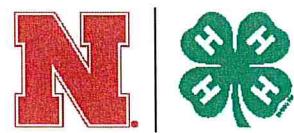


2025

Annual County
Extension Report
for Supervisors and
Commissioners





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January 2026

Sherry Morrow, Chair
Buffalo County Board of Commissioners/Supervisors
1512 Central Ave
Kearney, NE 68847

Dear Commissioner Morrow,

Nebraska Extension is pleased to continue a strong tradition of making a difference in the lives of individuals, families, businesses, and communities in Buffalo County! Our programs address issues Nebraskans have identified as important to them.

Enclosed are local Extension programming and financial summaries for 2025. Specific items include 1) Summary of 2024-25 budget expenditures, 2) Current fiscal year 2025-26 budget, 3) County Impact Report, 4) Program impacts and accomplishments for each educator and assistant/associate, Individual Impact Statement(s), and 6) Samples of 4-H newsletters, Extension newsletters, major program brochures, and other products that represent 2025 programming.

Thank you for continuing to invest in Nebraska Extension as a local collaborative partner. We strive to be great stewards of resources and work every day to demonstrate a strong return on your investment. As you know, Extension educators and assistants live, work, and engage with people in your local and area communities. We look forward to making a difference in the lives of Nebraskans, together with you!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Patty Fulton'.

Patty Fulton
President
Buffalo County Extension Board

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Kerry Elsen'.

Kerry Elsen
Lead Educator
Nebraska Extension in Buffalo County

Enclosure

Nebraska Extension is a Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln cooperating with the Counties and the United States Department of Agriculture.

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BUDGETS FOR 2024-25

AND 2025-2026

IMPACT AT A GLANCE FOR 2025

Buffalo County

2025 Impact At-A-Glance



buffalo.unl.edu

A homeschool STEM program included fairy gardens during which youth designed their own creation and were able to enter the project as a houseplant exhibit at the Buffalo County Fair.



The homeschool environmental education program engages both enrolled and non-enrolled youth in 4-H. At its inception, the first workshop at the Buffalo County Extension Office had three participants and has since grown to between 40-50 youth attendees at the monthly programs. Each lesson includes STEM-based instruction, hands-on activities, and teamwork. Topics included the web of life, animal tracks, pollinators, weather, orienteering and geocaching, flight and aviation, and horticulture. Interest in the homeschool programs has grown to include youth from outside of Buffalo County.

**NEBRASKA EXTENSION is
RELENTLESSLY RELEVANT.**



**EXPLORE ALL 2025
IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS**

26

attendees took part in a fire readiness meeting for landowners, partnering with 5 local agencies.

787

youth from elementary to high school attended special interest STEM and agriculture programs.

58%

increase in number of program hours provided by extension educators and assistants over last year.

**STRENGTHEN NEBRASKA
AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS**

**ENHANCE THE HEALTH
& WELLBEING OF ALL
NEBRASKANS**



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PROGRAM IMPACTS

Elsen Kerry Impacts 2025

Most Significant Contributions

AgCiting Science remains one of my focus areas. Kearney Public Schools has continued to have all third-grade classrooms participate in the complete 10-hour lesson set. These students will also be involved in our AgCiting Science Ag Festival as a capstone event in the spring. Our AgCiting Science Ag Festival was attended by 655 youth from both Kearney Publics and the area rural schools. This program has grown since 2016, 4,103 students have participated in the complete ten-hour lesson series. Beginning in the spring of 2021, all third graders in Kearney Public Schools participate in this program each year. **My Contribution:** I teach the 10-hour lesson sets to each third-grade students. Additionally, I organize, host and coordinate speakers for each of the AgCiting Science Festivals and secure any necessary funding.

BRAG, (Big Red Ag Growers) maintains a group of youth selected to participate each year. Youth gain knowledge to develop the skills necessary to advocate for production agriculture confidently and correctly. They recognize the diversity in agriculture across Nebraska. This program is constantly evolving. Members gain and practice communication skills, experience the vastness of Nebraska Agriculture by experiencing what is happening in agriculture related businesses across the state. A few highlights for the 2025 tours include, Embryo Transfer Service, CSS Potatoes, Sunny Valley Aerial, Chundy Aquaculture, Preferred Popcorn, and Greater Omaha.

My contribution: Organize and schedule educational seminars and tours for both local events and statewide tours. Worked directly with committee members on developing and continuing to grow the program. Submitted and gave accepted presentation along with 3 other educators providing Big Red Ag Growers (BRAG), *“Leadership and Advocacy through Agriculture,”* at ESP. There were 6 participants that attended. Two participants completed the post presentation survey:

- After attending this session:
 - 100% feel more comfortable about implementing a similar program
 - 1 individual intends to implement this or a similar program.
- Participants stated:
 - ‘Very helpful and practical information’
 - ‘Excellent program and presentation. Thank you for sharing!’

Youth participating in the **Nebraska Fed Steer Challenge** are learning about the commercial beef industry, focusing on production and carcass merit. Seven youth completed the program in 2025. **My contribution:** Shared in the facilitation of monthly meetings from January through August. Collaborated with team members to determine activities for a social event. Actively assist with all events during the Nebraska State Fair and time management of interview schedules. **Impact:** Cumulative evaluations from the beginning of the program showed the following:

- 100% of participants strongly agree the 4-H Fed Steer Challenge helped me gain valuable knowledge about the cattle industry.
- 100% of youth responded agree or strongly agree, because of this program, I will become a better advocate for the cattle industry.
- One youth responded, “My biggest take away is learning how to use spreadsheets.”

- Another youth responded, “I loved this challenge and think it is the best thing I have done out of all of the camps and activities that I do.”

The **Youth Science Field Day (YSFD)** team held programs in Hastings, Holdrege, and Kearney reaching 309 youth. **My contribution:** I organized and recruited presenters for the Kearney site that had 96 students from 5 schools. I communicated with teachers in selecting the date and taking registrations. I co-presented ‘One Health’ as a general session for all four fall sites. The ‘One Health’ session is a revised ‘What is a Pathogen’ that allowed the students to have an overview of types of pathogens and definition of zoonotic diseases, create an unknown pathogen via instructions, once built to hypothesize the pathogen that they created, and finally review the zoonotic disease concept with known pathogens. As part of the planning committee, I was part of the team that revised the Evaluation Tool. **Impact:** Evaluation from Kearney provided the following statements from students:

- “I learned the science behind all the small things in life/science is in everything.”
- “Sleep affects your mental, physical, and emotional health.”
- 97% of students stated, “I know science, engineering, or technology can be useful in solving everyday problems.”

Lead Educator

Lead Educator responsibilities come with a variety of challenges, as well as successes. 2025, brought a new set of challenges. An excessive amount of time was invested in volunteer management. These time-consuming challenges made it difficult to keep all areas of 4-H running smoothly. Throughout this time additional meetings were held with the 4-H committee of the Board of Commissioners, this kept the lines of communication open and allowed our staff to see an additional layer of support coming from the County Officials.

Through the facilitation of Extension Board meetings, we have experienced growth in the participation of the 4-H Committee members who attend Extension Board meetings. They are regularly participating in discussions and keep our staff as well as Board members up to date on what is happening throughout the county and what statewide decisions could have an impact locally and what that could be specifically for Extension.

While the building improvements have been complete for about a year, we have seen the addition of security cameras throughout the interior of the building, as well as on the exterior. Our staff appreciates the investment the County is making to ensure the safety of our staff and also those who attend events here.

Our full staff has been able to increase the amount of programs offered by 40%, from 36 to 61 programs. This also increased our programming hours by 58%. Our STEM and Ag. Literacy programs reached 2381 non 4-H youth. These students attended which include ecosystem, embryology, healthy lifestyles, leadership, and career exploration.

Kerry Elsen 2025 Other Contributions

- PASE Quiz Bowl Co-Superintendent
- Leadership Team for Fed Steer Challenge Program
- Fair Resource Development Team Member.
- Monthly Clipper Articles
- Manage 4-H Program
 - Facilitate 4-H Council meetings. Oversee spending and ensure 4-H Council funds are being utilized in an appropriate manner and a spending plan is being followed.
 - Supervise two 4-H Assistants. Encourage them to continue to grow their own programs and include new audiences. We have seen positive growth in youth program attendance and involvement with school enrichment and afterschool programming.
- Buffalo County Fair
 - Successfully direct the 4-H Program during the Buffalo County Fair. The 4-H team effectively utilizes volunteers to provide youth and families with well-organized events where they are able to be successful.
- Submitted a proposal to ESP conference.
 - Presented “*Leadership and Advocacy through Agriculture,*” during National Epsilon Sigma Phi Conference.
- Attended Epsilon Sigma Phi Conference.
- Was a panelist for Beyond School Bells Conference.
- Presented at Making the Connection Conference and Rising Educators Conference.
- Spoke at local Noon Rotary on the evolution of 4-H.
- Promotion Committee Member
- Buffalo County 4-H Staff increased programming hours by 58%.
- Participated in Jon Gordan, “How to Handle Tough Conversations Without Conflict, Avoidance, or Regret.”
- Judged local and state FCCLA competitions.
- Judge local STEMFest at ESU.
- Participate in monthly County Officials meetings.

Summary of Goals and Accomplishments

Most Significant Accomplishments 2025

Entrepreneurship Team Activities

Assisted with Inventure Days in Merrick, Hamilton, Fillmore, and Polk County.

Organized Inventure Day in Buffalo County for sixth grade students from Pleasanton, Amherst, Elm Creek and SEM.

Assisted in organizing Inventure day in Dawson County.

School Enrichment

Monthly School Enrichment activity with four 6th grade classrooms.

- Added an additional classroom for 2025-2026 school year:

- o Pleasanton, Amherst Elm Creek, SEM and Shelton

Birds of Nebraska, Pollinator Education, Water Journey, Mammal Tracks and Scat, All About Bats, Owls and Owl Pellet Dissection, Web of Life with Cockroaches, Tree Cookies and Life of a Tree, Mammals of Nebraska, First Aid in the Field

Outdoor Skills Day at Fort Kearny

Monthly School Enrichment activity for Homeschool students.

Owls, Bears, Web of Life – Cockroaches, Flight and Aviation, Fairy Gardens, Compass and Geocache, Monarchs, Bats, American Flag and Retirement Ceremony, and Egg-Streme Engineering

KHS – School Enrichment

Conservation Lesson, Web of Life – Cockroaches, Pollinator Lesson and Seed Bombs

Other Homeschool Enrichment

Holy Cross Homeschool Group – Pollinator Lesson

Environmental Education Outreach and Programming

Muzzleloaders of Nebraska - Conservation Lesson

Scouts of America – Mammals and Conservation Lesson

Ravenna Library Outreach – Web of Life – Cockroaches

Outdoor Expo – Mammal Lesson

Presentation at NACEE Conference on Environmental Ed School Enrichment

Activities with Forestry Service

Assisted with Tree Jamboree at Hastings Museum

Lead class on Tree Cookies and Life of a Tree for 2nd-4th graders.

Assisted with Arbor Day Event at Halsey Forest

Lead class on Tree Cookies and Life of a Tree.

Youth Science Field Day

Lead instructional group on Bees and pollinators.

Summer Reading Program for NE Libraries

Worked with Sonya Glup to develop curriculum and activities around Camouflage. Great chance to add Environmental Education topic to this program.

Foundation Programming

Two Egg-Streme Engineering lessons to Homeschool Families

Personal Development

Completed Trust Edge Training

Impacts and Accomplishments

Other Contributions 2025

Other sharing/teaching opportunities:

- Lead Pollinator Station at Water Jamboree
- Judge State FBLA Public Speaking Competition
- Judge FCCLA State Job Interview Competition
- NTV Guest Speaker on Cockroaches, STEM Backpacks and Bees
- Assisted with Archery Range at Outdoor Expo at Fort Kearny.
- Took the lead on the Fashion Show during the Fair.
- Assisted with booth at Husker Harvest Days.
- Monthly Clipper Articles
- Monthly KGFW Interviews
- Assisted with Discovery Club meetings.

Elizabeth Exstrom 2025 Impacts and Accomplishments

Horticulture, Landscape, and Environmental Systems Extension Educator

Most Impactful Work and Significant Contributions

Wildfire Ready Workshop and Fire Smart Landscapes — In 2025, wildfires made headline news across Nebraska, serving as a stark reminder that devastating fires can strike unexpectedly—even in places where we least anticipate them. While it's easy to believe that wildfires are unlikely to affect your area, it's crucial to stay informed and prepared. Fire Smart Landscaping is a proactive approach that includes creating defensible spaces, planning for potential fire events, and managing surrounding landscapes to minimize fire risk.

In April 2025, the Wildfire Ready Workshop at the Buffalo County Extension Office brought together residents, local agencies, and wildfire experts with a shared mission: preparing Nebraskans for wildfire risk before disaster strikes. The event showcased the power of collaboration, with Nebraska Extension working alongside the Kearney Volunteer Fire Department, Central Platte Natural Resources District, Nebraska Game and Parks, Buffalo County Emergency Management, and the Nebraska Forest Service.

As part of the workshop, I led a session on Fire-Smart Landscaping, focusing on how intentional landscape design can reduce home ignition risk. Participants learned the principles of defensible space—dividing property into three zones that create protective buffers around a home. I emphasized practical steps homeowners can take immediately, such as replacing wood mulch near structures with nonflammable materials like gravel or rock to prevent embers from igniting combustible surfaces.

The impact of this message was immediate. Following my session, Deputy Fire Chief Jason Whalen offered a candid reflection that resonated across the room:

"I was planning on removing the river rock from around the foundation of my home in the country to replace it with wood mulch, but after hearing Elizabeth's presentation, I think I'm going to leave the rock in place."

His comment underscored the value of prevention and affirmed how education can directly influence safer decisions in high-risk environments.

The Wildfire Ready initiative reflects Nebraska Extension's ability to respond swiftly and effectively to emerging community needs. What began in 2023 as a simple request from a county in my region has grown into a multi-year, multi-agency effort to address increasing wildfire concerns. Recognizing a local need—particularly in a lake community with seasonal homes—I developed the Fire Smart Landscapes program in 2024 as part of the Weather-Ready Landscapes group. This included a one-page homeowner flyer and a companion presentation outlining research-based landscape strategies to reduce wildfire risk.

To broaden reach and ensure professionals and volunteers could support community education, the material was delivered statewide through six ProHort training locations and shared during Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Zoom sessions. In 2025, digital outreach expanded through articles featured on Water.unl.edu, the GroBigRed blog, and the *Backyard Farmer* newsletter, bringing practical wildfire-ready guidance to thousands of Nebraskans.

This year also marked the launch of the Buffalo County Wildfire Ready Network—a coordinated task force I helped establish to create a unified, sustained approach to local wildfire preparedness. This diverse coalition includes Nebraska Extension, the Nebraska Forest Service, Buffalo County Emergency Management, the Kearney Volunteer Fire Department, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, and the Central Platte Natural Resources District. The group identified a high-risk area near Kearney and developed a tailored Wildfire Ready program for residents. Nebraska Extension facilitated coordination, outreach, and educational content to ensure that community needs and scientific best practices remained at the center of the effort.

Wildfire Ready Program Impacts.

Participants (n = 22):

- 100% would recommend the program to others
- 100% plan to make at least one change to their property to reduce wildfire risk
- 100% plan to take at least one action to increase family wildfire safety

Key Knowledge Gained

- Understanding and applying landscaping defensible zones
- Identifying and evaluating combustible materials near homes
- Recognizing vegetation risk near structures and the need to remove shrubs
- Implementing defensible space practices around the home

Planned Practice Changes

- Removing high-risk vegetation such as cedars near the home
- Reducing vegetation in Zone 0 (within 0–5 feet of the home)
- Increasing use of rock and nonflammable materials near homes
- Pruning and managing trees for reduced fuel load

Through this work, Nebraska Extension demonstrated statewide leadership in emergency preparedness education, strengthened agency partnerships, and supported measurable homeowner behavior change that increases community wildfire resilience.

