

Perspectives

The first week of March I was in Washington D.C. with our university's Delegates to the Council for Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching (CARET), visiting the offices of



John C. Owens
NU Vice President and
Harlan Vice Chancellor, IANR

Nebraska's congressional delegation.

CARET was created in 1982 to enhance national support and understanding of the land-grant university system's research, extension, and teaching programs. Each state has three delegates, and ours are Mark Gustafson, a Mead farmer; Rod Gangwish, a Shelton farmer; and Sallie Atkins, a Thomas County rancher.

They are tremendously effective advocates for IANR and the university.

Highest on our agenda at each visit this year was the executive branch's budget request for FY2006 and FY2007. It proposes eliminating federal formula research funds for land-grant universities. These are: the Hatch Act funds, used for agricultural, natural resources, and human sciences research; the McIntire-Stennis funds, used for forestry research; and the Animal Health and Disease funding.

The executive branch proposes halving the first two in 2006 and eliminating both in 2007. They'd totally eliminate Animal Health and Disease funding in 2006.

This is one very bad idea.

Nebraska receives \$3,485,678 in these federal formula funds that provide funding for 259 research projects in 15 IANR departments and at our research and extension centers. This is research focused on the needs of Nebraska.

Because the Hatch Act is associated with agriculture, some people may believe this proposed elimination of

continued on page 2

The Leading Object

The Morrill Act of 1862 established a Land Grant University in each state where The Leading Object would be instruction in agriculture and related fields.

March 2005

Grain Cubes Helping Nebraskans Save Feed Dollars

Nebraska ranchers are saving thousands of dollars with a new feed technology developed and distributed with the help of University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Cooperative Extension.

Ainsworth-based Extension Educator Dennis Bauer has been working with the Ainsworth Farmers and Ranchers Co-op to develop a new high-protein and energy source for cattle – the distillers' grain cube.

"It basically is going to make other protein sources obsolete," he said. "It will become the standard."

Grain cubes get their name from their major ingredient – grain meal – a byproduct from the ethanol industry. Since cattle feed accounts for 60 percent of a rancher's expenses, savings can mount quickly. Bauer reports that by changing from a more expensive protein supplement to the cube, ranchers have been able to save about \$23 per ton on cattle feed. By the end of 2004, ranchers using the cube saved about \$400,000, he said.

Gordon Bradley, a rancher in Brewster, participated in tests of the cube early last year, then started using them full time in the spring. He has 550 head of cattle and estimates saving \$35 to \$50 a ton. He goes through about 100 tons a year.

"It's a more usable protein," he said.

Although several extension educators have been studying the use of distillers grain in cattle feed for the last several years, 2004 was the first year it was available for sale through the co-op. Extension has conducted training sessions on the cube's nutrient values. The cube contains 25 per-



Bauer

cent protein, 7 percent fat for energy, and no starch, which aids in fiber digestion.

The Ainsworth co-op works with ethanol plants to purchase the byproduct and make the cube, sales of which make up about 90 percent of the co-op's business, according to Brad Daniels, feed and nutrition specialist there.

About 15,000 tons of the product have been sold to ranchers throughout Nebraska, Daniels said.

"Everybody is really pleased with the product," Daniels said. "The cattle just love it."

Bauer said the change to grain cubes also reflects a positive union between UNL and private industry to improve the financial status of beef producers.

"It's about as close to a magic bullet as you can get," Bauer said. "There's no downside to it."

– Lori McGinnis

Perspectives continued from page 1

funding doesn't affect them if they aren't farmers or ranchers.

They would be wrong.

Passed in 1887, the Hatch Act established agricultural experiment stations in the states and territories and specified the need for agricultural research to ensure American farmers and ranchers the technology necessary to be profitable and competitive, and to ensure our nation an affordable, sustainable food supply.

That need has not changed.

The Hatch Act calls for "... the maximum contribution by agriculture to the welfare of the consumer." It is a base for research that results in the world's safest, most affordable and abundant food supply, as well as safe and clean water, environmental improvement, and strong families and communities.

Studies by Iowa State University and Yale University economists demonstrate taxpayer investments in agricultural research and development at our country's land-grant universities and USDA have yielded an approximate 50 percent annual rate of return on investment since 1970.

It would be interesting to know if any other contract Congress made with America has paid a similar return over such a long period of time!

Here in Nebraska, where agriculture is our number one industry, nearly one in

four Nebraskans works in farm or farm-related jobs. IANR research is vital to helping Nebraska remain competitive. Federal formula funds are vital to Nebraska research.

Without federal formula funds, IANR research would be much more directed by priorities set by grantors outside Nebraska. Yet Nebraska always will continue to have specific research needs.

