



# Checking in on MyHerd

MyHerd.org continues to offer new features as more breeders utilize the program.

by Julie White

It's been 17 months since the American Hereford Association (AHA) officially launched its real-time online registry system, *MyHerd.org*, and Hereford breeders are taking advantage of the efficiency and flexibility offered through the program.

Developed and refined over the course of the past three years, this online system allows Hereford breeders to turn in their

registration and performance work, transfer animals, pay their bills and handle Hereford business any time day or night.

"When the AHA Board made the decision to upgrade the in-house registry system in 2011, they wanted to ensure recordkeeping and data submission were made as simple as possible for our membership," says Jack Ward, AHA executive vice president. "The

ultimate goal is to make available to breeders all tools required to conduct AHA business."

#### More features

Ward says while additional components are continually being added to MyHerd, the online system currently provides members with a multitude of features including real-time calf registration, performance data reporting, electronic storage of registration

certificates, electronic animal transfer, online bill paying, herd inventory maintenance, artificial insemination (AI) certificate release and the capability to view and download lists of animals and customers, among much more.

In the next few months members will be able to request DNA kits, track the status of DNA tests and view results.

"I love getting the initial call from a member who just signed

## MyHerd features

The top five most used MyHerd features include:

1

**Real-time calf registration**

2

**Animal transfer** (12,493 animals transferred last fiscal year on MyHerd)

3

**AHA payment** (includes credit card and electronic check payments)

4

**AI certificate release**

5

**Duplicate certificate request**

## Electronic certificate storage

Excerpt from "Pruning the Paperwork" in the July 2015 Hereford World.

The electronic storage of registration certificates on MyHerd is a service provided with busy Hereford breeders in mind.

"When a member registers or purchases a Hereford animal, the registration certificate is stored electronically on MyHerd," explains Christy Bradshaw, American Hereford Association (AHA) education and information service coordinator.

"The electronic storage service allows members to decide when they receive registration certificates. There is no additional cost to store or release registration certificates."

Bradshaw emphasizes that each current owner is provided one registration certificate with the cost of registration or transfer. AHA members using MyHerd may choose to store the registration certificate online until they would need a paper copy. Then, she says, it's simple for members to go to MyHerd at their convenience and "release" the stored certificate that will then be printed and mailed.

Bradshaw says there are numerous benefits to members who utilize electronic storage of registration certificates.

"This service helps prevent members from losing registration certificates on animals in their herd," she says. "It also cuts down on paperwork for our members. Since registration certificates aren't needed to transfer Hereford cattle online, members can transfer owned animals to their customers without having to handle registration certificates."

For performance members, Bradshaw says they can wait to have their calf crop's registration certificates printed until all performance data is submitted and then have the most current performance data and EPDs printed on each certificate.

Electronic storage not only benefits breeders by cutting back on paperwork, says Dave Bielema of Grand Meadows Farm, Grand Rapids, Mich., and a member of the AHA Board of Directors, but also there's a benefit to the Association's ability to serve members.

He says, "To me, I see the electronic certificate storage service as a cost savings advantage for the Association and providing conveniences and freeing up the records staff to do other work and answer phone calls." **HW**

up for MyHerd because they're always amazed at the amount of information they instantly have at their fingertips," says Christy Bradshaw, AHA education and information service coordinator.

"MyHerd gives members control of their Hereford records by allowing them to do their registrations, transfers and AI certificate releases after AHA business hours. Their customers no longer have to wait for the office to open to receive registration information or AI certificates to complete that last minute registration or show entry. Nowadays time is limited and MyHerd lets members do business when it's convenient for them."

AHA's last fiscal year recorded 68% of registrations were submitted electronically — up 5% from the previous year.

"Our goal is to get 80% online registration," says Stacy Sanders, AHA director of records department. "Not just by adding more users, but getting more use."

