



Positive Insights Shared Regarding CHIME — Head Start University Partnership Project

By Jaci Foged, Extension Educator in Lancaster County and Alexis Chavez, Graduate Research Assistant at University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Nationwide, research finds that early childhood educators experience high levels of stress, burnout and teacher turnover. These stressors impact this vital workforce, which in turn, impacts children. Therefore, we work with the adult, because early childhood educators' well-being is directly linked to children's well-being.



CHIME

**CULTIVATING HEALTHY INTENTIONAL
 MINDFUL EDUCATORS**

The University of Nebraska is a current grant recipient in the Head Start University Partnership: Building the Evidence Base for Early Childhood Education Workforce Well-Being. UNL's research team is partnering with Head Start (HS) and Early Head Start (EHS) programs in Nebraska, Minnesota, Indiana and Kansas to evaluate the use of mindfulness and compassion to promote staff well-being.

The Purpose of CHIME

CHIME was developed in Nebraska to support early childhood professional well-being.

About the CHIME Program

Cultivating Healthy Intentional Mindful Educators (CHIME) is a Nebraska Extension-created professional development program for early childhood educators. CHIME is an 8-week, in-depth, interactive program using evidence-based

practices to support educators' well-being and help them provide responsive care. The CHIME program provides education and guidance on how to incorporate mindfulness, social-emotional learning and reflective practice into early

childhood professionals' daily routines, teaching and caregiving. CHIME can be delivered both in-person and virtually and is available across Nebraska, the United States and internationally. The Nebraska Extension Early Childhood Program has a team who has refined the CHIME program based on feedback from both participants and facilitators.

Early childhood teachers and staff attend CHIME in small groups of 4-12 participants. Groups are led by a CHIME Facilitator. As CHIME



Extension Educator Jaci Foged (left) engages with Head Start participants during a recent CHIME Facilitator program.

expanded outside of Nebraska, there was a need to train facilitators outside of Nebraska Extension. All CHIME Facilitators are required to participate in the 8-week program and are then invited to attend the 2.5 day (18 hours) CHIME Facilitator Program. Following the program, new facilitators are provided mentorship by an Extension Educator/CHIME Mentor and use the Assessing CHIME Teachers (ACT) framework to self-reflect on their effectiveness and competency of delivering CHIME. CHIME Mentors use the ACT during reflective consultation to celebrate successes, reflect on challenges, check accuracy and evaluate recorded sessions.

As part of the Head Start University Partnership Project, our training team held three 2.5-day CHIME Facilitator Programs between September

2022–August 2024, training 22 new CHIME Facilitators in Nebraska, Minnesota, Indiana and Kansas. In April 2024, the research team conducted focus groups to gain insights to help refine and adapt the CHIME materials to better serve staff working in HS and EHS Programs. The focus groups included CHIME Facilitator's and HS/EHS Administrators.

The research team used qualitative data analysis software (MAXQDA) to code the focus group discussions.

Successful Application and Results for Teachers and Staff

Overall, CHIME was a success, and participants shared numerous positive experiences. Facilitators shared multiple instances where CHIME techniques were embraced and applied in classroom settings. A facilitator described a scenario where co-teachers in a full-day, full-year HS program enthusiastically adopted CHIME practices: "They really embraced it! The things that they learned and used themselves within our session, they brought back to the classroom. They introduced it to the children, and they were excited and passionate about it." Another facilitator noted

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Diabetes Awareness: Small Changes, Big Impact

By Kayla Colgrove, MS, RDN,
ACSM-CPT, Extension Educator in
Lancaster County

Did you know 38 million people have diabetes in the United States, and 1 in 5 of them don't know they have it? November is American Diabetes Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness about diabetes.

Types

Diabetes is a long-lasting health condition that affects how your body turns food into energy. Type 1, Type 2, and gestational diabetes are the three main types of diabetes.

Type 1 diabetes occurs when the body doesn't make enough insulin, so people need to take insulin every day. It can develop at any age, but is usually diagnosed in children and young adults.

Type 2 diabetes is the most common type. It is known as insulin resistance, which means the body can't use insulin properly. This type most often develops in people 45 or older, but is increasing in children, teens and young adults. Making lifestyle changes can help prevent or delay type 2 diabetes.

Gestational diabetes develops around the 24th week of pregnancy in pregnant women who have never had diabetes. It could put the baby at a higher risk for health problems. Testing for it between 24 and 28 weeks is important since most people do not have symptoms.

Prevention

More than 1 in 3 adults have prediabetes but over 80% are unaware of their condition. Prediabetes is when blood sugar levels are higher than normal but not high enough to be diagnosed with type 2 diabetes. This condition increases the risk of developing type 2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke. Fortunately, both prediabetes and type 2 diabetes can be prevented through lifestyle changes.

It is important to catch prediabetes early to help prevent or delay type 2 diabetes. A blood sugar test is a simple and quick way to find out if you have prediabetes. Talk to your doctor about getting your blood sugar tested if you



have any risk factors for prediabetes, such as:

- Being overweight
- Being 45 years or older
- Having a parent, brother or sister with type 2 diabetes
- Being physically active less than three times a week
- Ever having gestational diabetes (diabetes during pregnancy)
- Giving birth to a baby who weighed more than 9 pounds
- Having polycystic ovary syndrome.

