

Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources — AT WORK FOR NEBRASKA

Educating youth. Growing life and leadership skills. Strengthening Nebraska's families and communities.

All contribute to Nebraska's good life, which the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources helps grow through research, teaching and extension education.

Research provides new knowledge. Classroom teaching and extension education distribute that knowledge so Nebraskans can put it to immediate use in their lives.

Community programming stimulates entrepreneurial and business development, retention, attraction and growth; provides workforce education; enhances leadership skills; and meets a myriad of other needs.

Families and youth programming ranges from family life, economics, health and wellness to helping children gain knowledge, life skills and confidence. One of every three eligible Nebraska youth participates yearly in some 4-H programming.

The College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR) in IANR equips graduates with education and skills to advance and lead Nebraska's future. Historically, CASNR provides Nebraska a real brain gain, averaging around 70 percent of its graduates taking their first jobs out of college in Nebraska.

An independent study* of IANR reported: *"IANR is an institution focused on improving and sustaining Nebraska – improving its economy, preserving its environment, growing a skilled workforce, and contributing to continuing social sustainability and responsibility."* The report noted, *"... IANR's research, teaching, and extension activities are having powerful impacts on Nebraska's economic growth and on economic and social sustainability in the State ... Taken together, the impact of IANR's programs and expenditures represents a leverage of state funding that exceeds fifteen to one."*



Here are a few examples of how IANR grows and strengthens Nebraska's good life.

Medicare prescription drug enrollment

The 2003 Medicare Reform Act's prescription drug benefit program prompted questions and concerns for Medicare recipients and their families facing a gauntlet of paperwork and choices. UNL Extension was one of five extension systems nationwide USDA tapped for a pilot program educating and enrolling eligible beneficiaries. From mid-2008 to mid-2009, extension helped educate 2,295 Nebraska caregivers, beneficiaries and/or family members about the new Medicare Prescription Drug Program or Medicare Part D. Extension enrolled 938 Nebraska beneficiaries, conservatively saving them an estimated \$646,000.



Entrepreneurs gain business EDGE

Nebraska's small businesses gain an EDGE (Enhancing, Developing and Growing Entrepreneurs) through a UNL Extension program that gives rural entrepreneurs skills needed to create or expand their businesses, or decide if business ideas are feasible. Since 1993 NebraskaEDGE has helped more than 2,500 Nebraskans transform their ideas into viable business opportunities. A survey showed more than 70 percent of participants increased their business volume since participating in EDGE, while 33 percent added employees.

Healthy snacks and meals important for pre-schoolers

An IANR Agricultural Research Division nutrition scientist evaluated the nutrient status of healthy Latino children of immigrant parents living in Nebraska. Almost a third of these children were at risk of being overweight or obese. While the children consumed sufficient amounts of vitamins B-6 and C, about two-thirds did not consume enough vitamin E. The scientist recommends children regularly consume foods rich in vitamin E such as vegetable oils, salad dressings, nuts, seed oils, nuts, seeds, wheat germ, and foods with added vitamin E, and especially moderating consumption of saturated fats.

*No state tax funds were used in financing this study.

Coping with divorce

UNL Extension's Parents Forever and Kids Talk About Divorce are state-approved for the guidelines of the 2008 Parenting Act. Since 1999, approximately 3,250 parents have participated in Parents Forever, while Kids Talk About Divorce has reached approximately 900 children. Before taking the class, 65 percent of parents said they realized divorce affects children's developmental stages; after taking the class 100 percent of parents understood these effects. By using the class model, an average of \$500-\$1,000 per family may be saved in attorney fees, court costs, and juvenile and mediation services.

4-H computes

UNL Extension 4-H is preparing the next generation of the 21st century workforce to improve skills such as mathematic reasoning. Over 400 Nebraska youth have participated in 4-H's robotics program, learning about scientific inquiry, engineering principles and how technology can solve challenges. A grant from the National Science Foundation will help Nebraska 4-H'ers learn about precision agriculture and natural resource management. During the next two years youth will spend 240 hours in clubs, after-school settings and summer camps exploring robotics, aerial photography and geospatial concepts.



Guardians/conservators better prepared

Nebraska judges asked UNL Extension to partner with the legal system to develop a curriculum and materials to teach people about guardianship responsibilities. The result is a court-mandated, three-hour training session and resources approved by the Nebraska Supreme Court and others. More than 3,100 people in 11 of the state's 12 judicial districts were trained from fall 2004 through August 2009. Guardians/conservators say they are more comfortable with their roles, more knowledgeable about their responsibilities and better prepared to represent their wards' best interests. More than 2,000 guardians/conservators are appointed annually in Nebraska.

UCARE

UNL's Undergraduate Creative Activities and Research Experiences Program (UCARE) funds research between undergraduates and faculty. Since the program started in 2000, nearly 475 College of Agricultural Sciences and

Natural Resources students have participated. Students work with an adviser the first year and conduct independent research the second. One food science and technology major helped start-up food companies develop new products by working on food safety, ingredient functionality and processing requirements, increasing employment opportunities.

Good news marriages

One researcher is turning the tables on marital relationships by studying great marriages, and countering the stereotype that most marriages are unhappy. About 85 couples participated in the study, detailing experiences including spousal friendships; stresses of parenting, accidents and illnesses; and how spouses help each other through difficult times.

Rural businesses network

IANR experts are helping rural Nebraska small business owners work together and develop trustworthy relationships with each other. Doing so results in enhanced market knowledge, improved marketing and management skills and influence over favorable legislation — much more than going it alone. The researcher involved also is exploring whether networking can help Nebraska women and Latino-operated businesses be more successful in attracting a larger customer base.

Nourishment education for limited-resource parents

Proper nutrition helps keep individuals healthy and reduce disease. UNL Extension's Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) teaches limited-resource parents with children and youth-at-risk how to meet daily nutritional requirements. EFNEP reached 2,193 families and 3,980 youth in Douglas/Sarpy counties, Adams/Hall/Buffalo counties and Lancaster County in fiscal year 2007-2008. More than 1,048 participants completed the program, showing significant improvements in positive food consumption of at least one food group, improvement of one or more food resource management practices, and nutrition and food safety practices. A cost-benefit analysis shows that for every \$1 spent on EFNEP, a potential health savings of \$2-\$8 may result from the prevention or delayed onset of nutrition-related chronic diseases and conditions among participants.



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