Sanders says continuing to make MyHerd more user-friendly will help not only increase member use but it will allow members to use MyHerd entirely for record services. The percent of electronic recording reflects online registrations and registrations submitted from members using herd management systems.

#### Accurate and efficient

The AHA records department has been anticipating this increase in MyHerd use to allow customer service staff more time to assist breeders and to cut back on inaccuracies.

Nancy Thomas, AHA customer service, has worked for Hereford breeders for 48 years starting with the American Polled Hereford Association and then joining AHA.

"MyHerd has been a great addition and it's offered breeders a more streamlined way to do business than we've ever had before," Thomas says.

"I've heard a lot of good comments. They are wanting more features, but (the AHA) is working on that."

Thomas spends a good deal of her time on the phone with members. She says breeders especially enjoy the online transfer feature, cutting back on their paperwork. "They can get their numbers as soon as they register an animal too."

While many tech-savvy members have picked up on MyHerd quickly, she candidly

adds that switching to the new registry system hasn't been easy for all members.

"There are parts that have seemed difficult to understand for some, and those who call in I tell them there are tutorials and instructions for everything on MyHerd," Thomas says. "We spend a lot of time on the phone assisting members who are learning and may not feel confident with MyHerd, which we are happy to do."

All of the records department received training on MyHerd and are able to answer any questions.

"MyHerd has helped us in records, and breeders are getting their work done faster," she says. "And they don't have to worry we are misspelling their words," she laughs, "because with MyHerd as they input their information they will get errors like it would give us. It cuts back on our time correcting registrations and the whole process is more accurate. We are still busy on the phone, but it's freed up my time to do more important things outside of data entry." **HW**



### MyHerd and Whole Herd Total Performance Record (TPR™) breeders

Performance breeders may find it challenging at times to keep up with Whole Herd TPR compliance requirements and performance deadlines.

AHA Director of Records Department Stacy Sanders says the MyHerd home screen was designed with performance members in mind and the development team wanted to make it easy for members to know exactly what information they need to turn in next.

The home screen provides four to-do list boxes (see Table 1) that organize required performance information by priority in one-click tasks. The tasks are herd specific and tell the breeder down to the number of head what information is needed. With one click the MyHerd user is taken directly to the task described where information can be submitted. **HW**

**Table 1: MyHerd home screen to-do lists**

<b>Critical to-do list</b>	<p>Information listed is currently overdue, member is currently non-compliant in the Whole Herd TPR™ system and tasks listed must be completed before new information can be processed.</p> <p>If member is compliant in the Whole Herd TPR™ system, MyHerd will display the message "Compliant – in good standing."</p>
<b>Upcoming to-do list</b>	<p>This to-do list informs members what information is needed to maintain Whole Herd TPR™ compliance for upcoming performance deadlines: Inventory updates, calving records and weaning weight.</p> <p>Optional traits (birth weight, yearling weight, scrotal, hip heights and ultrasound) aren't listed because they're not required for Whole Herd TPR™ compliance.</p>
<b>Trait data incomplete</b>	<p>The trait data incomplete to-do list looks at all the performance data turned in for the herd. The list lets the member know of any incomplete calf crops for a specific trait.</p>
<b>Gold TPR</b>	<p>The Gold TPR award recognized breeders who not only participate in the performance program but also go above and beyond the basic compliance requirements. The Gold TPR to-do list tells members exactly what information is needed for upcoming Gold TPR awards. The Gold TPR award requires more information than basic Whole Herd TPR™ compliance. The tasks will display on the home screen until they are completed or the award is presented.</p> <p><b>Gold TPR award requirements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Herd inventory must be submitted prior to the inventory surcharge deadline (spring inventory is March 1 and fall inventory is September 1)</li> <li>• A reproductive status or calving update must be submitted for each dam on inventory.</li> <li>• A complete set of birth, weaning and yearling weights are also required as well as scrotal measurements for every bull calf with a recorded yearling weight.</li> <li>• 25% or more of the calf crop must have ultrasound data submitted.</li> </ul>