



Steven Green is pictured receiving his Junior Herdsman of the Year buckle from National Hereford Queen Annah Dobson.

It's Only the Beginning

Hereford Junior Herdsman of the Year Steven Green has big plans for his future in the Hereford breed.

by *Julie Mais*

Back in 2007 a young Steven Green was at the county fair washing his steer when something caught his eye. Looking over his right shoulder and forgetting about his task at hand, Steven set his eyes on a Hereford heifer stepping off a nearby trailer. Starting to show heifers had been on his mind, and that moment sealed his fate — Steven became a Hereford breeder.

“I just fell in love with the Hereford breed,” says Steven Green, Munfordville, Ky., who was honored as the 2017 Hereford Junior Herdsman of the Year, July 21, during the 2017 VitaFerm® Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE) in Louisville, Ky.

Junior Herdsman of the Year finalists are chosen by a committee of national advisors; then participants at JNHE vote for the winner.

Steven, who had been named National Junior Hereford Association board chairman two days before, was already in the showing when the announcement was made. He was standing amongst fellow board members helping with the awards presentations.

“It’s just a huge honor and blessing to receive this award,” Steven says. “The list of finalists for the Junior Herdsman of the Year was super tough. Each one is deserving. They should have more than one belt buckle for this contest.”

Learning the ropes

Not having been raised in a Hereford family, Steven says it means even more to him to be recognized for his passion and dedication to the Hereford breed.

Steven grew up on a small commercial cattle operation working alongside his dad, a veterinarian, and his brother, who still works on the family farm.

In 2008 Steven bought a Hereford heifer and built his small herd up to 15 head, which still includes his first Hereford. He got involved in the Kentucky Hereford Association, and his passion for the breed continued to grow.

In the early years of showing cattle, Steven says he had to learn much of the trade. “We had no clue what we were doing,” Steven says. “It was a lot of trial and error. Dad had a grasp of feeding one, but when it came to fitting and clipping, I learned it on my own.”

Steven’s dad took him to a few clinics to learn fitting and clipping. “What it boiled down to was me just doing it and figuring out what it’s supposed to look like and replicating what I wanted. You’ll ruin a few,” he laughs, noting everyone starts somewhere.

“Some are fortunate enough to have three generations behind them and walk in to it and have teachers there their whole life. But for those who don’t, it’s really important when there’s someone who will take them under their wing. That’s why I’ve been so big on helping out other juniors.”



The moment Steven decided to become a Hereford breeder was captured at his county fair.



Steven and his fiancé, Lauren, plan to remain in the Hereford family and grow their herd.



Tips from the herdsman

Hereford Junior Herdsman of the Year Steven Green offers advice for Hereford youth.

- **Don't be afraid to ask questions.** "It's easy to sit on the sidelines and just watch. You have to be engaged, and this Hereford family will help you. But you've got to want it."
- **Keep your head up.** "You have to keep working. Even when you 100% mess up, you have to look past it. There's another day tomorrow. Success will come your way if you want it bad enough. **HW**"

In nine years, Steven says he's gone from praying he doesn't stand last in a county fair class to being competitive at national shows. "It's been a lot of taking pieces of knowledge away from everybody," he says. "Take advice when you can get it and keep asking the right questions."

Taking advice

In addition to Steven's parents, who have supported him since the beginning making sure he had every tool needed to succeed, he remembers others who have taught him over the years.

Bill Doig from Indiana was first to invest in Steven. "He took me under his wing and showed me how to feed show cattle," he says. "He'd watch me clip, and would give tips and explained why."

Doug LeTourneau from Tennessee taught Steven the importance of good presentation. "His best advice was, 'People won't remember how you did in the ring, but they will remember your presence in the stalls,'" Steven recalls. "This is definitely something that has led to the herdsman award as I work to keep stalls well-presented and have a positive attitude."

More recently, Steven says he's learned a tremendous amount about running a seedstock operation from Dale Venhuizen at Churchill Cattle Co. in Manhattan, Mont. Steven has worked for Dale on a short-term basis at the National Western Stock Show and in preparation for Churchill Cattle Co. sales. "He's been a huge influence,"

Steven says. "He's probably got sick of me asking questions, but he's served as a cornerstone for me and projected me toward winning the award."

More than banners

As much as he enjoys working with Hereford cattle, Steven says it's the network he's formed in the industry he appreciates so much. "Showing cattle gives you a marketing opportunity, but to me, it's really about the Hereford family, and you're going to miss out on that if you don't show," he says. "There are so many good people within our Hereford industry. When you put in a lot of hard work, you want to see success, but showing cattle is not just about winning."

