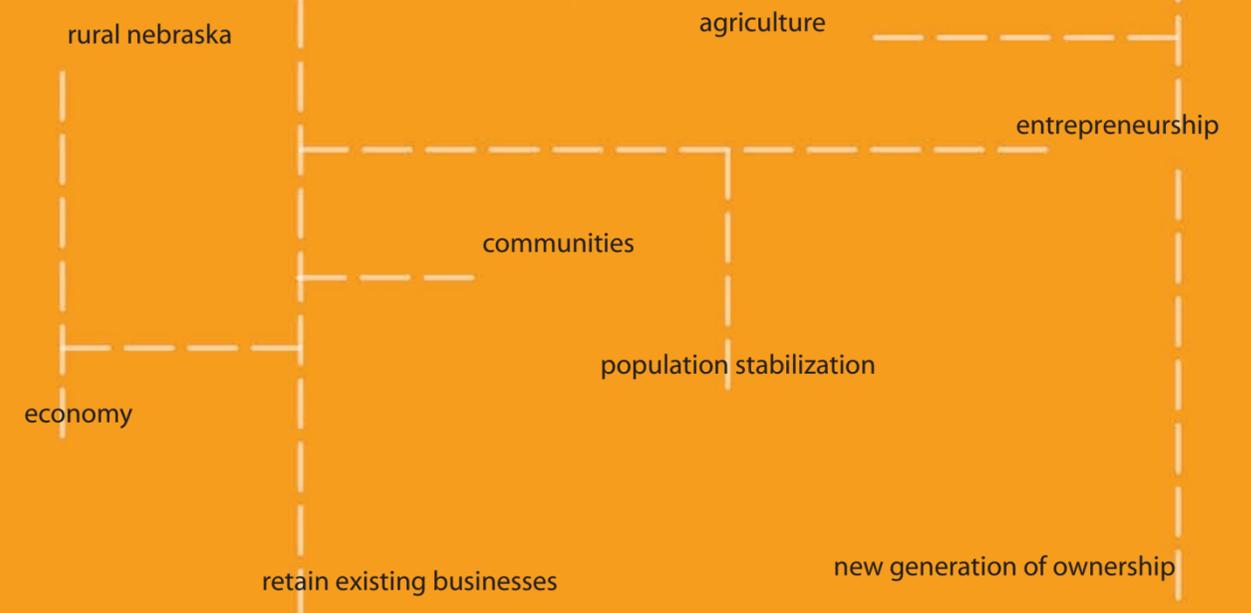
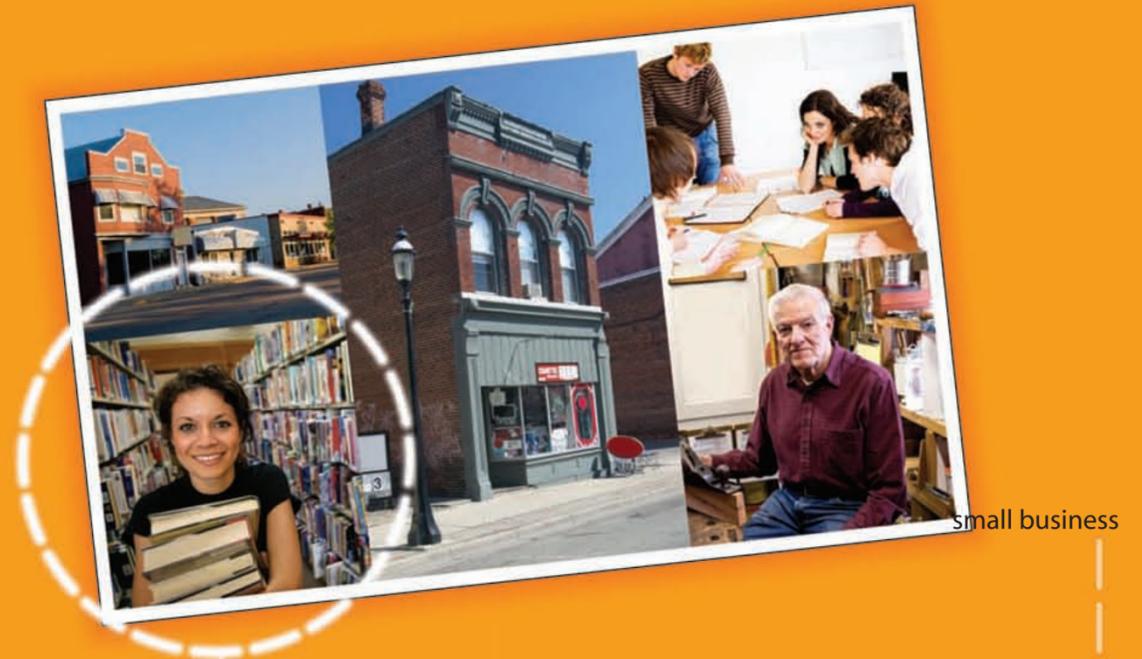




