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NDA SOLICITING VOLUNTEERS TO SERVE ON COMMUNITY GARDENS TASK FORCE

LINCOLN - The Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) is seeking individuals who are interested in becoming a member of the Community Gardens Task Force, a new group created through legislation in the 2015 session of the Nebraska Unicameral.

Nebraska Agriculture Director Greg Ibach is asking those interested in serving on the Task Force to submit a cover letter and resume to NDA by close of business July 13, 2015.

The Community Gardens Act was passed as part of Legislative Bill 175, signed by Gov. Pete Ricketts on May 27, 2015. The purpose of the Act is to foster growth in the number, size and scope of community gardens in the state by encouraging state agencies, municipalities and private parties in their efforts to promote such activities.

Under the Act Director Ibach is to appoint up to nine members to the Task Force, including at least three individuals who represent nonprofit organizations currently involved in community gardens. Other representation may come from: existing community gardens, state agencies, counties, cities, villages, utility districts and school districts.

Some of the goals of the Task Force are to develop recommendations that will:

- Encourage the establishment and expansion of community gardens in the state by state agencies, municipalities and individuals;
- Encourage cooperation between community gardens and local voluntary food assistance programs; and,
- Increase the benefits of community gardens to the communities in which they are located.

The Task Force is charged with providing a preliminary report with recommendations to NDA and the Nebraska Legislature by December 15, 2015. A final report is due by December 15, 2016.

Cover letters and resumes can be mailed to: Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Attn. Casey Foster, P.O. Box 94947, Lincoln, NE 68509, or emailed to casey.foster@nebraska.gov.

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