

Kids, Cattle and Fun

A great annual event happened in July when friends from all around the nation came together in friendly competition. Some 600 kids and 1,091 head of cattle attended this year's Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE) in Kansas City, July 12-19.

People came from 40 states plus Canada to gather and renew old friendships while creating new ones. It seemed that every animal and person enjoyed himself at the show. Great facilities and pleasant weather made the week even better. The hard work of the host states of Illinois, Missouri and Arkansas made this event a huge success. "I am the future" was the theme for JNHE, and it is a promising future for the Hereford Association. With so many intelligent young members attending, we will be the industry leaders to come.

Competition filled the week not only with the cattle show but also through numerous other activities. Youth participated in a heated 3-on-3 basketball



The four new NJHA directors elected at the 2008 JNHE (l to r) are: Justin Bacon, Prairie Grove, Ark.; Rossie Blinson, Buies Creek, N.C.; Danielle Starr, Manawa, Wis.; and Jacob Metch, Bainbridge, N.Y.

tournament held at the College Basketball Experience, turning one of the favorite events into a spectacular trip with more than just basketball involved. Everyone was bused downtown to the Sprint Center, where they then could play basketball, race through a scavenger hunt and look at the college basketball hall of fame.

Scholarships, showmanship and speech contests may not draw as much attention as the cattle show, but the participants put months of preparation into getting ready for these events, and they should be proud of their hard work and dedication. The effort kids put into contests like team marketing and grill-off showed through with stiff competition in each contest. If just keeping your cattle ready and making it to all your contests on time wasn't enough, some also went on tours to the American Hereford Association (AHA) headquarters and the national headquarters of VitaFerm® in St. Joseph, Mo.

Of course the main reason we all come to this event is for the cattle show. The best cattle from everywhere in the nation made their way to Kansas City. Class after class of high-quality cattle was evaluated by the judges during four days. Hereford enthusiasts

agree that it was an amazing sight, and hearts raced when each champion was picked.

This event would not have been possible without the support of sponsors, participants and parents and all the planning put into making this show the great event it is. Thanks go out to the host states for all of their behind the scenes work. The state hosts are large contributors to the success of the JNHE. VitaFerm, Fort Dodge Animal Health, and UMB Bank and the RC Kemper Charitable Trust were our corporate sponsors this year, and it is because of their outstanding support that we were able to have such a spectacular event in Kansas City.

Thank you to all the sponsors, regardless of the level; you did not go unnoticed. A special thank you for the continued support to the American Hereford Women and the National Organization of Polle-ettes for work throughout the week. And a final note of appreciation goes to the AHA staff and the fieldmen for all their help. The biggest thank you goes to the parents and grandparents who support their children every day and provide them with the opportunity to be a part of this great event. **HW**

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