



# Live from Louisville

JNHE offers young people a week of leadership development, networking, competition, connection-making, skill building and just plain fun.

“There’s no feeling that compares to pulling into tie-outs on the first night; seeing hundreds of Hereford cattle and hearing accents from across the nation as people set up stalls. But even more incredible is the realization that this is your Hereford family; you are part of something this big,” says Haley Mouser, National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) board member. “That realization, paired with the week that follows, filled with new friendships, being able to support those new friends in the ring and competing alongside them in so many new opportunities is what got me hooked on Hereford long before I became a board member.”

The 2025 VitaFerm® Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE) — “Live from Louisville” — takes place in Kentucky, July 12-18. This week-long event provides opportunities for junior members to compete and exhibit their cattle, along with plenty of events for the entire family.

Faith Benedict, NJHA member, has attended JNHE since she was an infant, yet she still looks forward to the annual event, calling it her favorite week of the year. And even after attending JNHEs throughout the country for 15 years, she learns something new each year. Despite the deep classes of the best bald-faced cattle in the country, the cattle show just skims the surface.

“I think every year I go, it just gets me a little more ready for what’s to come in the future,” Faith says. “I love all the different

activities, and I just love the program knowing that all my hard work over the summer paid off.”

One of Faith’s favorite JNHE activities is the Pen-to-Pen mentorship program. When she was younger, the program connected her with mentors, and now, at 15, Faith helps younger Hereford enthusiasts meet new people and learn about opportunities in the industry.

NJHA members will have the opportunity to experience the evolution of Pen-to-Pen at the Meet-Up-Powered by Sure Champ® in Louisville, as well as other Meet-Ups across the country this year.

Networking and connecting with peers, mentors and industry leaders is one of the many opportunities provided to young people alongside the Hereford

## Packaging Courage

The National Hereford Queen, Nataleigh Belcher, unveils “Courage Kits” as her service project at this year’s JNHE. Inspired by her mother’s battle with leukemia and the physical, emotional and mental toll that cancer takes on patients and their families, Nataleigh will be collecting items to create small care packages tailored to cancer patients. Each Courage Kit will include comfort items, such as fuzzy socks, lotion, tea, etc., and relaxation items, such as books, coloring books, journals, puzzles and more, that cancer patients can take along with them during their treatment journey.

“Cancer is a battle that no one chooses, and for many, it can feel isolating and overwhelming,” Nataleigh says. “Through this project, I want patients to feel the same love and encouragement that my mother received during her journey. A simple act of kindness can remind them that they are supported, valued and never alone in their fight.”

JNHE participants and their families can help prepare these Courage Kits by donating items for the care packages or volunteering during the designated times to pack the Courage Kits.

“Just like our Hereford family supports one another; Courage Kits are about spreading hope and encouragement to those in need,” Nataleigh notes. “I am profoundly grateful for the opportunity to lead this project and for the unwavering support of the Hereford community. Every small act of kindness adds up, and together, we can make a difference in the lives of those battling cancer, one kit at a time.” **HW**

### Courage Kit Shopping List

- Fuzzy socks
- Lotion
- Tea
- Books
- Coloring books
- Journals
- Puzzles
- Other comforting or relaxing items



cattle exhibition. Other various contests range from Hereford bowl and speech to livestock judging and marketing.

“JNHE is a space where I can work alongside my family to accomplish our shared goals, serve as a mentor to Hereford youth and have the chance to connect with friends that have become family,” says Salem Sifford, NJHA board member. “Attending JNHE has given me, as a junior, the chance to learn from so many amazing mentors.”

Forging lifelong friendships and connections between peers is an NJHA hallmark, but the association also facilitates conversations between Hereford youth and industry professionals. The networks youth build during their junior membership provide opportunities for these young people as they further their education and enter their careers. For instance, Bridging the Gap College and Career Fair connects NJHA members with college representatives and industry professionals to learn about opportunities, discuss career paths and offer their resumes for scholarships and potential internships.

“Participating in Bridging the Gap and taking the time to visit with judges and officials after competing in contests gave way to

## Reasons to Win

The 2025 VitaFerm® Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE) — “Live from Louisville” — features an oral reasons contest for the first time. National Junior Hereford Association senior-division members will be able to hone their livestock evaluation and reasoning skills by presenting two pairs of oral reasons, or a short speech detailing the logic behind their class placing.

**JNHE Oral Reasons Contest Rule FAQs:** The complete set of rules can be found at [Hereford.org](http://Hereford.org) under the JNHE resources tab. Here are a few key reminders:

- Registration for the oral reasons contest must be completed in addition to registering for the judging contest. Oral reasons contest entries will be managed on [Submittable.com](http://Submittable.com).
- All entries for both the judging contest and the oral reasons contest (if you choose to compete) must be submitted by June 1, 2025.
- Only senior contestants are eligible (18-21 years of age as of Jan. 1).
- Participation in the oral reasons contest is not required to compete in the judging contest.
- Scores in the oral reasons contest will not be factored into the judging contest scores or awards. The top three in the oral reasons contest will be recognized as separate contest winners.
- All contestants will compete individually, there will be no team division. **HW**

conversations that shaped both my college decision and the career I now hope to pursue,” Haley says.

Whether “Live from Louisville” will be your first JNHE or your 26th, make plans to attend. And whether you’re a junior showing Hereford cattle, a parent hoping to provide the best opportunities for their child or even a Hereford

breeder who wants to encourage the next generation, JNHE promises a week of opportunities, education and connection-making for all. **HW**

Learn more about this year’s JNHE, see the schedule, read about the many events and contests and enter the event at: [Hereford.org/youth/junior-national-hereford-expo](http://Hereford.org/youth/junior-national-hereford-expo).