The executive branch recommends increasing competitive grants funding while eliminating federal formula funds. We're all for increasing competitive grant funds – the need is there, and our faculty and staff are highly competitive. Yet it is the federal formula funds that provide the infrastructure necessary for scientists to be successful in winning these grants.

Federal formula funds provide dependable, appropriated funding that allows IANR to respond quickly when needs arise. Competitive grants can take up to 18 months to write, apply for, and receive, which makes it difficult to respond quickly to anything.

Long-term programs, such as our animal and plant breeding programs, are not good candidates for competitive grants because of the length of time needed for success. Competitive grants require results in a much shorter time-frame. Yet long-term programs are vital to the well-being of agricultural research and education and, in turn, this country.

Certainly they're vital for Nebraska.

It's important federal formula funds be restored. This research with its 50 percent annual return is needed. Scientists must be able to make rapid responses to emerging concerns, and each state and territory always will have its own specific research needs.



Baquet to Head Ag Econ, CARI

IANR Associate Vice Chancellor Alan Baquet has accepted the appointment as Head of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Director of the Center for Applied Rural Innovation (CARI) effective July 1, 2005.

Interim Academic Head and CARI Director Dick Clark has agreed to continue serving until that date.

Baquet has served as Associate Vice Chancellor since 2002. He is a tenured professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics and has been Interim Associate Director of the Nebraska Agricultural Experiment Station and Interim Associate Dean of the Agricultural Research Division since 2004.

Holling Awards to Eight

Eight IANR staff were honored with Holling Family teaching awards in a March ceremony.

Receiving Senior Faculty Teaching Excellence awards were: Elizabeth Birnstihl, Cooperative Extension; Judy Bowmaster and David P. Smith, Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture; and Merlyn Nielson, Animal Science.

Receiving Junior Faculty Teaching Excellence Awards were: Clyde Cranwell, NCTA; and Brett White, Animal Science.

Receiving Teaching Assistant Awards were: Carmen Gherasim, Biochemistry; and Jennifer Moss, Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communication.

The Holling Family Award program was made possible by a gift from the Holling family to honor their pioneer parents. John Holling was a 1912 electrical engineering graduate of the university and his brother Gustave attended the College of Agriculture before farming the family's land in the Wood River area.

Need to meet with the Vice President/Vice Chancellor?

Drop-ins each Friday from 3-5 p.m.*

John C. Owens

NU Vice President for
Agriculture and Natural Resources
and Harlan Vice Chancellor of IANR

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*Occasionally Dr. Owens will be called away on University business.

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109 ACB, 0918; via e-mail (brixstine2@unl.edu) or via fax (402-472-0025).

Construction Continues on East Campus This Spring

Four major construction projects on East Campus are in process this spring.

Hardin Hall

Renovation of the former Nebraska Center for Continuing Education on the northeast corner of 33rd and Holdrege streets in Lincoln continues with completion set for fall, according to IANR Director of Facilities Dale Vanderholm. Hardin Hall will house School of Natural Resources faculty, staff and students, now scattered in seven locations across both campuses. It's estimated that Department of Statistics faculty and staff will move to their new home in the north wing in late March, Vanderholm said.

International Quilt Study Center

A new \$10 million, 30,000-square-foot International Quilt Study Center (IQSC) is planned for the northwest corner of 33rd and Holdrege streets by June 2007, according to Carolyn Ducey, IQSC curator. Private donor funding has been acquired to provide year-round

exhibition space, work areas dedicated to research, care and maintenance of the collection, and expanded storage capacity for the world-class quilt collection.

Additionally, the facility will house a non-circulating reading room for use by students, staff, scholars, and the public. A further announcement on the IQSC is expected April 13.

Library Depository

A new Library Depository/Retrieval Facility is being built just south of the East Campus Loop, near the Tractor Testing Lab, with expected completion this summer. University Libraries Associate Professor Rebecca Bernthal said the new climate-controlled facility will house up to 800,000 volumes of library materials in high-density shelving. Additional storage is needed, she said, because the University Libraries are now at or near 90 percent capacity and although e-resources continue to increase, they account for only 15 percent of the research library's resources.

Bernthal said that once the new depository is complete, many of the older and lesser-used materials now in Love Library will move to the new facility to relieve tight areas and create space for the science materials being moved from the Chemistry, Biological Sciences and Physics Libraries.

Bike Trail

Plans to complete the partial bike trail on the north edge of East Campus, running from 33rd to 48th streets along Leighton Street and Huntington Avenue also is in process, Vanderholm reported. Both the City Campus and East Campus master plans are being redone to include the bike trail's completion and possibly a different entrance to East Campus from the University Place area.

