



## NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE

September 3, 2024

### **Welcome, Students – You are the Future of Agriculture!**

By Dr. Larry Gossen, Dean

I say this about every season, but fall has to be my favorite time of year. I love watching the leaves start to change colors, walking outside in the cool of the morning knowing the temperature won't be reaching triple digits or even the 90's, and of course, it's football season.

But one of the best reasons I love fall is being able to welcome a brand new class of Aggie students to campus. Having had a chance to meet each of these students during our orientation and move-in weekend was truly an honor, and I loved meeting each one.

This group of students who are setting out on a new adventure, preparing for a career that will make a difference in this world, are excited to start that journey on a small campus in a safe community where they are welcome and appreciated.

Once again, we have students from across the United States, spanning from Alaska and California to Vermont. NCTA continues to rise to the top of students' search results when looking for a hands-on, experiential education that provides job opportunities upon graduation.

Our dedicated faculty and staff are what make this campus so special. They work extra hard to ensure our students feel welcome, comfortable, and valued. Each of them understands their role in making NCTA the absolute best place for students to grow into productive citizens and excellent employees.

Whether students enter directly into the workforce, return home to the family farm, ranch, or business, or decide to further their education at a four-year institution after completing their degree at NCTA, they all leave prepared for that next step in their lives.

The sad fact is that we have more room for more students. Every year, we have more employers looking to hire our graduates than we have students to fill the need. Agriculture is such a critical industry to Nebraska's economic health, and yet it faces one of the biggest challenges ever: a workforce shortage.

The good news is that NCTA is well-positioned to provide every individual interested in a career in agriculture or veterinary technology with the education they need to be successful and to fill that workforce shortage. Students don't have to come from a rural or farm background to succeed at NCTA. Students from urban or suburban areas with absolutely no agriculture background can find rewarding careers waiting for them in the industry that feeds, fuels, and clothes the world.

Just as the leaves on the trees change colors and eventually fall to the ground, so too will our students grow and mature and eventually leave us to enter that world of work. We will miss this class after a couple of years, but look forward to that next class next fall. We welcome YOU to be

part of the next class of future entrepreneurs, ranchers, farmers, businesspeople, researchers, teachers, veterinary assistants or technicians, or another career of choice.

So welcome, Aggie class of 2026. We look forward to adding you to our list of distinguished alums. Have a great school year. Go Aggies!

*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.*

# # #



New Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture students gather on the steps of historic Ag Hall. Welcome Class of 2026!