



August 8, 2019

NCTA Dean's Message
By Kelly Bruns, Ph.D.

From county fairs to college fairs

No matter where one resides in Nebraska and much of our neighboring states, we are surrounded by agriculture. It's a wonderful way of life, and rural America certainly is a great place for raising and educating our children.

It is peak season for county fairs throughout the region, with many in southwest Nebraska winding down. Frontier County is unique in having two area fairs, one in Stockville and one in Eustis.

A big salute to the many volunteers, fair board members, leaders and staff with Nebraska Extension who create outstanding opportunities and educational programs for youth in 4-H, FFA and open class categories at the county fair.

Our family knows a bit about the livestock side of 4-H programs, in particular, with three sons who enjoy raising cattle and sheep, showing them in competitions, and developing lifelong relationships with friends and families in 4-H.

Now, as our family turns its sights on junior and senior high school programs starting in the next two weeks, we've added a new component this year to school preparedness.

New paths at NCTA

On Monday, I officially started serving as the interim dean for the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture in Curtis.

It's indeed my honor to be working with the fine staff and faculty at NCTA, and to have worked closely with retiring Dean Ron Rosati for the past five years in my role as director at the University of Nebraska West Central Research and Extension Center in North Platte.



University of Nebraska Regent Barbara Weitz visits with Dr. Rick Funston, beef scientist, and Dr. Kelly Bruns, recently-named interim dean at NCTA in Curtis, on a May 3 tour at the West Central Research and Extension Center. Dr. Bruns also is director of the WCREC in North Platte. (NCTA Photo)

I'll be continuing my administrative duties with Nebraska Extension and the team at North Platte, where I will be based part of each week. Half of my week will be spent here on campus, guiding our outstanding faculty and staff and working with students at the college level.

I grew up on a diversified livestock and crop farm near Grand Island. I attended the University of Nebraska – Lincoln where I majored in Animal Science and then received a M.S. Degree at Michigan State University. I accepted an instructor position at South Dakota State University where I taught ag courses and worked on my Ph.D. studying growth and development of feedlot cattle. In 2014 I returned to Nebraska as the Associate Director of the West Central Research and Extension Center. I currently serve as the Director with oversight of the research facilities and the Extension Programs in the 24 counties of Southwest and Central Nebraska.

College campuses are familiar places for me as I've spent my career, largely, teaching at the college level. I have a great appreciation for working with students who have an interest in agriculture. Creating an environment where they can learn and gain experience will ensure their success as well as support to the agriculture industry.

NCTA classes begin August 26

The summer session of NCTA courses for veterinary technician students was a busy eight weeks, reports Barb Berg, division chair. The course grades are being finalized since they adjourned on Aug. 2.

Meanwhile, campus is in full preparedness mode for classes to begin on Monday, August 26th. New students will be moving to campus that Saturday, with a host of activities and sessions to get them all acclimated to college life.

I am looking forward to welcoming new and returning Aggies to campus for orientation weekend.

Additionally, I look forward to visiting with you at NCTA or at upcoming events in the community. Please stop by to visit if you are on campus.

Also, please join me in welcoming students to Curtis and back to college at the NCTA Community Picnic on Sunday, August 25 at 5:30 p.m. at the Student Union.

Go Aggies!

***NCTA Mission:** The Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture 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*

Upcoming events:

Aug. 12-14 – Nebraska Grazing Conference, Kearney
Aug. 21 – Gudmundsen Sandhills Laboratory Field Day, Whitman
Aug. 24 – NCTA New Student Move-in Day
Aug. 25 – NCTA Sophomore Move-in Day
Aug. 25 - NCTA Community Picnic, 5:30 p.m., Student Union
Aug. 26 – Opening day of Fall Classes

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