



NEBLINE



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“As a result of these lessons, I have made several important changes: I have switched from whole milk and dairy products to low-fat options, I check nutritional labels before purchasing any items, I exercise for 30 minutes each day, I plan my meals for the week and I use a shopping list when I go grocery shopping.”

—Iman, Nutrition Education Program group class participant at Good Neighbor Community Center

2024 Extension Highlights

Engaging with Nebraskans wherever they are, connecting them with the resources, research and innovation of the University of Nebraska.



Nutrition Education Program (NEP) — NEP equips limited-resource families to live healthier lives through classes and policy, system and environmental (PSE) initiatives. In 2024, NEP in Lancaster County taught 5,500 adults and 7,700 youth in 1,850 classes. NEP fostered 51 PSE changes to increase health accessibility and affordability. Pictured (L-R): Alaya Greene teaching youth at the Malone Center about healthy eating, Hannah Schielke serving samples at a local farmers’ market to promote the Double Up Food Bucks program (which gives SNAP recipients up to \$20 a day in fresh produce), Lori Vossler preparing fresh garden produce with Healthy Recipe Kit recipients (over 600 kits were distributed in 2024) and Extension Assistant Zahraa Rida working with a participant to learn their cultural food practices.



**Volunteers
Valued at
\$772,431**

Lancaster County Extension’s estimated **2,226 volunteers** gave **24,861 total hours of service worth \$772,431*** to our community! Extension benefits from these volunteers who help extend the reach of programs such as 4-H, Master Gardeners and Extension Board members.

*Based on Independent Sector’s estimate of Nebraska’s value of a volunteer hour in 2023 as \$31.07

THANK YOU!

**Extension
helps people
solve
real-world
problems**

MORE HIGHLIGHTS ON NEXT PAGE



Agriculture Outreach — Water & Cropping Systems Educator John Nelson was one of several presenters at the Nebraska Soil Health & Cover Crops Field Day held at the Eastern Nebraska Research Extension and Education Center. 75 attendees learned about the results of the Highboy Cover Crop Interseeding Project (HiCCIP) and saw an equipment demonstration. As part of Extension’s On-Farm Research Network, HiCCIP included 16 farms covering 2,000 acres. The goal is to address barriers to adopting cover crops in corn fields prior to harvest.



Early Childhood Prep Academy — Extension Educator Hayley Jackson Perez partnered with Lincoln Littles and Ruth Staples Child Development Laboratory to offer 6-hour workshops to 22 middle school students about career possibilities in early childhood education. This program was aimed at increasing the Early Childhood workforce, which is an issue within Lancaster County and beyond. One participant said, “I enjoyed working with the kids doing hands-on activities. My favorite was assisting in the outdoor learning. The other kids and staff all made the day fun and a great experience.”

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Horticulture, Landscape, and Environmental Systems (HLES) Team – HLES Extension experts assist thousands of homeowners, renters and industry professionals each year to identify issues and solve problems. In 2024, over 15,000 questions were answered by horticulture, entomology and water experts (via emails, phone calls and walk-ins). Pictured: Horticulturist Sarah Browning, Urban Entomologist Kait Chapman and Statewide Domestic Water/Wastewater Program Manager Becky Schuerman. The HLES Team assisted over 2,000 Husker Harvest Days visitors during the 3-day event in September.



Cultivating Healthy Intentional Mindful Educators (CHIME) – Developed by Extension, CHIME teaches Early Childhood professionals how to improve their well-being. As part of a Head Start–University Partnership funded by a grant, Extension Educator Jaci Foged organized and presented a 2.5-day CHIME Facilitator Program (pictured). One participant said, “Nebraska Extension has provided me with practical strategies for cultivating mindfulness and self-compassion, enhancing both my professional life as an educator and my personal life.”

4-H Engaged 34,177 Youth

4-H equips youth with skills for the future while meeting them where they are today.



Beyond Ready



4-H Clubs – With over 50 clubs ranging from 5 to 75 youth members, clubs are an important part of the Lancaster County 4-H program. 4-H clubs are led by adult volunteers, hold regular meetings, elect youth officers, recite the 4-H pledge, learn together and do community service projects. Pictured is the 4-H Clover Kids club for youth ages 5–7.



4-H at Lancaster County Super Fair – 502 4-H/FFA exhibitors showcased 4,696 exhibits (including static exhibits, animals, contest entries and Clover Kids exhibits). The Super Fair provides 4-H youth an opportunity to share the projects they’ve worked on throughout the year. The 4-H Swine Show (pictured) included many exhibitors from the Pick A Pig club for non-farm youth.

4-H builds a ready generation in a world of change



4-H STEM – A new club focusing on generative artificial intelligence (AI) met seven times in two months. Youth in grades 5–8 journeyed into the world of AI through storytelling, art, games and more. They gained hands-on experience with AI tools like ChatGPT and DALL-E and explored how AI is impacting our world and shaping the future. This program was piloted in Lancaster County by Extension Specialist Brad Barker and University of Nebraska–Lincoln doctoral student Mackayla Kelsey (pictured helping a 4-H'er).



4-H in the Classroom – Lancaster County 4-H presents several programs in local schools which meet Lincoln Public Schools, Nebraska or national education standards. The Nutrition School Enrichment Kits program for grades K–5 reached 17,593 students in 41 schools during the 2023–24 school year. Pictured is Extension Assistant Sam Isaacson leading kindergartners in learning how to make a healthy snack, after reviewing the five basic food groups.



Afterschool Programs – 4-H delivered 144 afterschool/out-of-school programs focusing on hands-on STEM programs such as creating slime in a bag. Pictured is Extension Assistant Elizabeth Thiltges leading a 4-H STEM club in learning about polymers.

Nebraska Extension’s Strategic Direction

- 1) Strengthen Nebraska Agriculture & Food Systems
- 2) Inspire Nebraskans & Their Communities
- 3) Enhance the Health & Well-being of all Nebraskans



How the Big 3 energize Nebraska’s future:

- ✓ Developing a skilled workforce
- ✓ Enhancing health & well-being
- ✓ Creating statewide economic vitality
- ✓ Retaining & attracting young people
- ✓ Leveraging our strengths for sustained success

