

# Agriculture department gives UNL grants

## Federal funds allocated to 6 research projects Food center given \$100,000

By Lori Huff  
Staff Reporter

Six major research projects at the UNL agricultural research division will benefit from a grant received through the U.S. Department of Agriculture, an official said.

Dale Vanderholm, associate dean and director of the agricultural research division at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, said the \$534,000 grant was part of \$7 million in approved federal funding for UNL.

He said \$125,000 would be used for a rural policy study. This was UNL's allotment of \$525,000 to be divided between UNL, the University of Arkansas and the University of Missouri.

Darrell Nelson, dean for agricultural research, said in an Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources news release that the studies would be

conducted at UNL in collaboration with the two other universities as part of the three-state Rural Policies Research Institute.

Vanderholm said \$110,000 of the grant would be designated for studying methods to convert grains and animal byproducts into industrial materials. An additional \$50,000 would be used to finance research on adding value to agricultural commodities through the development of new food products.

Money also was allotted to the Gudmundsen Sandhills Laboratory, located near Ogallala, to research grazing strategies on the ecology and productivity of Sandhills vegetation. Vanderholm said funding for this project was set at \$99,000.

"This particular project is beneficial to rangeland cattle producers by providing them with efficient grazing methods," he said.

A milkweed research project to investigate the commercial production, harvesting and processing of milkweed floss as a goose-down substitute also will receive \$80,000 in funding.

Vanderholm said the final \$70,000 of the grant would be used in "developing sustainable agriculture." Researchers will attempt to reduce the use of chemical inputs by increasing the uses of organic farming substances, he said.

The funds were allocated to different research projects "through a competitive process," Vanderholm said.

"It was communicated to faculty members that the funds would be available and they, in turn, prepared proposals to demonstrate that their project exhibited an immediate research concern," he said.

By Kathleen McLaughlin  
Staff Reporter

The University Food Processing Center at UNL recently received a \$100,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to provide marketing assistance to Nebraska's food industry.

The food processing center at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln assists new businesses in developing and packaging a new product and getting it on the market, said Steve Taylor, the center's director.

The center also helps the expansion of a product's market and the establishment of new product lines, he said.

"We have helped big companies like ConAgra and small companies like Meadowlane Honey," Taylor said.

The center assisted ConAgra with

its Healthy Choice foods. Meadowlane Honey was helped in finding the right ingredients for the product, packaging it properly and finding the right market, Taylor said.

"We play a catalytic role," he said. "We make it easier to find an answer to their questions, but we don't take the financial risks; that's up to the companies."

The grant from the Department of Agriculture will extend marketing programs oriented toward smaller companies. The grant also will help businesses write proposals for new ideas.

"You might have a brilliant idea, but if you can't write up a proper business proposal, then you won't be able to finance your idea," Taylor said.

The food processing center should receive the grant Jan. 1, 1992.

## UNL testing method for turning fat to fuel

### Process to make diesel from tallow

By Yvonne A. Sabatka  
Staff Reporter

The UNL Department of Chemical Engineering is developing a way to convert beef tallow into diesel fuel, an official said.

Davis Clements, chairman of the chemical engineering department, said the conversion process, which has been in progress since March, is being tested in the lab.

The next step will be to run the fuel through an engine test, he said. If the test succeeds, he said, a large-scale conversion process, substituting the new tallow-based fuel for diesel, could be in place in two to three years.

Beef fat, also known as tallow, comes in long chains of fatty acids. The chains are in groups of three

connected by a backbone. Alcohol is added to the acids, which strips the backbone off. The acids are then hooked together, Clements said, which makes diesel fuel and glycerol, also a marketable product.

Because of higher consumer demand for leaner meats, he said, more tallow is being trimmed and disposed of in landfills.

"It gives us a chance to take a waste product and turn it into something useful," Clements said. "Instead of importing diesel fuel, we could make it ourselves."

The new fuel would cost about the same as regular diesel fuel. And, Clements said, the fuel would burn much cleaner than diesel fuel.

"It's virtually smokeless and smells sort of like french fries," he said.

The department also is working on using vegetable oil to make products such as lubricants, industrial plastics and perfumes, he said.

Beginning midnight Friday, Nov. 1  
12:15 p.m. — Burglary, compact discs stolen, Schramm Residence Hall, \$600.

### POLICE REPORT

1:20 p.m. — Woman had allergic reaction, Neihardt Residence Hall, transported to University Health Center.

Beginning midnight Saturday, Nov. 2  
2:21 a.m. — Burglary, miscellaneous items stolen, Schramm Residence Hall, \$1,210.

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### NEWS BRIEFS

#### UNL chairman elected institute president

Richard Kafonek, chairman and associate professor of the UNL construction management department, was elected president of the American Institute of Constructors on Oct. 25 by the group's board of directors.

Kafonek is the second construction educator elected president in the organization's 22-year history.

A 1955 graduate of the University of Nebraska (now the University of Nebraska-Lincoln), Kafonek retired from the U.S. Army in 1976 and was on the construction and engineering staff of the Department of Corrections until 1978, when he joined the UNL faculty. He has been department chairman since 1982.

#### Instructors awarded professorships

Distinguished professorships have been awarded to three professors in the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Journalism.

Peter Mayeux, professor of broadcasting, was named the Harold A. and Ethel Bash Soderlund Professor of Broadcasting. The professorship was established by Mr. Soderlund, a longtime radio and television executive in Omaha.

Michael Stricklin received the Hitchcock Distinguished Professorship. Stricklin is a professor in the news-editorial sequence and chair-

man of the graduate program. The Martha Hitchcock professorship honors the late wife of former U.S. Sen. Gilbert Hitchcock, founder of The Omaha World-Herald.

George Tuck, a news-editorial professor, received the Seaton Distinguished Professorship. It honors the late Fred Seaton and his widow Gladys of Hastings. Fred Seaton was the U.S. secretary of interior under President Eisenhower and the owner of a chain of radio, television and newspapers.

#### Congratulations to the DN staff

The Oct. 1 issue of the Daily Nebraskan won a Best of Show award at the Associated Collegiate Press 1991 convention last weekend.

The competition was open to daily tabloid newspapers at four-year colleges or universities that had delegates at the convention. Entries were judged by members of the Society of Newspaper Design.



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