

**TICKED OFF**

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ADPR 489 Campaigns

# **Social Media Marketing Strategy**

Campaign Brand: Nebraska Tick  
Testing

**SPRING 2026**

# **EVERY TICK TELLS A STORY.**

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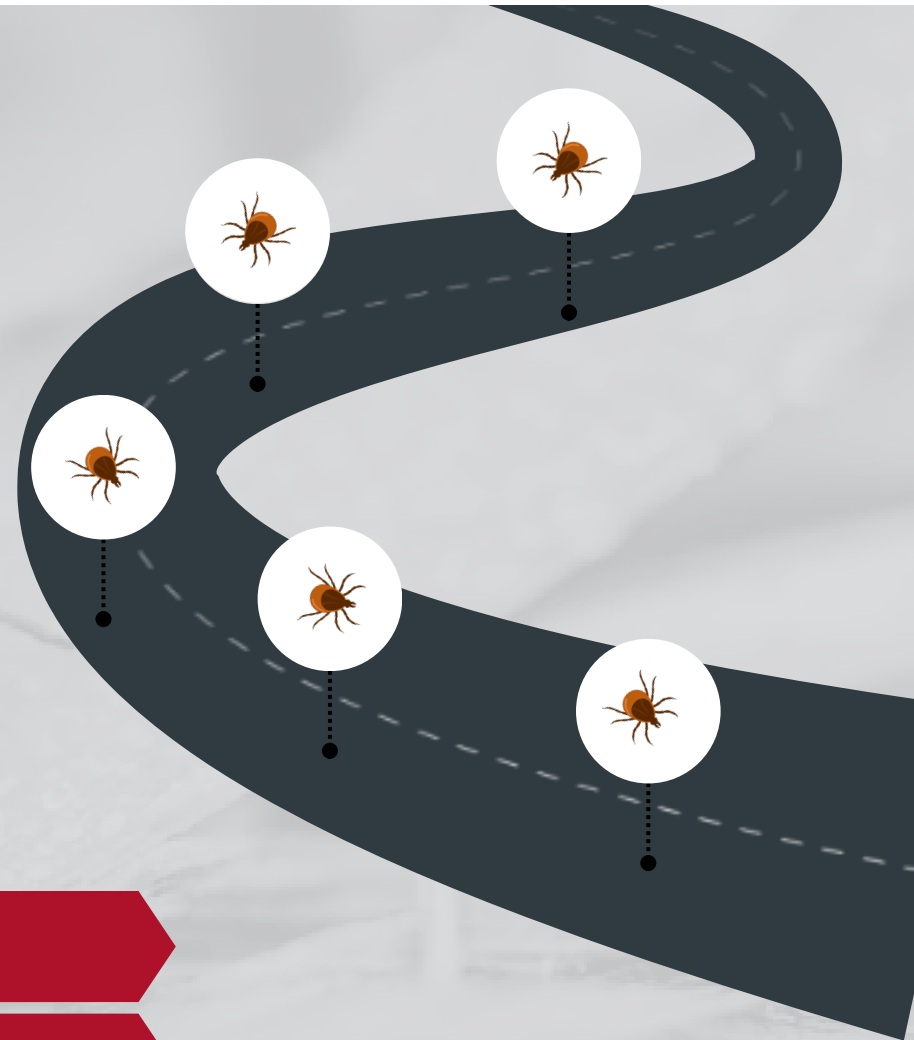
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The goal of our campaign is to increase NeTT's brand awareness across Nebraska to drive higher statewide tick submissions by the end of the tick season. The Nebraska Tick Testing (NeTT) center is a year-round public health program tick testing center that encourages Nebraska residents to submit ticks found across the state to their testing center to gather research on tick-borne illnesses.

Our main problem is the automatic reaction individuals often have of seeing a tick and immediately flicking it. We want to combat that with our big idea: Every Tick Tells a Story, Submit Yours Today. It targets the moment of action and promotes submissions to be shared online. People who have a distaste toward ticks can feel empowered to spend time outdoors after knowing they can learn something meaningful with the ticks they may/will find.

