



NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE

March 20, 2023

Every Week is Ag Week

Dean's Column by Larry Gossen, PhD

Teaching the next generation of farmers and ranchers has been the mission of NCTA since its creation 110 years ago as a high school. Founded as the Nebraska School of Agriculture, this model resembles what is known today as a magnet school: serving a particular field of study and addressing the demands of a changing world.

We take great pride in serving as one of the few colleges in the U.S. dedicated solely to agriculture and veterinary technology in its academic program. We are focused entirely on student success through high academic quality and industry connectedness. Our low cost is an added bonus, and new scholarship initiatives will assist tremendously in removing any financial barriers to our future enrollment goals.

NCTA's full range of academic programs constantly evolves with today's innovations while honoring past traditions. An emphasis on experiential, hands-on learning at NCTA is both effective and appealing to many students.

Agriculture Production

Within our Agriculture Production Systems degrees serving the fields of agronomy, ag equipment, animal science, and equine, we engage university and statewide partnerships, industry, and alums to remain on the leading edge. For example, our agronomy curriculum embraces precision agriculture practices incorporating tools for precise seed, chemical, and water placement. These innovations are crucial to maximizing productivity while protecting our resources.

A day in the life of our animal science students was recently featured in a video post as students on the ranch crew moved cattle while on horseback into our working barn pens to proceed to become certified in artificial insemination.

Ag Teacher Education

To serve the urgent need to increase the supply of junior high and high school ag teachers, NCTA is the all-encompassing, hands-on agriculture immersion experience. We provide the opportunity to engage students in the first two years of college in courses they will use daily in their future classrooms. Courses like accounting, animal management, soils, welding, and small engines immerse future teachers in relevant knowledge. After graduation, students seamlessly transfer to UNL to complete their four-year degrees.

For all of us who have seen the level of leadership and career development benefits for ag students through FFA participation, it is heartening to see the emphasis on promoting careers as ag teachers. We will strive to serve any student—no ag experience necessary!

AgriBusiness Management

This year we responded to an opportunity in our Agribusiness Management program to serve students desiring a four-year B.S. degree by partnering with the University of Nebraska-Kearney. A new 2+2

pathway allows seamless transfer for students into marketing, management, finance, accounting, and supply chain management programs at UNK.

Veterinary Technology

The Veterinary Technology program is the cornerstone of animal health education in the livestock industry, companion animals, and many other student goals. The longevity of our program and the industry connections of our faculty impacts student success. However, the menagerie of animals that students get to work with is what gets them excited!

A shout-out to NDA Director Vinton

I encourage everyone to search for the excellent Ag Week article shared by the new Nebraska Department of Agriculture Director, Sherry Vinton. Our faculty and students recently interacted with her at the Nebraska Women in Ag Conference and were excited to talk about agriculture and learn her daughter attended NCTA.

Thank you to everyone involved in agriculture—you are sustaining all of us! I especially salute our students destined to lead Nebraska agriculture and model our mission of innovation and tradition.

NCTA Events:

Mar. 25: NCTA Rodeo Banquet at Anvil Bar & Grill, Curtis

Mar. 29-31: Recruiters at Nebraska FFA SLC, Lincoln

Apr. 6-9: Punchy in Pink Spring Round Up, McCook

Apr. 11: Discovery Days Tour at NCTA

Part of the University of Nebraska system, the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture is a two-year institution with a statewide mission of preparing students for successful careers in agriculture, veterinary technology, and related industries. NCTA is known for its affordable tuition, high job-placement rate for its graduates and the success of student teams in competitive activities, including crops judging, ranch horse events, livestock judging, shotgun sports, stock dog trials, and intercollegiate rodeo. The college is consistently ranked as one of the best two-year schools in the nation.

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