



NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE

NCTA NEWS
404 East 7th Street
Curtis, NE 69025-9525
Mary Crawford: 308-367-5231
mcrawford@unl.edu

May 30, 2019
By NCTA News

Education team tours Aggie campus

CURTIS, Neb. – They came to college prepared to work, ask questions, learn, and weren't afraid to get their hands dirty.

Nebraska's Coordinating Commission on Postsecondary Education brought appointed members and staff to Curtis on Wednesday, making their first official visit in nearly a decade to the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture.

Their role: to see first-hand the programs, facilities and mission of the University of Nebraska's two-year campus which specializes in agriculture and veterinary technology.

"This was more intense and very specific, more so than in the past, we have seen one or two buildings before," explained Mary Lauritzen of West Point, who has visited NCTA twice before during her 19-year tenure with the commission.

"It's like a luxury to be able to actually wallow in this place, see the changes, touch the animals, visit with the students here this summer from Rwanda, which is a major accomplishment for NCTA, and again, to see NCTA's progress over the last 19 years in my eyes," Lauritzen added.

The commission usually meets in Lincoln, but goes throughout the state visiting post-secondary programs which include five campuses of the University of Nebraska, community colleges, state colleges and more, said Mike Baumgartner, CCPE executive director.

He and NCTA Dean Ron Rosati started planning the group's visit last year. The commission's business meeting was Thursday in North Platte.

"We like to get out on the ground, see the colleges, meet the instructors, faculty, and students," Baumgartner said.

"NCTA is performing a very significant role in the industry and meeting the agricultural needs in the workforce for our state and globally," he said.

Timing also coincided with the second week of summer classes for 50 students from Rwanda, who have completed their freshmen year at the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources Undergraduate Scholars Program (CUSP) at UNL.

Commissioners observed afternoon classes in animal health, welding, livestock reproduction and construction. They also toured facilities and then helped CUSP teams with chores for dairy, poultry, swine and goats.

"They were very busy vaccinating some of the goats in one area," said Paul Von Behren of Fremont, retired veterinarian and commissioner. "I was impressed when we went into the dairy barn with the cleaning they were doing. Everything was very meticulous."

In later discussions about biosecurity and global animal issues such as African swine fever, Von Behren emphasized the value of hands-on learning with livestock and complimented the CUSP program underway through UNL and NCTA.

After completing four-year degrees at UNL and a summer session or more at NCTA, the CUSP scholars will return to Rwanda and work with small-scale farms and expanding agricultural enterprises.

“Any point of influence we can have on a foreign nation is going to come back to help us in Nebraska, and in American agriculture,” Von Behren said.

Several of the commissioners commented about the unique aspects of the campus and workforce training.

“The opportunity to see all of these animals, work with the students and learn about NCTA has been a great experience,” said Gwenn Aspen of Omaha.

“It is impressive that the college is ranked 11th nationally in two-year institutions based on graduate earnings.”

NCTA Dean Ron Rosati said he appreciated the commissioners taking time to travel to Curtis, located south of North Platte in Frontier County.

“Their visit allows them to gain a better appreciation for what occurs at a college like NCTA. They are obviously very dedicated to doing their job well,” Rosati said.

“Spending time on our campuses helps commission members gain a deeper understanding as they make decisions concerning Nebraska’s higher education institutions,” he added.



NCTA veterinary technology professor Judy Bowmaster-Cole instructed students on how to administer vaccinations for goats as members of the Nebraska Coordinating Commission on Postsecondary Education observed the class. (Crawford/NCTA News)

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

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Sources:

Ron Rosati, NCTA Dean, 308-367-5200

Mike Baumgartner, CCPE executive director, 402-471-2847

Writer: Mary Crawford, NCTA News coordinator, 308-367-5231, mcrawford@unl.edu