



Spring 2008

North Platte Author Is Repeat Winner Of Children's Ag Book Honors

A second book by North Platte author Rajean Luebs Shepherd has been honored as a Nebraska Children's Agriculture Book of the Year. Her "C is for Cornhusker" alphabet book was selected for the award in 2006 and her new "Husker Numbers" counting book was announced as one of two 2007 winners in December. The award is sponsored by the Nebraska Farm Bureau Ag Promotion Committee.

"Husker Numbers" was honored as the best new book about agriculture for grades four and five, and "Where Does Food Come From?" by Shelley Rotner and Gary Goss, was named as the best new book for Kindergarten to third grade.

"Husker Numbers" takes you on a 'numbers' adventure across the state. Content ranges from the importance of honeybees

to the cattle grazing in the Sandhills," said Ellen Hellerich, Nebraska Agriculture in the Classroom coordinator.

"Where Does Food Come From?" is a photo essay that teaches children that the source of their food is not the supermarket. "The book takes a look at a variety of children's favorite foods and traces them back to their source," Hellerich said.

The winning books were selected by a committee of professional educators and agricultural representatives from among 37 submissions from publishers across the U.S. The Nebraska Farm Bureau Ag Promotion Committee donated copies of both books for the 25 mobile Agriculture in the Classroom Learning Barns which travel to elementary classrooms across the state.

Food is Most Affordable in the United States

U.S. consumers spend just 10 percent of their disposable annual income on food.

Here is How Other Countries Stack Up:

Finland	16
France	18
New Zealand	20
Germany	21
Australia	21
United Kingdom	22
Italy	23
Spain	25
Japan	26
Israel	26
South Africa	28
Mexico	33
India	51

10%



Information from American Farm Bureau Federation® Graphic Sources: United Nations; Economic Research Service - USDA

NAC Leadership

	Term Expires
Craig Buescher <i>Deweese, president</i>	2007
Cheryl Stubbendieck <i>Lincoln, president-elect</i>	2009
Ted Hartung <i>Lincoln, executive secretary</i>	
Larry Bitney <i>Lincoln, treasurer</i>	2009
Nancy Eberle <i>Bradshaw</i>	2007
Larry Hudkins <i>Malcolm</i>	2009
Gary Bergman <i>Lincoln</i>	2007
Duane Eversoll <i>Lincoln, ex-officio</i>	
Eddie Biber <i>Omaha</i>	2008
Paul Hay <i>Beatrice</i>	2008
Lowell Schardt <i>Wayne</i>	2008

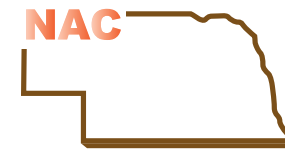
The Nebraska AgRelations Council works to promote the importance of agriculture to all Nebraskans. NAC is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, volunteer-run organization that serves as an umbrella to bring together organizations and individuals to speak out on behalf of agriculture.

NAC's mission is "To Communicate the Story of Nebraska Agriculture Through the Maximum Use of Media."

Newsletter courtesy of
Nebraska Farm Bureau
Cheryl Stubbendieck, editor
Tara Rieck, graphic designer

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Spring 2008

Crossroads Participants Use 'Clickers' To Predict the Future, Evaluate the Meeting

The November 2007 Ag at the Crossroads Conference, sponsored by NAC and the UNL Agricultural Economics Department, looked ahead to what agriculture will be like in 2017. As part of the program, participants were asked to use hand-held electronic "clickers" to make their own predictions for the future. Here's some of what they said:

What will have the biggest impact on ag by 2017?

- Biotechnology – 50 percent
- Improved Yield Technology – 26 percent

The average price of Nebraska farmland in 2017 will be:

- \$3,000 an acre – 36 percent
- \$3,500 an acre – 38 percent

Average Nebraska farm size in 2017 will be:

- 700 acres – 44 percent
- 1,000 acres – 44 percent

Other information from the survey:

- Fifty-one percent of respondents have a succession plan for their business, 49 percent do not.
- Forty-nine percent said their child/children will take over the farm/ranch business;

25 percent didn't know who would. Smaller percentages said another relative or employee; 8 percent said the business would be sold.

