



August 20, 2004

NEBRASKA STATE FAIR FUNDING VOTE THIS FALL

In November, the people of Nebraska will have the opportunity to give their input as to the future funding for the Nebraska State Fair. All who are interested should take part in the election. Basically Amendment 4, which if passed, would require a portion of the proceeds of the Nebraska Lottery to be appropriated by the Legislature to the Nebraska State Fair.

Premiums are being awarded for this year's Nebraska State Fair. Premiums are a form of reward for the time and effort that youth have put into their projects. For these reasons, it is good that they have been reinstated for this year's State Fair. However, the life skills learned through participating in 4-H projects far outweigh any monetary rewards. The dollar value of premiums will not increase. Premiums will be similar to previous years. As in the past, red ribbons in the 4-H area will not receive premiums.

Will this be the last Nebraska State Fair this year? What will 4-H do if there is not a State Fair next year? 4-H will continue to serve the youth and families of Nebraska by providing educational experiences that focus on life skill development. The State Fair is a way to provide recognition for 4-H youth but it is only one aspect of the overall education provided by 4-H. If there is not a State Fair, 4-H will explore other possible ways to continue to recognize 4-H'ers for their project achievements and development of life skills.

The Nebraska 4-H staff will continue to plan for ways to recognize 4-H'ers for their achievements, regardless of whether that occurs at the State Fair or through other ways. From a personal standpoint, it will feel really strange not volunteering to work on Labor Day weekend like I have for the last 20 years to help 4-H'ers in the livestock barn. I have assisted with the swine crew for a lot of years.

If LR 209 passes by the vote of Nebraskan's this fall, 10 percent of the money (after paying prizes and operating expenses to the Nebraska Lottery and the initial transfer into the Compulsive Gamblers Assistance Fund) would go to the Nebraska State Fair. After the first \$500,000 each year is transferred to the Compulsive Gamblers Assistance Fund, the Nebraska Environmental Trust Fund would receive 44.5%. Education would receive another 44.5% and 10% would go to the Nebraska State Fair if matched by the most populous city within the county in which the fair is located. Such matching funds may be obtained from the city and any other private or public entity, except that no portion of such matching funds shall be provided by the state. If the Nebraska State Fair ceases operations, 10% of the money remaining after the payment of prizes and operating expenses and the initial transfer to the Compulsive Gamblers Assistance Fund shall be transferred to the General Fund.

Specific information on LR 209 can be found at the following website:

http://www.unicam.state.ne.us/pdf/FINAL_LR209CA_1.pdf.



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