

A Humbling Honor

David Ezell, Bruno, Ark., was surprised and humbled by being named the 2011 JNHE Advisor of the Year.

by *Christy Couch Lee*

He never believed it would happen to him. And when David Ezell, Bruno, Ark., was honored as the 2011 Advisor of the Year July 15 during the VitaFerm® Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE) in Kansas City, Mo., he says he was filled with surprise and honor.

“Personally, I don’t see myself as winning this award,” he says. “A lot of people do a lot of things, and I don’t think of myself as any better than anyone else. It’s quite an honor that the youth of Arkansas thought of me that way.”



David has contributed his time, talents and guidance for many years to the Arkansas Junior Hereford Association (AJHA) members and their families. He was nominated by AJHA co-advisor Jennifer Cook and received the honor during the 2011 JNHE awards banquet.

David was born and raised on the beef cattle operation that has been in the Ezell family for 95 years, on which Herefords have been the focus for the past decade.

“My first start showing was with dairy cattle,” he says. “I worked at the dairy farm at the College of the Ozarks, got out of college, and started in the beef business, farming with my in-laws. My dad always had Hereford bulls. We never had any registered cattle, other than those registered Hereford bulls.”

David currently farms 500 acres and manages an 80-head cow herd, in addition to substitute teaching and driving a bus for the local school. He and his wife, Kelly, have two children: Curtis, 20, and Chesera, 17. From a young age, both children got their start in the showing.



David (back row, right) says he views each member of the Arkansas Junior Hereford Association as his own during the Junior National Hereford Expo.

“We started the kids showing cattle early, because we think it’s a great thing,” David says.

David often finds himself in leadership positions with the Arkansas Hereford Association, having served as president and vice president of the



David and his wife, Kelly (left), have encouraged their children Chesera (right) and Curtis to be involved in the showring for the life lessons it provides.

association and currently serving on the board of directors.

As AJHA advisor, David has led the sanctioning of four jackpot shows with the Arkansas Junior Cattlemen’s Association, which include two Hereford preview shows. He works diligently behind the scenes with critical attention to detail to ensure the success of these events. And AJHA membership numbers and state involvement have increased under David’s leadership, Cook says.

David says although the job can be tough, at times, he looks to each AJHA member as his own son or daughter.

“At times, being the advisor can be really rewarding, and at times, it can be stressful,” he says.

“I always try to make the good overshadow the bad.



David says he was humbled and surprised to receive the 2011 JNHE Advisor of the Year award.

I had 21 kids at the junior national this year — that’s the way I look at it. I’m just as happy for any of them to win as I am for my own.”

David says he was both surprised and honored by this recognition.

“It was very rewarding to receive this award, and I was in total shock,” he says. “I couldn’t do this without the other advisors and the support of the families of our state association.” **HW**