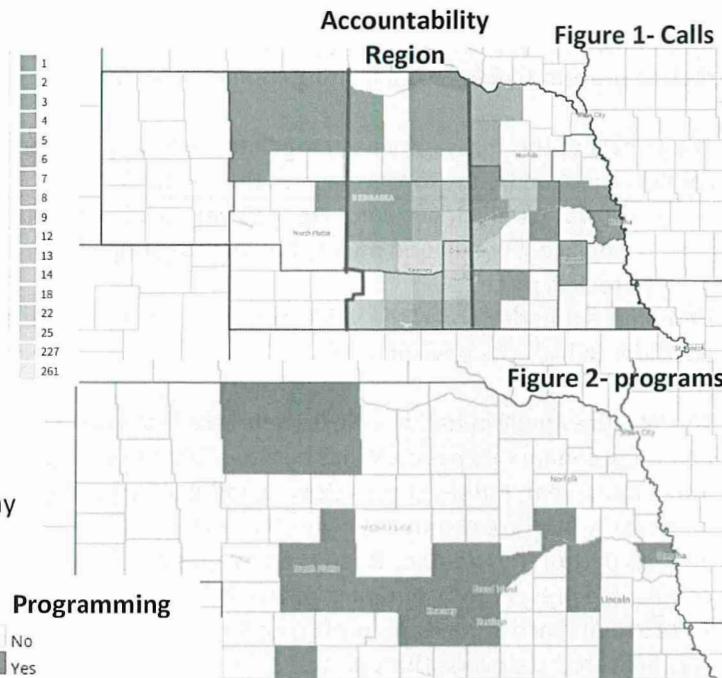
Client Contacts- In 2025, I received over 1,515 calls, emails, and texts from 40 Nebraska counties and six states (Figure 1). I taught over 141 programs to 6,842 participants, totaling approximately 390 teaching hours (Figure 2). Between media reach, direct contacts, and programs offered, I reached approximately 549,700 individuals—roughly the population of the 66 counties west of Seward or the combined populations of Omaha, Bellevue, and Bennington. This total does not reflect all media outlets I engage with, as some metrics are not publicly available, nor does it include my multi-platform social media reach.

Central Nebraska Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program- Extension Master Gardener Volunteers (EMGV)

enroll in the program and receive 40 hours of education from University of Nebraska–Lincoln faculty, then volunteer 40 hours of gardening and horticulture-related service. In 2025 the Central Nebraska EMGV program:

- Offered 16 EMGV classes which provided 60 hours of education
- 65 volunteers from 15 counties participated
- Volunteers reached 4,353 adults and 4,106 youth
- 2,255.5 volunteer hours were contributed locally; public value of service totaled \$77,468

Volunteers also hosted the “Ask an Extension Master Gardener” table at the Nebraska State Fair, where over 250 individuals stopped to ask questions or gather information. EMGVs assisted in donation gardens that provided more than 6,000 servings of fresh fruits and vegetables to over 1,792 individuals.



Elizabeth Exstrom 2025 Impacts and Accomplishments

Horticulture, Landscape, and Environmental Systems Extension Educator

Other Contributions

Lead Educator- In the Hall County office, I am the lead educator in charge of communication with accountability region educators and the Extension board. This past year, I planned and facilitated the Extension board meetings, sent reminders, and prepared the necessary documents for meetings. I also reached out to non-resident educators to include them in board meetings and provided their program narratives to the Extension Board members. Additionally, I worked with non-resident educators to determine their preferences for receiving client questions and shared that with the front office staff.

Nebraska Agriculture Section- I served as the NCEA Agriculture Section past president and act as the ornamental and turfgrass state contact. I also am a member of National Association of County Agriculture Agents.

Faculty Senate-I served as the Zone 10 representative on the UNL Faculty Senate and IANR Faculty Senate.

Agriculture and Natural Resources Promotion committee- I served as committee chair in 2025. The committee approved one Emeriti Status, reviewed and approved three promotion files for full rank, and finalized progress towards promotion for Assistant and Associate level Extension Educators.

Agronomy and Horticulture Department Affiliate- I am an Extension Educator Affiliate for the Agronomy and Horticulture Department and attended the Agronomy and Horticulture Retreat in September.

Area Committees- I serve on several area committees, including the Grand Island Tree Board, Nebraska State Fair Landscape Committee, and Grand Island Groundwater Guardian Committee. Serving on these committees allows me to be involved in local communities and provide my expertise.

National Committee- I sit on the Board of Trustees for the National Junior Horticulture Foundation which is the governing body for the National Junior Horticulture Association.

2025 Impacts and Accomplishments
Brent L. Plugge, Extension Educator (Livestock Systems)
Zone 3

2025 Stocker/Yearling Program and Tours (Winter and Summer Tour)

The annual Summer Stocker/Yearling Tour has been popular with beginning and established producers as it gives them an opportunity to learn how their peers have incorporated the stocker/yearling component into their systems. Previous attendees and advisory board members have expressed interest in a winter stocker tour to gain insight on cost-effective options to background calves through the winter. In response, a Winter Stocker Tour was hosted by Darr Feedlot near Cozad. *My Role:* Program Planning, Marketing and Local Host

Impacts: Fifty-six producers and allied industry personnel representing 27,460 head of cattle and 59,075 acres of pasture and hayland attended the inaugural winter tour. Post-meeting evaluations (n=20) indicated 80% of participants are likely to make business or management changes based on knowledge gained with an average estimated increase in profitability of \$19 per head.

The sixth annual Summer Stocker/Yearling Tour was held this year near North Platte. *My Role:* Program Planning, Marketing and helped coordinate a stocker/yearling advisory committee meeting the day prior to the program. The goal is to gather input from stocker operators across the state on current issues and to provide updates on research and Extension initiatives stemming from earlier committee discussions.

Impacts: Sixty-five producers and allied industry personnel representing 20,480 head of cattle and 43,912 acres of pasture and hayland participated in the summer program. Post-meeting evaluations (n=16) indicated 50% of participants are likely to make changes to their operation based on knowledge gained from the program. A 12-month follow-up (n=3) from long-term participants noted changes such as "increasing herd size and reducing numbers of herds."

2025 Feedlot Roundtables

The Bayer Crop Science, Gothenburg Water Utilization Learning Center was the site for one of three Feedlot Roundtables in 2025. The roundtables are designed to share current research and best management practices in a wide variety of topics relevant to feedlot owners, managers, and employees. *My Role:* Publicity, Program Moderator, Local Facility Arrangements.

Impact: Participants (n=66) in a post-meeting survey reported significant knowledge gained and an increase in the likelihood of adopting new management practices.

Nebraska Grazing Conference

The 2025 Nebraska Grazing Conference was held in Kearney on August 5, 2025. A total of 67 producers attended the conference. In keeping with past conferences, the agenda included a pre-conference tour and speakers representing academia, industry and producers emphasizing that everyone is a teacher, and everyone is a learner. The formal part of the conference focused on the financial aspects of ranching. *My Role:* Co-Lead the Conference Planning, Local Facility Arrangements, Publicity, Chair Sponsorship Committee and Moderator.

Impacts: In a post-meeting survey, 42% of participants reported that they implemented ideas from past conferences with the most reported response being rotational grazing and improved water infrastructure and 78% reported they are very likely or likely to make management changes because of this year's conference, with the most reported response centering around understanding their operations financial picture better.

Husker Beef Lab

The Husker Beef Lab is designed to transport a ruminally fistulated beef animal to middle schools and high schools across Nebraska and other invited events. The purpose is to teach students about ruminant animal nutrition and to increase their interest in science and science related careers. In addition, this hands-on, learning experience teaches youth the value of beef production in Nebraska, animal well-being, nutritional aspects of beef, and production phases from pasture to plate. Students can observe rumen microorganisms under a microscope and apply science principles using this ruminally fistulated animal. In 2025, I participated in 14 events reaching 1,7749 people with 47 hours of instruction. *My Role: Instructor, and Oversee Lab Schedule*

Total Western Lab Impacts: Surveys indicated the following overall impacts: 1905 people visited the lab, Ave 2.53 before and 3.66 after (1 = very low knowledge, 5 = very high knowledge) n=98, 65% had a better understanding of the topic n=65, 72% correctly identified that a ruminant has 1 stomach with 4 compartments) n= 75, 66% of youth reported increased interest in animal science. N=66, 81% said that there was a symbiotic relationship between cows and rumen microorganisms. n=82

Cow Clinics

Three "Cow Clinics" were scheduled in Nebraska in 2025. One location was cancelled but clinics were held in Gordon and Beatrice. Each clinic focused on the "why, how, and when to body condition score (BCS) beef cows" as well as "forage sampling and understanding a feed analysis". These management practices were examined in detail in the classroom with discussions that were supplemented with appropriate educational material and sample feed analysis. Locations were chosen for their ability to provide live animal demonstrations. Following the classroom discussions participants viewed cows in different BCS and discussed the differences with the instructors. Bales were also provided to demonstrate correct forage sampling techniques. Without a formal presentation, participants were more engaged and frequently asked questions throughout the clinics.

Impacts: 19 producers one of the two "Cow Clinics", 84% reported an increase in knowledge by attending the clinic, 84% reported it was likely or very likely to make management changes, 46,840 acres and 7,795 cows were represented at the clinics, participants reported a \$45 per cow value as a result of attending the clinic, all of the attendees participated in a free forage analysis with the offer to help decipher the results and provide ration formulation advice, producers established a resource for them to contact for other related questions

Sheep Production Workshop

A Sheep Production Workshop was held for producers with a focus on flock health and nutrition. The workshop was help at GPVEC. This is an underserved audience for Nebraska Extension. *My Role: Co-planned the program, marketing, and evaluation.*

Impacts: A total of 14 producers attended the workshop representing 3,372 head of ewes and 4,495 acres. Producers (77%) indicated that they improved their knowledge and 100% indicated they were likely or very likely to make management changes because of the program. Producers reported a \$30.67 value per head because of the program.

Backyard Poultry Program

A program was designed for both youth and adults to address concerns around biosecurity, bird health, housing and nutrition. This program was the first time I addressed this audience with an educational effort. *My Role: Program Planning, Marketing and Evaluation.*

Impacts: A total of 9 people attended the program. They reported an 88% improvement in knowledge and 75% reported they were likely or very likely to make management changes. The program represented 175 broilers and layers. Producers indicated a \$27 per bird value as a result of the program

Other 2025 Contributions

- Co-lead of the Husker Harvest Days effort, including selecting the theme, approving graphics, selecting booth leaders, inviting dignitaries, monitoring daily activities, and receiving feedback from attendees. A total of 8,866 clientele visited the IANR building during Husker Harvest Days.
- Co-Planned a FireWize Public Meeting with the help of Elizabeth Exstrom and other local partners. The program reached 23 local citizens.
- Member of the NCEA, Ag Section, Woody Encroachment Working Group, Promotion Committee and an affiliate of the Department of Animal Science.
- Advisor for the Nebraska Grazing Lands Coalition Board of Directors, member of the Lower Loup Nebraska Cattleman's Affiliate, advisor for Grazing Systems major, and member of the Center for Grassland Studies Policy Advisory Committee.
- Served as a secondary host for five Private Pesticide Certifications (n=64), a Chemigation Certification (n=22), Land Application (manure) Management (n=8), Beef Quality Assurance and Trucker Quality Assurance Certification (n=4), Land Managers Meeting (n=9) and a Cornhusker Economics Outlook Meeting (n=33).
- Contributed to the success of the 2024 Buffalo County Fair and Buffalo County Horse Invitational
- Presented at the 2025 National Association of County Ag Agents meeting in Billings, MT sharing information with peers about the "Cow Clinic's.
- Provided leadership and booth support at the Nebraska Ranch Expo, Nebraska Cattleman's Convention and the Kearney Farm Expo.
- Part of the planning and teaching team for the Midwest Feeds Practicum with 8 producers participating.
- Co-authored a BeefWatch article with Rick Rasby titled "Management of Fall Calving Cows" The article was viewed 287 times and an additional 30,000 views from popular press.
- Participated in several professional development opportunities both online and face-to-face. These opportunities led to improvement in subject matter competency and personal development. Participated in a Search Process Seminar allowing me to continue to provide support in the hiring process.
- Reached 2,107 clients with 69 hours of direct teaching and an additional 114 clientele with individual consultation within the Livestock Systems Program Area.

BOARD REPORTS

Kerry Elsen
Buffalo County Extension
March/April 2025 Report

Programs & Involvement

March 3 – Fair Resources Team Zoom, Ag. Literacy at Meadowlark, Poultry (22 Participants). Extension Board Meeting.

March 4 – Ag. Literacy at Central, Poultry (50 Participants), and Northeast, Hot House Detective (24 Participants).

March 5 – Ag. Literacy at Glenwood, Popcorn (23 Participants).

March 6 – Annual Performance Review, Ag. Literacy at Buffalo Hills, Popcorn (44 Participants), and at Bryant, Pigs (25 Participants).

March 7 – Ag. Literacy at Windy Hills, Our World (46 Participants), and at Buffalo Hills, Beef (44 Participants).

March 10 – Ag. Literacy at Northeast, Our World (22 Participants), Park, Our World (25 Participants), and Kewood, Our World (23 Participants).

March 11 – Ag. Literacy at Northeast, Our World (24 Participants), Emerson, Poultry (44 Participants), and Bryant, Kathy (Poultry). Buffalo County Shootings Sports Fair Shoot.

March 12 – Ag. Literacy at Glenwood, Our World (23 Participants), Fed Steer Zoom.

March 13 – Buffalo County Officials Zoom, Ag. Literacy at Northeast, Our World (25 Participants), Park, Our World (25 Participants), and Kenwood, Our World (23 Participants).

March 14 – 4-H Council Budget Meeting, Mental Health Awareness Month.

March 17 – Embryology at SEM, Elm Creek, Glenwood, Shelton and Ravenna.

March 18 – Embryology at Pleasanton, Amherst, Windy Hills and Gibbon. Ag. Literacy at Central, Our World (25 Participants).

March 20 – Embryology Presentation at Faith Christian, and Ag. Literacy at Kenwood, Our World (23 Participants).

March 21 – Kick-Off with Kathleen, Ag. Literacy at Meadowlark, Pigs (21 Participants), Meadowlark, Our World (21 Participants), and Embryology presentation at Northeast.

March 24 – Gibbon/Shelton Clipper Article, “4-H Summer Camps.”

March 25 – Lamb & Goat Camp Planning Meeting, 4-H Council Meeting.

March 26 – BRAG meeting, Lottery Sheep Meeting.

March 27 – Fed Steer Challenge work day.

March 31 – Nebraska Cooperative Extension Association Professional Development Committee Meeting, Ag Literacy at Meadowlark, Our World (22 Participants) and 4-H Council Scholarship Selection.

April 3- Ag. Literacy at Buffalo Hills, Pigs (44 Participants), and Bryant, Poultry (25 Participants).

April 4 – Ag. Literacy at Windy Hills, Pizza (46 Participants), at Northeast, Pizza (25 Participants), and Buffalo Hills, Poultry (44 Participants).

April 7 – State FCCLA STAR Event Judge

April 8 – Ag. Literacy at Central, Pizza (50 Participants), Park, Pizza (25 Participants), and Meadowlark, Pizza (22 Participants). Lottery pig meeting.

April 9 – Ag. Festival, Life on the Farm area rural schools (147 Participants). Fed Steer Challenge Zoom.

April 10 – Ag. Literacy at Park, Pizza (25 Participants), at Buffalo Hills, Our World (44 Participants), Bryant, Our World (25 Participants). Shooting Sports Leaders Meeting.

April 11 – Ag. Literacy at Meadowlark, Pizza (21 Participants).

April 14 – Ag. Literacy at Northeast, Pizza (22 Participants), at Kenwood, Pizza (23 Participants).

April 15 – Ag. Literacy at Central, Our World (25 Participants), at Northeast, Pizza (24 Participants), at Emerson, Our World (44 Participants), and Bryant Our World (25 Participants).

April 16 – Ag. Literacy at Glenwood, Pizza (23 Participants).

April 17 – Buffalo County Officials Zoom, Extension Huddle. Ag. Literacy at Meadowlark, Poultry (21 Participants).

April 21-22 BRAG Tour (Stops included Sunny Valley Aerial, Embers Bakery, Parks Fish Hatchery, Chundy Shrimp Farm, West Central Research & Extension Center, Feed & Company, and The Milk House).

