

NEBRASKA NURSERY NEWS

NEBRASKA NURSERY AND LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION

NNLA SUMMER FIELD DAY "KICK THE DIRT" & NCNLP TESTING A SUCCESS

NNLA hosted two events during the first week of August. On Thursday, August 5th, NNLA held a summer edition of the Nebraska Certified Nursery & Landscape Professional (NCNLP) exam on UNL's East Campus. NNLA was welcomed by UNL Agronomy and Horticulture to use a classroom in Keim Hall. It was an excellent location for the test with the Keim Courtyard for the plant identification test review and the Maxwell Arboretum and Backyard Farmer garden for the plant identification test itself. The test takers and proctors were able to visit the newly-renovated East Campus Union for lunch. NNLA had three people registered to take the test. Two of them were taking portions of the test over and one was taking the entire NCNLP test for the first time. At the end of the day NNLA welcomed two new members to the NCNLP program. NNLA plans to offer the exam again this winter and would like to return to East Campus for testing next summer as well.



The next day, on Friday, August 6th, NNLA held its annual Summer Field Day also on UNL's East Campus. Attendees were welcomed by NNLA's President, Jason Kuehl. Doctor Mamo, the head of the UNL Department of Agronomy and Horticulture, presented her vision of how industry leaders and the University can work together to advance horticulture and advance change. She also discussed the tie between a thriving horticulture program and students who would enter the workforce as possible employees. UNL Extension educator Terri James gave an overview of the schedule of the day and split the attendees, which totalled around 50, into two groups for the morning session of tours.



The morning tours included a visit to the UNL turf test plots where the group learned about yellow nutsedge management methods, organic weed control, and the ongoing buffalograss trials. One key takeaway was that most turf species will thrive and have fewer weeds with



proper management which includes not overwatering or mowing too short or too often. An interesting finding regarding the yellow nutsedge is that spraying or mechanical removal should be done in mid-May which is much earlier than the previously recommended date of the summer solstice in mid-June. The other morning tour took attendees through the Backyard Farmer (BYF) gardens, the "rain-chain" rain garden and wet meadow, and the collection of edible landscape plants used for teaching plant identification and best management practices. Kim Todd, UNL horticulture professor and extension educator, shared that this particular area is used to teach pruning by letting students do it on living plant material where the stakes are low if they make a mistake. All aspects of these garden areas can be used for teaching as well as enjoyment. *Continued on page 3...*

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the Date!*

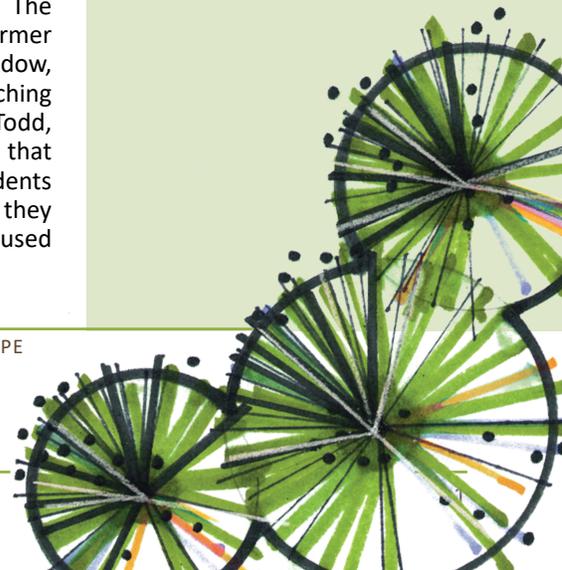
**NNLA 2021 Winter
Conference
December 7 & 8**

**NCNLP Testing to be held
in February 2022**

*Watch
members.nnla.org/nnla-events
for details!*



THE NNLA MISSION: TO ADVANCE THE NURSERY AND LANDSCAPE INDUSTRY BY PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR NETWORKING, EDUCATION, ADVOCACY AND CERTIFICATION TO INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS FOR THE PURPOSE OF COLLECTIVELY GROWING THEIR BUSINESSES.



NEBRASKA NURSERY NEWS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE BY JASON KUEHL, NCNLP



Thank goodness for fall!