Our target audience is individuals who are active and spend a lot of time outdoors, especially parents who are concerned about their children's and pets' safety, and who are looking for a free way to test the ticks their kids may come into contact with.



1.

Increase Program Awareness across Nebraska



2.

Increase Number of Submissions



3.

Interrupt the Decision Moment when Handling Ticks

- **Stickers** - Ease of information. Can be placed on bags. Graphics can be used on other print/digital content.
- **Flyers** - To be handed out at in-person events. Graphic-heavy -> Strong messaging.
- **Brochures** - To be handed out at in-person events. More information than flyers.
- **Coloring Book** - To target the kids in a light-hearted but educational way that still gets the message across.
- **Owned Media** - Creating conversation about NeTT in spaces where our target audience frequents grows familiarity and trust.

## Content & Materials



## Points of Contact

- **Waiting rooms:** Spreads awareness, gets parents' attention for their children.
- **Nebraska Game and Park trailheads:** Spreads awareness to people who spend time outdoors and allows for points of contact information.
- **Vet offices:** Spreads awareness to pet owners who may be bringing in their pets for tick bites/ or ticks on them.
- **NeTT website:** Directly connects and distributes informative content.

**Tick research is advancing.**

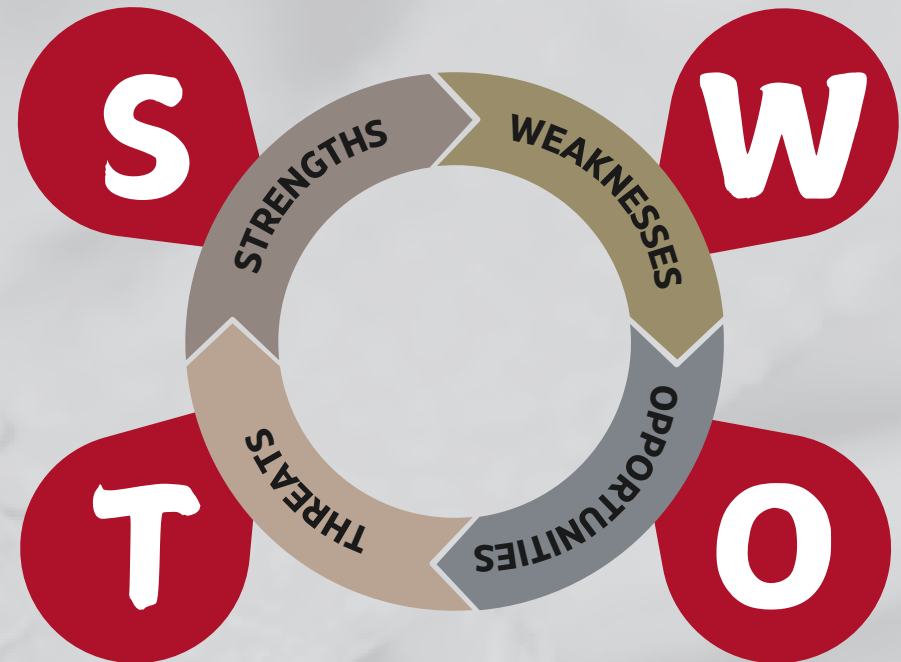
Both state and national research centers are collecting data on health information related to pathogens and the data they carry. According to the CDC, "...working to establish enhanced surveillance and research platforms for Lyme disease using electronic health records (EHRs) from large healthcare systems in areas of the U.S. with a high incidence of Lyme disease. The Surveillance Based Lyme Disease Network is comprised of partners in healthcare systems from Maine, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin..."

**Due to the national data being sought, national and state public health initiatives are trying to gain people's attention.**

However, it has not yet entered the mainstream ideas. 31 million people are reported bitten by ticks each year (CDC, Tick data), however 42% of ticks are found to indicate they carry at least one pathogen (TickCheck, "Tick Testing Data") although 51.2% of those interviewed about their views on tick diseases reported they are aware but do nothing to combat it. (Hook, Nelson, & Mead, 2015).

