An Eight-Week Checkup
By Ron Rosati, NCTA Dean

This week marks the completion of our first eight weeks of the Fall semester here at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture. We are now halfway through the first semester and students are starting to buckle down and are engaging in some serious studying. Students are now taking 8-week exams and will be preparing to take a few days break on Oct. 20-21.

Dedication and commitment to academics pays off the most for our students who have been continually engaged in their college classes throughout these two months of courses. In addition to academics, we strive to provide social and recreational activities on campus. Last week for example a number of students participated in our intramural football league and on Thursday evening, approximately 125 students attended our semiannual bonfire event at Aggieland – our pasture is on the north end of campus.

We design our programs to keep all students aware of course curriculums, the syllabi and the expectations within their respective areas of study. For freshmen and new transfers to NCTA, we hope their introductory experiences have been positive. I feel they’ve been off to a great start!

NCTA’s faculty and staff are exceptionally dedicated to taking care of the needs of our students. Our faculty and staff are very caring and friendly professionals. They are helpful, kind, and respectful to each other and to our students, and most importantly are accessible. For example, some faculty made special arrangements this week for evening study sessions to assist students in exam prep.

I appreciate them going above and beyond to help students with additional study tips and refreshers.

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Thank you to all who participated in the American Red Cross blood drive last week. Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society of two-year colleges, sponsored this annual event and exceeded their goal of 48 by collecting 49 units. The students who organized, promoted and assisted with the blood drive contribute to the betterment of the campus and our community.

Eric Reed, general studies division chair, serves as faculty advisor for Phi Theta Kappa, and has 11 students among the membership this year. Students are recognized for academic achievement, and invited for induction each May. Ashley Lawton of Aurora, Neb., a second-year veterinary technician major, is president of Phi Theta Kappa.

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I was fortunate to represent NCTA with another of our educational partners last week. The Rural Futures Institute, a part of the University of Nebraska, hosted an engaging discussion and interactive outreach session
with stakeholders in Broken Bow. This was the second of three collaborative sessions across the state, starting in Nebraska City and concluding next week in Scottsbluff.

Many of you know Chuck Schroeder, a southwest Nebraska native, who leads RFI’s rural and economic development as executive director, and who joined us as NCTA’s commencement speaker in May. The Rural Futures Institute is dedicated to improving the vitality of Nebraska’s small rural communities such as Curtis. The enthusiasm and vision Chuck brings to this mission and to projects across the state is inspiring.

NCTA’s Curtis Community Garden was one of the 2014 recipients of RFI funding to assist in development, coordination and education. We’re glad RFI is on our team.

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Finally, keep those well-groomed horses fit and ready for the NCTA equine program’s “Shiny Show” at the Livestock Teaching Center Arena on Saturday, Oct 25th. If you miss this season-ender, there’s always the spring-opener, “Shaggy Show” next April.

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.