

Study: UNL Institute of Agriculture & Natural Resources is 'Primary Engine' for Nebraska Economy



UNL Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources

The Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln annually returns at least \$15 in benefits to Nebraskans for every dollar of state support, making it "a primary engine for economic and social sustainability," a new study says.

The study, by Battelle of Columbus, Ohio, was commissioned to capture the benefits of IANR's teaching, research and extension work in Nebraska and to provide solid guidance for setting future priorities. Results are published in a new "At Work for Nebraska" study.

"As our faculty and staff work to meet Nebraskans' needs today and in the future, it's important we take a critical look at our programs and activities and determine how effectively they're serving the state," said John Owens, IANR Harlan vice chancellor and University of Nebraska vice president for agriculture and natural resources.

"We thought it especially important to find a highly qualified, independent consultant to do this study for us, so that we'd get an unbiased perspective," Owens added.

The "At Work for Nebraska" report notes the increasing importance of agriculture in Nebraska, citing a recent finding by the Nebraska Policy Institute that agriculture and agribusiness account for nearly one-third of the state's jobs — up from 25 percent in 1990. As the university's primary arm dedicated to "sustaining, growing and

improving agriculture and agriculture-related enterprise in the state," IANR "is key to the long term competitive sustainability of Nebraska's high standard of living," Battelle said in the report's executive summary.

"Much of what is required for 21st century success ... is directly addressed through the mission and operations of IANR," the study says.

IANR was created by the Nebraska Legislature in 1973 as a defined component of the University of Nebraska. It includes the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, the Agricultural Research Division and UNL Extension. Headquartered on UNL's East Campus, IANR has extension offices in 83 of Nebraska's 93 counties, research and extension centers in Norfolk, Lincoln, North Platte and Scottsbluff and the Agricultural Research and Development Center near Mead.

Battelle did not investigate the economic impact of every research and extension program at IANR — hundreds are under way at any one time — but it did delve into a few projects, focusing on IANR's mission areas of agriculture, food production and natural resource systems; nutrition, health and food safety; environmental sustainability; community and entrepreneurial development; building strong families; and youth development.

see IANR AT WORK FOR NEBRASKA
on page 12

Among the IANR Programs Cited by the Study...

- **Research IANR scientists did with University of Florida colleagues led to new beef products that added \$50-\$70 in value per head** over the past seven years. On Jan. 1, 2006, Nebraska had 2.6 million cattle on feed. At \$50 per head, that's \$130 million more in 2006 alone.



The 2006 National 4-H Leadership Conference was held at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

- **An extension demonstration project in the Republican River Basin**

focuses on teaching producers to achieve nearly full yields with less water. The project showed a water miser strategy used 31 percent less water while reducing corn yields only 3 percent. Pumping cost savings usually more than offset yield loss. Overall estimated value of knowledge gained in 2006 was \$2.4 million, according to 130 producer participants.



- **IANR-developed wheat varieties that perform well in Nebraska fields are worth roughly \$30 to \$35 million annually** to Nebraska producers, based on increased yield alone.



- **4-H, part of IANR's extension division, is a national leader in youth participation, reaching 118,000, or one of every three eligible, Nebraska youth yearly.**

- **UNL Extension partnered with the Nebraska legal system to develop a curriculum** and materials to teach the more than 2,000 people appointed annually as legal guardians for elderly and disabled people and children in our state who cannot make decisions for themselves.

- **UNL Extension's NebraskaEDGE — Enhancing, Developing and Growing Entrepreneurs — program has helped nearly 2,000 Nebraskans transform their ideas into viable business opportunities** since 1993.

- Since 2000, more than 260 **College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources students have partnered with faculty advisors to gain hands-on experience and improve job skills** through UNL's Undergraduate Creative Activities and Research Experiences program.

EXTENSION NEWS

Julie Rasmussen Joins Nutrition Staff

This spring, **Julie Rasmussen** joined the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension in the Lancaster County Nutrition Education Program (NEP). NEP helps limited resource families learn how to prepare nutritious and safe foods while stretching their food dollars.

Julie will teach nutrition to adults and youth at a variety of locations including WIC sites, rehabilitation facilities, after-school programs, day camp sites, and home visit settings.

Previously Julie had been with the Nutrition Education Program in Lincoln-McPherson and Keith Counties for six years. While serving in those counties, Julie worked with numerous agencies including



Arbor, Head Start, WIC, the Housing Authority, the Salvation Army and the Homeless Shelter to teach nutrition education. She also enjoyed teaching youth at group homes and to children in after-school, summer school and Head Start programs.

Two Promoted to Extension Associate

Zainab Rida and **Marty Cruickshank** were recently promoted from Extension Assistants to Extension Associates. Zainab has

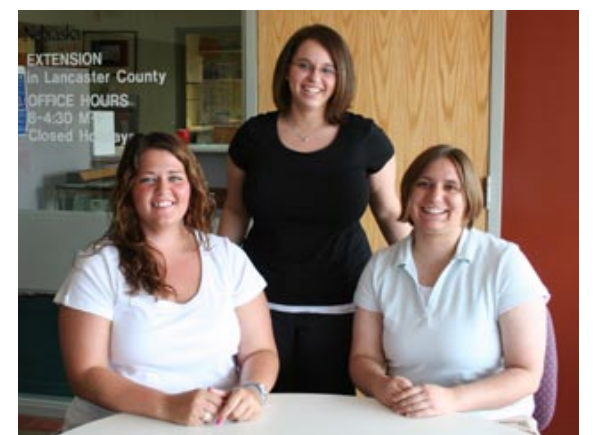
been with the Nutrition Education Program staff for five years and Marty Cruickshank has been with the 4-H staff for four years.

4-H Interns Assist with 4-H Programs

Each year, student interns join the 4-H staff at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County and provide much needed assistance during the summer for contests, County Fair and other activities.

- **Jessica Bauman** assists Marty Cruickshank with the horse, poultry and rabbit areas (this is Jessica's third summer as a 4-H intern).

- **Jami Rutt** assists Tracy Kulm in the Family and Consumer Science areas (this is Jami's third summer as a 4-H intern).



(L-R) Jessica Bauman, Jami Rutt and Jessalyn Schrock

- **Jessalyn Schrock** assists Deanna Karmazin in the livestock areas (this is Jessalyn's first summer as a 4-H intern).

Pollution Prevention Intern

The Partners in Pollution Prevention (P3) program is a 12-week program which is part of a UNL biological systems engineering class. This summer, P3 intern Jason Thoendal is working with UNL Extension in Lancaster County.

Jason will visit small businesses to assess their work situations, provide research options and a detailed report on how to conserve resources. More information about the program is online at www.ianr.unl.edu/p3