Simple Tips for Better Health

Lifestyle changes such as making healthy eating choices, getting more physically active and losing a small amount of weight are proven to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes. Set small goals that work for you.

Make Healthy Food Choices.

Start building a healthier plate by eating a variety of foods. Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, protein foods and fat-free or low-fat dairy or fortified soy alternatives are healthy choices. Include a variety of protein foods such as seafood, lean meats, poultry, beans, peas, lentils, nuts, and eggs.

Read food labels to help increase your dietary fiber, calcium and vitamin D, and decrease added sugars, saturated fat and sodium. Drink water instead of sugar-sweetened beverages. Regular soda, energy or sports drinks and other sweetened drinks usually contain a lot of added sugars. Get the My Plate Plan at myplate.gov/myplate-plan to find out what is right just for you.

Move More. It is never too late to focus on moving more and sitting less throughout the day. Always remember some activity is better than

none. Walking, biking, gardening or playing sports are a few examples of how you can be active. Aim to get 30 minutes of physical activity 5 days a week. Start gradually and increase the amount and intensity of physical activity over time. Use the Move

Your Way Activity Planner at health.gov/moveyourway/activity-planner to get more active. Check with your doctor before starting a physical activity routine.

Taking control of your health through these simple changes can significantly reduce your risk of diabetes and improve your overall well-being. Remember, progress doesn't happen overnight, and every small step counts. Whether it's choosing a healthy meal or adding an extra 10 minutes to your walk, celebrate those successes. Let's use American Diabetes Month as a reminder to take action and prioritize our health.

Sources:

- cdc.gov/diabetes
- diabetes.org

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

By Kayla Colgrove, MS, RDN, ACSM-CPT, Extension Educator in
Lancaster County

Holidays are a great time to share meals with family and friends. This easy recipe would be a perfect addition to festive gatherings

TURKEY CRANBERRY MEATBALLS

(Yield: 8 servings)

- 1 pound lean ground turkey or chicken
- 3/4 cup dry bread crumbs*
- 1/4 cup dried cranberries, finely chopped
- 1 egg
- 1/4 cup fat-free milk
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon poultry seasoning or Italian seasoning



1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Preheat the oven to 425°F. Spray the baking sheet with non-stick cooking spray. Set aside.
3. In a large bowl, combine all ingredients just until mixed.
4. Shape into balls (about 24) and place on a baking sheet.
5. Wash your hands with soap and water after handling uncooked turkey or chicken.
6. Bake for 15 minutes or until the internal temperature reaches 165°F as measured with a food thermometer.
7. Store leftovers in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to four days.

Notes: *Crushed cracker crumbs, crushed unsweetened cereal or uncooked oatmeal can be used instead of dry bread crumbs.

Nutrition Information: Serving Size (1/8 of recipe): Calories 120; Total Fat 1.5g; Saturated Fat 0g; Cholesterol 50mg; Sodium 115mg; Total Carbohydrates 12g; Fiber 2g; Total Sugars 3g, includes 2g Added Sugars; Protein 15g; Vitamin A 0%; Vitamin C 0%; Vitamin D 0%; Calcium 2%; Iron 6%; Potassium 0%.

Nutrition Software Used: ESHA Food Processor

Commercial/ Noncommercial Pesticide License

Applicators needing a new license and those with licenses expiring in April 2025 have several options to maintain their license.

2025 Traditional Classroom Training

In-person training classes are held from January through April. Training schedules will be available soon at *pested.unl.edu*. In-person trainings are a supplemental learning opportunity; they DO NOT replace pre-class studying of category manuals or flipbooks for test preparation. Study materials for all commercial categories must be purchased online at *pested.unl.edu*.

2025 Conference Options

Extension and industry-sponsored events also offer opportunities to renew a license. **Recertification only.**

- Jan. TBA | NE Extension Crop Production Clinics (00 General Standards, 01 Ag Plant, Demonstration/Research)
- Jan. 7-9 | NE Turf Conference (00 General Standards, 04 Ornamental & Turf)
- Feb. 19-21 | NE State Pest Control Association Conference (00 General Standards, 08 Structural/Health Related, 08w Wood Destroying Organisms, 11 Fumigation, 14 Wildlife Damage Control)
- Feb. 24-26 | NE Aviation Trades Association Convention (00 General Standards, 01 Ag Plant, 07 Right-of-Way, 09 Public Health, 12 Aerial)

Testing-Only Options

Closed-book exams are given by the Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA). Preregistration is not required and there is no cost. For test-only dates, times and locations, visit *go.unl.edu/nda_testing_only*.

NDA computer-based testing is provided through the Pearson-Vue company. For a list of testing sites, categories, dates and registration information, visit *go.unl.edu/pearson-vuetesting*. Cost is \$55/exam. (For applicators with multiple categories on their license, each category is charged the full testing fee.)

Love Gardening? Become a Master Gardener!

Do you want to learn more about vegetable gardening & landscaping?

Do you have a passion for tree planting?

Do you enjoy volunteering and sharing your knowledge with others?



