

# Strategic Plan

2010-2015



## Vision Statement

To be the preferred beef breed for producers and consumers.

## Mission Statement

AHA will provide the leadership to record, protect, promote and facilitate the production and consumption of Hereford beef.

## Strategic Intent Statement

The American Hereford Association will grow its herd book cow numbers by 1% a year, registrations 3-5% per year and its commercial bull market share to 22% by 2015. This will be achieved by delivering practical tools, trusted documentation, targeted education, innovative marketing and member services to progressive, profit-oriented seedstock producers, commercial cow-calf producers, feeders and packers who value increased efficiency, predictability and differentiation.

## Core Strategies

- I. Improve the overall quality, consistency, predictability and profitability of Hereford genetics.
- II. Build strategic alliances.
- III. Continue to grow the Certified Hereford Beef (CHB<sup>®</sup>) program.
- IV. Increase investment in member and customer education and service.
- V. Increase focus of communicating the profitability advantage of Hereford genetics.
- VI. Grow non-traditional revenue.
- VII. Cultivate the growth and development of juniors and young breeders.

**Core Strategy 1: Improve the overall quality, consistency, predictability and profitability of Hereford genetics.**

**Objective A:** Increase the accuracy of breeding values in young cattle and manage functional defect rates by developing a plan for including genomic information into genetic evaluation.

### Tactics

- Build test populations for discovery purposes.
- Develop DNA tests for measurable traits (birth weight and calving ease are priorities).
- Collect DNA for cosmetic/functional problems (prolapse, cancer eye).

**Objective B:** Grow research and National Reference Sire Program (NRSP).

### Tactics

- Expand NRSP cow numbers by 50% to increase accuracy of young sires.
- Collect non-traditional traits (docility, feed intake, tenderness).
- Continue to collect economically relevant traits (ERTs).

**Objective C:** Evaluate the economic relevance of existing traits and develop new traits or indexes that will affect cow-calf, feedlot and packer profitability.

### Tactics

- Educate membership about the value and proper methods of collecting accurate data at all levels of production.
- Develop applications/tools for user-friendly data collection and submission.

**Objective D:** Recognize members who are breeding cattle humanely and properly and integrate into Gold TPR program.

### Tactics

- Get 20% of Hereford members to complete NCBA's Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) and/or Masters of Beef Advocacy (MBA) program.
- Establish a training and certification program for animal handling standards.
- Develop promotional opportunities that recognize Hereford breeders as progressive animal care operators and stewards of the land.
- Establish industry partners interested in sponsoring such a program.

## Core Strategy 2: Build strategic alliances.

**Objective A:** Develop research alliances with genomic laboratory entities (including universities, companies or labs) to support breed improvement plan.

### Tactics

- Develop genomic-enhanced expected progeny differences (EPDs) with revenue implications with the goal of keeping product affordable and thereby enhancing uptake of technology.
- Continue University of Illinois initiative.
- Explore corporate opportunities (Pfizer, Igenity).
- Participate in USDA research projects that will benefit the Hereford breed.
- Identify funding mechanisms (foundation, sponsorships).
- Develop partnerships with technology companies for data management.

**Objective B:** Develop corporate marketing alliances with feeders, marketing companies, end-users, influencers, processors to gain leverage in the market.

### Tactics

- Effect the marketing of 1 million feeder cattle through branded alliances.
- Influence the market for 50,000 certified/specification replacement females annually.
- Investigate regional opportunities for marketing alliances (Texas/HEB supply chain alliance).
- Develop strategies for merchandising Hereford-influenced females with industry trade partners, possibly utilizing *BuyHereford.com*.
- Investigate other niche market opportunities to market Hereford-influenced cattle.

**Objective C:** Increase collaboration with multiple breeds and other species.

### Tactics

- Explore national corporate funding/education opportunities.
- Research collaboration with other associations.
- Promote registry system service opportunities.
- Explore providing registry and data management services to international entities.
- Offer Creative Services opportunities to industry partners.
- Include all viable products in the production of documented information.

**Objective D:** Enhance electronic data management system.

### Tactics

- Add 20,000 registry records from other associations/entities.
- Improve on-farm software systems and support that will influence the dataflow of more than 80% of cow inventory, registration and performance information.
- Launch ILR Online system developed by ABRI.
- Develop immediate on-farm software strategies for making data collection and submission more user-friendly.
- Develop new novel technologies that might enhance data collection and submission through phone applications.

