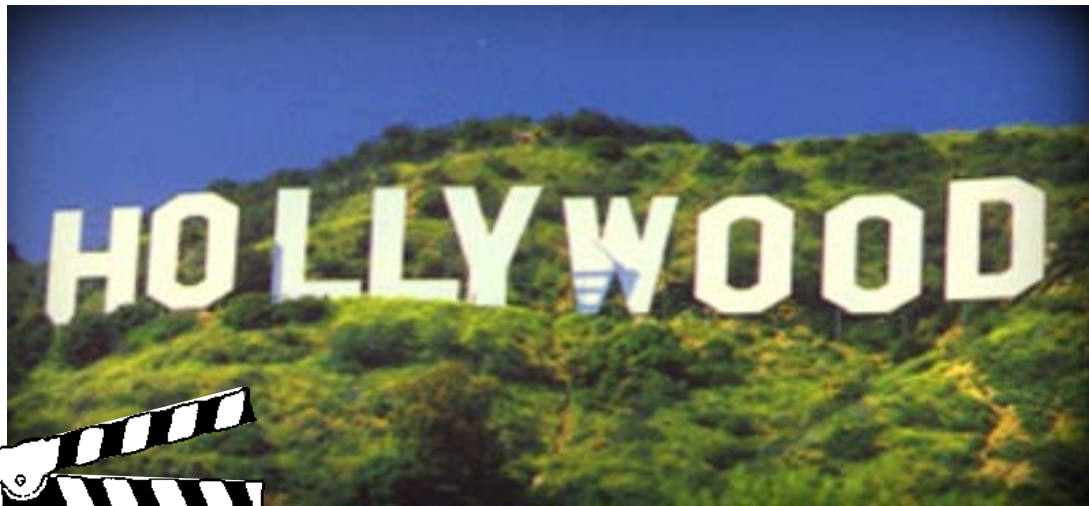


4-H & Youth

Join the 4-H Speech VIPS

We are looking for new speech VIPS members. If you would like to help organize and conduct the Lancaster County 4-H speech contest, call Deanna or Tracy at 441-7180. (DK/TK)

Hurray for Hollywood!



Sleepover!
Games!
Fun Projects!
Snacks!
Movies!

5th and 6th Grade 4-H Lock-In

An Overnight
Evening/Night/Morning
of Fun!

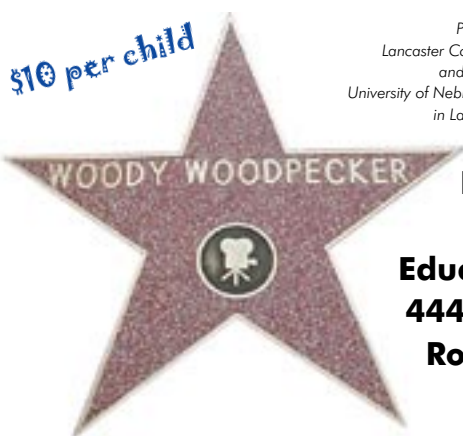
From **Fri. Jan. 11, 8pm** to **Sat. Jan. 12, 8am**

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



\$10 per child

Presented by
Lancaster County 4-H Teen Council
and sponsored by
University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension
in Lancaster County



**Lancaster
Extension
Education Center,
444 Cherrycreek
Road, Suite A,
Lincoln**

Registrations due by January 4, 2002

4-H Lock-In Registration Form

Name of participant(s) _____ Age _____
 _____ Age _____
 Address _____
 City/State/Zip _____
 Phone _____
 Parent or Guardian _____
 Special Needs or Other Information (such as food allergies) _____

Make check payable to
**Lancaster County 4-H
Teen Council** and mail
with registration form to:

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



4-H...The Power of YOUTH 1902 - 2002

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

in conjunction with
**4-H WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT/
ACHIEVEMENT NIGHT**
Tuesday, Feb. 5

- Hors d'oeuvres, 5:30-7:00 pm
- Exhibits featuring 4-H alumni projects, photographs, stories and scrapbooks
- Door prizes, including a Collector's edition 4-H Garfield cookie jar
- 4-H Clover Mint ice cream (mint ice cream with chocolate truffles and white chocolate chunks!) and cookies wrap up the evening

Help Generate Next Century Ideas for 4-H

Youth and adults who want to contribute to an effort to collect the nation's best ideas in youth development can join the Lancaster Conversation on Youth Development in the 21st Century on Thursday, Jan. 31 from 7-9 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Rd., Lincoln.