**The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services has reached 39 counties so far.**

The majority of submissions are coming from Douglas and Lancaster counties. The current perception of ticks in these areas is much more closely tied to general bug perception. This tracks through as western rural areas find bugs less off-putting, meaning they are far less bothered by the presence of ticks. According to Yamamoto and Yamaguchi (2021), "Urbanization reduces insect knowledge, and this decreased knowledge results in a wider range of insects that elicit disgust."



**STRENGTHS**

- Low-cost/ free
- Add to public health data
- Existing Partnerships (medical + research)

**WEAKNESSES**

- Low public awareness
- Limited funding
- Complex messaging importance

**OPPORTUNITIES**

- Increase awareness
- Expand into rural communities
- Utilizing social and local media

**THREATS**

- Competing test services
- Lack of public understanding



## PRIMARY AUDIENCE:

Mothers in Nebraska  
Outdoor-active families  
(yards, parks, recreation)



## SECONDARY AUDIENCE:

Veterinarians  
Healthcare providers  
Outdoor/community  
organizations



## BEHAVIORS

Frequently engage in outdoor activities:  
Hiking, yard work, walking pets (most common)  
Tick exposure is common:  
184 respondents encountered ticks  
Found on pets (117), self (111), family members (25)  
More likely to remove/dispose of ticks than test them  
Turn to vets or doctors when concerned



## DEMOGRAPHICS

PRIMARILY AGES 35–44  
MOSTLY SUBURBAN  
55% PET OWNERS



## MOTIVATIONS

PROTECT CHILDREN  
PROTECT PETS  
PEACE OF MIND  
CONTRIBUTE TO  
COMMUNITY HEALTH  
INCENTIVES



## BARRIERS

LACK OF AWARENESS  
DON'T KNOW WHERE/  
HOW TO SEND TICKS  
TIME/EFFORT REQUIRED  
LACK OF UNDERSTANDING  
OF IMPORTANCE  
PERCEIVED COST



## PARTNERSHIPS

VETERINARIANS  
HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS  
OUTDOOR/COMMUNITY  
ORGANIZATIONS

## **CATEGORY INSIGHT**

Most people know ticks are “gross” or annoying, but many underestimate the real health risks associated with tick-borne diseases.

## **BRAND INSIGHT**

NeTT offers free, science-backed tick testing to provide peace of mind, but awareness of the service remains low.

## **CONSUMER INSIGHT**

People who spend time outdoors value safety, but often, “brush off” tick bites; assuming they are no big deal unless symptoms appear.

## **ONE AREA OF CONCERN: LONG-TERM INCURABLE DISEASE**

Age group: 25-44

Top communication methods: social media/healthcare office

Reason to Submit: public health initiative

Motivation: Information about submitted tick/diseases in the area

# Testing Ticks Keeps Everyone Informed

## Single Minded Message

### Brand Strategy

NeTT should feel approachable, trustworthy, and not scary, so moms see it as a helpful resource to keep their families safe.



### Audience Strategy

The targeted moms in Nebraska live active lives, often outdoors with their kids. Many of them do not think much about tick bites until symptoms appear, so we focused on that mindset. We wanted to show them that even if a tick bite seems small, testing it is a simple way to protect their family and community.

### Communication Strategy

We used simple and relatable messaging like “every tick tells a story”. We wanted moms to feel like this is something quick and easy they can do to protect their kids, so we avoided complicated language and focused more on easy steps.

## Positioning Statement

Nebraska Tick Testing is a free, reliable resource that helps protect families by identifying tick-borne disease.

# The Big Idea

**EVERY TICK TELLS A  
STORY, SUBMIT YOURS  
TODAY!**



Every tick carries unknown information, from where it's from to what it carries. By reframing each tick and experience involving its discovery as a "story," it changes fear into curiosity. This turns the risk of the unknown into peace of mind.

