

# Cattlemen's Congress 2024

The Cattlemen's Congress in Oklahoma City will host the 2024 National Hereford Sale.

The American Hereford Association (AHA) invites you to Oklahoma City, Okla., for the Cattlemen's Congress and National Hereford Sale Jan. 3-6. Hereford Night in OKC is set for Jan. 5, 6 p.m., in the Super Barn Sale Arena.

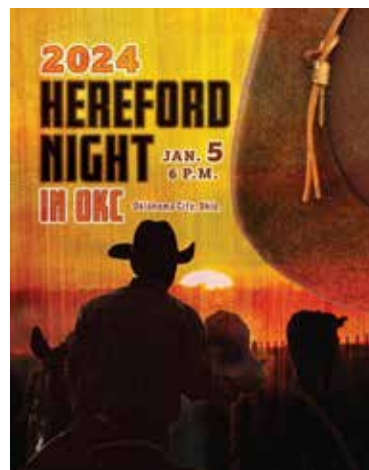
**National Hereford Junior Female Show** – Wednesday, Jan. 3, 2024  
*Show Judge* – Brian Fox, Ft. Morgan, Colo.

**National Hereford Pen Show** – Thursday, Jan. 4, 2024  
*Show Judges* – Jeff Gooden, Oak Grove, Mo.; Jan Ward, Sheridan, Wyo.; and Ryan Topp, Grace City, N.D.

**Hereford Eve in OKC Frozen Genetics Sale**, 6:30 p.m.

**National Hereford Bull Show** – Friday, Jan. 5, 2024  
*Show Judge* – Kyle Colyer, Bruneau, Idaho  
**Hereford Night in OKC National Hereford Sale**, 6 p.m.

**National Hereford Female Show** – Saturday, Jan. 6, 2024  
*Show Judge* – Kyle Colyer, Bruneau, Idaho



## Hereford Herdsman of the Year

The 2024 Herdsman of the Year will be announced at Cattlemen's Congress, Jan. 6. The winner will be recognized prior to the selection of the champion Hereford females.

A link to vote for the 2024 Herdsman will be emailed to exhibitors at the email address submitted with their Cattlemen's Congress entries. Exhibitors are allowed one vote per email, and votes must be submitted by 11:59 p.m., Jan. 5. Please submit your votes early.

Thank you to this year's Hereford Herdsman selection committee: Bobby Singleton, chairman; Alyssa Copeland, Copeland and Sons Herefords; Jacob Wolfrey, Grimmel Girls Show Cattle; and Kyle Lemmon, Lemmon Cattle Co.



**Breck Debnam**  
*Innisfail Farm*

Breck Debnam started his career as herdsman at Innisfail Farm in Madison, Ga., in 2018. Innisfail Farm runs 150 registered cows along with a dynamic embryo transfer (ET) program. In 2021, with Breck's help, Innisfail began a female production

sale in conjunction with Mead Cattle. They also market 50 bulls a year through 'The Source' bull sale and private treaty.

Breck attended Black Hawk East College and Western Illinois University where he was a member of the livestock judging teams at both institutions.

Breck takes care of the day-to-day operations at Innisfail: data collection, show and sale cattle management, chores and rotational grazing, as well as AI and calving. Breck oversees the farm's recently implemented C-Lock system, adding individual feed conversion data to the list of the many measures they record throughout the year.

Working alongside the Hunt family to make genetic selections, Breck and Innisfail Farm pride themselves on their disciplined program directed toward increasing their commercial clientele's profitability in the beef industry. Although Innisfail does not raise many cattle for exhibition, events such as Cattlemen's Congress and the National Western Stock Show (NWSS) have been essential to the operation's ability to reach and connect with customers nationwide.

Breck loves working with Innisfail's wide variety of customers, from making donor cow purchases and matings to helping northeast Georgia commercial cattlemen make sound, profit-minded genetic selections.

Breck believes the Hereford breed will play a pivotal role in the future of the cattle business, and he is humbled to be nominated for Hereford Herdsman of the Year.



**Melissa Grimmel Schaake**  
*Grimmel Schaake Cattle Co.*

Melissa Grimmel Schaake, Manhattan, Kan., owns and operates Grimmel Schaake Cattle Co. with her husband, Shane. Born and raised in Maryland, Melissa is a first-generation Hereford cattlegirl. In 2016, Melissa graduated from Kansas State University

with dual degrees in agricultural communications and animal sciences and industry.