Retirement savings accounts, stocks, bonds, etc. will be the main source of income for 67 percent of the respondents when they retire. For 28 percent, rental of farmland will be the main source. Four percent said sale of farm and nonfarm assets. Two percent said Social Security would be the main source.

About half of respondents expect to retire between ages 61 and 70; 19 percent do not plan to retire, ever.

Conference participants also used the "clickers" to evaluate the conference.

- 52 percent said it was excellent, 48 percent good.
- 48 percent agreed and 48 percent strongly agreed they were more knowledgeable about what may happen in ag in the next 10 years because of attending the conference.
- 88 percent said the conference would help them make better decisions.

Official Notice

Nebraska
AgRelations Council

Rescheduled 2008
Annual Meeting

Wednesday, March 4, 2008
4-5:30 p.m.

Holiday Inn and
Convention Center
Kearney, Nebraska

Room will be posted

Agenda: Elections, budget
approval, program planning

AgRelations Award Nominations Due July 1

Each year NAC presents its Nebraska AgRelations Award to a selected individual for exemplary contributions to agriculture. The 2008 honoree will be recognized at a banquet scheduled for Sept. 10 in Grand Island, in conjunction with Husker Harvest Days.

A nomination form is enclosed with this newsletter. Nominations are due July 1. Send to Larry Hudkins, NAC Awards Chair, 104 ACB, UNL, P.O. Box 830918, Lincoln NE 68583-0918.



President's Message

Hello again,
The 2007 Nebraska Ag Classic proved to be another success but as many of you probably noticed, the AgRelations Council annual meeting scheduled for Dec. 12 was postponed. My Dad had some health issues which became much worse on Dec. 11 and resulted in emergency surgery on the 12th in Omaha. Because this came up so suddenly, I didn't have time to pass the baton to another NAC board member, so we decided to postpone the annual meeting.

We are now planning to have the annual meeting in Kearney at the Kearney Holiday Inn on Tuesday, March 4, from 3:30 to 5 p.m. This is in conjunction with the Governor's Ag Conference, which starts that evening at 5:30 and continues through Wednesday, March 5. Please note that this year the conference is on Tuesday and Wednesday instead of Wednesday and Thursday as in years past.

We are planning another exciting year for NAC with various promotions and activities throughout the year. I hope you can plan to help us out and attend the annual meeting and give your input on how we can better fulfill our mission, which is "To promote the story of Nebraska agriculture through the maximum use of media."

Also at the annual meeting, we will be filling

two vacancies on the board of directors. Gary Bergman from Lincoln has finished his first term on the board and has chosen not to run again and Lowell Schardt from Laurel has chosen to step down because of business commitments.

We have asked Deanna Karmazin of Lincoln, an extension educator in the Lancaster County Extension office, to consider joining the board and she has agreed to put her name on the ballot. Lowell Schardt had one year left of his three-year term and we have asked Dave Hunt, who works for Principal Financial Group in Holdrege, to fulfill that term on the board. We will of course accept nominations from the floor, so please be on hand to help us fill these positions and continue the work of the AgRelations Council.



Craig Buescher
NAC President

During National Agriculture Week, March 16-22, we will again be promoting agriculture by having a call-in contest on the Nebraska Rural Radio Network stations and we hope on other radio stations. We'll give gift certificates to the caller with the correct response to an ag fact or question. This has been a popular program the past two years and I am sure it will be again this year.

Until next time, stay warm, be safe and be happy!

Craig Buescher
NAC President

University of Nebraska President J.B. Milliken was the featured speaker at a luncheon Dec. 12 in Kearney. The Nebraska AgRelations Council hosted the event as part of the 2007 Nebraska Ag Classic Conference. Milliken discussed his vision for the future of the university and Nebraska.



