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Nebraska Food News... People... Places... Things...

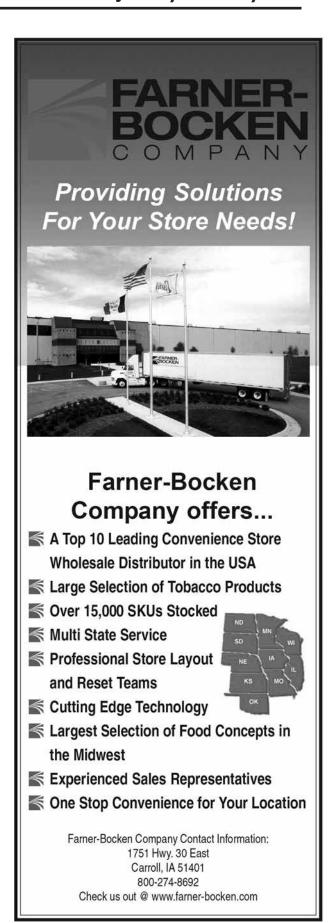
This section of the magazine is dedicated to announcing the changes, additions, promotions, etc., regarding members of the grocery industry in Nebraska. We invite members to submit information that can be included in this section.

Supermarket operator SpartanNash will close three Omaha-area stores and remodel eight others this year. SpartanNash will remodel four Bag 'N Save and four No Frills stores, rebranding them as Family Fare stores. The three stores that will close mid-March are No Frills at 8005 Blondo St. in Omaha, No Frills at 1817 West Broadway in Council Bluffs, and Bag 'N Save at 15370 Weir St. in Omaha near 156th and Q Streets.

The remodeled Family Fare stores will have features including Starbucks kiosks, an expanded selection of wine and craft beer, and a selection of local, natural and organic foods. Changes will also include upgrades to the stores' floral, produce, deli, bakery, dairy and meat departments. The stores will stay open during remodeling.

Kimball's Mary Lynch Elementary School has reached the million dollar mark in the "Receipts for Cash" program with **Main Street Market**. Monies collected in the past have purchased play ground balls, backpacks and clothing for students in need and other supplies.

Lincoln's and Nebraska's first Fresh Thyme Farmers Market opened February 10 at 5520 O St. The nearly 30,000-square foot natural foods grocery store is the anchor of the redevelopment of the former Villager Courtyard and Gardens Hotel site. The Lincoln store is the first in Nebraska and 30th overall for the natural foods chain, which opened its first store in 2014.



Nebraska Legislature Convenes 104th Session



The 2016 Legislative Session is the second half of the 104th Legislature and is referred to as the "short" session since it is a 60 day session. The session started on Jan. 6, the first Wednesday after the first Monday of the year. Deadlines are sprinkled throughout the session, to keep things on track. Bill introduction must be made in the first 10 days of the session. Priority bills must be named in the first 20 days of the session. Every bill introduced will have a hearing. Only those bills that receive a majority vote to move the bill out of Committee and to the floor of the Legislature have a chance of becoming law. In a short session it is not unusual that only those bills with priority designation will advance – simply because there won't be time to discuss every issue and every idea.

This year, as was the case last year, floor debate has been filled with filibusters. The new normal appears to be fighting the entire proposed legislation on the floor, rather than working on compromise to find solutions. It is important to note that while filibusters take place on the legislative floor in the public spotlight, many of our State Senators diligently work in the background to compromise and find solutions where everyone wins. Of specific note this year is Sen. Williams' bill that will, at last, give law enforcement a tool to confiscate and arrest those who are selling K2, a dangerous synthetic drug. Sen. Williams worked with everyone who had an interest in removing this drug from storefronts. As a result, the bill is advancing at a rapid rate and is positioned to become law.

The last day of the session is scheduled for April 20. In a normal year very little business is transacted after day 55 (or day 85 in a 90 day session) because a constitutional requirement gives the Governor five session days to veto legislation. If legislation is going to be voted on during days 56-60, the Governor could--in effect--veto legislation without doing anything, and wait for the Legislature to adjourn (sometimes referred to as a "pocket veto") Governors put it in their pocket, and let the Legislature adjourn and the bill does not become law because the Legislature is not in session.

In 2016 a total of 31 bills on the NGIA watch list were carried over from last session. An additional 445 legislative bills were introduced, along with 3 Constitutional Amendments and several Legislative Resolutions. Of the 445 new bills introduced this year, NGIA is watching 43 bills ranging from tobacco, alcohol, work comp, pharmacy, healthy food initiatives and labor law. Our initial position, as established by the NGIA Legislative Committee, was to support 15 bills, oppose 7 bills, and monitor 21 in the event amendments might change the impact a bill has on the food industry. As the legislative session progresses we work with Senators and other organizations to find solutions. In many instances a bill that we initially oppose is amended to remove our opposition. It is a fluid process that can change on a daily basis.

