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Dean's Column by Ron Rosati, PhD

## **NCTA: Teaching and livestock programs**

This week's column will feature Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture academic programs in animal science, equine science, and agricultural education. This column is a component of a four-part series on the award-winning programs at NCTA.

The Agriculture Production Systems - Animal Science and Agricultural Education Division draws the great enrollment to campus with over 110 students in courses such as livestock production, feedlot management and equine management.

Longest-serving professor is Jo Bek, who retires this month after 39 years in animal science and veterinary technology. The APS Animal Science group will host a "Social Time with Jo Bek" this Friday from 10 a.m. to 12 noon, with a "retirement farewell" program at 11 a.m. The public is invited to stop and say hello.



Terri Jo Bek retires

Meet faculty members Division Chair Doug Smith, associate professor of animal science and agricultural education, and livestock judging team coach; Joanna Hergenreder, assistant professor of equine science and Ranch Horse Team coach; Meredith Cable, assistant professor of animal science; Alan Taylor, lecturer of animal science and Shotgun Sports Team coach; Roy Cole, farm manager; and Dave Smith, online and dual credit instructor. Jan Price is the Division's office associate and Taylor Rossenbach is the Aggie Rodeo Team coach.

Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degrees are awarded to students graduating in APS-Livestock Industry Management, APS-Equine Industry Management or APS-Dairy Production. Programs of study are listed at <https://ncta.unl.edu/academic-programs>.

An Associate of Science (AS) degree is available in APS-Grazing Livestock Systems, APS-Agricultural Education (Transfer Option) and APS-Animal Science (Transfer Option). Students may transfer to 4-year institutions such as the College of Agricultural Science and Natural Resources at UNL.

A 16-credit hour Certificate in Agriculture is also available on campus or online. The certificate provides a basic understanding of agricultural careers, crop science, livestock, agricultural economics and natural resources. This is a growing area of interest, says Dr. Smith, for professionals who may have non-agricultural degrees yet would find some college courses helpful in their current careers.

Other one-year certificate programs are offered at NCTA in Beef Production, Diversified Agriculture, and Equine Training Management. Certificates may be stand-alone programs for immediate employment in technical fields, or added as certificates to an AAS program.

An advantage for APS-Animal Science and Agricultural Education is a rural campus which owns production livestock, maintains a cow-calf herd, college horses, a cattle feedlot and commercial farm.

Faculty advisors are helpful in guiding prospective students to programs which best meet their educational and career goals. More students are entering agricultural education to become high school teachers. Some NCTA students choose to continue for a 4-year degree. The A to B Transfer Program (Associate to Bachelor) provides seamless transition from NCTA to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Dr. Smith also coordinates the UNL Bachelors of Applied Science program for NCTA graduates. Students may telecommute from a job, their ranch or farm, or work around Curtis to obtain this BAS. Campus resources such as library, clubs and test proctors are available.

Students pursue leadership and service through APS clubs such as NCTA Collegiate 4-H & FFA, Women in Agriculture, Collegiate Cattlemen, and four traveling competition teams. These academic enrichment opportunities keep students very busy with classes, early morning or evening practices, club meetings, community service, and competition travel teams.

One highlight for Aggie academic teams is the annual conference of North American Colleges of Teachers in Agriculture (NACTA). Animal science students performed quite well in 2017. NCTA won the Reserve Champion Sweepstakes Award for two-year colleges, as well as Champion Team in the Knowledge Bowl and Champions in APS-Crops Judging.

NACTA results specific to animal science were:

Dairy Judging - 2nd place team

Nathan Lashley, Curtis, 1st place individual

Braden Wilke, Columbus, 4th place individual

Team Members: Lashley, Wilke, Dean Fleer, Pierce, 8<sup>th</sup>; and Joe Calvo, Bassett, 12<sup>th</sup>.

Livestock Judging – 8<sup>th</sup> sheep and goats, 10<sup>th</sup> beef cattle, 11<sup>th</sup> reasons, swine and overall team.

Team Members - Wilke, Calvo, Fleer, Katharine Schudel, North Loup; Wyatt Duskie, Jewell, Kan.

Livestock Management – 5<sup>th</sup> in ID, 6<sup>th</sup> overall team. Katharine Schudel 4<sup>th</sup> individual on test.

Team Members - Schudel, Wilke, Calvo, Duskie

NCTA students from APS are competitive with the Shotgun Sports Team, Rodeo Team, Ranch Horse Team, or Livestock Judging Team. Details about APS Animal Science and Agriculture Education are available from Dr. Doug Smith at (308) 367-5286 or at [doug.smith@unl.edu](mailto:doug.smith@unl.edu).

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



Professor Jo Bek instructs a livestock student on vaccinations during a feedlot management course. (Craig Chandler / University Communication Photo)