

PICTURED SUCCESS

Mason Allan — Junior Herdsman of the Year — starts with the end in mind.

by *Wes Ishmael*

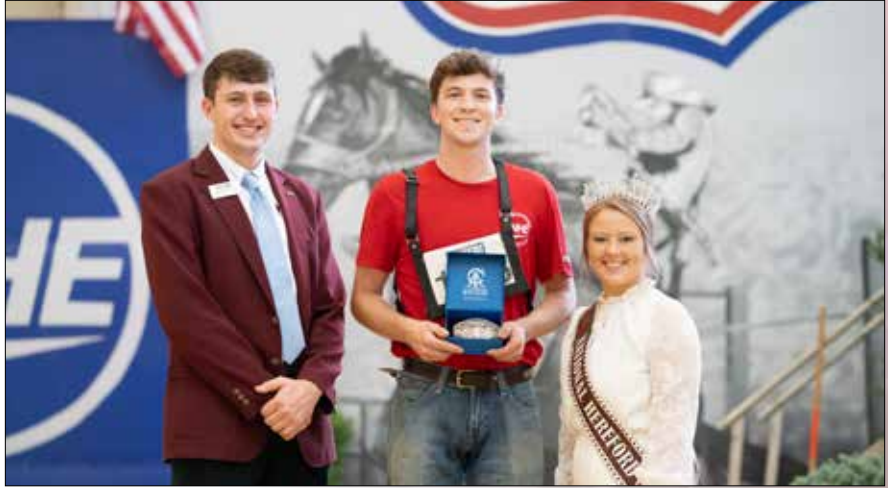
If you can see what you want to achieve, truly visualize the desired outcome and the necessary steps, then you are already well down the road of accomplishing a particular goal.

That's how Mason Allan, Nocona, Texas — this year's Junior Hereford Herdsman of the Year — approaches things.

"Before you start anything, I think you have to visualize a goal to know the steps to take," Mason says. Whether envisioning the potential of a specific mating or how an animal can look before picking up the clippers, he starts with a clear picture of the intended outcome.

For instance, this is how Mason approached winning the senior showmanship title at the 2021 VitaFerm® Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE). The *Hereford World* article chronicling the win described his process:

Scarcely a week passed when Mason didn't think about his goal. In the days before the showmanship competition, thoughts of the contest



Mason Allan, Nocona, Texas, was named the 2024 Junior Hereford Herdsman of the Year at "The Grand Daddy of 'Em All."

kept him awake. When Mason finally drifted to sleep, it was while he imagined the upcoming contest — visions of a showmanship championship lulling him to sleep. That dream pushed him to spend the long hours needed to prepare.

"I was up till 3 in the morning, and I was just picturing every single detail and running the scenarios through my mind over and over and over again," Mason said.

Mason's older brother, Tyler, claimed the same title in 2018, as did his uncle, Mark Allan, in 1985.



Showing at the JNHE is an annual tradition for Mason's family. The Allan family, pictured (l to r): Tyler, Landry, Becky, Dave and Mason.



Mason blows out a heifer at his stalls. Day-to-day management is an integral part of caring for show cattle.

Mason's dad, Dave, was reserve senior champion showman in 1990. Mason's younger brother, Landry, is currently carving his own successful path.

Incidentally, Mason explains his dad stood last in the largest class there ever was at the JNHE, back before classes were broken. His dad didn't like how it felt and got to work

"For me, it's taking a step back and looking at people who are the best at what they do. Watch their every movement, make your own assessment and then make what you do unique," Mason says. "I've been surrounded by great people, but I always try to work as hard as them or outwork them to be the best I can be."

Mason also understands the responsibility that accompanies success and the opportunity to pursue your passion.

"I know people are watching. I know younger people are looking up to me like I've looked up to others," Mason says. "I try my hardest to be a positive face of the Hereford breed and a consistent advocate of what Hereford brings to the table."

Winning Herdsman of the Year

"It's the culmination of everything I've worked for my entire life," Mason says. That includes everything from selection and mating decisions to daily

cattle management on his family's Bar A Cattle Co. — owned by his mom and dad, Becky and Dave — to showing cattle at the highest level and interacting with peers and professionals from across the nation.

"Because you're voted on by your peers, achieving that honor because of other peoples' thoughts and opinions is a dream come true. To be recognized for such a prestigious award is extremely humbling," Mason says of the coveted honor.

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— Mason Allan

The win was also another strong link forged in the family's lengthy legacy. His dad and uncle were named co-National Hereford Herdsman of the Year in 1992.

