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By Mary Crawford, NCTA News

Graduates earn more than diploma

CURTIS, Neb. - When Hunter Lee and Bailey Fleischman graduated from college in early May they took home more than a diploma.

Each is the new owner of a yearling breeding heifer, a result of participating in the Heifer Link program at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture.

The program was started by Bruning, Nebraska agri-businessman Fred Bruning and his son, Reiss, an NCTA alumnus, to assist Nebraska students in the cattle industry.

Aggie students in animal science, livestock management, diversified agriculture or agricultural education are eligible.

Hunter Lee of Chapman graduated in animal science. He had started his beef program with two head at the age of 12.

In one of his projects for Professor Meredith Cable, Lee developed a long-term plan for financing and building his herd in Merrick County where he is employed for a neighbor.

Lee recently purchased a bull to add to his small herd and will be running cattle with his rocking J brand.

Meanwhile, his classmate, Bailey Fleischman of Tekamah also met criteria to take home a heifer.

For the summer, Fleischman will be at his family's corn, soybeans and cattle enterprise. This fall, he will add to his associate degree by continuing in animal science at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Doug Smith, animal science professor and livestock judging team coach at NCTA, has been their professor and said both heifers were raised in the NCTA beef herd.

"Bailey and Hunter are hard-working, dedicated and motivated students who will succeed with their new heifers and new endeavors," Smith said.

"Both are great representatives of NCTA and will be advocates for the beef industry as well as for Heifer Link."

Students work with the herd for hands-on training in their academic programs, including taking a rotation at the NCTA campus farm during calving season each spring. The two Angus-based heifers were born in February-March of 2018.

Fleischman said his heifer will be artificially inseminated this month at his family's operation. The triplet has two brothers, neither of whom are involved in agriculture. While at NCTA, Fleischman was active with the Collegiate Cattlemen club.

"We appreciate the support we receive from Nebraska cattle producers and other Heifer Link donors who provide the resources needed to make this program work," said Ron Rosati, NCTA dean.

"Without that support, we could not help these young people grow their cattle businesses."

Further information about Heifer Link and animal science programs at NCTA is available at ncta.unl.edu. Or, for donations of animals or monetary gifts, contact Craig Buescher at the University of Nebraska Foundation in Lincoln.



Hunter Lee of Chapman, at left, and Bailey Fleischman of Tekamah recently graduated from the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture in Curtis. They participated in the NCTA Heifer Link project. (Crawford/NCTA News Photo)

Online article at: <https://go.unl.edu/on09>

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