NGIA is again holding Government Relations 101 sessions while the Legislature is in session. It is a one day program where members spend the day learning how the Legislature works, spending time with Senators, attending hearings, and watching floor debate. If you are interested in participating we work with groups of 1-3 people – just call the NGIA office and let them know you are interested and we'll set up a day that works for you!





Food for thought

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Joe Hermes 419-998-2502 VP of Sales - South Heartland Region



2016 Bills Supported by NGIA

- LB 680 Pharmacy Technicians: extends the time period for pharmacy technicians to become certified. Techs currently employed by a Health Care Facility must be certified prior to employment. This bill allows certification by 1-1-17 or within 1 year of being registered. Certification must be maintained during the time the tech is registered.
- **LB 723 Tax** The bill increases sales and use tax collection rates from 2.5% on the first \$3000 to 5% and from .5% to 2.5% of the next \$3000 as of Jan. 1, 2017.
- **LB 724 Tax** Sales and use tax collection rate increased from 2.5% on the first \$6000 to 5% and maintain the .5% on the next \$3000 collected
- LB 776 Tax Streamlined Sales: Changes "Prepared Food" does not include "food that ordinarily requires additional cooking to finish the product to its desired final condition. The bill adopts changes to the streamlined language to include amendments through December 31, 2015. The bill clarifies the definition of a "Prepared Food".
- LB 798 Nebraska Pure Food Act This bill makes several updates in terminology to reflect language updates that do not impact policy. The bill also requires that meat processors use a HACCP plan to improve food safety. Meat processors did not object to the additional HACCP plan requirements.
- LB 841 Labor Unemployment Benefits: If an individual voluntarily leaves a job, that individual would not be eligible for unemployment benefits until they requalify by earning six times their weekly benefit amount in insured work. This would reduce abuse of Unemployment Benefits by those who hop from one job to the next, drawing unemployment benefits.
- LB 887 Petroleum Release Remedial Action Cash Fund – Would allow reimbursement from the fund to pay eligible persons the cost of third party claims until 2020 (from 2016). The bill moves the sunset language down the road to 2020.

- **LB 950 Tax Tobacco**: Provides an exemption on tobacco taxes that are uncollectable bad debts. A distributor would be allowed to file for a credit on stamps for which they have already paid.
- LB 1001 Work Comp Defines loss or loss of use to mean permanent loss of physical function and clarifies that permanent restrictions to each scheduled member must exist in order for the loss of earning capacity determination to apply. The bill would require injuries to two separate and distinct scheduled members for the loss of earning capacity determination to apply, by defining, in part, that a member means an arm or a leg.
- LB 1005 Work Comp provides that the Work Comp Court adopt an evidence-based drug formulary for prescription drugs that are prescribed for outpatient use in connection with a work comp claim. The formulary is science based and would assist in reducing addiction in instances of chronic pain. The formulary would lead to better patient outcomes based on decreased addiction and dependencies and increase return to work.
- LB 1009 Pharmacy Establishes language that would allow law enforcement to confiscate and charge those who attempt to sell or distribution synthetic drugs (K2). NGIA reviewed the bill and made minor changes to protect supplements (not synthetic drugs) that are sold in retail stores.
- LB 1058 Tobacco Compliance Checks would allow a licensee to use a minor to conduct compliance checks if the retailer obtains the written permission of the minor's parent.
- **LB 1060 Pharmacy** Regulates Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs) that are used by many grocery stores who have in-store pharmacies.
- LB 1087 Tax Sales tax would be collected on all sales that are delivered to Nebraska locations (Internet sales). The bill removes the requirement that individuals must voluntarily pay a use tax. The bill was introduced so that an Interim Study can be conducted.

2016 Bills Opposed by NGIA

LB 743 Work Comp – Clarifies that loss of use of an arm does not include injuries to the shoulder regardless of the location of the impairment. Injuries to the shoulder would provide additional compensation, increasing work comp claims and costs.

LB 762 Tax - Tobacco: Increase the tax on cigars, cheroots or stogies from 20% of the purchase price to 22% of the purchase price not to exceed 50¢ per item.