In exchange for 40 hours of training, Extension Master Gardeners (EMGs) volunteer 40 hours of their time. EMGs serve an important role extending the horticulture education and outreach from Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County. The 2025 training begins in February. Application deadline is Jan. 17.

For more information, visit *lancaster.unl.edu/emg* or call Mary Jane Frogge at 402-441-7180.

Upcoming Green Industry Conferences

NEBRASKA TURFGRASS CONFERENCE

• JAN. 7–9

LaVista Conference Center, LaVista, NE

Agenda and registration – *nebraskaturfgrass.com/conference*



GREAT PLAINS GROWERS CONFERENCE

• JAN. 9–11

Missouri Western University,
St. Joseph, MO

Agenda and registration – *greatplainsgrowersconference.org*



NEBRASKA ARBORIST ASSOCIATION WINTER CONFERENCE • JAN. 21–22

Embassy Suites, Lincoln, NE

Agenda and registration coming soon – *nearborists.org*



NEBRASKA NURSERY & LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION • JAN. 30–31

Nebraska Innovation Campus Conference
Center, Lincoln, NE

Agenda and registration – *nebraskanurseryandlandscapeassociation.com/event*



MIDWEST INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF ARBORICULTURE ANNUAL CONF.

• JAN. 29–31

Double Tree Inn, Overland Park, KS

Agenda and registration – *mwisa.org/annual-conference*



GARDEN GUIDE THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH

By Mary Jane Frogge, Extension Associate in Lancaster County

African violets do well when potted in small pots. A good general rule is to use a pot one-third the diameter of the plant. Encourage African violets to bloom by giving them plenty of light. They can be in a south window during dark winter months. They bloom beautifully under fluorescent lights.

House plants with large leaves and smooth foliage such as philodendrons, dracaena and rubber plants, benefit if their leaves are washed with a damp cloth to remove dust.

After the ground freezes, mulch small fruit plants such as strawberries. One inch of straw or leaves is ideal for strawberries.

Order seed catalogs now for garden planning in January. For variety, consider companies that specialize in old and rare flower varieties or wild flowers.

Clean power tools of all plant material and dirt. Store all tools in their proper place indoors, never outdoors where they will rust over the winter.

Winter is a good time to start reviewing your garden notes to help with next year's plans.

Remove all mummified fruit from fruit trees and rake up and destroy those on the ground. Also, rake and dispose of apple and cherry leaves. Good sanitation practices reduce insects and diseases the following season.

Be sure not to store apples or pears with vegetables. The fruits give off ethylene gas which speeds up the breakdown of vegetables and will cause them to develop off-flavors.

Check fruits, vegetables, corms and tubers you have in storage. Sort out any that show signs of rot and dispose of them.

Winter is a good time to inspect trees and shrubs for bagworm capsules. Remove and destroy them to reduce next year's pest population.

Place fresh Christmas trees away from fireplaces, heat vents and anything else that could dry the needles. Keep your Christmas tree well watered from the time it is brought home until it is recycled.

A home weather station that includes a minimum-maximum thermometer, a rain gauge and a weather log is a good gift for a gardener.

Managing the Demands of Water & Wastewater Systems Can Make Gatherings More Enjoyable

By Becky Schuerman, Extension Associate in Water/Wastewater Mgmt.

Fall and winter gatherings are upon us and that often means a bustling house full of family, friends and preparation of tasty recipes in the kitchen. All of these things should make for joyful times, but they can potentially have a stressful impact on your private water well and onsite wastewater systems.

With the ownership of water well and wastewater systems, comes great responsibility. You oversee the upkeep; not a municipality. While your immediate family should know how to avoid undue stress on these systems, your guests may not, so share information on the best daily practices. With everyone in the know, you will help each system perform efficiently despite the increased demands while having additional house guests.

- Water conservation and staggering of higher water demands throughout the day can have a positive impact in reducing strain on both systems.
- Check for and fix any leaky indoor or outdoor water fixtures such as faucets/hydrants, shower heads or continuously running toilets. Consider replacing older water fixtures with new, low-water usage ones before having a



- house full of guests.
- Ask everyone to take quick showers and stagger the water usage by having some shower in the morning while the others shower in the evening.
- Lessen wasted water by reminding everyone to turn off the water while brushing teeth, washing hands/face or shaving.
- Combine smaller loads of laundry and only do one or two loads per day.
- Run the dishwasher and/or washing machine at night when water use is at its lowest.

Minimizing solids within your wastewater will improve your system's performance. Solids add to the organic load in the system and too much can produce an unbalanced system, resulting in inadequate treatment. Problems can include clogged pipes, clogged filter screens or a

- clogged and/or saturated drain field.
- Choose composting or the trash over using the garbage disposal to get rid of items such as vegetable skins and trimmings.
- Do not pour cooking oils or grease from the cooked meats down the drain at any time; rather pour into a disposable container, refrigerate until solid and throw away.
- Avoid flushing items other than septic-friendly toilet paper and human waste, even if the items say they are flushable.

By implementing these best daily practices, you will help to ensure your water and wastewater systems will not be to blame for a potentially messy and costly disruption of your holiday festivities.

For more information on maintaining your water well and wastewater systems, go to water.unl.edu/residential-water-use.

