

# Andee Marston



The beef industry is unique in the way it invests so much time and dedication into the next generation of leaders. Junior cattle associations provide members with the opportunity to gain lifelong skills not only in the showring but also in available leadership roles.

Many beef leaders started their careers when they were barely big enough to lead a heifer; showing cattle was a hobby and family activity. Through the years, these leaders expanded their roles and established careers based on something they have been passionate about all their lives.

Andee Marston, American Hereford Association (AHA) field representative, fits the profile of a beef leader. While involved in the Shorthorn breed, Andee was an active junior member and successfully showed across the nation. While taking part in something he enjoyed, Andee was able to prepare for a professional career as a field representative for the AHA.

Andee is originally from Canton, Kan., where he grew up on his family's Shorthorn and farming operation. While managing 150 cows, his dad also managed a custom fitting

service in the late 1970s and early '80s. Andee decided to following in his father's footsteps by starting Lucky 7 Cattle Services, preparing cattle for shows and sales.

He has accumulated several purple banners. His family raised the 2009 National Western Stock Show (NWSS) champion Shorthorn bull, 1998 NWSS champion Shorthorn heifer and 1996 All-American Shorthorn heifer, along with several other division champions at national shows.

Andee attended Kansas State University (K-State), receiving his bachelor's degree in animal science.

After college he worked for an Angus operation in Oklahoma until deciding to return to Kansas to work for Jensen Bros. He was then offered and accepted full-time employment as show cattle manager for Bohi Land & Cattle, located outside of Kansas City, Kan.

Recognizing an opportunity for career advancement, Andee interviewed for and accepted the job as AHA fieldman and packed his bags to move to Nashville, Tenn., to start a new endeavor with the Hereford breed.

After accepting the job, he remembers saying to Joe Rickabaugh, AHA director of field management and seedstock marketing, "I don't know much about being a fieldman." Rickabaugh reassured him by replying, "Don't worry; you can always call John Meents; he will have all the answers."

During the past three years, Andee has traveled to shows, sales and Hereford operations in eight Southeast states. He covers several thousand miles each year and has come to think of the Hampton Inn as a second home.

Year-round he works closely with breeders, assisting them in marketing purebred and commercial cattle.

Public relations is a big portion of Andee's job. He has become the familiar face at shows and sales throughout the Southeast. He is a spokesperson for the breed at state association meetings. These events give Andee an opportunity to communicate with members, informing them of new services and upcoming *Hereford World* deadlines.

He says he treasures the connections made at the AHA. Wednesday is his favorite day of the week; this is his time to catch up on Hereford events in different parts of the country during the fieldmen conference call.

John Meents, AHA field representative for the Upper Midwest, compliments his coworker, "Andee is one of the great bright stars on the AHA staff. He is super knowledgeable of beef cattle, has a great eye for the good ones and is a very dedicated, hard-working staff member. It is great to have Andee on board, and I enjoy working with him."

Andee is enthusiastic about the future of the breed in the next five to 10 years. He says the table is set for a change in the way the cattle industry works. He speaks confidently about the breed, "Cattlemen all over the country are looking for stock that will move their herds in the right direction. A good Hereford bull or female is the perfect answer."

Andee continues adding, "Cattlemen are beginning to see the improvements heterosis can bring to a herd and how it will put more money into your pocket." In years to come, the Hereford breed is poised to gain market share against other breeds. Andee challenges breeders to sell a product that continues to improve with each generation.

Andee's favorite aspect of his job is going to Hereford events and establishing friendships with people

in the breed. David and Beth Burns, Burns Farms, Pikeville, Tenn., have become close friends with Andee through the years. Beth and Andee attended college together. Andee has enjoyed watching Burns Farms grow and was honored to be a part of its first sale in November.

"Andee was instrumental in the success of our first sale," David says. "He was involved all along the way. He helped with mating advice, advertising, brochure and catalog layout, as well as on sale day. Southeastern Hereford breeders are lucky to have such a valuable resource at their disposal."

Andee says he is grateful for the people who have made a difference in his life, shaping him into the person he is today. His parents, Twig and Mary, have been amazing role models and provided him and his sister, Katie, with the cattle lifestyle. He says his parents taught him the importance of pursuing his dreams and working hard to accomplish his goals.

When talking about his future, Andee says, "This Hereford thing must be contagious." Without a doubt, Andee will be in the Hereford breed for a lifetime, as he will marry Robin Valek, a Kansas Hereford breeder, this February. Her family has raised Herefords for three generations in north central Kansas. Robin received an agriculture journalism degree from K-State in December.

Andee is an inspiration for Hereford junior members across the country. Like many juniors he was competitive in the showring; and because he valued hard work, dedication and education, he has climbed his way to the top as a leader in the beef industry. **HW**