NAC Calendar

- March 4**
2008 NAC Annual Meeting
Kearney (see page 1)
- March 16-22**
National Agriculture Week
NAC Radio Promotions
- March 24**
National Ag Week Banquet
Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center, Near Gretna
- July 1**
Deadline for nominations for 2008 AgRelations Award
- Aug. 22-Sept. 1**
Nebraska State Fair Lincoln
NAC Ag Hall presentations on selected days
- Sept. 10**
NAC Awards Banquet
Midtown Holiday Inn Grand Island
- Nov. 6**
2008 Ag at the Crossroads Conference Lincoln
- Dec. 16**
2009 NAC Annual Meeting (tentative) at Nebraska Ag Classic Holiday Inn Convention Center Kearney



Members of the NAC Board of Directors and potential members met at the Farm Bureau Building in Lincoln on Jan. 23 to make program plans for 2008. Pictured from left are: Ted Hartung of Lincoln, executive director; Larry Hudkins of Malcolm, board member; Cheryl Stubbendieck of Lincoln, vice president; Craig Buescher of DeWeese, president; Nancy Eberle of Bradshaw, board member; Duane Eversoll of Lincoln, board member; Deanna Karmazin of Lincoln, board candidate; Larry Bitney of Lincoln, treasurer; Eddie Biver of Omaha, board member; and David Hunt of Oxford, board candidate.

National Ag Week Banquet Will Highlight 'The Beef State'

Nebraska's National Ag Week Banquet is typically held on the Monday of Ag Week, March 16 - 22. However, because the Monday of Ag Week is St. Patrick's Day, organizers have scheduled the event for March 24.

The Omaha Agri-Business Club and Lincoln-based Nebraska Agribusiness Club co-sponsor the banquet, which will be held at the Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center near Gretna.

Featured speaker for the evening will be John Carter, senior research folklorist with the Nebraska State Historical Society. He will be discussing "The Beef State," an

upcoming public television documentary which NET is producing, and which will premiere in May. The program explores how and why Americans switched from eating primarily poultry and pork to preferring beef in the 1860s. It also examines how Nebraska went from being part of the Great American Desert to being the greatest beef-producing state in the nation.

The sponsoring clubs hold a silent auction in conjunction with the banquet, with proceeds benefiting 4-H, FFA, Agriculture in the Classroom, the Ag Awareness Coal-

ition and the Nebraska LEAD program. The auction typically raises \$5,000 to \$6,000, which is divided among the groups.

The evening begins with a reception at 5:45 and dinner at 6:45. The silent auction closes after the banquet.

Banquet tickets haven't been priced yet. For information and to reserve tickets, contact Millie Speck at Midwest Laboratories, millie@midwestlabs.com or 402/334-7770. Contributions for the silent auction are welcome, as well as cash contributions to support the five organizations.

20th Governor's Ag Conference Scheduled for March 5 in Kearney

The 20th Nebraska Governor's Ag Conference is scheduled for March 5 at the Kearney Holiday Inn and Convention Center. "The past year has been a very strong one for our agriculture industry, and I look forward to celebrating this milestone with the producers who've help move Nebraska forward," Gov. Dave Heineman said Jan. 22.

Pre-conference activities will begin at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, March 4, with the "Celebrate Nebraska Agriculture" reception, featuring foods produced by Nebraska farmers and ranchers. The evening also will include

entertainment from comedian Jerry Carroll. The conference will convene at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, March 5.

Speakers will include John Huston, an international beef advocate and former president of the National Livestock and Meat Board, discussing domestic marketing opportunities and consumer trends. Tim Vala, owner and operator of Vala's Pumpkin Patch in Gretna, will highlight the growing opportunities available in agriculture, and Mike Krueger, founder and president of The Money Farm Radio Network, will

discuss domestic and international markets and what the future holds for Nebraska agriculture. Anita Estes, a former Nebraska and National FFA officer, will talk about efforts to keep youth involved in agriculture. Several members of the Governor's Cabinet also will be featured.

The conference is open to all interested persons. The \$50 registration fee includes the meeting and the Tuesday evening reception. Registration information is available online at www.agr.ne.gov. Or call 800/831-0550.