



January 2016 | Membership Newsletter

Phil Kozera Letter from the Executive Director



Executive Director
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Getting the year off to a great start

For Bio Nebraska, the year has kicked off with a flurry of activity. With the short 60-day legislative session that opened January 6th, there is pressure to move quickly with all new bills introduced during the first 10 legislative days. We were fortunate to host a gathering of state senators, which provided a great opportunity to highlight our industry.

We are monitoring several bills from last year, including LB331, the Bioscience Impact Opportunity Act. We are also pleased to have Senator Morfeld introduce LB987 to develop a Bioscience Steering Committee. During Governor Ricketts' State of the State address, he outlined the need to grow Nebraska's economy. The life sciences industry offers Nebraskans high-wage and high-growth opportunities, with an average salary of \$59,000. LB987 would bring strategic direction to growing more of these jobs.

On the legislative front, our association will again be represented by Katie Zulkoski of Zulkoski Weber. If there are specific issues of interest to you or your company, please contact us.

Bio Nebraska is excited to welcome Courtney Dentlinger. Courtney is the new director of the Department of Economic Development. She brings a wealth of experience to the position. As a Nebraskan with years of economic development experience, she will work to promote Nebraska's assets and grow a 21st Century economy. We look forward to introducing Director Dentlinger to our member companies.

We are continuing to partner with the Department of Economic Development on a workforce study. Workforce is a barrier to growth for many of our member companies and we are aiming to gather information on our industry to help build solutions. If you haven't yet spoken to him, please expect a call from Jacob Knutson. You can also reach out to him at Jacob.knutson@nebraska.gov.

The strength of Nebraska's biotech community is based on the people driving growth, collaboration and successes in our industry. We are excited about a new feature for this year's newsletter called

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opportunities,
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Nebraska Bioscience Leader, which will highlight people making a difference in our industry. This section will alternate with our *Member Company Spotlight* feature and help keep the newsletter fresh and evolving.

Finally, we have lots of valuable activities planned throughout 2016. The first event is Bio & Beers, set for January 28th at the Upstream in the Old Market. We will welcome Ben Stobbe and Suzanne Torroni from the University of Nebraska Medical Center. They will showcase the world of cutting-edge medical training. I hope to see you all there.



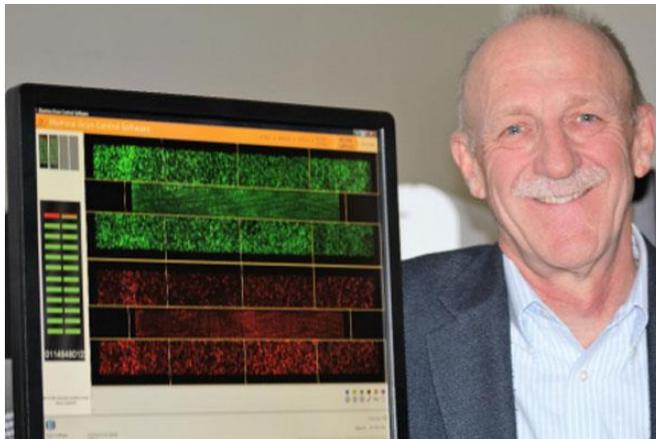
Phil Kozera
Executive Director

Bioscience Leader Spotlight

Rapid growth driving expansion at GeneSeek

Featuring Stewart Bauck, General Manager, Neogen
GeneSeek Operations

*Stewart Bauck showcases the
display of DNA gene markers
detected by an Illumina array.*



Neogen GeneSeek operations in Lincoln has grown from startup to a leader in agricultural DNA testing. As General Manager for the operation, Dr. Stewart Bauck describes the company's journey thus far and its vision of the future.

Q: Dr. Bauck, what is new at Neogen and how is business going?

A: This past year has been one of significant growth. Our new facility, which we moved into about two years ago, is being expanded to increase our capacity to receive and process tissue samples for plants and animals that are used in various facets of agriculture. All told, this new space will add about 2000 square

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feet to our operation and make several areas larger to accommodate more people and equipment.

Q: It sounds like your business is really growing. What can you tell us about that?

A: Our business is focused on genotyping or sequencing samples from animals and plants, for customers on a global basis. They use genomics to help make selection and breeding decisions that support their program objectives. With the ever-increasing acceptance, awareness and use of genomic technology in agriculture, the demand has grown steadily. This past December, for example, we processed a record number of DNA samples, and we are approaching 200,000 received per month. We are fortunate to be able to bring on more customers and our existing clients are increasing the volume of work they send to us. This is good but it is also causing us to work very hard to meet these workflows and add on people and equipment to manage growth. Our company, Neogen Corp., is also expanding genomics capacity in other parts of the world, including Canada, Brazil, Scotland, Australia/New Zealand and China.

Q: To what do you attribute the success of Neogen GeneSeek?

