

Patriotic Giving

National Hereford Queen Kaylee McInvale collects donations for first responders.

by *Grace Jacobson*

National Hereford Queen Kaylee McInvale from Lockney, Texas, looked toward first responders when planning her service project — “Red, White and Back the Blue.”

“After this whole pandemic, I feel like we realized how much first responders were putting their lives on the line every single day,” she says.

She and the National Hereford Women (NHW) collected donations throughout the VitaFerm® Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE) to make blessing bags and hygiene care packages for first responder organizations. The donations were then distributed after the event.



McInvale stands ready to present a division champion banner.

The blessing bags contain various non-perishable items suggested by first responders. “We collected items like socks, toothpaste, toothbrushes, bottles of water, granola or anything that is super simple and can be eaten on the go,” McInvale says.

The process was less than simple. First, McInvale learned what donations different organizations could and could not accept. “When talking to

some nurses, they said they would love thank-you cards because their restrictions didn’t allow for anything else,” McInvale says.

Building on Success

Conversations at the Cattlemen’s Congress in Oklahoma City inspired McInvale’s project

“We were sitting around and talking about random things,” she says. “Then we started talking about past National Hereford Queen service projects, looking at what was successful and trying to build an idea.”

McInvale also talked to the presidents of the Texas Hereford Association and the Texas Polled Hereford Association about their organizations’ service projects.

“Their projects were mainly for military families,” she says. “I built my idea off of what we could do for first responders because there are so many areas where we can potentially help.”

The National Hereford Queen service project crew collected 70 thank-you cards and assembled about 50 blessing bags with items donated by families during the first two days of JNHE. At the end of the week, they collected a total of 100 thank-you cards and 200 blessing bags. McInvale distributed them to a local Kansas City police station. From there, officers delivered the hygiene care packages to the homeless.

“I’m proud that the Hereford family came together to show our appreciation,” McInvale says. “Never underestimate the value of a thank you and kind gesture. Thank you to everyone who participated.”

McInvale is grateful for the learning opportunity her project



Kaylee McInvale at the 2021 JNHE in Kansas City, Mo.

provided. “I learned how hard it is to plan something that could potentially be so large-scale,” she says. “I was trying to think as big as possible because there are so many junior members in this association.”

The 2022 National Hereford Queen will be crowned at the American Royal in October. “My greatest piece of advice for her is to start promoting your project as soon as possible,” she says.

Many firsts were part of McInvale’s time as queen: the first National Hereford Queen at the Cattlemen’s Congress, the first National Hereford Queen to be crowned in the middle of a pandemic and the first National Hereford Queen to wear the newest banner.

“I am so thankful for all the support everyone has given me through the year,” she says. **HW**