
PLANTING A PARTNERSHIP, REAPING THE REWARDS

Partnership With Business Project



Elmwood-Murdock High School
Chapter 8152
300 Wyoming Street
Murdock, NE 68407

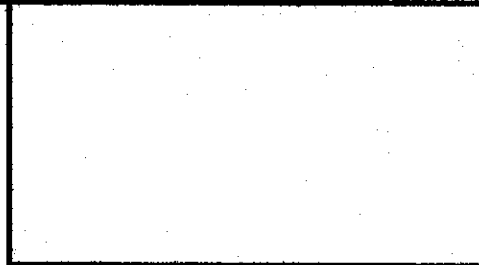


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DEVELOPMENT



In 1956 Lyle Stock acted on his commitment to soil conservation by planting warm season grasses instead of the traditional corn and soybeans that are grown in Eastern Nebraska. With his dedication and his family's loyalty, Mr. Stock's mission grew into a successful family business. Today, the business has blossomed from a single man's mission to a business recognized worldwide.

From the first seed planted forty years ago to the millions sowed today, Stock Seed Farms has faithfully invested in the business' future. Likewise, they have invested in the future of the community by nurturing a Partnership with Business Project with the Elmwood-Murdock Future Business Leaders of America.

DEVELOPMENT

Needs Assessment. To meet the needs of FBLA members and to assist in the selection of a business with which to form a partnership, several issues were considered. Chapter members needed to utilize skills learned in business classes and apply them to the "real world." Through an exclusive partnership with one community business, FBLA members in business classes would be able to use their business skills, such as salesmanship, computer applications, and marketing.

Another factor to be considered was the surrounding community and the businesses that could offer a diverse experience for the membership. After weighing all of the options and advantages, the Elmwood-Murdock FBLA chose to begin a partnership with Stock Seed Farms. Stock Seed Farms was chosen because of its longevity within the community, its international reputation, and a willingness by Dave Stock, president, to cooperate with the chapter. Dave Stock has been an advocate of FBLA's members and program of work throughout the past few years.





DEVELOPMENT



A partnership was generated out of mutual respect. While FBLA members aided the business by completing various business tasks, Mr. Stock and his staff volunteered time to educate members about the procedures necessary to maintain a successful business.

Description of the Business. Stock Seed Farms, located in Murdock, Nebraska, is a native grass and wildflower seed company. The wildflower and grass seeds are marketed to wholesale and retail establishments. One of its long-time marketing tools is a colored informational catalog. Just recently, however, Stock Seed Farms began selling its products over the Internet. The main market target is the Midwest because the product can be easily grown in that climate. The quality of the product and the use of the Internet as a marketing tool has expanded the company both nationally and internationally.

Customers include government agencies such as the Department of Transportation and Corps of Engineers, wildlife conservation organizations, parks, golf courses, and the backyards of many private estates. Stock Seed Farms employs ten full-time employees and three part-time employees. The work environment is both outdoor and indoor depending on the season. The facilities include two seed-cleaning areas, seed-drying facilities, numerous warehouses, and managerial offices.

Purpose and Goals. Based upon the needs of Stock Seed Farms and the educational opportunities for FBLA members, project goals were established.

Goal I: To promote competent, aggressive business leadership through the operation of a business.

Goal II: To introduce members to a thriving local community business while providing them with hands-on experience in business procedures.





STOCK SEED FARMS
PARTNERSHIP WITH BUSINESS PROJECT



Goal III: To provide Stock Seed Farms with assistance through a variety of business activities.

With the approval of president Dave Stock, Elmwood-Murdock FBLA began its partnership with Stock Seed Farms. This partnership involved participation in the marketing, publicity, production, salesmanship, and other day-to-day operational activities of Stock Seed Farms.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In order to coordinate, create, and promote this Partnership with Business Project, the roles and responsibilities for the participating members were defined.

The FBLA members learned the true meaning of leadership through the Partnership With Business Project with Stock Seed Farms. This lesson went beyond the classroom; through hands-on experience, members observed and developed necessary business skills. At the conclusion of the project, the members knew that true leaders are dependable, democratic, adaptable to change, well-prepared, and cooperative.

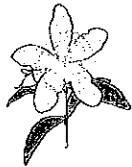
Whether they were committee chairpersons or committee members, everyone participating in the project utilized the following leadership skills:

1. Cooperation/Team Building: Working on committees and more importantly as team players was important in all aspects of the project.
2. Creativity: By generating visually pleasing displays and product designs, members had to use their imaginations to generate original ideas which would effectively present Stock Seed Farms and its products.





ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES



3. Responsibility: Members were expected to work certain hours and to finish tasks on time. Fortunately, they were exceptionally reliable.

4. Goal Setting: The chapter members knew how to set reachable, yet challenging goals for the project.

5. Determination: As the project progressed, members became more enthusiastic about their involvement. Their enthusiasm fueled their desire to succeed.

The responsibilities of the committees were as follows:

Executive Committee:

- *Review guidelines and establish a timeline for project completion
- *Act in an advisory capacity and provide motivation to committee chairpersons
- *Share feedback information with committee members
- *Complete final report

Education—High School Committee:

- *Invite Mr. Stock to participate in the Career Fair
- *Host a meeting at Stock Seed Farms
- *Tour Stock Seed Farms and learn current business practices from guest speakers

Education—Elementary Committee:

- *Utilize Stock Seed Farms products in the elementary school's butterfly flower garden
- *Promote a partnership with elementary children by creating a small business, Wonka II and More

Technology Committee:

- *Desktop publish Stock Seed Farms' brochure
- *Design a web page for Stock Seed Farms and "Native Turf Group"





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Marketing Committee:

- *Prepare product and promotional display for the local Elmwood Community Craft Show
- *Exhibit at the craft show
- *Design and utilize marketing strategies to sell at Bits and Pieces & More
- *Sell product at a basketball game

BUSINESS INVOLVEMENT

As a result of the partnership with Stock Seed Farms, Elmwood-Murdock FBLA became more familiar with the procedures of business operation. The business knowledge attained by the participating students included utilization of the following skills: business procedures, communications, salesmanship, computer application, advertising and marketing, and human and public relations. These skills were enhanced through activities completed during the Partnership with Business Project.

Education—High School

Career Fair. On Wednesday, October 28, the Elmwood-Murdock FBLA hosted its annual Career Fair. Stock Seed Farms' president Dave Stock informed FBLA members as well as other junior and senior high students about careers in agriculture, entrepreneurship, and international business.

FBLA Monthly Meeting. The Elmwood-Murdock FBLA chapter held its November meeting at Stock Seed Farms. In addition to the traditional meeting, Stock Seed Farms' associates graciously provided all 47 FBLA members in attendance with a tour and explanation of the facilities and marketing procedures. The tour not only enhanced members' knowledge of Stock Seed Farms' operations but also increased members' enthusiasm for the Partnership with Business Project. Mr. Stock addressed the production element while Rod Fritz discussed the marketing components.





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The high school education component enhanced FBLA members' knowledge of business procedures which accompany entrepreneurial and international business endeavors.

Education—Elementary

Wonka II and More. Instead of involving only high school students in the partnership, the FBLA chapter incorporated elementary students as well. The third grade children from Elmwood-Murdock elementary started a business that sold several products, one of which was flower seeds from Stock Seed Farms. The children were responsible for producing, marketing, and distributing their products. In order to simulate the entrepreneurship process, Stock Seed Farms sold bulk seed and envelope packets at wholesale price. Students colorfully decorated the envelopes, measured the seed, and sealed the packets.

With the help of FBLA members, the seed packets were then priced and sold by the elementary students at Parent-Teacher Conferences. The marketing and salesmanship skills learned from FBLA members enabled their business, Wonka II and More, to be a successful business earning over \$50! Just as any typical business is expected to repay their vendors for a product, elementary students also repaid Stock Seed Farms for the seed.

Flower Garden. A perennial butterfly garden exists at Elmwood-Murdock Elementary School and is maintained by the children and their teachers. FBLA members encouraged Stock Seed Farms to donate seed to further enhance the existing garden.

While elementary students learned about the components of entrepreneurship, FBLA members also enhanced their business skills. They adapted and shared their business knowledge in a manner which was understandable for young children. FBLA members then utilized communication and salesmanship skills that successfully enticed the children to





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become a part of the project and to recognize Stock Seed Farms' product line.

Technology Committee

Stock Seed Farms Brochure. Members created a promotional brochure for Stock Seed Farms by using desktop publishing. They were responsible for obtaining the information, designing a layout, and duplicating and delivering the brochure. The brochure describes the history, products, and means of contacting and ordering from Stock Seed Farms. Mr. Stock indicated that the brochures would be helpful when marketing his products at trade shows.

