



# Driven by Passion



A fourth-generation Hereford breeder, Cody has played an active role in his family's operation — Beck-Powell Polled Herefords. He is pictured here with his parents, Andy and Betsy, and his grandparents, Gene and Alice Beck.



## ***A lifetime of love and dedication for Hereford cattle led to Cody Beck being honored with the 2014 Herdsman of the Year title.***

by ***Bridget Beran***

**W**hen one of the first words you say as a child is “bull,” you know you’re destined to be a cattleman. For Cody Beck, Bainbridge, Ind., there was never any doubt that Herefords were going to be his life. However his passion, discipline and responsibility are what earned him the respect of his peers.

This respect led to him being recognized as the Herdsman of the Year at the 2014 Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE). Cody says

watching his mentors and role models and then developing his own style have helped him get where he is today.

His parents, Andy and Betsy Beck, say the best way to get him to stop crying as a baby was when his dad read the *Hereford World* to him. This fourth-generation breeder says that while he may not have had a choice of breed, he wouldn’t have chosen differently anyway.

“I’ve always loved Hereford cattle,” Cody says. “Not only because Herefords are good cattle but because of the people in this industry as well. The Hereford people are my extended family.”

An active member of the National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) and the Indiana Junior Hereford Association (IJHA) since 2000, Cody has served as a director for the IJHA for five years, including two years as president. He also served on the committee for the JNHE when it was in Indianapolis in 2010. Throughout his years as a junior, Cody has exhibited cattle and participated in contests at every Indiana preview show and JNHE.

All those years have added up to a lot of success. He says one of his proudest accomplishments in the showing was exhibiting the 2010 JNHE reserve grand champion bred-and-owned female, as well as being a top 10 senior showman at the 2011 and 2013 JNHE. Cody also won reserve grand champion horned female at this year’s JNHE.

And this JNHE isn’t the first time he’s been recognized by his peers for his hard work. Cody was also named Indiana’s outstanding state member at the 2011 JNHE. However, he says all the awards don’t mean as much as the people he’s met along the way.

### **Friends, family, mentors**

“I met my best friends — Brady and Cody Jensen — at my first junior nationals,” Cody says. He and the Jensen cousins went on to be roommates and livestock judging teammates while at Butler Community College (BCC), El Dorado, Kan. He also says his junior experience wouldn’t





be complete without the Van Horn brothers — Burk, Cole and Jae — from Franklin, Ind., as well as Ky Stierwalt, Leedey, Okla.

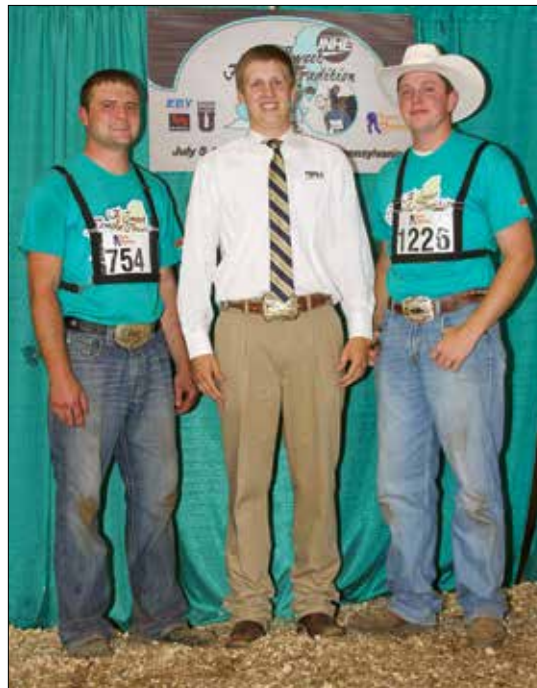
“When I think of Cody Beck, I think of a first-class friend that lives and breathes the Hereford breed,” says Brady, who was the 2012 herdsman of the year recipient. “Cody’s passion for the Hereford breed has been instilled by his parents and grandparents who have been longtime Hereford enthusiasts. Cody sets the bar high for his show cattle every year and he possesses the drive, work ethic, and talent that led him to being awarded with the junior herdsman award.”

Cody Jensen agrees, saying that Cody’s long-standing passion for Hereford cattle always shows through.