## Core Strategy 3: Continue to grow the Certified Hereford Beef (CHB®) program.

**Objective A:** Grow retail box beef program.

### Tactics

- Generate 15 million lb. of new retail fresh beef sales.
- Grow 7 million lb. of ground beef sales from different chub/case-ready formats.
- Move 8 million lb. of box beef into retail stores, adding an additional 150 stores.
- Evaluate case-ready opportunities that will assist in marketing CHB fresh products into retail.

**Objective B:** Maintain 100% existing customer retention rate.

### Tactics

- Implement retail relations strategy.
- Develop promotional plans to sustain interest in brand.
- Investigate retail advertising partner opportunities.
- Conduct business review meetings and store audits.

**Objective C:** Develop value-added revenue streams, generating \$500,000 in new revenue through product development.

### Tactics

- Expand Nuestro Rancho seasoned, marinated line — \$300,000 annually.
- Continue to build food-service hot dog and hamburger program — \$100,000.
- Investigate other value-added concepts that will generate \$100,000 annually.

**Objective D:** Energize packer relations and marketing.

### Tactics

- Involve National Beef Packing Co. LLC in marketing and point of sale (POS) plan.
- Involve packers in more sales opportunities.
- Investigate social media marketing strategies that might bring awareness to Hereford story.
- Participate in major industry trade shows.

**Objective E:** Develop and market a high-marbling Hereford beef program.

### Tactics

- Generate demand for 1,000 head a week of upper  $\frac{2}{3}$  Choice Hereford brand.
- Establish Hereford program with Greater Omaha Packing Co. Inc. utilizing middle meats from 500 head per week.
- Convince other packers to develop an upper  $\frac{2}{3}$  Choice Hereford program.

## Core Strategy 4: Increase investment in member and customer education and service.

**Objective A:** Educate members and non-members on strengths of the Hereford breed.

### Tactics

- Produce educational videos — value of AHA fees, whole herd reporting, Circle A research, genetic defect management.
- Continue to enhance *eNews*; investigate opportunity to produce a “commercially focused” e-newsletter.
- Maintain and expand Web site. Develop online packet of information (new members).
- Investigate social media strategies for broadcasting the Hereford message.
- Expand *The Whiteface* — make available at tradeshow and meetings.
- Create templates for newsletters and advertisements for breeders.
- Utilize field service as extension/education arm.

**Objective B:** Transform Annual Membership Meeting into an educational convention that attracts more members.

### Tactics

- Establish convention break-out sessions and training opportunities.
- Bring in top speakers in specific fields of interest.
- Bring in Cattle-Fax to discuss economics of business.
- Establish ongoing Board training program.

**Objective C:** Improve the skills and competencies of Hereford leaders (directors, youth, women).

### Tactics

- Have leaders complete MBA program.
- Develop online Hereford education course covering:
  - ◆ Registrations/transfers
  - ◆ Breed advantages
  - ◆ Heterosis
  - ◆ History
- Implement Hereford Extension strategy — beef 101 issues.

**Objective D:** Promote present services to improve members' awareness of available services.

### Tactics

- Investigate and improve Google/Yahoo ranking of *Hereford.org*.
- Develop strategies to drive Web site traffic.
- Customize breeder communication strategy (field service, university partners, updates, regional).
- Produce a low-cost promotional packet/video brochure to utilize for new members and member recruitment.
- Develop an electronic communication strategy for new and old members.
- Train field service to give presentations to member groups.

**Objective E:** Create a member herd marketing profile for maximum market exposure.

### Tactics

- Develop profile template for breeders that describes their operation and product to help expose their cattle to a much larger audience.
- Develop marketing standards that will qualify the herd and breeding program (i.e. BQA, MBA, humane handling, TPR).
- Identify exposure methods for breeders to link to commercial industry.
- Evaluate a commercial transfer volume rate or credit rebate.

**Objective F:** Establish a coordinated member service promotional program through Hereford Publications Inc. (HPI).

### Tactics

- Refocus HPI sales strategy to involve an annual promotional plan contract for breeders.
- Identify all products and services of value to membership and train all personnel regarding those products and services and how they are to be sold.
- Bundle products, services and pricing under an annual promotion strategy contract.

**Objective G:** Evaluate efficiencies and customer service improvements in all companies.

### Tactics

- Implement an easy credit card payment system.
- Reduce labor and increase user-friendly billing and communication of junior dues and Junior National Hereford Expo fees.
- Offer *Hereford World* subscription payment option online.

