



March 24, 2020

Ag Week at the NCTA Farm

NCTA Dean's Message

By Interim Dean Kelly Bruns, Ph.D.

CURTIS, Neb. _It's National Agriculture Week!

As I write this weekly message, it is National Ag Day across the United States and at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture in Curtis.

Our 2020 observance may be muted by current events around the globe. Nonetheless, we recognize the immense contributions made by those who produce the food, fiber and fuel needed to feed the world.



Spring calves and their mothers at the NCTA Aggieland pasture north of campus. (Photo by Annie Bassett, student photographer)

NCTA is evaluating the evolving situation around COVID-19 daily. The safety of our students, faculty, staff and the greater community is our utmost concern. We will be transitioning our Spring semester toward remote learning after Spring Break, on March 30. For more information on these details, please see ncta.unl.edu

Most of our students are away on Spring Break, and our faculty and staff are working remotely or from their offices on campus.

However, agriculture production does not take a break. Hard work and responsibilities continue at the 550-acre NCTA Farm and Learning Laboratory.

Livestock at the farm, horses, and the animals or various species used for teaching programs at the NCTA Veterinary Technology program, are fed, managed and facilities maintained by employees and student workers.

Standards of care are a priority for all animals owned and managed by NCTA.

Spring calving

The NCTA cow herd is about half done with calving. The 31 head of cows are pastured in Aggieland, located immediately north of the campus.

Over the weekend, several of the Vet Tech students took their shifts in checking cows. And, student workers and fulltime staff with the NCTA "Farm Crew" are watching the animals, as well.

Students in livestock management and one of the VT classes had signed up for their calving rotations, as part of their class credits. This hands-on training is a hallmark of the NCTA experience.

Equine science

Campus horses are maintained for by Huntra Christensen, Ranch Horse Team assistant coach. With temperature swings and rain or snow, special attention is paid to a couple of geriatric horses. Like humans, older animals may need extra care for nutrition, hydration and exercise.

Animal Science and Ag Education Division Interim Chair Joanna Hergenreder reports that professors are busy preparing academic content for online platforms to begin next week.

The Ranch Horse Team's Punchy In Pink Horse Show scheduled for April 3-5 has been canceled.

Crops program

On the crops side of the NCTA Farm, wet weather prevents any crop field activity for a while. Once conditions allow, Dr. Brad Ramsdale, agronomy professor, reports as a 100% no-till farm, we will go straight to planting.

In a Crops Practicum II class, students have planned for crops on the varying sizes of ground assigned to them. Nine acres of triticale is slated to be planted in one area. Spring forage mixtures will be planted on the dryland corners of a center pivot irrigated field.

Ag Week, March 22-28

From all of us at NCTA, we appreciate the contributions of each individual to the success of our rural campus and culture, and to the daily lives of all consumers.

The Agriculture of America reports that each American farmer feeds more than 165 people. Those of us in American agriculture are producing even more food and fiber – and doing it safely and with improved technologies.

Thank an agriculture producer today, and throughout the year.

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

Online article: <https://go.unl.edu/ym3y>

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