



Data From the Field: On-Farm Research Extension Partners With Farmers to Answer Crop Production Questions

By John Nelson, Water and Cropping Systems Extension Educator in Lancaster County

The Nebraska On-Farm Research Network (NOFRN) is a collaborative research program designed to be “by farmers, for farmers.” It bridges the gap between academic research and real-world application by partnering Nebraska Extension faculty with local producers to conduct applied research on farmers’ land across the state.

NOFRN conducts 80 to 100 on-farm studies each year to find solutions to critical crop production and profitability concerns. Topics include water, nutrient and soil management, crop protection and cover crops.

2025 Studies

In the 2025 season, 11 On-Farm Research projects were conducted in cooperation with Nebraska Extension Water and Cropping Systems Educators John Nelson, Ritika Lamichhane, Matheus Ribeiro, and Mailson Freire de Oliveira in Southeast Nebraska, including the counties of Lancaster, Cass and Saline. Here is a summary of two studies.

Fungicide Applications in Corn

One of the key studies in 2025 was comparing the efficacy of fixed-wing airplane and spray drone fungicide applications in corn. Veltyma fungicide was applied during tasseling at a rate of 7 oz/acre, with a carrier volume of 2 gal/acre. This study,



Cass County field used in the airplane–drone fungicide study: (above) visual differences in the corn canopy health between fungicide treatments; (right) treatment layout showing the Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) (green indicates treated strips with healthier plants, and orange/red indicates untreated strips with less healthy plants).

Treatment	Moisture (%)	Yield (bu/acre)	Marginal Net Return (\$/acre)
Airplane	15 A	242 A	1007 A
Drone	15 A	246 A	1023 A
Untreated	15 A	227 B	959 B
P-Value	0.19	0.0001	0.0005

Table 1. Grain moisture, yield and marginal net return differences between drone and airplane fungicide applications. A vs. B indicates statistically significant differences.

conducted in eastern Cass County under severe Southern Rust disease pressure, showed no statistically significant yield differences between the two fungicide application methods (Table 1). Because of the heavy disease pressure on corn in the region, both fungicide applications significantly improved corn yield (15–19 bu/acre) over the untreated check.

Highboy Cover Crop Interseeding Project

A long-term research study

of a statewide effort aimed at understanding the benefits of preharvest cover crop seeding in corn. One site involved in the project was a dryland field in northwest Lancaster County. At this site, three different seeding rates (70 lb/acre, 140 lb/acre, 210 lb/acre) were broadcast to determine optimal practices for this system in a dryland setting.

Cover crops were first seeded in late summer of 2023, and biomass data was collected

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Fields in the Highboy Cover Crop Interseeding Project: (above) a high-clearance machine interseeding cover crops into growing corn; (below) interseeded cereal rye cover crop growing between rows of corn.



Photos by John Nelson
 Drone imagery collected by Ritika Lamichhane

FOR MORE INFO

Learn more about the Nebraska On-Farm Research Network and see research results at <https://on-farm-research.unl.edu>

Discover the Power of Nutrition This March

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

Every March the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics celebrates National Nutrition Month®, a nutrition education and information campaign that focuses on making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits. The 2026 theme, “Discover the Power of Nutrition,” highlights how food fuels our bodies, supports health at every age and influences how we feel and function day-to-day.

Here are simple ways to explore and benefit from building healthy habits this month and beyond.



Power Your Day With Nutrition

Including a variety of healthful foods helps ensure you get the range of nutrients your body needs to support energy, focus and overall health.

- Eat an amount of calories that is right for you, based on age, sex, height, weight and physical activity level.
- Be mindful of portion sizes.
- Choose water and unsweetened beverages most often.
- Include protein foods at each meal from a variety of sources such as eggs, poultry, seafood, lean meats, beans, lentils, nuts and seeds.
- Eat a variety of colorful, nutrient-dense vegetables and fruits throughout the day.
- Choose fiber-rich whole grains like whole wheat bread, oatmeal and brown rice.

- Limit highly processed foods, added sugars and refined carbohydrates such as chips, cookies and candy.

Stay Nourished on Any Budget

Planning helps you make purposeful food choices that fit your schedule, preferences and budget.

- Plan meals based on what you already have at home and make a list for what you need to buy.
- Use a grocery list to shop with intention and limit impulse purchases.
- Use leftovers within three to four days for food safety, or freeze them for longer storage.
- Preparing meals ahead can reduce stress and help you rely less on quick, less nutritious options.

Create Tasty Foods at Home

Learning basic cooking skills empowers you to control ingredients, manage portions and experiment with flavors.

- Try new ingredients or recipes from different cultures to expand your palate and add variety to meals.
- Make simple swaps, such as roasting vegetables instead of frying or using herbs and spices in place of salt.
- Preparing meals at home more often can help support healthier eating patterns and portion awareness.

