

The NEBLINE[®]

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Lincoln

University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County
"Helping Nebraskans enhance their lives through research-based education."

January 2004
Vol. XVII, No. 1

Web site: lancaster.unl.edu

In This Issue

- Horticulture 2
- Farm Views 3
- Food & Fitness 4
- Family Living 5
- Environmental Focus . . . 6
- Urban Agriculture 7
- 4-H & Youth 8-9
- Community & Home Living 10
- Miscellaneous 11-12

SPECIAL INSERT
University of Nebraska
Cooperative Extension
in Lancaster County
2002-03 Annual Report



Rural Living Carries Rewards, Responsibilities

Don Janssen
Extension Educator

It is said the American dream is to have your own home to do with as you please and accumulate wealth in the form of property value.

Now it seems the ultimate American dream is to have a home in the country. Fresh air, clean water and enough land to meet some of your recreational needs. But along with these new possessions comes new responsibilities.

Groundwater provides nearly all the water for domestic use in Lancaster County. It's essential the quality of our groundwater, along with our surface water resources, be protected from contamination. Because of this dependence on groundwater, it is especially important to protect the drinking water supply on farms and rural acreages.

Activities around the acreage and the location of buildings in relation to drinking water wells determine the potential risk to the water supply. By identifying contamination risks and taking action to reduce them, you can



Living on an acreage or farm has its rewards and challenges.

better protect the health of your family.

Moving to the country puts the responsibility of domestic waste treatment on the property owner. The primary treatment is in the form of a septic tank system or the use of a waste lagoon. Both of these processes need to be maintained by the property owner. This requires the property owner have a basic knowledge of how these systems work and how best to keep them operating efficiently.

In the country, the constant force of the wind makes living in these areas seem unbearable. A well designed windbreak around

the home slows the wind and improves the overall environment. Windbreaks conserve energy, provide snow control, improve working and recreational environments, provide visual screening and controls dust. Windbreaks definitely enhance living in the country.

Another thing you will find in the country is a diverse variety and increased number of pests. Pests that eat your vegetable crops as well as your landscape plants and pests that invade your home. Critters you have never seen before or will never want to see again will test you. Learn

as much as you can about them so they will be less intimidating.

When you live in the country and have questions about these things, who do you call? Many people call the UNL Cooperative Extension office in their county. The extension office has a wealth of information that can help solve some of these problems.

Most of the printed information from the university is on the Internet and can be accessed at anytime. "A Place in the Country: The Acreage Owners Guide" is online at lancaster.unl.edu/acreageguide. A UNL Web site dedicated to acreages and small farms is at acreage.unl.edu. People can sign up for a free monthly e-mail newsletter "Acreage & Small Farm Insights eNews" by going to dodge.unl.edu/Webforms/AcreageSub.htm.

Another opportunity to get information and have your questions answered will be at the "Acreage Insights - Rural Living Clinics" (see below). These programs are for the families living in the country and for the ones considering moving there.

Monthly "Acreage Insights" Clinics Focus on Rural Living Topics

"Acreage Insights - Rural Living Clinics" is a series of seminars designed to help acreage owners manage their rural living environment.

Each month during 2004 a program of particular interest will be presented. Each program will give in-depth information focused on a specific acreage or rural living subject.

Choose the ones which most interest you and plan to attend.

Grasses & Wildflowers (January)

Wildflowers and native grasses are beautiful, drought tolerant, and provide habitat for many types of wildlife from butterflies to birds. Learn how to incorporate a wildflower planting into your landscape, the necessary steps in establishment and how to maintain the planting in years to come.

Acreage Weed Control (February)

Weeds compete with

desirable plants for nutrients, water, and sunlight. Learn how to manage the growing environment to reduce weed competition and how to use chemicals effectively.

Pasture Management (March)

Properly managed pastures reduce the need for weed control and increase production and profitability. Learn how to select the right species of grasses and legumes for your site and species of livestock and how you can use fertility, watering systems, and grazing management to your advantage.

Septic Systems for Wastewater Treatment (April)

A properly designed, installed, and maintained septic system should meet your needs by treating wastewater to protect the environment and your health. Learn about basic septic system design and installation, as well as six critical steps to properly maintain a system.

Vertebrate Pests (May)

Moles, ground squirrels,

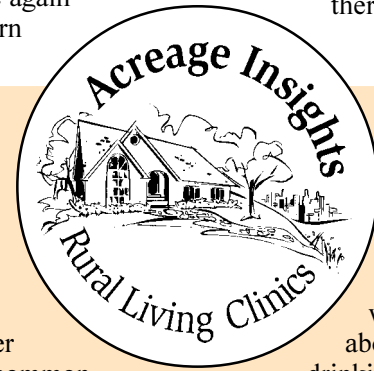
pocket gophers, ground hogs, badgers, and other vertebrate pests common in Nebraska will be the focus of this program. Participants will learn basic methods including trapping, exclusion, poison baits, habitat modification and other methods to control these pests in and around acreages.

Small Scale Meat Animal Production (June)

This seminar will provide information about raising small numbers of meat animals (hogs & beef) being grown for the home freezer. Participants will be provided references listing daily nutrient and water requirements of these animals and will be given instruction on balancing rations using a pocket calculator or a computerized spreadsheet program (Excel spreadsheets provided).

Private Drinking Water Systems (July)

A properly designed, installed, and maintained private drinking water system should meet your needs by providing an



adequate supply of safe and aesthetically acceptable water. Learn about basic

drinking water well design and installation, as well as water quantity and quality needs, protection of the water supply, monitoring recommendations, and treatment options.

Ponds (August)

Ponds are aesthetically pleasing, draw our natural wildlife into the landscape and have become a very popular landscape feature. Participants will learn how to design, construct and maintain ponds on the acreage that enhances both the environment and property value.

Windbreak Design & Maintenance (September)

Windbreaks are linear

see TOPICS on page 5

For complete schedule and registration form, see page 5.

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 537
Lincoln, Nebraska

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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