Breed Focus

Electricity Exemplified

by **Jack Ward**

Hereford juniors keep raising the bar.



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The VitaFerm® Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE) is a "Best of the Barns" event, dedicated to the success of National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) members in the showring and beyond. This year's chapter certainly contends for the best-ever.

Participation was extraordinary once again with more than 700 exhibitors from 41 states and Canada showing 1,215 steers, bred-and-owned heifers, bred-and-owned bulls, cow-calf pairs and owned females. As well, 599 exhibitors competed in four showmanship divisions.

The JNHE is a premier industry event connected to many other leadership, educational and scholarship opportunities that prepare NJHA members to be successful in whatever path they choose in the future.

It is so impressive to watch these juniors lead out such high-caliber cattle and compete in contests designed to sharpen skills that will prepare them for future success. These competitions include illustrated and advanced speech, photography, livestock judging with a separate oral reasons contest added this year, team fitting, the Certified Hereford Beef® Cook-Off, Hereford bowl and future professionals.

Beyond the competition

Moreover, the JNHE continues to evolve with education and career exploration opportunities. For instance, Bridging the Gap — a college and career fair — enables Hereford juniors to meet college representatives to visit about their schools and degree programs. It also features representatives from a wide variety of companies who explain internship and career opportunities.

Likewise, the Meet-Up Powered by Sure Champ® is a community mentorship program offered at the JNHE and other locations across the nation. It pairs more experienced NJHA members with newer members. The program fosters networking among Hereford juniors, not just establishing networks but maintaining them, all while engaging in fun, hands-on activities.

Turn to Page 53 in this issue to read the complete "Live From Louisville" coverage.

Thanks and gratitude

Such a successful event is the result of countless dedicated individuals working together, before, during and after.

First, a very special congratulations and thanks to the American Hereford Association (AHA) staff, interns, NJHA board of directors and the Kentucky volunteers who managed such a seamless event while also navigating unforeseen and difficult situations stemming from other events and construction at the show complex.

Most importantly, huge thanks to all the families and supporters who commit their resources and time to support the NJHA at this event and many other activities throughout the year.

I extend special thanks and congratulations to: Gary and Kathy Buchholz, GKB Cattle, Desdemona, Texas, for sponsoring the top five overall bred-and-owned females along with the sponsors of the various divisions and contests.

Thanks, also, to our long-time partners and JNHE title sponsor, VitaFerm; Meet-Up title sponsor, Sure Champ; and Sullivan Supply, the showmanship title sponsor.

I also extend thanks to the judges who worked with our junior exhibitors throughout the week while providing their evaluation expertise.

Congratulations to all.

Next stop — World Hereford Conference

If you have not done so yet please make plans to join us for the World Hereford Conference (WHC), Oct. 22-27, in Kansas City, Mo. This event will take place during the American Royal. You will find a full and detailed schedule at *Hereford.org*. It will be an amazing opportunity to visit with breeders from around the world. **HW**