Web Page. Stock Seed Farms is a member of the "Native Turf Group," a membership of seed corporations from throughout the nation. FBLA members demonstrated to Stock Seed Farms' president Dave Stock an interest in web development. Therefore, Elmwood-Murdock FBLA members accepted the honor to construct Native Turf Group's first web page. Stock Seed Farms was credited for having FBLA members successfully complete the page.

Computer skills were enhanced through the development of the Stock Seed Farms' brochure and the "Native Turf Group" web page. The use of word processing, desktop publishing, PrintMaster web software, and html enabled committee members to produce quality marketing resources. They are valuable tools that can be utilized by Stock Seed Farms for many years. Communication skills were also developed by presenting project proposals to Stock Seed Farms' associates.

Marketing Committee

Craft Show. On Saturday, November 11, 1998, FBLA members displayed a booth promoting Stock Seed Farms at the Elmwood Community Craft Show. FBLA members displayed seed packets at the craft show. In preparation for this event, committees were assigned. A production committee utilized a





DEGREE OF INVOLVEMENT



Christmas theme to decorate the seed packets. The seed packets were displayed as ornaments on a Christmas tree.

A committee was also assigned to design and construct the booth. On the booth, there were photographs that depicted the different types of seed sold. Customers had an opportunity to view a 1998 Stock Seed Farms' annual catalog, as well as place orders for other merchandise from Stock Seed Farms. These ideas created a more unique and marketable way to present Stock Seed Farms' products to potential customers.

FBLA worked hourly shifts at the craft show. Members were responsible for initiating customer contacts, answering questions, and selling the seed packets.

Bits & Pieces and More. Elmwood-Murdock FBLA expanded Stock Seed Farms' market to the community of Elmwood by creating a display for the local consignment store, "Bits & Pieces and More." During the Christmas season, seed packet ornaments were displayed on a Christmas tree and sold. Community members identified them as ideal Christmas gifts.

Basketball Games. FBLA members recognized basketball games as another marketing prospect. They jumped at the chance to distribute seed packets to community patrons who were eager to purchase them.

The marketing component of the Partnership with Business project improved FBLA members' human and public relation skills and well as advertising techniques. Producing, selling, and marketing the products allowed members to feel as though they were operating the business. FBLA members identified it as successful and raised over \$150.

DEGREE OF INVOLVEMENT

Many hours were spent planning, developing, and implementing the project; additional hours were spent in personal contact with president Dave Stock and other Stock





CHAPTER INVOLVEMENT



Seed Farms associates. The hours were utilized in the following ways:

Activity	Time Spent
Executive Committee:	
Review Guidelines and Establish Timeline	2 hrs.
Set Goals and Plan Committees	4 hrs.
Complete Final Report	30 hrs.
Education—High School Committee:	
Organize Educational Opportunities	2 hrs.
Attend Mr. Stock's Career Fair Presentation	30 hrs.
Tour Facilities and Hear Presentations	67 hrs.
Education—Elementary Committee:	
Confirm Flower Garden Project	2 hrs.
Initiate Wonka II and More	2 hrs.
Educate Elementary on Business Procedures	8 hrs.
Produce and Sell Product	20 hrs.
Technology Committee:	
Desktop Publish Stock Seed Farms' Brochure	15 hrs.
Design Native Turf Group Web Page	30 hrs.
Marketing Committee:	
Prepare Products for Craft Show	30 hrs.
Exhibit Products at Craft Show	24 hrs.
Prepare Display for Bits and Pieces & More	4 hrs.
Sell Products at Basketball Games	<u>14 hrs.</u>
TOTAL	284 hrs.

CHAPTER INVOLVEMENT

Success of the project was due primarily to large membership participation. Fortunately, 100 percent of the chapter's members were involved in at least one aspect of the Partnership with Business Project. Additionally, many of these





P U B L I C I T Y



members were also involved in several components of the project.

Although Mandy Bornemeier and Jamie Stock were the primary chairpersons, responsibilities were delegated to other committee chairpersons. Rachel Klemme and Kristen McLaughlin were appointed to organize the High School Education Committee; Jeff Backemeyer and Lucas Stock chaired the Elementary Education Committee; Dan Aspnes was responsible for the Publicity Committee; and Laura Rikli was the chairperson of the Marketing Committee.