It's Time to Plant Fall Cover Crops

By John Nelson, Extension Educator in Lancaster County

The majority of cover crops in Nebraska are planted during and after the fall harvest season, so now is a good time to review the benefits and drawbacks of cover crops, and general cover crop management practices.

The benefits of including cover crops in a corn-soybean rotation have been well established in Nebraska and across the Midwest. Cover crops can reduce erosion, increase soil organic matter and water holding capacity, improve nutrient cycling and suppress weeds, among many other things.

The concern about cover crops using valuable soil water in dry conditions is certainly valid. Cover crops can have a negative effect on available soil water and yield of the subsequent crop. However, UNL research in irrigated seed corn production fields in Seward County showed that fall interseeded cover crops can have a beneficial effect on soil water availability for the subsequent cash crop by reducing evaporative losses in

Table 1. Effect of winter-hardy cover crop terminated in spring on subsequent cash crop yield in NOFRN research studies.

COUNTY	CROP	IRRIGATION	YEAR	YIELD (BU/AC) NO COVER	YIELD (BU/AC) RYE	YIELD (BU/AC) MIX
Lancaster	Soybean	Dryland	2011	62	59	61
Lancaster	Corn	Dryland	2012	93	86	91
Lancaster	Soybean	Dryland	2013	56	54	56
Lancaster	Corn	Dryland	2015	172	155	158
Seward	Corn	Pivot	2014	248	247	—

abnormally dry conditions. However, the researchers noted that evapotranspiration and soil water storage are very site-specific and heavily influenced by the climatic conditions at each site.

To address the question of yield reductions in cash crops following cover crops, five site-years of on-farm research conducted by the Nebraska On-Farm Research Network (NOFRN) in Lancaster and Seward Counties were summarized on the UNL CropWatch site (cropwatch.unl.edu/2016/impact-cover-crops-corn-and-soybean-yield

nebraska-farm-research). Table 1 shows that planting rye as a cover crop did not statistically affect yield of the subsequent cash crop.

This data does offer the possibility that cover crops can be implemented in Southeast Nebraska without severe yield penalties. However, the true benefits of cover crops can take many years to realize, and it does take patience and a willingness to adapt to the challenges of altering our systems with a long-term soil health goal in mind.

The most commonly used cover

crop in Nebraska is cereal rye. It is the hardiest of the cereals and can grow quickly and accumulate significant biomass even in suboptimal conditions. However, there are many other types of cover crops and mixes that can be tailored to fit the specific goals of your operation. The Midwest Cover Crops Council has developed a cover crop selector tool that can help growers decide which cover crop species or mixes

fit their goals and operations. The tool will provide information at the county level that accounts for local climate and growing conditions. It can be accessed at midwestcovercrops.org/selector-tools.

Cover crops are a great tool to improve soil health and cropping system resiliency, but implementing them on your farm takes careful planning and a willingness to adapt and learn the best strategies to maximize their value. Contact John Nelson at 402-441-7180 or jnelson158@unl.edu.

CHIME

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the ripple effect of CHIME techniques: “They will actually talk through some difficult situations with other employees and use CHIME techniques.” This highlights the program’s role in fostering a supportive and mindful work culture. Additionally, facilitators observed that CHIME techniques were not only used in professional settings, but also had a positive impact on personal lives. For instance, a facilitator recounted a teacher’s experience using CHIME breathing techniques during a stressful dental procedure, showcasing how the program impacts participants outside of work.

Administrators noted that CHIME had become a common language within their organizations. “We’re seeing staff use it like a verb, like ‘I gotta



remember to CHIME’ or ‘I’m CHIMEing right now,’ which has become a helpful reminder when things are feeling stressful or overwhelming.” A director also noted the successful application of CHIME was also reflected in the positive outcomes observed in children’s behavior.

An Entirely Positive Experience with Mentorship

A critical component to the CHIME program was the provided mentorship for facilitators which was highlighted as a key part in their growth. A positive aspect was the accessibility of mentors, as it was easy and convenient for facilitators

to seek guidance and support as needed. Mentors also played a helpful role in asking facilitators to reflect on their experiences. A facilitator with extensive training experience (~25 years) valued their mentor’s ability to listen and help the facilitator walk through challenges, enhancing the facilitator’s reflective practices.

Facilitators also appreciated the balanced support provided by the mentorship. A facilitator shared, “I have received similar mentoring-type training for different programs, which were very intense and time-consuming...with CHIME...there was a good balance of support.” This balance allowed facilitators to benefit from mentorship without feeling burdened by it.

Another facilitator echoed this sentiment, appreciating that mentors were available when needed, but not overly intrusive.

Reasons for Training and Facilitating

Facilitators decided to undergo CHIME Facilitator training for a couple of reasons. One facilitator stated, “I had such a positive experience as a participant, and it paired with the need at our agency. That’s why I decided to receive the training.” Another shared, “It came at a very good time for me, going through a really difficult time in my position and other personal things. CHIME has really helped me, and I was looking forward to facilitating it with our first group, and now

our second group.” Finally, prior negative experiences in other educational settings motivated some to seek out CHIME, as one facilitator described, “I was in the classroom for 10 years, and recently, 5 years in a school district that did not support my well-being or my burnout. I needed a recharge, and [CHIME] was perfect. It was life-changing for me.”

