

When Joe and Connie Cool of Callaway saw an article in the Custer County Chief about the 100 Beef Cow Outreach program offered by Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture in Curtis, they made a decision that they hope will change their lives.

Joe, who grew up on a farm and has been a farm hand for 15 years, enrolled in the program at NCTA to gain more knowledge about the beef cattle industry so he and his family could start their own operation. Once Joe enrolled in the classes, he spent about two days a month working at hands-on courses.

Joe's wife Connie notes that his current employer was supportive of Joe's decision and was able to give him time to work on the classes. It was the family's turn to be supportive when Joe spent an evening each week working at home via telecom courses.

During this time, Joe was able to learn a lot of new information, even with the hands-on knowledge he had already accumulated over the years. Connie enjoyed working with Joe as they completed their own business plan, an aspect of the EDGE course required for the program. The two are hoping to finish their plan and be able to put it into practice within the next few years.

The 100 Cow Outreach program is tailor-made for individuals who need to receive instruction while still working full-time. The program takes nine months to complete, covering a course outline from May to January.

With a total of eight credits and four required courses, this program is designed specifically for those looking for college courses that will fit into their already busy lives.

The core of this program is to ensure that the next generation of Nebraska farmers and ranchers are Nebraskans.

"I recommend this course for anybody who is trying to get ahead," stated Connie.

The 100 Cow Outreach Program is ready to prepare those interested in owning and managing a beef cattle operation. If you are interested in this program, or are interested in partnering with a beginning farmer or rancher, contact Larry Cooper at 1.800.3CURTIS.