LB 834 – Alcohol: Prohibits the sale of alcohol below cost by holders of Class B or Class D licensees (Off site sales of Beer, Spirits & Wine Only) to prevent aggressive pricing that hurts small bar owners. Retailers sell alcohol at a loss to move close dated, damaged, or non-selling items from inventory

LB 850 – Labor: Establishes a statewide paid family leave insurance program similar to Nebraska's unemployment insurance system and managed by the state Department of Labor. Under the bill, nearly all Nebraska workers "would pay into the program, which would provide eight weeks of paid leave to those who leave work to care for others, and 12 weeks for those who care for themselves, including pregnant mothers. The bill has a fiscal note of \$19M.

LB 1003 Telecommunications – Sets the surcharge rate by using the FCC's safe harbor percentage for

determining the interstate portion of the monthly wireless charge. The bill also allow collection of the federal tax at point of sale. Prepaid wireless went to point of sale in 2012 and this would do the same thing for the federal tax. The problem retailers face is filing remittance with the Dept. of Revenue for taxes owed that are as low as 86¢ in some cases. In addition many POS systems have a limited number of bins that are available for additional tax collections and eventually could be forced to upgrade POS systems to accommodate mandatory tax collections.

LB 1013 Tax – **Tobacco**: Increases excise tax from 64¢ per pack of cigarettes to \$2.14 (an increase of \$1.50 per pack). Taxes on other tobacco products would increase from 20% of the purchase price to 31% of the purchase price of tobacco products paid by the first owner. The bill provides a tax exemption for the first \$25,000 of valuation of tangible personal property in each tax district. It also earmarks millions of dollars to various health related businesses such as UNMC and Behavioral Health Providers, County Public Health Aid Program, Health Education Centers, etc.

LB 1105 Establishes a Craft Brewery Board; the Craft Brewery Board would serve as an advisory panel to the NLCC in all matters concerning beer. Since "Retail" is not included in the bill language, NGIA opposed the bill. In addition, we voiced concern over allowing 16 year olds to serve/sell if NLCC approved training is passed.

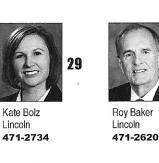


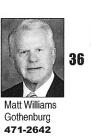
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Tract Williams	30	mwimamsereg.ne.gov	702-7/1-2042