Seek Professional Guidance

A Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) is a food and nutrition expert who can provide personalized, evidence-based guidance to support your health goals, medical needs and lifestyle. Whether you are managing a health condition, fueling an active lifestyle or simply looking for credible nutrition information, an RDN can help. Visit <http://eatright.org> to find an RDN in your area.

Sources:

- <http://eatright.org/national-nutrition-month>
- <https://food.unl.edu>
- <https://realfood.gov>

RECIPES OF THE MONTH

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

These recipes highlight colorful ways to add more fruits and vegetables throughout the day. Bell Pepper Nachos provide a crunchy alternative to chips, while Berry Good Overnight Oatmeal makes it simple to start the day with fruit and fiber.

BELL PEPPER NACHOS

(Yield: 9 servings)

- 1 pound lean ground beef
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup salsa
- 3 bell peppers, scrubbed with clean vegetable brush under running water
- 1 cup Cheddar cheese, shredded, low fat



1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Preheat oven to 375°F. Spray a baking sheet with non-stick cooking spray. Set aside.
3. In a large skillet, brown ground beef until internal temperature reaches 160°F when measured with a food thermometer. Drain fat.
4. In a small bowl, combine spices and salsa. Add to cooked meat.
5. Remove seeds, core and membrane from bell peppers. Slice each one into 6 vertical pieces. Set sliced bell peppers on prepared baking sheet.
6. Evenly distribute meat mixture into the bell pepper slices. Top with cheese.
7. Bake for 10 minutes or until cheese is melted and peppers are hot.
8. Store leftovers in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to four days.

Nutrition Information: Serving Size (1/9 of recipe): Calories: 160; Total Fat: 8g; Saturated Fat: 3.5g; Cholesterol: 45mg; Sodium: 370mg; Total Carbohydrates: 4g; Fiber: 2g, includes 0g Added Sugars; Protein: 17g; Calcium: 6%; Iron: 10%; Potassium: 6%

Nutrition Software Used: ESHA Food Processor

BERRY GOOD OVERNIGHT OATMEAL

(Yield: 1 serving)

- 1/2 cup oatmeal (old-fashioned or quick-cooking)
- 1/2 cup low fat milk
- 1/2 cup low fat yogurt (any flavor)
- 1/2 cup fresh or frozen berries (or any fresh, frozen or canned fruit)

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Add each of these ingredients, beginning with oatmeal, to a cup or bowl.
3. Refrigerate overnight and enjoy for breakfast!



Nutrition Information: Calories: 340; Total Fat: 4.5g; Saturated Fat: 1.5g; Cholesterol: 10mg; Sodium: 135mg; Total Carbohydrates: 61g; Fiber: 2g, includes 8g Added Sugars; Protein: 16g; Vitamin D: 10%; Calcium: 30%; Iron: 10%; Potassium: 15%

Nutrition Software Used: ESHA Food Processor

Perennial Plant of the Year for 2026

By Mary Jane Frogge, Extension Associate in Lancaster County

The 2026 Perennial Plant of the Year is 'Blackhawks' big bluestem. The foliage emerges dark green, turning reddish-purple as the summer arrives. In mid-summer, the "turkeyfoot" inflorescences appear and by September, the plant takes on a deep purple hue. More compact than other big bluestem cultivars, 'Blackhawks' is five feet tall and two feet wide.

Big bluestem is a dominant native grass in North America's tallgrass prairies. Its leaves and stems provide cover and nesting material for birds and serve as a larval food source for several species of skippers. It will remain a single, dense clump but may reseed in the garden. Plant with blue pitcher sage, black-eyed Susan and asters.

For more information about 'Blackhawks' big bluestem and the Perennial Plant Association visit <https://perennialplant.org>.



'Blackhawks' big bluestem grass

Photo courtesy of the Perennial Plant Association



2026 GROBigRed

Wednesdays
12 p.m.

Join the experts from Nebraska Extension to learn and ask questions about:

3/11 — The Road to Ripe: Growing Great Tomatoes • Dana Freeman

4/8 — Vegetable Garden Insect Pests • Dr. Jody Green

5/13 — Lawn & Landscape Weeds • Scott Evans

6/10 — Beyond Pollinators: Predatory & Beneficial Bugs • Ian Peterson

7/8 — Recognizing Tree Hazards and Non-Hazards • John Fech

8/12 — Composting for Small-Scale Growers • Katja Koehler-Cole

9/9 — Fall Garden Preparation • Nicole Stoner

10/14 — Spring Flowering Bulbs • Scott Evans & Mary Jane Frogge



EXTENSION

Register at <https://hles.unl.edu/grobired>

EXTENSION Master Gardener Volunteer Spotlight

LORI SWIAEK has been an Extension Master Gardener Volunteer (EMGV) for 2 years and has volunteered over 100 hours. Lori has volunteered at Discovery Days and teaches students about gardening at the Beattie Elementary School garden.

