

Herdsmanship

From decorating to cleaning, herdsmanhip requires all.

Story & photos by **Mathew Elliott**

During the week of the 2008 National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) July 13-19, members of the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) turned the Iowa State Fairgrounds from an empty cattle barn and showing into a winter wonderland. While temperatures remained warm, Christmas lights sparkled, the spirit of giving was in the air, Santa and Mrs. Claus were spotted, and “snow” even fell.

While this transformation of the grounds was taking place, juniors were using cooperation, teamwork and hard work to maintain their stalls and cattle. The Best State Herdsmanhip Contest encourages juniors to work on the above-mentioned qualities, as well as promote pride and enthusiasm for state junior organizations.

Just like working with the cattle and preparing for the Prepared Speech Contest, planning for the herdsmanhip contest starts long before the NJAS begins. Most states have some form of a display committee that plans what their area will look like and how to incorporate the theme for the year.

Brittany Full, Mount Airy, Md., says with the long distance they have to travel, her state plans out everything.

“We have display, stall arrangement, tie out and contest committees,” Full says. Each committee must plan accordingly for the week and work together. “If you can’t cooperate with your own state, you can’t accomplish anything here.”

Judging

At the NJAS, herdsmanhip is judged based on the following criteria:

- ▶ 30% for aisle and bedding cleanliness and general appearance;
- ▶ 30% for animals — cleaned, groomed and general appearance;
- ▶ 10% for the equipment, showboxes and signs being arranged and attractive;
- ▶ 20% for youth tending the cattle — being

neat, knowledgeable and friendly, and showing teamwork and enthusiasm; and

- ▶ 10% for the promotion of the state, Angus or beef.

The states are then broken down into five divisions based on the number of head entered: those with 61 head or more, 46 to 60 head, 31 to 45 head, 16 to 30 head and 15 or fewer.

States are given a day to settle into things before the judging begins. Judges are given a scorecard to keep track of each state’s cattle displays. They are to check each state area twice a day, once sometime during the morning hours and once during the afternoon.

Working together

Nathan Lanier of Walton, Kan., says his herdsmanhip responsibilities at the NJAS were to pick up manure from any Kansas cattle, to keep the area and aisles clean, and to help everyone.

“Herdsmanhip shows people are working together to make things better,” Lanier says. “It shows we are unified and makes a bunch of friends in the process.”

Tabitha Grochowalski of Ada, Mich., also thinks that a little herdsmanhip can help your state.

“It shows to other people that you care about your presentation,” Grochowalski says. Michigan works as a group to set things up for the NJAS, as well as taking it down and all the work that goes on in between. “It helps everybody to be social in our state [group],” Grochowalski says. “Don’t take care of just yours.”

So while herdsmanhip may look like just scooping manure and sweeping, there is actually a lot of teamwork and friendship involved with this state contest. Each state takes great pride in their exhibits and the hard work that goes into each contest.

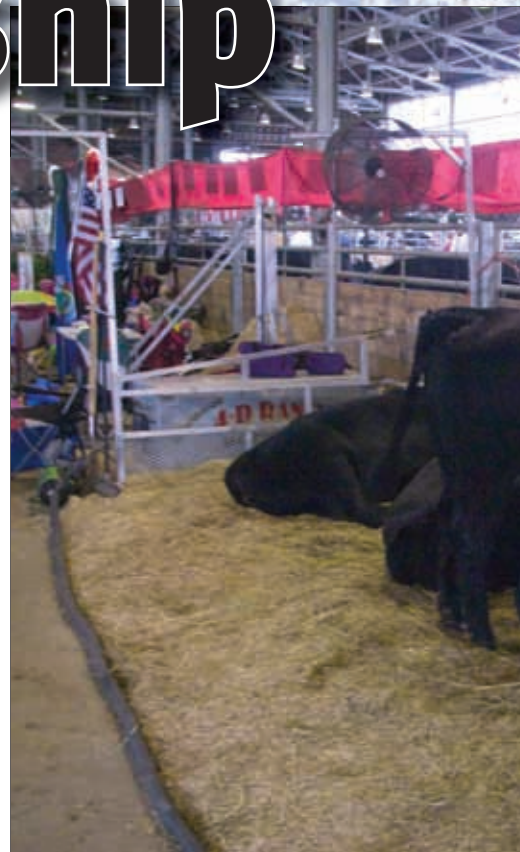


Table 1: 2008 NJAS herdsmanhip winners

Division	First	Second	Third
≥61 head	Missouri	Iowa	Kansas
46-60 head	Indiana	Oklahoma	Nebraska
31-45 head	Ohio	Kentucky	Michigan
16-30 head	Pennsylvania	Montana	Virginia
≤15 head	Louisiana	Maine	Mississippi



► **Left:** This state uses a blower hose to keep shavings out of the aisle and their area clean.

► **Below & right:** Planned well in advance of the NJAS, state stall displays provide a sense of pride and unity to state groups.



► **Above & right:** When it comes down to it, herdsmanship is still about rolling up your sleeves and doing some of the dirty work.

► **Left:** While enjoying a little down time and each other's company, juniors from this state keep an eye out for any animals that need to be brushed or blown off and any manure that needs to be scooped.