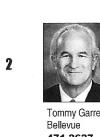














Bob Krist

471-2718

Omaha





Ernie Chambers

Omaha

471-2612

471-2621



Merv Riepe Omaha 471-2623

Heath Mello

Omaha



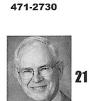




Joni Craighead

471-2714

Omaha



Papillion

Nicole Fox

471-2721

Omaha

John McCollister Ken Haar Omaha Malcolm 471-2622 471-2673

27



Papillion

471-2613

Sara Howard

471-2723

Omaha





24

Dave Bloomfield

Hoskins

471-2716

Mark Kolterman Seward 471-2756



25

32

39

46

Brett Lindstrom

471-2618

Omaha

Lincoln 471-2731



Jim Scheer

471-2929

Norfolk

Lincoln 471-2610

26

33

40



Patty Pansing Brooks Lincoln Lincoln 471-2633 471-2632





37

Rick Kolowski Omaha 471-2327



Laura Ebke Crete 471-2711



Les Seiler Hastings 471-2712



Curt Friesen Henderson 471-2630



35

Mike Gloor Grand Island 471-2617





Galen Hadley



John Kuehn Heartwell 471-2732



Beau McCoy Omaha 471-2885



Tyson Larson O'Neill 471-2801



Kate Sullivan Cedar Rapids 471-2631



Mike Groene North Platte 471-2729







Bellevue

471-2615

38



Adam Morfeld Lincoln 471-2720



Ken Schilz Ogallala 471-2616

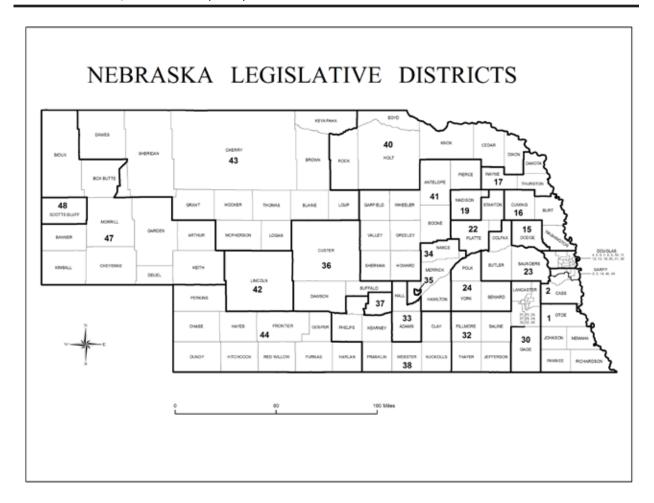


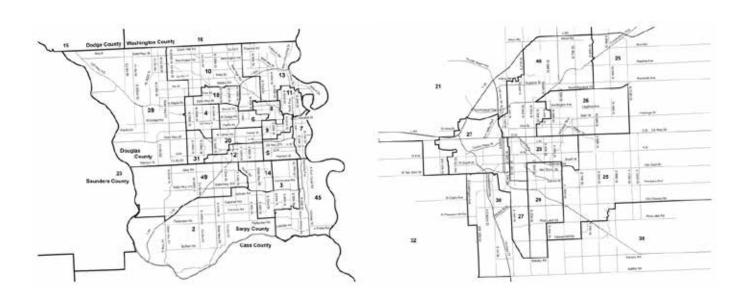
John Stinner Gering 471-2802



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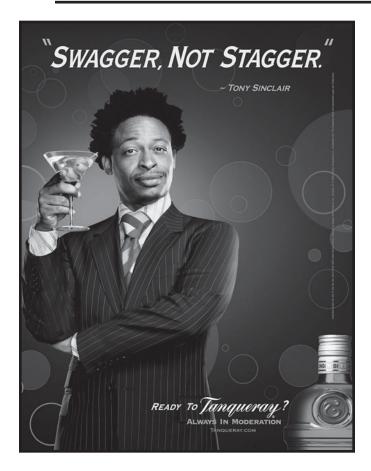
John Murante Gretna 471-2725

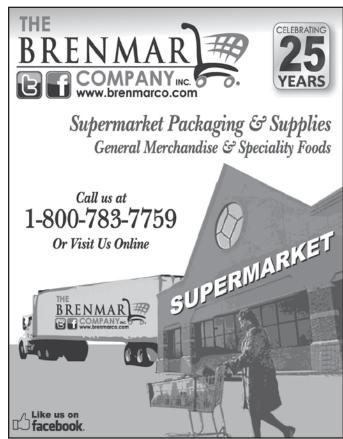




Omaha Legislative Districts

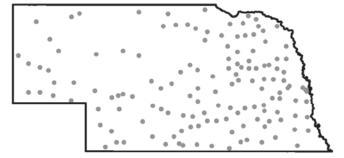
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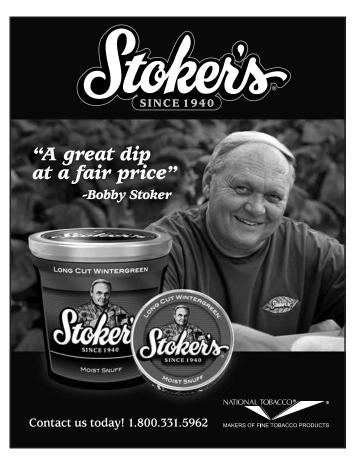
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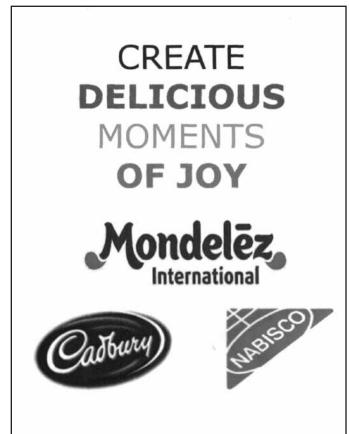
Find out how the natural, simple goodness of LAND O LAKES® Milk and dairy products can maximize your profits by calling 402-474-8700.

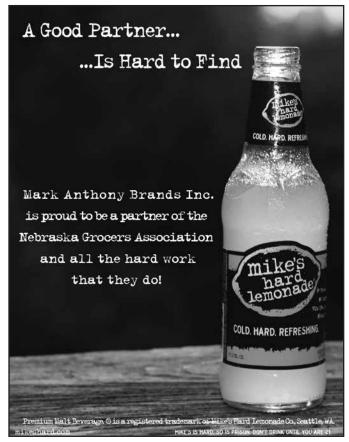


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NGIA 2016 Award Presentations



Those going off the board were recognized and thanked for their contributions. L-R: Lezlie Maguire, Bill Huenemann, Mike Brtek and Jason Dworak.



Peter Clarke was recognized for serving as Legislative Chairman In 2014 & 2015.