## NETT PERSONAL GOAL

- Metric: Geographic coverage (county participation)
- Baseline: 39 counties (2025)
- Target: All 93 counties within 5 years
- Short-Term Target (Year 1): 55–65 counties
- Measurement Method: Submission location data
- Metric: Total submissions
- Baseline: 608 submissions / 497 valid samples (2025)
- Target:
  - Achievable: 730–850 submissions (+20–40%)
  - Ideal: 910–1,030 submissions (+50–70%)
- Measurement Method: Internal NeTT submission records

## AWARENESS KPI

- Website Traffic
- Metric: Total visits to NeTT landing page
- Baseline: Current average traffic
- Target: +50–80% increase in traffic
- Measurement Method: Google Analytics
  - (Rationale: Awareness must grow faster than submissions to fill the funnel and drive conversion.)

## ENGAGEMENT KPI

- Time on Site
- Metric: Average time spent on landing page
- Baseline: Current session duration
- Target: +25–40% increase
- Measurement Method: Google Analytics
  - (Rationale: Higher engagement indicates users are learning the process and considering submission.)

## CONVERSION KPIS

- Tick Submissions (Primary Conversion)
- Metric: Number of ticks submitted
- Baseline: 608 submissions (2025)
- Target:
  - Achievable: +20–40% (730–850)
  - Ideal: +50–70% (910–1,030)
- Measurement Method: Internal submission tracking

# Media Strategy



## Channel Roles

We will be using a mix of physical and digital media. Children's coloring sheets, two informational entertaining videos, an online game, and flyers, it will bring immediate awareness to mothers and children who spend time outdoors.

## Audience Touchpoints

These touch points are strategically placed at moments when tick exposure is most relevant and guides them from awareness to tick submission.

## Rationale

These channel roles will produce exposure across multiple environments. These spots will advertise NeTT as we are focusing on parents and people who spend a lot of time outdoors.

## Match KPI's

Tracking reach engagement rates on digital content, website traffic from QR code scans, and evaluating the number of tick submissions to NeTT.

01

## AWARENESS

- Posters at Nebraska Game and Parks
- Doctor and vet office waiting rooms
- Stickers
- Press release and local media coverage

02

## CONSIDERATION

- Visit website to learn process
- Understand benefits (protect kids, pets, peace of mind)
- See that testing is free and easy
- Learn how to submit ticks step by step

03

## ENGAGEMENT

- QR codes linking to website
- Educational videos and website content
- Coloring pages for kids (with submission guide)
- Stickers that explain how to submit