After a very hot and humid August it is time for some cooler weather, some Husker football, and the best time of the year to plant trees. September and October are fantastic months to install trees, and for evergreens, a great time to begin harvest. Hopefully everyone has had a good season and fall is the final push to wrap that up. It is already time to begin planning for next season as well.

Inventories are very tight on certain kinds of trees and plants, but especially in the three hottest items I see; conifer, columnar, and small ornamental patio trees. There is a lot of pressure on conifers specifically and that won't be changing for the near future. Shortages there have been predicted for years but the pandemic and the overall strength of the green industry the last couple years has pushed that shortage into its own version of a pandemic. Prices are rising due to many factors, but good old supply and demand has its place, too. Evergreens for too long been undervalued compared to deciduous trees and the market correction on them is now. The challenge of finding certain evergreens gives an opportunity to use other trees. Junipers are making a comeback, but finding other deciduous substitution options are as well.

The NNLA Summer Field Day at the University of Nebraska's East campus gave us a chance to look at some of those other options. While a bit warm (although it could have been worse) it was a great time to get back to UNL and visit some of the things the Agriculture and Horticulture departments are doing. Walking around campus, listening to the speakers and checking out the Backyard Farmer Gardens made for a fun day, but it was also really nice to see each other in person. I enjoyed wandering around campus. It had been a long time and I had forgotten how many plant specimens are there to study. I appreciate the work put in by the people who planned, hosted, and sponsored the Field Day and the feedback we got was very encouraging.

Coming soon will be the Winter Conference. The board is very excited to be planning the event at Innovation Campus at UNL on December 7th and 8th. Several speakers are already booked and we are finalizing the topics. It will be a very educational and fun event and I look forward to seeing everyone there. Please come to any of the board members with ideas you have for speakers or panel ideas, or even better, jump in and give us a hand. There is always room on a committee, and for a few hours a year you can help with the event planning and format. Your membership and help is appreciated and any suggestions or assistance from you is important. NNLA is your organization. Have a great and successful fall,

Sincerely,
Jason Kuehl, NCNLP, NNLA President

Advertise in the **NNLA NEWSLETTER**

Would you like to see your company featured in an ad in the Nebraska Nursery & Landscape Association's quarterly newsletter, Nebraska Nursery News?

You will have the opportunity to present your company logo, products/services and company identity to members from across the state. Check out the new lower advertising rates on the last page of the newsletter. This is a great, affordable opportunity to reach members and anyone who views the newsletter on the website. Please contact the NNLA office at jennifer@youraam.com or (402) 381-7154 for further details.

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NEBRASKA NURSERY NEWS

Continued from page 1...

Terri James elaborated that the BYF gardens are meant to be an example of “what urban gardening can be ” and that they “emphasize the soil” to ensure that the plantings thrive from year to year.

During lunch the attendees were able to visit the Gooding Learning Center, the updated Dinsdale Family Learning Commons (formerly the CY Thompson Library) , the Dairy Store for dessert, and the newly-renovated Student Union. Many classrooms in Keim and Plant Science Halls were opened to have lunch and to explore. Some chose to have lunch in the Keim Courtyard with the four well-cared-for turtles that live in a small pond near the walking path surrounded by a small arboretum of plantings. The lunch break allowed for some networking as well as a rare opportunity to catch up with colleagues and peers in this time of COVID-19.



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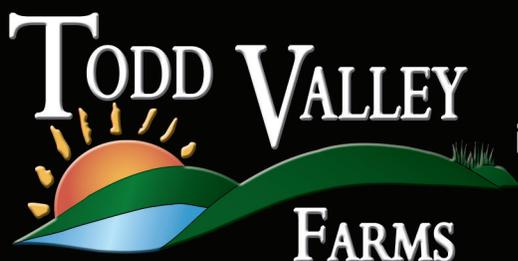
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NEBRASKA NURSERY NEWS

SPOTTED LANTERNFLY KANSAS UPDATE & SCOUTING FOR ADULTS

A 4-H youth in Kansas made news this month when they included an adult spotted lanternfly (SLF) specimen in their entomology collection at the Kansas State Fair. The specimen was reported to have been collected by the youth in Colby, Kansas, during the summer of 2021. Inspectors with the Kansas Department of Agriculture have gone to the collection site in Colby, to visually check for an SLF infestation. At this time, no life stages of SLF were found at the site or in the surrounding area, and it remains unknown if the adult collected in Colby represents a loan hitchhike or is indicative of an early population. Survey for SLF in the area will continue in 2022.

The Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA), in cooperation with USDA, has been conducting visual surveys for SLF in the state for several years. Locations at high risk for introduction or establishment are identified and inspected for evidence of an SLF infestation. Staff also monitor for SLF during regular nursery stock inspections. No SLF has been found in Nebraska to date.

SLF was first found in Pennsylvania in 2014 and has since spread throughout several eastern states. In 2021, small populations were also confirmed in Ohio and Indiana. As with any exotic invasive pest, early detection is key to effective control. Be vigilant in keeping an eye open for invaders like SLF.

Fall is the perfect time to scout for SLF, and NDA encourages nursery persons to keep an eye out for this pest. In the fall, adults will aggregate on tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*). Check the trunks of tree-of-heaven for these large, colorful insects. Sites at high risk for introduction are nurseries, major interstates, and railroad corridors, as SLF has been known to move on nursery stock and vehicles/railcars.

The adult SLF is about 1" in length, with gray forewings. These wings have black spots at the upper half and narrow black rectangles on the lower half. The underwings are red with black wingtips.

If you think you've seen an SLF, take pictures or collect a specimen, and report your suspicions to your NDA Entomology Inspector, or contact Julie Van Meter, NDA Entomology Program Manager/State Entomologist at 402-471-6847 or Julie.vanmeter@nebraska.gov.



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NEW MEMBER BENEFIT

In addition to our current job posting webpage, a 'Tools and Equipment' page will be located on the NNLA website as an exclusive benefit to members to list tools an equipment they would like to advertise. The webpage will be viewable by the public but only members will be able to list items. To place your ad, simply send the NNLA office an email at jennifer@youaam.com. Include all pertinent information and attach a photo if appropriate. Ads will be listed for 30 days, and the posting of ads will not constitute a recommendation or endorsement by NNLA. (<http://nnla.org/tools-and-equipment>)

NEBRASKA NURSERY NEWS

GARDENING WITH KIDS (AND WITH PLEASURE)

BENEFICIAL LANDSCAPES COLUMN FROM THE NEBRASKA STATEWIDE ARBORETUM

A quick internet search will bring up a whole range of ideas and activities for gardening with kids. But what about you? As parents, time for personal hobbies is slim and precious. We know, especially as we spend more time at home, that making time for—and enjoying—the things that are important to us helps us be better parents. It's also important to model a healthy balance of necessary work and hobbies for our children. We want them to see us making time for things we enjoy and taking pleasure in the work that we do. Whether we're experienced gardeners with a growing family or an established family learning something new, the fact remains that gardening takes time and energy and both of those things are non-renewable resources.



Sometimes it's helpful to take a moment and remember why gardening is important to us. A few of the reasons I garden are because it makes me happy and is my preferred form of exercise. I also garden because I like my yard to look nice for people passing by and be a pleasant place to spend time. I want my yard to benefit insects and other wildlife while limiting mower and chemical use. These are all achievable goals but I have adjusted my expectations a bit as our family grows.

- **Zone your yard.** Divide your gardening space into zones based on the amount of time they require, establishing high priority areas that will get the most attention (front landscaping, entertaining area, etc.) and low priority areas to clean up every couple weeks or as time allows. Don't forget to leave an area for free play and/or a garden area where your children can take some responsibility, depending on their age and interest.

- **Stick to the job at hand.** When you head out to the garden, set an achievable goal. You may not have time to weed the whole garden but can you pull all the weeds in two square feet? Once you've set a goal, stay on task. It's easy to get distracted and overwhelmed by other things once you're kneeling on the ground but you can always move onto the next thing if you finish the first task.

