

# Managing Herefords

## Whole Herd TPR



Whole Herd Total Performance Records (TPR™) is a system of registration and performance tracking whereby participating breeders update their cow herd inventory annually and are charged for performance data on a per cow basis as opposed to a per calf basis.

With this system, AHA measures economically relevant beef production traits such as fertility, longevity and reproductive efficiency. Furthermore, the greater volume of data reported from each herd will enhance the accuracy of Hereford Expected Progeny Differences (EPDs).

Participation in Whole Herd TPR is voluntary and breeders may choose to maintain pedigree records without recording performance information. With this option, known as Pedigree Registry, breeders will not see EPDs or other performance information printed on their registry certificates.

The TPR program is divided into five sections — cow herd inventory, birth, weaning, yearling and scanning data.

### How to participate:

1. New participants should request a current dam inventory for their account from AHA.
2. Complete the form for all cows and breeding age heifers (as well as herd sires if you choose the option of a sire inventory) expected to be represented by a calf during the next 12 months.
3. For each animal inventoried, provide the herd ID number, registration number, name and date calved.
4. Designate each female as either fall or spring calving.
5. Mail the completed inventory form to the AHA. Retain a copy for your records. Your account will be billed \$5 per female per year or \$2.50 for first calf heifers.

### Inventory your females

At the time producers request an inventory form they have six weeks to complete the information needed and

return it to AHA. There is a \$5 fee for each mature female and \$2.50 fee for first-calf heifers.

Whole Herd TPR participants are encouraged but not required to maintain all active sires on their inventory. Doing so speeds and eases the breeder's reporting process by allowing use of shorter sire herd ID rather than using the full eight-digit registry number. Sires should be updated annually, are not subject to a re-activation fee and are charged only \$1 per sire annually. If you wish to use herd ID numbers rather than registry numbers for sires when reporting your calves, you must maintain an active bull inventory.

If a producer returns the inventory form within six weeks, AHA gives that producer a 25-cent-per-head discount for each female maintained on inventory. If returned six to 12 weeks after requesting the form, they producers are charged the regular rate. Any inventory received after the 12-week period has a \$2-per-head late fee surcharge.

This is an inventory based system, so producers are not charged a fee for each weaning, yearling or scan data turned in. It is an annual fee per cow.

When reporting cows or first-calf heifers it is important to designate which breeding season the females will calve in — spring, fall or year-round. After turning in the herd inventory form producers will receive a dam production summary report from AHA listing all females maintained on that season's inventory.

Each year or breeding season TPR participants update their cow herd inventory. If they want to remove females from the inventory list they should enter it on the inventory form by using the correct disposal code.

Disposal codes are designed to keep the inventory clean and keep records up-to-date. The disposal codes are listed at the bottom of the cow herd inventory form (see Figure 1).

Disposal codes allow producers to track their herd and monitor longevity. It is important not to dispose (remove)

a female from the inventory record before her last calf has been registered.

If a cow completely drops off from a producer's inventory — no data recorded for a year or a calf needs to be registered — there is a \$30 reactivation fee. Young heifers initially added to the inventory can be moved the first time at no cost.

Submitting disposal records will help the AHA continue to develop and enhance the genetic tools available for breeders to make breeding decisions. "Whole Herd Reporting is giving us an opportunity to track different things," says Jack Ward, AHA chief operating officer and director of breed improvement. "We can start putting together more information regarding cow herd fertility and productivity."

Once a breeder has returned to AHA their annual (or seasonal) inventory update AHA will return a dam productivity summary report in addition

### Figure 1: Disposal Codes

- T – Sold with papers
- 1 – Sold as a breeding animal without papers
- 2 – Sold as a feeder calf
- 3 – Died, illness
- 4 – Died injury
- 5 – Died, calving difficulty
- 6 – Died of old age
- 7 – Died, other
- 8 – Culled, inferior production
- 9 – Culled, infertile
- 10 – Culled, illness
- 11 – Culled, injury
- 12 – Culled, poor temperament
- 13 – Culled or died, genetic defect
- 14 – Culled, bad feet
- 15 – Culled, poor udder
- 16 – Culled, prolapsed
- 17 – Culled, cancer eye
- 18 – Culled, structurally unsound
- 19 – Culled, old age
- 20 – Culled, other

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# Whole Herd TPR



to a statement for inventory fees and the breeder's Form 1 worksheets.

