

February 20, 2018
Dean's Column by Ron Rosati, Ph.D.

I Can. We Will. FFA Week and Nebraska Beef

This week marks the annual observance by the National FFA Organization in saluting FFA students and families with National FFA Week. The 2018 theme is "I Can. We Will."

The Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture celebrates the 184 FFA chapters and more than 8,000 members in Nebraska, including our own Collegiate FFA program here at NCTA. We are fortunate to host multiple FFA contests and programs here at campus, including two recent district Career Development Events which each drew more than 300 students and 17 schools.

Nebraska FFA is thriving and growing! We were the sixth state to be chartered when the then Future Farmers of America organization was formed in 1928. Congratulations to all FFA families and instructors!



NCTA Beef Production students at the Nebraska Cattlemen's Classic Career Day on Monday. (Tina Smith photo)

Go big beef!

Also, this week is the Nebraska Cattlemen's Classic in Kearney at the Buffalo County Fairgrounds. Events started February 17 and conclude February 25. The Classic provides great opportunities for NCTA students to compete in contests, volunteer as assistants in the show rings, and interact with many producers and professionals in the cattle industry.

For example, we had professors and students from our veterinary technology division on site at the stock dog demonstration and ranch horse show and sale last weekend. The stock dogs and NCTA students were a hit! Then, on President's Day, 19 students from the NCTA beef production class attended Career Fair activities.

Wednesday features the NCTA Agricultural Education students at the Classis, assisting with outreach and celebrating FFA Alumni Day as Aggie students recognize the vital role all FFA alumni play in development of leaders and chapters.

At this weekend's events for youth exhibitors and competitors, NCTA recognizes the juniors by sharing special t-shirts designed for the Nebraska Cattlemen's Classic. Junior beef cattle contests in market beef, breeding beef and showmanship are Saturday and Sunday, along with the annual Livestock Judging Contest Saturday for both youth judges and collegiate teams. Look for our Aggie judges at this great contest!

The NCTA exhibit in the main foyer of the Exposition Building is coordinated by our Aggie recruiting office. Find NCTA students there, ready to answer questions about our programs.

Women in Agriculture

The Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture offers many experiences in leadership and education through our campus clubs and organizations. These opportunities are generally associated with specific academic programs or areas of study.

One such group is Women in Ag with Meredith Cable, assistant animal science professor, serving as club adviser. On Thursday and Friday, Professor Cable sponsors our WIA club members at the state conference in Kearney. These students do more than observe in educational sessions. They interact with the attendees from across the state, introduce speakers during the programs, and assist organizers wherever needed.

This experiential learning engages students in agricultural marketing, policy, communications and leadership skills. They learn by doing, and are exposed to a variety of exciting careers and agricultural mentors and resources.

Academic success

NCTA students are nearing the 8-week point in the semester, which means the veterinary technician students or others preparing for internships are now finalizing their work on campus. They will be taking exit exams in the Vet Tech division and moving off-site in the next two weeks.

Our faculty has been providing extra study halls and tutoring sessions in some departments to assist students down the homestretch for the 8-week projects and exams. I appreciate the additional investment by the campus community in assuring student success in learning outcomes. See you at these wonderful agricultural events this week. "I Can. We Will. Discover NCTA!"

Campus events:

17-24 – National FFA Week

17-25 – Nebraska Cattlemen's Classic, Kearney

22-23 – Women in Agriculture Conference, Kearney

26 – High School Science and Engineering Fair, NCTA Campus

27 – Agribusiness Management Legislative Study, Lincoln

NCTA Mission: *The Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture is devoted to a statewide mission of preparing students for successful careers in agriculture, veterinary technology, food and related industries. The college provides open access to innovative technical education resulting in associate degrees, certificates, diplomas and other credentials.*

Online article at: <https://go.unl.edu/7vyv>