



NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE

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By NCTA News

Cattle technology at the show ring

KEARNEY, Neb. – College classes sometimes are best taught around the livestock producers who invest in the genetics, nutrition, technology, land resources, and overall management for their cattle herds.

“Since moving to Nebraska in the fall of 2019, I’ve had many opportunities to learn about the beef industry, specifically in Nebraska,” says Lucinda Overweg, a native of White Lake, S.D.

“The Cattlemen’s Classic in Kearney was one of those opportunities,” adds the Aggie sophomore, a Livestock Industry Management major at NCTA.

Fourteen students in the Beef Production class of NCTA Professor Doug Smith were on a field trip Thursday, in visiting the livestock shows and expo at the Buffalo County Fairgrounds.

The two-year technical college also hosted an exhibit among vendors at the Expo Building where Classic attendees could learn about the college, its agricultural and veterinary technology courses, and team activities such as Collegiate Livestock Judging, Aggie Rodeo, NCTA Stock Dogs, and Ranch Horse Team.

“I enjoyed my time there at the Classic, as I’m from out of state. It was nice to get to experience one of Nebraska’s bigger shows,” Overweg added. “Watching the heifer sale was definitely the highlight of my day, and I’m glad that Dr. Smith took us on this trip.”

Last weekend, Smith’s judging teams competed in the Collegiate Division of the Livestock Judging Contest. The sophomore team placed 8th and the freshmen were 12th in evaluating 12 classes of beef cattle. Youth and college-age students also visited dozens of vendors and learned about industry technology and production resources.

“I had the opportunity to chat with a company that is producing a new type of heat synchronization for cattle,” Overweg said, explaining a heat detection patch placed at the tail head of the cow can detect 1 pound of pressure when another animal exerts physical contact. A sensor transmits a signal to an antenna, which in turn sends a notification to the cow herd manager’s mobile phone.

“This was the most interesting piece of technology information I learned on the field trip,” she added.

After graduation in May, Overweg plans to return to her family’s operation where she will be assuming greater management of their ranch and expand her beef herd.

Part of the University of Nebraska system, the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture is a two-year institution with a statewide mission of preparing students for successful careers in agriculture, veterinary technology and related industries. NCTA is known for its affordable tuition, high job-placement rate for its graduates, and for the success of student teams in competitive activities including crops judging, ranch horse events, livestock judging, shotgun sports, stock dog trials, and intercollegiate rodeo. The college is consistently ranked as one of the best two-year schools in the nation.



Field trips are valuable for learning about new technology in the cattle industry. A Beef Cattle Production class from the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture in Curtis gained management tips from the Nebraska Cattlemen's Classic. Luci Overweg is in the front row, third from the left. (Doug Smith / NCTA Photo)

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