The 4-H Council serves as a local group of elected representatives who provides guidance, solicits support and assists in carrying out programs and activities in the interest of the 4-H youth development program. The 4-H Council is composed of volunteers who are interested in promoting positive youth development and represent the demographics, delivery modes and project areas they serve. 4-H Council members should act in the overall best interest of all young people and are expected to regularly attend Council and committee meetings, volunteer at 4-H events and activities and support the final recommendations and decisions of the Council. The 4-H Council operates under the leadership of the local 4-H Staff. 4-H Councils are a critical partner to Nebraska 4-H. Their input, fundraising and interaction help to ensure 4-H provides the needed educational programs for the area.

The major functions of the 4-H Council are to:
- Develop and Secure Resources
- Establish and Support Local Policy
- Advise Development of Local Program Plan
- Advocate for Youth & Nebraska Extension

Specific functions related to resource development in cooperation with the local Extension staff are: resource development through creating and managing a council budget to support the planned program; lead and support fund raising activities to reflect planned budget; provide resources to provide recognition of those contributing/participating with the 4-H youth development program (youth, volunteers, partners).

Specific functions related to policy support in cooperation with the local Extension staff are: establish local policy for the 4-H program when not determined by district, state or national regulations; provide input to interpret and enforce policy issues when relevant; serve as support to 4-H staff responsible for carrying out policy.

Specific functions of the 4-H Council related to program advisory in cooperation with the local Extension staff are to: ensure a comprehensive 4-H youth development program that includes all delivery methods, based on the needs of youth and local needs; participate in efforts to assess and clarify youth and community needs; promote full participation by youth and adults in 4-H programming, events and activities, including those outside of the county/area.

Specific functions related to advocacy, in cooperation with the local Extension staff are to: inform others about Council decisions; advocate for 4-H, positive youth development and Nebraska Extension.

Nebraska 4-H extends a sincere thank you to all 4-H Council members across the state for their willingness to serve in a volunteer role and make 4-H an opportunity to youth across the state!

In the Spotlight for January
- Club: 4-H Clubs of Excellence Award
- Grab & Go: CK Nutrition Lesson
- Contest: 2019 Culinary Challenge Contest
- Special Gardening Project
- Healthy Habits
- Leaders through Priceless Preteens
- East Campus Union Renovations
By Tracy Anderson

The overall goal of 4-H clubs is to develop caring, connected, confident, competent youth who contribute to the improvement of themselves, their family, their club, their community, and their world.

Using the Nebraska Club of Excellence standards provides a guideline leaders can use to meet the goal of a 4-H Club. Becoming a 4-H Club of Excellence is very achievable. At the beginning of the club’s 4-H year, 4-H leaders and members review the Nebraska 4-H Club of Excellence Summary Form, set goals to meet the criteria, create a plan of action to achieve their goals and follow through with their plan. At the end of the year a designated club volunteer or 4-H member completes the simple 4-H Club of Excellence Summary Form and returns it to the extension office (contact your county for form and due date).

Many Nebraska 4-H leaders embrace the 4-H Club of Excellence Award. Here is what some leaders have to say about their club’s participation in the 4-H Club of Excellence Award:

“The Club of Excellence is an award our club strives to achieve for several reasons. One, there is a sense of overall accomplishment as a club. When the members see how many of them participated in the various events, meetings, etc....it makes our small club feel pretty mighty...” —Jen, 4-H Club Leader

“Our club loves working towards getting the Club of Excellence award because it shows your club goes above and beyond to reach higher goals. Many of the requirements to receive this designation help our club become more well-rounded. Reviewing these goals at the beginning of the year gives our club an additional outline to assist us in being the best club we can be...” —Anne, 4-H Club Leader

“...We want them to use what they have learned to become leaders and to serve their community. The conditions of the award give us the accountability to make sure we are striving for those goals each year. Last year, we asked each member to do a presentation on at least the club level. I think hearing about so many interests has really helped our members get to know each other a little better...” —Cathy, 4-H Club Leader

To receive the designation as a Nebraska 4-H Club of Excellence and help youth grow, clubs must meet the following requirements:

- Have at least five members from at least three different families
- Recite the 4-H Pledge at meetings
- Meet at least six times per year
- Choose/elect youth officers
- Give youth leadership roles
- Have one club project (related to curriculum) which they do together
- Have adult role models/(parental) involvement
- Are facilitated by a volunteer/organizational leader who has successfully completed the Volunteer Screening
- Have members who perform a presentation or public speaking at the club level or above
- Complete one community service project
- Have members who participate in a county, district or state event(s)
- Celebrate member and club achievements

