



# NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE

June 23, 2020

## Settling in to our small campus, small town

Dean's Message from Larry Gossen, Ph.D.

Greetings from the Dean's office. It is indeed my privilege to write this first column as the new dean of the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture.

My first week has been a whirlwind, but I am finally getting settled in and finding my way around southwest Nebraska. My wife Fay and I have enjoyed the hospitality of the local establishments and enjoy the many conversations we have had about anything from our cat to our favorite foods.

What I have found so far are friendly people, generous folks who have offered to help in any way possible. Of course, this is nothing short of what I expected in moving to a small community again. I was born and raised in a smaller community than Curtis, and taught high school agricultural education in two small towns in southeast Kansas.

My roots have been in Kansas, and I do tend to bleed K-State purple, but my move here was from Springfield, Missouri. Fay is from southwest Missouri and we are leaving our adult daughter, Ambur there.

We also have a son, Robb, and his wife Amy, in Beaverton, Oregon with our two wonderful grandchildren, Ally and Ki. And, our godson, Richard, lives in Kansas City, Missouri. We are looking forward to a family get-together in July so you may see them around town.

I am very excited about this new adventure. I continue to tell everyone I meet that NCTA is Nebraska's best kept secret, but we hope to change that soon.

Since my first visit to the NCTA campus for an FFA event in January this year, I have been extremely impressed with the faculty and staff, the administration and everyone who supports or is engaged with the college.

As I have mentioned NCTA to those I've come in contact with across the state, I continue to hear, "I went to NCTA," or "I love that college," or "you are going to love Curtis."



*Larry and Fay Gossen's family gather for this 2016 photo. Dr. and Mrs. Gossen are settling into their home at the NCTA campus in Curtis, Nebraska. (Courtesy photo)*

My trek to Curtis has taken me from southeast Kansas to Topeka as the State Director of Agricultural Education, to Indianapolis, Indiana for my years of service with the National FFA Organization, and back to Missouri. My latest position with the Nebraska Department of Education brought me to Lincoln for a year to serve as the State FFA Advisor.

And now here we land in Curtis, Nebraska. I look forward to meeting as many people as possible including the many former students and college alumni of the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture and the University of Nebraska School of Technical Agriculture, supporters and industry partners, present and future students, and the fine citizens of Curtis and Frontier County. I look forward to engaging with local community leaders, businesses, and everyone we meet in the store, at church, or on the street.

I am also excited about the connections NCTA has with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the West Central Research and Extension Center in North Platte, and Mid-Plains Community College in North Platte and McCook. The support I have already received from University President Ted Carter, Vice Chancellor Mike Boehm, Dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources Tiffany Heng-Moss and NCTA Interim Dean Kelly Bruns has assured me that NCTA is in a strong position to do great things.

Finally, I want to express condolences to the family of Jamie Spratlen on behalf of NCTA faculty, staff and students. Words are inadequate to express the sorrow we feel for the loss of one of our own. Jamie will truly be missed by her family and the many friends she made in her short time here in Curtis and on the NCTA campus.

My office is on second floor of the historic Agriculture Hall on campus so please stop by for a visit and take a tour of this beautiful college campus. I look forward to meeting you, and as always, 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 for the success of student teams in numerous 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.*

Online article: <https://go.unl.edu/o8kb>

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