- **Make the most of little moments.** Letting the dog out? Pick a bouquet while you wait for him to do his business. Taking the trash out? Pull a couple big weeds on your way back. Toddler got distracted by a leaf on the way inside? Scatter some seedheads while she explores.

- **Multitask.** If you set aside time each day for exercise, make gardening the workout a couple times a week. According to the CDC, 30-45 minutes of yard work burns around 300 calories and most gardening activities are great muscle builders. Gardens are also an ideal place for mindfulness activities, whether you're meditating or praying, try spending that time outside with your hands in the soil.

- **Make it a Date.** There will always be bigger projects that are nice to get done all at once—like preparing a new planting bed, building a patio or seasonal cleanup. If both parents enjoy gardening, these projects make a fun and unique date activity. Send the kids to Grandma's or on a playdate and spend some time working together. Working side by side with a visible accomplishment at the end can be a valuable bonding experience.

- **Take time to enjoy your work.** Plan a picnic, camp in the yard, watch the birds, hunt for insects or designate one night a week to eat outside. Showing your family the fun side of having a nice garden will help them understand why it's a priority to you and may help them develop their own interest and pleasure in working outdoors.

Sarah Buckley, Program Coordinator, plantnebraska.org

MEMBERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

Thank you for your continued support of the Nebraska Nursery and Landscape Association!

As a way to promote our members and learn about each other, NNLA will begin highlighting members with a spotlight feature on the NNLA Facebook page, website, and in the NNLA newsletter/emails. In order to participate, you must complete and submit the Member Spotlight form. [Click here to complete your Member Spotlight form.](#)

NEBRASKA NURSERY NEWS

ARBORETUM'S BLOOM BOX PROGRAM RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD

The Nebraska Statewide Arboretum's Bloom Box program received the 2021 Program Excellence Award from the American Public Gardens Association this June.

The Nebraska Statewide Arboretum established Bloom Box in 2016 to get ready-to-plant pollinator plants to homes, schools, parks and other private and public lands. Its purpose is to educate about how to plant habitat for pollinators; distribute personally curated groups of plants for landscapes of varying sizes and conditions; and make gardening more accessible and doable for people who want to support the environment.

Through this program:

- 852 waterwise pollinator-friendly gardens have been planted
- 25,299 native plants have been distributed
- 153 communities and 57 schools have planted landscapes designed with pollinators in mind
- More than 82,000 square feet of land have been devoted to more sustainable, pollinator-friendly landscaping

"The program has been enthusiastically embraced by Nebraska gardeners since its beginning in 2016. Receiving this award confirms its value as a model for increasing pollinator habitat nationwide," said Mark Brohman, Executive Director of the Nebraska Environmental Trust, a beneficiary of the Nebraska Lottery, which helped fund the program.

The award was granted by the American Public Gardens Association for innovative programs modelling education, conservation, sustainability and outreach. More information about Bloom Box at <https://plantnebraska.org/your-yard/bloom-box/>.



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NEBRASKA NURSERY NEWS

MEMBERSHIP REMINDERS

As a member benefit, all your employees are NNLA members under your company's membership. Currently, NNLA emails are sent to the main contact on file for the company. If other staff would like to receive the emails/newsletter, [click here to add their email address to our distribution list](#).

Check the online directory at <http://nnla.org/find-a-member> to ensure your contact information is correct. Consumers access this directory when visiting our website. Reply to this email to report any changes needed.

We can include your logo in the directory – to include your logo, reply to this email with your logo attached as a jpeg or png file.

Be sure to check out www.nnla.org periodically for news and updates and “Like” us on Facebook! We encourage you to send information and updates about your company to include in our newsletter and/or social media, in addition to the member spotlight feature.

PLANT NATIVE: NARROWLEAF MOUNTAIN MINT



Narrowleaf mountain mint, *Pycnanthemum tenuifolium*

Height: 2-3feet Spread: 2-3 feet Sun: full sun to part shade Water: dry to medium

Though mountain is in its common name, narrow or slender mountain mint grows naturally in dry, upland prairies and rocky, open woods. It's a tough, long-lived plant that will tolerate part shade but, for more prolific flowering, does best in full sun. Thread-like leaves bear clusters of white to lavender flowers from July into September. It makes an appealing minty tea and all parts of the plant are fragrant. Bees and butterflies love the tiny but abundant flowers, which provide several months of excellent pollen and nectar. It's not a true mint and is a well-behaved plant for herb or butterfly gardens that will slowly spread.