If the Club meets all the requirements, they will get a certificate and a seal the first year and an additional seal in subsequent qualifying years. For more information, go to: https://4h.unl.edu/clubs-excellence
Grab & Go: Clover Kid Nutrition Lesson

By Tessa Hain

Objective: To learn about MyPlate so youth learn how to eat healthier
Time Frame: 30-45 Minutes
Materials:
Food Models if you have access to any (check your local Extension Office). If not than you can have youth cut out foods from magazines
MyPlate template (can be found online)

Lesson: Building a Strong & Healthy ‘Machine’

Building and maintaining a healthy body is a lot like building a car.
Q: If I wanted to build a strong car, what would I need to start?
A: I would need a sturdy frame made out of strong metal.
Q: What is the ‘frame’ for your body?
A: Your bones--your skeleton--give your body shape and protect your organs. Calcium in the Dairy group helps to build strong bones and teeth.
Q: What foods are in the Dairy Group?
A: Milk, yogurt and cheese are in the Dairy Group. You should eat three portions from the Dairy Group every day. And, try to choose low-fat and fat-free milk or yogurt more often.
Q: What foods do Nebraska farmers produce to help us get dairy?
A: Nebraska dairies produce milk to drink and to make into cheese and yogurt.
Q: Once a strong frame is built, what is the next thing needed to build a good car?
A: Parts are needed: engine, tires, steering wheel, etc.
Q: Once you have a strong skeleton, what is the next thing added to finish building a body?
A: Muscles and organs like heart, lungs, brain, skin...

The protein group provides the building blocks to grow strong muscles and healthy organs.
Q: What foods are in the Protein Group?
A: Beef, pork, poultry, eggs, fish and dried beans are in the Protein Group. You should eat two 2% - 3 ounce portions from the Protein group twice a day. When you choose protein foods, try to eat different kinds so you get a variety.
Q: What do Nebraska farmers produce to help us get protein?
A: Nebraska Farmers raise:
--Beef for steaks, roasts and ground meats
--Pork for ham, chops, bacon, sausages and other ground meats
--Poultry/chickens for eggs and meat
--Sheep and goats
--Fish
--Dried beans
--Soybeans
Q: Once a strong car is built, what is needed to make it run right?
A: Chemicals like oil, brake fluid, anti-freeze...
Q: What does our body need to keep everything working correctly?
A: We need vitamins and minerals. For example:
Vitamin A from carrots helps our eyes and skin.
Vitamin C helps protect our bodies from serious illnesses.
Iron helps our blood carry oxygen throughout the body.

We get vitamins and minerals from all of the food groups but the groups that give us the kinds of vitamins that really protect our bodies and keep us from getting very sick are the Fruit and Vegetable groups.
Fruits and vegetables are so important that you should fill half of your plate with foods from these groups:
• Eat three portions from the Fruit Group every day. Focus on eating whole fruit instead of juice.
• Eat five portions from the Vegetable Group. Vary your vegetables so you get different kinds of vitamins and minerals.

Q: What do Nebraska farmers raise to help us get fruits and vegetables?
A: Fruits: Tree Fruits- apples, pears, peaches; berries, and melons
Vegetable
Vegetables: potatoes, tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, pumpkins, squash, onions, cabbage, sweet corn
Q: Finally, once we have built a strong car, what do we need to add before we can drive it away?
A: Gas...fuel.

Q: Your body needs energy, too. What food group gives you energy?
A: You get energy from different foods but the group that gives you energy that is the easiest for your body to use is the Grain Group. You should eat from the Grain Group 4-6 times every day. Half of the foods you eat from the Grain Group should be made from ‘whole’ grains.

Q: What foods are in the Grain Group?
A: Any foods made from grains like wheat:
--Baked goods like breads and pancakes/waffles
--Pasta like spaghetti, noodles and macaroni
Foods made from rice, barley, oats, corn, etc.

Q: What do Nebraska farmers raise to help us get foods made from grains?
A: Wheat, Corn, Popcorn, Grain Sorghum, Proso millet

At the end of the lesson, have youth use the food models or cut pictures of food from magazines to put together a healthy meal that they will put on the MyPlate model.

If time allows, post the 5 food
There is no place like Nebraska and the State Fair to showcase our 4-H’ers skills! The Culinary Challenge Contest is just the place for young teams of youth to demonstrate healthy decision making through nutrition, menu planning, food preparation and food safety, as well as learning about Nebraska commodities!

The Culinary Challenge Contest is open to 4-H youth from 10 – 18 years in age. They must be enrolled in a 4-H Foods and Nutrition project and be a team of 2. The registration fee is $5 per 4-H’er and the contest will be the second weekend of the Nebraska State Fair.