April 22 – 4-H Council Meeting.

April 23 – Ag. Festival Life on the Farm for KPS

April 24 – Ag. Literacy at Kenwood, Pizza (23 Participants).

April 25 – Ag. Literacy at Meadowlark, Our World (21 Participants) and Kenwood, Pizza (23 Participants).

April 28 – Ag. Literacy at Kenwood, Poultry (23 Participants).

April 29 – Ag. Literacy at Emerson, Pizza (44 Participants), and Bryant, Pizza (25 Participants).

April 30 – STEMfest Judge and Ag. Literacy at Kenwood, Poultry (23 Participants).

March/April 2025 Report

Jordan Wilbur

March

- March 3: KCLC at Emerson, 15 participants
- March 4: Discovery Club Meeting, 15 participants; FACET Interview
- March 5: Northeast Leadership Summit, 60 participants; Glenwood Leadership Summit 20 participants; NCEA Planning Zoom
- March 6: Health and Wellness Team Meeting Retreat
- March 7: Park KCLC, 20 participants
- March 10: KCLC Emerson, 20 participants
- March 11: ESU 10 CTD Program
- March 13: Park KCLC, 20 Participants
- March 17: KCLC Emerson, 20 participants; delivered eggs to Faith Christian and Northeast
- March 18: Connect the Dots-North Platte, 65 participants; 4-H Discover Club Meeting, 15 participants
- March 19: NTV recording
- March 20: Park KCLC, 20 participants
- March 21: FACET Zoom
- March 24: Foundational Program Zoom, PCE Leadership Meeting Zoom, KCLC Emerson, 20 participants
- March 25: 4-H Council Meeting
- March 26: NE State Fair Webinar
- March 27: Park KCLC, 15 participants
- March 28: Brianna Brown NTV recording
- March 31: Connect the Dots-Grand Island, 100 participants

April

- April 1: KCLC at Emerson, 20 participants; 4-H Discovery Club, 15 participants
- April 2: NCEA Planning Zoom, Chamber Tour, Sportsmanship Meeting
- April 3: FACET Meeting, KCLC Park 15 participants
- April 4: Zone Connection Meeting
- April 7: FACET planning Zoom, KCLC Emerson 20 participants
- April 8: Health and Wellness Zoom, KGFW Recording
- April 9: Life on the Farm-Dairy Presentation, 147 participants
- April 10: KCLC Park, 15 participants
- April 11: Judge FBLA job interviews
- April 14: Circulatory Presentation at Animals Inside and out-Nuckolls and Thayer County
- April 15: Gosper County 4-H Promotion Day, 60 participants; 4-H Discovery Club, 12 participants
- April 16: Park KCLC, 15 participants
- April 17: Assisted with T-Shirt Workshop-Franklin County, 5 individuals
- April 21: Babysitting Workshop, Adams County, 20 participants
- April 22: Lincoln County Animals Inside and out-Management Lesson, 245 participants
- April 23: Life on the Farm-Dairy Presentation, 517 participants
- April 24: FACET Zoom Meeting
- April 25: All day zone gathering
- April 28: PCE Planning Zoom, NCEA Planning Zoom, Emerson KCLC, 20 participants
- April 29: FACET Zoom Meeting
- April 30: Park KCLC, 15 participants

March-April 2025

Heidi Darby
Buffalo County Extension

March 2025

March 4 – Meeting with Fair manager
March 6 – Zoom Shooting Sports
March 7 – Clipper Article
March 7 – School Enrichment – KHS Block 1 - Intro to Ag – Web of Life – 28 students
March 7 – School Enrichment – KHS Block 5 – Intro to Ag – Web of Life – 24 students
March 10 – School Enrichment – SEM 6th Grade – Owl Pellets – 10 Students
March 10 – BB Gun/Air Rifle Fair Shoot
March 11 – KGFW Interview
March 18 – School Enrichment – Pleasanton 6th Grade – Web of Life – 33 students
March 18 – School Enrichment – Pleasanton Kindergarten – Web of Life 28 students
March 18 – School Enrichment – KHS Block 3 – Plant Science – Pollinators/Seed Bombs – 26 students
March 18 – BB Gun/Air Rifle County Fair Awards Night
March 20 – School Enrichment – Amherst 6th Grade – Mammals of Nebraska – 25 students
March 21 – Kick off with Kathleen Zoom
March 21 – NACEE Zoom (Nebraska Alliance for Conservation and Environmental Education)
March 21 – Ravenna Library 4-H Club Meeting – Web of Life – 27 students
March 25 – Homeschool Workshop – Web of Life – AM Session – 19 students
March 25 – Homeschool Workshop – Web of Life -PM Session – 20 students
March 25 – 4-H Council Meeting
March 26 – School Enrichment – Elm Creek 6th Grade – Owl Pellets – 24 students
March 26 – BRAG Meeting Prestation – Pollinators and Beekeeping – 7 attendees
March 31 - School Enrichment – KHS Block 4 – Plant Science – Pollinators/Seed Bombs – 25 students

April 2025

April 4 – Clipper Article
April 4 – Zone Connection Meeting
April 8 – Homeschool STEM Day – Hamilton County - 190 students
April 9 – NTV Interview
April 9 - School Enrichment – Pleasanton 6th Grade – First Aid – 33 students
April 9 - School Enrichment – SEM 6th Grade – Birds of Nebraska – 10 Students
April 10 - School Enrichment – Amherst 6th Grade – First Aid – 25 students
April 11 – State FCCLA Judge – Senior Public Speaking
April 15 – Homeschool Workshop – Flight and Aviation – AM Session – 17 students
April 15 – Homeschool Workshop – Flight and Aviation -PM Session – 19 students
April 16 - School Enrichment – SEM 6th Grade – Fish of Nebraska – 10 Students
April 17 – Extension Huddle
April 17 – Arbor Day Zoom meeting
April 18 – Kick off with Kathleen
April 21 – PASE Information Zoom meeting
April 21 – Geocache Team Zoom meeting

April 22 – STEM Team Meeting

April 22 – Arbor Day Festival Team Zoom meeting

April 22 – Council Meeting

April 25 – Arbor Day Festival at Halsey Forest

April 25 - School Enrichment – Ravenna 6th Grade – Web of Life – 29 students

April 26- Water Jamboree at Republican City – total 457 students

April 27 – Water Jamboree at Republican City

Activities in March and April

The homeschool workshop participation continues to grow. I am at or close to the maximum number of students at each workshop. This has been encouraging for us to be able to reach out to a growing population of homeschool students. I really feel like I am helping to add to their curriculum.

In March the topic was Web of Life, again featuring the hissing cockroaches. They are always a hit. Even for the families that went to the same workshop last year. I did add to the lesson plan to make it new for them. April was all about flight and aviation. We learned about the principles of flight and made paper airplanes. It was a beautiful day and the afternoon group enjoyed the grassy area for their “test flights”.



Future Plans:

I am super excited to wrap up my sixth grade school enrichment. We will be meeting at Fort Kearny for the Outdoor Skills day on May 5th. Students will be attending six sessions: Dutch oven cooking, fire starting, archery, geocache, nature trails and fishing. This was a fun day last year and this year we will have a new class join us. There will be a total of 96 students this year. May also includes the Outdoor Expo at Fort Kearny and is two days at the end of the first week. I will be leading a session on Mammals of Nebraska on Thursday and helping Jordan and Jim with Dutch oven cooking on Friday.

After that, the focus is on pre-fair contests and other contests as well. The homeschool workshops in May are on Fairy Gardens. This will be led by myself and Elizabeth Exstrom. Students will learn about fairy gardens and different plants that work well for them. Participants will leave with a planted fairy garden and all the information they need to care for it. We will also give them what they need to know to exhibit it at the fair.

June's two workshops will be on compass navigation and geocaching. A chance to learn about orienteering and how to use a GPS unit on a treasure hunt. I anticipate them filling up fast and hope to be able to add more sessions. Those will be on June 24th. This is right in the middle of pre-fair contests.

Jada Zimmer
May 2025 Report

Programs/Involvement

Mar 3: Clipper Article- National Nutrition Month
Mar 4: School Enrichment Kit- Glenwood Elementary School (16 participants)
Mar 5: Employee Lunch and Learn
Mar 6: Hypertension Team Meeting
Mar 7: Zone Connection Meeting
Mar 10: Employee Wellness Committee Meeting
 Buffalo County Food Leaders Task Force Meeting
Mar 11: KAFM/DUFB Promotion Meeting
Mar 13: Hypertension Team Meeting
Mar 17: FNH Program Share Day
Mar 18: School Enrichment Kit- Glenwood Elementary School (16 participants)
Mar 19: Cancer Summitt
Mar 20: DUFB Team Meeting
 FNH Program Team Meeting
Mar 21: AgrAbility Team Meeting
 Recipe Testing/Demonstration- Meat Shop
Mar 24: Meat Shop Survey
Mar 25: Go NAPSACC Team Webinar
Mar 26-27: Food Preservation Training
Mar 31: School Enrichment (Rethink Your Drink)- Central Elementary School (22 participants)
 Clipper Article- Sourdough

April 1: In-person FNH Program Share Day
 School Enrichment (Kitchen Sense/Safety)- Central Elementary School (24 participants)
April 2: Fillmore Central Wellness Day- Sleepless in Nebraska (170 participants)
April 7: Buffalo County Food Leaders Task Force Meeting
 Hypertension Team Meeting
April 8: KAFM Data Collection Meeting
 School Enrichment (Food)- Central Elementary School (24 participants)
April 9: Hall County Youth Science Field Day- Sleepless in Nebraska (50 participants)
April 10: FNH Connect and Collaborate
April 11: MVP Series 2025
 4-H Foods Judges Training
April 12: NEP Team Meeting
April 13: NCEAFSC Meeting Update
April 14: Teach Virtual Hypertension Series
April 15: AgrAbility Team Meeting
April 21: Outdoor Skills Geocache Meeting
April 22: Lets Talk Cancer Screening Event
April 23: AgrAbility Grant Meeting
April 24: Canva Training Webinar
 Teach Virtual Hypertension Series
April 25: Zone 3 Gathering
April 29: MVP Series 2025

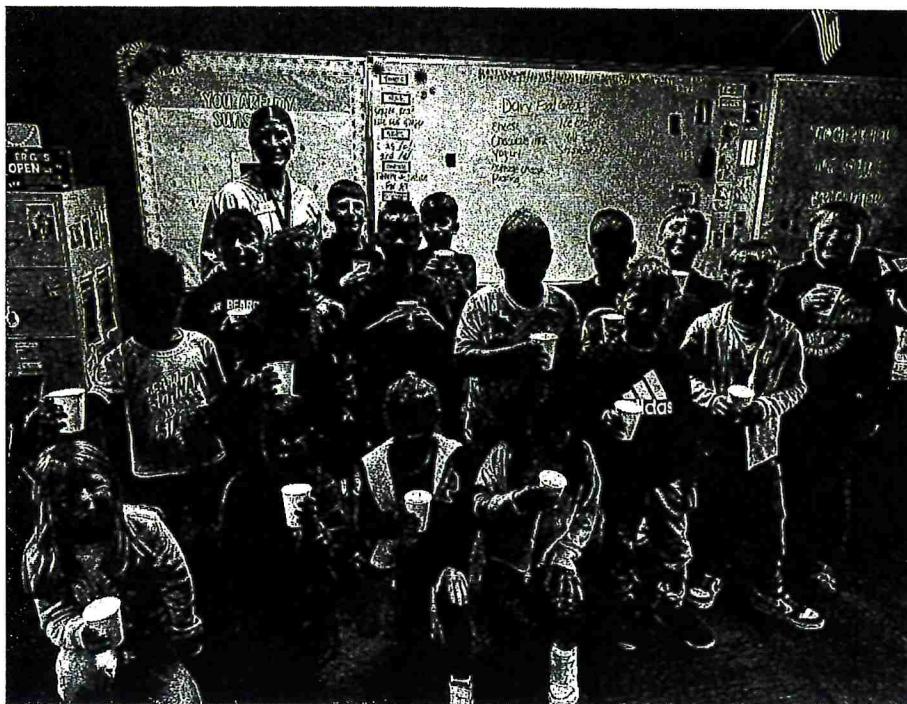
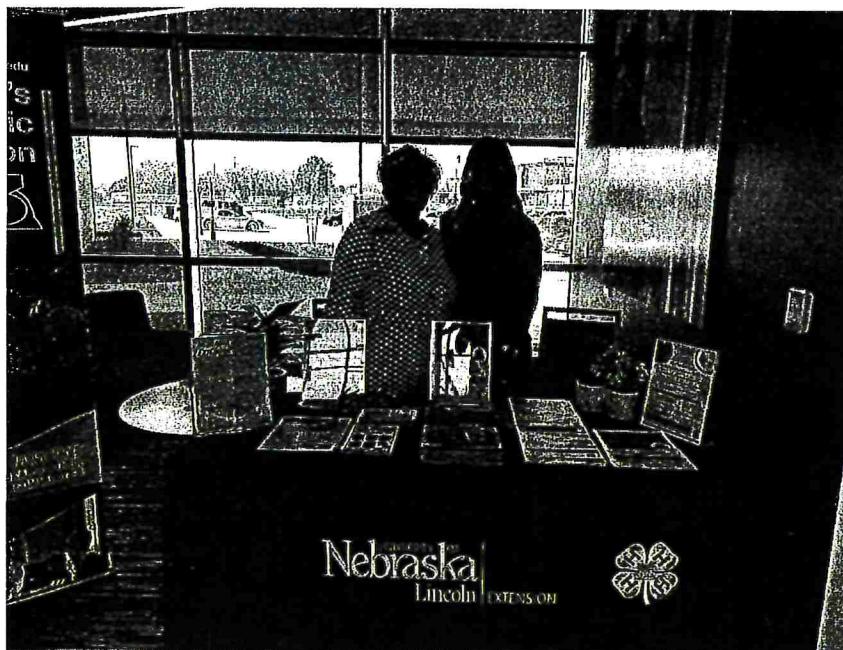
Clipper Article- Importance of Fiber
April 30: National Health Outreach Conference

Number and Type of Individual Contacts

Phone: 5

Office: 1

Email: 0



Buffalo County Extension Board Narrative Report

Brent L. Plugge

March 1 – April 30, 2025

Extension Activities March 1 – April 30, 2025

- March 3 -Buffalo County Extension Board Meeting
- March 7 -GSL Advisory Board Meeting via Zoom
- March 10 -Monthly Statewide Beef Meeting
- March 12 -Nebraska Grazing Lands Coalition Board Meeting
- March 13 -Livestock Systems Educator Zoom Meeting
- March 18 -**Strategic Listening Training Session (Pilot Program)**
- March 20 -**Private Pesticide Certification/Chemigation Training (P=13, P=22)**
- March 21 -Dean Smith Pasture Visit
- March 25 -Husker Harvest Days Planning Team Meeting
- March 26 -IANR Listening Session
-Tour Riverdale Burn Area
- March 27 -Livestock Systems Educator Zoom Meeting
- March 31 -Woody Encroachment Training
- April 1-3 -Livestock Educators In-Service @ Kearney
- April 1 -Stocker/Yearling Planning Committee Meeting
- April 4 -Zone 3 Connection
- April 7 -Husker Harvest Days Planning Team Meeting
- April 8 -**Wildfire Ready (FireWize) Workshop (p=23)**
- April 9 -**Life on the Farm (P=145)**
-Livestock Systems Educator Interview for BKR
- April 10 -Tanner Nelson Cows in Drylot Visit
- April 14 -Monthly Statewide Beef Meeting
- April 21 -**4-H Horse Advancement Day (P=4)**
- April 22-23 -**Animals Inside and Out @ North Platte (P=245, P=95)**
- April 24-25 -**Midwest FEEDS Practicum @ ENREEC (P=8)**
-Livestock Systems Educator Zoom
- April 28 -NCEA Ag Section Meeting
-Woody Encroachment Training

Number and Type of Individual Contacts

- Phone -6
- Office -3
- Farm/Ranch -2
- Email -1

Activities for May 1 – June 30, 2025

- May 1 -Lower Loup Cattleman's Affiliate Meeting @ Pleasanton
- May 2 -Backyard Poultry Workshop (Cancelled)
- May 5 -Hastings College Microbiology Class – Husker Beef Lab
-Buffalo County Extension Board
- May 6 -Animals Inside and Out @ Holdrege
- May 7 -Animals Inside and Out @ Hastings
- May 12 -Monthly Statewide Beef Meeting via Teams
- May 15 -Livestock Systems Educator Zoom Meeting
- May 19 -Woody Encroachment Training

May 20 -Pasture Visit
-Strategic Listening Pilot Program Follow-up
May 21/22 -Spring Beef Meetings @ North Platte
May 26 -Office Closed
May 28 -Animal Science Discovery Days @ NCTA
June 2 -Monthly Check-in with Brian Cox
June 6 -Zone 3 Connection
June 12 -Livestock Systems Educators Zoom Meeting
-Extension Huddle
June 18 -Extension Educator Promotion Webinar
June 19/20 -Midwest FEEDS Practicum @ ENRECC
June 24 -Cow-Calf Field Day @ MARC
June 24-26 -American Grasslands Conference @ Kearney
June 26 Livestock Systems Educator Zoom Meeting
June 26-July 5 -NACAA AM/PIC @ Billings MT

Training, Workshops and Other Educational Events Attended for Professional Development

Woody Encroachment Training
Livestock Educators In-Service @ Kearney (Mineral Nutrition and Methane)

Other Meetings/Functions

Buffalo County Extension Board Meeting
GSL Advisory Board Meeting
Nebraska Grazing Lands Coalition Board Meeting
IANR Listening Session
Zone 3 Connection
NCEA Ag Section Meeting

Additional University Work

Strategic Training Listening Session Pilot Program

March and April 2025 Information

Private Pesticide Certification and Chemigation Training – Five certification sessions were held for Private Applicator's reaching a total of 94 producers and a Chemigation training was held reaching 22 producers. Talon Mues, Cropping System Educator from Dawson County conducted each of the six training sessions.

