LINCOLN—“Strengthening the State of Beef” is the theme for University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources’ exhibits at this year’s Husker Harvest Days show near Grand Island. The show is Sept. 11-13.

The old Nebraska saying of “More cattle than people” holds true in many ways: On average, there are 2.3 million head of cattle on feed in Nebraska and more than 5 million cattle are fed and marketed here each year. It is the state’s single largest industry.

“One out of every five steaks produced in the U.S. is from Nebraska, so Nebraska has a well-deserved reputation as ‘The Beef State,’” said Ronnie Green, NU vice president and IANR Harlan vice chancellor.

“UNL and IANR are working to strengthen that industry both here and nationally through research and education focused on beef nutrition, breeding improvements, resource stewardship, animal care, food safety and producer profitability,” he said

This is the fifth year that IANR teaching, research and extension exhibits at Husker Harvest Days focus on a specific area of importance that is relevant to all Nebraskans, and visitors to the Husker Red exhibit building on the south side of the showground at Lot 321 will see lots of ways IANR and UNL Extension are working to strengthen the state’s beef industry.

Key exhibit areas focus on the economic impacts of beef in Nebraska, the state’s single largest industry with a $12.1 billion annual economic impact; UNL’s global leadership in beef breeding practices; reproduction and proper management of prenatal nutrition to improve calf health and lifelong performance of the animal; and innovative pasture and forage management to improve herd performance and profitability while sustaining the health and value of grasslands and rangelands.

Others examine stewardship and animal care, food safety and feedlot nutrition.

“Nutrition is part of Nebraska’s unique combination of cattle, corn and ethanol production that attracts millions of cattle from other states to be fed out prior to harvest. Our research on distillers grains, a co-product of ethanol production, is helping improve cattle performance, while adding value to our state’s corn production,” Green said.

Outreach education also will be prominent within the exhibits.

“We provide a wide range of education and management information for cattle producers and much of this uses a systems approach to help producers adopt a holistic perspective that integrates cattle, natural resources, range and economics into their decision-making,” Green said.

The Husker building’s central information booth will help answer questions on a variety of extension and research-related topics, provide copies of helpful NebGuides and direct those needing further help to extension experts in their area.

The Husker building is also the place to learn about the latest opportunities for students at UNL’s College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, and at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture at Curtis. College representatives are available throughout the show to answer questions from potential students. Those interested in the Nebraska LEAD (Leadership Education Action Development) program also can visit with a LEAD representative.

New this year, a large tent just east of the Husker building will be filled with information on careers and career activities and provide samples of some of the latest cuts of beef. UNL Extension’s mobile beef lab will be located there too, along with IANR’s Market Journal team.

IANR has been part of Husker Harvest Days since the first show in 1978.

“We hope people stop to see us each year,” Green said. “To see what’s new, and to tell us what they think, and what they see as Nebraska’s main challenges and concerns. As the people’s land-grant university, our focus is always on how we can best be at work for Nebraska.”