Other East Campus construction projects include fire- and life-safety repairs in the Veterinary Diagnostic Center and development of teaching gardens in the area north of the current horticultural gardens, Vanderholm said.

—Barbara Rixstine

Water Issues Trigger Platte River Advisory Group

When western Nebraska drought conditions worsened, Agricultural Economics Professor Ray Supalla and others at UNL knew something had to be done.

This year, for the first year ever, irrigators who depend on water from Lake McConaughy will not have their full supply, he said. Recreation activity also is expected to be down substantially due to low lake levels.

The water level is low due to a lack of snowfall in the Colorado and Wyoming mountains. Melted snowfall flows into the North Platte River, which supplies the lake. Lake water is managed by the Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District, which releases it to irrigators. Low lake levels translate into

less water for irrigators, hydropower, and recreation.

Concerns over a lack of water were brought to UNL by U.S. Rep. Tom Osborne, Supalla said. Osborne sought UNL's help on water management since Lake McConaughy was at 20 percent of its capacity – the lowest level in 50 years.

"It became increasingly evident we had to look closely at some hard economic choices," he said. "Hence we have initiated a study of the economic tradeoffs and related policy options."

Supalla invited 12 representatives from various water, business, and environmental interests to discuss what analyses should be done to help with water management in the Platte River Water Basin. The Platte River Basin Advisory

Group, formed last fall, will provide continuing guidance as the study progresses.

"They will help us make sure that we address the concerns of all major interests," Supalla said. "Electric power, recreation, irrigation, and environmental needs are especially important."

Members of the board, appointed by John Owens, NU Vice President and Harlan Vice Chancellor of IANR, "will be very helpful as we work together to study the impact of the water management options on the various competing interests," Supalla said.

The group plans to meet periodically to develop a preliminary report on water management by November, he said.

—Lori McGinnis

Falter Finds Career Takes Off With Jet Design

Art design to jet design. That's really the story of UNL College of Education and Human Sciences alumna Jeannine Falter.

Falter is the Vice President for Business Development at Duncan Aviation in Lincoln, a large national business aviation service company, and a business psychologist and consultant. Although she's spent more than 25 years in the aircraft industry, her academic career really didn't take off until she changed her original UNL major – art.

Enrolling in 1973, the Tilden native thought she'd become an artist. She changed her mind after pondering her financial future in that field.

"I'm a pragmatic person," Falter said. "After my first semester I couldn't figure out how to make a living at (art)."

She realized that studying textile design at the then-College of Home Economics would teach her a new science -- which she loved – and would allow her to express her artistic side. She stayed with the program, graduating with high

distinction in 1976 after only 3 1/2 years.

Falter continued her education on full academic scholarship at the University of Arizona in Tucson. While earning a master's degree in design, a college



| Falter

professor encouraged her to apply for a design job at Gates Learjet, a corporate aircraft manufacturer that sold customized business jets.

Falter said, "I told him that wasn't my goal. I wanted to teach. I knew nothing about airplanes."

But he was persistent, and she was persuaded. She interviewed with Learjet's vice president of design without even

having a portfolio to show. It didn't matter. She got the job and ended up designing everything involved with the interior cabin and exterior paint.

"It literally changed my life," she said.

A little over three years later she left for Duncan Aviation, where she has worked for 23 years.

Falter continued her education after landing the Duncan position. She returned to UNL for a master's degree in human development/marriage and family therapy (1995) and a Ph.D. in organizational psychology (2000).

Earning her advanced degrees and launching her aviation career haven't slowed down the designer. So far, she's earned a Formula 1600 Race Car Driving license, U.S. Parachute Association certification, traveled to all the continents and climbed several 14,000-foot peaks.

"I owe thanks to (emeritus professor) Rob Hillestad and other UNL college professors who instilled confidence and critical thinking abilities in me," she said.

– Lori McGinnis

OEAs to Two

Jeri Cunningham, Staff Secretary III in the Department of Entomology, has received the Office/Service Outstanding Employee Award for March 2005.

One recommendation said, "Because of her ability, dedication, and positive attitude, our department is not only a more efficient and effective place to work, it is also a very enjoyable place to practice our profession. The ultimate beneficiaries of her good work are our students, clientele, and citizens of the state." Another supporter said, "Jeri brings an incredible 'esprit de corps' to (our department)."



| Cunningham

Kim Johnson, Budget Specialist for IANR Finance and Personnel, received the OEA for Managerial/Professional staff for March/April 2005. "Kim is a self-starter who takes great pride in her work," said one recommendation, adding, "She is solutions-oriented, highly personable, creative, and resourceful. Kim relates well to everyone, providing the same high level of service to all."

Another recommendation said, "Her ability to function as part of a team and provide whatever support is necessary has produced a very streamlined process."



| Johnson