Wildfire Ready (FireWise) Workshop – Elizabeth Extrom and I led the planning for a Wildfire Ready Workshop held on April 8 reaching 23 area citizens. Partners like the State Forest Service, the Central Platte NRD, Nebraska Game and Parks, Emergency Management and the Kearney Volunteer Fire Department were included in the planning and delivery of the program. Elizabeth gave a great presentation on Landscape Preparation for Fire and the other agencies shared what they offer for technical assistance and cost share. This was a timely meeting and with encouragement from the county supervisors we will continue these meetings in other parts of the county.

Life on the Farm – I helped with Life on the Farm on April 9, specifically the horse section. I spent the day helping with the roping of a dummy. It was a great group of volunteers. The day reached 145 students from the rural schools.

Animals Inside and Out – I attended Animals Inside and Out in North Platte on April 22-23 reaching 340 elementary age students from Lincoln County. Randy Saner, Erin Laborie and Troy Saner and I provided the beef lab to discuss ruminant nutrition.

Midwest FEEDs Practicum – I traveled to ENRECC on April 23-25 to teach the 8 participants about Body Condition Scoring and Production Records. Rick Rasby and I led those sessions.

ELIZABETH EXSTROM

MARCH 2025

HORTICULTURE, LANDSCAPES, AND ENVIRONMENTAL
SYSTEMS

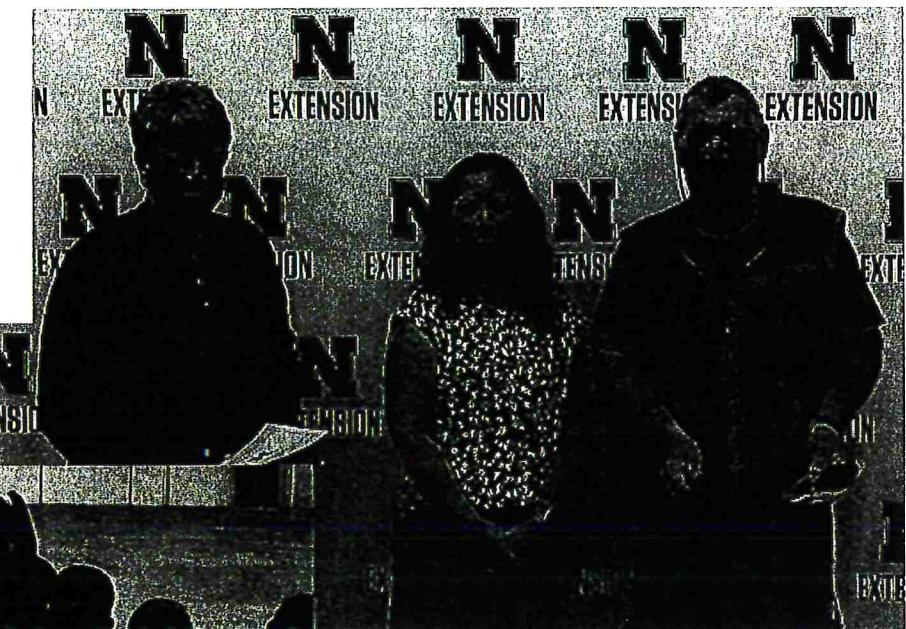


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EXTENSION

Master Gardener

2



3



1. Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Training- Extension Master Gardener Volunteer (EMGV) Training- Offered 48 hours of education to EMGVs from 14 counties.
2. EMGVs were celebrated for years of service. Anne Hoffman (left) and Greg Lamphiear (right) celebrated 10 years of service. Terri James, EMGV State Coordinator (center) presented the awards.
3. Ag Day at Fonner Park- 654 youth from Grand Island Schools. Partnered with the Central Platte NRD to teach about watersheds.

ELIZABETH EXSTROM

MARCH 2025

HORTICULTURE, LANDSCAPES, AND ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS

- Tuesdays January 30- March 11- Seven Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Zooms were offered statewide
- March 3, 5, 10, 12, 17, 19 - Facilitated twelve EMGV in-person trainings. Taught a class on Efficient Irrigation Practices to a crowd of 12. Overall, 41 EMGVs from 14 counties attended the in-person training.
- March 4- Assisted with two Private Pesticide Training
- March 4- Attended a zoom Faculty Senate Meeting
- March 6- NTV noon show about starting vegetables - <https://nebraska.tv/news/>
- March 6- Attended Nebraska's Largest Pumpkin Committee meeting
- March 7- Nebraska Extension Mentoring Meeting
- March 11- Tree Board Meeting
- March 11- ServSafe Integrated Pest Management section to 12
- March 12- Facilitated the Rainwater Harvesting GroBigRed Virtual Learning Series
- March 12- Attended a Herbicide Carryover and Drift zoom offered by SDSU
- March 13- Assisted with a Private Pesticide Training and a Chemigation Training
- March 18- Ag Day at Fonner Park- 654 youth from Grand Island Schools, partnered with the Central Platte NRD to teach about watersheds
- March 21- Site Assessment for pasture near Kearney
- March 25-Site assessment for M. Hollister
- March 25- Program about Starting Seeds Indoors for 15 Adams County EMGVs
- March 26- Attended the Ag Workforce Round Table

Clientele Contacts- 33 emails, 12 texts, 35 phone calls and walk-ins, 2 site assessments, & 1380 program participants through 27 programs

New- Assisted in the formation of a Wildfire Task Force for Kearney/ Buffalo County. Members include Nebraska Extension, Nebraska Forest Service, Central Platte NRD, Kearney Volunteer Fire Department, Nebraska Game and Parks, & Buffalo County Emergency Management. Wildfire Ready workshop is scheduled for April 8th at 6:30 pm. Partners will present on various topics, I will teach about Fire Smart Landscaping and sit on the panel of experts

ELIZABETH EXSTROM

APRIL 2025

HORTICULTURE, LANDSCAPES, AND ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS

Buffalo County Extension to host wildfire ready workshop.

By Deandra Kunkel on Tue, April 08, 2014 at 6:41 AM

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FIREWISE 2

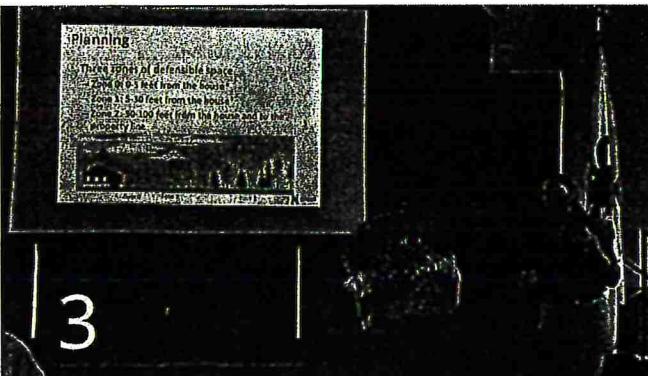
Wildfire Ready Workshop for Property Owners

Topics will include:
• Wildland Urban
Interface (WUI)
• Fire Smart Landscapes
• Be Fire Ready
• Connect
opportunities with
local agencies

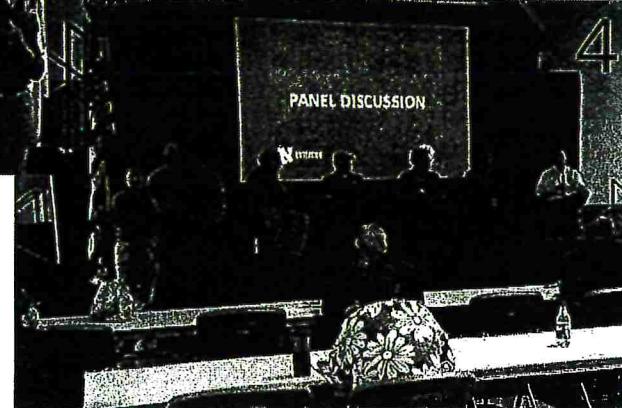
When: 8:30 a.m. April 8
Where: Buffalo County Extension
Register: Please R.S.V.P. by April 4
by calling Buffalo County
Extension at 308-236-1235
Cost: Free



© Nebraska Extension in the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources and the University of Nebraska Urban Research Institute with the Council on Firewise Cities, Department of Agriculture, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension, and the Nebraska Forest Service with the Nebraska Office of the State Forester and the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources.



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4

Wildfire Ready Workshop- 15 individuals, including 2 county commissioners, attended the workshop that was planned in conjunction with Nebraska Extension, Kearney Volunteer Fire Department, Central Platte Natural Resource District, Nebraska Game and Parks, Buffalo County Emergency Management, and the Nebraska Forest Service in Kearney on April 8th.

1. NTV noon show discussing the need for Fire Smart Landscapes
2. Flyer for program advertising
3. Presentation on Fire Smart Landscaping
4. Panel Discussion

ELIZABETH EXSTROM

APRIL 2025

HORTICULTURE, LANDSCAPES, AND ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS

- April 1- IANR & UNL Faculty Senate Meetings
- April 2- Judy Schaeffer consultation
- April 7- Site Assessment- Bohnart
- April 8- Grand Island Tree Board meeting
- April 8- Wildfire Ready workshop- 15 participants
- April 9- Buffalo County Rural Schools Life on the Farm 147 from several area schools
- April 9- GroBigRed Virtual Learning Series- Presented to 65 about Trees to Plant and Trees to Avoid with Chrissy Land with the Nebraska Forest Service
- April 9- Hall County Extension Board
- April 10- Zone 10 Spring Gathering in Hastings
- April 11- Agronomy and Horticulture Department Extension Faculty meeting
- April 12- Presentation about Tree Care to 15 participants at Wild Roots Nursery in Central City
- April 14- Nebraska State Fair Landscaping Committee Meeting
- April 15- Sherman County Open house
- April 17- Buffalo County Wildfire Coalition meeting
- April 17- Backyard Farmer television show on Nebraska Public Media
- April 18- Dawson County Coffee with Extension-5 participants
- April 18- Dawson County 4-H Special Garden Project workshop- 10 participants
- April 23- Pesticide Program Listening Session
- April 23- taught ServSafe Integrated Pest Management (IPM) to 9 in Kearney
- April 25- Arbor Day tree planting with Dodge Elementary in Grand Island- 25 participants
- April 25- Arbor Day tree planting with Park Elementary in Kearney - 50 participants
- April 28- Consultation with Mark and Delores Edwards
- April 30- Lawn Mower and String Trimmer Safety at Centura Elementary Ag Day to 100 youth

Clientele Contacts- 45 emails, 25 texts, 67 phone calls and walk-ins, 2 site assessments, & 375 program participants through 15 programs



Lynn DeVries, Early Childhood Extension Educator Activities and Accomplishments March 2025



Knowledge Network for Early Childhood Education Workforce (K.N.E.W.)



Team members from the UNK College of Education, Nebraska Extension and Communities for Kids are working together to address the state's early childhood education workforce shortage. (Photo by Zsuzsa Michael/UNK Communications)

I am sharing exciting news! Extension Early Childhood has been invited to be part of the *Knowledge Network for Early Childhood Education Workforce (KNEW)* project led by Led by Philip Lai, an associate professor in the UNK College of Education. Dr. Holly Hatton, Jaci Foged, and Lynn DeVries are a part of the core team on this project.

Early Childhood Extension's role is to provide individualized-customized professional learning to early childhood educators/providers in rural Nebraska. This will be a hybrid approach of coaching, reflective consultation, and online learning. I will be involved in the co-creation of ideas and programming. You can learn more about the KNEW project below.

<https://unknews.unk.edu/2024/05/22/unk-receives-2m-in-federal-funding-to-address-states-early-childhood-workforce-shortage/>

March Updates:

I am collaborating with my team to develop the on-line professional development program for our sub- award for the grant. This will involve 16 In-service Hours of Professional Development & Reflective Consultation PD delivered on-demand.

- **3/3/25,** The K.N.E.W. Communities were invited to a ½ day kick off to meet with UNK, Communities for Kids, and Dr. Hatton, Jaci Foged and myself from Extension to connect in-person around local goals and discuss childcare challenges with the goal shaping workforce goals that benefit children, families, and communities across rural Nebraska.
- **K.N.E.W. Communities Identified:**

1. Ainsworth	9. Lincoln County
2. Albio/Boone County	10. North Platte
3. Bridgeport	11. Pierce County
4. Buffalo county	12. Seward County
5. Dawson County	13. Valentine/Cherry County
6. Eustis/ Elwood	14. Minden
7. Holdrege	15. Friend
8. Kleth County	



Office of Research & Economic Development
GRAND CHALLENGES

Grand Challenges Catalyst project aims to strengthen early childhood workforce – and positive results for children.

I am on the design team to develop *Connections for Kids*, an integrated approach to individualized and inclusive professional development. Grounded in collaboration and partnership among researchers, educators, parents and community partners, the program is designed to measure and boost children's social and emotional skills, which offer protective factors that improve resilience and reduce the risk of future problems. Our team continues to meet monthly, and we are solidifying the outline of the 2-year program elements.

Link to the full article:

[Grand Challenges Catalyst project aims to strengthen early childhood workforce – and positive results for children | College of Education and Human Sciences \(unl.edu\)](#)

Lisa Knoche, CYFS co-director, is leading a large-scale program aimed at leveraging the University of Nebraska–Lincoln's strengths in early childhood education to create an integrated, educational approach to support professional workforce development and mental wellness among early childhood educators, and to encourage educator retention.

The five-year project is funded by a \$3.44 million Grand Challenges Catalyst Award, and aligns with the Grand Challenges themes of early childhood education and development, anti-racism and racial equity, and health equity. The team comprises 18 faculty, along with university, state, and community partners. Several Nebraska communities will also be involved.

The project, Knoche said, is designed to create connections among the university and community partners to promote early childhood workforce development and retention — and as a result, promote children's social-emotional development.

Connections for Kids will adopt the most effective elements from three evidence-based interventions widely used in Nebraska early childhood programs — Cultivating Healthy Intentional Mindful Educators (CHIME), Getting Ready and Rooted in Relationships/Pyramid.