While earning a banner isn't everything to Steven, he has enjoyed

increasing success in the showing. His earliest favorite memory showing Herefords was standing second at his county fair with his first Hereford heifer. "I was grinning from ear to ear to have done that well," he says.

A notable win, he says, is taking home supreme champion bull at the Kentucky State Fair junior show with a bull his family had raised. Steven also exhibited the champion Hereford female at the Kentucky State Fair in 2015 and 2016.

The 2015 win was an emotional experience for Steven. "My roommate and good friend at the time at school had thyroid cancer," he says. "I had a moment with God, we're doing this for Seth, and sure enough she won. We had more concerns than winning a banner

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Herdsman finalists



Carter St. John is the 20-year-old son of Joy and the late Kent St. John. He is from Pell City, Ala., and has been showing Hereford cattle for 12 years. Carter notes winning reserve intermediate showman at the 2014 JNHE as one of his biggest accomplishments. He is a sophomore at Jefferson State Community College and upon graduation plans to transfer to Auburn University to pursue his dream career as an embryologist. Carter's long-term goal is to stay involved in the cattle industry and to run his own Hereford operation.



Keayla Harr, the 20-year-old daughter of Jeff and Lou Ellen Harr, is from Jeromesville, Ohio. She recently graduated from Casper College in Casper, Wyo., and currently attends Kansas State University as an animal science major with an emphasis in ruminant nutrition. Keayla has been showing for 13 years and aspires to keep making the Hereford breed better. She is proud to be a mentor to younger exhibitors and hopes to continue to help in the cattle industry for many years to come.



Jacob Moore, Madill, Okla., is the 22-year-old son of Craig and Freda Moore, and is currently a student at Oklahoma State University. Jacob has been showing cattle for more than 12 years and has been a NJHA member for six years. His proudest moment was watching his brother and sister compete against one another in the JNHE showmanship finals last year in Madison, Wis. Although he didn't make finals himself, he was happy to be supporting his siblings and watching their success in the showing. Jacob's biggest goal within the show industry is to always remain positive, even in difficult times.



Austin Deppe, of Maquoketa, Iowa, is the 22-year-old son of John and Joell Deppe. He recently graduated from Kansas State University with a bachelor's degree in animal science. Austin has been showing since age 10 and has stayed involved in the Hereford industry. Currently, he is working on his family's operation that consists of 450 commercial cattle, 60 head of Herefords, a feedlot, and an extensive ET program. Austin is proud of his family's accomplishments in the showing, especially winning reserve champion steer at the 2013 JNHE and raising the champion steer last year. He is thankful for the connections he's developed within the industry and looks forward to continued breed improvement.



Emily Beanblossom, of Bradford, Ohio, is the 22-year-old daughter of Steve and Leesa Beanblossom. She recently graduated from Ohio State University where she majored in animal science and minored in agricultural communications. Currently, Emily works for a beef embryologist in Alexandria, Ohio. Her goal is to maintain a career in beef genetics and reproductive sciences. As a 15-year retiring NJHA member, Emily's proudest moment was passing down the showing tradition in Louisville as her oldest sister and oldest nephew attended their first show. **HW**

that year. He got through the cancer and some has come back, so I have a feeling this year could be similar."

Just getting started

Though his junior show career is coming to a close, Steven has big plans to stay in the industry. A Western Kentucky University animal science graduate, Steven is preparing to apply for veterinary school.

"It's always been a dream to have a Hereford farm, and I want to take advantage of the reproductive technology we have, and vet school will help if I become an embryologist," he says. "I want to turn a lot of our commercial cows in to recips and push out our Hereford program. I want to be someone people look to, especially in our area, for bulls and females. When someone wants to buy replacement heifers, we want to be the first in their mind."

Dale Venhuizen believes Steven can do just that. "He has a combination of abilities and traits that really could propel him far no matter what he's in," Dale says. "He's passionate about Herefords and people, and he has the genuine personality, honesty and integrity to be exceptional."

Steven says it's a blessing to be honored with this award. "I didn't grow up with a few generations of Hereford cattle behind me," he says. "We got in to it a lot later than most. To go from struggling to figure it out to being named Junior Herdsman of the Year is a huge honor and blessing. Who would have thought that in that short amount of time, I could be where I am today."

He adds that winning this award wouldn't have been possible without the help of his fiancé, Lauren Meredith. "She works just as hard on the cattle, and took care of them all week for me when I was busy with NJHA board responsibilities. It meant just as much to her as it did me. It's a blessing to see Hereford industry recognize the passion my family and I have for the breed. We're just getting started." **HW**