“He has put a lot of time into this industry and you can tell he has gained a lot of knowledge from it. We have had a lot of success helping and fitting for families, but there is nothing more that I enjoy than getting cattle ready with one of my best friends,” Cody Jensen says.

With a long list of mentors, Cody Beck says his success as a junior wouldn’t have been the same without the guidance of his parents; grandparents, Gene and Alice Beck, Bainbridge, Ind.; Bruce Everhart, Waldron, Ind.; Kevin and Sheila Jensen, Courtland, Kan.; Colt and John Keffer, Crawfordsville, Ind.; Dylan Koepke, Onida, S.D.; Eddie Sandberg, Courtland, Kan.; Jason Hoffman, Thedford, Neb.; Shane Werk, Herman, Minn.; and Chris Mullinix, Manhattan, Kan.

Chris, Cody’s livestock judging coach during his time at BCC, says that he could not be more proud of having coached Cody, but even more so Chris is excited to be able to call Cody a friend for life.

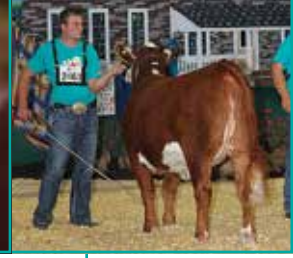


Cody met his two best friends — Cody and Brady Jensen — at his first junior national in 2000.



“When I consider the criteria expected of our breed’s Herdsman of the Year, I think of a young person who is dedicated to the breed and in-herd improvement, one who understands genetics and management and one who has the ability to prepare and exhibit cattle in a way that can truly showcase their breeding program. I can’t imagine a young





person who defines that image more than Cody Beck,” Chris says. “Cody’s dedication to simply learning more about the industry he loves made him a pleasure to coach. But more importantly, he’s the kind of friend we all hope to have in our lives. Always there for you, no questions asked. He knows just how to make you feel good when things are tough and yet knows you well enough to bring you down to earth when you’re too high on your accomplishments. You have a mutual respect and an unspoken bond. That’s what makes Cody Beck so special.

“Obviously, this is a well-deserved honor. However, as Cody closes his junior involvement another door opens. I have no doubt Cody Beck will continue to have a powerful impact on the Hereford breed —as a great cattleman, leader and friend to us all.”

### Important lessons

Cody says it’s very beneficial as a junior to find people who can be looked up to and to watch them. Even now, he says he still watches his mentors closely and knows that there’s always a new lesson he can learn. One important lesson Cody learned from his parents was the power of a positive attitude.

“When I first started showing cattle, my parents would always tell me, ‘Don’t brag when you win and don’t pout when you lose.’ I follow that advice both inside and outside the showring,” Cody says.

He encourages juniors to always try to keep a good attitude and to have fun in life. Still, this young leader knows nothing gets done without hard work.

“Responsibility is something everyone needs to be successful,” Cody explains. “You have to be disciplined and get your work done no matter what anyone else does. Cattle and responsibilities are a part of a livestock kid’s life.”

Being responsible is something Cody knows a lot about. When he’s home from Oklahoma State University,



where he’s pursuing a degree in animal science, Cody is busy helping his father and grandfather take care of the cow herd and working on both the sale and show cattle. While he says his main responsibilities are rinsing, clipping, helping work cows and checking cows, Cody says their farm is truly a family affair.

“We all work together to get done what needs to be done,” Cody says.

### Honor beyond measure

Being a true herdsman means being respectful of others and, in turn, being respected by your peers, as well as having dedication to your herd and an unparalleled passion for the breed. The committee of adult national advisors who handpick the five finalists for Herdsman of the Year saw these traits in Cody. JNHE participants who vote on the finalists also recognized Cody’s hard work and love of the Hereford breed.

“This award means the world to me and I am very grateful that I had the opportunity to receive

such a high honor,” Cody says. “After watching people that I look up to for so many years and trying to emulate what they do with my own style, it’s a true honor to achieve this goal.”

While this year marks his 15th JNHE and his last year in the NJHA, Cody says he intends to stay in the Hereford business for the long haul.

“After Oklahoma State I intend on finding a steady career in the cattle industry and continuing to raise and market my own cattle along the way,” Cody says. **HW**

### Herdsman of the Year tips

- Find people you look up to and watch them.
- Develop your own style.
- Be dedicated and get your work done, no matter what anyone else does.
- Never take anything for granted in life.
- Be passionate about whatever you do.

