NCTA courses linked with eastern partners
By Ron Rosati, NCTA Dean

This week the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture is proud to be broadening our scope of statewide academic programs with partners in eastern Nebraska communities.

On Thursday, NCTA will be signing a memorandum of agreement for collaborative agricultural education programming in the Omaha area with University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension and the Omaha Home for Boys.

Goals of this new program are to:

1) support the development of locally-produced food for Omaha area markets;
2) produce job-ready graduates for agricultural careers;
3) support residents, businesses and institutions interested in urban agriculture and food systems;
4) foster the social and economic development of Omaha youth; and
5) stimulate economic development in the Omaha area.

We’re excited about this new venture and the opportunities it also will lend for the future of NCTA.

The trio of partners will be working collaboratively with interested stakeholders in the region, including Omaha-based farmers and food industry professionals, local higher education entities, Omaha secondary schools and other interested parties.

At NCTA, we share a proven track record of success in what we provide not only on campus for our full- and part-time college students, but also through significant offerings of dual credit programs to juniors and seniors in Nebraska high schools.

Now, we take that success in hands-on classroom and laboratory teaching and meld it with the expertise of our University of Nebraska partners in research and extension.

The populations we hope to serve are in four primary audiences:

1. **Traditional college students** interested in securing an associate degree.
2. **Adult learners** interested in specific agricultural technical skills through credit and non-credit programs.
3. **Youth participating in 4-H youth development programs related to agriculture production.**
4. **Dual enrolled high school students.** This population would include students enrolled in traditional high schools within the greater Omaha metropolitan area. They would attend dual enrollment courses in the program to receive both high school credit and college credit.
Two courses will be offered this next Spring semester, starting on Saturdays in January. On Jan. 3rd, students can earn three credit hours in Agricultural Entrepreneurship. On Jan. 17th, a beginning Carpentry course starts, also offering thee credit hours.

If you get a chance to share this information with friends, family or colleagues in the Omaha area, please do so and direct them to registration information at ncta.unl.edu, or call Dr. Scott Mickelsen, NCTA associate dean, at 1-800-3CURTIS. Registrations will be occurring during Christmas break.

To our students and staff leaving this week for Christmas and memorable times with family and friends, I thank them for being a part of NCTA and our community. Best wishes for safe journeys, happy holidays and greetings until we see you again in 2015.

Ahead at NCTA:

**Dec. 18** – End of Fall Semester
**Dec. 19** – NCTA Residence Halls Close
**Dec. 24** – NCTA Holiday Shutdown
**Dec. 25** – Merry Christmas!

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_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._

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