



Brady Jensen, Courtland, Kan., was named the 2012 Herdsman of the Year during the JNHE in Grand Island, Neb.

Leading By Example

2012 Herdsman of the Year Brady Jensen says to be successful in the ring, you need to dedicate time at home.

voted by his peers to win this year's Herdsman of the Year title and coveted belt buckle. Brady was awarded the title prior to the conclusion of the 2012 VitaFerm® Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE) in Grand Island, Neb.

A committee of national advisors chose five finalists for the Herdsman of the Year award and JNHE participants voted for the winner.

"I feel very honored to win this award," Brady says. "I have looked up to several people that have been privileged enough to receive the award in the past. I hope to continue setting a good example for the youth of our association."

A member of the National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) for 18 years, Brady has shown at 12 JNHEs. The 19-year-old son of Kevin and Sheila Jensen, Courtland, Kan., Brady is currently a sophomore at Butler Community College (BCC), El Dorado, Kan.

At BCC Brady competes on the livestock judging team, is a member of Ag Ambassador Club and Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and was listed on the President's Honor Roll.

He is past president of the Kansas Junior Hereford Association, was a member of the 2011 JNHE fundraising and show committees, and has attended three PRIDE Conventions.

Through the years, Brady's involvement at the JNHE has been more than the showing. At this year's JNHE, he was elected to the NJHA board and won the John Wayne, Hereford Herdsman, Future Cattleman and Golden Bull Achievement Scholarships. At the 2011 JNHE, he received the second-place Walter and

"Livin' the Hereford Life" is a true description of Brady Jensen's life since he was in diapers. Born into the Hereford breed, he has spent countless hours in the showbarn and pasture caring for Hereford cattle.

Because of his dedication, knowledge and skill, Brady was



Showing is a family affair for the Jensen family. Pictured here are Brooke, Sheila, Kevin, Brady and Ben.



Not missing a junior national since he was old enough to show, Brady has had much success in the showing. At the 2011 JNHE, Brady placed fourth in senior showmanship, and in 2009 he won the intermediate division.

Joe Lewis Award, which recognizes excellence in the showing and in other JNHE contests.

In the ring

Brady and his family have exhibited Herefords across the country, and through the years, Brady has won his share of purple banners.

Some of his proudest moments are from his success in showmanship at the JNHE. He was reserve peewee showman in 2002, champion junior in 2005, reserve intermediate in 2006, champion intermediate in 2009 and fourth place senior in 2011.

“Work at home before a show is more important than work at the show,” Brady explains. “The characteristics of a good herdsman is being someone who knows what it takes behind the scenes to be successful. What it takes to get cattle ready so they look their best and being part of the breeding program that produces the right kind.”

He adds his favorite part of showing cattle is the people. “I love the people in the cattle industry. I have been around the Hereford showing all my life,” he says. “And I have had the privilege to learn from some extremely talented breeders and fitters through the years.”

He says some of his mentors have been his parents, Kevin and Sheila; Kyle Perez, Nara Visa, N.M.; Allen “Eddie” Sandberg, Courtland, Kan.; and Jerrod Arthur, Stillwater, Okla.

“My mentors have helped form who I am as a person — in the showing and outside of it,” he says.

Brady has taken that knowledge and utilized it to become the herdsman and showman he is today.

Eddie Sandberg, who’s been herdsman at Jensen Bros. since 2005, says, “I’ve enjoyed watching him grow and mature from a young junior member with lots

of ambition into a fine young cattleman with a great future ahead of him.”

He says what sets Brady apart from other youth is his yearning to learn, his competitive spirit and his willingness to take on tasks that need to be done.

Outside the ring

Brady plays an important role in his family’s operation — Jensen Bros. He says he enjoys helping manage his family’s 250-head cow herd. When not at school or on the road working out for the judging team, he assists with day-to-day management on the ranch and with his family’s semen collection business.

Brady says he enjoys the daily management as well as being part

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The oldest of three, Brady knows the importance of teamwork and cooperation to get one ready for the ring. This leadership shined as he led the Kansas team to first-place honors in team fitting in 2011.

Brady’s top five tips

2012 Junior Herdsman of the Year Brady Jensen from Courtland, Kan., shares these tips with Hereford juniors.

1. Work hard.

Showing cattle is not an easy job, Brady explains. You need to work hard every day so your calves are in their prime when you get to the Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE).

2. Be active in the different parts of our junior association.

There are so many opportunities our association provides us, Brady says. He encourages youth to participate in more than the showing. He says his participation in contests such as team marketing, quiz bowl and extemporaneous speaking has helped him with his educational goals and to obtain scholarships to help him further his education as well as to develop life skills he will use beyond his years as a Hereford junior member.

3. Be competitive.

Always have a winning attitude, Brady says. Be sure you give 110%.

4. Yet, be humble.

Don’t brag and always be kind and courteous to your competitors.

5. Make as many friends as possible.

“Growing up, my junior advisor Sue Rowland gave us Kansas kids a goal to make three new friends at each show,” Brady says. “I always tried to do that. Now those friendships have grown and will last a lifetime.”



of making breeding decisions. “I also like showing guests around the ranch. I enjoy talking pedigrees and being part of the marketing side of the business.”

He also adds that one of his fondest memories was helping with his family’s production sale last fall and being in the sale ring when their herd sire Redeem sold — a moment that validated all the hard work and effort his family has put into developing a successful breeding program.

Family time

Brady is the oldest of the three Jensen children, and showing Herefords is definitely a family affair for the Jensens.

“Working together as a family, we have experienced many fond memories that we will cherish for life,” Brady says.

Chris Mullinix, BCC associate professor of agriculture and livestock judging coach, says this about the Jensen family and Brady, “As a fellow Hereford breeder, I’ve had the

opportunity to know and work closely with the Jensen family for more than a decade. I’ve also had the pleasure of watching Brady and his siblings mature through their involvement in various youth activities.

“I hope that someday I will have the foresight to do for my children what Kevin and Sheila have done for Brady. With numerous resources at their disposal and an opportunity to make things easy for Brady; they’ve kept things in perspective and brought up a young man that has learned through hard work. He doesn’t just love working with cattle; he understands the business, grasps the concepts of nutrition, has an astute eye for evaluation and values the importance of genetics and pedigree information. How many 18 year olds can you truly say that about? As an educator, it’s exciting to challenge Brady to think at yet another level and expand his knowledge base.”

After graduation from BCC, Brady plans to continue his animal science education at a four-year university, then seek a master’s degree in animal genetics. After graduation, he hopes to be involved in the animal genetics industry and ultimately return to Courtland someday and continue his family’s tradition of raising Herefords.

There’s no doubt Brady has done the work at home, developed the skills necessary to be successful and then led by example. Because of this, he is now being recognized by his peers as a herdsman they admire and respect. **HW**