**Objective H:** Develop a transfer ownership program.

### Tactics

- Identify sales management software that will allow for easy transfer information exchange with AHA headquarters.

### Core Strategy 5: Increase focus of communicating the profitability advantage of Hereford genetics.

**Objective A:** Increase our focus on communicating the profitability advantage of Hereford genetics.

#### Tactics

- Benchmark and report marketshare and commercial industry perception.
- Increase online marketing (banner ads and e-blasts).
- Develop a social media strategy (Facebook and Twitter).
- Research the opportunity to advertise on RFD-TV.
- Create promotional videos to load on YouTube.

**Objective B:** Engage and equip state and regional associations to spread the Hereford message.

#### Tactics

- Investigate opportunities to cost-share advertising.
- Offer national ad campaign customization option to states.
- Develop custom ranch signs.

**Objective C:** Explore new avenues and continue practices to promote Hereford genetics.

#### Tactics

- Develop billboards.
- Create more news releases.
- Network with ag media to tell our story (media events).
- Trademark “baldie” name.

### Core Strategy 6: Grow non-traditional revenue.

**Objective A:** Develop electronic marketing opportunities that can generate \$250,000 over five years.

#### Tactics

- Expand Web site development options.
- Offer logo ads on the pedigree/EPD search pages.
- Consider the cost of charging for links.
- Market banner ads to corporate customers.
- Offer Creative Services to ABRA customers.

**Objective B:** Research developing a crossbreed registry program.

#### Tactics

- Do a cost-benefit analysis for crossbreed registry.
- Revisit alternate breed inventory system.

**Objective C:** Research and develop programs to streamline data flow to AHA and from herd management software.

#### Tactics

- Evaluate systems that will sync with ILR2 system.
- Develop applications for data collection and submission.
- Research non-traditional electronic applications.

**Objective D:** Grow *BuyHereford.com* sales.

#### Tactics

- Increase gross sales 50% per year during the next five years.
- Develop marketing campaign for *BuyHereford.com*.
- Target privately branded breeder sales, adding five per year.
- Integrate into breeder national advertising contract.
- Develop special sales (female, semen, embryos, etc.).

### Core Strategy 7: Cultivate the growth and development of juniors and young breeders.

**Objective A:** Implement membership growth strategy.

#### Tactics

- Increase NJHA membership 20% by 2015.
- Re-brand the NJHA with a fresh look and strategy.
- Use social media to recruit new members.
- Develop a recruitment incentive program.
- Create online membership recruitment and payment option.
- Develop strategy for communicating with and recruiting ag instructors as Hereford breed supporters.
- Produce educational videos targeting youth and communicating the value of the organization.

**Objective B:** Implement issues management, leadership training and industry networking training programs.

#### Tactics

- Incorporate alumni into educational and leadership programs.
- Create young breeder Masters of Beef Advocacy Academy.
- Continue to expand online “Educational Center.”
- Incorporate more beef industry issues into PRIDE Convention.
- Conduct media training for junior board and Hereford youth.

**Objective C:** Cultivate alliances with other junior organizations.

#### Tactics

- Create synergistic efficiencies, attract new members and corporate support for youth-related activities that will assure the funding of dynamic educational and networking experiences.
- Bring multiple breeds together to host junior national expos in one location, possibly for multiple-year contracts.
- Co-host national and regional leadership conferences with other breeds or species groups.
- Align with NCBA to train our national youth leaders.
- Consolidate efforts to have a beef seedstock presence at National FFA Convention.

**Objective D:** Grow HYFA funds to \$5 million to advance educational and scholarship opportunities.

#### Tactics

- Plan face-to-face meetings to discuss HYFA mission, NJHA strengths and gift strategies with prospective donors.
- Forge corporate partners to support leadership and development.
- Utilize RFD-TV and other media to promote NJHA efforts.
- Identify grant writers and/or contract fundraisers.
- Develop ongoing online financial support campaign through Internet or social media strategies.

**Objective E:** Assure Junior National Hereford Expo long-term sustainability. Create self-funding mechanism to assure JNHE remains one of the premier livestock junior events in the world.

#### Tactics

- Brand the JNHE as the world-class event for Hereford youth.
- Seek corporate funding through alliances with other breeds.
- Increase HYFA support through gifts, contributions or earmarks.
- Develop a strategy for funding the show program.