Chairman of the Board Lonnie Eggers presents David Green With the Distinguished Service Award



Chairman Lonnie Eggers presents Terry Rehmeier with the Vendor of the Year Award



The Spirit of America Award was presented by National Grocers Association President Peter Larkin to Martin Arter

2016 NGIA Annual Conference Highlights





















2016 Legislative Dinner Highlights

















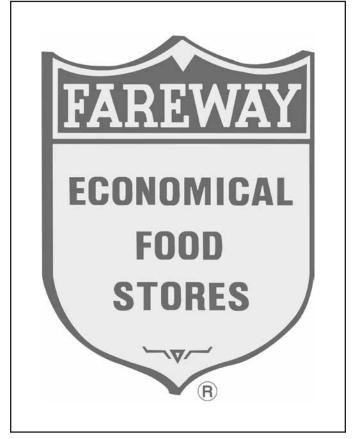














Pan-O-Gold Baking Company

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Signed. SEALED. DELIVERED.

SWEDISH MATCH

NGIA Elects New Board Members



Shannon McCord, as elected to serve on the NGIA Board of Directors to complete the unexpired one year term that was recently vacated. Shannon will run for re-election in 2017. Shannon and his wife Jenny, own and operate Ideal Market in Superior. Shannon was born and raised in a grocery family and is a third generation single store owner. He attended Doane College from 1994 – 1998 where he received a BA in business administration with an emphasis in marketing and management. Shannon has been managing and operating the family store for the past 18 years. In his spare time he has served as a member of the Superior Economic Development Committee, as a Youth Wrestling Coach, a member of the Elks

Lodge and past Exulted Ruler and now he is an Exhausted Rooster. He has also served as an active member of the Superior Methodist Church and currently serves as Head of the Trustees Committee. Shannon and his wife Jenny have two sons, Truett age 6 and Callum who is 9 months of age.



DeLone Wilson, one of the owners of Cubby's and Phil's Foodway was elected to serve a 3 year term on the NGIA Board of Directors. There are 35 Cubby's locations throughout Nebraska, Iowa and South Dakota. DeLone spent 20 years in the ATM business before joining the Cubby's team. He is active in both Boys Scouts and Cub Scouts. He is active in his parish, Christ the King Church in Omaha. He and his wife Cathy serve as hosts for Alpha, which is a faith based study program. DeLone and Cathy have been married for 13 years and have two children, Nick age 12 and Philip who is 11.



Jamie Richards has been elected to serve a three-year term on the NGIA Board of Directors as a representative of the Associate Membership category. Jamie started on a Colonial bread (Earthgrains) route in 1981 in Des Moines, Iowa. In 1982 he was promoted to a supervisor. In 1992 he was promoted to a Sales Manager to bring Colonial Bread into the Omaha market. In 1996 he was promoted to manage the Des Moines Market West ½ of the state to Omaha. In 1999 he was promoted to the St. Louis market where he worked until 2004 developing and managing marketing areas in St Louis, Columbia, and Belleville, IL down to the Arkansas border. In 2004 he went into business for himself as a Little Debbie

distributor. In 2007 he went to work for Pan-O-Gold Baking Company and in 2014 Jamie was promoted to Vice President of sales for the Nebraska and Iowa Markets. Jamie has 35 years of experience in developing and managing major DSD markets in the mid-west. He and his wife Shelly have 4 children. Jamie stated that he looks forward to working with and helping the NGIA Board continue to serve its many grocers in the great State of Nebraska.



Stu Wilsman was elected to serve on the NGIA Board of Directors for an unexpired 2 year term that was vacated in 2016. Stu will run for re-election in 2018. He is the owner of Rightway Grocery in Franklin, Nebraska. He is a third generation grocer who grew up in the store when his grandparents were the owners. After a lifetime of working alongside his family, Stu and his parents purchased the store from his grandparents in 1982. Stu served as a member of the Board of Directors for Affiliated Foods Midwest for 17 years. He has served as a member of the Franklin County Foundation for over 20 years. The Franklin Foundation is responsible for managing donated funds and distributing the monies for good causes within

the County of Franklin. Stu has been a member of the UCC Church throughout his lifetime and is in charge of music on Sunday mornings. Stu's goal is to help the independent grocer thrive in a changing marketplace. Twenty years ago we used to make 3 and 5 year plans but he discovered in recent years that the marketplace changed so quickly that 3 and 6 month plans have become the norm in order to deal with constant change. Jacquie, Stu's wife of 37 years, works in the store alongside Stu. He and Jacquie have 2 grown children, Tony and Joe who both work in Lincoln, NE.

