

Nelson: Argentine markets appealing

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of Agriculture and a trade mission participant, said he had been concerned by statements from Argentine officials that the country would be able to compete with the United States in Asian beef markets by 2003.

But after examining the state of agriculture in Argentina firsthand, Sitzman said, he was convinced this wouldn't happen soon.

Although Argentina is the world's second-largest exporter of corn, he

said the country doesn't have enough cattle to compete in beef markets.

To support greater cattle populations, he said, Argentina will have to convert some of its cropland into grazing areas.

State Economic Development Director Maxine Moul said Nebraska and Argentina should cooperate to improve the world's agricultural production.

Demand for more and better agricultural products will increase as the world's population expands, she said.

"When you look at the worldwide need for agriculture, I think we need to work together," she said.

The governor said he had discussed with Argentine officials a proposed Western Hemisphere free trade zone similar to the North American Free Trade Agreement, an idea Nelson supports. Last fall, Congress voted against granting President Clinton fast-track authority to speed creating of the hemispheric free trade zone, and the idea has yet to win approval.

South America has laid the

groundwork for open markets with a free-trade organization called Mercosur. Nelson said he hoped to meet with Argentine President Carlos Menem later this week to discuss free trade and new markets for Nebraska.

Nelson said the Argentina trip and other trade missions expanded opportunities for Nebraska business and allowed the state to scout competition.

"The better we understand what the others are doing," he said, "the better prepared we are to equip ourselves to maintain the lead."

Landscaping director faces big challenge

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year before the hiring of Meyers. Kirby Baird, manager of landscape and botanical services for City Campus, said adding Meyers to the department's staff has been a positive change.

"It was a really smooth transition," he said. "Ellen Meyers is a great person to work for. She's so positive."

Meyers said the team spirit of her department is what she has enjoyed most so far.

Baird agreed. "We all seem to work very well together around here," he said.

But she's still trying to adjust to working with Old Man Winter.

Meyers said the toughest part of her first month on the job has been adjusting to some "crazy days" caused by the elements.

"There aren't any routines in this job," she said. "You can have the best-planned day, but things will come up."

Meyers said the recent snowstorm kept her busy.

"I had some days that lasted from 2 a.m. to 6 p.m. during this last round of snow," she said. "But plowing snow does allow me to quickly familiarize myself with the campus."

She's also one of the first people to see what the campus looks like after a large snowfall.

Although she is not directly responsible for the decision to cancel classes, she does make a recommendation to the chancellor.

"The main question to consider is whether the campus is safe," she said. "If the sidewalks and parking lots are clear and the essential personnel can get in, we'll have class."

"Commuters are not the top priority."

Before coming to UNL, Meyers spent the greater part of her professional life on the East Coast. She worked in Boston for the Massachusetts Horticulture Society and more recently in New Jersey, where she was employed for five years by the Somerset County Park Commission.

A former high school French teacher, Meyers returned to school to get her master's degree in public horticulture administration from the University of Delaware.

"Gardening was always a strong interest of mine," she said. "I just extended it into a professional career."

Meyers said not to be surprised to see more tall buffalo grass or native Nebraska wildflowers sprouting up around campus.

"I'm a big fan of naturalistic design," she said. "I like the idea of getting people to preserve and appreciate what they have."

Meyers, who grew up near Indianapolis, said coming to UNL was a good chance for her to get back to her Midwestern roots.

"UNL is a well-respected institution whose campus is recognized around the country for its beauty," Meyers said. "I think a lot of people around here take that for granted."

"And Lincoln just seemed to have a nice feel to it. The people here are so enthusiastic and friendly."

Besides repairing damage from last fall's storm, Meyers said, designing and preparing to landscape the new plaza area north of the Nebraska Union was her department's top priority.

The new plaza, which will include a waterfall-type feature, is expected to be completed next fall.

"I enjoy interactive design, and this will be a great place for students to gather again," she said. "A campus like this isn't complete without a place like that."

Happy St. Patty's Day!

Good Luck to Ya!

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