A: Many things really. We are fortunate that our founders, Abe Oommen and Daniel Pomp, had a unique vision and worked very hard to have a successful startup. Many of their early employees are still with GeneSeek and provide a critical knowledge base. After acquiring GeneSeek, Neogen has invested wisely and significantly in new facilities, technology and people. Those actions give us the capacity to be where we are today. We are good at many things, but one thing making us unique is a strong capability to provide the most advanced, and affordable, genotyping services in growing markets. One sign of this is, our key technology collaborator, Illumina, is now distributing some of our arrays around the world. Illumina is regarded as one of if not *the* global leader in DNA and genomic test arrays. They think enough of our test design expertise that they will essentially re-distribute their arrays with our content design. This is a sign that we are doing great science with Illumina and it is a true collaboration. GeneSeek is also working with scientists all over the world to design DNA tests that explain variation in livestock and plants. The field is constantly transforming and it is an exciting time to be part of it.

Q: What are some of your big challenges?

A: Well, high growth has meant we are needing to hire lots of people. And so workforce development is an ongoing challenge. We also have been introducing a number of new product lines of late and have invested significant time and energy into those efforts. Another thing that some of our customers challenge us to improve is to become more widely known. So our response has been to do a better job of that. One important customer told us we should not settle for being "the best kept secret in Lincoln, Nebraska."

Q: You have a diverse background. You have worked abroad and lived in other parts of the U.S. And you have taken over GeneSeek in Lincoln. What do you think of doing business in Nebraska?

News Briefs

We are on the lookout for news from member organizations.

Please send us your press releases, suggestions and article links by emailing them to Phil at pkozera@bionebraska.org.

Please also add us to press release distribution list so we can help spread news for you!

A: My wife, Louise, and I have loved moving to Lincoln. Louise is also a veterinarian and her specialization is avian medicine. So in between teaching biology at Nebraska Wesleyan, she volunteers with the Raptor Recovery Center east of Lincoln and absolutely loves the work. From my perspective, Lincoln is nearly perfect for GeneSeek. It gives us ready access to the vast and diverse market of North American agriculture. And it allows for us to develop synergistic relationships with entities like the University of Nebraska. And everywhere we go, we make it a point to say, "if you are driving down Interstate 80, and find yourself near Lincoln, Nebraska, we hope that you will stop by to see the world's largest commercial agricultural genomics testing lab." And I am pleased to tell you that we get a lot of takers on that standing offer. So from our perspective, Lincoln is a very hospitable home.

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State News

[Gov. Ricketts outlines agenda in annual address to lawmakers](#)

In Gov. Pete Ricketts' second State of the State address at the Capitol, he identified ag land property tax relief as his top priority for 2016. The governor urged "lawmakers to pass a package that would slow the statewide growth in property taxes and to reject any proposals that expand Medicaid." The governor's proposals also include "an infrastructure bank that would accelerate work on road and bridge projects." He told senators the state could balance its budget without using its cash reserve if lawmakers utilized unspent money from state agencies, transfers from cash accounts and reduced new spending. "We need to grow Nebraska's economy, create more and better paying jobs, keep our kids and grandkids here, and attract people from all over the country to come and make Nebraska their home. Our three largest industries are agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism and they all require a strong transportation infrastructure to expand," Ricketts said, outlining his agenda during his second annual State of the State address. [Governor's office](#)

[Signs of concern for Nebraska economy](#)

UNL's latest leading economic indicator report shows that "growth in the Nebraska economy may be less strong than previously thought during the first half of 2016." According to the article, "the leading indicator declined in December due to another strong increase in the value of the U.S. dollar, which hampers export-based businesses." While business expectations were positive, "there also was a decline in airline passenger counts and manufacturing hours during the month and a slight decrease in building permits for single-family homes." [Lincoln Journal Star](#)

[Farm Credit services funds science literacy project at UNL](#)

To help more Nebraska students of all ages gain an understanding of science and agriculture, Farm Credit Services of America has given \$100,000 to bolster the Science Literacy Initiative at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The gift to the University of

Dmitry Oleynikov, a professor of surgery at the University of

Nebraska Foundation will support the university's efforts to integrate agriculture and natural resource education into pre-K through 12th grade curriculum through a combination of programs and research at the local, state, national and international levels. More information is available at <http://casnr.unl.edu/grow-eat-learn>. UNL Newsroom

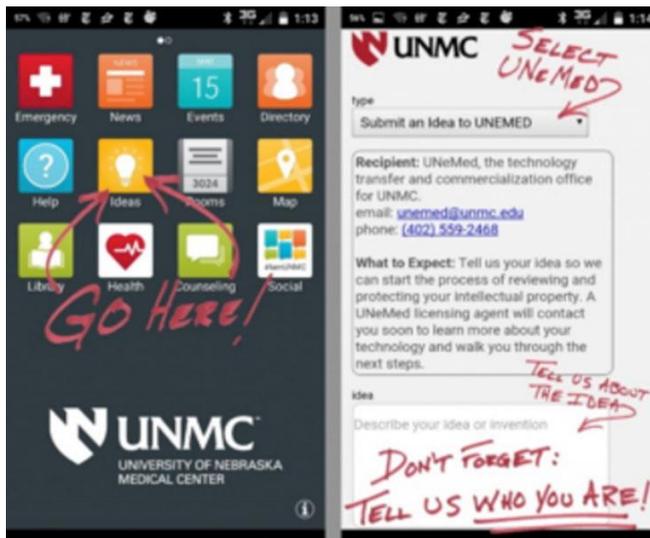
Virtual Incision LLC to locate at Nebraska Innovation Campus

Nebraska Medical Center, operates a surgical robot as in the background Shane Farritor, an engineering professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, adjusts the camera on the surgical subject.