Youth participate in the contest by choosing a theme and a table setting for the event. A challenge ingredient will be selected each year, highlighting a Nebraska commodity food product. The 2019 challenge ingredient will be DAIRY. Each team must incorporate the challenge ingredient into their food item they will be presenting during the contest. This may require creatively incorporating an item into their overall table theme. (For example: cooking with yogurt, cheese, milk or ice cream). Recipes may come from any source, but a good start is the National Dairy Council recipe collection at https://dairygood.org/Recipes.

Each team will have an interview with the judge. The challenge ingredient must also be included in the interview presentation, demonstrating youth’s knowledge of the ingredient, such as nutritional value, a farm-to-fork concept, or how to adapt a recipe to include the ingredient.

The Culinary Challenge Contest is a great way for the 4-H’ers to learn more about Nebraska commodities and how we use them in food preparation. You do not need to qualify through a county contest to participate, but if a table-setting or food preparation contest is an event available, it’s a great way to practice skills needed to present at the State Fair.

More information regarding proper table setting guidelines, recipe development resources, and food safety guidelines are also available through the website at http://food.unl.edu/youth/projects.
Special Gardening Project

By Elizabeth Killinger

The Nebraska Extension Special Gardening Project lets 4-H members try their hand at growing unusual vegetables and flowers. The project allows experienced 4-H gardeners to grow something fun, new, and different while letting those new to gardening get their feet wet in this project area. This project is open to all youth of 4-H age and it will give them the opportunity to learn about growing, harvesting, and exhibiting this unique vegetable; obtain the tools necessary to be successful gardeners, and learn about the wide range of plant-science related careers.

Each year the Special Garden Project focuses on a different flower or vegetable. Carmine Splendor Okra will be the focus of the 2019 project. Carmine Splendor Okra is as unique as it is tasty. This plant is high yielding and produces uniform, red pods. The stout 5-pointed pods are deep red when small and at the best eating quality. The tropical-looking, pinkish flowers are also edible and have a sweet, mild flavor. The mature seed pods also give a fun twist for winter interest in a container.

Interested in participating? Youth enroll in the Special Garden Project through 4-H On-Line, then contact their local Extension office to let them know the number packets they will need. The county offices will order and distribute the seeds to the youth.

The flyer about the project, an educational newsletter, and examples of how to exhibit are all available at the website https://4h.unl.edu/special-gardening-project or the Box folder https://unl.box.com/s/dfsrvlbo1wiw7emayzskr6wvmz79

4-H members enrolled in the Special Garden Project will:
Receive a ‘packet’ of Carmine Splendor Okra (one packet per youth) in April/May

Receive a newsletter containing information about:
Planting & growing okra
Okra problems & insects
Harvesting & using okra
Exhibiting okra

Be able to enter this unique vegetable at County and State Fair
State Fair Special Garden Project Educational Exhibit Class G-775-001. The educational exhibit is based on what was learned from the project.
Special Garden Fresh Cut Flowers or Harvested Vegetables G-775-002. The current years’ Special Garden Project fresh picked pods should be entered in this class.
Be on the lookout for other fun county only ways to exhibit this unique vegetable like a story, poem, or poster. Each county is different so be sure to check with your local Extension Office.

In order to improve the program, please remind youth to participate in the evaluation at: https://go.unl.edu/carminesplendorokra. Youth who complete the evaluation are entered to win a gardening prize.

Questions? Contact Elizabeth Killinger at elizabeth.killinger@unl.edu or 308-385-5088.
Carmine Splendor Okra photo courtesy of Johnny’s Select Seeds, Johnnyseeds.com
Everyone is different and requires different amounts of nutrients which is why everyone has a different eating style that works for them. Planning is important when forming healthy eating habits for youth. Adults need to be realistic and sensible but also a little adventurous. Following the “MyPlate” and eating a variety of all five food groups every day is the best advice for establishing positive lifestyle habits.

It is recommended to use the word “lifestyles” rather than diet. As diets are made to be short term and often have characteristics that make them hard to follow for an extended amount of time. Lifestyles are what we all need to focus on each day which include physical activity, eating lots of fruits and vegetables, sticking with whole grains, and lean protein foods.

It can be hard to tell if we are serving ourselves and our families the right amount of food. First, it is important to understand the difference between the serving size and a portion.

Portion is how much food you choose to eat at one time.

Serving Size is the amount of food listed on a product’s Nutrition Facts Label. The values you see on the Nutrition Facts Label are for the serving the manufacturer suggested.

Knowing the difference between these two terms will help in figuring out how much to serve ourselves. You can use your hand to help you guide your portion sizes:

- Your fist is about the size of a cup.
- The palm of your hand is about the size of 3 ounces of meat.
- Your thumb is the same size as 1 ounce of cheese.

