



NJAA member Adam Jones speaks for the beef industry.

Story & photos by **Nikki Krien**

Juggling the pressures of his senior year, farm life and being one of the most looked-to spokespersons for the beef industry, the 2000 National Beef Ambassador demonstrates why he's the one.

Adam Jones, 19, started preparing for his role at an early age. When he was 7, he began participating in speech contests and has been learning and networking ever since.

Shelle Taylor, executive director of the American National CattleWomen Inc. (ANCW), says, "Adam is very active in many different avenues, from the ambassador program to 4-H and FFA."

He also is a member of the Kansas Junior Livestock Association and the American Quarter Horse Association. And in 1995 he joined the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA). Since then he's been an active member, participating in various contests at the last two national junior shows, where he has won numerous honors, most notably the Janet Castle Memorial Crystal Award.

Aside from his speaking experience, he's gained real-world knowledge by taking an active role in his family's farm, Crooked Creek Angus, near Saint Francis, Kan. He manages the registered Angus herd alongside his father, Daniel, and two sisters, Amanda and Katelyn. His mother, Karen, is a member of the ANCW.

The program

The ANCW sponsors the ambassador program in cooperation with the Cattlemen's Beef Board (CBB). Beef producers fund the project through the \$1/head checkoff program.

Participants who have won at the state level, making them eligible for the national competition, must make their presentations seven more times before attending nationals. Five of the presentations must be to nonagricultural audiences. Activity reports must be filed within 30 days of each engagement for verification.

There were 28 contestants at this year's contest. A drawing determined the order in which they gave their presentations. Jones drew the last spot on the roster.

With his speech, "You've got mail; we've got beef," Jones won the ambassadorship and the first prize of \$2,500. He also was the recipient of the \$1,000 ANCW Foundation scholarship.

"I spent quite a bit of time researching my topic. I used a very elaborate and humorous PowerPoint presentation during my speech," Jones says.

He says that he became interested in the program after meeting a past ambassador and is excited about the opportunities he has been presented.

"I really like the idea that I can have a positive influence on the cattle industry and help reach consumers, specifically those in an urban setting," he says.

Jones says the program tries to focus on activities that draw large crowds of urban consumers. They try to work with other groups that have pre-existing programs and booths.

The road ahead

Taylor says, "Jones is a very hardworking person who is very dedicated to the beef industry."

Jones looks forward to attending events and meeting the people in the beef industry. Along with other industry leaders, he will attend state fairs, festivals, and business and legislative meetings. Fort Dodge Animal Health and the Phillip Morris family of companies have made those travel opportunities possible.

"It has been really exciting meeting the men and women who produce the world's beef. There are some very talented, intelligent and dynamic people in this industry," Jones says.

The ambassadorship has presented him with a networking opportunity. He plans to draw on the experience and the contacts he gains during his time as ambassador to achieve his professional ambitions. Complementing this is Jones's newest undertaking — college.

He plans to attend Casper College in Wyoming and to become a part of their livestock-judging team. From there, he would like to transfer to a senior college and pursue a dual major in agricultural communications and animal science.

Jones aspires to becoming a communications manager for an agricultural publication or company. He says that the insight he gains as national beef ambassador will bring him closer to his goal.

"Since I was named the national ambassador, I have had so many great things happen because of the award," Jones says. "The opportunities that come along with the prestige of the award are incredible. I've been interviewed on several radio and television programs, had the chance to be published in three different magazines and books, met influential members of the industry, and attended business meetings that will shape the industry in the coming years."



Editor's note: *Nikki Krien is a May 2001 graduate of Kansas State University and a participant in our Young Guns Student Writers Program.*