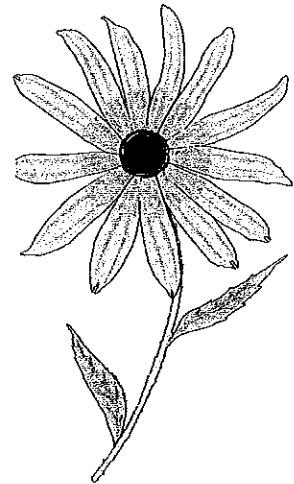
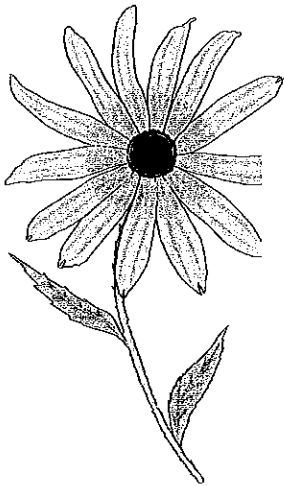
EVIDENCE OF PUBLICITY

Publicity was an important component for the success of this project. Articles were written for publication in the Plattsmouth Journal and the Nebraska FBLA Pledge. In addition, advertisements for the craft show were displayed throughout the communities of Elmwood and Murdock as well as in the elementary, junior high, and high school. Samples of this publicity are included in the Appendix.

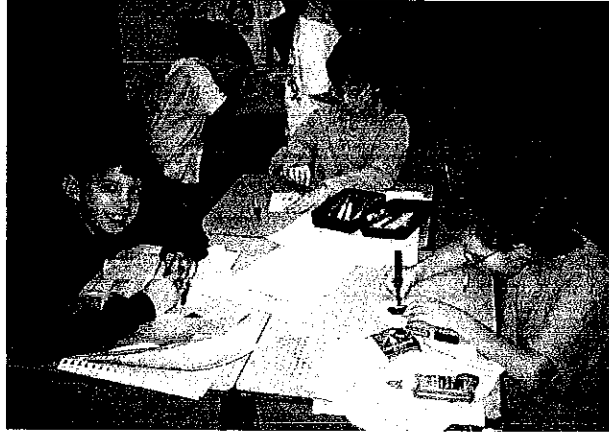
Elmwood-Murdock FBLA and Stock Seed Farms planted a successful partnership that will reap rewards for years to come!

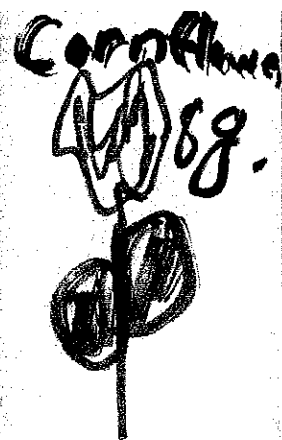


APPENDIX

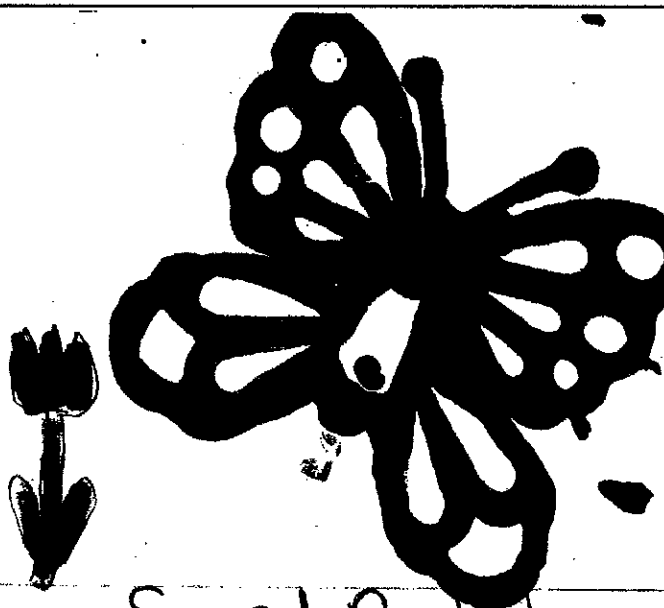


Third Graders Design Seed Packets.





ADVERTISING IS A KEY TO
GOOD BUSINESS!