Native plant recommendations from the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum, plantnebraska.org

HANNA PINNEO SELECTED FOR NEBRASKA STATEWIDE ARBORETUM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Pinneo has been serving as interim director for more than a year and already has led the organization through some difficult transitions, said NSA Board President Leah Meyer. She navigated transition of the 2021 Spring Affair from an in-person event with thousands of participants to safe and successful outreach as an online event. And Pinneo's vision of private home landscapes supporting broader environmental goals through a new “My Garden” affiliation has drawn a lot of interest and applicants since its inception just a few weeks ago.

The grassroots nonprofit oversees a wide variety of programs, from community greenscape projects to native plant sales, pollinator grants to water conservation, “so the learning curve is a steep one, but Pinneo is already familiar and enthusiastic toward all these efforts,” said Meyer. Prior to being interim director, Pinneo was the conservation education coordinator for Nebraska Forest Service, “a background that lends itself well to her work here.”

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NNLA MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Membership renewal forms have been sent for the 2021-2022 membership year. Thank you to those who have renewed. If you did not receive your renewal invoice, contact the NNLA office.

NEBRASKA NURSERY NEWS

TREES AND DROUGHT

BENEFICIAL LANDSCAPES monthly column from the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum

Drought is relatively common in Nebraska. The further west we go, the drier it is, with central and western parts of the state experiencing significant drought every 5-7 years or so. As Nebraska researchers continue to project increases in the frequency and severity of drought (<http://snr.unl.edu/research/projects/climateimpacts/>), how can we prepare our landscapes for those challenges?

It's important to remember that trees offer significant environmental, economic and social benefits for homeowners as well as whole communities. But most municipal water use in summer goes to lawns, which in many cases are overwatered by far upwards of 30 percent; Nebraska Extension actually estimates 30 to 300 percent (<https://unlcnms.unl.edu/educational-media/droughtresources/lawns-turfgrass>). In larger cities, that's a waste of 600,000 bathtubs of water daily. During severe droughts, restricting lawn irrigation in favor of tree-watering could save significant amounts of water. Setting priorities is especially important if replacement values are kept in mind, since turf is far easier and less expensive to replace than mature trees.

Some tree species like juniper, hackberry, and bur and gambel oak have remarkable drought-tolerance; but in severe drought even long-lived and well-established trees can be stressed. If trees need to be prioritized for watering, preference might best be given to young and newly planted trees and to established trees prone to drought stress (red and sugar maple, baldcypress, ginkgo, tulip tree, aspen, crabapple, spruce). Since water runs downhill, desirable trees and ones at the top of slopes or in sandy soils might receive preference over more favorable sites and more adaptable trees like bur oak, honeylocust, elms, hackberry, limber pine, and juniper/redcedar.

How should trees be watered? Ideally, watering should be deeper and less frequent and concentrated under the tree's canopy. Options include hoses for small or individual trees, lawn sprinklers that spray low to the ground, soaker hoses and drip tubing for trees and shrubs in landscape beds and watering bags for new/young trees.

Here's some recommendations to increase drought-tolerance:

1. Mulch with 2-3" layer of wood or other organic compost around trees and in planting beds to help absorb and retain moisture, reduce soil temperature and protect trees from mower or weeder damage.
2. Pick the right plants with an emphasis on regional natives.
3. Plant trees and shrubs together in groups where they can more easily be mulched and cared for.
4. Limit high-input turf grass to where it is truly needed.
5. Think healthy soil. The more organic matter it has, the healthier and more drought-tolerant it is.
6. Design and manage irrigation systems so they're used only when needed.

