

Views from VanDeWalle

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July 26, 2023

Drones in Ag Conference

Drone pilots and businesses utilizing drones across Nebraska will converge on Aug. 3, 2023 for the inaugural Drones in Ag Conference, sponsored by Nebraska Agricultural Technology Association (NeATA) and organized by Nebraska Extension. The conference is a one-day event held at UNL's Eastern Nebraska Research and Extension Education Center (ENREEC) located near Mead, Nebraska.

This conference serves as a platform to exchange knowledge and experiences among participants, given the growing nature of this industry. The widespread adoption of drones in agriculture offers significant prospects for enhancing resource management and operational efficiency in farming practices. The conference will begin with a keynote address delivered by Mike O'Shea, program manager of the UAS Integration Office for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). He will discuss how the FAA is working to streamline the process of using drones in the national airspace and providing resources that participants can use.

Three practical informational sessions with panel discussions from 10 drone practitioners will be presented throughout the day to allow participants opportunities to have their questions answered by experts in the field. These sessions will include information on how to fly drones legally in the national airspace, including requirements to fly sprayer drones, practical uses of drones in agriculture, and tips and tricks to successfully use drones in a business.

The conference starts at 8 a.m. on Thursday, Aug. 3 at ENREEC, located at 1071 Co. Rd. G, Ithaca, NE 68033. Lunch will be provided and sessions will wrap up at 2:30 p.m., followed by drone demonstrations. Certified Crop Advisor credits for attending the conference are pending.

More information, agenda details and registration for the Drones in Ag Conference can be found on the NeATA website, neata.org. Contact Dirk Charlson at dirk.charlson@unl.edu or 402-460-0742, for questions or concerns.

NeATA is a non-profit organization that provides a professional network for producers, businesses, and educators to share agricultural research experiences and related knowledge. Registration to the conference includes free membership to NeATA.