

This past July I had a great opportunity which involved travelling to Herning, Denmark to judge the National Junior Danish Hereford Show. When I got a message from Mads with the details, I thought to myself, wow, this is going to be a tremendous opportunity and fun too, but mostly an honour to be considered.

For those that don't know me I am a second generation farmer and rancher. Along with my family we run RSK Farms, a mixed farming operation, with grain and hay. We also run a Polled Hereford Herd as well as an Angus/Hereford/Simmental commercial herd for a total of about 130 head. I grew up with cattle, showing and judging in 4-H and the Canadian Junior Association Hereford Association where I grew my skills and learned a lot of valuable lessons. This has allowed me to travel all over North America showing, exhibiting and judging Hereford cattle. This was the first time that I had travelled overseas though. I wasn't sure what to expect, but I knew from the minute I arrived this was going to be a great time. I met up with Mads in Billund and then travelled to Herning, stopping along the way to tour farms and see some cattle. I was quite interested in the difference in the livestock and management when compared to Canada.

I then spent 4 days in Herning taking in the show and judging the Danish Junior Hereford Show. I was amazed at the heart and ambition of this Junior Hereford Association. There was so much drive and encouragement between the membership to make the Junior movement a success, that it had me reminiscing back on my junior time. We also had some time to put on a showmanship clinic and give out some special awards. It was great to have junior members asking questions as I feel they learned as much from me as I did them. I feel that this junior association is a group to be encouraged and celebrated as it creates and molds young enthusiasts in agriculture and the Hereford industry. It develops lifelong skills, educates and promotes leadership for the future of our industry.

After the show I was able to finally walk through the barns to visit with breeders and look at the Danish livestock. It was a very high quality set of Hereford cattle that were displayed, but not only that, it was the exhibitors and breeders that truly made me feel welcome. From walking in the barns, to the BBQ dinners and the amazing social at the end of the show, I felt at home every day I was there. It was truly inspiring to see not just everyone from the Hereford barn, but everyone from all breeds come together and celebrate the show, agriculture and friendship at the end of the Herning show. I really enjoyed the Herning show, from the cattle, to the horse shows and the ag equipment, it was a well-rounded ag show.

After my stay in Herning I travelled to Copenhagen, touring farms along the way. I spent 2 days there touring the city. Tivoli Gardens was very scenic with great shops and food. I walked through the Nyham area of town as well as enjoyed a canal tour of the city. In Copenhagen I was able to meet with a friend from Sweeden. We then travelled back to his farm where, yes you guessed it, toured his herd and others along the way.

This trip to Demanrk and Sweeden was really a life changing moment for me, creating new friendships and networks along the way, witnessing a junior association that is growing and moving in the right direction, and getting to see some of my genetics at work was justly

rewarding. I want to thank everyone that toured me around and made me feel at home. The great hospitality made the experience that much better and I cannot wait to come back again.

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