



NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE

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Heifer Link Supports Student

By Andela Taylor, NCTA News

The NCTA Heifer Link initiative was launched at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture in January 2015 as an integral part of the Ownership Advantage Program. With Heifer Link's introduction, students are given a unique chance to receive a bred heifer during their fourth semester.

This year, Hadley Sayer of Wallace took advantage of this opportunity to support his goal of expanding his operation raising purebred show cattle in Nebraska.

Hadley shared, "Over the past two years, NCTA has allowed me to develop useful connections that I will utilize throughout my future endeavors. The Heifer Link Program through NCTA has provided me with a great addition to my herd. I am truly grateful for this opportunity, and all the others, that the college has provided me with."

Under the guidance of experienced faculty members, the Heifer Link program aims to equip students with hands-on knowledge and skills crucial for successful careers in animal agriculture. Students participating in the program gain valuable experience in livestock management, animal husbandry, and overall farm operations.

Apart from the day-to-day responsibilities, students also participate in projects related to livestock production, nutrition, and genetics. These projects provide an additional avenue for students to delve deeper into the field of animal agriculture and contribute to advancements in the industry. They also gain hands-on experience in reproductive management, including artificial insemination and pregnancy diagnosis.

"NCTA and its partners have been committed to empowering students starting out in the livestock industry through the Ownership Advantage Program," says Dr. Larry Gossen, dean of NCTA. "By introducing the Heifer Link component, where students take ownership of a donated heifer during their academic journey and leave the NCTA campus with a bred heifer, we aim to provide our next generation with a remarkable head start on building their own herds."

Beyond the campus, Aggie students have the unique opportunity to work on the ranch crew to care for our expanding herd at our 2,147-acre Leu Ranch, at our adjacent campus cattle facilities, and participate in internships with cattle ranches and feedlots, gaining invaluable hands-on experience.

Additionally, the program provides an excellent platform for networking with industry producers and engaging in discussions on pressing industry issues. Dean Gossen affirms that this program not only equips students with practical skills but also fosters a deep understanding of the cattle industry, preparing them to excel in their future careers.

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 student teams' success 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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