If you or someone you know would be interested in participating in the 8-week CHIME program, please email chime@unl.edu.

This project is supported by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the United States (U.S.) Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award (Grant #: 90YR0131, PI Hatton-Bowers) with 100 percent funded by ACF/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement by, ACF/HHS, or the U.S. Government. Please visit the ACF website, acf.hhs.gov/grants/administrative-and-national-policy-requirements.

A Quick Guide to Fleas

By Kait Chapman, Extension Educator in Lancaster County

While insect activity slows for the year, there may still be problems that arise indoors. Fleas, for example, are small, wingless insects that feed on blood and are most commonly found in homes with pets. And just like other “bitey” bugs,

they can cause itchy bites, allergic reactions and may even transmit diseases and parasites like tapeworms.

Flea Habitats

While fleas can bite people — dogs, cats and other animals serve as their primary hosts. Understanding the flea life cycle and where fleas are commonly

found on our furry companions, flea larvae and pupae live off of their hosts, developing in carpets, pet bedding and on furniture. Fleas can even be found outdoors in yards and other areas where pets frequent or wildlife is present.

Signs of Fleas

The first signs that there may be a flea problem in the house is excessive scratching for pets and bites, particularly around the ankles, for people. Taking a closer look to diagnose the problem is important. Adult fleas are small, about 1/8 inch long, brown in color and flattened from the side. They are also excellent jumpers, capable of jumping 150 times their height or up to 8 feet vertically.

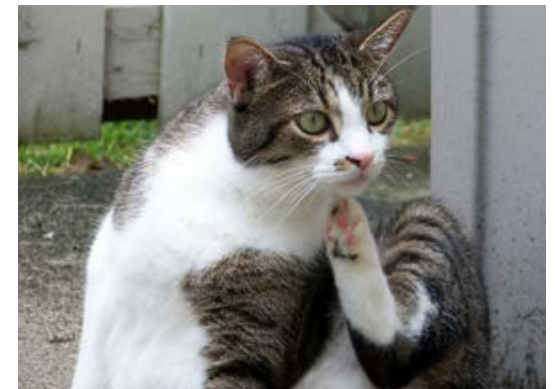
Flea Control Strategies

• Pet Treatment:

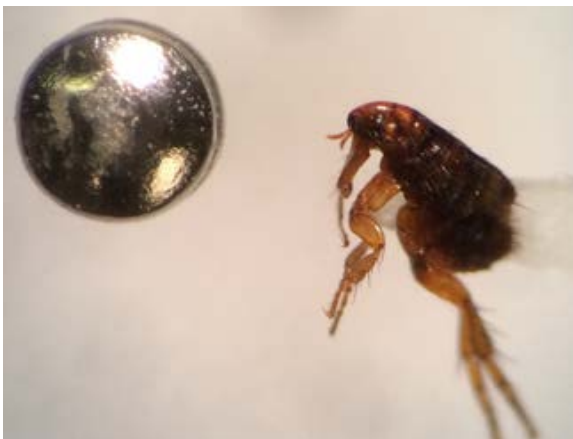
Consult with a veterinarian and treat all pets in and outside the home.

Treatments commonly come in the form of shampoos, oral or topical medications or flea collars. Regularly groom and remove fleas using a specialized flea comb.

• **Home Treatment:** Wash and dry pet bedding and vacuum the home regularly, paying close attention to areas that pets most frequent. Consider contacting a pest management professional for insecticidal treatments in the



Cat scratching its neck because of possible fleas.



Flea next to a pin head. Highly magnified.

found is a crucial component to their control. Fleas undergo a complete metamorphosis with four life stages: egg, larva, pupa and adult. While adults are commonly

Photos by Jody Green, Extension Educator in Douglas/Sorry Counties

home.

• **Outdoor Treatment:** Also consider outdoor treatments to lawns and landscapes. Removal or exclusion of wildlife in or around the home may be necessary.

While fleas can be an itchy problem, it takes an integrated approach of non-chemical and chemical methods for successful management.



HEART OF 4-H VOLUNTEER AWARD

Shane Cuttlers

Lancaster County 4-H is proud to announce Shane Cuttlers of Raymond as winner of the November "Heart of 4-H Award" in recognition of outstanding volunteer service.

He has volunteered with 4-H in a variety of ways for 14 years:

- Assisting the 5 Star 4-H club with community service activities such as roadside cleanups, YMCA Trunk or Treat, and the Salvation Army Red Kettle campaign.
- Assisting the Pick A Pig 4-H club with club activities and hauling pigs to and from the Lancaster County Super Fair.
- At the Super Fair, helping in the show ring at the Swine Show, assisting with poultry pen set up and take down, providing livestock for the Livestock Judging Contest and the Elite Showmanship contests, as well as staffing shifts in 4-H Council's food stand.

"I like being a volunteer because I have always been a part of civic groups such as Boy Scouts and numerous fire service organizations (local, state, national and international)," Shane says. "I think giving time and resources to organizations like 4-H helps to make communities strong. My volunteering sets an example for youth to see and hopefully it encourages them to volunteer. My favorite experience as a 4-H Volunteer has been watching my daughters show livestock and also seeing the joys of all the kids and their accomplishments in 4-H."