Written by Justin Evertson and Graham Herbst of the Nebraska Forest Service. Tree lists and landscape tips at plantnebraska.org

PLANT NATIVE: ELDERBERRY

American Elderberry, *Sambucus canadensis* Height: 10-12 feet Spread: 10-12 feet
Sun: full sun to part shade Water: medium to wet soils

Elderberry typically grows in streambanks, moist woodlands, thickets, fence rows and roadsides. Large flat-topped clusters of small white flowers bloom in June and give way to clusters of black elderberry fruits in late summer. Raw elderberries are toxic but their berries and flowers are packed with antioxidants and vitamins and, once cooked, are recommended for use in easing cold and flu symptoms. They can be cooked into jams, jellies, pastries, pie fillings, syrups and wine. The flowers attract a variety of pollinating insects and can be used to make a delicious tea or cordial and the berries attract other wildlife as well. In the landscape, it can become somewhat lanky and tends to sucker but pruning can help maintain its spread and appearance. *Native plant recommendations from the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum, plantnebraska.org*



Ginkgo trees are known for their beautiful golden color in fall but these brown leaves mid-summer are the result of drought.

JOB OPENINGS

As a member benefit, NNLA will post job openings to our website for no cost. To view current posting, go to nnla.org/resources/job-openings-2/. If you have a current posting, notify NNLA if you want it removed or updated. To list an opening, email jennifer@youraam.com with the information to be posted.

NEBRASKA NURSERY NEWS

PREDATOR-RESISTANT PLANTS TO AVOID A “CAGED PLANT ZOO”

BENEFICIAL LANDSCAPES COLUMN FROM THE NEBRASKA STATEWIDE ARBORETUM

Are some of your prized plants caged up to protect them from predators like deer, bunnies or other creatures? Animals will eat almost anything if they're hungry enough but selecting less-favored plants from the outset can go a long way toward avoiding a “plant zoo” landscape.

Deer and rabbits are the worst culprits for aboveground damage. Both generally avoid plants that are fragrant (herbs, alliums, catmint), sappy, prickly or toxic (lenten rose, foxglove, poppies and daffodils). If you're unsure of the culprit, deer tend to leave rough, shredded tooth marks while rabbits leave a finer, cleaner cut. The presence of voles is marked by wide pathways strewn with clippings that lead to open burrows; their damage is evidenced by yellowing or withered plants whose roots have been consumed. Below are some of the least and most favored plants.

DEER

If deer are hungry enough they'll eat almost anything, especially tender new plants. The worst deer browse tends to occur in winter.

Woody plants they're likely to avoid include forsythia and yucca. Some of the plants they're least likely to bother are grasses, ferns and herbs. Specific perennials they tend to avoid: artemisia, iris, lamb's ear, lamium, lenten rose, monkshood, peony, salvia and yarrow.

As far as favorites, the woody plants they most like to browse are fruit trees, arborvitae, dogwood, fir, rhododendron, yew and maple. Most-favored perennials include balloonflower, blanketflower, campanula, clematis, daylily, geranium, hosta, lily and tulip.

RABBITS

Rabbits can do a lot of damage to woody plants by feeding on bark and twigs but they tend to avoid boxwood, cotoneaster, holly/Ilex, juniper, Kerria, quince and viburnum. Besides grasses and the fragrant, spiky and poisonous plants listed above they tend to avoid: artemisia, beebalm, bleeding heart, columbine, coreopsis, daylily, delphinium, monkshood, rudbeckia, salvia and yarrow.



Hosta damage

Like deer, fruit trees are some of their favorites for nibbling on.

VOLES

Keeping the vegetation low around garden beds can help deter voles by reducing cover. Their damage is done underground but there are some specific bulbs and corms they tend to avoid: daffodil, grape hyacinth, snowdrops and jack-in-the-pulpit. They also avoid allium, iris, lenten rose and salvia.

Their favorite plants for grazing include grasses, herbaceous plants, roots, seeds, bark, seedlings and most bulbs and corms.

Insects—97 percent Beneficial

Insects are an entirely different story. The great majority of them—97 percent according to most sources—are beneficial. Entomologist Doug Tallamy was referring to insects when he said, “A plant that has fed nothing has not done its job.” Though insects do some visible damage to plants, they're critical for pollination and as a food source for birds and other wildlife. His research works to quantify their value toward broader environmental benefits. One of the ways he does this is to explain their worth in terms of more valued creatures like birds and butterflies. His catalog of native insects, for instance, is titled “What does bird food look like?”