After developing the program, researchers will assess its effectiveness in randomized classroom trials, examining children's social skills and problem behaviors, and teacher practices in early childhood classrooms. The project will also create an early childhood assessment tool for researchers and early childhood teachers to measure children's social emotional well-being. A public awareness campaign will be implemented to broaden understanding and support the importance of young children's social- emotional skills.

UPDATE: August 28 – October 16, I will be teaching the CHIME 8-week program to the Pilot participants of "Connections for Kids"

Completed the 8-week March 3, Afternoons 12:30-2:30 and Evenings, 6:30-8:30



The CHIME Program provides education and guidance on how to incorporate mindfulness and reflective practice into your daily routine, teaching, and caregiving. Engaging in mindfulness and reflective practice has many benefits for

health and well-being of both providers and young children — including reduced stress, improved emotion management, better sleep quality, increased focus and attention, and enhanced relationships. The CHIME program consists of a 2-hour introduction followed by 7 weekly CHIME sessions.

These sessions are:

- Mindfulness in Breathing
- Mindfulness in Listening
- Mindfulness and Emotions
- Mindfulness in Speech
- Mindfulness and Gratitude
- Mindfulness and Compassion
- Setting Intentions



12 Participants awarded completion certificates from: Adams, Buffalo, Hall, Lincoln, Lancaster, & Dawson Counties

Evaluation Quotes:

"Honestly, the most beneficial part of the program was Ms. DeVries approach and presentation. When I initially began this class, I had taken it with the intention of gaining more knowledge and resources to add to my "tool bag". However, this class was so much more. It was the opportunity to reflect, self-check, and self-improve. As educators, we give all of ourselves and often have nothing left to give to ourselves. Which leads us to pour from an empty bucket. Practicing the exercises within the class reminded me of the importance of self-care to prevent burn-out."

"I had a wonderful experience with this program. A lot of the material and content were things I was already familiar with. However, the way it was instructed was phenomenally done. Most online classes are not personalized, and it's hard to feel like you are more than just a name and face on a screen. Ms. DeVries built connections, made it personal, and really created a safe environment to practice the skills being taught."

"As a director of a center, one of our biggest challenges is staffing issues. The personal savings that attending this online class provided me with, was it being online and outside of work hours. Otherwise, trying to take this class would have been extremely challenging."

"Chime has helped me to be able to have a deeper connection with the children and my own children."

What was the most beneficial part of the program?

"The different techniques the way Lynn teaches is really helpful to me! I also loved how understanding Lynn is when it came to certain situations."

CHIME Guiding Teacher Facilitator Program:



Photo of our 2024 facilitator training

Partners from North Carolina are collaborating with our CHIME team to bring CHIME to Childcare Resources Inc. in North Carolina.

February 11 – April 1:

I have been facilitating the 8-week CHIME program for a group of 12 from North Carolina. This is a pre-requisite to the CHIME Facilitator Program that we will be delivering in person to 40 participants April 14-16, when we travel to Greenville, NC. It was such a wonderful experience teaching this group of Early Childhood coaches over the course of the 8-weeks. I can't wait to meet them in person.

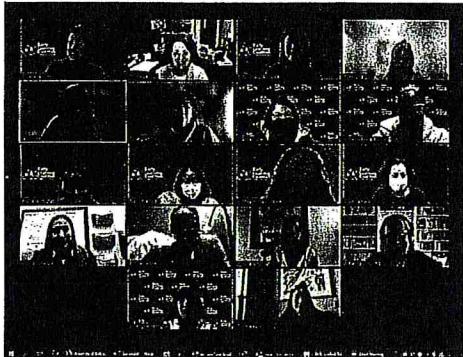


Photo from 2024 facilitator training

As a pre-requisite to becoming a CHIME facilitator, we offer the CHIME 8-week program first. Through our research, we have found this to be one of the best practices to ensure fidelity to our program. CHIME team members Erin Campbell, Ingrid Lindal, and myself, are hosting pre-requisite sessions and have divided the participants from North Carolina into 3 smaller groups. We deliver the 8-week CHIME program for this audience live over Zoom.

Learn, Grow, Eat and Go! workshops were successful!

I had 3 childcare providers from Adams, Hall, and Lancaster Counties join our Extension staff (4-H and NEP) for the day of training at Raising Nebraska. All 3 sites have plans to begin implementing the curriculum this spring. One site has both pre-k and school age children and will use both curricula to begin to Learn, Grow, Eat, & Go!



Evaluations:

What was the most beneficial part of the program?

"Hands on activity to try."
"Such great hands-on ideas"

100% said they would definitely use the information.

100% Extremely likely to recommend the training to other early childhood professionals.

Our Website - Our Story - Our Impact



Early Childhood Extension Statewide on-line

programs: <https://child.unl.edu/in-service-professional-development>

Nebraska Early Childhood Extension offers online professional development lessons covering a range of early childhood education topics. Each topic area will provide research-based information and strategies on how you can support young children's early growth and development.

Early Childhood Meetings:

- 3/3, KNEW Community Event at UNK
- 3 / 4, CHIME planning for NC. Facilitator training
- 3/5, KNEW Core Team meeting with UNK and C4K
- 3/6, CANVAS team meeting for the KNEW online classes
- 3/6, KNEW community meeting follow up
- 3/10, Learn, Grow program planning
- 3/10, NAIMH conference presentation planning
- 3/11, Completed the Canvas Catalog Survey for KNEW courses
- 3/12, EC Extension Team Meeting
- 3/12, EC Reflective Consultation
- 3/12, KNEW Core team meeting
- 3/18, Early Childhood Task Force, Adams Co.
- 3/18, Early Childhood Team KNEW planning
- 3/19, NAIMH presentation planning
- 3/20, Mindful Movement program video recording in studio, Lincoln
- 3/20, Block Party for Hall Co. Sixpence
- 3/25, Go NAPSACC monthly webinar

Extension Activities:

- 3/10, 3/17, Adams Co. Staff Meeting
- 3/13, Search Committee Charge meeting for the Early Childhood Educator position in Dawson Co.
- 3/17, KSNB Local 4 TV midday interview
- 3/17, Summer Intern Interview

Upcoming Programming & Presentations:

- January 13 – March 3, 2025, New 8-week CHIME program 2 sessions offered: Mondays, 12:30 p.m. or 6:30 p.m.
- February 11- April 1, 1:00- 3:00 p.m., 8-week CHIME prerequisite programs for participants in North Carolina
- March 3, K.N.E.W. Communities event at UNK
- March 20, Block Party for Hall County Sixpence providers
- March 24, Learn, Grow, Eat, & Go program for early childhood and extension at Raising Nebraska
- March 27, Headlice training for Childcare, on-line, Central Region ELC
- April 3, NAIMH Presentation in Lincoln
- April 4, Block Party for ESU 10 Kearney, Buffalo Co. Sixpence
- April 7, Block Party program for Loup City area Sixpence pre-k teachers and paras
- April 14-17, CHIME facilitator training, Flat Rock, North Carolina
- April 25, State ECE Celebration, Wellness, Omaha
- April 29, NAIMH Presentation in North Platte
- May 1- July 10, 2025: New in-person 8- Week CHIME program for Hall County Head Start as part of the HSUP grant. 2 groups held on Thursdays.
- May 13 – July 1, 2 New CHIME classes on-line: 12:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.
- August 28- October 16, CHIME 8-week series Thursdays 1:00-3:00
- August 29 – October 17, CHIME 8-week series Fridays 1:00-3:00
- August 4 & 18, KNEW Reflective Consultation, 12:00 p.m. & 6:30 p.m.
- Sept. 5 or 12, Block Party for ESU 10 Sixpence providers.
- September 17, 8 Dimensions of Wellness, Lynn leads Spiritual Wellbeing
- September 6 & 20, KNEW Reflective Consultation, 12:00 p.m. & 6:30 p.m.
- October 6 & 20, KNEW Reflective Consultation, 12:00 p.m. & 6:30 p.m.
- December 1 & 15, KNEW Reflective Consultation, 12:00 p.m. & 6:30 p.m.
- TBD: Pyramid Year 3, two 6-hour training sessions for Adams Co.
- TBD: Pyramid Year 3, Two, 6-hour training sessions for Hall County
- TBD: Pyramid Year 3, Two, 6-hour training sessions for Buffalo County

Lynn DeVries, Early Childhood Extension Educator Activities and Accomplishments April 2025



Knowledge Network for Early Childhood Education Workforce (K.N.E.W.)



Team members from the UNK College of Education, Nebraska Extension and Communities for Kids are working together to address the state's early childhood education workforce shortage. (Photos by Elska Vrba/UNK Communications)

I am sharing exciting news! Extension Early Childhood has been invited to be part of the *Knowledge Network for Early Childhood Education Workforce (KNEW)* project led by Led by Philip Lai, an associate professor in the UNK College of Education. Dr. Holly Hatton, Jaci Foged, and Lynn DeVries are a part of the core team on this project.

Early Childhood Extension's role is to provide individualized-customized professional learning to early childhood educators/providers in rural Nebraska. This will be a hybrid approach of coaching, reflective consultation, and online learning. I will be involved in the co-creation of ideas and programming.

You can learn more about the KNEW project below.

<https://unknews.unk.edu/2024/05/22/unk-receives-2m-in-federal-funding-to-address-states-early-childhood-workforce-shortage/>

March Updates:

I am collaborating with my team to develop the on-line professional development program for our sub- award for the grant. This will involve 16 In-service Hours of Professional Development & Reflective Consultation PD delivered on-demand.

• K.N.E.W. Communities Identified:

1. Ainsworth	9. Lincoln County
2. Albio/Boone County	10. North Platte
3. Brdgeport	11. Pierce County
4. Buffalo county	12. Seward County
5. Dawson County	13. Valentine/Cherry County
6. Eustis/ Elwood	14. Minden
7. Holdrege	15. Frlend
8. Kleth County	

- We sent out our survey to officially have participants register. 100 slots are available this first year, 100 more in year 2.
- As of 4/23, we have 92 registrations.



Office of Research & Economic Development
GRAND CHALLENGES

Grand Challenges Catalyst project aims to strengthen early childhood workforce – and positive results for children.

I am on the design team to develop *Connections for Kids*, an integrated approach to individualized and inclusive professional development. Grounded in collaboration and partnership among researchers, educators, parents and community partners, the program is designed to measure and boost children's social and emotional skills, which offer protective factors that improve resilience and reduce the risk of future problems. Our team continues to meet monthly, and we are solidifying the outline of the 2-year program elements.

Link to the full article:

[Grand Challenges Catalyst project aims to strengthen early childhood workforce – and positive results for children | College of Education and Human Sciences \(unl.edu\)](#)

Lisa Knoche, CYFS co-director, is leading a large-scale program aimed at leveraging the University of Nebraska–Lincoln's strengths in early childhood education to create an integrated, educational approach to support professional workforce development and mental wellness among early childhood educators, and to encourage educator retention.

The five-year project is funded by a \$3.44 million Grand Challenges Catalyst Award, and aligns with the Grand Challenges themes of early childhood education and development, anti-racism and racial equity, and health equity. The team comprises 18 faculty, along with university, state, and community partners. Several Nebraska communities will also be involved.

The project, Knoche said, is designed to create connections among the university and community partners to promote early childhood workforce development and retention — and as a result, promote children's social-emotional development.

Connections for Kids will adopt the most effective elements from three evidence-based interventions widely used in Nebraska early childhood programs — Cultivating Healthy Intentional Mindful Educators (CHIME), Getting Ready and Rooted in Relationships/Pyramid.

After developing the program, researchers will assess its effectiveness in randomized classroom trials, examining children's social skills and problem behaviors, and teacher practices in early childhood classrooms. The project will also create an early childhood assessment tool for researchers and early childhood teachers to measure children's social emotional well-being. A public awareness campaign will be implemented to broaden understanding and support the importance of young children's social- emotional skills.

UPDATE: August 28 – October 16, 2025, I will be teaching the CHIME 8-week program to the Pilot participants of "Connections for Kids"

I met with the design team again on March 31. We are in the process of creating a course outline for the pilot program to begin in late summer 2025.



CHIME

CULTIVATING HEALTHY INTENTIONAL
MINDFUL EDUCATORS

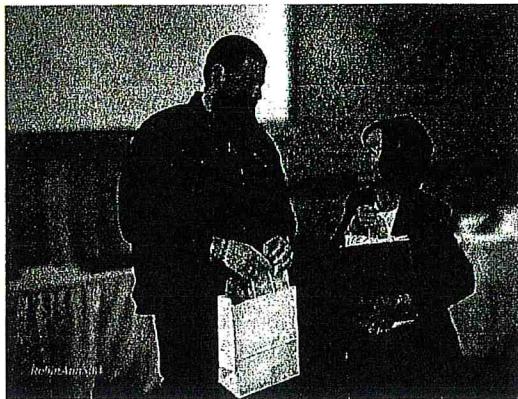
CHIME Guiding Teacher Facilitator Program:



Partners from the Healthy Social Behaviors Initiative, North Carolina Pyramid Model Collaborative are collaborating with our CHIME team to bring CHIME to Childcare Resources Inc. in North Carolina.

April 14 -17 Erin Campbell and I traveled to Flat Rock, North Carolina to conduct the 2-day facilitator training. 40 participants who had attended the 8-week CHIME program with us on-line, met us in Flat Rock to complete their facilitator training.

All 40 participants intend to deliver CHIME as a part of their work as early childhood coaches and trainers in their statewide program.



I was invited to present at the NAIMH State Conferences. I delivered my presentation, ***“More than just getting by, Why Self-Care is essential for early childhood professionals”*** to an audience of 50 on April 3. I will bring this presentation to the western part of the state in North Platte on April 29. As of 4/23, 35 people registered.

Foundations of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health A Day of Learning and Growth



Nebraska Association
for Infant Mental Health

Are you passionate about supporting the healthy development of young children? Join us for an informative and engaging day of learning focused on Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH)! This training offers valuable insights for anyone working with infants, toddlers, and their families—from home visitors and early childhood educators to therapists and child care providers.

Immerse yourself in key aspects of IECMH through a series of dynamic presentations led by experts in the field. You'll gain a deeper understanding of:

- The foundations of IECMH and how to promote young children's mental health in various settings*
- The impact of trauma on childhood development, including brain development, social-emotional development, and attachment*
- The DSM-5 diagnostic system for understanding and addressing mental health needs in early childhood*
- The importance of self-care for caregivers and how it relates to responsive caregiving*



Dr. Mark Hald
PhD, Licensed Psychologist, IMH-E®



Lindsay Ondrak
LMHC, LPC, IMH-E®



Julia Torquati
Professor, IMH-E®



Lynn DeVries
M.S., IMH-E®

*What Happens When
Things Don't Go So
Well: The Impact of Toxic
and Traumatic Stress on
Childhood Development*

*DSM-5 Overview
Training*

*Infant and Early
Childhood Mental
Health: Supporting
Children in Diverse Early
Childhood Settings*

*More Than Just
Getting By: Why
Self-Care is Essential
for Early Childhood
Professionals*

THURSDAY, APRIL 3
9AM-3:30PM
Nebraska Extension—Lancaster Co
444 Cherry Creek Rd, Suite A
Lincoln, NE

TUESDAY, APRIL 29
9AM-3:30PM
ESU 16: 1221 W 17th
North Platte, NE

Registration fee: \$30 | NAIMH members: \$15

N
EXTENSION



Early Childhood Educator Training



Block Party is an interactive, engaging program for early childhood educators, families and children.

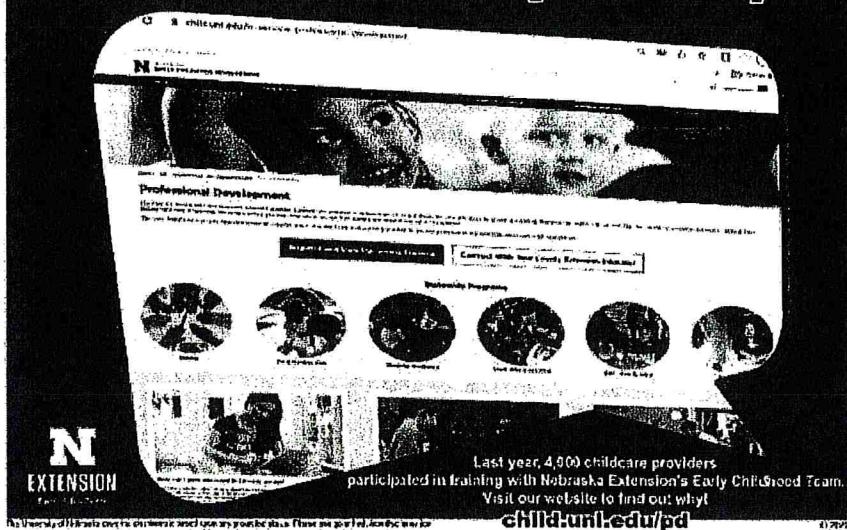
Educators and families will develop a better understanding of the multitude of ways children learn by playing with blocks!

