

Junior Beef Leaders Gather, Increase Knowledge For Creating Future Demand

ST. JOSEPH, Mo - Speakers from various segments of the beef industry addressed more than 170 junior beef leaders from 28 states during the 2000 Youth Beef Industry Congress (YBIC), March 16-19, in Saint Louis, Mo.

Purina Mills, Inc., sponsored and hosted the event, "Gateway to the Future-Creating Unity, Creating Demand." The U.S. Beef Breeds Council also supported the event.

During the three-day event, leaders from various state junior beef association and national junior breed association boards interacted with each other and beef industry leaders to determine their future role in beef industry.

"I enjoyed attending YBIC and having the opportunity to learn more not only about the beef industry, but about the other breeds and what their junior boards are achieving," said Sonya Smith, Lebanon, Tenn., a director of the National Junior Angus Association. "It is exciting to think about the future of the beef industry."

Chuck Schroeder, chief executive officer, National Cattleman's Beef Association (NCBA) addressed the group twice. First, he updated them on where the beef industry stands, and again to discuss where the industry will be in the future.

Mike Kasten, a commercial cow-calf producer from Millersville, Mo., and Glen Dolezal, technical services

manager for Excel Corporation, Wichita, Kan., spoke about future industry specifications from a commercial cow-calf producer and packer perspectives.

Other speakers included Stewart Kennedy, a motivational speaker, who addressed developing leadership skills, and Margie Joy, assistant director issues communications for NCBA, who presented a media training workshop.

Susan Waters, director of public relations and communications for American Angus Association, wrapped up the meeting by leading an interactive discussion with the youth on how to get where the beef industry needs to be in the next 10-20 years.

"Breed better cattle, focus on the consumer, toot your horn by promoting and educating others, and get involved in your associations and industry groups," Waters told the group.

"The message to communicate between the producers, processors and consumers to better the beef market was very important. I believe every activity we participated in is important in achieving this goal," said Cody Halfmann, Miles, Texas, a director of the Junior Red Angus Association.

In addition to listening to the speakers, the group was challenged to gather information during the event,

and give a brief presentation to answer the question of how to create unity in the beef industry in order to stimulate demand for beef as a desired protein source for the next century.

"After attending YBIC I'm confident the future of the beef industry is in capable hands. Watching the nearly 200 young leaders representing different breeds and state cattlemen's organizations focus on ways to build demand for our industry is exciting," said Todd Johnson, executive secretary, purebred division, for the Kansas Livestock Association. "I was impressed with how the group set aside breed and state differences to focus on the true challenges our industry is facing."

The YBIC was organized to bring concerned youth working in the interest of the beef industry together. YBIC provides these youth with knowledge and understanding of all segments of the industry and it allows them to learn how the segments are related.



Tara Walker, Avella, right, represented Pennsylvania at the 2000 Youth Beef Industry Congress (YBIC), March 16-19 in Saint Louis, Mo. Also pictured is Rod Nulik, marketing manager, beef business group for Purina Mills, Inc.



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