

Update on Bennet Visioning Process

Report from the
Communication Committee

Members of the Bennet Citizen Advisory Committee and the Planning Commission met on March 16. They created a Vision Statement for Bennet, incorporating input from the community listening sessions; and selected four slogans for the Bennet community to vote on.

Vision Statement

- "Bennet's mission is to:
- protect and build on our unique small town atmosphere through people who respect and care for one another.
 - support well-planned growth and a vibrant business community.
 - seek to enhance quality of life by improving infrastructure and creating a variety of recreational opportunities, while maintaining the natural beauty of our environment.
 - promote quality education and multi-generational family values."

The Bennet community is encouraged to comment on the Vision Statement. Residents may submit written comments to the village office, put them in the village

drop box or make comments online at <http://lanaster.unl.edu/community/Bennet/VisionSurvey.shtml>.

Town Slogan

The four town slogans proposed were:

- 1) Bennet—a small town with a big heart.
- 2) Live, love, learn—grow with us in Bennet.
- 3) Bennet—a home for families not addresses.
- 4) Remember yesterday's values; live today's dreams; invest in tomorrow's families.

Bennet residents received a ballot to vote on a slogan in their water bill and were asked to return the ballot by April 15. Ballots were also available at various businesses and locations in Bennet.

Visioning Celebration, April 29

A "Community Visioning Process Celebration" is planned for Saturday, April 29 beginning at 4 p.m. at the Bennet Park Gazebo. The event will feature an ice cream social, live music and announcement of the town slogan. Everyone is welcome to attend!

Firth Town Hall Meeting is First Step in Visioning

Yelena Mitrofanova
UNL Extension Educator

About 20 residents living in and around the town of Firth attended a Town Hall Meeting on March 27 at the Firth Community Center to learn about Firth's upcoming visioning process.

To help residents understand the process, the group learned how planning and visioning activities resulted in the improvement of communities in Kansas City, Portland and Seattle. Extension Educators Yelena Mitrofanova and Phyllis Schoenholz explained the steps, commitment and time line in the Visioning process for the



community. As the process moves forward, all community residents are invited to become involved.

Community volunteers signed up for three committees. Logistics committee will plan for upcoming dates, times and places for the Listening Sessions this spring. The Communications committee will help publicize and promote the Listening sessions and Town

Hall report. The Research committee will search out the demographics, infrastructure and assets of the community needed for future planning.

If you are interested in helping with the process or to get more information, contact one of the village board members or Extension Educators Yelena (441-6753) or Phyllis (402-450-6678).

Community CROPS Offers Weekly Delivery of Fresh Produce



A plot at Sunset Community Farm located on the edge of Lincoln.

Community CROPS: Combining Resources Opportunities & People for Sustainability is a grassroots non-profit organization, working with area gardeners and farmers to grow and market agriculture products. Community CROPS will be selling fresh, organically-grown produce through a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) project. CSA projects are a great way for you to support local farmers and get a variety of very fresh, nutritious vegetables throughout the growing season. You know exactly where your vegetables come from and the people who grow them for you.

How Does it Work?

Before the season begins, you buy a share in the harvest. Then CROPS farmers grow a variety of vegetables for you and package it weekly for you to pick up. A share costs \$375 for 15 weeks (mid-June to end of September). You will be able to pick up your box at a central location in Lincoln. CROPS is looking for shareholders who would like to host a pick-up site for a discount.

What's in Your Box?

CROPS farmers will grow the following vegetables with at least two varieties of many items: lettuce, spinach, radishes, beets, carrots, potatoes, tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, okra, chard, cucumbers, melons, zucchini, winter squash,

beans, herbs, onions, corn, cabbage and more. Of course, you won't get all of them at once. Each week, you will receive a selection of crops, each in sufficient quantity to make at least one meal.

Your share will average 9-12 pounds per week, varying with the season. A share is about right for a family of four, depending on how many vegetables you eat.

Sound like it might be too much produce for your family? Find a friend and split a share. You will be responsible for dividing your weekly bag. Or, donate half of your share to a low-income family that will be very excited to receive the vegetables and make good use of them.

How is it Grown?

All of the crops will be grown at Sunset Community Farm (located just on the edge of Lincoln) by staff and participants of CROPS. CROPS will contract for some of the vegetables from participants who have their own plot at the farm. Other participants will work on a plot specifically for the CSA.

All of the produce is grown using organic methods, such as cover crops, row covers, composting and simply keeping a watchful eye on everything. CROPS also tries to use as much recycled packaging as possible and do everything in the most environmentally

friendly manner.

What's Your Part?

As a shareholder of a CSA farm, you can help support local small farms, boost the local economy, as well as provide your family with healthful, fresh produce. This requires a commitment on your part to be more flexible and adventurous with your cooking and eating habits. It's not like a grocery store where you can pick and choose. CROPS provides plenty of the standard vegetables, and then add in some new ones for you to try, complete with recipes and cooking suggestions.

Shareholders not only share the bounty from the farm—they also share the risks. If there is a crop failure (such as from disease or major freeze), the shareholders agree to take the loss with the farmer. CROPS will schedule a farm tour during the season for shareholders, so you can come out and see where CROPS farmers are growing your food and how they do it.

How do You Sign Up?

Applications will be accepted through mid-June or later. Application forms and additional information is available at <http://www.communitycrops.org> or by calling Ingrid at 730-2532.

Source: <http://www.communitycrops.org>

Community Service—Sewing Machine Donations Needed

First Presbyterian Church Lincoln continues to reach out to the Sudanese community by offering sewing classes to Sudanese women. First Presbyterian members volunteer to teach the classes and upon completion Sudanese women take home the machine they used during the class free of charge. The Sudanese women strengthen their language skills and are proud of their achievement which they can now use to benefit their family.

If you have a sewing machine looking for a new home, please contact Janice Stege, coordinator of Mission Outreach at First Presbyterian Church by e-mail, jstege@firstpresbyterianlincoln.org, or call the church office, 477-6037.

School of Natural Resources



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Michael Gillwon,
rangeland ecosystems major

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