

FUTURE-FOCUSED

Angus breeder Abbey Schiefelbein awarded Allied Angus Breeders Scholarship.

by Karen Hiltbrand, American Angus Association

My grandfather loves food — and I think he gave me my genetics for my love of food,” says Abbey Schiefelbein, a 2019 Allied Angus Breeders Scholarship recipient.

“It was before I was born, when my grandpa decided that he was going to raise cows. He had just moved out to Kimball, Minnesota, from the big city of Saint Paul and was trying to figure out what he wanted to do,” she says.

He decided to hold a taste test to decide the kind of beef he wanted to raise, she explains. Angus won over his taste buds.

“We’re raising these,” she says, quoting her grandfather, “and that was the end of the discussion.” It was the beginning of Schiefelbein Farms.

Abbey shares her passion for the Angus breed with her grandfather, but she also shares his passion for food — specifically, food security.

Being recognized for her passion and commitment to the industry, Schiefelbein was selected as one of the three recipients to receive a \$1,000 Allied Angus Breeders Scholarship in 2019.

Pursuing a passion

Currently a sophomore at Kansas State University (K-State), Schiefelbein is studying food science with a secondary major in global food systems leadership. She says her interest in food science began after she was a member of her FFA chapter’s food science Career Development Event team.

“I decided to do the global food systems leadership secondary major because it has this aspect of working with food insecurity,” she says. “I

used to volunteer at my local food shelter. From that I learned I really wanted to help make sure the world is going to be fed by the year 2050, when we reach 10 billion people.”

In addition to her degree-specific classes, Schiefelbein works in the Value Added Food Labs at K-State and is a member of the K-State Meats Judging team. She and her team recently won the National Western Stock Show Meats Judging Contest.

“I’m trying to figure out if I’m more into quality assurance in the food science area, or if I want to do more of the research and development,” she says. “I know that I want to be within the meat industry, so I’ll just keep experimenting until I find the exact right fit.”

Building a work ethic

Growing up on her family’s 1,000-head cow-calf and 1,000-head feedyard operation has taught

her numerous life lessons, and has prepared her for the future by instilling a strong sense of responsibility. She says one of her most memorable times on the farm was with her dad during calving shifts.

“We did a lot of calving shifts.



Abbey Schiefelbein says, “I used to volunteer at my local food shelter. From that I learned I really wanted to help make sure the world is going to be fed by the year 2050.”

His calving shift is 11 p.m. to 3 a.m. every third night,” she says. “It was the best bonding experience because you sit there and you talk and it’s just nice.”

In addition to igniting her passion for the beef industry, she says agriculture and the Angus industry made her a better person.

“The one thing you could count on living on a farm, is that there’s always going to be something to do, and you can’t always take those days off,” she says. “It just teaches you responsibility to take care of others and hard work.”

Growing up in a big family whose members all work for the family business has taught her the importance of togetherness, she says.

“If we don’t help one another out, we’re all going to fall together,” she says. “You get really connected. We all go to church together. We all went to the same high school. You just create this tight-knit bond that I’m going to have for the rest of my life.”

On the farm her main responsibility consists of collecting and recording calving data and assisting her family with whatever jobs rank the highest on the list of priorities.

Making the future visible

With the cost of education being higher than ever, the Angus Foundation is committed to supporting the youth of the Angus industry in their educational pursuits.

“It was important that I got this scholarship because it gave me the ability to focus on school, and less on how to pay for school,” Schiefelbein says.

Between advocating for agriculture and having her goals of building an affordable, yet nutritious food supply, Schiefelbein has big plans.

With the help of the Angus Foundation, Schiefelbein will be able to dedicate more of her time and effort to her education and less time worrying about finances.

The Angus Foundation is committed to providing opportunities for success to Angus youth. The Allied Angus Breeders Scholarships are available to students, or students from families who use Angus genetics. Interested students are encouraged to apply at angusfoundation.org. ■

Editor’s note: Karen Hiltbrand is a communications specialist for the American Angus Association.

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