Broadening our horizons
By Ron Rosati, NCTA Dean

Our NCTA community is well into a second week of fall coursework and already we have had students and programs engaged in hands-on learning off campus.

In fact, before classes even officially started, the livestock judging team coached by Dr. Doug Smith had gathered in Curtis and gone out for a day of judging workouts to evaluate cattle. And, last Friday at the Nebraska State Fair, Dr. Smith coordinated NCTA’s student volunteers at Grand Island to help check in livestock, unloading 4-H and FFA animals as exhibitors arrived on the grounds, and helping with weigh-ins and registrations. This activity blended service and leadership with responsibility as our college ambassadors.

Jo Bek coordinated 15 students from NCTA’s Collegiate Cattlemen and animal science department to serve food at the Nebraska Cattlemen’s popular “Beef Pit.” These are excellent opportunities for students to share in service to the agriculture community and provide visibility for NCTA’s programs, as well as share some fun.

They also had a chance to view many exhibits at the fair, including the NCTA recruiting and admissions booth. Our recruiting team of Tina Smith, Kassie Starkey and Bailey Michaels, and Paige Bek Wood, did a great job of outreach and coordinating information to fairgoers, and pitched in an extra effort during the UNL “Red Out” activities for families on Sunday.

I am proud of the interest and enthusiasm of NCTA students, and appreciate the commitment of service and dedication to agriculture shared by our students and staff. Thank you all!

Exposure to industry information and to the ideas and practices of active farm and ranch producers is always valuable. This week, Bridger Chytka will be taking students in the Equine Marketing Techniques class to Ericson for the Pitzer Ranch Horse Sale, where they will witness the great traditions of success of the Pitzer and Brinkman family operation.

To all of our community and area partners, be sure to take in these upcoming events:
**Saturday, Sept. 6** – 9 a.m. to 12 noon, Curtis Farmers Market, Curtis City Park. The NCTA Horticulture Club hosts the Farmers Markets Saturday mornings through October 11th.
**Friday, Sept. 12** – 11 a.m. – “NCTA Celebrates Irrigation 2014”, NCTA Education Center auditorium, Join us for this official ribbon cutting of the NCTA-Reinke Irrigation Technician partnership, with keynote speaker Governor Dave Heineman.

If you have any questions or input, I welcome hearing from you. Call me at 367-5200, or stop by my office at 202 Ag Hall. Thank you.

_NCTA Mission:_
_The Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture is devoted to a statewide mission of preparing students for successful careers in agriculture, veterinary technology, food and related industries. The college provides open access to innovative technical education resulting in associate degrees, certificates, diplomas and other credentials._