As part of its centennial celebration, 4-H is leading conversations in all 3,067 counties of our nation. In the Local Conversations, youth and adults are being asked to describe what youth need to achieve success in their lives. This will be the first time any organization has developed a series of recommendations starting at the ground floor — where everyone lives — working its way up to one national report.

The Local Conversations will lead to State Conversations, and then, on Feb. 28-March 3, the National Conversation will take place in Washington D.C., presenting a national report to President Bush and the Congress.

For more information about the Lancaster Conversation, call 441-7180.



THE NATIONAL CONVERSATION ON YOUTH DEVELOPMENT IN THE 21ST CENTURY

**Lancaster Conversation on Youth
Development in the 21st Century**

Thursday, Jan. 31 • 7-9 p.m.

Lancaster Extension Education
Center, 444 Cherrycreek Rd., Lincoln.



Community Focus

STAFF NEWS



Soni Cochran Receives State “Distinguished Extension Associate” Award

Extension staff member Soni Cochran received the 2001 “Distinguished Extension Associate” award at the Annual Nebraska Cooperative Extension Association’s annual conference in Omaha Nov. 13–15.

Soni annually handles more than 4,000 urban pest management and wildlife queries. She maintains an active schedule with community partners in environmental education programs including the earth wellness festival — an annual event that has reached nearly 20,000 Lancaster County fifth-graders and their teachers.

Congratulation Soni! (GB)



Dr. Boshra Rida Joins Staff

Dr. Boshra Rida joined the Lancaster County Extension Staff on Nov. 19. She joins Ali Alkhazraji as a second AmeriCorps*VISTA member on staff. AmeriCorps*VISTA places full-time volunteers in local organizations for one-year terms.

Boshra has a highly interesting background and has much to offer extension. Her country of origin is Iraq and she spent nearly 22 years as a refugee in both Iran and Syria. She comes from a large family of seven brothers and five sisters, most of whom are currently in the United States. When her family was forced to leave Iraq, however, they left behind four brothers who have not been heard from since.

Boshra was a practicing general practitioner in Iran and Syria and was a resident in a pathology program for more than one year. Since coming to this country she has been working on getting her license to practice medicine and has already successfully passed two of the qualifying exams.

In addition to studying for her medical license, Boshra has worked as an Arabic and Farsi interpreter and translator and as a volunteer at Bryan LGH. She says she is most grateful to her family for the support they have given her over the years.

During her year as a VISTA with extension she will be working with the Character Education program as well as in outreach programming for Arabic and Farsi speaking refugee women in the community. (BR)

What Will Lincoln, Lancaster County Be Like in 25 Years?

The Comprehensive Plan Committee has been working the past year to draw up a new map of the community’s future. A difficult and important task, the City Council and the Lancaster County Board look to adopting a new Comprehensive Plan in early 2002.

Tiers of Growth and What They Mean

Future growth visions for Lincoln have been shown as “Tiers”:

Tier I

Tier I reflects the city’s growth, with full urban services, for the next 25 years. Land within this area should remain unencumbered with land uses, development forms, or conditions of property owner reticence that would present impediments to future urbanization of this area by the city.

Tier II

Tier II serves these purposes:

- Defines the area where the city is to grow beyond the initial 25-year planning horizon.
- Serves as the basis for long

term, advanced utility planning

- Acts as a reserve area for urban growth should the Tier I area develop more quickly than assumed for 25 years.

Tier II should remain unbridled with impediments to development.