04

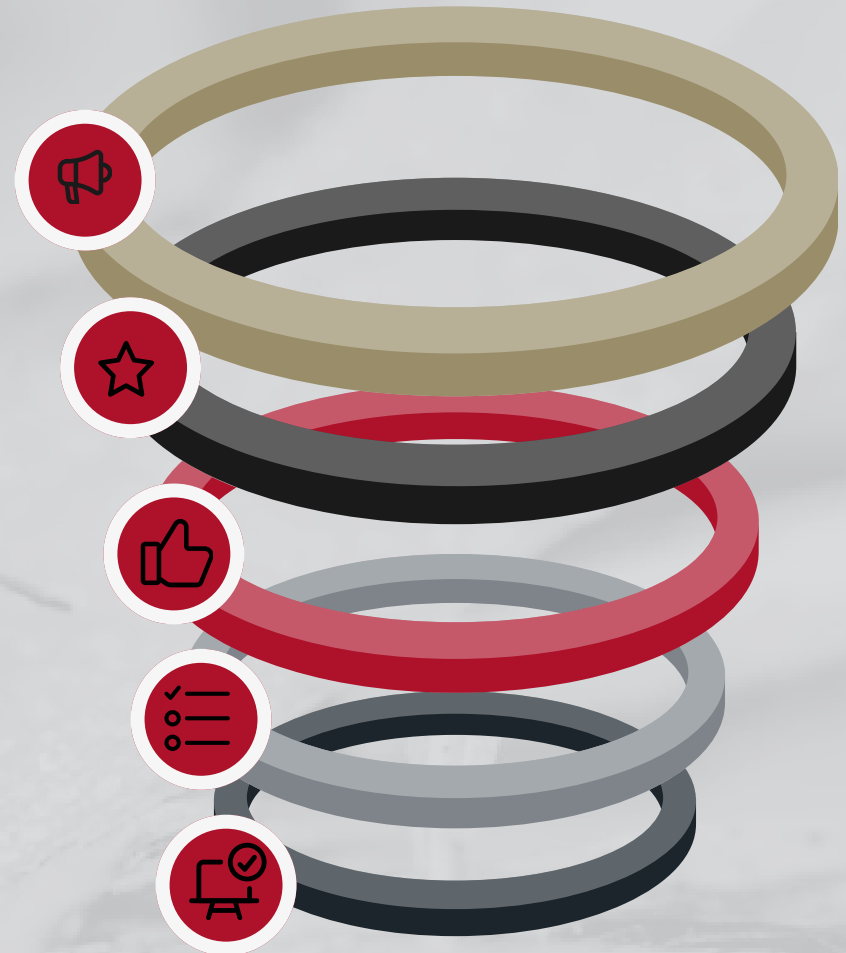
## ACTION

- Collect and save tick
- Submit tick to NeTT
- Scan QR/ visit the landing page
- Follow submission instructions

05

## DATA

- Campaign introduces brand through broad promotions
- Utilizing increasing KPIs to indicate what to hone in on second summer

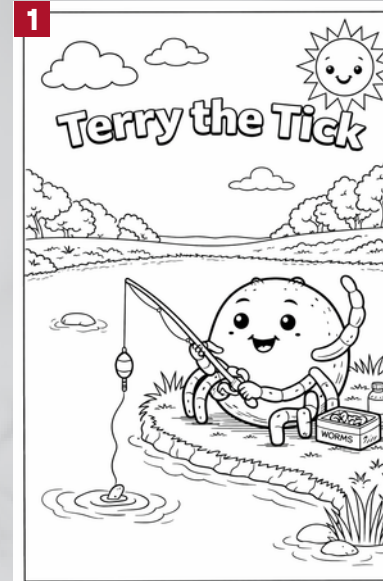


# Creative Executions



## 1. Coloring Pages with Submission Guides on the Back

For tick testing to become normalized in the households of these mothers, we introduced the idea of personifying the tick with a story to appeal to all members of her family. We have multiple mockups, and though they are directed towards kids, the message to the mothers is that “every tick has a story; look where this one has been.” The submission guide on the back keeps physical instructions nearby for parents to reference.



## 2. Videos for websites

Creating a multimedia mix to be displayed on the NeTT website allows for the messaging to be consumed in several ways. Utilized on NeTT website and location services driven Youtube ads. [LINK IN APPENDIX](#)

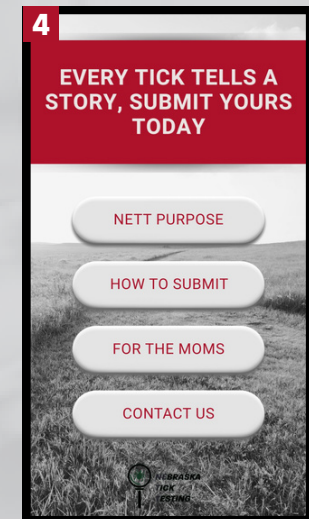
## 3. NeTT Poster for Trailheads

Through partnerships at Nebraska state parks, we hope to draw the mothers in with a graphic labeling places where a tick has gone before it ended up in Nebraska. It illustrates the type of journey the tick has been on, featuring a QR code to the website. The goal is to catch our target audience at the point of contact with a tick.