NGIA Elects Leadership



Back row l-r: Ted Stessman, David Green, Jamie Richards, Tom Ryks, Mogens Knudsen, Frank Woodward, Lonnie Eggers and Stu Wilsman. Front row l-r: Peter Clarke, Brenda Guill, DeLone Wilson, Shannon McCord, Steve Pirtle, and Pat Raybould. Not Pictured: Larry Baus

During the Annual Conference new officers were elected to serve NGIA. Mogens Knudsen, owner of Plum Creek Market and Holdrege Market was elected to serve as Chairman of the Board of Directors. Mogens was elected to the Board of Directors in 2006. Peter Clarke, owner of Crete Foodmart and IGA Marketplace in Lincoln, along with Boogarts in Kearney, was elected to serve as Vice Chairman of the Board. Peter began his service on the board of directors in 2012. David Green was elected to serve as Secretary. Dave is a co-owner of The Grocery Kart and manages the Broken Bow location. Lonnie Eggers of SpartanNash serves as the Immediate Past Chairman of the Board. All of the above are members of the Executive Committee.

Nebraska's 2016 Election Calendar

The 2016 elections are quickly approaching. Nebraska's statewide Primary Election Day is May 10. In this election cycle, 25 of Nebraska's 49 state legislative seats are up for election (odd-numbered districts). This means 14 seated senators will face re-election if they choose to run again (including Senator Nicole Fox of Omaha, who was appointed by Governor Ricketts following the recent resignation of former Senator Jeremy Nordquist). Meanwhile, 11 senators are term-limited, including five committee chairs and Speaker of the Legislature Galen Hadley.

Key dates for the 2016 elections include:

- Feb. 16 Filing deadline for incumbents (any current office holder, including local offices).
- March 1 Filing deadline for non-incumbents (new filers).
- May 2 Last day to register in person to vote.
- May 10 Nebraska's primary election (polls open at 8 a.m. CT).
- Nov. 8 General election.



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Change Your Behaviors to Become a More Inspiring Leader In 2016

Behavioral Strategist Offers 4 Tips For Broadening Your Mind and Your Leadership Skills

Habits can be a trap for people in leadership positions – whether they are in business, politics or another field.

As leaders, they should provide a compelling vision that inspires those around them. Instead, many of them lapse into automatic and mindless thinking. And that can affect every decision they make – and the actions of the people who report to them.

"Too often, we don't come up with imaginative solutions because we let ourselves be ruled by routine and by preconceived notions," says Rob-Jan de Jong, a behavioral strategist and author of "Anticipate: The Art of Leading By Looking Ahead" (www. robjandejong.com).

"We think we know ahead of time what will and won't work, which makes us quick to dismiss ideas that sound too 'out there.' The people who answer to you learn the lesson that creative thinking is frowned upon, even if that's not the lesson you wanted to teach."

Simply making a New Year's resolution to have a more open mind in 2016 likely won't be enough to turn things around. But de Jong says there are behaviors and practices that, through repetition and perseverance, can help leaders and anyone else develop a mindset that's open to imaginative and better ideas.

• Formulate powerful questions.

Generating ideas starts with asking the right questions and the best questions are thought-provoking. They challenge underlying assumptions and invite creativity. "They also give us energy, making us aware of the fact there is something to explore that we hadn't fully grasped before," de Jong says. Train yourself to catch poorly designed questions, asked by you or someone else, and reformulate

them. Questions that begin with "why," "what" and "how" are best because they require more thoughtful responses than those that begin with "who," "when," "where" and "which." Especially avoid questions that can be answered with a "yes" or "no."

- Expand your sphere of influence. "We are strongly influenced, for better or worse, by the small group of people we have direct contact with," de Jong says. "Since we tend to hang out with people who are fairly similar to ourselves, chances are we are limiting our perspectives." He recommends making a deliberate effort to encounter people and ideas that are "profoundly different from the usual suspects you hang out with." Visit a conference of a different profession, hang out with skaters, join an arts club or buy a magazine randomly off the shelf.
- Break your patterns. You can increase your chances of seeing things differently if you deliberately break your normal pattern of working, communicating, thinking, reacting and responding, de Jong says. Take a different route to work. Change where you sit in meetings. If you are normally the first to volunteer, hold back.
- Learn to listen. "We've all been taught the importance of being good listeners," de Jong says. "The problem is most of us struggle to actually do it." Often when people are "listening," they really are waiting for the first opportunity to share their story, their opinion or their experience. De Jong suggests training yourself to engage in three pure listening conversations a week. They don't need to be longer than 15 to 20 minutes, they can be formal or informal, and the other person doesn't need to know what you're doing. Vow that you won't try to take over the

conversation no matter how much you want to. "Just keep asking questions and don't dismiss anything the other person says," de Jong says. After the conversation, reflect on what you learned. Don't dismiss any ideas or views that don't align with yours. "Dare to challenge your own assumptions and reframe your beliefs if need be," he says.

