

For Immediate Release

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UNL Extension Tractor Safety Classes Offered Across Nebraska

Nebraska Extension Tractor Safety & Hazardous Occupations Courses will take place at nine Nebraska locations this year. Teens 14 or 15 years of age who will work on a farm should plan to attend.

Federal law prohibits youth under 16 years of age from working on a farm for anyone other than parents or legal guardians. Certification received through this course grants an exemption to the law allowing 14- and 15-year-olds to drive a tractor and to do field work with specific mechanized equipment.

The most common cause of agricultural-related death in Nebraska is overturned tractors and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs). Extensive training on Tractor and ATV safety occurs during in-class lessons with hands-on activities. Instilling an attitude of ‘safety first’ and respect for agricultural equipment are primary goals of the course.

The course consists of two days of instruction plus homework assignments. The first day of classroom instruction includes hands-on demonstrations, concluding with a written test. Students are required to pass the test before taking the driving test on day two. Classroom instruction will cover the required elements of the National Safe Tractor and Machinery Operation Program. Students will complete homework assignments that will be due on day two. The second day will include a driving test, equipment operation, and ATV safety lessons. To receive certification, students must demonstrate competence in hitching and unhitching equipment and driving a tractor and trailer through a standardized course.

Two locations, Gordon and McCook, will offer online course instruction to replace the first day of the two-day course. Students complete this at their convenience before attending the driving component of the course on-site.

All on-site classes begin at 8:00 A.M. and end times will vary, depending on the number of participants. Dates, locations, and Site Coordinator phone numbers are as follows: May 30 & 31 - Kearney Fairgrounds (308) 236-1235; June 1 & 2 – Auburn Fairgrounds (402) 245-4324; June 6 & 7 – Valentine Fairgrounds (402) 376-1850; June 13 & 14 – North Platte West Central Research and Extension Center (308) 532-2683; June 15 & 16 – Gering Legacy Museum (308) 632-1480; June 19 & 20 – Wayne Fairgrounds (402) 584-2234; June 22 – Gordon Fairgrounds

(308) 327-2312; June 23 – McCook Fairgrounds (308) 345-3390; July 10 & 11 – Grand Island College Park (308) 385-5088.

Participants must submit registration forms to the location they will attend at least one week before the course. The registration form is available online: kearney.unl.edu. Cost of the course is \$60, which includes educational materials, instruction, supplies, and lunches. For more information, contact the Extension Office of the location where student will attend.

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