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By NCTA News Service

## **NCTA hits record enrollment, up 33 percent**

Curtis, Neb. – Student enrollment at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture in Curtis is up 33 percent from a year ago, a record for NCTA enrollment with 512 students, NCTA Dean Ron Rosati announced Tuesday.

The 102-year-old school, the only two-year college degree program of the University of Nebraska system, issued its count after the first full week of classes began on August 24.

Full-time campus enrollment increased by 4.8% to 239 students. However, the largest boost comes from enrolling nearly double the students in dual credit from 130 last year, to 254 this semester.

“This is a record enrollment for NCTA,” said Rosati, who joined the college as Dean in July, 2013. “This is due to growth of on-campus enrollment plus the development of new dual credit programs and partnerships.”

NCTA had realized a 28 percent growth for its student population in September, 2014, expanding to 384 registered for full-time, part-time or dual credit courses. Then, the significant increase was credited to new program offerings, aggressive recruiting and financial aid for more students.

A large freshman class in 2014 was 50 percent greater than in 2013. Many of that 2014 freshman class returned this fall, combined with another increase in on-campus freshman arriving last week.

This semester, 254 off-campus high school students are enrolled in the dual credit or “concurrent” courses. These are courses taught by NCTA faculty or high school instructors with at least master’s level certification.

“High schools are realizing the huge advantage of offering college-credit curriculums along with their high school coursework to assist their students in career-readiness or college preparation,” said Rosati. “NCTA has been very successful in designing some customized programs for specific needs such as agricultural academies or workforce certifications for job-ready careers.”

Such a program will be highlighted Thursday at York High School where NCTA, YHS and two agricultural industry partners, Central Valley Ag Cooperative and Reinke Manufacturing, Inc., are partnering in an ag worker certificate program. Governor Pete Ricketts will be a keynote speaker at the 1 p.m. kickoff at York High.

Rosati also credits the diligence of NCTA’s admissions and recruiting team headed by Associate Dean Scott Mickelsen for developing the dual credit partnerships and for its marketing and public awareness efforts. For example, NCTA is visible this week at the Nebraska State Fair, and will also be part of Husker Harvest Days in Grand Island on Sept. 15-17.

“We have great partnerships across the state with new programming such as Urban Agriculture with Nebraska

Extension and Omaha Home for Boys in Omaha, the dual credit programs with high schools, and new opportunities for students such as the Heifer Link program, or competition teams such as NCTA rodeo, ranch horse, livestock judging, crops judging and shooting sports,” Rosati noted.

“Students love the small-town campus here, and the ability to easily transition into a Bachelor of Applied Sciences with our partner institution at UNL, the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources,” he added. “I am very proud of the NCTA staff for their extraordinary effort in sharing our message of affordable, quality programs at NCTA.”

More information is available at <http://ncta.unl.edu> or by calling 1-800-3-CURTIS (1-800-367-5231).

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 (Enrollment.growth.Fall.2015.09.01.15)

**Photo cutline:** The Nebraska College of Agriculture at Curtis has record enrollment this fall. May graduates went into a workforce with strong demand for agricultural skills, while some advanced to further studies at a 4-year college. (NCTA Photo)

Photo and bar chart attached.

