

2016 National We

Herdsmanship: It Just Comes Natural

Dameron Angus' Cody Bock named
2016 Herdsman of the Year during the NWSS.

by *Shelby Mettlen*, assistant editor



Herdsmanship comes naturally to Cody Bock. The Hanna City, Ill., native is no stranger to the showring, either. Bock, a herdsman for Dameron Angus in Lexington, Ill., was named Herdsman of the Year by a popular vote during the National Western Stock Show (NWSS) Jan. 13-15 in Denver, Colo.

"It's a great honor," Bock says. "I work for a lot of people who have won the award before me, and it's a great feeling to be on that list."

Now a resident of Towanda, Ill., Bock grew up showing Angus cattle on his family's registered-Angus operation and developed a love for the breed. Bock's mother's family raised Angus cattle and his father's family raised Herefords. Needless to say, they stuck with Angus.

The first time he stepped into the ring, Bock was just 7 years old. Twenty-four years later, he's traded the showring's bright lights for the chaos of the show barn, and he's getting some serious attention for his work behind the scenes.

In fact, Jeff Dameron — a past recipient of the award and Bock's current employer — was judging the Super-Point Roll of Victory (ROV) Angus Show when Bock was announced the winner. Dameron was understandably excited to see Bock accept the honor.

"He's an extremely hard worker," Dameron says. "I think he's someone who is really passionate about Angus cattle and the Angus breed. He's really passionate about showing Angus cattle. It's all he's ever done, and it's what he enjoys doing."

Angus has been the breed of choice in Bock's family for about 30 years now, he says. In addition to his family's operation, Bock cares for, trains and exhibits cattle for a handful of other producers in the area,



PHOTO BY JENA MC-RELL

► 2016 Herdsman of the Year Cody Bock says herdsmanship is about doing your best and making the most of what you have.

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including Dameron, which is home to about 200 registered-Angus cows. Bock leads the charge in caring for the Dameron Angus show cattle. From providing daily feed and water to outfitting heifers for the showring, Bock does it all.

Dameron's program has produced numerous champion animals at shows across the country. Bock has also worked with Steve Patton of LaGrand Angus in Freeman, S.D. and Express Ranches in Yukon, Okla.

Dameron says Bock connects particularly well with the young people around the show barn.

"He works closely with some of the junior members and their families," Dameron says. "Those young people really enjoy being around him, and you can tell he enjoys working with them. He really does a great job with them."

Herdsmanship is about doing your best and making the most of what you have, Bock says. From the daily grind to the finishing touches, it's about taking good cattle and making them great.

"It's about loving what you do and working hard to make it happen," Bock says. "It's about presenting yourself and those cattle you're in charge of the best that you can. That's what makes a great herdsman."

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