To really be sure, size your hand up to a measuring cup. Here are a few tips to help you control your portions when eating at home:

- To control your portions, it’s best to put foods on a plate rather than eating directly out of the box or bag. This allows you to see how much you are eating.
- Try eating off smaller plates and drinking out of smaller cups.
- Before you snack, ask yourself “Am I really hungry?”

If you cut your serving in half you get two meals for the price of one! Store properly and use the leftovers for lunch or dinner the next day.

And as a general rule of thumb… A little less is usually plenty.
Developing Leaders through Priceless Preteen

By Melissa Mracek

Are you trying to find ways to help your youth develop leadership skills? The Nebraska Human Resources Institute developed the Priceless Preteen curriculum to help middle school youth discover their leadership strengths through small group interactions during a five day summer camp. The program will help youth learn how to apply these skills within their schools, families, and communities. The objectives of the program is to help youth understand themselves, their peers, and to help them invest in themselves. The Priceless Preteen curriculum is formatted to utilize teen teachers to help facilitate groups through a summer camp. It however can be utilized within a school enrichment program or club meetings. This curriculum utilizes conversations between youth members to help them gain a better understanding of each other and their leadership potential. Priceless Preteen is organized as a five day camp running from 9 until noon. During the first day of the camp, youth discover who difference makers in their lives are and what makes them a difference maker. This hopefully helps inspire the youth to possess the same characteristics as their difference maker. Then youth discuss skills to become an active listener by identifying some of the irritating listening habits. To end the first day, the youth discover what excites the youth within the group. Day 2 of the camp focuses on the youth discovering their strengths and the strengths of the group members. The third day focuses on youth learning how to display empathy and create synergy within their groups. Day 4 of the camp helps the youth discover how the activities in their lives have shaped their leadership skills. They also discuss ways they can prevent themselves from reacting to situations in a variety of settings. The camp is concluded by helping youth to determine ways they can help brighten other people’s days and set goals for their future. The curriculum has an instructor manual with step by step instructions for the teen teachers and the camp leader. There is also a student manual with worksheets for the various activities. Within the student manual, there are additional activities for the youth to conduct with their families. The at home activities help the youth take the skills they are learning within the camp and apply them to their everyday life. To adapt this to a club format, leaders can take one lesson from the camp per meeting and utilize it as a way to create a sense of belonging through the club members’ conversations. Leaders can also help club members discover ways they can create impact within their communities.
JANUARY DATES

15th: 4-H Equines Unlimited Club Meeting, 6:30pm-8pm at Extension Office
19th: Shooting Sports Club Meeting, 9am at Sarpy Co. Fairgrounds
22nd: Clover Connection, 12pm-12:30pm via online Zoom
26th: Market Beef Weigh-in, 9am-10am at Cooper Farm
28th: Special Garden Project orders due to Cathy Raneri

East Campus Union Renovations—By Carly Horstman

According to the dictionary, a student union is a building on a college campus that is devoted to student activities and that usually contains lounges, auditoriums, offices, and game rooms. The student union on UNL’s East Campus, called the Nebraska East Union, has all of that and more - it’s just a bit outdated. Built in 1977, the Nebraska East Union was due for a renovation, and we are happy to say that the process has begun this fall.

One of the things the Nebraska East Union houses is the dining hall, where our UNL students can eat their meals. The dining hall is currently on the second floor, but with the renovations will be moved down to the first floor, conveniently close to the Massengale Residential Center. In addition to serving those on a meal plan, the dining hall will have expanded food and seating options for the whole campus community. The projected date for the new dining hall to be completed is the end of summer 2019, with the current dining hall staying open until completion, so students continually have a place to eat on East Campus.

The Nebraska East Union is also home to UNL Bowling, the only Husker athletics team housed on East Campus. The bowling center in the Nebraska East Union is called Lanes n’ Games, and will be upgraded to expand the team space as well as enhance the Husker Experience for bowlers using the space. Nebraska Athletics provided funding to support this portion of the renovation.

The Great Plains Room in the Nebraska East Union is also going to be renovated to update the interior aesthetics, and expanded to increase its size by 30%. Many conferences and large meetings are held in the room, and it is also where the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR) holds events such as Salute to Graduates, Admitted Student Event, and career fairs. Having this larger function space in the Nebraska East Union will be beneficial to many who come to East Campus.

Alongside these bigger changes, the Nebraska East Union visitors will have access to new and increased lounges and study rooms for building community. There will also be a full Starbucks operation, similar to the one in the Nebraska Union on City campus. The UNL community is excited for these renovations to help meet the changing needs of visitors and those who call East Campus home.