Mason also led out another of he and his family's many bred-and-owned champions at this year's JNHE. He had the division II champion and fifth-overall bred-and-owned female with

BACC 629 Georgia Kay 359 ET, an Oct. 23, 2023, daughter of T/R BPF AmericanClassic 561CET.

Becoming a true cattleman

Mason, a junior at Texas Tech University (TTU), interned at Wilroads Feedyard in Dodge City, Kan., this summer, and did a little bit of everything, from riding pens to learning about reading bunks and calling feed. He wanted to learn more about that sector of the beef industry and bring ideas home to his family's operation.

His participation in the National Junior Hereford Association Fed Steer Shootout sparked his interest in cattle feeding, but it caught flame with his desire to become a cattleman.

"I didn't like the label as a show cattle kid," Mason explains. "You have to diversify and be known as a cattleman to be successful."

Watching and learning from his dad, Mason recognizes a cattleman needs to understand the business from end to end. For instance, his dad spent several years running stocker cattle in south Texas. He then used what he learned running stockers to help make the family's Bar A Cattle Co. the successful purebred operation it is today.

"I think it's a rarity to find someone, like my dad, who can do it all at such

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Mason gets the handshake from Brady Jensen, Courtland, Kan., for fifth-overall bred-and-owned female with BACC 629 Georgia Kay 359 ET.



After placing first and second in their class, Mason and his brother, Landry, compete in the division II bred-and-owned female drive.

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a high level, from breeding them to feeding them, trimming hooves and fitting them to showing them at the highest level,” Mason says. “I hope I can do the same someday.”

Mason took another step on that particular road this summer with his first professional judging job, working alongside his dad to sort the 300-head steer show at the Fearless Champion Fall Showcase in Lubbock, Texas.

“It was the most rewarding thing I have ever got to do in my life,” Mason says. “All I ever wanted to do was put

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myself in my dad’s shoes, in the center of the arena, judging cattle.”

Mason is attending TTU on a livestock judging scholarship, aiming for a degree in nutrition. Currently, he’s considering a career as a nutritionist or perhaps a fed cattle buyer. Wherever he lands will be in addition to remaining in the Hereford business.

“I want something with a steady income that allows me to stay connected to Bar A Cattle Co. and remain involved with my family’s operation,” Mason says.

He can picture it. **HW**

2024 Junior Herdsman Finalists



**Mason Collins,
Lewisburg, Tenn.**

Mason Collins is majoring in food and agriculture business at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. A member of the National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) for 11 years, Collins has attended the VitaFerm® Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE) seven times since 2017. As a fifth-generation

Hereford breeder, Collins is honored to be a candidate for such a distinguished award. “Ever since my first show heifer, I have looked up to the herdsman who strive to improve Hereford genetics,” Collins says. “It’s a great privilege to be recognized alongside those who have built this breed.”



**Lauren Frederick,
Hutchinson, Kan.**

Lauren Frederick recently graduated from Kansas State University with a degree in animal sciences and industry. Though new to the Hereford breed, she has embraced the community, exhibiting at the last two JNHEs. Frederick has gained hands-on experience working with Grimmel Schaake Cattle Co.,

preparing sale heifers and show cattle. “I’m extremely honored to be recognized by the association for my love and passion for the cattle industry,” Frederick says. “The wonderful people associated with this incredible breed have welcomed and supported me.” Eager for the future, Frederick looks forward to incorporating Hereford cattle into her herd.



**Sara Harfst,
Sheridan, Wyo.**

Sara Harfst is a fourth-generation Hereford breeder attending Oklahoma State University, studying agricultural business pre-law and finance. She has attended the JNHE nine times during her 11-year show career. Aspiring to stay involved with the junior program, Harfst will serve as Wyoming’s junior advisor.

“Getting ready for JNHE means working with my cattle sun-up to sun-down for months,” Harfst says. “I believe that work and commitment lead to success over time. It is special when others recognize my hard work and passion.”



**Taylor Miller,
Lebanon, Mo.**

Taylor Miller has been showing Hereford cattle her entire life and hasn’t missed a JNHE since birth. Her family has raised Hereford cattle since 1968, making it a core part of her identity. A recent graduate of Missouri State University, Miller will start her teaching career in August. “To be

seen for my work ethic, dedication and passion for the Hereford breed is a huge accomplishment on its own,” Miller says. “I am extremely thankful for the chance to do something I love alongside my family each year.” **HW**