What have you learned since you became an EMGV? The educational training has definitely expanded my technical knowledge in several areas. However, what stands out for me is learning about all the resources available through Nebraska Extension. The website, NebGuides and GROBigRed series have all provided invaluable information for my continued learning.

What is your favorite part about volunteering with Nebraska Extension? While I have enjoyed working with the kids at Beattie Elementary, I have to say meeting and learning from the other Master Gardeners has definitely been a favorite part of the program. Their knowledge has left me awestruck.

If you could encourage someone else to volunteer, what would you say? I would say, "Just do it." We all have something to give. You may be surprised at what you get in return.



GARDEN GUIDE THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH

By Mary Jane Frogge, Extension Associate in Lancaster County

Consider planting native perennials that are beneficial to native pollinators like solitary bees, bumblebees and butterflies. Native plants include coreopsis, coneflower, aster, goldenrod, butterfly milkweed, ironweed, blazing star, beardtongue, pitcher sage, bee balm and purple poppy mallow.

Cut flower stalks back to the ground on daffodils, hyacinths and other spring flowering bulbs as the flowers fade. Do not cut the foliage until it dies naturally. The leaves are necessary to produce strong bulbs capable of reflowering next year.

Do not add organic matter to the soil when planting trees. It does not help the plant become established and it may create conditions that encourage the roots to stay inside the planting hole instead of spreading to surrounding soil. It is important to dig a large planting hole, but fill it with the original soil removed from it.

Buy a notebook and use it to keep all your gardening information and records. List what you plant in the garden. Include the name of seed companies, plant name, variety, planting date and harvest date. During the growing season, keep notes on how well the plant does. If the variety is susceptible to disease, record what was used to treat any problems. All this information will be helpful in planning future gardens.

How are your houseplants doing? Check all five growing factors if your house plants are not growing well. Light, temperature, nutrients, moisture and humidity must be favorable to provide good growth.

Do not till your garden when the soil is wet. It will form clods which are difficult to break up and interfere with cultivation and planting during the growing season.

Scatter annual poppy seeds in flower borders. The tiny seeds do not need to be covered. The plants grow rapidly and provide colorful flowers in early summer.

Consider planting flowers which may be dried for winter arrangements. Some of the best are strawflower, statice, celosia and globe amaranth.

On-Farm Research

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in the fall of 2023 and before planting in the spring of 2024 (Table 2). As expected, the higher seeding rates resulted in more cover crop biomass, both in the fall and spring. Additionally, the presence of cover crop reduced weed biomass compared to the plots with no cover crop.

Yield data was collected for the 2024 soybean crop that was planted into the cover crop plots. It is encouraging to see there was no statistical soybean yield effect of the 70 lb/acre cover crop seeding rate compared to the no cover crop check. However, the higher seeding rates (140 and 210 lb/acre) that produced significantly more cover crop biomass did lower soybean yield when compared to the no cover crop and 70 lb/acre seeding rate treatments (Figure 1).

Seeking Collaborators

If you have questions you want answered on your farm, reach out to Extension and we'll help you design a study, collect data and analyze the results. If you are interested in conducting an On-Farm Research study on your field, contact your local Extension Water and Cropping Systems Educator. In Lancaster, Cass or Otoe counties, contact John Nelson at 402-441-7180 or jnelson158@unl.edu.

Results Meetings

The Nebraska On-Farm Research Results Meetings are an opportunity for farmers to learn the details of the studies conducted in their region, as well as network with the producers who participated in the research. A meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 4,

Seeding Rates in Corn at R5 Stage	FALL 2023		SPRING 2024	
	Cover Crop Biomass (lb/ac)	Weed Biomass (lb/ac)	Cover Crop Biomass (lb/ac)	Weed Biomass (lb/ac)
70 lb/ac	350.5 A	0	10541.9 A	0
140 lb/ac	513.8 A	0	11507.0 AB	0
210 lb/ac	847.5 B	0	12850.2 B	0
Check (no cover crop)	—	0	—	728.6
P-Value	0.004	—	0.005	—

Table 2. Lancaster County HiCCIP project results showing cover crop and weed biomass collected in a corn field. A vs. B indicates statistically significant differences.

9 a.m.–3 p.m. at the Kimmel Orchard Event Center in Nebraska City. Meetings are free to attend and lunch is provided. Please register at <https://go.unl.edu/x2nz>. Extension Educators will discuss the regional projects in detail, explain results and give cooperating producers an opportunity to share their experiences and opinions on how the research will affect their farming operations.

