

Annual Hereford Crossroads #8 In Valentine

Nebraskans for Hereford Heritage will host their annual Hereford Crossroads #8 reception in Valentine, Nebraska on October 8.

This event welcomes all cattle producers. Doors open at 3:00 p.m. for displays from area Hereford breeders featuring information about past and current herd production. Social at 5:00 p.m. followed by supper at 6:00 p.m.

Keynote speaker is Nebraska Cattleman President, Brenda Masek of Cherry County. She'll speak about the current cattle industry and where it's headed.

Several Cherry County Hereford breeders will be inducted into the Hereford Crossroads Hall of Fame as well as a bull that made an impact on the breed years ago.

Hereford Alley, Hwy. 83

from Thedford to Valentine, will be remembered with the many Hereford breeders and commercial cattlemen from the 1950's into the 70's

Rounding out the evening will be a lively fundraiser auction of a "new bloodline" of bred cows.

Tickets are \$25 per person and available by contacting Dixie at dddhoffman@yahoo.com or texting 406-425-0477. Reservations must be made and prepaid by October 1st as tickets will not be sold at the door. Location of the event is the Connot Auction Building at 329 East 1st St. Valentine.

The Hereford Crossroads exhibit is currently housed in The Sandhills Heritage Museum at Dunning. After Labor Day the museum is open by appointment.

Ag Sack Lunch Program Continues

The popular Ag Sack Lunch Program is returning for its 13th school year in 2022-2023, continuing its offerings which include both in-person and virtual presentations designed to increase agricultural awareness among Nebraska fourth-grade students and their families.

"We are excited to continue to offer virtual presentations to schools," said Karen Brokaw, Ag Lunch Program coordinator. "We can reach schools who do not travel to Lincoln for a field trip. Response from the virtual presentations has been very positive and student engagement remained strong."

The in-person program provides a free lunch and an ag-focused learning experience to fourth grade students who visit Lincoln each year to tour the State Capitol Building as part of their educational curriculum. While they eat their lunches, students hear a presentation about the important role agriculture plays in Nebraska's economy, as well as the crops and livestock species that are raised in the state. The sack lunches consist of Nebraska-produced food items to help students gain an appreciation for where their food comes from. Students also receive a deck of cards containing many agriculture facts including the games "Crazy Soybean" and "Old Corn Maid" to take

home.

The virtual presentations include the same lively presentation on the importance of agriculture in Nebraska, connecting the food we eat every day with Nebraska farmers. Students also receive the fact-filled card games that feature Nebraska agriculture facts.

Registrations are now being accepted for fall and spring presentations for both virtual and in-person

State Capitol visits. "It is important teachers make their reservations as soon as possible to ensure availability," Brokaw said. Reservations can be made online at www.agsack-lunchprogram.com.

"Over the last 12 years, the Ag Sack Lunch Program has been successful in helping fourth grade students understand where their food comes from," said Kelly Brunkhorst, Nebraska Corn Board executive director. "We teach how Nebraska's farming methods help protect the environment while ensuring food safety and animal health."

The program is sponsored by the Nebraska Corn Board, the Nebraska Soybean Board, the Nebraska Pork Producers Association, Nebraska Beef Council, Midwest Dairy, Nebraska Poultry Industries and Nebraska Wheat Board.

For more information, call Karen Brokaw at 1.402.432.2299.



2022 Nebr. Youth Survey Results Indicate Preference For Small Communities

Work needed on inclusion and career opportunity awareness

Greater Nebraska youth remain committed to small communities but there is work to be done in showing them they can have the future they want in their hometowns, according to Nebraska Community Foundation's new 2022 Youth Survey.

Nebraska Community Foundation (NCF), in partnership with the University of Nebraska at Omaha's Center for Public Affairs Research (CPAR) and local school districts, surveyed 715 middle and high school students between January and May of 2022. Participating communities included Bertrand, Butler County, Columbus, Howells and Stuart.

Building on a trend from previous surveys, respondents expressed a strong preference for small communities. Only 4% said they would like to live in a community larger than any in Ne-

braska. Safety, good schools and proximity to family continue to be the top characteristics of their ideal community, and the vast majority (71%) said there is no stigma associated with returning to your hometown as an adult.

Though Nebraska youth seem to not see social downsides to returning home, results suggest they are susceptible to misperceptions about a lack of career or professional upsides to living in Greater Nebraska.

Healthcare (22%), agriculture (14%) and education (8%) represented the top three most desirable industries among respondents, but there seems to be a disconnect between what they want to do and what they perceive to be available where they live. Of student respondents, 48% said if they were to not live in their community as an adult the main reason would be job or business opportunities elsewhere.

"Many of the industries students are pursuing have job openings in their communities," said Dr. Josie Gatti Schafer, CPAR. "And industries that are hiring the most are industries Greater Nebraska youth have shown interest in, including healthcare, education and recreation. Opportunities like internships are a great way to help students on their career path and ensure they understand the potential in their own communities."

This year's respondents included 149 students of color, or 24% of the sample. Students of all ethnic and racial backgrounds said they value "diverse cultural experiences" and were likely to take a stand against "unfair treat-

ment" – but the survey found notable differences among the experiences of non-white students. They reported feeling less connected to the places they live and are less likely to live there in the future.

Compared to white students, students of color were more likely to plan to work directly after high school, they wanted more organizations to engage with in their community and were less likely to want to live in the area they live now as an adult. In addition, they reported seeing unfair treatment at slightly higher rates than the white peers.

"With diversity increasing, outreach and inclusion is critical to population sustainability and growth in Greater Nebraska," Schafer said. "The variation in response across demographic groups suggests some work is to be done to ensure inclusion and that everyone feels connected to their hometown."

The results of the Youth Survey begin to reveal the priorities, values, con-

cerns and desires of these individuals as well as factors that may influence their decision to return to or remain in Greater Nebraska in the future. The hope is that these data may serve as a resource for NCF's network of 1,500 community volunteers as well as other organizations and entities that share an interest in people attraction.

"Nebraska Community Foundation's network of affiliated funds and volunteers across the state are committed to keeping their communities thriving, magnetic places," said Jeff Yost, president and CEO of Nebraska Community Foundation. "The future of our hometowns depends on young Nebraskans returning to or remaining in our communities. Youth surveys are just one of the tools in our people attraction tool-belt. It is imperative that we listen to what they have to say."

For more information on the 2022 Nebraska Youth Survey, visit www.NebraskaHometown.org.

First Blood Drive Of School Year Sept. 21



Join the Thedford High School students and staff for their first blood drive of the school year on Wednesday, September 21 from 1:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Save lives and help the seniors get scholarship funds. To set an appointment contact Jamie Taylor or Emilee Wells at 645-2614 or a senior.



COURTESY PHOTO

Ag Ambassador Jady Fleischman, from Herman, has the fourth-grade students engaged and learning about the importance of agriculture in Nebraska.