Karma Larsen, Nebraska Statewide Arboretum, plantnebraska.org

The award was granted by the American Public Gardens Association for innovative programs modelling education, conservation, sustainability and outreach. More information about Bloom Box at <https://plantnebraska.org/your-yard/bloom-box/>.



A caged bellflower

NEBRASKA EAB UPDATE

The Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), confirmed the presence of emerald ash borer (EAB) in Columbus, Nebraska. The insects were discovered in an NDA trap used to monitor the spread of EAB across the state. This is the first detection of EAB in Platte County. EAB, an invasive beetle that attacks and kills ash trees, was first discovered in Nebraska in 2016. Since that time, EAB has been confirmed in Cass, Buffalo, Dodge, Douglas, Hall, Lancaster, Saunders, Seward, and Washington counties.

“Nebraskans continue trying to slow the spread of this destructive pest, but it’s difficult to stop its progress entirely,” said NDA Director Steve Wellman. “Monitoring for the pest as it moves within the state gives people more time to prepare for its arrival in their community and develop plans for managing for EAB and disposing of infested ash trees. Since August is National Tree Check month, it’s a good time to check your trees for invasive pests like emerald ash borer.”

If you are in a non-infested county and think you have located an EAB infestation, please report it to the Nebraska Department of Agriculture at 402-471-2351, the Nebraska Forest Service at 402-472-2944 or your local USDA office at 402-434-2345.

Do you ship nursery stock out-of-state?

More than just your NE nursery license may be required.
Don't risk shipping without proper certification!

For info about requirements, contact the
Nebraska Department of Agriculture
Export Certification Coordinator at:
402-471-5902 or agr.phyto@nebraska.gov

NEBRASKA
Good Life. Great Roots.
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



NEBRASKA NURSERY NEWS

NNLA WELCOMES TWO NEW NEBRASKA CERTIFIED NURSERY AND LANDSCAPE PROFESSIONALS

The Nebraska Nursery and Landscape Association's newest Nebraska Certified Nursery and Landscape Professionals (NCNLP) are Christine Meza and Holly McGowan. They took the NCNLP Certification test in August and passed all three components.

The NCNLP program was established to promote the professionalism of individuals within the industry. A rigorous three-part test, which covers plant identification, landscape, and the NCNLP manual, must be successfully completed. To learn more about becoming a Nebraska Certified Nursery and Landscape Professional, visit nnla.org/certification.

Christine Meza is an Owner and Landscape Designer with Meza Gardens and Designs in Omaha

What factors motivated you to become certified?

I feel it is important to continue your education over your career and stay up to date on industry standards.

Educational and Work Background

I have a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture from Iowa State University. Right after college, I started working in the landscape industry in Omaha. I have been designing and managing landscapes in the area for over 20 years.

Holly McGowan is the Nursery Manager with Robert's Nursery Landscape and Lawns in Omaha.

What factors motivated you to become certified?

I have worked with plants and in nurseries my entire life and is my dominant passion. I have always been eager to learn as much as possible, and motivated to achieve goals. I love to challenge myself to learn something new and enjoy the satisfaction of accomplishment. I hope to continue to learn so I can be a credible leader in the industry.

Educational and Work Background

I began working in a nursery and garden center at the age of 13 around school and during the summers for a family friend and later at a tree nursery through high school. I also did side work of gardening and landscaping for various clients during high school and later college. My father was a forester/logger and mother was a foreman at the tree nursery so plants and soil are in my blood.

I received my AA and AAS from Metropolitan Community College. I recently completed my BS in Biological Sciences from University of Nebraska – Omaha. During college, I worked as an EMT and was considering a career in healthcare; however, I realized I was happiest outside, with dirt under my nails and sunshine on my back so I decided to follow my true passion.



Christine Meza



Holly McGowan

PLANT TALKS

The Nebraska Statewide Arboretum's First Thursday Plant Talks are Facebook Live events. Watch on the NSA Facebook page – facebook.com/NeArb. A different topic will be discussed each month on the first Thursday.

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