The University of Nebraska Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture Business Builder



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BUSINESS BUILDER PROGRAM

Background

The Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture (NCTA) has, during the 2006-07 academic year, prepared its faculty to teach **entrepreneurship** principles across its entire curriculum. The central focus on entrepreneurship has created a new way of thinking at NCTA. Instead of just preparing its students for positions in Nebraska agriculture, NCTA faculty are now preparing students to develop **small businesses** to take home to rural Nebraska.

Filling Empty Storefronts vs. Keeping Current Businesses Viable

We have strived to send each student home with a business plan to fill a store front in their hometown, however it would be more beneficial to the community to maintain those businesses in existence. The business not only offers assets and placement but also a customer base that would take years to build. New owners bring new blood, enthusiasm, money, ideas and goals to the table.

The problem, until now, is that most higher education institutions have not developed partnerships with agencies, parents, and employers to create within students a vision and understanding of how the student's dream of owning a business could become a reality.

The key to this program is to have the NCTA graduates return to rural Nebraska with an interest and assets large enough that they will be viewed as more than a key employee, new student, or third-party owner.

Another positive aspect of the program is that students mature rapidly when they are trusted with a substantial asset. This is good for the graduate and for the community.

The NCTA program will encourage the development of legal agreements between the owner and the potential buyer. Perhaps such legal agreements could be used as a prerequisite to receiving a tax credit.



• small business • agriculture • entrepreneurship • economy • rural nebraska

• new generation of ownership • population stabilization • retain existing businesses •



This is important since 47% of rural Nebraska communities now maintain a population of 300 residents or fewer. It is predicted that these small communities will continue to lose population because they are based on an **agricultural economy**. This economy is increasing the size of farms and ranches, which generally means fewer rural families.

For years, NCTA has been preparing its students to return to **rural communities** as community leaders. NCTA's new entrepreneurship thrust will add to that leadership potential because they will return home with a business plan that will be fundable through various financial institutions. It is the NCTA faculty's belief that if students become familiar with entrepreneurial concepts, they can help their rural communities once again become **economically viable**.

NCTA partnering with **Nebraska Business Development Center** (NBDC) is a perfect fit in matching those business owners desiring a mechanism to transition to a new entity or retirement with students wanting to one day own their own businesses through a 3-5 year transition period.

NCTA and NBDC will develop courses and seminars for students, parents, employers, and business owners with the specific objective of formulating business plans that include business transfer systems.

This unique program starts with NCTA's degree program in Agribusiness Management Systems, which includes the development of a business plan. This plan will be developed through NCTA course work and involve the current business owner and NBDC.

Program Outcomes

- Maintain Successful Local Businesses
- Build Cash Flow for the Local Economy
- Provide a Way for Business Owners to Gain Information Confidentially
- Stabilize or Increase the Rural Nebraska Population

This infusion of residents with an understanding of entrepreneurship and leadership education will be a catalyst in revitalizing rural Nebraska communities.

Summary

Business owners enjoy their rural lifestyle but often times don't see a way for their business to continue. We hope to provide that avenue and see the business not only continue, but grow. The program will build character in the student and result in a positive outlook on their future.

In addition, if NCTA graduates were to return to their rural communities, establish families, and become entrepreneurial leaders, life would be better for a number of rural Nebraskans who understand the importance of rural life.

