

by Wyatt Lawrence

The year 2020 will always be remembered for a pandemic that took the world by storm. It shut down cities, closed businesses and schools, cancelled livestock shows and so much more. Needless to say, many people were happy to welcome in a new year and to say goodbye to the old on Jan. 1, 2021. The pandemic still plagues the world, regulations are still required in certain businesses and we are still required to wear masks in public places. But, the outlook of society is much brighter than it was last year. I believe there is a specific reason why.

## Challenge to success

The pandemic has pushed businesses and families to adapt and grow, and it has made us change the way we do things. Challenges we face in life force

change. It could be said the pandemic was the ultimate challenge, as it affected every aspect of our lives. We were forced to change how we go to school, how we meet with friends and family and how we conduct business.

For livestock producers, the challenges were endless as packing plants shut down and stock shows were cancelled, leaving many youth wondering what they were going to do with their livestock projects. I'm thankful to say this change was just the start of the story of 2020.

The year began with challenges and ended with many successes. The resilience and determination of livestock producers and breed associations accomplished things the current situation would have deemed impossible. The creation of new shows and events provided more opportunities for youth to exhibit livestock. This adaptability ensured the growth of the next generation in our industry.

As an industry, we started a fresh, new year with the ultimate victory in Oklahoma City at the Cattlemen's Congress. In my mind, this event was more than a cattle show. It was proof that no challenge will keep cattlemen from pursuing greatness.

## Dream big

In all we have faced the past year, the important question to ask is, "What have we learned?" I believe the lesson from 2020 is *challenge spurs change*. As cattle producers, we have challenges every day; yet many times we come up with reasons why we can't accomplish them. Especially after 2020, we all want to take a deep breath and just have everything go back to "normal." However, to continue to grow and propel forward in our operations and endeavors, it is important to face those challenges head on. COVID-19 forced this to happen,



and we need to make sure we don't get comfortable in 2021.

The beginning of a new calving season and spring bull sales ushers in an opportunity to tackle genetic progress you want to make in your herd. Maybe you have goals to grow your operation, or maybe you are a junior with career dreams that seem impossible. The truth is we need to change our attitude and gain motivation.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic was our motivation. It made us desperate to change the way we did things in order to hang on to those traditions of deep importance to us. We need to find what our motivation is going to be in 2021 to help us propel forward. We need to change the way we look at what we want to do. It needs to become a necessity. As always, we need to dream big. **HW**



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