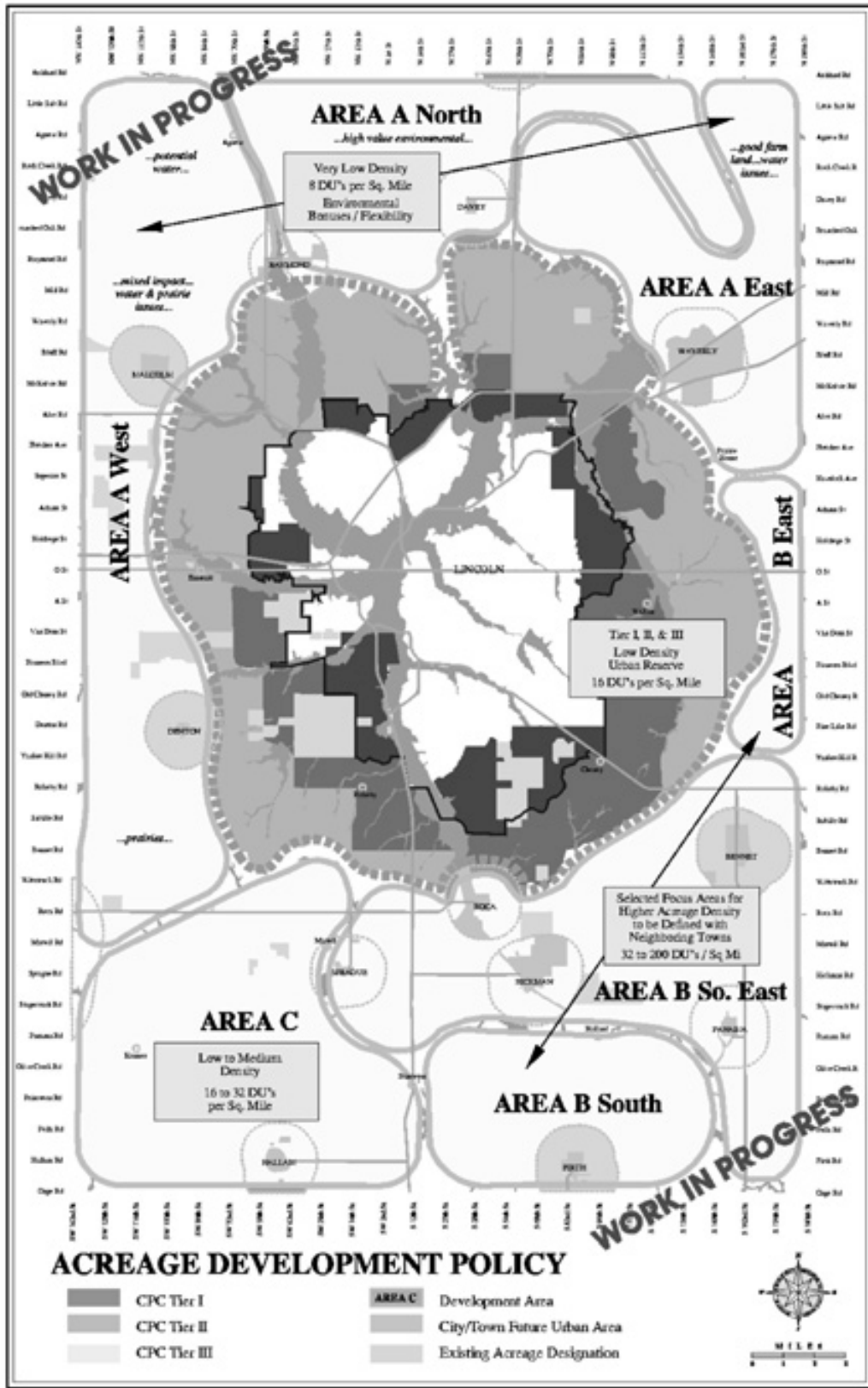
Tier III

Tier III plans for Lincoln’s extended long-term growth potential. While urbanization is expected, the Tier III area extends well beyond any urban development envisioned within the present plan. Tier III serves as a panoramic vision for expansion of the city well into the future.

No active planning nor development within Tier III should occur during the planning horizon.

Community input is welcomed! Here is how you can share your ideas:

- e-mail to plan@ci.lincoln.ne.us
- fax to 441-6377
- write to the Planning Department, 555 South 10 Street, Lincoln, NE 68508
- call the comment line: 441-9744 (English); 441-9745 (Vietnamese); or 441-9746 (Spanish)



Planning Acreages

A proposed policy was brought to the Comprehensive Plan Committee related to acreage development. The draft copy of the Growth Map, includes areas for planned acreage development and

recognizes those areas already planned and developed.

Around six percent of the county population (15,000 persons) live on acreages. Those people live in 3,900 dwellings on 41 square miles of property.

If acreage growth were to continue at approximately six percent of the county’s population, that would represent about 6,780 additional persons and

BIOSECURITY

continued from page 1

ing good biosecurity measures on their operations.

Now as ag-terrorism becomes a more realistic threat, those same biosecurity measures can, and should, be practiced to prevent an ag-terrorism attack on our food supply.

According to the National Animal Health Emergency Management System, there are several reasons why animal agriculture is a potential target for ag-terrorism.

- Relative ease (when compared to incident affecting human population) of implementing an ag-terrorist attack.
- The disruption of the nation's food supply and the negative effects throughout the food processing and transportation infrastructure.
- Public fear regarding the safety of their food purchases.
- Public apprehension/confusion resulting from media coverage of response activities; e.g., destruction/disposal of affected livestock, quarantines, etc.
- Disruption of United States' ability to export food products. Ag-terrorism poses a greater threat to states like Nebraska which rely heavily upon animal agriculture and food processing for economic well-being.

Fortunately, livestock producers can greatly reduce or prevent any ag-terrorism attack.

According to the team of University of Nebraska veterinarians there are four main biosecurity principles livestock producers should practice to protect their animals.

- Check Livestock Frequently – look for unusual behavior, blisters, illness or death and report them to your veterinarian immediately, do not hesitate.
- Don't spread disease from place to place – check all animals before they move on to or off of your operation. If something doesn't look right call a vet immediately.
- Assure the safety and quality of feed and water – always know your source of feed and don't be afraid to ask questions. Also always store your feed in a safe location.
- Know who is on your farm or ranch – it is very important to keep your eye out for people who do not belong on your place or your neighbors'. Always control visitors contact with your animals and their feed. Restrict access to your livestock and insist visitors register with you and wear clean clothes. Don't be afraid to call law enforcement if you suspect a problem.

Bioterrorism and Crops

According to University of Nebraska Extension Plant



DEPRESSION

continued from page 7

depression include loneliness, the financial aftermath of holiday shopping and even disappointment over presents received.

Nearly everyone is susceptible to holiday depression regardless of age, sex or background. However, it most often affects those people who feel they have a lack of control over their lives.

One of the best ways to combat holiday depression is by participating in activities with

other people. Visit a nursing home; go to a holiday service at a church, synagogue or temple; play in the snow with your favorite little person or sing—it's a lot harder to be depressed when you're doing something worthwhile with people you enjoy.

Seeking help with depression does not mean you are crazy or something is wrong with you. It doesn't mean you can't handle your own problems. It's just smart. Getting help when it's needed is a sign of strength and intelligence, not weakness. Successful people



ACREAGES

continued from page 10

2,800 dwelling units over 25 years.

Acreage growth could occur in various styles and locations throughout the county. Some development will occur in towns that permit acreage development. Some will occur in towns that utilize farmstead split-off provisions and some will likely cluster within agricultural areas.

Acreage Principles

Acreages should:

- Be limited in the Lincoln areas of growth Tier I, Tier II and Tier III in order to provide for future urban growth.
- Be directed to appropriate areas of the county. Predetermined focus areas where acreage developments generally are concentrated enhances the ability to provide county services and aids in reducing

the impact on the agriculture community.

- Provide for adequate and appropriate locations of this type of development.
- Be sensitive to: soil productivity, agricultural production, existing rural water, existing and planned; paved roads, ground water conditions, environmentally sensitive areas; reflect existing zoned and designated acreage areas.

Geographic Distribution

Area A

Area A is suggested as a very low density area to reflect, better farming soils, poorer groundwater, a lack of a rural water district, a low frequency of paved roads, the location of wetlands, both saline and fresh water, the location of threatened and endangered species and the location of native prairie.

Densities of eight dwellings per square mile, or less, are suggested.

Area B

Area B shows an area of poorer soils, better access to paved roads, little impact on wetland and native prairies and better ground water or rural water availability. This may have selected opportunities for focus areas of higher acreage development, perhaps at densities of 200 dwellings per square mile. Until specific areas are identified, density should be held at about 32 dwellings per square mile.

Area C

Area C has generally good ground water but is not in a rural water district and does not have a fine grain of paved roads. This area has not had much acreage activity yet except near the state lakes and Crete. It is suggested this have an overall density of 16-32 dwellings per square mile.

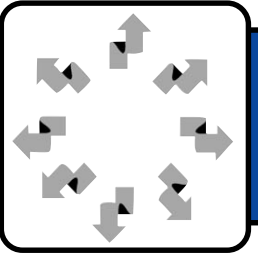
Pathologist, John E. Watkins the likelihood of a bioterrorism attack working and causing any damage to our crops is very small. Even though it can be done in a greenhouse "For any plant disease to occur and then become epidemic, the three essential components — a virulent pathogen, susceptible host, and favorable environment — have to be in balance, as this doesn't happen very often in nature."