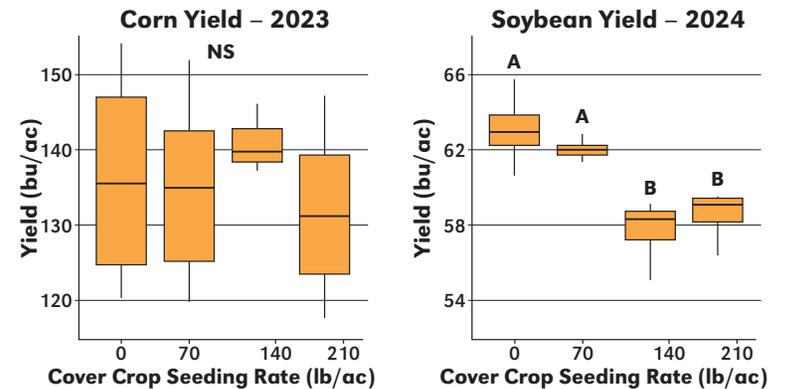


Figure 1. Lancaster County HiCCIP project results showing corn and soybean yield compared to seeding rates. A vs. B indicates statistically significant differences. NS indicates no significant differences.

Extension's Hatching Program for Childcare Providers

By Jaci Foged, Extension Educator in Lancaster County

In Nebraska Extension's Look Who's Hatching program, childcare providers with preschool-age children have a hands-on learning adventure of hatching chicks or ducklings! Extension loans the necessary items (incubator, chicken or duck eggs, and brooder box) and an emergent curriculum. There is a small fee for the program.

Workshop Introduction

Each spring, a free workshop is offered to early childhood providers new to the program. They learn how to use the curriculum which uses the Experiential Learning Model to support children's learning. Rather than providing the answer to what is inside the

eggs, teachers should instead follow the children's lead and explore all of the possibilities by asking questions that provoke thinking. This helps children think about, and process their ideas.

After providers complete the workshop, they can sign up for the Look Who's Hatching program. The 2026 in-person workshop was presented in February, but providers who are interested may take the workshop online.

4-Week Program

The Look Who's Hatching project session lasts approximately four weeks with incubators and eggs onsite. The program starts with the concept of "What could be inside of the eggs?" A children's story about oviparous (egg laying) animals is read to the group, and children begin to wonder

about what could hatch from their eggs — turtles, crocodiles, snakes and even dragons are some of the ideas children have.

Children use magical thinking as a way of figuring out how things work. When we provide children with an opportunity to think outside the box, magic happens. Suddenly, it is more than just a simple egg, like the eggs they might have seen in their refrigerator. The simple provocation of what could be in the egg creates many days of exploration and learning — for the children, their parents and their teachers too!

Depending on the children's interests, classrooms might explore oviparous animals for many weeks after the eggs have hatched and left the classroom.

What to Expect

Week 1: Pick up your incubator, eggs and other

supplies from the Extension office. Shhh, don't tell the children they are chicken or duck eggs! The book, "Whose Egg?" illustrated by Guy Troughton is about a variety of animals which hatch from eggs. Children then brainstorm what they believe will hatch from the eggs. Throughout the week, teachers observe the children and document what they see to identify areas of interest to build on. This supports teachers putting into practice their newly learned skills for using an emergent curriculum.

Weeks 2 and 3:

Classroom teachers continue the discussion about what could be in the eggs and provide a variety of books and activities relating to the type of animals children think will hatch out of the eggs.

Week 4: The eggs, whether chickens or ducks,

hatch over several days and at different times which allows children different opportunities to watch the process. Once the eggs hatch, children typically show interest in learning more about baby chicks or ducklings. Teachers are encouraged to follow the children's interests and provide opportunities for further learning around this new concept.

How to Participate

To participate in Look Who's Hatching in Lancaster County, contact Janis Pierce at janispierce@unl.edu. Extension staff prepare all the necessary items for you to pick up at the Extension office the first date of your session. Following the hatch, we ask that you return all items (cleaned) and hatched baby chicks or ducklings to the office on your assigned date.

Meet the 2025–26 4-H Council



The Lancaster County 4-H Council, comprised of adult and youth volunteers, helps determine long- and short-term goals and policy for Lancaster County 4-H. 4-H Council also raises funds to help support 4-H programs, activities and scholarships. Extension Educator Tracy Anderson is the staff liaison. This year's 4-H Council: (front row L-R) Russ Parrott — President, Rachel Koch — Vice-President, Marsha Prior — Treasurer and ex officio Extension Board representative, Emma Thomson — Secretary; (middle row L-R) Emily Bauman, Helen Parrott, Tenley Bauman, Emalea Dean, Pam Cuttlers; (back row L-R) Kari Schepers, Analisa Peterson, Hope Bauman, Sara Hansen, Parker Hansen; (not pictured) Monica Bauman, Tammy Sheldon

4-H Spring Rabbit Show, March 14

The 4-H Spring Rabbit Show will be held on Saturday, March 14, 9 a.m. at the Sandhills Global Event Center – South Hall. Open to all youth ages 8–18, with a Clover Kids class for youth ages 5–7 (age as of Jan. 1, 2026). This is a great opportunity for youth to talk to 4-H'ers about where to purchase a good rabbit for a 4-H project, and to learn and practice showmanship. Rabbit quiz and breed identification contests are free for youth to enter! Show information with classes and registration fees is posted at <https://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/rabbit-spring-show>. Sponsored by the Lancaster County 4-H Rabbit VIPS Committee and Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County. If you have questions, contact Kate Pulec at kpulec3@unl.edu or 402-441-7180.