"Some of these practices may take people outside their comfort zones, and everyone might not be ready to try all of these at once," de Jong says. "But if you start to put them into practice, you'll be able to grow into a more mindful, visionary leader one step at a time."

About Rob-Jan de Jong, author of "Anticipate: The Art of Leading By Looking Ahead" (www. robjandejong.com), is an international speaker, writer and consultant on strategy and leadership themes. He serves as an expert lecturer at various leading business schools such as the Wharton Business School (USA), Thunderbird School of Global Management (USA), Nyenrode Business University (The Netherlands), and Sabanci Business University (Turkey). As a behavioral strategist, he speaks, teaches and consults on executive subjects such as visionary leadership, influence, strategic decision-making, and innovation.



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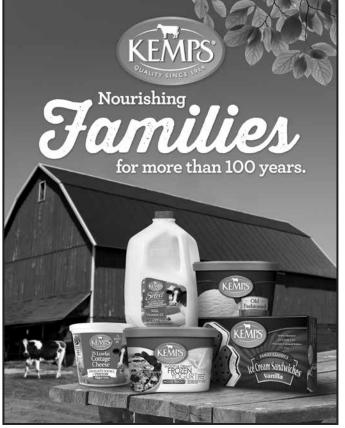
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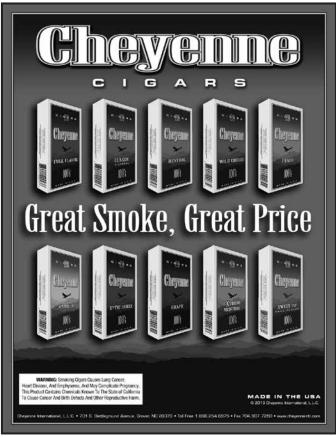


Report: States Becoming Heavily Dependent on Federal Funding

State-levied taxes are the most evident source of state government revenues, but they are not the only source. The non-partisan Tax Foundation reported last week that state governments also receive a significant amount of non-general fund revenue in the form of federal governmental transfers. "In Fiscal Year 2013, a full 30% of state revenues derived from federal grants-in-aid," the Foundation notes. From federal Medicaid payments, education funding assistance, support for infrastructure projects, housing grants and more, federal grants-in-aid to state and local governments have reached \$600 billion per year, "with Medicaid by far the largest (and most rapidly growing) component." According to the Foundation, Mississippi relied on federal assistance for 42.9% of its revenue in FY 2013, the largest share in the country. On the other end of the spectrum are states like North Dakota (19.0%), Hawaii (21.5%), Alaska (22.4%), Virginia (22.9%) and Connecticut (23.4%). Nebraska is No. 26 in dependence on federal funding, with more than 32% of the state's FY 2013 revenue coming from Washington. Meanwhile, the federal debt has increased from roughly half a trillion dollars 40 years ago to nearly \$19 trillion today.

Courtesy: Nebraska State Chamber





Outdated Computer Systems Play Havoc With the Bottom Line

Assessing Technology Needs Can Help Businesses Stay Competitive, Says Tech Company President

One of the greatest characteristics of computer technology also can be problematic. It's ever-evolving. While that's exciting for techies, it can be a headache for business leaders, whether they are corporate executives or small business owners.

Businesses periodically need to upgrade or replace creaky computer systems, or risk falling behind their competitors. If they try to muddle through with a cranky jalopy when everyone else moved up to the latest sports car, they may find themselves out of the race for consumer dollars. "One thing companies need to remember is that as the capabilities of technology continue to rise, so do the expectations of their customers," says Nicole McMackin, president of Irvine Technology Corp. (www.irvinetechcorp.com), which specializes in information technology solutions and staffing.

"The bar keeps being raised higher and higher in terms of how quickly and efficiently customers expect to be served." But weighing whether to invest a substantial sum in updated technology when other needs are pressing can leave management in a quandary. Is it time to junk the system entirely and start over? Can the current system be salvaged with just an update here or there? Or is everything fine – at least for now? "Frankly, unless they happen to work for a high-tech company, most business leaders probably don't consider information technology to be one of their areas of expertise," McMackin says.

"I'm sure most of them prefer to spend their time and energy on the other pressing matters. They look at the struggling IT system they don't completely understand, and about all they can think about is the cost they are going to face to improve it. So they keep putting off a decision." Inaction can come with its own costs, though, she says, such as:

• Low employee morale and production. Employees will dread coming to work when they know they must do battle each day with troublesome technology. Employees want to arrive at the office, log in to the system and get to work. An outdated system leaves them frustrated and production suffers when the system works too slowly or freezes up.

