

Experience of a Lifetime



Between a blingy tiara, a white outfit and red lipstick, there have been long days with miles upon miles walked, great Hereford cattle and lifelong memories. It's been more than standing at the backdrop with a smile on my face — serving as National Hereford Queen has been the experience of a lifetime.

Hello, my name is Brooke Jensen. I am the 19-year-old daughter of Kevin and Sheila Jensen of Courtland, Kan. Since I was 7 years old, I've carried on my parents' tradition of showing Hereford cattle. My parents raised me along with my two brothers, Brady, 22, and Ben, 14, in a passionate environment of Hereford cattle and the beef industry. The American Hereford Association (AHA), the National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) and the Kansas Junior Hereford Association have been a very large part of my family's life and have opened more doors to opportunities than imaginable. Working alongside my family and with a breed of cattle I am passionate about has been the best blessing in my life. I love what I do, inside the ring and out.

Supportive is the only way to describe what my family has been over the last year. Allowing me to balance being National Hereford Queen and showing, my parents and brothers have helped in every way possible. I owe a lot of gratitude to numerous people for keeping me company near the ring, bringing me food and being there when my family was busy with our cattle. The Hereford family is like no other; I have been so unbelievably honored to represent the breed, to meet new juniors and to work with Association leaders. Everyone has been willing to give me a hand whenever possible whether it was getting picked up from the airport or handing out class ribbons, and I have really appreciated that help.



When I decided to run for Kansas Hereford Queen, I had a goal set in the back of my mind to run for national queen the next fall. Little did I know of all the friendships, the experiences and the character I would gain from being a part of the Hereford Queen program.

Growing up, I always admired the pretty girl in white. She was poised, elegant and wore a kind smile at all times. I never dreamed I would become the queen all the little ones were looking up to. A year ago at the American Royal, a huge door of opportunity opened for me, and I'm so humbled to have lived out the experience.

The role of the 2013-14 National Hereford Queen has been remarkable. Not many 19-year-old girls can say they've taken part in an interview for RFD-TV, stood multiple times in front of a crowd to speak, traveled across the country, worn a crown for a purpose and written articles for several magazines. I have been an ambassador, a role model and a representation of the breed that built me. I will remember this yearlong journey for the rest of my life. The people I have met, the history of Hereford cattle that I have been a part of and the amazing

skills I have gained from this role have meant the world to me.

Advocating for the livestock industry and Hereford cattle has been one of my favorite elements of the National Hereford Queen role. I ran into this duty most when I was traveling. When a person is carrying a leather crown box around and covered in Hereford cattle hair, she gets a lot of questions and funny looks. The security guards and folks sitting next to me on airplanes couldn't help but ask. I truly enjoyed informing them of my reign and the breed of cattle and people I represent. I didn't mind being called "The Queen of All Cows" by a flight attendant, because I know the information I shared with that lady will stick with her the rest of her life.

I have put many miles on those white boots, and it's hard to believe my reign as the 2013-14 National Hereford Queen has concluded. I have loved wearing my crown and white wardrobe while representing a breed of cattle I am passionate about. This role has made me a better person from all the incredible experiences I have had the opportunity to grasp. Next time you see me, I will gladly share my story about Hereford cattle and being National Hereford Queen. I highly recommend this program to all girls in the cattle industry. I look forward to my next leadership roles in the AHA and the NJHA, because the people in this industry and the cattle we are all passionate about make it worth being involved. National Hereford Queen — an experience of a lifetime.

*Thank you,
Brooke Jensen,
2013-14 National Hereford Queen*