

Motivation Going Forward

October is one of the most exciting and busy months of the year for the American Hereford Association (AHA), as many important decisions are made and valuable information is shared at the AHA Annual Membership Meeting and Conference, held in Kansas City, Mo. Both the conference and the membership meeting are full of viable information all AHA members should heed. For those who are new to the breed or who simply want to know the trends in the industry or updates within the Hereford breed, the Annual Meeting is the place to go. With industry professionals, farmers and ranchers from across the country and companies which want breeders to succeed, attendees are sure to find new and exciting information to take home to their herd.

Wrapping it up

The powerful theme this year was “Leading Through Innovation.” With that, the AHA hopes attendees took away some valuable information on new statistics, new ideas and new technologies to become a more innovative breed. The four educational sessions prompted excellent conversations on how Team Hereford can continue to lead through innovation. Sara Place, Ph.D.; Leoma Wells; Brian Bertelsen; and Mark Core were the session speakers and exceeded all expectations. Their topics covered a wide range of issues, controversies and conversations, such as misinformation regarding beef’s greenhouse gas emissions.

Not only is the Annual Meeting important for our adult breeders to attend, but it is especially important and valuable for juniors involved in the breed. This event is an excellent opportunity for juniors to get their hands wet and to meet the people who represent our breed. This is a place for ideas to be shared and for information to be absorbed. It is an excellent opportunity for the seasoned breeders to share their knowledge with Hereford juniors.

A large amount of work goes into planning this event to make it special for everyone in attendance. The Hereford Honorees awards ceremony is a highlight of the weekend, where outstanding members from the AHA and the National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) are recognized. Our scholarship program, in conjunction with the Hereford Youth Foundation of America (HYFA), is by far the most successful and recognized program in the Hereford industry, and this year 26 Hereford youth received more than \$180,000 in scholarships from HYFA.

After the conference and membership meeting, the National Hereford Show begins on Saturday and concludes on Sunday afternoon with the selection of the National Hereford Queen. What began in 1899 as the National Hereford Show, the first nationwide show for the exposition and sale of purebred cattle, has forever been special for our breed. The history of our breed and Kansas City brings breeders together from around the country to showcase the livestock with which they work so hard through the year. Although weather and farm responsibilities affected our numbers this year, the quality of the Hereford cattle at the 2019 American Royal did not fall short. Breeders and junior showmen brought their A-game and showed up to win. We owe a big thank-you to Jirl Buck, Okla., and Jack Oattes, Canada, for sorting the Hereford cattle.

The “crown-topping” on the ice cream which wraps up the American Royal for the NJHA is the selection of the National Hereford Queen. This year’s winner is the one and only Melanie Fishel, of Kernersville, N.C. As last year’s runner-up for the contest, she is now the lady in white representing the powerful and strong women of our breed. She began her reign as the National Hereford Queen Sunday, Oct. 27, and will be the face for many young women to look up to during her year as queen.

The NJHA would like to congratulate and thank the award winners, conference attendees and Hereford enthusiasts who made our week in Kansas City unforgettable. We could not do it without you! **HW**



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