

# N.J. Youth Travels To Australia With FFA Work Experience Abroad Program

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BROADWAY, N.J. — Jay Steele spent the summer working on a Far Hills beef farm with 70 head of polled Herefords.

The June graduate of Alfred State College in New York felt fortunate to have found the job. After all, 70 head of beef cattle is a large farm in northern New Jersey.

But it will pale in comparison to Steele's newest job.

He left last week for Australia, where he will work on a ranch with 400 Polled Herefords in the Queensland Territory. Steele is participating in the Future Farmers of America Work Experience Abroad program.

Until March, he'll be living with Mr. and Mrs. Richard Thiele on the ranch he knew, before leaving, precious little about.

Mrs. Thiele called her American guest at his home in Broadway, a tiny village straddling Route 57 in Warren County, several weeks ago and told him he would be arriving in the middle of the three-week spring season. The most consistent rains of the year would fall on grazing lands during the period, but when the skies clear, summer will bring its 100- and 110-degree temperatures, she said.

Australia, in the southern hemisphere, is now changing from winter to spring.

Steele will also have to get accustomed to living far from other population centers. The Thieles told him they were "isolated, but not totally out in the sticks," said Steele.

Steele said the day before he left that he was up to the task.

Polled Herefords are his first love, and he hopes to forge a career of managing a herd. He holds his associates degree in animal science from the Alfred, N.Y. college and has been accepted at Virginia Polytechnic Institute to continue his studies when he returns.

For the Australia phase of his experience, he has some good friends to thank.

His parents, Joseph and Virginia Steele of Broadway, were thrilled that he would pursue the adventure. They left their Asbury dairy farm six years ago when Mr. Steele went into the excavating business.

One of their reasons for the move was that they weren't sure any of their children would be interested in assuming the farm once they retired. Jay has emerged as the farming son, and they are delighted at his interest.

But even their enthusiasm, alone, may not have been enough to send Steele winging toward Australia.

He figures the trip will cost about \$2,200. He sent out nearly 80 letters to prospective sponsors and was surprised at the strength of the response.

Twenty-one individuals and organizations pledged \$1,820 to his travel fund.

Max E. Spann responded with a donation. So did Jeff Strunk, John Parisi, Mr. and Mrs. David P. Hall, Joseph Damms, Roy Dowling and Dan L. Schafer.

Organizations which responded were the New Jersey FFA



Jay Steele left the States recently to work on an Australian cattle farm as part of the FFA Work Experience Abroad program.

Foundation, Warren County Board of Agriculture, New Jersey Polled Hereford Association, Warren County Farmers Fair Association, Collegiate Agricultural Leaders of Alfred State College, Farm Credit Service, Franklin Township Lions Club of Warren County, New Jersey Appaloosa Association, Warren County Cattlemen's Association, Warren County Holstein Association, Stewart-

sville, Warren, and Washington Granges and Warren County Pharmacy.

Without them, Steele, 20, said he would have had a hard time pulling together the necessary finances to make the trip to Australia.

And that would have come as a great disappointment to the 1984 Warren Hills Regional High School graduate. Ever since he was a sophomore, said Steele, he had

dreamed of working abroad because a neighbor participated in the FFA program in Holland.

Steele, who will return to the United States in March, got his way. And he hopes he can bring something to the Thieles, his host family, by contributing to their operation.

That operation — the 400 Polled Herefords in Australian cattle country — is a dream come true for the Broadway man.


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