I taught 2, 2-hour Block Party Programs in-person this month.

- **April 7, I traveled to Loup City to deliver the program to 25 Childcare providers from the Sixpence program in that area.**
- **April 10, I took the Block Party training to 36 Sixpence providers from Hall County.**
- **Both locations intend to have a Block Party Family Event for their Sixpence community**



Our Website - Our Story - Our Impact



Early Childhood Extension Statewide on-line programs:

<https://child.unl.edu/in-service-professional-development>

Nebraska Early Childhood Extension offers online professional development lessons covering a range of early childhood education topics. Each topic area will provide research- based information and strategies on how you can support young children's early growth and development.

Early Childhood Meetings:

- 4/2, KNEW Core Team meeting with UNK and C4K
- 4/7, KNEW Meeting with co-coordinator to schedule time slots
- 4/9, EC Extension monthly meeting
- 4/9, EC Team Reflective consultation
- 4/9, KNEW Core Team meeting with UNK and C4K
- 4/23, KNEW Core Team meeting with UNK and C4K
- 4/25, CHIME Conference
- 4/28, Connections for Kids Design Team meeting
- 4/29, NAIMH presentation, North Platte
- 4/30, KNEW Core Team meeting with UNK and C4K

Extension Activities:

- 4/7, 4/28, Adams Co. Office meeting
- 4/7, Twila's annual performance conversation meeting
- 4/10, Zone 10 Spring Gathering in Hastings
- 4/24, Search Committee for EC Dawson Co. position
- 4/28, MVP Zoom with Kathleen Lodi
- 4/28, Meeting with Megan Burda, Zone 10

Upcoming Programming & Presentations:

- April 3, NAIMH presentation, Lincoln
- April 7, Block Party for Loup City Sixpence providers
- April 10, Block Party for Hall County Sixpence providers
- April 3, NAIMH Presentation in Lincoln
- April 14-17, CHIME facilitator training, Flat Rock, North Carolina
- April 25, State ECE Celebration, Wellness, Omaha
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- May 13 – July 1, 2 New CHIME classes on-line: 12:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.
- June 2, 16, Bimonthly KNEW Reflective consultation group.

- August 28- October 16, Connectons 4 Kids Grand Challenge grant: CHIME 8-week series Thursdays 1:00-3:00
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Kerry Elsen
Buffalo County Extension
September & October Report

Programs & Involvement

September 3 – Youth Science Field Day in Holdrege, taught *One Health* session.

September 4 – Ag. Literacy at Kenwood, Dairy (21 Participants).

September 8 – Clipper Article, “4-H Volunteers Help Youth Thrive,” Ag. Literacy at Kenwood, Dairy (21 Participants), Extension Board Meeting.

September 9 – Ag. Literacy at Central, Dairy (40 Participants), Project Action Team (PAT) meetings.

September 10 – Ag. Literacy at Bryant, Dairy (20 Participants).

September 11 – 4-H Foundational Program Training.

September 15 – Ag. Literacy at Park, Dairy (21 Participants), Meadowlark, Dairy (26 Participants).

September 16 – Ag. Literacy at Park, Dairy (22 participants), Bryant, Dairy (19 participants).

September 17 – Score FFA Range Judging Cards, Ag. Literacy at Windy Hills, Dairy (44 participants), Kenwood, Dairy (21 participants).

September 18 – Tri-City Huddle Meeting, Ag. Literacy at Northeast, Pumpkin Life Cycle, (21 participants).

September 19 – Kick-Off with Kathleen, Ag. Literacy at Meadowlark, Dairy (50 participants).

September 22 – Shooting Sports Leader meeting.

September 23 – Ag. Literacy at Emerson, Dairy (38 participants).

September 26 – Afterschool Conference, 4-H as a resources panel member. Discussion with Sarah Fanning.

September 29 – Ag. Literacy at Park, Pumpkin Life Cycle (21 participants).

September 30 – Ag. Literacy at Park and Bryant, Pumpkin Life Cycle, (41 participants), Emberson, Hot House Detective, (38 participants).

October 1 – Follow for Foundational Programming meeting.

October 5 – BRAG Meeting

October 6 – National Epsilon Sigma Phi Meeting

October 7 – National Epsilon Sigma Phi Meeting

October 8 – National Epsilon Sigma Phi Meeting, Presentation

October 9 – National Epsilon Sigma Phi Meeting

October 10 – Ag. Literacy at Meadowlark, Pumpkin Life Cycle, (50 participants).

October 14 – Ag. Literacy at Central and Emerson, Pumpkin Life Cycle (78 participants).

October 15 – Ag. Literacy at Bryant and Windy Hills, Pumpkin Life Cycle, (64 participants).

October 16 – Ag. Literacy at Northeast, Dairy (21 participants) and Kenwood, Pumpkin Life Cycle (21 participants).

October 20 – Ag. Literacy at Kenwood, Pumpkin Life Cycle, (42 participants).

October 21 – Youth Science Field Day taught “*One Health*” session.

October 22 – Youth Science Field Day taught “*One Health*” session.

October 23 – 4-H Planning Meeting, Ag. Literacy at Northeast, Dairy (20 participants).

October 24 – Ag. Literacy at Meadowlark, Hot House Detective (50 participants).
October 27 – Ag. Literacy at Meadowlark, Pumpkin Life Cycle (26 participants).
October 28 – Microsoft computer migration.
October 29 – Ag. Literacy at Park and Bryant, Hot House Detective (40 participants).
October 30 – Ag. Literacy at Park, Hot House Detective, (22 participants), Northeast, Pumpkin Life Cycle (41 participants).

September/October 2025 Report

Jordan Wilbur

Buffalo County Extension

September

September 2: Picked up Static Items from the State Fair

September 3: NCEA planning zoom

September 4: KCLC at Central-15 youth

September 8: KCLC at Meadowlark-18 youth

September 9: September PAT Meeting

September 11: Foundational Program Training

September 12: FACET Fall Retreat

September 16: Kearney County Safety Day, 270 youth

September 18: Tri City Huddle, KCLC at Central, 15 youth

September 19: Kick-Off with Kathleen Zoom

September 22: Premier Communication Event Meeting, KCLC Meadowlark-18 youth

September 23: NCEA Social Zoom, 4-H Council

September 25: KCLC at Central-15 youth

September 26: Moderator for Livestock Quiz bowl at Aksarben

September 29: NCEA Planning Zoom, Meadowlark KCLC-18 youth

September 30: 4-H Discovery Club- 7 youth

October:

October 1: NCEA Planning Zoom

October 8: Assisted Heidi with Inventure Day

October 10: Huddle Zoom

October 13: KCLC at Meadowlark, 18 youth

October 14: 4-H Discovery Club, 12 youth

October 16: Animals Inside and Out at Kearney County, 115 youth

October 21: Adams County Youth Science Field Day, 50 youth

October 22: Buffalo County Youth Science Field Day, 63 youth

October 23: Meeting with Heidi and Kerry

October 24: NTV Christmas Segments

October 27: NCEA Planning Zoom

October 28: 4-H Discovery Club-10 youth, 4-H Council

September-October 2025

Heidi Darby
Buffalo County Extension

September 2025

September 9 – KGFW Interview
September 9 – Husker Harvest Days – 4-H Booth
September 9 – FCS Project Action Team Meeting
September 9 – Shooting Sports Project Action Team Meeting
September 10 - SEM School – Fish of Nebraska – 14 students
September 11 – Foundational Program Training Grand Island
September 12 - Pleasanton School – Bees – 24 students
September 12 – Inventure Day Meeting with Sarah Fanning – Dawson County
September 16 - Homeschool Enrichment – Monarchs – Session 1 – 12 Students
September 16 - Homeschool Enrichment – Monarchs – Session 2 – 16 Students
September 17 – Shelton School – Bees – 26 students
September 17 – Elm Creek School – Bees – Class 1 – 14 students
September 17 – Elm Creek School – Bees – Class 2 – 14 students
September 18 – Extension Huddle Meeting Grand Island
September 19 – Shooting Sports Meeting
September 22 – Shooting Sports Meeting
September 22 – Clipper Article
September 23 – 4-H Council Meeting
September 24 – Amherst School – Bees – 21 students
September 25 – Get Connected Afterschool Conference – Kearney
September 26 – Get Connected Afterschool Conference - Kearney

October 2025

October 6 – Elm Creek School – Bees – Class 1 – 14 students
October 6 – Elm Creek School – Bees – Class 2 – 14 students
October 8 – Buffalo County Inventure Day – 81 students
October 9 – Tree Jamboree Hastings – Taught Sessions on Tree Cookies – 128 students
October 10 – Extension Huddle
October 10 – Zone Connection Zoom
October 14 - Homeschool Enrichment – Bats – Session 1 – 18 Students
October 14 - Homeschool Enrichment – Bats – Session 2 – 21 Students
October 15 - SEM School – Bats – 14 students
October 15 – Shooting Sports PAT meeting
October 17 - Pleasanton School – Bats – 24 students
October 17 – Amherst School – Bats – 21 students
October 19 – County Fair .22 Rifle Silhouette Competition
October 20 – Clipper Article
October 22 – Youth Science Field Day – Taught Sessions on Pollinators – Kearney - 113 students
October 23 – Office Meeting
October 23 – Pick Up Mammal Trunk

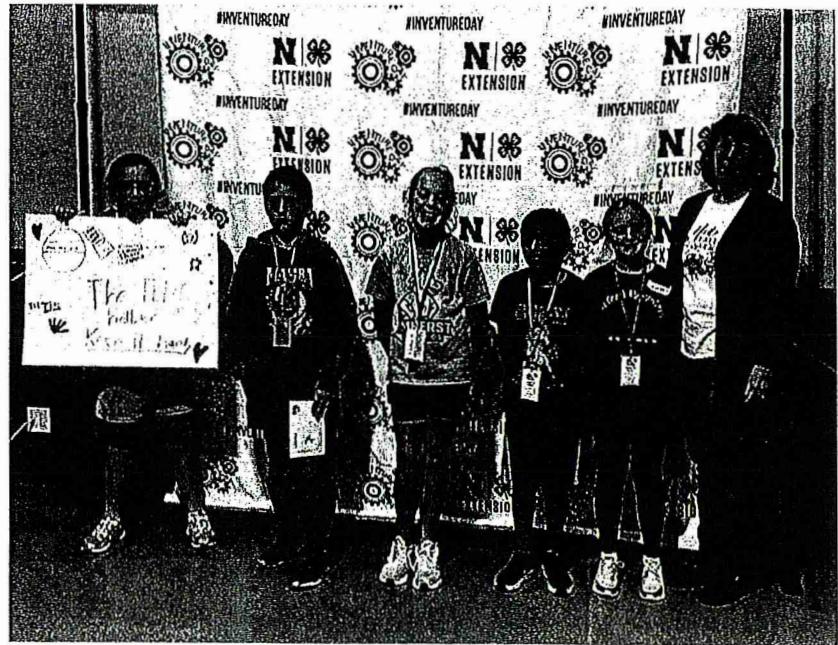
October 25 – Mammals of Nebraska Presentation at Boy Scout Campout – 115 students

October 28 – 4-H Council Meeting

October 29 - September 17 – Shelton School – Bats – 26 students

Activities in September and October

Inventure Day: We hosted our second Inventure Day for Buffalo County sixth grade students on October 8th. There were 81 sixth grade students from Pleasanton, Amherst, SEM and Elm Creek at the event. We were very lucky to have 18 community members, extension personnel and business owners volunteering to serve as mentors and judges for the day. The registration fees and lunch were provided for all students thanks to the generous support of local banks. The Economic Development Council of Buffalo County sponsored lunches for all teachers, mentors, judges and bus drivers. In all, the day was a great success and a true testament to the support we have in Buffalo County for our youth.



Homeschool Workshops: The monthly homeschool workshops are continuing to grow. The Bat Workshops in October were highly attended. Two sessions were held and that reached 39 students. I am excited each month to meet new families and will continue to offer two sessions each month. In November our topic is the American Flag. Participants will learn flag protocol and etiquette and will participate in a flag retirement ceremony. We are currently asking the community to donate flags that are "no longer fitting of the emblem" to be properly retired at the workshops. These will be held on November 18th from 930-1130 and 100-300.

Looking ahead:

As we look at November and December, I will continue to be in the classrooms each month with different topics. I will also attend a couple of conferences in November. December will be busy with our baking workshop, an inaugural Inventure Day in Dawson County and three home-school workshop.

Homeschool workshops are scheduled in both November and December. November will be the flag workshop. The workshops in December will be a chance for me to test a new curriculum that I was trained on in September. This is all about "Egg-Streme Engineering". There will be two sessions for students ages 8-15. Students will learn about gravity and will be making a prototype helmet to protect an egg. They will drop them to see if their design works. We will test them a few times. After that, students will be challenged to give their prototypes a name, logo and slogan. They will design a business poster and pitch their product to others. These will be 3-hour workshops and are already receiving signups. I will also offer a third workshop for youth ages 4-8. Since these students are younger, this will be a 2-hour workshop. Students will build a parachute to gently "drop" their egg and will make egg catapults that they can take home with them.

ELIZABETH EXSTROM

SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER 2025
HORTICULTURE, LANDSCAPES, AND ENVIRONMENTAL
SYSTEMS

TREE PLANTING

NEIGHBORS JOIN FORCES TO RESTORE AREA TREES



Article was front page in the *Grand Island Independent*

Favorite Quote

"Thank you for all of your help. You had those Boy Scouts so excited to plant the trees. You are a good teacher, and this is coming from a former teacher"-

Neighborhood resident



When Tom Halstrom approached the Grand Island Tree Board, he wasn't sure what would come of his simple idea — bringing more trees to his neighborhood. But with determination and the right partners, that seed of an idea grew into something far greater.

With guidance and support from the Grand Island Tree Board, including Nebraska Extension Educator Elizabeth Exstrom, Tom and his neighbors applied for and secured a grant to fund new trees for their neighborhood. What followed was a true display of community spirit.

On planting day, nearly 40 volunteers — families, neighbors, and local Boy Scouts — came together with shovels and smiles, ready to make a difference. Elizabeth Exstrom led the group, demonstrating proper tree planting techniques, watering tips, and how to stake young trees for strong growth.

As volunteers worked across 17 planting sites, Elizabeth moved from group to group, offering hands-on guidance. She checked each newly planted tree, assisted with corrective pruning, and shared advice with homeowners on tree care and long-term maintenance.

By the end of the day, the neighborhood had been transformed — not just with new trees, but with a renewed sense of connection and pride.

Thanks to Tom's vision, the Tree Board's support, and the dedication of volunteers, Grand Island gained more than shade and greenery — it gained a reminder of what can grow when a community works together.

Trees

From A1

"I just didn't want to be a neighbor to have the cost of trees," he said. "I wanted to plant trees for free."

Halstrom said, "I thought it would be a good project for the city."

"The city has been really nice to us,"

Fruth said. "They have

had to get together and

it all on our part."

Fruth said, "I think it's

about 40 neighbors,

Scouts and other volunteers

gathered on the lawn

at Tom Halstrom's West Koenig Street home before

heading out to plant trees Saturday.

At the bottom, she said, no

watering to the tree will

hurt the tree.

Halstrom said, "When

we water it, it's going to

shrink back."

Overhead, when the tree

gets taller, the Ex-

stroms will have to

water it again.

Fruth said, "I think it's

going to be a good

experience for the

Scouts."

Fruth said, "I think it's

going to be a good

experience for the

Scouts."