## 4. Landing Page for Cellphones

We wanted them to be able to find and access as much of the information as they need to understand why they are being asked to participate. Having the pages clearly labeled makes it suitable for someone to scan with their phone while they are on the go.



## 5. Press Release

To fully capture attention, we know that we need to hit as many touchpoints as possible, with the 5:00 pm news as a perfect opportunity. These mothers are cooking an early dinner before running around and taking care of any nighttime tasks, so we know that they typically partake in news in the evening. [LINK IN APPENDIX](#)

## 6. Blog Post

In a digital age, mothers want to feel informed about health-related decisions in their household. With this, we want to make sure that when searching for tick testing, our blog with comes up; giving them all the pertinent information. [LINK IN APPENDIX](#)

## 7. Stickers for submission ziplocs

These stickers have a bit more information on them. We understand that in rural areas, it can be non-conducive to tell someone to go to our website later on to learn how to submit. The idea is to have these stickers in a Ziploc bag so that the instructions are paired with the means to submit them.

## 8. Paid Search Marketing Terms

Paid Search allows NeTT to push its website listing to the top of local search results, driving more traffic and providing easier access. Budgeted words: NETT, UNMC Ticks, Nebraska Ticks, Tick Testing.

**Tone:** Reassuring, practical, empowering, not overly-clinical

**Visual Direction:** Clean, informative, family-friendly

**Messaging:** Short, action-based phrases that focus on what to do, not just danger



This campaign simplifies behavior, removes friction, and meets the target where decisions happen: at home, at the park, and in daily routines.

## PRINT & EDUCATION MATERIALS: \$3,015

- Posters for parks, clinics, and vet offices: \$900
- Brochures/flyers: \$700
- Stickers: \$450
- Coloring sheets/books: \$650
- QR Code/Print setup: \$315

## DISTRIBUTION/COMMUNITY OUTREACH: \$1,410

- Printing and distribution supplies \$600
- Press release/media kit materials: \$250
- Community/event handout: \$560

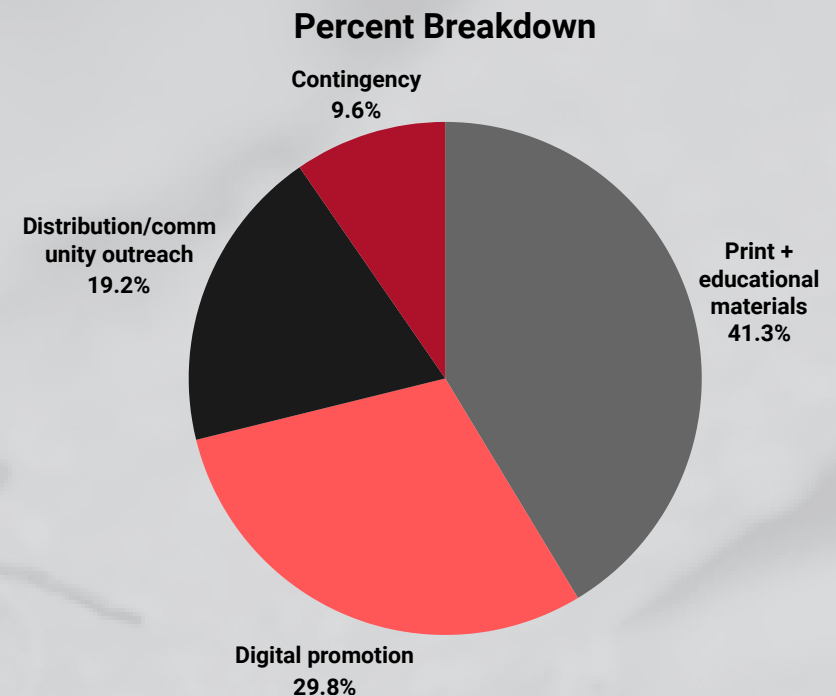
## DIGITAL PROMOTION: \$2,175

- Paid Instagram/Facebook/Youtube ads: \$1,200
- Boosted posts/local awareness ads: \$500
- Graphic/landing page for cell phone: \$300
- Paid Search Marketing Terms: \$175

## CONTINGENCY: \$700

- Extra money set aside for unexpected campaign costs, such as reprints, added supplies, or last-minute needs.

