

March 16, 2018

## NEBRASKA LEAD PROGRAM

Fellowship applications for Nebraska LEAD 38 (Leadership Education and Action Development) are now available for men and women involved in production agriculture or from agribusiness. Director of the Nebraska LEAD program, Terry Hejny, dropped by this past week talking about new opportunities where applicants are received from five regions across Nebraska.

Basically participants attend 12 three-day theme driven seminars from mid-September through early-April. Over two years, participants visit almost every public and private college and the University of Nebraska. The first year focus is on local state and national issues with a ten-day national study/travel seminar in February. In the second year of the program participants focus on the international community and includes a 14-16 day international study/travel. I really wish I would have applied for this program years ago.

Sure it's a commitment but really a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Applicants really need to secure their employers full support for the programs. Applicants keep an open mind and interest and pay a modest fee each of the two years. You will develop new lifelong friends. I can get you in touch with a few LEAD past participants from Saline County who have gone through the program and have great things to say about their experiences.

Graduates of LEAD have said they have gained self-confidence and a positive can-do attitude. Some have increased problem solving and decision making skills. Public speaking skills are improved with the belief of making a difference. There are new contacts and new networking that happens. You definitely get a broader view. People tend to stay in our own box, so to speak, and that box opens up into a bigger picture of agriculture as a whole. Participants brush up on their etiquette skills and there are opportunities to seek out new role models and learn about different leadership styles.

Terry says many times he has seen people wait until their lives appear to slow down before applying. Waiting sometimes means the applicants no longer meet the preferred age range of 25 to 55 years old. Yes, it requires a time commitment, thus Terry challenges you to begin preparing today in order to become a member of LEAD 38 beginning in the fall of 2018. Now is the time to talk to family and business associates. Terry believes the success of our agricultural industry is dependent on preparing and motivating men and women in agriculture for more effective leadership.

Think about it. Applications are due no later than June 15 and are available at your local Extension office or by calling 402-472-6810 on campus or emailing Kimberly at [kbraaten2@unl.edu](mailto:kbraaten2@unl.edu). Visit the LEAD website at [www.lead.unl.edu](http://www.lead.unl.edu) for further information. As Terry says, you blink and it seems like ten years have passed. Because time goes quick, consider making an application to LEAD.

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