4-H Horse Judging Team Earns National Reserve Champion!



Horse Judging team (L-R): Savannah Nordmeyer, Liz Boshart, Katy Weaver and Avery Stohs

This January, several Nebraska 4-H'ers attended the 4-H & FFA Western National Roundup's Horse Classic in Denver, Colo. To qualify, each team and individual were required to win the state competition.

This year, the Horse Judging contest consisted of 37 individuals on 10 different teams from across the nation. The Lancaster County 4-H Horse Judging team of **Liz Boshart, Savannah Nordmeyer, Avery Stohs and Katy Weaver** (coached by Roger Bell and Amy Frink) earned

9th in reasons, 2nd in performance, 1st in halter and 2nd high team overall!

Liz Boshart received 3rd individual in performance, 9th individual in halter and 3rd high individual overall. Savannah Nordmeyer received 10th individual in performance and 8th high individual overall. Avery Stohs received 10th individual in halter. Katy Weaver received 4th individual in halter and 10th high individual overall.

Teen Council 4-H'ers Team Up to Lead Overnight Lock-In

In January 2026, 4-H Teen Council members organized and led an overnight Lock-In for 4th and 5th graders, complete with a Disco Party theme. Teens planned the event from start to finish, serving on games, crafts and food committees. Lock-In participants rotated through activities, built friendships and created memories. More photos are at <https://flickr.com/photos/unlxtlanco/albums>.

Here's what two of the teens said about this year's 4-H Lock-In.

Fun for Kids & Teens

"The 2026 4-H Lock-In was a fun night for both the kids and the teens. Teen Council chose the theme 'Disco Party,' so several teens dressed up in shiny jackets and colorful pants. There

were also disco themed decorations throughout the building, making it feel like a real disco party. The 4th and 5th graders had a blast playing games, making crafts and eating snacks. I had a great time teaching the kids how to play the games which helped me strengthen my leadership skills."

—Noah Babcock, Teen Council Member

Amazing Learning Opportunity

"4-H Teen Council's 2026 Lock-In was a success! The theme was Disco Party, and the teens enjoyed planning and executing the event. The youth played many games, enjoyed fun snacks and created disco-themed crafts. The Lock-In was an amazing learning



Teen Council members introduced themselves to kick-off the Lock-In.

opportunity for both the youth and the teen leaders. The youth learned about 4-H while having fun, and the teens developed leadership and communication skills while leading the event.

The Lock-In was lots of fun to lead and I look forward to another successful Lock-In next year!"

—Emily Bauman, Teen Council Vice President



HEART OF 4-H VOLUNTEER AWARD

Recognizing Outstanding Volunteer Service

Carolyn Eschliman is receiving Lancaster County 4-H's March "Heart of 4-H Award." She started by judging 4-H crochet and knitting at the Lancaster County Super Fair and Nebraska State Fair. For the past 12 years, she has helped 4-H volunteer Kath Conroy during sewing help sessions for 4-H'ers held at the Sewing Centre of Lincoln (formerly the Bernina Sewing Center). At the help sessions, Carolyn works with 4-H sewists on their sewing projects prior to the Lancaster County Super Fair, giving guidance and helping solve problems.

"Personally, it's been satisfying to help young girls in the early stages of developing their sewing skills," Carolyn said. "I know it's a talent that will serve them well over a lifetime. I try to check the fair exhibits every year to see how the girls have done, and attend the Fashion Show when I can."



Betty Lou Doty is receiving Lancaster County 4-H's April "Heart of 4-H Award." In recent years, she has helped 4-H volunteer Kath Conroy during sewing help sessions for Lancaster County 4-H'ers held at the Sewing Centre of Lincoln (formerly the Bernina Sewing Center). Previously, she volunteered with Saline County 4-H as a parent helper with her daughter's 4-H club, and helped organize and teach babysitting and first aid clinics in the 1980s.

Betty said, "It has been rewarding to see a person start a sewing project and not even know how to insert a pin, yet in a couple days, cut out fabric, sew straight lines, finish seams, fit the garment to their size and height, enter the 4-H fair and win ribbons. I have enjoyed over the years seeing them develop with more difficult patterns and types of fabrics. Their creativity and ideas on design and style are amazing. I'm glad to see the increased interest in young people wanting to sew."



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

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



MARKET BEEF WEIGH-IN — 4-H & FFA exhibitors showing market steers or heifers at the Lancaster County Super Fair who want to participate in the Rate of Gain contest must weigh in their projects at the 4-H & FFA Market Beef Weigh-In on Monday, March 2, 6-7 p.m. at the Sandhills Global Event Center – EquineMarket Pavilion. For more information or to RSVP, contact Madelaine Vanderbeek at 402-441-7180 or mpolk2@unl.edu.

