



## Farm Views

### SNAP Hires Manager

Regular readers will recall that the Lancaster County Extension office has been assisting the Southeast Nebraska Area Producers (SNAP) marketing cooperative as it goes through its start-up phase. Periodic progress reports have appeared in the NebLine as SNAP has passed certain milestones. I am excited to report that SNAP has hired Roger Hammonds as General Manager beginning December 1, 2000.

Many Nebraska producers and seed company representatives will recognize Hammonds' name from his 25 year tenure with the Nebraska Crop Improvement Association. Precautions and procedures necessary for the production and handling of foundation and certified seed are very similar to those necessary for the production and handling of Identity Preserved (IP) grains. Roger's experience gives the SNAP cooperative a huge boost in terms of the expertise needed in this critical area. In addition to other duties, Roger will be working with SNAP members as they go through orientation and training on the production of IP grains and will be making site visits to evaluate members fields, equipment, and procedures for the 2001 crop year.

For more information about SNAP, please contact Tom Dorn, Extension Educator, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln, NE 68528, phone: 402-441-7180, or e-mail: tdorn1@unl.edu. (TD)

## Private Pesticide Applicator Training

Persons who apply pesticides to fields, pastures, or other agricultural land, please read on.

Applicators who use, or supervise the use, of pesticides that are registered with the EPA as **restricted use** to produce an agricultural commodity on property he or she owns or rents, on an employer's property, or on the property of another person **IF** there is no compensation other than trading personal services, need to receive certification as a private pesticide applicator. (If you will be compensated for applying restricted use agricultural chemicals to another person's property. Or any pesticide, whether restricted use or general use, to lawns and landscape plants or for structural pest control, you will need to be certified as a commercial pesticide applicator). Certification can be obtained by participating in an approved training conducted through UNL Extension or by passing a written test administered by the Nebraska Department of Agriculture. Nearly all people elect the training option for private pesticide certification. There are two ways to receive certification training from UNL Extension, attending a training session or completing a home study course.

### 2001 Dates and Times for Private Pesticide Applicator Training in Lancaster County

Wednesday, January 17	9 a.m. - noon	repeated	1 - 4 p.m.
Friday, January 19	1 - 4 p.m.		
Saturday, January 20	9 a.m. - noon		
Thursday, March 15	1 p.m. - 4 p.m.	repeated	7 - 10 p.m.

There is a \$10 fee for Private Pesticide Applicator Training. Participants attending in Lancaster County will also receive one complimentary copy of the 2001 Guide for Weed Management in Nebraska. Make checks payable to Lancaster County Extension. Participants don't need to pre-register, just come to the training session of your choice. Be on time. The training will likely take the full three hours allotted, so schedule accordingly. All training sessions will be conducted at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln.

#### Home Study Option

Persons desiring to become certified via the home study option need to pick up the study manual at the extension office, complete the test questions, and return it to the extension office where the tests will be graded. The applicant will then be allowed to fill out and sign a certification application form. There is a \$20 fee, payable when the book is picked up. The home study method of receiving certification can be done at any time throughout the year and there is no time limit for when the book must be returned. Most people can complete the home study course in three to four hours.

Regardless of the training method chosen, allow approximately four weeks for the application to be processed and the certification to be mailed to the applicant.

## Testing Feed and Balancing Rations Saves Money



Feed is the largest expense of the beef cow/calf operation resulting in 55 to 65 percent of the total operation cost. Overfeeding increases costs. Inadequate feeding decreases animal performance and reduces profit potential.

Forage testing and ration balancing allows producers to develop a practical method to feed cows and calves a balanced, low-cost diet. The goal is to get the best performance possible with the feed resources available at the lowest cost.

The main advantage of testing and sorting feed for beef cow/calf operations is feeds can be targeted for their best use in the cow/calf enterprise. For example, on a spring-calving cow herd, a lower quality forage could be used during November and December, while animal

nutrient demand is lower. The lower quality roughage also generates more heat in the digestion process, and this will come in handy during a time when extra heat can be used.

Top quality feeds should be used near calving time for the cow to recover from calving, to produce milk for the calf, and so the cow is ready to be bred again.

