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By NCTA News Service

## **NCTA Aggies to Cooperatives Conference**

Minneapolis, Minn. – Four agribusiness students from the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture in Curtis, Neb., recently attended the College Conference on Cooperatives in Minneapolis.

Shane Hoer of Blair, Dalton Johnson of Gering, Kayla Reynolds of Litchfield, and Alyssa Novak of Eldorado, joined 19 other Nebraskans traveling to the annual conference, said Jeremy Sievers of NCTA's Agribusiness Management Systems.

The National Farmers Union hosted 100 students from 20 colleges and universities including agricultural students from NCTA in Curtis, Northeast Community College in Norfolk, and Southeast Community College in Beatrice.

The three-day conference provided an interactive learning experience regarding the importance, structure and operations of various types of cooperative groups, Sievers said.

"In addition to excellent programs about the cooperative system, our delegation toured several businesses which gave the students new insights," said Sievers, AMS associate professor.

Tour highlights allowed participants to view several cooperative entities including the Riverton Housing Co-op and REI sports sales coop, as well as the Mill City Museum, which is a river-front museum built into the remains of what was once the world's largest flour mill.

Representatives and farmers from traditional and value-added agricultural cooperatives, housing and worker-owned co-ops, and consumer cooperatives offered their insight on cooperative development.

Speakers included William Nelson, former president of the CHS Foundation, and Doug O'Brien, executive vice president of programs at the National Cooperative Business Association CLUSA International.

"This was my second opportunity to attend this conference with NCTA," said Novak, a sophomore agribusiness student. "I love learning how coops are helping impact communities to make them better, and gaining a better understanding of the business structure and how it works."

NCTA's Agribusiness Management Systems division is one of four majors for the open-enrollment, two-year institution.

NCTA has a statewide mission as part of the University of Nebraska system and is fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. Additional information is available at [ncta.unl.edu](http://ncta.unl.edu) or by calling 1-800-3-CURTIS.

Jeremiah Picard of Nebraska Farmers Union led the Nebraska delegation. The Nebraska colleges received grant support from the CHS and NFU Foundations. Online article: <http://go.unl.edu/7040>

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**NCTA representatives** attending the 2017 College Conference on Cooperatives in Minneapolis were, (from left), Kayla Reynolds, Litchfield; Alyssa Novak, Eldorado; Dalton Johnson, Gering; Shane Hoer, Blair, and Jeremy Sievers, NCTA associate professor. They visited Thrivent Financial in tours of membership cooperatives. (Courtesy photo)



Attendees in this group photo from the 2017 College Conference on Cooperatives included Nebraska students from the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture, Curtis, Northeast Community College, Norfolk, and Southeast Community College, Beatrice. (Courtesy photo)