PREPARED SPEECH & RADIO PSA CONTESTS — 4-H Speech & Public Service Announcement (PSA) Contests are open to all 4-H'ers ages 5-18. In the Radio PSA Contest, 4-H'ers submit a 60-second "radio commercial" promoting 4-H. Submit a PSA as a .wav, .mp3 or .m4a file by Monday, March 23. The 2026 PSA theme is "Ready Today, Leading Tomorrow." The 4-H Speech Contest is planned for Sunday, March 29 at the Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County conference rooms, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A, Lincoln. Contest begins at 1:30 p.m. with scheduled speech times to be assigned. Register by Monday, March 23. For rules, helpful resources, examples and registration link, go to <https://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/speech>. If you have questions, contact Kate Pulec at kpulec3@unl.edu or 402-441-7180.

PRESENTATIONS & VIDEO COMMUNICATION CONTEST — This year's Lancaster County 4-H Illustrated Presentations & Video Communication Contest will be Sunday, April 19, starting at 2 p.m. at the Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County conference rooms, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A, Lincoln. NOTE: New day of the week. Open to all 4-H'ers ages 8-18. Register by Monday, April 13 by emailing Kristin at kristin.geisert@unl.edu or calling 402-441-7180 and providing youth name(s), age(s) by Jan. 1 of current year, presentation and/or video title(s) and email address. Specify if it is a team presentation. Time slots will be assigned in advance; however, 4-H staff will do their best to accommodate a time preference requested by a 4-H'er. All participants are strongly encouraged to review the rules, procedures and helpful resources at <https://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/presentations>.

HOME DECOR & FURNITURE PAINTING WORKSHOP — 4-H youth ages 8 and up are invited to participate in a Home Decor & Furniture Painting workshop on Saturday, April 25, 9 a.m. until about noon at the Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County conference rooms, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A, Lincoln. No cost to attend. Must register by Monday, April 20 by calling 402-441-7180 or emailing Kristin at kristin.geisert@unl.edu. Bring an unpainted wooden home decor item or small piece of furniture, such as

a frame, shelf, stool or chair. All paints, brushes and finishes are provided. Wear old clothes appropriate for painting.

HORSE STAMPEDE — The statewide 4-H Horse Stampede will be held Saturday, April 25 and Sunday, April 26 on UNL East Campus. This event offers a variety of 4-H horse contests that don't require live horses, including horse judging, hippology, public speaking, demonstration, quiz bowl, art and photography. Entry deadline is Wednesday, April 15. More information about this event and the entry link can be found at <https://4h.unl.edu/horse-stampede>. If you have questions about Stampede, contact Makayla Burg at mburg2@unl.edu. Lancaster County 4-H Council will reimburse entry fees of Lancaster County 4-H youth. Submit receipt invoice to lancaster4h@unl.edu or the Extension office. If you have questions about reimbursement, contact Kate Pulec at kpulec3@unl.edu.

SPECIAL GARDEN & AGRONOMY SEEDS — 4-H families have the opportunity to participate in the special garden and/or special agronomy projects this year. The Special Garden Project is Alumia Vanilla Cream Marigold. The Special Agronomy Project features two types of popcorn. Seed packets are available on a first-come, first-served basis. To sign up, call the Extension office at 402-441-7180. Seeds will be mailed after April 30.

ZIP IT UP! SEWING WORKSHOP — 4-H youth ages 9 and up are invited to participate in the Zip It Up! sewing workshop on Saturday, May 2, 9-11 a.m. at the Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County conference rooms, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A, Lincoln. 4-H'ers will learn the basic centered zipper installation technique. Youth must have at least one year of sewing experience. No cost to attend and the supplies, including fabric and zippers, will be provided by Lancaster County 4-H. Must register by Monday, April 27 by calling 402-441-7180 or emailing kristin.geisert@unl.edu. Bring your sewing machine in good working condition along with your sewing tools/supplies.

LEADER & VOLUNTEER COLLABORATION — New leaders, experienced leaders, volunteers and parents are invited to attend a 4-H Spring Leader & Volunteer Collaboration on Wednesday, April 29, 9 a.m. via Zoom or in-person at the Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County conference rooms, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A, Lincoln. Focus will be on your value for 4-H'ers, static exhibits, opportunities for 4-H'ers and more. Learn about fair entry, contests and important Super Fair information. MUST register by Wednesday, April 15 by calling 402-441-7180 or emailing kristin.geisert@unl.edu. Please indicate if you will be attending in-person or via Zoom.

4-H Achievement Celebration

Lancaster County 4-H and 4-H Council presented the Lancaster County 4-H Achievement Celebration on Thursday, Feb. 12. The Lancaster County Board of Commissioners proclaimed Feb. 12 as "4-H Achievement Day." The proclamation was read by UNL Admissions & Extension Specialist, Greg Fritz. For a complete list of award recipients and link to photos on Flickr, go to <https://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/achievement>.



