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The Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture  
**Heifer Link Program**

**2016 Nebraska Grazing Conference**

August 9, 2016  
Ron Rosati  
Doug Smith

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**Agenda:**

- Introduce NCTA broad overview
- Discuss 100 Cow program
- Discuss Heifer Link program
- Present an opportunity for questions, input into our NCTA programs



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**NCTA - the big picture:**

- Unique unit of the University of Nebraska
- Independent accreditation & state line-item appropriation
- Two-year degrees, one-year certificates
- College of opportunity & access - financial & academic




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**NCTA - the big picture:**

- ~ 260 residential, full-time students
- Primary majors:
  - Production agriculture – ranching and farming
  - Veterinary technology
  - Agricultural business management
  - Agricultural mechanics
  - Agricultural education
- Measures of excellence:
  - Aspen Institute (Top 15%)
  - Veterinary Technology Top 10
  - Excellent graduation rate
  - Student performance relative to peers



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**Hands-on learning – an NCTA trademark!**



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### NCTA Stock Dog Club

- Official Club formed in 2016
- Outback Stock Dog Association and NCTA Vet Tech Division



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**2016 National Agriculture Contest – Minnesota**



**Nine top places for NCTA teams, individuals**

- Livestock, dairy, equine, crops judging and agribusiness contests

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**NCTA Ranch Horse Team**



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**2016 NCTA Rodeo Team**



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**2016 Crops Judging Team**

- NACTA Nat'l Contest
  - 2013 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Place
  - 2014 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Place
  - 2015 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Place
  - 2016 – 1<sup>st</sup> Place




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**2016 Shooting Sports Team**




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**2016 NCTA Safari Club Ecuador/Galapagos Islands study**



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**2016 Livestock Judging Team**



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**Livestock Judging Team, Houston**



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**2015 Nebraska Range and Conservation Endowment Award**



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**Nebraska Cattlemen Foundation's Industry Endowment Award**

*Presented by:*

Barb Cooksley, NC president

to


Jo Bek, NCTA professor  
Animal Science



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**NCTA Collegiate Cattlemen**



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**100 Beef Cow Ownership Advantage Program**

**Goals:**

- Help young people get started in farming and ranching from an ownership capacity
- Create successful business plans and operation transfer programs
- Provide a forum where students, parents, employers and agencies create transition

**Results:**

- 90 graduates since 2007
- Nearly 30% as owners in production agriculture

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### 100 Beef Cow Ownership Advantage Program

#### Semester 1:

- Students develop realistic long-term enterprise goals
- Students learn about USDA's Farm Service Agency loan programs
- Students present their formal career plan and discuss with colleagues



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### Trusted advisors and mentors

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### 100 Beef Cow Ownership Advantage Program

#### Semester 2:

- Students learn requirements of various lending institutions within the agricultural sector
- Students learn types of business professionals and resources utilized for agricultural business resources and ownership transitions
- Students learn legal aspects of farm and ranch ownership and transfer
- Students learn practical models of transition from peers and successful program graduates
- Program participants sign up for internships

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### 2016 Animal Science Advisory

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### 100 Beef Cow Ownership Advantage Program

#### Semester 3:

- Students meet with FSA representatives to discuss Beginning Farmer/Rancher applications
- Students research the marketing strategies appropriate for their business plan
- Students explore practical intergenerational strategies for a business transition
- Students write a first draft of business plan

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## Evaluating ranch resources



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## 100 Beef Cow Ownership Advantage Program

Semester 4 - Capstone:


- Students develop complete financial business plan
- Students develop detailed business management plan
- Students develop competence in detailed legal issues:
  - Estate planning
  - Corporations and partnerships
  - Real estate law
  - Fence law
  - Water law
  - Banking regulations
  - Livestock and income taxes

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## Heifer Link Program

- Expansion of the 100 Cow Program
- Enables student heifer ownership
- Student managed herd - nutrition, reproduction, health care
- Two students received bred heifers in May 2015; Four students received bred heifers in May 2016.




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## Heifer Link Program

- Animal Science Division
- Specialty Program
- Students majoring in:
  - Livestock Management
  - Diversified Agriculture
  - Agricultural Education



<http://ncta.unl.edu/heifer-link-program>

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## Heifer Link Program

- Application process
  - Eligibility requirements
  - Student selection criteria
  - February application
- Student selection process
  - Department advisory committee
  - Industry advisory committee
- Acquisition of student heifers
  - Donated funds or animals
  - Animal selection criteria
  - Solicitation process




2016 Heifer Link Scholars

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## Heifer Link Education

- Hands-on
- Student herd
- Near campus



Nick Kunz with NCTA cow-calf pair

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## Heifer Link Education

Management of student herd

- Nutrition
- Reproduction
- Healthcare
- Facilities




Evey Choat's  
heifer



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The Nature Conservancy  Graves Ranch

 U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge



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Discover Your Way  
at NCTA

I WANT TO MAKE A CAREER OUT OF MY GREEN THUMBS


I WANT A CAREER THAT COMBINES BUSINESS AND AGRICULTURE

I'D LIKE TO OWN MY OWN RANCH OR FARM

I WANT TO HELP ANIMALS



Dr. Douglas Smith -- [doug.smith@unl.edu](mailto:doug.smith@unl.edu)



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