For Cub Scouts like

Damien, the tree-planting

activity counted toward

the World Conservation Award,

and Ding (Dion) Over-

ton, a Girl Scout, direc-

ted the project for the

Scout Troop 100.

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Scout Troop 100.

ELIZABETH EXSTROM

SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER 2025
HORTICULTURE, LANDSCAPES, AND ENVIRONMENTAL
SYSTEMS

September

- Sept 2- UNL Faculty Senate Meeting
- Sept 4- IANR Faculty & Staff Senate Meeting
 - Zone 10 meeting
 - State of University
- Sept 8- Platte County HLES hiring committee
- Sept 9 &10- Husker Harvest Days
- Sept 11-2 tree assessment
 - Backyard Farmer
- Sept 12- Agronomy and Horticulture Department Staff Retreat
- Sept 16 ProHort lunch and learn
 - Mary Unrein client meeting
- Sept 17- Range Judging Scoring
- Sept 18- Doug Zarek client meeting
- Sept 18- Platte Co HLES interview
- Sept 19- Platte Co HLES Interview
- Sept 22- Tim Wright client meeting
 - Weather Ready Landscapes meeting
- Sept 23- Grand Island Tree Board meeting
- Sept 24- Front Door Forum meeting
- Sept 25- HLES meeting
- Sept 26- Platte Co HLES interview
- Sept 29- Platte Co HLES interview
 - Lippincott Site assessment

October

- Oct 1- Agronomy and Horticulture Extension Faculty Meeting
 - Extension Master Gardener Program in Gage Co-Taught Weeds & Management
- Oct 2- presented at Front Door Forum to front office staff
- Oct 3 & 6- Reviewed Promotion files
- Oct 8- Inventure Day, Buffalo Co
- Oct 10- National Junior Horticulture Association and Foundation Meeting
- Oct 11- Tree Planting in Grand Island
- Oct 14- Site Assessment Ward
- Oct 15- Connecting the Dots- Hastings
- Oct 16- Zone 10 Gathering Hebron and Deshler
- Oct 21- Youth Science Field Day- Hastings
- Oct 22- Youth Science Field Day- Kearney

Clientele Contacts-

September

85 emails, 45 texts, 110 phone calls and walk-ins, 3 site assessments

October

15 emails, 26 texts, 37 phone calls and walk-ins, 2 site assessments

Jada Zimmer
November 2025 Report

Programs/Involvement

- Sep 1: Labor Day
- Sep 3: Youth Science Field Day- Holdrege (Science of Sleep 123 Participants)
- Sep 4: State of the University Address
- Sep 5: HCHC Coach Check-in
- Sep 8: Husker Harvest Days Set up
 - Buffalo County Extension Board Meeting
- Sep 9: Husker Harvest Days (AgrAbility and Science of Sleep)
 - PAT Meeting
- Sep 10: NTV Interview- AgrAbility
- Sep 11: Double Up Food Bucks- Holdrege Location
 - UNK NKFND Program Planning Meeting
- Sep 12: Lights Out Cooking Training
 - Wheat Grant Program Planning
- Sep 15: State Fair Superintendent Meeting
 - Clipper Article Due- The Story of Wheat
- Sep 16: Employee Wellness Committee Meeting
- Sep 17: Create OT/PT Binders and Books
- Sep 18: UNK NKFND0- Handwashing and Rethink Your Drink (720 Participants)
- Sep 23: AgrAbility Team Meeting
- Sep 25: FNH Pears Webinar
 - Create OT/PT Binders and Books
- Sep 29: Nebraska Rural Engagement Summit
 - Set Up for OT/PT Day- North Platte
- Sep 30: OT/PT Workshop- North Platte (35 Participants)

- Oct 2: PEARS Entries
- Oct 3: Hypertension Coach Meeting
- Oct 6: Buffalo County Food Leaders Meeting
- Oct 7: Kids in the Kitchen (KIK) Meadowlark 3rd Grade (25 Participants)
- Oct 8: Inventure Day Mentor (111 Participants)
- Oct 9: SEK Central 1st Grade (18 Participants)
- Oct 10: Extension Huddle
 - MyPlate Party- Zion Kindergarten (22 Participants)
- Oct 13: AgrAbility Team Meeting
 - Clipper article Due- Fall Pumpkin Fun
- Oct 15: SEK Central 1st Grade (18 Participants)
- Oct 16: Kids in the Kitchen (KIK) Meadowlark 3rd Grade (25 Participants)
- Oct 17: Out- Vacation
- Oct 20: FNH Pre-Retreat Webinar
- Oct 21: Youth Science Field Day- Hastings (Science of Sleep 121 Participants)
- Oct 22: Youth Science Field Day- Kearney (Science of Sleep 96 Participants)
- Oct 23: Deliver DUFB Tear Pads North Platte and McCook Grocery Stores
- Oct 24: SEK 2nd Grade Kenwood (21 Participants)
- Oct 27: SEK Central 1st Grade (18 Participants)

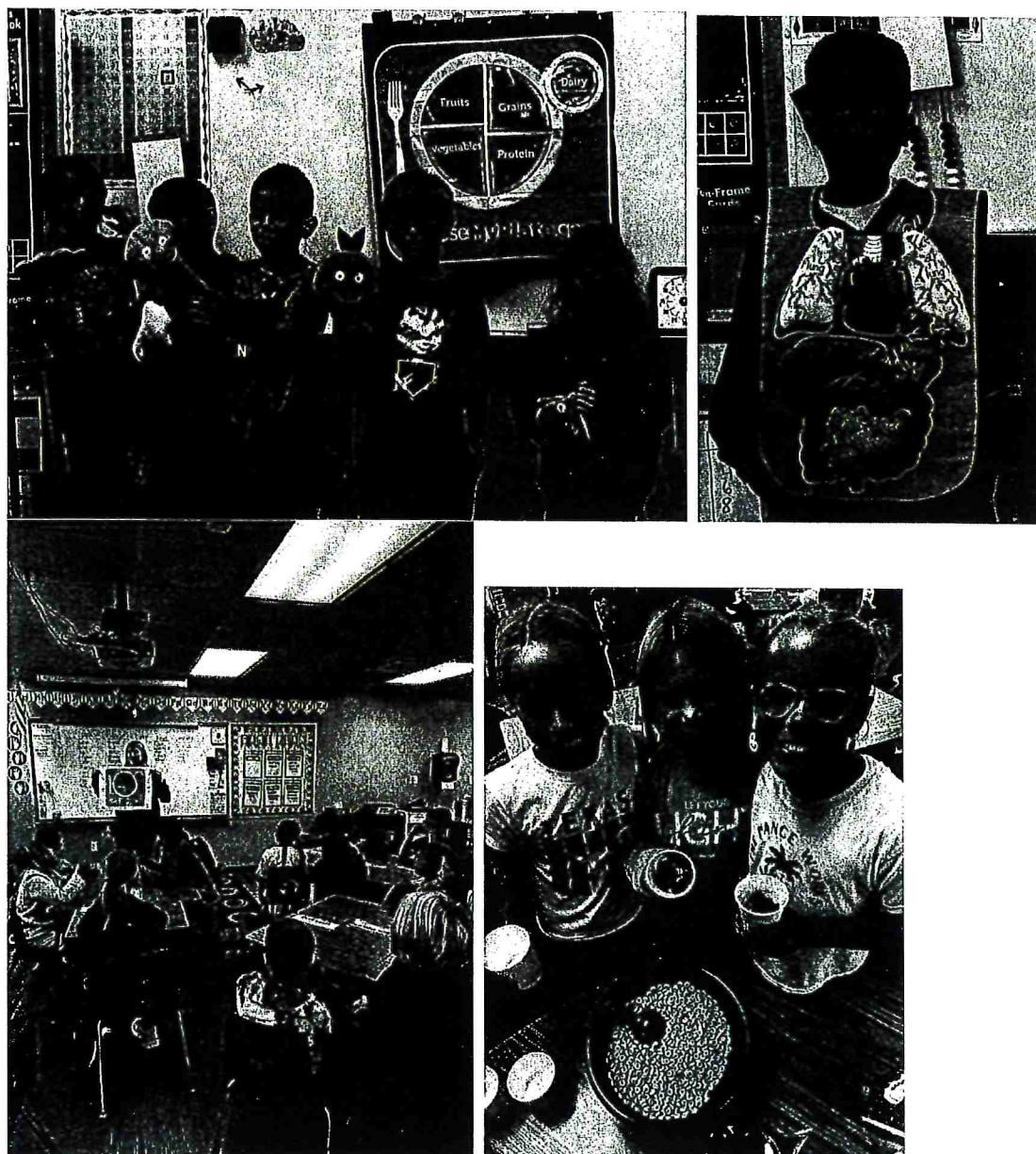
Oct 28: Health and Wellbeing Retreat in Lincoln
Oct 29: Kids in the Kitchen (KIK) Meadowlark 3rd Grade (25 Participants)
Oct 30: Local Food Access Public Meeting
HCHC Coach Meeting
Oct 31: AgrAbility Grant Meeting
SEK 2nd Grade Kenwood (21 Participants)

Number and Type of Individual Contacts

Phone: 5

Office: 0

Email: 0



Buffalo County Extension Board Narrative Report

Brent L. Plugge

September 1 – October 31, 2025

Extension Activities September 1 – October 31, 2025

September 1 -Office Closed
-Clean IANR Building

September 3 **-Youth Science Field Day @ Holdrege (P=0)**

September 8 -Monthly Statewide Beef Meeting

September 9-11 **-Husker Harvest Days**

September 9 -P.A.T. Meetings

September 12 -“Cow Clinics” Planning Team Meeting
-Danny Neal Pasture Visit

September 17 - **Score Range Judging Cards @ Buffalo County Extension Office (P=442)**

September 19 -Nebraska Ranch Practicum Programming Planning Meeting (Evaluation)

September 22 -Woody Encroachment Team Meeting

September 23 -Nebraska Grazing Conference Planning Committee Meeting

September 25 -Livestock Educators Meeting (Fall Programming, Swine Professional Development)

October 1 -Youth Science Field Day Educators Meeting

October 6 -Ag and Natural Resources Promotion Committee Meeting

October 9 -Livestock Educators Meeting (Fall Programming and Communication)

October 10 -Extension Huddle
-Zone 3 Connection

October 13 -Monthly Statewide Beef Meeting
-Terry Chandler Pasture Visit

October 14 -Nebraska Grazing Conference Advisory Meeting

October 15 **-Husker Beef Lab @ Cambridge (P=190)**

October 16 **-Animals Inside and Out @ Minden (115)**

October 17 **-Husker Beef Lab @ Hershey (P=252)**

October 22 **-Youth Science Field Day @ Kearney (P=63)**
-Husker Beef Lab @ Kearney High School (P=38)

October 23 -Livestock Educators Meeting
-Sheep Production Workshop @ Clay Center (P=14)

October 27-28 -Buffalo County Microsoft Migration

October 27-28 -Beef Innovation Hub Fall Workshop @ Lincoln

October 29 **-Animals Inside and Out @ Ogallala (P=125)**

Number and Type of Individual Contacts

Phone/Text - 5
Office - 5
Farm/Ranch - 2
Email - 0

Activities for November 1 – December 31, 2025

November 3 -Monthly Check-in with Brian Cox
-Extension Board Meeting

November 4 -Backyard Poultry Workshop @ Buffalo County Extension Office
-Trent and Kelli Loos Farm Visit

November 5 -UNK Careers in Ag Roundtable

November 7 -Zone 3 Connection

November 10 -Monthly Statewide Beef Call
November 12 -Nebraska Grazing Conference Advisory Meeting
November 17 -Extension Road Show @ College Park
November 19-20 – Gateway Farm Show
November 27-28 - Office Closed
December 1 -Monthly Check-in with Brian Cox
December 1 -"Cow Clinic" @ Burwell
December 2 -"Cow Clinic @ Gordon
December 8 -Monthly Statewide Beef Call
December 9 -"Cow Clinic" @ Beatrice (Tentative)
December 11 -Extension Huddle

Training, Workshops and Other Educational Events Attended for Professional Development

Sheep Production Workshop @ Clay Center
Beef Innovation Hub Fall Workshop @ Lincoln

Other Meetings/Functions

Husker Harvest Days
Extension Huddle

Additional University Work

Husker Harvest Days (Planning Committee)
Ag and Natural Resources Promotion Committee Meeting

September and October 2025 Information

Husker Beef Lab – The Husker Beef Lab teaching team participated in seven events this reporting period. From Animals Inside and Out, Youth Science Field Days and stand alone programs the team reached a total of 783 students.

Husker Harvest Days – Member of the planning committee.

Score Range Judging Cards – The District Contest was held in Hall County in September. A week later I invited area Extension faculty and others to help score the judging cards. A total of 442 high school ag students participated in the contest.

Sheep Production Workshop – A workshop for sheep producers was held in October at Clay Center to address some emerging issues such as nutrition and parasite control. A total of 14 producers attended the workshop reaching over 3,000 ewes.

NEWSLETTERS AND PROGRAM INFORMATION

Happy Easter

BUFFALO COUNTY 4-H

Nebraska Extension-Buffalo County 1400 E. 34th St. Kearney, NE 68847 (308)-236-1235 buffalo.unl.edu

CALENDAR

April

- 1 Deadline to sign up for Lottery Goat**
- 8 Deadline to sign up for Flight & Aviation Workshop**
- 15 Flight & Aviation Workshop for Homeschooled Youth
- 21-22 BRAG
- 24 4-H Council meeting
- 25 Extension office closed – Arbor Day

May

- 6 Deadline to sign up for Speech/PSA/Presentation Contest**
- 12 Deadline to sign up for Performing Arts – UNK**
- 13 Speech/PSA/Presentation Contest 6:30 p.m.
- 14 Deadline to sign up for Fairy Garden Workshop**
- 19 Performing Arts – UNK
- 21 Fairy Garden Workshop for Homeschooled Youth
- 26 Extension office closed – Memorial Day
- 27 4-H Council meeting
- 27-28 Building Better Babysitters – Kearney Park & Recreation



June

- 1 Horse ID, entry level testing, online entries due for State 4-H Horse Show
- 1 Deadline to sign up for Sr. & Jr. Tempt, Taste, Try**
- 10 FCS PAT meeting 5:30 p.m.
- 10 Horse PAT meeting 6:30 p.m.
- 10 Livestock/Small Animal PAT meetings 7 p.m.
- 10 Shooting Sports PAT meeting 7 p.m.
- 10 Deadline to sign up for Culinary Workshop**
- 11 Sr. Tempt, Taste and Try
- 12 Jr. Tempt, Taste and Try
- 15 All Livestock, Horse, Rabbit, Poultry ID's due**
- 15 DNA State Fair envelopes due to Extension office**
- 15 State Fair online nominations due**
- 15 4-H ENROLLMENT DEADLINE**
- 15 Quality Assurance deadline**
- 15 Horse Advancement Level test due for county fair**
- 16 Culinary Challenge Workshop
- 17-18 PASE Premier Animal Science Event-UNL
- 18 Deadline to sign up for Culinary Challenge**
- 19 Extension office closed - Juneteenth
- 19 Deadline to sign up for Clover Kid Adventure Day**
- 19-20 4-H State Premier Communications Event
- 24 Culinary Challenge
- 24 4-H Council meeting
- 26 Clover Kid Adventure Day

July

- July 3 Buffalo County Pre-fair online entries due**

All youth and volunteers need to register Time to enroll in 2024-25 4-H year

The 4-H enrollment site is open for returning 4-H members, volunteers and to newcomers who have not yet joined. Please visit <https://v2.4honline.com/#/user/sign-in> to enroll. **Now you can easily pay for your enrollment via debit/credit card right in 4H Online!** If you choose to pay by cash or check, just drop your payment off at the Extension office or mail to 1400 E. 34th St. Kearney, NE 68847.

When you enroll in 4-H, please use an email that you check regularly as this will be how you will stay informed of what's happening in our program.

ENROLLMENT FEES

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Clover Kids: \$5

Clover Kids are youth ages 5 to 7, as of January 1, 2025.

Traditional 4-H members: \$10

Traditional 4-H members are youth ages 8 to 18, as of January 1, 2025.

