



NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE

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California Dreamin' at NACTA

By NCTA News

Last year, NCTA hosted the North America Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture, bringing students from far and wide to our region. This year, it was our turn to venture far away to Modesto Junior College in California to compete and learn at the NACTA Judging Conference.

Modesto is a two-year college in the heart of the San Joaquin Valley, between Yosemite National Park and the Pacific Coast/San Francisco. It is the home of a premier agriculture program that serves the extensive agriculture industry of the Central Valley of California. This region alone produces over 250 crops valued at \$17 billion annually, contributing an estimated 25 percent of the nation's food.

With that said, it is a tremendous achievement to celebrate the FIRST and THIRD placements of our Crops and Livestock Judging Teams, respectively, in the two-year college division. NCTA Dean Dr. Larry Gossen congratulates, "Once again, we are very proud of our judging teams representing NCTA at these national competitions. We are excited to be National Champions again. We tell prospective students that we have the country's best agronomy program, which proves that claim. Kudos to all our Animal Science and Agronomy students for their success."

NACTA is a professional society that focuses on the scholarship of teaching and learning agriculture and related disciplines at the postsecondary level; therefore, it is a testament to the excellence of our teaching and programs.

Dr. Brad Ramsdale, Associate Professor of Agronomy, and Dr. Doug Smith, Associate Professor of Animal Science, coached the NCTA Crops and Livestock Judging Teams.

The Crops Judging Team dominated the competition, achieving 1st Overall Team; 1st in Plant/Seed ID and Lab Practical; 2nd in Knowledge; and 3rd in Math. Codi LaBorde of Milliken, CO, led the team, earning 1st Overall Individual; 1st in Plant/Seed ID; 2nd in Lab Practical; and 4th in Knowledge Exam. Gavin Tremblay of Hoxie, KS, was awarded 4th place Overall Individual; 1st in Lab Practical; and tied for 2nd in Plant/Seed ID with Garrett Thielen of Dorrance, KS. Garrett also earned 3rd in Lab Practical and placed 7th Overall Individual. Nolan Buss of Stockton, KS, was the 8th Overall Individual; 6th in Lab Practical; and 3rd in the Knowledge Exam.

Dr. Ramsdale shared, "I'm very proud of the students and what they have accomplished this year. The trip also provided a great opportunity to learn about the unique agricultural production in California."

The Livestock Judging Team competed in several classes, placing near the top in many. They were 5th Overall Team; 5th in Swine, Sheep, Beef Cattle, and Reasons; and 6th in Goats.

Livestock Management Team earned 3rd Overall Team.

The Dairy Judging Team achieved 3rd and 4th Overall Teams. Taylor Wilson of Hastings, NE, was 6th Overall Individual and 2nd in Placings. Jozlyn Anderson of Plainview, NE, was 7th Individual and 5th in Placings. Haley Robb of Doniphan, NE, was 10th in Reasons. Emma Harms of Sterling, NE, was 9th in Reasons.

Dr. Smith shared, "We had a successful trip to Modesto. Students did well! The trip was an awesome experience to witness a different environment and world of agriculture. The students could view new agricultural enterprises—dairy, fruits, nuts, and hay. Thank you to Modesto Junior College for hosting NACTA and the great events—3,329 miles, but priceless learning opportunities!"



NCTA students who competed in the North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture Conference in Modesto, CA. (L-R) Ben Ochs, Jetmore, KS; Taylor Wilson, Hastings, NE; Emma Harms, Sterling, NE; Heidi Wilkerson, Mauriceville, TX; Dani Layland, Elk River, MN; Jozlyn Anderson, Plainview, NE; Haley Robb, Doniphan, NE; Codi LaBorde, Milliken, CO; Gavin Tremblay, Hoxie, KS; Nolan Buss, Stockton, KS; and Garrett Thielen, Dorrance, KS.

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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