## TOTAL CAMPAIGN BUDGET \$7,300



Since NeTT is a public health awareness campaign, the budget focuses on simple and low-cost materials that Nebraska families can easily access. Most of the money goes toward printed educational materials in places like parks, clinics, and vet offices, while digital promotion helps reach more people online during peak tick season.

**The Ticked Off campaign positions NeTT at the center of a simple but powerful behavior shift: transforming the instinct to flick off a tick into an opportunity to learn, protect, and contribute to the health of communities across Nebraska.**

By using clear messaging, family-focused education, and strategic placement where tick encounters happen, this campaign closes the awareness gap so residents can use a free, science-backed resource for their safety.

By grounding our strategy in real Nebraskan experiences, emotional drivers, and the lived concerns of parents and outdoor-active families, we created a campaign that meets people at the moment of decision. Our creative executions empower residents with knowledge, reduce fear through understanding, and highlight the collective impact of each submission on statewide disease surveillance. Through our multifaceted work, we are able to keep NeTT in front of our target, becoming part of their tick routine.

With a cohesive media plan, accessible educational tools, and a message that reframes ticks from something to fear into something to learn from, NeTT is positioned to increase submissions, strengthen public health data, and build long-term trust with communities across the state.

**Every tick tells a story. Submit yours today.**

## RESEARCH COLLECTION

[https://unlcorexmuw.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_5yDREv4g1GZBBXg](https://unlcorexmuw.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5yDREv4g1GZBBXg)  
NEW LINK  
Took me 2:30 minutes to complete

**SCREENER**

1. Do you currently live in Nebraska, Iowa, or Kansas?  
 • Yes — Continue  
 • No — Screen out with message: "Thank you for your interest. This survey is currently only for Nebraska, Iowa, or Kansas residents."

2. ARE YOU 18+?  
 • Yes - continue  
 • No - Screen out Message

The Nebraska Tick Testing (NeTT) center is a year-round public health program tick testing center that encourages Midwest residents to submit ticks found across the state to their testing center to gather research on tick-borne illnesses, getting both you and all of Nebraska the data needed to help detect and prevent health risks. This survey's goal is to help NeTT better understand public awareness, motivations, and barriers related to tick testing. Your responses will provide valuable insights that can guide efforts to increase submissions and expand statewide awareness of the program.

2. How often do you spend time outdoors in parks, trails, grassy/wooded areas, or engage in outdoor activities from April to September (hiking, camping, hunting, fishing, etc.)?  
 • Daily  
 • A few times a week  
 • A few times a month  
 • Once a month or less  
 • Rarely/Never

Q1	Q2	Q2_10_TEXT	Q3	Q4
How often do you spend time outdoors in parks, trails, grassy/wooded areas, or engage in outdoor activities from April to October (hiking, camping, hunting, fishing, etc.)?	Which outdoor activities do you participate in? (Select all that apply) - Selected Choice	Which outdoor activities do you participate in? (Select all that apply) - Other (please specify) - Text	3. How often do you encounter ticks when spending time outdoors from April to October?	Have you found a tick on a family member in the last 5 years?
A few times a week	Hiking or walking trails, Fishing, Gardening or yard work, Walking pets		Occasionally	I found one
A few times a month	Hiking or walking trails, Fishing, Gardening or yard work, Outdoor work (farming, landscaping, etc.)		Occasionally	Yes, on member
A few times a week	Gardening or yard work, Walking pets		Occasionally	Yes, on p
A few times a week	Camping, Fishing, Gardening or yard work, Walking pets, Outdoor work (farming, landscaping, etc.)		Frequently	Yes, on r member elsewhere
A few times a week	Hiking or walking trails, Camping, Gardening or yard work, Walking pets		Rarely	Yes, on f
Daily	Hiking or walking trails, Gardening or yard work, Walking pets, Outdoor work (farming, landscaping, etc.)		Frequently	Yes, on r
Daily	Hiking or walking trails, Walking pets		Frequently	Yes, on r