To be eligible to show at the Buffalo County Fair and the Nebraska State Fair, all youth must be enrolled by **June 15**.



[Buffalo County NE 4-H](https://extension.unl.edu/statewide/buffalo/4-h/)



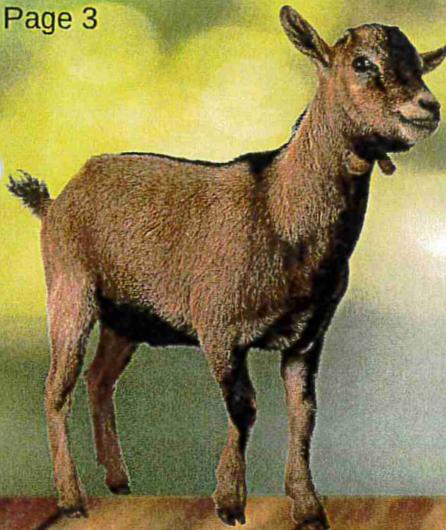
For fun projects, articles from our 4-H educator and assistants, upcoming events and other resources, visit our website at <https://extension.unl.edu/statewide/buffalo/4-h/>

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BUFFALO COUNTY 4-H GETS YOUTH

BEYOND READY





Last call for Lottery Goat!

The purpose of the Lottery Project is to provide Buffalo County 4-H members with an engaging, educational and competitive experience at the Buffalo County Fair.

The Lottery Project gives 4-Hers a great opportunity to:

- Participate in three educational seminars that include selection/production traits, nutrition, proper handling and showmanship techniques
- Learn about the species' industry and potential careers in Nebraska

Fill out Lottery Goat Agreement & submit your \$125 down payment by April 1.

The remaining \$125 will be due at the first meeting where you will pick up your goat.

ALL TALENT WELCOME AT PERFORMING ARTS CONTEST

Where: Merryman Performing Arts Center

When: 7 p.m. Monday, May 19

Who: 4-H youth ages 5-18

Register: <https://go.unl.edu/performingarts2025>

Youth can share their talents of singing, playing an instrument, dancing or other special performance skills.

Groups are encouraged to enter! **Sign up by May 12.**

**GRAND PIANO
PROVIDED**

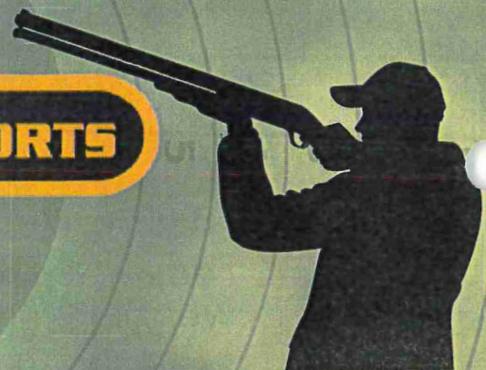


Shooting Sports Instructor Trainings

Bassett - April 12

Certified Leader Update

This session is for current instructors who were certified in 2018 or 2019 to provide any recent state 4-H policy and curriculum changes and to keep discipline certifications up to date. Five disciplines will be offered for the morning session including archery, rifle, pistol, coordinator, and shotgun sessions. For more, visit <https://newsroom.unl.edu/announce/4hstaff/18493/100195>



Hastings - April 26

Certified Leader Update

This session is for current instructors who were certified in 2018 or 2019 to provide any recent state 4-H policy and curriculum changes and to keep discipline certifications up to date. Six disciplines will be offered for the morning session including archery, rifle, pistol, coordinator, muzzleloading and shotgun sessions. For more, visit <https://newsroom.unl.edu/announce/4hstaff/18624/100221>

Bassett - April 12-13

1 Become Certified Instructor

2 Volunteers will have the opportunity to become certified as an adult (21 years and older) or apprentice (14-20 years old) leader. Five project areas will be offered: rifle, pistol, shotgun, coordinator, and archery.

3 Participants MUST complete a series of online modules prior to the training to become eligible for certification. To access the training, visit <https://go.unl.edu/ntso>. For more information on becoming a certified leader, please visit <https://go.unl.edu/kw7o>

Hastings - April 26-27

Become Certified Leader

4 Volunteers will have the opportunity to become certified as an adult (21 years and older) or apprentice (14-20 years old) leader. Six project areas will be offered: rifle, pistol, shotgun, coordinator, muzzleloading, and archery.

5 Participants MUST complete a series of online modules prior to the training to become eligible for certification. To access the training, visit <https://go.unl.edu/ntso>. For more information on becoming a certified leader, please visit <https://newsroom.unl.edu/announce/4hstaff/18624/100220>

4-H PREMIER COMMUNICATION EVENT

Buffalo County

May 13, 2025 | 6:30 PM
Location: TBD

Sign up for a great event that
combines all these contests!
Youth can participate in multiple
contests.

Youth must be present at event to
participate.

All Visual Aids, PSAs, and Video
Communication Entries must be sent
to the Extension Office ahead of time.
Submissions can be sent to [buffalo-
county@unl.edu](mailto:buffalo-county@unl.edu)



Sign up by May 6



Sign up: <https://go.unl.edu/commevent2025>



SCAN THE QR CODE FOR MORE
INFORMATION AND RULES



PREMIER COMMUNICATION EVENT

VIDEO COMMUNICATION

RECORD YOUR OWN VIDEO!

Create a multi-media piece related
to the 4-H theme.



Youth will learn to produce videos
using elements such as filming and
editing.

Youth will enhance their knowledge
of using video as a powerful
communication tool.

Youth will strengthen their skills in
engaging audiences through visual
and verbal communication.

**CHECK OUT MORE
INFORMATION FOR EACH
CONTEST!**

**THERE IS SOMETHING FOR
EVERYONE AT THE PREMIER
COMMUNICATION EVENT!**

60-90
SECONDS

INDIVIDUAL
ONLY

CAN USE
PHONE, LAPTOP, TABLET

JUDGING CRITERIA, SCORESHEETS,
AND EXAMPLES AVAILABLE ONLINE



SCAN THE QR CODE FOR MORE INFORMATION AND RULES



SCAN THE QR CODE FOR MORE INFORMATION AND RULES



PREMIER COMMUNICATION EVENT

RADIO PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT (PSA)

PROMOTE AND RECORD!

Write and record a captivating 60-second radio advertisement promoting the work of Nebraska 4-H



Youth will learn effective uses of technology in recording and preparing a PSA.

Youth will enhance their confidence in media communication.

Youth will strengthen their ability to create concise and impactful messaging.

60 SECOND TIME LIMIT

CAN USE
SOUND EFFECTS + PUBLIC DOMAIN MUSIC

.MP3 OR .WAV
FILE FORMATS ACCEPTED

JUDGING CRITERIA, SCORESHEETS, AND EXAMPLES AVAILABLE ONLINE



SCAN THE QR CODE FOR MORE INFORMATION AND RULES



PREMIER COMMUNICATION EVENT

ILLUSTRATED PRESENTATION

SHOW AND TELL!

Use visual aids to teach others how to do something



Youth will learn how to create and use visual aids correctly and effectively.

Youth will enhance their confidence in presenting to audiences.

Youth will strengthen their ability to answer questions relevant to presentations.

INDIVIDUAL OR TEAM

SOME EQUIPMENT PROVIDED

NO LIVE ANIMALS

JUDGING CRITERIA, SCORESHEETS, AND EXAMPLES AVAILABLE ONLINE



SCAN THE QR CODE FOR MORE INFORMATION AND RULES

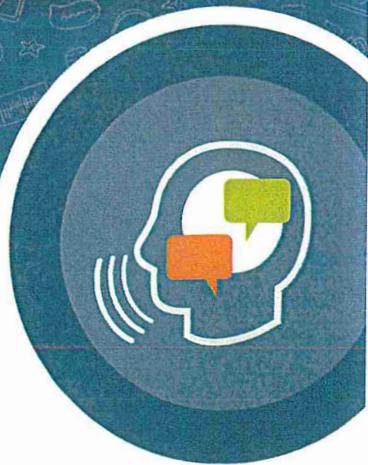


PREMIER COMMUNICATION EVENT

PREPARED SPEECH

SHARE YOUR VOICE!

Write and prepare an original speech about your 4-H experience



Youth will learn to format a speech to present in a coherent manner.

Youth will enhance their confidence and skills in verbal communication.

Youth will strengthen their ability to communicate perspectives, stories, and ideas.

JUNIOR

2-3 MINUTES

INTERMEDIATE

3-5 MINUTES

SENIOR

5-8 MINUTES

JUDGING CRITERIA, SCORESHEETS, AND EXAMPLES AVAILABLE ONLINE



SCAN THE QR CODE FOR MORE INFORMATION AND RULES



PREMIER COMMUNICATION EVENT

IMPROPTU SPEECH

READY, SET, WRITE!

Spin the wheel, pick the category, and prepare your speech in 15 minutes



Youth will learn to analyze topics and present logical arguments under time constraints.

Youth will enhance their ability to remain composed under wavering circumstances.

Youth will strengthen their skills in articulation and clarity.

JUNIOR

1.5 MINUTES

INTERMEDIATE

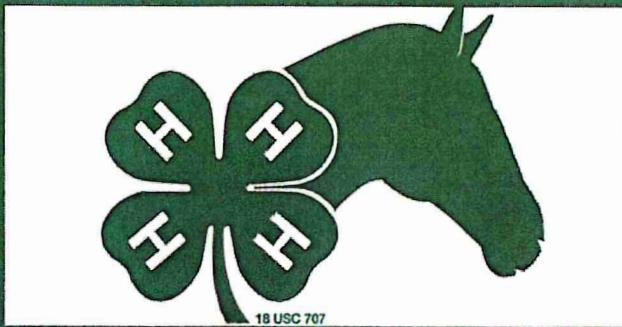
3 MINUTES

SENIOR

5 MINUTES

JUDGING CRITERIA, SCORESHEETS, AND EXAMPLES AVAILABLE ONLINE

SAVE THE DATES



07 06 25

Buffalo County Invitational

PRIZES AND HIGH POINT BUCKLES!

Buffalo County Fairgrounds Kearney, NE

Mark your
calendars for
State 4-H
Horse Expo

July 12-16, 2025: Fonner
Park State 4-H Horse
Expo held at Fonner Park
in Grand Island, NE
Entries due June 1
Advancement levels and
Horse IDs need to be
completed by June 1



ONLINE HORTICULTURE CONTEST



AVAILABLE JUNE 10-24 AT [HTTPS://GO.UNL.EDU/ONLINE4HHORTCONTEST](https://go.unl.edu/online4hhortcontest)

Do you know what it takes to pick the best fruit and vegetables out at the grocery store? Or do you know what judges are looking for when they judge your plants at the county fair? Have you ever wondered, what plant is that?! We are excited to offer the opportunity to learn these and other important horticulture skills through the Online Horticulture Contest. More information about the Nebraska State contest along with study materials for the knowledge portion, links to plant pictures to aid in identification and insight on how judging of plant material is done at <https://4hfairbook.unl.edu/fairbookview.php/contests/45>. More details at: <https://4h.unl.edu/online-horticulture-judging-contest>



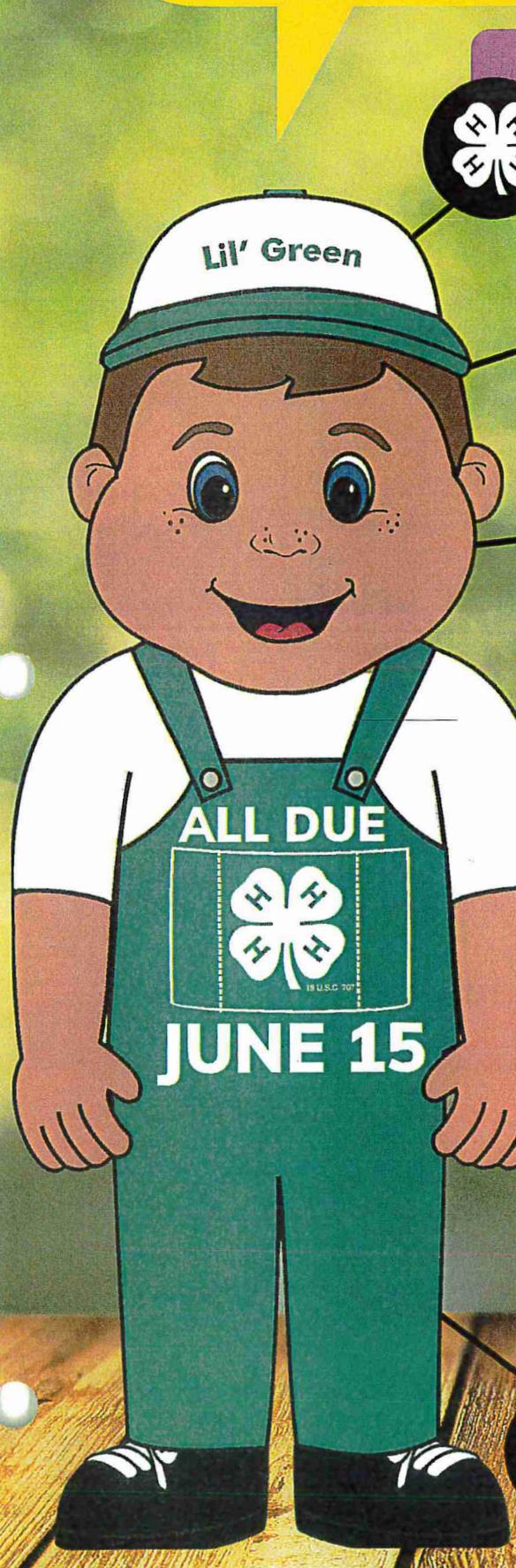
3 parts of Horticulture Judging Contest

- **Identification of plant material:** Participants identify the plants by common name from a plant list. Specimens may be alive or preserved plant parts like stems, twigs, leaves, flowers, seeds, fruits, roots, bulbs, tubers, or plant products.
- **Knowledge:** Usually in the form of a true/false or multiple choice quiz, questions will test the contestant's knowledge of cultural practices for horticultural crops, plant science, pesticides, horticultural careers and other topics related to the production, processing and consumption of horticultural crops.
- **Judging or placings:** Four different plants, plates of vegetables, or container flowers are ranked from best to worst based on a set of criteria. Classes are judged on the basis of condition, quality, uniformity, true-to-type, and size.

Sincerely Kerry Elsen - 4-H Extension Educator, Jordan Wilbur & Heidi Darby - 4-H Assistants

GET READY FOR COUNTY AND STATE FAIR BY COMPLETING THESE STEPS BY JUNE 15TH. FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT:

HTTPS://EXTENSION.UNL.EDU/STATEWIDE/BUFFALO/4-H/BUFFALO-COUNTY-FAIR/



SHOWING AT FAIR?

ENROLL IN 4-H

Go to <https://v2.4honline.com>

LIVESTOCK, HORSE, POULTRY, RABBIT ANIMAL ID SHEETS

Pick up at Extension or print at
<https://extension.unl.edu/statewide/buffalo/4-h/buffalo-county-fair/>

HORSE ADVANCEMENT LEVELS

Completion of Level 1 required for Buffalo County Fair. For more on horse, visit
<https://4h.unl.edu/statewide-events-opportunities/horse-program/>

BEEF, SWINE, SHEEP, GOATS, DAIRY, COUNTY FAIR BROILERS/TURKEYS, STATE FAIR POULTRY/RABBITS

YQCA TRAINING

To show at county/state fairs, you must complete the course at www.yqcaprogram.org and give certificate to the Extension office.

STATE FAIR MARKET AND BREEDING ANIMALS DNA ENVELOPES

If you are showing feeder calves, Market or Breeding of the following: beef, swine, goat or sheep at State Fair, you must submit DNA.

STATE FAIR MARKET/BREEDING ANIMALS

STATE FAIR NOMINATIONS

Complete online nominations by visiting showstockmgr.com. You must submit payment to be eligible to show.

MARKET ANIMALS FOR COUNTY/STATE FAIRS

PREMISE ID

Any new members or members who have moved since last year's fair need to provide their Premise ID. To get a number visit
<https://nda.nebraska.gov/adt/premises.html>