LANCASTER COUNTY 4-H COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS

Recognizes 4-H'ers with significant hours of community service.

Age 13 & under: (below, front row L-R) Adelaide Metcalf, Piper Bauman, Brayden Belew, Isaac May; (back row L-R) Alexa Smith, Monica Bauman, Evelyn May, Payzleigh Belew, Andrea Bettenhausen, Murray Bettenhausen, Ian Bettenhausen; (not pictured) Molly Boysen, Clare Friesen, Gwendolyn Friesen, Mary Kerstin Friesen, Grace Tetzlaff



Age 14 & over: Emily Bauman, Tenley Bauman, Emily Crawford, Khloe Cuttlers, Reese Dell, Parker Hansen, Vanessa Peterson

NEBRASKA 4-H DIAMOND CLOVER

At the beginning of the 4-H year, youth choose goals from a provided list, and at the end of the 4-H year, complete a report which documents their accomplishments.

Level 1 – Amethyst: Nicholas Bauman, Murray Bettenhausen, Mary Brooks, Madison Draeger, Mckenna Draeger, Juniper Faeh, Maggie Faeh, Penny Faeh, Catherine Friesen, Clare Friesen, Gwendolyn Friesen, Johanna Friesen, Mary Kerstin Friesen, Cayson Grone, Lea Hollstien, Owen McCarthy, Brigham Moore, Addison Rocole, Amelia Rocole, Zayne Russell, Ella Schneider, Isabelle Tonkin, Avery Vlasnik, Jaxon Vlasnik

Level 2 – Aquamarine: Lundy Dell, Shelby Huenink, Jesse May, Adelaide Metcalf, Drew Moscrip, Natalie Pape, Anthony Pflanz, Sandrafaye Schulz

Level 3 – Ruby: Piper Bauman, Ian Bettenhausen, Sophie Huenink, Gracie Mittan-DeBuhr, Abigail Page

Level 4 – Sapphire: Monica Bauman, Emily Crawford, Mia Crawford, Isaac May, Lucy Pflanz, Grace Tetzlaff

Level 5 – Emerald: Andrea Bettenhausen, Khloe Cuttlers, Helayna DeBuhr, Reese Dell, Parker Hansen, Evelyn May

Level 6 – Diamond: Tenley Bauman, Amorita Payne, Alexa Smith

NEBRASKA 4-H ACHIEVEMENT APPLICATION RECOGNITION

These are a record of a 4-H member's 4-H experiences, leadership and community involvement/service-learning.

Completed a Junior application: Monica Bauman, Andrea Bettenhausen, Ian Bettenhausen, Murray Bettenhausen, Hannah Chevalier, Molly Gabel, Amorita Payne, Cora Pracheil, Silas Pracheil, Alexa Smith

Completed a Senior application: Emily Bauman, Khloe Cuttlers, Adam Gabel, Parker Hansen, Hadley Reimers

NEBRASKA 4-H CLUBS OF EXCELLENCE

Clubs which have met criteria outlined by Nebraska 4-H.

4 on the Floor 4-H Dog Club, Clever Clovers, Fantastic 4 4-H Club, Fusion 4-H'ers, Green Spark 4-H Club, Horticulture 4-H Club, JP2 Crew, Lancaster County 4-H Teen Council, Lancaster Leaders, Little Green Giants 4-H Club, Prairie Explorers, Rabbits R Us, Southern Lancaster Kids

LINCOLN CENTER KIWANIS OUTSTANDING 4-H CLUB AWARDS

Lincoln Center Kiwanis Club awards traveling trophies to the top 4-H clubs participating in the Lancaster County Super Fair.

Category I (5–10 members): Boots N' Hooves (Leader: Teresa Brandt)

Category II (11–20 members) & Wayne C. Farmer Memorial Cup overall winner: Southern Lancaster Kids (Leader: Hope Bauman)

Category III (21 or more members): Rabbits R Us (Leaders: Sarah Lanik-Frain, Jen Metcalf and Jesse Metcalf)

LANCASTER COUNTY 4-H COUNCIL LEADERSHIP AWARDS

This award recognizes 4-H'ers in grades 10–12 who show outstanding qualities in servant leadership.

(Below L-R) Parker Hansen, Helen Parrott, Maria Polk; (not pictured) Marylynn Rauert



LANCASTER COUNTY OUTSTANDING 4-H MEMBER AWARD

Presented to individuals 14 years of age or older who have excelled in their involvement with the 4-H program.

Emma Thomson (above)

LANCASTER COUNTY MERITORIOUS SERVICE TO 4-H AWARD

Presented to individuals or organizations who have exhibited consistent and strong support of the Lancaster County 4-H program.