Nebraska Innovation Campus has announced a new partner. Dan Duncan, executive director of NIC, said that Virtual Incision Corp. will move into space on campus in early 2016. Virtual Incision is a startup company founded by faculty members at the University of Nebraska Medical Center and University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The firm is developing a first-of-its-kind, miniaturized robot for abdominal surgical procedures. "Virtual Incision is NIC's first medical device company and will hopefully pave the way for more to follow," Duncan said. UNL Newsroom

UNMC App invites Med School innovators to submit ideas



A new feature on UNMC's mobile app now allows any user to quickly submit an idea to UNeMed. The UNMC app is entirely free, and is available on both [Apple](#) and [Android](#) platforms. UNeMed welcomes all ideas, inventions and discoveries from any UNMC faculty, students and staff. To submit an idea, open the application, and select the light-bulb icon which is marked as "Ideas." [UNeMed](#)

[UNeMed reviews successes of 2015](#)

Before moving forward it's often useful to pause for a moment and reflect on the year that was. Here's Charles Litton's review of some of UNeMed's key developments and accomplishments, highlighting hard work and innovation in a diverse and successful top 10 from 2015. [UNeMed](#)

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BIO News

[BIO lauds Obama's cancer initiative](#)

BIO expressed support for President Barack Obama's initiative that aims to discover and develop cancer treatments. "The process of discovering new cures and treatments for patients in need relies upon an ecosystem of innovation in which all stakeholders, including government agencies and regulators, academic research institutions, private industry and patient groups, play a critical role," BIO CEO and President Jim Greenwood said. [Chemistry World magazine online](#)

[Most scientists view biotech foods as safe](#)

Polls indicate 88% of scientists think biotech foods are safe to consume, and scientific organizations such as the American Medical Association and the World Health Organization say there are numerous peer-reviewed studies confirming their safety. "There's not a single instance of harm to human health or the environment using [biotech] crops," says University of California at Davis plant geneticist Pam Ronald. Farmers have been altering food through grafting, cross-breeding and hybridization for thousands of years, Ronald notes. [CBS News](#)

[Iowa incentive promoted for bio-based chemicals](#)

Iowa should establish a "modest" tax credit for producing bio-based chemicals to grow jobs and share of the bio-renewable chemical market. "As Iowa has more deployed bio-manufacturing capital assets than any other state, it is well positioned to be a preferred location for bio-based chemicals manufacture," according to the report, *The Case for a Renewable Biochemical Tax Credit*, by three Iowa State University professors. The report was commissioned by the Iowa Biotechnology Association and the Cultivation Corridor, a regional effort to bring more bioscience companies to Iowa. The Iowa Economic Development Authority intends to offer as much as \$10 million annually under its renewable chemical tax credit initiative. [Cedar Rapids Gazette](#)

Algae viewed as feedstock for alternative biofuel

Algaculture, the farming of algae for fuel, is gaining traction globally as governments and private players look to leverage on the potential of algae as a biofuel. Concerns about depleting oil resources and the environmental impact of modern-day fuels has catalyzed the research and development in algaculture globally. [Eco Business](#)

DuPont and ADM Develop Technology for Making Bio-Based Materials

DuPont Industrial Biosciences (DuPont) and Archer Daniels Midland Company (ADM) have announced a breakthrough process with the potential to expand the materials landscape in the 21st century with high-performance renewable materials. The technology has applications in packaging, textiles, engineering plastics and many other industries. The long-sought after method now appears enabled by cost-effective production of furan dicarboxylic methyl ester from fructose. [Business Standard](#)

Companies developing bio-based bottles

Anellotech and Suntory Holdings have entered into the next phase of their strategic partnership to develop and commercialize cost-competitive 100 percent [bio-based plastics](#) for use in [beverage bottles](#). Suntory is a leading consumer beverage company whose brands include Orangina, Schweppes and Jim Beam. [Environmental Leader](#)

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Upcoming Events

Bio & Beers

Speaker: Ben Stobbe and Suzanne Torroni

5 p.m., Jan. 28

Upstream Brewing Company

514 S. 11th St., Old Market in Omaha

Nebraska Chamber Annual Meeting

February 4

The Cornhusker Hotel, Lincoln, NE

Biotech Innovation Showcase

March 3

Ankeny, IA

World Congress of Industrial Biotech

April 17-20

San Diego, CA