



NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE

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A Million Thanks to FFA

By Caitlyn Krout, Agribusiness student

Welcome back to school to my fellow NCTA Aggies and students at schools everywhere! I am a second-year student at NCTA from Fair Play, South Carolina studying Agribusiness. The recent news that FFA now enjoys a national membership of more than one million members has motivated me to reflect on all the ways FFA has impacted my life.

I first discovered NCTA at the National FFA Convention and Expo in Indianapolis, Indiana. While attending the convention, I served as one of six South Carolina State FFA Officers and attended committees throughout the week to better our State Association and National Organization and their bylaws. I also competed in the National Dairy Cattle Evaluation CDE (Career Development Event), where my team and I placed silver overall and individually. Throughout my time in Indianapolis, I was able to attend the college fair that is home to more than 100 colleges—including NCTA! I was able to talk to two NCTA students about what they personally liked about the college and how hands-on it was. This college sounded amazing, and I was very intrigued!

When choosing a college, it was important to me to continue as a member of the FFA and have a hands-on environment with classes and agriculture. NCTA was the perfect fit for me. We do have an amazing Collegiate FFA and 4-H Chapter that is highly active throughout our community. This past school year, we hosted dodgeball tournaments, sold root beer floats alongside our rodeo team, and hosted a bingo and soup night in the fall! Hosting the Livestock Judging CDE and LDE (Leadership Development Events) on campus is a highlight of our involvement. Not only do we get to host these events, but our chapter members judge them, alongside the Nebraska FFA Association. These events develop many qualities of leadership, career growth, and personal success for FFA members and our Aggies.

Along with hosting events at our campus in Curtis, our Collegiate FFA members also get to travel to Lincoln, Nebraska, to help host events during Nebraska's State FFA Convention. This year, we hosted the Agricultural Mechanics CDE. This competition includes four written tests about agricultural mechanics, a hands-on electrical portion, and an identification portion. Our ag mech students were able to judge the electrical wiring portion along with our professors. Talk about a hands-on experience!

Throughout the week, several of us enjoyed representing the college at our recruiting booth to recruit new FFA members and students to come to NCTA. We also had many students receive their American degrees at the state convention and will walk across the stage at the national convention. The American degree is the highest degree awarded to FFA members and only one percent of all FFA members receive this degree.

While I am wrapping up my last year at NCTA, I hope that anyone who chooses to come to this college will take advantage of all the unique opportunities that NCTA provides, including Collegiate FFA. Please join me in celebrating the milestone of over one million members in FFA by encouraging youth in your lives to participate. I can attest that NCTA and FFA set students up for future success in a wide variety of agriculture and animal health careers—and a farming background is not necessary to join!

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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Caitlyn Krout during her year serving as the South Carolina State Vice President of FFA.