Seed Packets

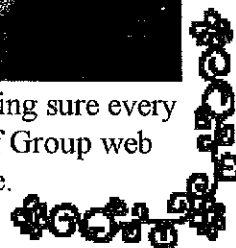
These two different varieties of seeds, the Cosmos and the Cornflower, could make your garden beautiful. Butterflies are especially attracted to them.



Do you want to see the new web page?



Mandy concentrates on making sure every element of the Native Turf Group web page is accurate.





Stock Seed Farms, Murdock, Nebraska

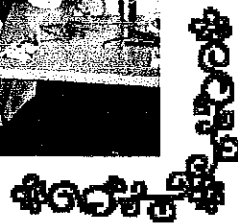
ELMWOOD-MURDOCK FBLA CAREER FAIR

The morning of Wednesday, October 28, the Elmwood-Murdock FBLA chapter hosted the annual career fair. The career fair began with keynote speaker, Gerri Cotter, from the University of Nebraska Career Services. Following the keynote address were three breakout sessions. The breakout sessions provided students with the opportunity to listen to speakers from the careers of their choice. These various careers included: Tom Carbon, Manufacturing Careers; Sgt. Robinson, Military Careers; Sen. Roger Wehrbein, Government Service; Dave Stock, Agricultural Careers and International Business; Sheriff William Bruggeman, Law Enforcement; Nadine Possehl and David Wiens, Job Market and Trends; Mark Pauley, Technology Careers; Terry Mead, Civil Engineering; and Susie Taylor, Nursing.

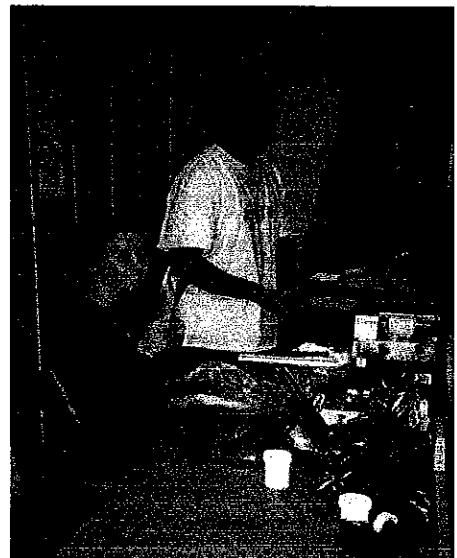
The 1998 FBLA Career Fair not only educated 8th through 12th grade students about various careers but also provided them with valuable knowledge for their futures.



Dave Stock, Career Fair Speaker



Production and Display of
Seed Packets "Ornaments"

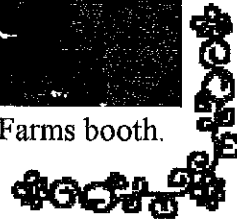




Dave Stock congratulates project chairpersons, Mandy and Jamie, on their creative craft show display.



Customers visit Stock Seed Farms booth.





Above: Stock Seed Farms' merchandise is sold during a basketball game.

Below: Article from Plattsmouth Journal

PARTNERSHIP WITH BUSINESS PROJECT BLOSSOMS!

Although the sun wasn't shining and there was snow on the ground, Elmwood-Murdock's FBLA Partnership with Business Project "blossomed" at the annual community craft fair. Elmwood-Murdock FBLA partnered with Stock Seed Farms to bring spring flowers to the snow shower!

On Saturday, November 11, 1998, FBLA members set up a promotional display for Stock Seed Farms at the craft show. FBLA members attained valuable persuasive and marketing skills by designing a booth, packaging the product, and working hourly shifts. Members sold "Bit O' Prairie" gift packages and seed packets decorated as Christmas ornaments. In addition, they designed an informative pamphlet describing the corporation and its product offerings.

The partnership between Stock Seed Farms and FBLA expanded beyond the craft show. One of the chapter's monthly meetings was held at Stock Seed Farm. Nearly fifty members attended the meeting and toured the facilities. As a speaker at the FBLA Career Fair, owner Dave Stock informed members about various aspects of owning a business: entrepreneurship, international business, and marketing.

Fortunately, the partnership between FBLA and Stock Seed Farms is still flourishing, but both organizations can still recall the day the partnership blossomed. Although the weather may not have been cooperative for the craft show, both FBLA members and customers were satisfied. While FBLA members gained valuable salesmanship experience, customers were blessed with a bit of spring, or more appropriately a "Bit O' Prairie," to brighten their day!



