



NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE

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Curtis teacher earns ag mechanics certification

Dan Stehlik, agriculture mechanics instructor at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture in Curtis, received a professional development certificate after a weeklong institute entitled, "Technical Applications in Agriculture."

Stehlik was one of 33 educators from 13 states attending the TAA institute held at Ridgewater College in Willmar, Minnesota.

The course is designed for dual enrollment credit at post-secondary institutions.

"The TAA instruction accomplished two outcomes for me," said Stehlik. "One result of the training was affirmation that the subjects I cover in the ag mechanics courses at NCTA are right on for industry and production training.

"The other contribution for my instruction currently taught in my lectures and lab sessions is additional technology applications or precision measurements."

The program called CASE, Curriculum for Agricultural Science Education, is a new course funded through a National Science Foundation grant in partnership with AgCentric, Northern Center of Agricultural Excellence and Ridgewater College.

Stehlik, who taught agricultural education in Kansas high schools for 19 years, joined the NCTA faculty in 2015. He teaches classes in welding, electricity, pivot technology, ag equipment maintenance, ag safety and more.

"A benefit from this experience was the opportunity to interact with agriculture instructors from a variety of high school and post-secondary ag programs," Stehlik said. "I shared training in lab sessions with instructors from Kansas, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Idaho, Minnesota, and the Dakotas. In some instances, I had better knowledge from years of teaching, and in some situations, I gained ideas I can use with classes and students at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture."

A CASE media release outlines the program as a course designed for dual enrollment credit at post-secondary institutions. Secondary students successfully completing the course for a credential and college credit will move seamlessly into an agricultural technician training program at partnering post-secondary schools or into the agricultural technician workforce.

The lessons in a year-long curriculum emphasize how to deliver lessons in an inquiry-based way that will shift focus in the classroom from teacher-led to student-directed learning.

Stehlik said he plans to incorporate some of the hands-on skills and teaching techniques for his classes.

CASE is an initiative of the National Council for Agricultural Education and managed by the National Association of Agricultural Educators.



Dan Stehlik attended an agricultural mechanics institute in Minnesota in August studying Technical Application in Agriculture. This tractor is equipped with autosteer capability. (Courtesy photo)



Dan Stehlik, NCTA ag mechanics educator

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