HEART OF 4-H VOLUNTEER AWARD

Dena Noe

Lancaster County 4-H is proud to announce Dena Noe of Lincoln as winner of the December "Heart of 4-H Award" in recognition of outstanding volunteer service.

She has volunteered with 4-H for eight years, teaching Clover College workshops on basic banking, entrepreneurship and bike safety. At "Connecting the Dots" interactive career exploration programs in Lincoln and Kearney, Dena shared important information with students about potential careers. As a member of the Lancaster County Extension Board from 2017–2022, she helped provide direction for Extension's program areas, including the 4-H youth development program.

"I'm a firm believer in education and what it can do for our youth," says Dena. "But what is really special about 4-H is not only are participants receiving education, they are receiving hands-on training for life. The skills the students are taught will help them grow into productive and responsible adults. It's not just about the facts and figures; it's about growing into productive members of society, one fun-filled project at a time. 4-H is transforming their lives forever and that is powerful. My favorite experience as a 4-H volunteer was being outside on my bike with the kids. Seeing the freedom the kids found from riding their bikes and experiencing the outdoors was very special."



4-H Specialty Clubs Invite New Members

Several Lancaster County specialty 4-H clubs are looking for new 4-H members. For more information about these clubs, go to go.unl.edu/specialty or call 402-441-7180.

4-H TEEN COUNCIL — a leadership organization for youth in 7th–12th grade. Meetings are held the second Sunday of each month, September through April, at 3 p.m. at the Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County conference rooms, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A, Lincoln.

CLOVER KIDS CLUB — for youth ages 5–7. The club meets once a month, October through July, on Mondays, 6–7:15 p.m. at the Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County conference rooms, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A, Lincoln.

UNIFIED SHOWING — empowers youth with disabilities ages 8–18 through learning about and showing lambs with the aid of youth buddies ages 14–18. Lambs are provided and kept at a local farm.

4 ON THE FLOOR DOG CLUB — for youth ages 9–18. Will restart on Monday, Jan. 6 at the Sandhills Global Event Center – 4-H office located by the South Hall. Meetings will be held every other Monday at 6:15 p.m. Contact club leader John Croghan at 402-957-3651 by Dec. 25.

RABBITS R US — focuses on rabbits, as well as a variety of other projects. Open to all youth ages 8–18. Usually meets monthly.

PET PALS — for youth ages 8–18 and their small animals. Meetings to be arranged.

WONDER CATS CLUB — Open to all youth ages 8–18. Meetings will be held the last Thursday of every month from 4:45–5:45 p.m. Location will rotate and will be held virtually every other month.

LINCOLN SHOOTING STARS — open to all youth ages 8–18. Club meetings are Wednesday evenings 5:30–7 p.m. at the Nebraska Game & Parks Turpin Outdoor Education Center, 4703 N. 44th St., Lincoln.

Nebraska 4-H Fed Steer Challenge

Nebraska 4-H, in collaboration with the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Department of Animal Science, hosted the sixth annual Nebraska 4-H Fed Steer Challenge in 2024. Participants selected, purchased, exhibited, harvested and analyzed carcass data on a steer while networking with industry professionals. Additionally, they participated in monthly educational sessions led by industry experts and Animal Science faculty. Lancaster County 4-H'er Lilee Chevalier participated and earned 3rd place for her Record Book.



State Shooting Sports Results

Several 4-H shooting sports competitions happen throughout the year, including archery, shotgun, bbgun, air pistol and air rifle. Here are the Lancaster County 4-H youth who placed in the top ten. Complete results are at 4h.unl.edu/shooting-sports.

State 4-H Archery Indoor

The 2024 Nebraska State 4-H Archery Championships were held Jan. 27 at the Aurora Cooperative Pavilion in Grand Island. Four Lancaster County 4-H'ers participated.

- Suzy Hanley — Fixed Head Long Stabilizer (FHLS) Young Adult 2nd place
- Talin Abney-Cook — Bowhunter Freestyle (BHFS) Young Adult 7th place

State 4-H Archery Outdoor

The 2024 Nebraska State 4-H Archery Outdoor Championships were held Sept. 21–22 at the Heartland Public Shooting Park in Grand Island. Three Lancaster County 4-H'ers participated.

3D TOURNAMENT:

- Adelaide Metcalf — Basic Bow (BB) Cub (C) 3rd place

OUTDOOR 600 TARGET TOURNAMENT:

- Adelaide Metcalf — Basic Bow (BB) Cub (C) 3rd place
- Kamryn Wanser — Olympic Recurve (OR) Young Adult (YA) 1st place
- Suzy Hanley — Olympic Recurve (OR) Young Adult (YA) 4th place



Adelaide Metcalf

State 4-H Shotgun

The 2024 Nebraska State 4-H Shotgun Championships were held Sept. 14–15 at the Heartland Public Shooting Park in Grand Island. Six Lancaster County 4-H'ers participated.

INTERMEDIATE DIVISION:

- Owen Savicky — 5th place



4-H Announcements FOR 4-H'ERS AND VOLUNTEERS

The 4-H e-newsletter at go.unl.edu/lan4hnews has up-to-date information about upcoming 4-H opportunities.