Depending on location and needs, money also can be saved in such a situation as selling feed of higher value. In comparing average quality alfalfa to higher quality, if the average hay can sell for \$55 per ton and high quality, dairy quality, or alfalfa with an relative food value of 150 or higher at \$95/ton, then determine what feed is needed and how well it will do in the operation. Producers could sell some higher quality feed and buy back cheaper feed if the time is right.

When buying hay, producers need to be aware of quality factors and base the price on the

quality. Because one doesn't know how feeds will test until they are sampled, the most important things to test for are:

- Moisture content—Moisture is a measure of the amount of water in the feed. This is important, because moisture dilutes the concentration of all nutrients.

- Energy value—For beef cow rations, the test for energy is total digestible nutrients (TDN). This is most useful when formulating rations and determining supplements that may be needed.

- Protein value—Usually expressed as percent crude protein. If producers must supplement protein, this information can be used to determine the source of protein that's most economical. Buying soybean meal or using alfalfa as a protein source could be used so a more expensive substitute doesn't have to be bought somewhere else.

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## Computerized Financial Record Keeping



Lancaster County will present the very popular **Computerized Financial Record Keeping** workshop series this spring. This series of extension workshops has been held in various places in Nebraska for several years and in the Metro area since 1998.

The workshop series is divided into two parts: A beginning-level workshop which assumes no prior experience with computerized record keeping and an advanced-level workshop to build on the topics presented in the first workshop. The beginning-level workshop will be held on March 13; the advanced-level workshop on March 20. Both workshops will be held at the UNL Animal Science Building on East Campus in Lincoln.

The workshops will be presented in a hands-on teaching style with participants actually performing the tasks being demonstrated throughout the day. The concepts covered in the beginning level workshop include: Setting up and Starting Your Records; Developing a Chart of Accounts (categories) to Key Income and Expense Transactions to, Entering Single and Split Transactions, Generat-

ing Various Types of Reports, Organizing Transactions by Enterprise and Retrieving Profit/Loss Enterprise Reports, Handling Term Loans, and Reconciling Your Records with the Bank Statement.

The concepts covered in the advanced-level workshop include: Saving Time by Printing Checks on the Computer (which automatically makes the ledger entries), Handling Non-Cash Transactions (inventory shifted between enterprises), Handling Pre-Paid Expenses in a Cash Accounting System, Tying Transactions to Tax Schedules to Save Time on Tax Preparation, How to Handle Depreciation Schedules, Generating a Balance Sheet, Handling Lines of Credit, and Tracking Expenses That Cross Enterprise and Category Groups (such as expenses associated with a particular piece of equipment that may be used in multiple enterprises).

The concepts taught are applicable to any of several inexpensive computerized record keeping programs, with slight modifications in procedure. These workshops will be taught hands-on using Quicken 2001 Basic™ in the classroom. Step-by-step hand out materials covering each topic have been developed and are included in the registration fee.

A follow-up survey has been conducted following each workshop. The following comments are representative of those received: "I thought the entire class was very informative. I've been using Quicken for about three years and I learned a lot. There are many things that I didn't know about before

attending the class." "It has been very helpful to have written materials to use as guidelines when setting up the program at home."

A summary of evaluation surveys conducted over the past three years show the following results when participants were queried on specific topics:

- 83 percent said they had learned to keep a better (more complete) set of financial records.

- 94 percent said they expected to keep a more accurate set of financial records as a result of attending the workshop.

- 56 percent said they expect to save money on tax preparation.

- 39 percent indicated that they plan to use reports generated by the computer when applying for a loan in the future.

- 66 percent indicated they expect to be able to analyze which enterprises are most profitable (do enterprise analysis).

- 89 percent said they would recommend these workshops to others who are at the same level of experience as they were before attending.

Registration will be limited due to space and computer availability on a first-come, first-served basis. After the class is filled, a waiting list will be developed in case of a cancellation. If you are interested, please contact the extension office and ask to have a brochure and registration form sent to you. Each workshop will begin promptly at 9 a.m. and end at

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