As college students, Melissa and Shane began building a cow herd of their own. Cow families are the core of their operation, where they prioritize structural integrity and maternal ability. Their cattle must thrive in multiple environments and facets of the industry. Melissa constantly studies leading genetics to produce high-quality females and

bulls for junior members as well as purebred and commercial producers. Along with the daily care of the cattle, Melissa handles nutrition, health, calving and marketing of their genetics, and manages their ET and in vitro fertilization (IVF) programs.

In December 2021, the couple established operation headquarters near Manhattan. Since putting a stamp on what they've built together, Melissa and Shane have achieved success by being named premier breeder at both the 2022 and 2023 American Royal, winning division titles at the VitaFerm® Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE), American Royal, Cattlemen's Congress, and most notably showing the NWSS reserve champion polled female twice.

Some of Melissa's core values are raising quality livestock and helping juniors both in and out of the showing. She focuses on providing superior customer service and takes pride in assisting junior members.

Melissa is grateful for the friends and fellow breeders who guided and supported her along the way. She feels blessed to be a part of the Hereford breed and cattle industry.



### **Ty Krebs**

***Krebs Ranch and Krebs Cattle Co.***

Ty Krebs, Gordon, Neb., oversees all aspects of his cattle operations — Krebs Ranch and Krebs Cattle Co. — with his wife, Kaleigh, and his children, Sage, Kynsleigh and Kashlyn. The family runs approximately 700 registered cows

and markets bulls through their annual bull sales each February and November. They also market cattle and frozen genetics in other regional and national sales. His children attend 12 to 15 shows annually.

Ty judged livestock in junior college before transferring to Oklahoma State University where he worked in the Purebred Beef Unit with show and sale cattle and on the range with the cow herd overseen by Cindy Pribil and Joel Birdwell. While in college he was able to get experience working at national shows and sales.

Ty's children reintroduced Hereford cattle to the Krebs family's operation. The first Hereford cattle were run by Ty's great grandfather. Ty and his family continued his great grandfather's tradition and purchased Hereford females in 2011. Since then, the family has continued to acquire top females from around the country.

He considers himself fortunate to help his kids earn several regional and national championships over the years. Ty hopes to leave the operations and the breed in better position for the next generation to be successful and to enjoy.



### **Carter St. John**

***Dry Creek Farms***

Carter St. John, Pell City, Ala., owns and operates Dry Creek Farms, alongside his brother, Locke St. John. Dry Creek Farms started as a 4-H project exhibiting Hereford cattle in 2005. Carter's love and passion for

the Hereford breed began then at just 7 years old.

Since then, Carter has placed a top priority on producing useful, real-world genetics that will be successful for junior show exhibitors and in the pasture for registered and commercial operations.

Carter spends countless hours in the barn, raising and managing his herd and completing day-to-day operations. Carter's primary goal is, and always will be, the integrity of the animals he produces. Carter believes his success can be attributed to a genuine love for quality cattle and personal and professional strengths.

Carter has been successful at some of the largest national shows, including Cattlemen's Congress where he exhibited the 2023 grand champion polled bull. Carter is honored to be nominated as a candidate for the 2024 Hereford Herdsman of the Year.



### **Clayton Weatherly**

***Ella Weldon Cattle Co.***

Clayton Weatherly, of Perry, Okla., grew up in north central Oklahoma. He showed Hereford and Chianina cattle through 4-H and FFA. The programs sparked a love for exhibiting cattle and helping young exhibitors, a career he

knew he wanted to pursue.

In 2019, Clayton began working for Ella Weldon, of Ella Weldon Cattle Co., while she was exhibiting miniature Herefords. Her program won many national titles at the NWSS, North American International Livestock Exposition, American Royal and Cattlemen's Congress.

In 2021, Ella purchased her first three Hereford heifers. These heifers won divisions at several national shows. In 2023, Ella exhibited the grand champion polled female at Cattlemen's Congress. The duo went on to win the polled female show at the Fort Worth Stock Show as well as reserve champion cow-calf pair at the 2023 JNHE.

While exhibiting her first Herefords, Ella fell in love with the breed and wanted to continue her success. So, Clayton hit the road searching for her next herd additions. The heifers Clayton found led Ella to the backdrop, with division champions at multiple national shows and champion owned polled female at the 2023 JNHE.

Ella's drive to show fuels Clayton's passion for finding good cattle to add to her herd. In a short time, he has created a herd worthy of national recognition, while meeting many successful Hereford breeders along the way. Discussing cattle and how to make the breed better is a passion Clayton feels fortunate to call his career. He is extremely humbled to be nominated as a candidate for Hereford Herdsman of the Year and looks forward to seeing all the great cattle along the way. **HW**