

'Tis the Season of Giving

Last year, the Hereford Youth Foundation of America (HYFA) kicked off the inaugural Season of Giving. Over five days, donors raised \$135,000 to support HYFA's pillars of scholarship, leadership, education and research.

During last year's Season of Giving, pivotal donors provided various challenge donations, and every gift, big or small, went toward unlocking these challenge values throughout the week. As a perk, all donors had the chance to win a custom, Hereford-branded Priefert cattle chute.

This year, the Season of Giving will once again provide donors the opportunity to direct their donations to match their passion and unwrap gifts for the future. Few words can describe the impact HYFA's four pillars have had on me, as well as thousands of other National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) members. Each pillar contributes something different to Hereford youth and makes a difference in their lives. Donating to HYFA during the Season of Giving is supporting the future of the Hereford breed. Donations can be made to a specific pillar or event, or gifted to HYFA's general fund to support the continued growth of the foundation.

Scholarship

HYFA proudly awarded more than \$220,000 in scholarships to NJHA members last year. The foundation believes in supporting our future so that we may excel and make our breed and industry stronger. As a past scholarship recipient, I have felt the impact of this pillar. A scholarship helps relieve the financial burdens that come with higher education, and it's comforting to know I am

supported by the Hereford family. Knowing the foundation and its supporters believe in me enough to invest in my education, encourages me to excel. One day I will return to the industry and pay it forward. Scholarship pillar donations invest in the future of our breed.

Leadership

When I think of the NJHA, leadership immediately comes to mind. With bolstering from HYFA, the NJHA hosts numerous events to grow its juniors into the best beef industry leaders. These events and opportunities have developed me into the person I am today. From attending six Faces of Leadership Conferences, the BOLD Conference, and serving the past two and a half years as a junior board member, I can speak to the personal and leadership growth I've experienced, which was facilitated by the NJHA. When you choose to donate to the leadership pillar, you are impacting and encouraging juniors, like me, to be the best versions of themselves.

Education

Two giant events fall under the education pillar: the VitaFerm® Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE) and the NJHA Fed Steer Shootout. The JNHE serves as a testament to the quality of the Hereford breed and the young people raising the stock. You would be hard-pressed to find a junior member that hasn't been impacted inside or outside the showring while attending JNHE.

Now in its seventh year, the NJHA Fed Steer Shootout continues to grow and develop. The 2023 program had 207 head of cattle from 67 participants representing 18 states. The event educates young people about the cattle feeding and

commercial beef industry. It's an eye-opening experience. I encourage everyone to participate in the Fed Steer Shootout. Donating to the education pillar means supporting these events and making a difference educating all Hereford enthusiasts.

Research

For those that have been raising Herefords for generations, think about how far we have come in the last 142 years since the American Hereford Association was established in 1881. That growth has been accelerated in recent years by a commitment to research. The research pillar supports programs that enhance beef cattle production. By donating to the research pillar, you are solidifying our future and choosing to support sustainability in all its forms, from economic to environmental.

As the holiday season approaches, I reflect on the many bright moments in the Hereford breed. Many of these moments could not happen without HYFA's pillars and the generous donors who support them. Consider giving to one of HYFA's four pillars. We truly appreciate each donor who contributes to making the Hereford breed and its youth better.

The 2023 Hereford Season of Giving will be Dec. 4-8. Make sure to stay up to date and be prepared to give as HYFA unwraps challenge donations once they are matched. To learn more, visit Hereforyouthfoundation.org/Hereford-season-of-giving. **HW**

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