E-M FBLA
Elmwood-Murdock High School
Murdock, Nebraska 68407

Dear FBLA Members,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Elmwood-Murdock FBLA Chapter for a very enjoyable experience. The "Partnership With Business" project has been fun, challenging and educational for Stock Seed Farms and I hope it also has been for you.

I would like to evaluate what has taken place in the last few months and give you my perspective.

This last fall, I was very surprised by the interest and enthusiasm when I spoke at the Career Fair. The attendance to my talk on Agricultural and International Business was much larger then when I have spoken at other schools' Career Fairs. The questions were very good and it showed a sincere interest.

We very much enjoyed hosting your chapters business meeting on a cold and damp night in November. It was fun to show you around Stock Seed Farms Inc. and tell you what we are all about. Rod Fritz, Manager, and myself both were impressed with the groups behavior and maturity. Your meeting was very organized and well run.

I found the Christmas wildflower seed-marketing project to be a learning experience for us. That is a time of the year that our company has done very little marketing. While the amount of seed sold was small in comparison to our total sales, it did show us that there is a market for our products at that time of the year. Your Christmas packaging design is great and the idea of using a tree as a display is one that could be used as a counter top unit. Great job!

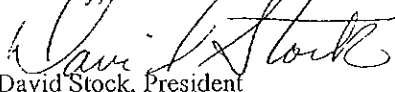
I also want to let you know that we plan to consolidate some of your ideas into a company promotional brochure that will be printed sometime this summer. It has been very helpful to get a new perspective in our advertising.

While we were not directly involved with the Elementary School project, I loved the seed packets that the children designed. Maybe some day we will use their "hand-made packets".

I am very excited about you developing a web site for one of our products. While we have had a successful web site for several years, the concept of having a site for just buffalo grass is new. From what I have seen so far, it should be successful. It also would not of gotten done this year without your help.

Once again I what to thank your group for a positive experience and I hope you will continue this project in the future so other businesses in our community can reap the same benefits that we have.

Sincerely,


David Stock, President
Stock Seed Farms Inc

28008 MILL ROAD, MURDOCK, NE 68407-2350
PHONE: 402-867-3771 • 800-759-1520 • FAX: 402-867-2442
e-mail: stockseed@navix.net • www.stockseed.com

Stock Seed Farms



Prairiegrasses & Wildflowers

We welcome you to look at the many ways seeds from STOCK SEED FARMS can provide beauty in any setting. Demand for wildflowers and warm-season grasses is currently higher than ever as these plants find their way into many seeding projects. Just as committing oneself to prairie landscapes is based on a long-term perspective, we ask you to look at your prairie planting needs over the next few years in the long term. We at STOCK SEED FARMS again say "thank you for your business, and thank you for your commitment to the prairie!"

The Stock Family
Lyle and Margaret
Dave and Linda

28008 Mill Rd
Murdock, NE 68407-2350
Phone: 402-867-3771
E-Mail: STOCKSEED@NAVIX.NET
WWW.STOCKSEED.COM

With the help and encouragement of Soil Conservation Service and University of Nebraska personnel, Lyle has spent the past 40-plus years as a recognized leader in the production of prairie grass seed. The business is now run by son and daughter-in-law, Dave and Linda. With the help, encouragement and family-like loyalty of customers like you, STOCK SEED FARMS has been allowed to continue its founders' mission and to expand the use of prairie plants, nationwide.

The Stock family invites you to enjoy the beautiful array of year-long colors and textures that nature provides in every prairie planting. Carrying on the couple's commitment to soil, water and energy conservation will be the best gift you can give.

STOCK SEED FARMS was founded by Lyle and Margaret Stock who harvested their first acres of Nebraska Certified grass seed in 1956. The seed was a new release from the Agriculture Experiment Station called, Nebr. 28 Switch grass. The warm-season native grass allowed Lyle to act on his strong commitment to soil conservation and to diversify his traditional corn and soybean farm near Murdock, Nebraska.

STOCK SEED FARMS sells Grasses, Wildflowers, and Mixtures. We invite you to call our toll-free number 1-800-759-1520 to request a copy of our catalog. The catalog a photograph and detailed description of each item listed, as well as planting tips and suggestions for the many uses of prairie plantings. Feel free to visit our web page at www.stockseed.com. We would love to have you e-mail your comments to: stockseed@navix.net.



GRASSES:



WILDFLOWERS:



MIXTURES:

