

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!