

BOARD ACTION

The American Hereford Association (AHA) Board of Directors met in Kansas City, Mo., April 28-29. The following are highlights of the meeting:

Finance committee report

March ending financials indicate a robust financial year for AHA with all subsidiaries performing better than expected. The consolidated net income through the first seven months of the fiscal year is \$357,000.

AHA investments were reported at \$2.2 million. AHA reported a 4% increase in registrations; cow herd inventories are up 8%, and membership is up 5%. Hereford Publications Inc. and Certified Hereford Beef (CHB) LLC are both reporting profitable performances midway through the year.

Breed improvement highlights

New correlations from panel retraining will not be ready for summer 2014 release. AHA staff reported that there are double the number of genotypes available for a retraining of the genomic enhanced panel.

A total of 5,200 U.S. animal genotypes are available to use for discovery at Iowa State University, where Dorian Garrick and his team are working to improve the predictions of the genomic-enhanced expected progeny differences (GE-EPDs). However, the new adjustments will not be ready for the fall 2014 genetic evaluation. The goal will be to update the panel for the spring 2015 genetic evaluation.

AHA staff has been working with GeneSeek Inc., AHA's official DNA lab, to streamline the DNA testing and data handling procedures. GeneSeek moved to a new location in May, adding capacity to the laboratory. Other programming and testing procedures are being developed to help with turnaround time particularly during the peak season of November through February.

The cost of DNA technology is affected by the volume of tests run annually and the type of technology utilized. The Board instructed staff to enter into a new agreement with

GeneSeek to introduce the new small, low density DNA chip, which is expected to reduce the cost of the GE-EPD test by 35%. The new technology is still in research mode and will hopefully be ready by late 2014.

The Board directed staff to evaluate quarterly EPD updates as soon as the logistics can be worked out. Due to the increase in investment in genotyping and enhanced EPDs production, the Board directed staff to look at the feasibility and costs of running the evaluation more than two times a year. A quarterly evaluation might reduce the need for complex interim EPD calculations and provide higher levels of accuracy in younger animals with little or no progeny. Staff will be looking into the possibility this summer.

Following the objectives set in AHA's strategic plan, the Association has committed resources to proving Hereford genetics in large commercial settings and utilizing the data to document the strengths of the Hereford breed.

This year marks the third breeding season AHA has worked with Simplot Livestock Co. to document that Hereford calving-ease sires can stack up to Angus calving-ease sires. Simplot, with ranches in several northwest U.S. states, is one of the largest cattle feeders in that region, as well. Calves in the project have been followed through every phase of development and slaughter to gather economic data.

A GrowSafe system is used to collect individual feed intake data, which are being utilized with DNA samples from progeny in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) national feed efficiency study. It is hoped that the Simplot data along with data collected from the GrowSafe system at Olsen Ranch, Harrisburg, Neb., plus other sources of Hereford feed-intake data will

soon be utilized to develop a feed efficiency EPD.

Marketing committee

Results of the commissioned national cow-calf survey were distributed to the Board. Hereford bull demand continues to be steady with more than 22% of cow-calf producers nationwide indicating they will be purchasing a Hereford bull.

The survey showed that Hereford is recognized among cow-calf producers as the No. 1 breed for good disposition and cold tolerance and was also the only breed that had universal acceptance across all U.S. environments.

AHA will be utilizing the data to talk to Hereford breeders about the evolving demands of the beef industry and the cow-calf sector. See Page 173 for results.



Staff gave an update regarding the Hereford Genetic Summit, slated for Sept. 4-5 in Springfield, Mo. The event will include a dynamic exchange of ideas with hopes to challenge Hereford breeders to think outside the box and help navigate Hereford genetic trend and the Association direction into the future.

The event will be both educational and entertaining, and the Board strongly urges all AHA members to register and consider it a "must attend" event.

Youth update

Staff reported on the 2014 Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE) in Harrisburg, Pa. The Board unanimously endorsed hosting the JNHE in Harrisburg two years ago, and state organizers and national sponsors have met their goal for fundraising. It will be an exciting event in a part of the country that many young Hereford breeders have never seen before.

continued on page 14...

Show and sale report

The 2015 Mile High Night National Hereford Sale in Denver will be managed by AHA staff. The Board made this announcement based on the retirement of Eddie Sims. The auctioneers for the 2015 sale will be Eddie Burks from Kentucky and Rick Machado from California. The number of lots will be a maximum of 40 head.

An additional calf division which splits the August through December age groups into August through September and October through

December was developed for national Hereford shows. This classification change will begin with the 2014 Keystone Show in Harrisburg, Pa.

Membership update

The Board approved a non-resident membership. For at least four decades, AHA has required that for semen to be imported on a foreign bull and used in the U.S., an American breeder must be listed as an owner of the bull. This stipulation will no longer be required for foreign-owned bulls.

Instead, a non-resident membership has been established that will allow foreign breeders to become non-voting members of the AHA and to take advantage of the services AHA provides all members (see AHA Rules and Regulations in the "Hereford Handbook").

The Board also approved allowing lifetime memberships to be transferred to immediate family members; however, the membership name must remain the same. **HW**