

Jack Ward named Outstanding Ag Alumni for 2008

The 2008 winner of the ABCA Outstanding Ag Alumni Award is Jack Ward of Plattsburg, Mo. Jack is the American Hereford Association (AHA) chief operating officer and director of breed improvement. His leadership has created increased interest and participation in the AHA's National Reference Sire Program (NRSP) and testing Hereford genetics in real-world commercial settings.



A graduate of Benton Central High School in Indiana, Jack enrolled at Black Hawk East and received his associate's degree in Ag Transfer in 1984. At BHE he was an active member of the Agri-Business Club and the livestock judging team. He graduated from Purdue University with a bachelor's degree in Agricultural Economics.

Prior to working for AHA in 2003, he managed several prominent purebred Angus herds -- Maple Lane Angus in LaGrange, Ind.; Three Rivers Angus in Roanoke, Ind.; and Hicks and Yearly Angus in Midway, Ky. At these farms, Jack hosted practices for hundreds of 4-H, FFA, junior college and senior college livestock judging team members.

Throughout the US as well as in Canada, Argentina and Uruguay, Jack is well respected as a livestock judge, particularly of purebred cattle, and is a frequent guest lecturer on beef production. He was named Outstanding Breeder by the Indiana Angus Association and has served as president of that organization. As well, he has been recognized with the BHE Agriculture Merit Award for outstanding service in the training of young people for careers in agriculture.

Today, Jack, his wife, Mary Ann, and their two sons, Cameron and Carter, show livestock at state and national shows. Jack is a lifetime member of the BHE Agri-Business Club and a member of the St. Ann's Catholic Church, Knights of Columbus and Purdue Ag Alumni. He also is a member of the Beef Improvement Federation Board of Directors, Missouri Beef Cattle Association, American Angus Association, National Cattlemen Beef Association, and serves on the executive committee for the All-American Angus Breeders Futurity.