

# Ag Literacy Coalition

**Current and Past Sponsorship includes:**

- Agriculture in the Classroom
- Douglas County Farm Bureau
- Lancaster County Farm Bureau
- Midwest Dairy Association
- Nebraska AgRelations Council
- Nebraska AgriBusiness Club
- Nebraska Beef Council
- Nebraska Corn Development, Utilization and Marketing Board
- Nebraska Extension in Saunders, Lancaster and Douglas/Sarpy Counties
- Nebraska Pork Producers Association
- Nebraska Poultry Industries
- Nebraska Soybean Board
- Omaha Agribusiness Club
- Papillion Grange No. 401
- University of Nebraska Eastern Nebraska Research and Extension Center
- Waverly Grange

**Our Mission...** To increase youths' knowledge and understanding about agriculture concepts by cooperatively bringing together several disciplines.

**Our Goal...** The goal of the Ag Literacy Coalition is to help youth, primarily from urban communities, become aware of agriculture. The group develops resources and opportunities that will increase youth understanding and awareness about agricultural concepts.

**Over 23,200 students learn about the importance of AGRICULTURE!**

As communities continue to urbanize, youth are losing touch with Nebraska's greatest resource - AGRICULTURE. The Ag Literacy Coalition seeks to bring youth back in touch with agriculture by hosting Agricultural Awareness Festivals in the fall and spring.

The first fall festival was held in 1996 at the University of Nebraska Agricultural Research and Development Center (ARDC) near Mead, Nebraska. The one-day event served as a pilot project for 200 Omaha Public School sixth-graders. It has since grown to four days annually and hosted up to 950 fourth-grade students, primarily from Douglas, Sarpy and Saunders Counties.

Over 15,800 students have attended the fall festival from 1996-2017. In an effort to reach more urban youth, a spring festival was added in 2001 at the Lancaster County Event Center in Lincoln. This festival is primarily for Lancaster County youth. It, too, started as a one-day festival and has grown to 2 days. Over 6,500 students have attended the spring festival. In 2016, an additional festival was added at Cooper Farms in Omaha, Nebraska. The addition of this festival has provided an opportunity for schools to attend that previously were not able to due to travel time constraints - with over 800 in attendance so far. At the festivals, students learn about beef production/products and food safety, ruminant nutrition, dairy production/products and nutrition, grain production/products, farming technology, water resources and irrigation, swine production/products, poultry production/products, and horses (Lincoln festival only). Students also learned about sheep at the spring 2016 festival in Lincoln. Goats, horticulture, and ask a farmer sessions have also been included, depending on the time available.

**Busing continues to be a major expense, but is vital to the success of the festivals.**

The festivals include hands-on activities, livestock, and food samples.

Learning about technology in ag

**Students and teachers consistently give the festivals excellent reviews!**

Learning about the role of ag in everyday living

Blender bikes for making smoothies