

When It All Comes Together



PHOTO BY JENA McRELL

Hadley Pitts of Dal Porto Livestock selected as the 2017 Herdsman of the Year at the National Western Stock Show.

by *JD Rosman*

Herdsmanship is the art of juggling. That's according to the 2017 Herdsman of the Year Hadley Pitts, who was recently recognized by his peers during the National Western Stock Show (NWSS) in Denver, Colo.

"Herdsmanship combines everything from your breeding decisions the past year to feeding, calving, training, clipping — all the way to the showing or salering," said Pitts, who assists in managing operations at Dal Porto Livestock in California. "You always have multiple balls in the air, but it's all in how you manage them."

As part of the Dal Porto Livestock team,

Pitts helps with the 1,200-head cattle operation, the show herd and other crop-producing areas of the operation. From his home near Oakley, Calif., Pitts enjoys the way of life provided by farming and ranching.

During the National Western, Pitts could be found in the barn preparing for shows during the day's early hours, leading cattle into the showring with a determined eye on the judges, and visiting with breeders near and far about their new genetics on display.

An annual tradition at the NWSS, all Angus exhibitors at the show vote on the Herdsman of the Year award. The honor recognizes someone with strong dedication

to the breed, and someone who is willing to help those around them. The fact that the award is a reflection of all his peers in the barn makes the recognition even more special.

Pitts was announced as this year's Herdsman of the Year during the Roll of Victory Angus Bull Show at the NWSS. He was recognized prior to the selection of the grand champion Angus bull. A

captive audience shared their applause as he was awarded the Herdsman belt buckle.

Pitts credits those around him for helping him reach his success now and throughout the years.

"The people you surround yourself with have a huge impact on you, whether you realize it or not," Pitts said. "They push you to do better, and in turn you become a better herdsman and person."

Those connections hold value no matter where you find yourself — from fitting cattle at the National Western or making selection decisions back home on the ranch. Pitts added that the ability to communicate with fellow cattle producers and learn from their feedback helps them continue to produce a genetic lineup their customers want.

Herdsmanship is the art of juggling. Juggling tasks around the show barn, operations on the ranch and always taking time to learn from other breeders and exhibitors, a successful herdsman has the ability to combine cattle knowledge with the skills to connect with fellow breeders and, in turn, serve as a leader in the beef production chain.

"It's an honor to have been selected as the Herdsman of the Year," Pitts said. "It is humbling when we are in such a competitive breed and industry. I'm surrounded by so many talented individuals."



Editor's Note: Angus Media's 2016 communications intern, JD Rosman is an Angus member and continues to contribute to Angus Media communications.

► **Right:** "Herdsmanship combines everything from your breeding decisions the past year to feeding, calving, training, clipping — all the way to the showing or salering," said Pitts, who assists in managing operations at Dal Porto Livestock in California.



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