

NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE LAUNCHES 100-COW OUTREACH PROGRAM TO MEET DEMAND FOR NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENTS

Program kicks off on May 15, 2008, with NCTA Cow/Calf College

CURTIS, NE, APRIL 28, 2008: Since launching the 100-Beef Cow Ownership Program in Fall 2007, the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture (NCTA) has been overwhelmed by the enthusiastic response by students, producers, and industry. Some of the reaction they didn't initially plan for was from current "hired hands" interested in participating, but unable to enroll as full time students.

The result of this response is the new 100-Beef Cow Ownership Outreach Advantage. Slated to begin on May 15, 2008, this parallel program is focused on the non-traditional student who, for various reasons, is unable to take advantage of the curriculum on a full-time basis on campus.

Dr Weldon Sleight, NCTA dean, is excited about the possibility of meeting a need for students outside of the student body on the Curtis campus. "There are as many ranch hands that have as strong a desire to have their own herd as our current students," says Sleight. "We knew we had to find a way to meet their needs as well."

Developing a program to be delivered on a statewide basis presented some challenges, but many of the same components of the traditional program will be incorporated into the outreach version. The new outreach program will consist of the following modules:

- **Farm and Ranch Management:** This course covers business management concepts which are involved in the decision-making process when organizing and operating a farming/ranching operation
- **NebraskaEDGE Program:** The NebraskaEDGE program is a entrepreneurial training program designed to encourage the expansion of small business, including agricultural operations
- **Nebraska Ranch Practicum:** The Nebraska Ranch Practicum is a three-season, hands on educational program designed to give the participants the skill and education needed in today's complex ranching industry. This unique class is held at the West Central Research and Extension Center in North Platte and the Gudmundsen Sandhills Laboratory near

Whitman , Nebraska .

- NCTA Cow Calf College: The course is designed to assist managers in making management decisions for improving profitability.

Students who elect to participate in the program will receive instruction through distance learning at home, in addition to the onsite experiences at Gudmundsen and NCTA. “We aim to make the class convenient, but still allow students to experience everything they need to be successful,” adds Sleight.

The first segment of the program, the NCTA Cow/Calf College, kicks off on May 15, 2008, and runs through May 17, 2008. This three-day event, which is also open to the public, will focus on nutrition, handling, and herd health and features experts such as Dr Lynn Locatelli, national expert on low-stress cattle handling. Cost for the Cow/Calf College is \$200 and includes all sessions and meals. Registration deadline for this event is Thursday, May 7, 2008.

For more information about the 100-Beef Cow Ownership Outreach Program, please contact Jeff Tidyman, Continuing Education Coordinator, at 1-800-3CURTIS.