Also, new genetics in crops and new chemicals used to fight crop diseases aid in reducing the likelihood of a successful attack on our crops.

Hopefully, we will never have to deal with a bioterrorism or ag-terrorism attack here in Nebraska. I believe it is very comforting to know that the University of Nebraska is on the forefront of these very serious issues providing quality information and research to aid the citizens of Nebraska.

For more information on biosecurity issues, contact Lance Cummins-Brown at the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Saunders County at 1-800-529-8030 or by e-mail at lbrown4@unl.edu.

Miscellaneous



WATER

continued from page 5

malfunctioning heat tapes. The CPSC recommends using only new heat tapes certified by Underwriter's Laboratories (UL) or similar agency. They also recommend using a ground fault circuit interrupter and replacing any heat tapes more than three years old with new, certified heat tapes utilizing grounded (three-prong) plugs. Check the CPSC web page at www.cpsc.gov for more information, or call CPSC at 1 (800) 638-2772.

Underground Pipes

Even buried, underground water pipes are subject to freezing. Problems usually arise when soil in new water line trenches has not fully settled, or when earthwork or construction above the pipeline removes too much soil or replaces soil with materials like concrete that conduct heat away more easily.

If you have a buried water line that is at risk because of fresh backfill or thin cover, you can add insulation on top of the ground in the form of hay, leaves or even snow piled over the water line. In extreme cases, letting a small flow of water run continuously through the water line can supply enough warm water to keep a line open through temporary periods.

With buried lines, remember that the risk period may last for days or even weeks beyond the extreme cold weather until ground heat from below can migrate back up to the water line.

Livestock Waterers

Keeping waterers open in an unheated barn, can be challenging and frustrating in winter. If electricity is available, submersible electric trough, tank and bucket heaters are available for \$20 to \$50.

For safe operation, you must have a power supply with a third wire ground. If electricity is not available, liquid propane gas (LPG) stock tank heaters are available for \$300-\$500.

Energy-free waterers are available for new installations. These waterers channel heat up from the ground below and use lots of insulation to keep water warm. If properly adjusted, they seem to work very well. Expect to pay \$450 to \$700 for energy-free waterers (about \$100 more than their electrically heated counterparts).

An inexpensive alternative for large stock tanks without access to electricity is the propane bubbler. This device is anchored to the bottom of the stock tank and releases a slow stream of bubbles from a 20-pound (5 gallon) propane tank. The bubbles, which are not harmful to livestock, carry warmer water from the bottom of the tank up to the surface where they maintain a small open hole in the ice during moderate weather. The bubbler costs less than \$100 and operates for up to three months on five gallons of propane (about \$10).

Adding insulation to the outside of a water tank and even to the water surface can help conserve heat and keep water available longer during cold weather. When adding insulation, be sure to protect the insulation from animal chewing, manure and spilled water.

For small quantities of water, electrically heated buckets and water dishes are available for \$30-\$100 from hardware and farm supply stores. Make sure these units are properly grounded for safety. (DJ)

Information Source: Shawn Shouse, ISU Extension Field Specialist/Ag Engineering, SW Area Extension Center.



COOKING AHEAD

continued from page 6

must be kept refrigerated, as bacteria love to grow in these foods. Avoid letting a pumpkin pie set at room temperature for more than **TWO** hours. That means it shouldn't sit out more than **TWO** hours total including after its baked and while waiting to be served.

Note: Some commercial pumpkin pies that are purchased at room temperature may later need to be refrigerated. Check the label on commercially baked pies for storage requirements. Don't buy pies stored at room temperature if label directions are unclear or missing.

• If you'd like to get a head start on preparing your pumpkin pie, it's easiest and safest to freeze just your shaped and unbaked pie crust in a freezer- and oven-safe pie pan. Or, purchase an unbaked frozen pie crust already in a pie pan. Then, add the pumpkin filling, mixed according to directions, to the

frozen crust just before baking. It takes just a few minutes to mix together the ingredients.

Unless the directions with your frozen pie crust recommend otherwise, place a baking sheet in your oven and pre-heat your oven to the baking temperature given in your pie recipe. Then place your pie on the hot baking sheet and bake your pie as usual the day of your meal. To save additional time, buy a pie filling with the spices already added, especially if you must buy extra spices just for your pie.