HORSE AWARDS NIGHT, OCT. 24

— The annual Lancaster County 4-H Horse Awards Night will be Thursday, Oct. 24, 6:30 p.m. at the Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County conference rooms, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A, Lincoln. Awards presentation includes Incentive Awards, Horsemanship Levels, All-Around Awards, Herdsmanship, Top Judging buckles and ribbons, as well as a few surprise awards! Come help celebrate the outstanding accomplishments of the 2024 Lancaster County 4-H equestrians!

PAPER BASKET WORKSHOP, NOV. 9; REGISTER BY NOV. 4

— 4-H youth ages 8 and up are invited to a "Design My Place" workshop to engineer and construct a woven paper basket using recycled newspapers and wire on Saturday, Nov. 9 from 9–11 a.m. at the Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County conference rooms, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A, Lincoln. No cost to attend. Learn paper weaving techniques to make a home décor basket that may be exhibited at the Super Fair. Adults are encouraged to attend to help, especially if their child is 8 or 9 years old. Register by Monday, Nov. 4 by

calling Kristin Geisert at 402-441-7180 or emailing kristin.geisert@unl.edu. Bring a needle nose wire cutter for cutting wire. All other supplies will be provided.

ARCHERY CONTEST, NOV. 23; REGISTER BY NOV. 11

— Lancaster County 4-H is offering an Archery Contest on Saturday, Nov. 23, 8 a.m. at the Nebraska Game & Parks Turpin Outdoor Education Center, 4703 N. 44th St., Lincoln. Register by Monday, Nov. 11 at go.unl.edu/archerycontest2025. To participate, youth must be ages 8–18 (by January 1 of the current year) and actively enrolled in the 4-H shooting sports project under the direct supervision of a certified 4-H shooting sports instructor. Participants exhibiting unsafe practices may be disqualified from the contest at the discretion of the superintendent. The contest will consist of 12 ends of 5 arrows on an NFAA Indoor 40 cm target. Scoring X, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 from the center out. Archers will be classified according to age division and bow style. This is a Lancaster County Super Fair contest held before the fair. If you have questions, contact Kate Pulec at kpulec3@unl.edu or 402-441-7180.

VOLUNTEER ROAD SHOW NOV. 18; REGISTER BY NOV. 11

— Nebraska 4-H is excited to bring the 4-H Volunteer Road Show to Lincoln! A virtual session will be held on Sunday, Nov. 17, 4–6 p.m. and an in-person session on Monday, Nov. 18, 5:30–8 p.m. at the Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County conference rooms, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A. Register for the Nov. 18 in-person session by Nov. 15. For more information, go to 4h.unl.edu/volunteer-road-show. Lancaster County 4-H Council will reimburse the \$15 registration fee for Lancaster County volunteers — contact Kristin Geisert at kristin.geisert@unl.edu with confirmation of your registration.

LET'S GET ARTSY! WORKSHOP, DEC. 7; REGISTER BY NOV. 25

— 4-H youth ages 8 and up are invited to a "Let's Get Artsy!" workshop on Saturday, Dec. 7, 9–11 a.m. at the Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County conference rooms, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A, Lincoln. Youth will create their own tessellation drawing by repeating a pattern of shapes. Learn how to create radial symmetry by blending colored pencils. The art may be exhibited at the Super Fair. Guest instructor will be Caitlyn Heiden, Art Educator at Blessed Sacrament Catholic School. No cost to attend. Register by Monday, Nov. 25 by contacting Kristin Geisert at 402-441-7180 or kristin.geisert@unl.edu. All supplies will be provided.

4-H Awards & Scholarship Forms Due Jan. 3

Many Lancaster County 4-H award forms and college scholarship applications are due Jan. 3. Forms are available at go.unl.edu/4has and the Extension office. Recipients will be announced at Lancaster County 4-H Achievement Celebration on Thursday, Feb. 13, 2025. Families and club leaders are encouraged to submit photos related to award application accomplishments to go.unl.edu/Lan4HPic by Jan. 3. These photos may be used in the multimedia presentation at Achievement Celebration.

AWARDS

- Lancaster County 4-H Community Service Awards — based on number of hours of community service through 4-H.
- Lancaster County 4-H Council Leadership Award — youth in grades 10–12 who show outstanding qualities in servant leadership.
- Lancaster County Outstanding 4-H Member Award — an individual 14 years of age or older who has excelled in their involvement with 4-H.
- Lancaster County Meritorious Service to 4-H Award — individuals or organizations who have exhibited consistent and strong support of 4-H.
- Nebraska 4-H Achievement Application — two versions: junior for ages 8–14 (county only) and senior for ages 15–18 (county and state). The senior application is utilized

to select delegates for National 4-H Conference and 4-H Congress, as well as Nebraska 4-H Foundation scholarships.

- Nebraska 4-H Diamond Clover Program — recognizes the accomplishments of 4-H'ers ages 8–18, youth can progress from Level 1–6.
- Nebraska 4-H Gives Back — a 4-H member or team completes a major service-learning project (over 100 hours of service).
- Nebraska 4-H Club of Excellence — meet criteria outlined by the state 4-H office.

