

Make Your Yard a Greener Place



Soni Cochran, Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County

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Meet Your Yard — Learn about the soils, native plants, climate and wildlife around your home.

Be Water Wise — Water lawns only when needed, but to the depth of the root zone. Consider replacing irrigated turf with drought-tolerant ground covers.

Be a Pest Pro — Identify

pests correctly. This allows for the most appropriate control method, if it is needed.

Police Pollution — Prevent fertilizer, pesticides and animal waste from entering water sources or wastewater systems.

Be Well Read — Read the label, it's the law. Keep children and pets away from pesticides. Store and dispose of pesticides according to label instructions.

Go Native — Create pollinator and wildlife habitats at home using native plants.

Remove invasive plants that may threaten or invade native habitat.

Make a Pile — A compost pile recycles grass clippings, leaves and other organic material. It is a great natural fertilizer too.

Recycle Your Lawn — Leave the grass long at 3–3.5 inches when mowing and leave the clippings in place. This saves water and fertilizer. Do not mow more than one third of the height of the grass.



GARDEN GUIDE

THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH

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Check deciduous trees for fall webworm. Use a broom or rake to get them out of small trees.

Check on water needs of hanging baskets daily in the summer. Wind and sun dry them much more quickly than other containers.

Clean up fallen rose and peony leaves. They can harbor disease and insect pests over the winter if allowed to remain on the ground.

Hand pick bagworms from your evergreen and deciduous trees.

Water the garden early in the day so plants can absorb the moisture before the hot sun dries the soil. Early watering also insures the foliage dries before night. Wet foliage at night increases susceptibility to fungus diseases.

Many herbs self-sow if the flowers are not removed. Dill produce seeds that fall around the parent plant and come up as volunteers the following spring.

Every weed that produces seed means more weeds next year. Control weeds before they go to seed.

Remove old vegetable plants which have stopped producing to eliminate a shelter for insects and disease organisms.

Mound soil over the lateral or brace roots of corn stalks for extra support against strong winds.

Pick summer squash and zucchini every day or two to keep the plants producing.

Do not add weeds with mature seed heads to the compost pile. Many weed seeds can remain viable and germinate next year when the compost is used.

Tips for a Fun and Educational Day at the Fair

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County fair season is well underway. The Lancaster County Super Fair will run Aug. 1–10 at the Lancaster County Event Center, 84th & Havelock, Lincoln. 4-H exhibits and events will run Aug. 1–4.

I hope you have made plans to get out and visit the fair. If not, it is not too late! This fun outdoor experience is one your children will likely remember for many years.

This time of year brings back many memories of my time at the Scotts Bluff County fair. I was a member of The Buttercups 4-H Club. Some of the exhibits I participated in included sewing, designing babysitting kits, first aid kits, baking, vegetables and dog obedience.

Although it has been a couple of decades since I was a 4-H'er, things haven't changed much. There are youth enrolled in 4-H across Nebraska who meet monthly to learn important life skills such as: decision making, citizenship, leadership and service to others.

4 Tips to Get the Most Out of Your Visit at the Fair

Plan for your day at the fair — Review the fair schedule and make a plan. If your child has a pet dog, check the fair schedule and plan to attend the dog obedience show. There will be a variety of shows and activities available for free for



See special pullout section in this NEBLINE for an overview of the Lancaster County Super Fair, including where to pick up free fair gate tickets.

Full schedule and ticket information is at SuperFair.org.

the public. Some of my favorites for young children include the Llama/Alpaca Show, Fun at the Farm Kid Zone in Pavilion 1, Extreme Raptors Show, A-Z Exotic Animals Petting Zoo and a visit through the 4-H static exhibits in the Lincoln Room.

Consider Safety — Using a stroller or wagon for younger children will help you keep them in sight at all times. The fairgrounds are quite large. Identify a meeting spot in case you get separated. Have children who will be walking wear closed-toed shoes. Wear sunscreen and insect repellent and re-apply as necessary. Bring water to drink and snacks to keep your energy up. There will also be snacks available for purchase.



Fairs are a great place to get ideas for projects you might want to do!

Ask a 4-H'er about their exhibit or animal — It is extremely rewarding to have exhibits and animals on display at the fair for everyone to see. 4-H'er's can often be found caring for their animals throughout the day. If you or your child have any questions about their animal, please ask the 4-H'er — they know all about their animals.

Remember to wash hands often — It is important to practice good handwashing regardless of where you are at, but when visiting places where animals are housed (like at the fair), handwashing will protect your health and the health of the animal. Remember to ask permission of the owner before touching any animal.

At the 2018 Lancaster County Super Fair, over 750 4-H/FFA youth brought one or more exhibits to the fair and

over 5,400 exhibits entered for judging. If you have questions about joining 4-H, please contact the Extension office at 402-441-7180.

If you are unable to make it to the Lancaster County Super Fair, you can see 4-H youth exhibits at the Nebraska State Fair in Grand Island from Aug. 23 through Sept. 2.

Precautions That Visitors Should Take

Following these simple guidelines should help to prevent human illness and lessen the chance of animal to animal spread of disease:

- Do not touch or pet animals, except at designated petting exhibits.
- Wash your hands with water and soap after any direct contact with animals.
- Supervise children younger than 5 years during hand washing and petting to make sure they don't put their hands or other objects into their mouth.
- Avoid eating in animal exhibit areas.
- Do not feed human food to animals.

Source: Nebraska Extension NebGuide "Attending Fairs: Safeguarding Your Health and Nebraska's Livestock Industry" (G1693)

Upcoming Early Childhood Trainings

Nebraska Extension teaches several early childhood development classes for child care providers. Listed are upcoming classes held at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road (unless location otherwise noted). For additional information or to sign up, contact Jaci Foged at jfoged2@unl.edu or 402-441-7180. Some registration forms are at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/family>

Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care (Go NAP SACC) Training for Childcare Providers — Thursdays, Aug. 22, Aug. 29 and Sept. 5. 6:30–8:30 p.m. Must attend all nights. Free. Register by Aug. 16 at <https://go.unl.edu/napsacc>.