• Instead of making a baked pumpkin pie, consider making a form of pumpkin pie that can be frozen, such as the Pumpkin Ice Cream Pie recipe in this month's "Healthy Eating Section."

Set the Table Ahead

Save time by setting your table the day before your holiday meal. Also, set out all food preparation and service utensils. Or, assign children or others to set the table before you eat.

The NEBLINE

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Lancaster County



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All programs and events listed in this newsletter will be held
(unless noted otherwise) at:

Lancaster Extension Education Center

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Lincoln, Nebraska

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Extension Calendar

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

DECEMBER

- Dec. 14 Extension Board Meeting 8 a.m.
- Dec. 20 4-H Cool Clover Club Meeting 7 p.m.
- Dec. 25 Office Closed

JANUARY

- Jan. 1 Office Closed
- Jan. 3 Crop Protection Clinic 8 a.m.-4 p.m.
- Jan. 6 4-H Ambassadors 2-3 p.m.
- 4-H Teen Council 3-5 p.m.
- Jan. 8 Parents Forever and Kids Talk About Divorce
(at Northeast Family Center, 5903 Walker) 5-9 p.m.
- 4-H Pet Pals Club Meeting 6:45 p.m.
- 4-H Council Meeting 7 p.m.
- Jan. 9 4-H Horse VIPS Meeting 7 p.m.
- Jan. 10 4-H Rabbits VIPS Meeting 7 p.m.
- Jan. 11 Extension Board Meeting 8 a.m.
- Jan. 11-12 4-H Lock In 8 p.m.-8 a.m.
- Jan. 15 4-H Citizenship Washington Focus Meeting 7 p.m.
- Jan. 31 Lancaster Conversation on Youth Development in the 21st Century . 7-9 p.m.

Crop Protection Clinic Scheduled for January 3

Lancaster County is slated to serve as a host site for a Crop Protection Clinic again in 2002. This very popular clinic offers many topics of interest to crop producers and agribusiness professionals alike.

Among this year's topics are: Seed and seedling insect management, soybean disease update, decision aids for weed management, alfalfa insect management, Callisto performance and mode of action, stripe and leaf rusts of wheat, glyphosate brand comparison, genetic control of plant traits, soybean insect management, relationship of tillage and rotation to crop diseases and more.

Commercial Pesticide Applicators will be able to renew their General Standards and Ag



Plant certification by attending the entire workshop session.

The clinic will be Jan. 3 at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln. Registration begins at 8 a.m. with sessions

continuing from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The \$25 registration fee includes proceedings, publications, refreshments and the noon meal.

For more information, contact Tom Dorn at 441-7180. (TD)

Parents Forever and Kids Talk About Divorce

"It's changed me! It's taken the focus more off of me and put it on 'Where do my kids fall into play here?' It was good!" So says a participant in the Parents Forever Program—a parenting class whose focus is on minimizing the effects of divorce on children.

Parents Forever Classes are held monthly at the Northeast

Family Center, 5903 Walker, Lincoln. They are taught by professionals from UNL Cooperative Extension, St Elizabeth's Regional Medical Center and the Mediation Center.

At the same time parents are attending class, children have the opportunity to attend Kids Talk about Divorce. Kids learn to talk to their parents, understand their

emotional ups and downs are normal, acknowledge and positively direct feelings of frustration and anger and understand their rights and responsibilities.

The next class is scheduled for Jan. 8, 5- 9 p.m. For registrations please call 441-7180 and ask for a Parents Forever brochure. (LJ)

Faces of Middle East and the Survival English



Sief Mahagoub
Extension Community Coordinator

Non-English speakers, most of whom are refugees from the Middle East have participated in an interesting short English program called Survival English. The program teaches basic English communication, important in every day life, and helps newcomers avoid some of the

problems they may come across when dealing with others.

This program was started by Mohammed Albezerji, the project coordinator for Faces of the Middle East at the Asian Community and Cultural Center. It takes two to three months to complete.

Some of the things learned include:

- How to say and write your name, address, telephone number, social security number, date of birth,

children's names, country of origin, etc.

- Telephone skills—for example, what to say in case of fire, a fight or other emergency, and how to dial 911. What to say if someone calls them and they don't understand.

After the learners complete the program, they are able to write and say what they had learned. Sometimes they continue taking more English by attending Southeast Community College. (SM)



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