Kristy Hattan (below, left with Extension Associate Kristin Geisert)



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EXTENSION NEWS

2026 Extension Board



(Front row L-R) Teresa Erdkamp, Zainab Rida, Nicole Miller, Marsha Prior;
 (back row L-R) Mike Gropp, Phil Tegeler, Kim Klein, Tracy Gordon;
 (inset photos) Phil Bruce, Regina Sullivan

The Lancaster County Extension Board serves as an advocate for Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County. Members of the board are appointed by the Lancaster County Board of Commissioners. The Extension Board provides guidance to Extension staff in establishing and accomplishing Extension education program goals and objectives. The board typically meets monthly (usually the second Friday at 8 a.m.).

Tracy Gordon and Mike Gropp were recently appointed for their first terms. Zainab Rida and Teresa Erdkamp were re-appointed to serve their second terms.

Extension Board members for 2026 are: **Nicole Miller** (President), **Zainab Rida** (Vice President), **Teresa Erdkamp** (Secretary/Treasurer), **Phil Bruce, Tracy Gordon, Mike Gropp, Kim Klein, Regina Sullivan, Phil Tegeler** and **Marsha Prior** (4-H Council ex officio member).



EXTENSION CALENDAR

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

March

- 2 ProHort Lawn & Landscape Update. 8:30 a.m.–4 p.m.
- 2 4-H/FFA Market Beef Weigh-In, Sandhills Global Event Center – EquineMarket. 6–7 p.m.
- 2–3 4-H EGG Cam Chicks Hatching, <https://lancaster.unl.edu/eggcam>
- 3 4-H Council Meeting. 6 p.m.
- 8 4-H Teen Council Meeting 3 p.m.
- 10 Commercial Pesticide Applicator Initial Training. 8:30 a.m.
- 11 GRO Big Red Virtual Learning Series: Tomatoes, <http://hles.unl.edu/grobigrad> .12 p.m.
- 12 Commercial Pesticide Applicator Recertification Training. 8:30 a.m.
- 12 4-H Dog Workshop Series, Sandhills Global Event Center – South Hall 6–7 p.m.
- 13 Extension Board Meeting 8 a.m.
- 14 4-H Spring Rabbit Show, Sandhills Global Event Center – Ag Society Hall 9 a.m.
- 21 Lincoln Early Childhood Conference 8:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.
- 23 4-H Radio Public Service Announcement (PSA) Contest Entries Due/Registration Deadline for Speech Contest
- 23–24 4-H EGG Cam Chicks Hatching, <https://lancaster.unl.edu/eggcam>
- 26 Pesticide Applicator NDA “Walk-In” Testing Session 9 a.m.–2 p.m.
- 29 4-H Prepared Speech Contest. 1:30 p.m.
- 31 Chemigation Training. 9 a.m.–Noon
- 31 Private Pesticide Applicator Training. 1–4 p.m.

April

- 7 4-H Council Meeting. 6 p.m.
- 8 Commercial Pesticide Applicator Initial Training. 8:30 a.m.
- 8 GRO Big Red Virtual Learning Series: Vegetable Garden Insect Pests, <http://hles.unl.edu/grobigrad> 12 p.m.
- 9 4-H Dog Workshop Series, Sandhills Global Event Center – South Hall 6–7 p.m.
- 10 Extension Board Meeting 8 a.m.
- 12 4-H Teen Council Meeting 3 p.m.
- 15 Deadline for Nebraska 4-H Horse Stampede
- 16 Pesticide Applicator NDA “Walk-In” Testing Session 9 a.m.–2 p.m.
- 19 4-H Illustrated Presentations and Video Communications Contest 2 p.m.–5 p.m.
- 25 4-H Home Decor & Furniture Painting Workshop 9 a.m.–12 p.m.
- 25–26 Nebraska 4-H Horse Stampede, UNL East Campus – Animal Science Complex
- 29 4-H Leader & Volunteer Collaboration. 9 a.m.–11:30 a.m.

New Nutrition Education Program Staff Member

Darby Walsh

recently joined Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County as an Extension Assistant who will help support the Nutrition Education Program (NEP). She will focus on engaging youth and young adults with nutrition information as well as increasing nutrition access in Lancaster County. Her position is funded by the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), which is the primary federal nutrition education program. She graduated from Midland University last spring with a Bachelor of Science in Biology, minoring in Chemistry and Nutrition.



Tracy Anderson Earns National Award

Extension Educator **Tracy Anderson** and a team of Extension professionals from Nebraska, Georgia and Penn State were recently recognized as the national winners of the “Search for Excellence in Teen Programming Award” by the National Association of Extension 4-H Youth Development Professionals (NAE4HYDP). This award recognized the team for their innovative educational series *Adulting 101: Grab & Go Lessons*. The program addresses a critical gap in youth development by teaching financial literacy, cooking, household maintenance, automotive care, healthy relationships and career readiness.