- Cybersecurity threats. While technology is a great asset, it also represents a potential risk for every company. Hackers are hard at work looking for weak links in everyone's IT security systems. An aging system provides a weaker defense against potential breaches that could damage both a company's equipment and reputation.
- Missing out on potential cost reductions. Technology can be expensive. That's no secret. But McMackin says the right technology also can be a solution to rising expenses in other areas of a company. An efficient computer system can help reduce costs and potentially increase revenues. Remember, too, that downtime and outages also chip away at the profit margin, McMackin says. Many businesses barely function or don't when their computer systems crash.

McMackin says most companies with an aging system could benefit from an IT assessment that would help answer the questions that leave business leaders fretting. "That would tell you how well your technology infrastructure matches up with the goals and needs of your business," McMackin says. "A good assessment will tell you if you are spending too much or too little, and can point out ways that you can gain the most leverage from technology." But any decisions shouldn't be about technology for the sake of technology, she says. This isn't like consumers lining up to buy the latest gadget-filled cell phone just because it's the trendy thing to do. "Businesses don't need something just because it's the newest and flashiest thing," McMackin says. "They need what will help them succeed with their bottom line."

About Nicole McMackin

Nicole McMackin is president of Irvine Technology Corp. (www.irvinetechcorp. com), a firm that specializes in information technology solutions and staffing. She joined the company more than 10 years ago, initially serving as Vice President of Sales. McMackin has an established career in sales and management with a strong emphasis of account ownership within Fortune 300 organizations.

USDA Meat Grinding Rule

Those impacted include retail stores and official USDA establishments that grind raw beef products. Supermarkets, grocery stores, meat markets, warehouse clubs, cooperatives, supercenters, convenience stores and wholesalers are all covered. For each lot of ground beef product produced, records must be maintained on: USDA establishment numbers of those supplying materials used to prepare the product; Supplier lot numbers and production dates; names of supplied materials, including beef components and any materials carried over from one production lot to the next; date and time each lot of raw ground beef product is produced; and date and time when grinding equipment and food-contact surfaces are cleaned and sanitized.

A "Lot" is the beef ground after a clean-up and until the next clean up, during which the same source materials are used. A sample log can be obtained by contacting the NGIA office at 800-433-6742.

When is compliance required? June 2016.

Must records be kept for customerrequested grinds? Yes. Records must be kept for customer-requested grinds.

How long must records be kept? One year.

Are electronic records acceptable? Yes.

Where must records be kept? At the location where the beef was ground.

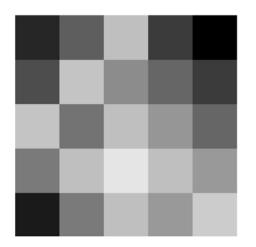
How will this regulation be enforced? FSIS compliance investigators will verify that retail grinders meet the recordkeeping requirements. FSIS indicates it will also explore ways to partner with state authorities on enforcement.

For further information please contact Erik Lieberman at erl1@liebermanpllc.com or 202.830.0300.

Nebraska Grocery Industry Association 2016 Calendar of Events

Mar. 4-5	. Affiliated Foods Midwest Trade Show, Omaha
April 15	. Tentative Nebraska Legislature Adjourns
April 19-21	. Day In Washington Supermarket Industry Fly-In (FMI, NGA, FIAE)
April 20	. AWG Kansas City Summer Show
May 3-4	. AWG Springfield Summer Show
June 5-9	. National Grocers Executive Leadership Development Program, Ithaca, NY
June 9	. NGIA Spring Golf Outing at Iron Horse
June 20-23	. FMI Connect – Chicago
July 26	. B&R Golf Outing
Aug. 17	. AWG Kansas City Holiday Show
Aug. 24-25	. SpartanNash Fall Trade Show in Minneapolis
Sept. 9-10	. Affiliated Foods Midwest Fall Trade Show in Omaha
Sept. 11-15	. National Grocers Association: The Sustainable Growth Conference, Ithaca, NY
Sept. 23-24	. AWG Springfield Holiday Show
Sept. 22	. Hackers & Snackers Golf

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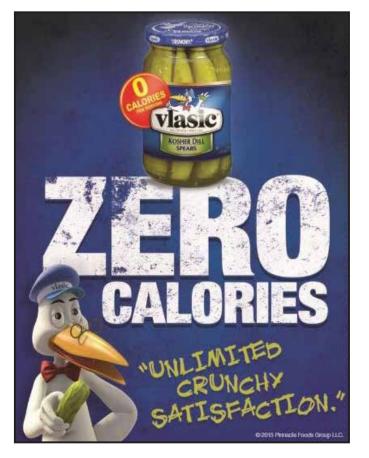
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