NCTA offers youth animal science, horticulture and ag careers
By Ron Rosati, NCTA Dean

Youth in South and West Central Nebraska get a quick breather after school adjourns before several late-spring and summer programs start here beginning this weekend. The Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture is hosting some exciting activities, mini-sessions, and multi-day camps for all youth, with some events customized to 4-H and FFA students.

We are excited to have young visitors on campus – whether these youth are experiencing a first-time visit to NCTA, or are previous attendees to our arena, greenhouse or classroom programs. Consider having your youngsters participate in some or all of these educational and fun offerings:

May 22-24: Rodeo Rough Stock Academy, Mill Park in Curtis, and the NCTA Agriculture Industry Education Center. The rodeo weekend is sponsored by Ace High Rough Stock Academy and Cervi Championship Rodeo Company, and coordinated locally by NCTA Rodeo Coach Bridger Chytka.

Chytka says the free academy is to encourage youth in the sport of rodeo, and to train saddle bronc and bareback riders. It features several professional cowboys and National Finals Rodeo qualifiers such as Ryan Gray, Steven Dent, Bryce Miller, Cort Scheer and arena pick up man Chase Cervi. All ages are welcome, including youngsters who will train on ponies. Teaching includes video review on the 23rd and 24th, as well as practice on a bucking machine indoors. To register, call Lauren O’Brien at 970-515-2567 or e-mail acehighroughstockacad@gmail.com.

May 28: The West Central Youth Animal Science Field Day is sponsored by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Frontier County Extension, UNL Animal Science, Nebraska 4-H and NCTA for youth in a 20-county extension region. Youth ages 8-18 are invited to attend. This is not a competition, but a day of hands-on learning in animal science, agricultural literacy and technology.

Students can apply skills to their 4-H projects while exploring careers in animal science, veterinary technology and agriculture through programs at NCTA and UNL. Topics in the rotational tour include equine behavior and safety, small animal safety and handling, career exploration, forage nutrition, beef and swine reproduction, animal by-products and meat production. Sign-in begins at 8:45 a.m. at the NCTA Ed Center, with a $5 fee. Registration is requested by May 21 to local extension offices. Frontier County 4-H Council will provide lunch.

June 15-16: Career Connection Camp, 10 a.m. Monday, June 15 to 2 p.m. on Tuesday, June 16 for high school-age youth, ag teachers and guidance counselors, 4-H clubs and sponsors. Tour NCTA and the West Central Research and Extension Center as you learn from industry professionals about agriculture careers, dual credit high school-college programs, and participate in experiential learning activities. Contact Dr. Brad Ramsdale at bramsdale2@unl.edu, or call 308-367-5225. Registration is $25 per person by June 1, with attendees staying overnight in NCTA dormitories. Bring a pillow, a sleeping bag or bedding.

June 24: Frontier County 4-H Horticulture Mini-Camp, 9 a.m. – 12 noon, NCTA greenhouse and garden.
Instructor is Tee Bush, NCTA horticulture professor. For more details or to register, call Peggy at Frontier County Extension, 308-367-4424.

NCTA values the educational opportunities and linkages it shares with industry partners. As the NCTA Mission Statement notes, we are devoted to a statewide mission of preparing students for successful careers in agriculture, veterinary technology, food and related industries.

Fun, summer-time learning programs at NCTA are a win-win for our youth and Nebraska agriculture!

More NCTA events:

May 25: Memorial Day, NCTA Offices Closed
June 3: NRD Manager’s Meetings, Ed Center
June 8: New Student Registration, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m., Ed Center
June 17: West Central NE Development District tour and meeting, Ed Center
June 23: Nebraska Water Tour, 9:30-10 a.m., Ed Center
June 27: UNSTA-NCTA Alumni Association annual conference, York

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.