



30-years-old

**Iowa State University
Professor and Livestock
Judging Team Coach**

**B.S. in Animal Science, Texas
A&M; Doctor of Philosophy
in Ruminant Nutrition,
University of Illinois**

Background: Grew up on a diversified grain and purebred Angus cattle operation, C-5 Angus, near Ancona, Ill., with his parents Kevin and Debbie. He and his older brothers, Matt and Kyle, were involved in 4-H, FFA, and the National Junior Angus Association. Cassidy has judged in more than 30 states and at all levels. He judged three junior national beef breed shows during this past summer and had the opportunity to co-judge with his dad at the Simmental Junior National in Hattiesburg, Miss. Today, he is a professor and the livestock judging team coach at Iowa State University.

Family: Wife, Katie, and son, Beau, 1

About ISU: "We have great alumni support, faculty and high-quality livestock in a centralized area. It's an untapped gold mine that I am excited to be a part of," Cassidy says.

Hobbies: Cassidy enjoys helping out on the family farm where he was raised as much as he can. He also enjoys spending time with his wife and son when he is not on the road.

Favorite reading material: Angus Journal

Favorite quote: "The difference between champ and chump is U."
– Lou Holtz

BEYOND BANNERS

By Kiera Leddy

"If it was a competition that was agricultural related, you can bet I did it and I loved it," says Chris Cassidy, Iowa State University professor and livestock judging team coach.

Cassidy grew up on a diversified grain and livestock operation in north central Illinois near the town of Ancona. He and his brothers raised and showed Angus cattle and pigs. He was involved in 4-H, FFA and the National Junior Angus Association. Cassidy had the unique opportunity to grow up with his FFA adviser, Dan Weber, living on the farm site. "He played a pivotal role in my life and encouraged me to get involved with contests like livestock judging," says Cassidy.

Cassidy was a successful livestock evaluator throughout his youth. He won the Illinois State FFA livestock evaluation CDE as a sophomore in high school and was named to the 2006 Illinois State 4-H livestock judging team as a freshman in college.

With the success he had throughout his youth, Cassidy decided to give collegiate judging a try. This led him to Black Hawk East. While judging there, he was high point individual at the American Royal, was a top five individual at the National Western Stock Show and Rodeo and a top 10 individual at the Houston Livestock Show. Additionally, he was named to the Junior College Coaches All-American Team.

The Vision

In the middle of his junior collegiate judging season, Cassidy found himself and his teammates sitting in on the senior collegiate judging contest awards banquet in Louisville, Ky. As the announcers began to talk about the history and the prestigious livestock evaluators in the industry, Cassidy began to evaluate the direction of his future. "I thought to myself, I want to be one of those individuals, to be a first-class educator and livestock evaluator," says Cassidy. "I may not ever get there, but that was the goal I chose to work toward and continue to work toward."

Cassidy chose to continue his education and judging career at Texas A&M University. "It was a totally different climate and culture from what I grew up in," says Cassidy. "I figured it would help me better understand the industry." Cassidy was able to do just that at the Texas A&M Beef Center where he worked with Bos indicus cattle, much different from the Angus cattle he had raised throughout his youth.

At A&M, Cassidy went on to receive numerous top judging honors at several of the nation's prestigious stock show events. In addition to individual honors he was a member of the champion team at the National Western Stock Show, Fort Worth Stock Show, Houston Livestock Show, Tulsa State Fair and American Royal. His team secured the Reserve National Champion Team title at the North American Livestock Show in Louisville.

Following his vision of becoming a first-class educator and evaluator, Cassidy returned back to his home state to work on his doctorate. at the University of Illinois. While there he coached the livestock judging team. "It gave me the opportunity to give back to my home institution and kids I knew growing up," says Cassidy.

As a livestock judging coach, Cassidy doesn't measure his successes through ribbons, banners and trophies, but through the success his students have post judging. "A lot of my former students are out in the industry with leadership positions, hold graduate degrees or are coaching livestock judging teams," says Cassidy. "It reassures me that they saw the bigger pictures during our workouts and contests."

The Continuation

A piece of advice for students interested in livestock judging is to keep your ears and eyes open, he shares. "I've judged livestock for a large portion of my life and have a Ph.D.," says Cassidy. "I've coached teams for the past seven years and learn something new every day." One thing he enjoys about ISU is the heavy focus on teaching. "There's always going to be someone that knows something you don't," says Cassidy. "Trends change, genetics change, always try to better yourself or you won't progress."

Having completed his first year at ISU, Cassidy is excited for the opportunities that will present themselves over the years. "We have great alumni support, faculty and high-quality livestock in a centralized area," says Cassidy. "It's an untapped gold mine that I am excited to be a part of."

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