## PRIMARY RESEARCH SURVEY RESPONSES

## PRIMARY RESEARCH SURVEY DOCUMENT



## OWNED MEDIA



NeTT, a program of UNMC | College of Public Health  
Community Science • Outdoor Safety • Tick Awareness  
[unmc.edu/publichealth/cscash/nebraska-tick-testing](http://unmc.edu/publichealth/cscash/nebraska-tick-testing)  
Dr. Shaun Cross, Laboratory Director | 402-559-4960

Ready to submit a tick? [unmc.edu/publichealth/cscash/nebraska-tick-testing](http://unmc.edu/publichealth/cscash/nebraska-tick-testing)

### Every Tick Tells a Story. Submit Yours Today.

Why Nebraska families should mail their ticks to researchers and how to do it in five minutes

By the NeTT Research Team, led by Dr. Shaun Cross | UNMC College of Public Health | [Publication Date]

## BLOG



#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: [Communications Contact Name]  
Email: [email@unmc.edu]  
Phone: 402-559-4960  
Date: [Month Day, Year]  
NeTT, a program of UNMC • College of Public Health  
984355 Nebraska Medical Center, Omaha, NE 68198-4355

### Nebraska Researchers Want Your Ticks and They Will Test Them for Free

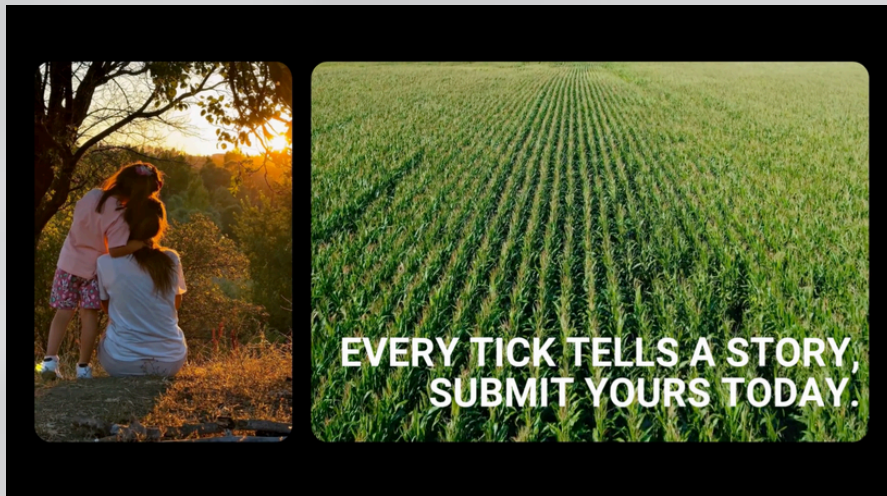
NeTT, a program of UNMC, launches statewide tick surveillance campaign as lone star ticks expand northward into Nebraska

"Every Tick Tells a Story. Submit Yours Today."

LINCOLN, Neb. After the kids come home from a day at the park, or the family wraps up a

## PRESS RELEASE

## CONTENT COLLECTION



WEBSITE VIDEO



CHILDREN'S SUBMISSION  
GUIDE VIDEO

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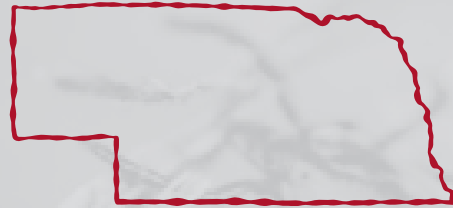
TICKED OFF

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**Thank You,**

**EVERY TICK TELLS A  
STORY.**



**LET US HELP  
NEBRASKANS TELL  
THEIRS.**

TICKED OFF  
2026 APRIL 27