

A Loyal Companion

Introducing 2024 MOFB Farm Dog of the Year - Cole

By Natalie Ayers



We often hear a dog described as “man’s best friend.” That holds true for Cole, the 2024 Missouri Farm Bureau Farm Dog of the Year.

Cole is a purebred Australian Shepherd owned by Aaron Brown of Concordia. Cole’s trademark facial feature – one brown eye and one smoky blue eye – stems from heterochromia, which is an endearing trait for the breed. Not only did this feature catch the attention of our judges in Brown’s application, but it was also what originally brought the dog and owner together.

Although Brown is not Cole’s initial owner, the two have been inseparable since they met. When the previous owner was called to serve overseas, he decided it was time to find a new home for his puppy. He posted an image of Cole on social media, and after seeing it, Brown reached out.

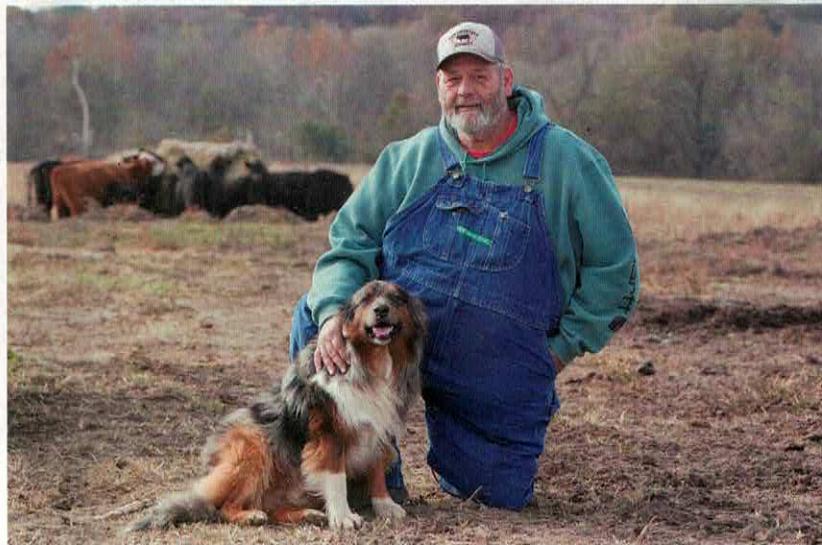
“I had always wanted an Australian Shepherd,” Brown said. “The blue eye caught my attention, so I thought, ‘well, I’ll give it a shot.’”

Cole was not raised on a farm, so Brown was curious how the dog would cooperate with the cattle on his operation. After seeing how well Cole interacted with both him and his livestock during just one afternoon together, Brown adopted him.

“He needed a good farm to run on, and out here he has plenty of wide-open spaces,” Brown said.

Cole quickly established himself as a farm companion and has been with Brown for the last two years. Every day, he meets Brown at the back door of his home as he leaves for his off-farm job. Cole greets him again as he returns to do farm chores. Most commonly, you will find Cole riding either in the Gator UTV or on the truck toolbox to check fences, feed cattle and occasionally go into town.

“He’s just an all-around good farm dog,” Brown said. “Some people look at farm dogs as wanting to work cattle



Aaron Brown with his companion, Cole, on his farm near Concordia. The purebred Australian Shepherd is the 2024 MOFB Farm Dog of the Year.

and so forth, but mine is more of a companion and a friend, and that’s what I consider my farm dog.”

Like any good dog, Cole can also perform a few tricks. He knows how to sit, rollover, lay down, shake and other basic commands. However, when asked his favorite thing about Cole, Brown immediately responds that he enjoys his loyalty.

“I have never had a dog this loyal,” Brown said. “He is always by my side. If I need something, he’s right there. I do a lot of the cow work myself, and I have a feeling that if something happened and I got down, he would be right there to try and protect me. He’s a very loyal companion.”

In addition to earning the title of Farm Dog of the Year, Cole will be treated to a year’s supply of Purina Pro Plan dog food sponsored by Purina Petcare. MOFB President Garrett Hawkins presented the award to Cole and Brown on stage during the MOFB Annual Meeting in December.

For more information on the MOFB Farm Dog of the Year contest, visit www.mofb.org/farmdog. The contest is only open to Farm Bureau members. ■



Scan to watch the video.

Meet Cole, the 2024 MOFB Farm Dog of the Year.