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS for graduating high school seniors

- 4-H Council — up to twelve \$700 scholarships.
- 4-H Teen Council — up to five \$300 scholarships.
- Lincoln Center Kiwanis — one \$1,000 scholarship.
- Dick Fleming Leadership & Communication Scholarship — one \$250 scholarship to a 4-H'er who has excelled in leadership and communication through 4-H.
- Lane Community 4-H Scholarship — one \$200 scholarship to a 4-H'er attending Raymond Central High School.
- Nebraska 4-H Foundation Scholarships — several statewide Nebraska 4-H scholarships (applications are via the 4-H Achievement Application).
- Nebraska Association of Fair Managers Martha & Don Romeo Scholarship (note: deadline is Nov. 30).

Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County
444 Cherrycreek Road, Ste. A, Lincoln, NE 68528
402-441-7180 • lancaster.unl.edu

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Outgoing 4-H Council Members

The October 4-H Council meeting marked the final meeting for two outgoing 4-H Council members.

Youth members:

- Lilee Chevalier served two years.
- Hannah Dean served three years, one as secretary.

Lancaster County 4-H thanks them for their leadership!



Lilee Chevalier



Hannah Dean

Ag Society Annual Election & Meeting

The Lancaster County Agricultural Society (which acts as the Fair Board) will hold its Annual Meeting and Board election on Thursday, Dec. 12 at Sandhills Global Event Center, 4100 N. 84th St., Lincoln, NE 68507, in the Lancaster Room on the north side of the facility. Voting will take place 5:30–6:30 p.m. for three positions on the Lancaster County Agricultural Society Board (three-year terms). Any registered voter in Lancaster County may vote. Please bring valid photo ID. The Ag Society Annual Meeting, starting at 6:45 p.m., is an opportunity for the public to learn more about the

Super Fair and Sandhills Global Event Center, as well as hear the election results.

Any Lancaster County resident interested in running for a position on the board must submit a short biography with a photo to arrive at Sandhills Global Event Center office by Wednesday, Nov. 13 in order to be placed on the ballot.

For more information, visit sandhillsglobaleventcenter.org and click on “About” or contact Lancaster County Ag Society Board President Kendra Ronnau by leaving a message at 402-441-6545, option 0, during regular business hours.



EXTENSION CALENDAR

All events held at the Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County conference rooms, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A, Lincoln, unless otherwise noted.

October

- 24 4-H Horse Awards Night 6:30 p.m.
 30 4-H Leader/Volunteer Training 9 a.m.

November

- 5 Youth Science Day for Homeschooled Youth (FULL) 9 a.m.–12 p.m.
 5 4-H Council Meeting 6 p.m.
 7 Pesticide Applicator NDA “Walk-In” Testing Session 9 a.m.–2 p.m.
 8 Extension Board Meeting 8 a.m.
 8–9 State 4-H Rodeo, Sandhills Global Event Center
 9 4-H Paper Basket Making Workshop 9 a.m.
 10 4-H Teen Council Meeting 3 p.m.
 11 Extension Office Closed for Veterans Day Holiday
 18 Nebraska 4-H Volunteer Road Show 5:30–8 p.m.
 23 4-H Archery Contest, Nebraska Outdoor Education Center, 4703 N. 44th St 8 a.m.
 28–29 Extension Office Closed for Thanksgiving Holiday

December

- 4 Successful Farmer Series (In-Person and Livestream) 8–11 a.m.
 5 Pesticide Applicator NDA “Walk-In” Testing Session 9 a.m.–2 p.m.
 7 4-H Let’s Get Artsy! Workshop 9–11 a.m.
 8 4-H Teen Council Meeting 3 p.m.
 11 Successful Farmer Series (In-Person and Livestream) 8–11 a.m.
 13 Extension Board Meeting 8 a.m.
 18 Successful Farmer Series (In-Person and Livestream) 8–11 a.m.
 25 Extension Office Closed for Christmas Holiday

Successful Farmer Series Returns in December

Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County’s popular program, Successful Farmer Series, is returning with new and relevant cropping systems topics presented by experts. Sessions will be held on Wednesdays, Dec. 4, Dec. 11 and Dec. 18 from 8:30–11 a.m. with check-in and breakfast starting at 8 a.m. They will be located at the Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County conference rooms, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A, Lincoln. Sessions will also be livestreamed and archived on YouTube.

Each topic will feature two to three speakers from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln or industry organizations. Multiple sessions and topics allow producers to pick the topics most relevant to them and their operation.



Extension Educator John Nelson (right) led a Farmer Panel at last year’s Successful Farmer Series.

Cost is \$10 per session or \$20 for the entire series, and includes breakfast and handouts. The in-person program is a great opportunity to network with other area producers in attendance. No fee for livestream participants.

Please register at least two days before each session and indicate if you will participate in-person and or via livestream. More information

and a registration link will be online at lancaster.unl.edu/farmerseries. You may also register by contacting Karen Wedding at kwedding2@unl.edu or 402-441-7180. Pay at the event with check (payable to Lancaster County Extension), cash or credit/debit card (small additional fee). CCA credits will be available at relevant sessions for certified crop advisors attending in person.