The dam production summary was designed to track the lifetime productivity of a cow. This summary shows herd ID number, registration number, age, the number of bull and female calves produced, average calving ease score, and calving interval. A cow's progeny will be summarized according to average birth, weaning and yearling ratios. Plus, her latest expected progeny differences (EPDs) and accuracies for all traits will be listed. "It gives the producer a little bit of how that cow has done in the herd within her lifetime," says Stacy Sanders, AHA director of records.

TPR is a very practical reporting system that has a certain amount of flexibility to accommodate herd situations. For example, if a cow calved late within the spring breeding season and you decide to hold her until fall breeding, there is a \$2.50 charge to move her. Then when she is added to the inventory another \$2.50 is charged to add her and maintain her on that list. That means it will cost \$5 to move the female.

There are three different ways for you to turn in your inventory forms. You can return all Whole Herd TPR forms by mailing them to the office in Kansas City. Another way to submit your inventory forms is through the Online Registry. You can contact AHA to request more information and to sign up your herd for the Online Registry system. This is more efficient and has a quicker turn-around time. Another option is with herd management software program that you can purchase. Click here for more information about on-farm herd management software programs that interface with AHA's registry system. (See Herd Management Software Options fact sheet.)

### How to utilize the birth worksheet

After submitting the female inventory form to the AHA, producers will receive the birth information worksheet

(Form 1). This form requires you to submit each active cow's breeding and calving information.

As a TPR breeder it is important to keep detailed calving records. An option to help with record keeping is to purchase a shirt-pocket size Calving Record Book from AHA. Data can easily be transferred from the calving record book to Form 1.

On the female inventory form a producer selected a calving season for their females this data is used to produce Form 1, which will list a dam's herd identification number (ID) or her registration number.

The main purpose of Form 1 is to collect calving data. On this form producers can choose to register the calf at birth or wait until later, report a tattoo number and designate it either in the left or right ear, and record if the calf is male or female. Form 2 allows the producer to designate the bull as a steer. Calving birth dates need to be recorded properly on the form as month, day and year. It is mandatory to select a calving ease score (see Figure 2).

Birth weights are optional, however; if a producer turns in one birth weight on a calf then you have to turn in weights on the entire set of calves. "In whole-herd reporting the only

weight required is weaning weight," says Ward. "If you want to collect birth weights you have to turn them all in for any of them to contribute to EPD calculations." Birth weights can be measured with scale or an industry accepted weight tape measure. It is preferred that the weight is taken within 24 hours after birth.

Form 1 also requires you to distinguish a management type that you have had your cows in prior to calving. You should assign a different management number to each group if you have multiple groups that have been managed differently. It is important to be sure to that all calves whose dams were similarly managed are kept in the same contemporary group. Contemporary groups are those calves raised together and managed in the same manner so that each calf's data can be fairly compared against all of the other calves within the group.

On Form 1 producers can also record a dam's udder score. The scoring is optional but it does make producers document and pay more attention to their herd's udder quality. See udder scoring for more information. (See Udder Scoring fact sheet.)

As producers collect performance data on their herd it is recommended that you submit it to the AHA as soon as possible so that it can be processed and adjusted measures, ratios and interim EPDs can be calculated and reported.

It is also important for producers to submit performance information to the AHA in a timely fashion so that data on their herd can be included in the semi-annual genetic analyses performed by the AHA. During these genetic analyses, performance data from a producer's herd is used to calculate more accurate EPDs on the sires and dams he uses in his herd.

If a producer wants to make sure the most recent performance data is included in each genetic evaluation, submit all available information by the end of May and October for the fall and spring EPD analyses, respectively.

### Figure 2: Calving Ease Scores

- 1 – No difficulty/ no assistance
- 2 – Minor difficulty/some assistance
- 3 – Major difficulty/calf puller used
- 4 – C-section
- 5 – Abnormal presentation
- 6 – Calf born dead/died shortly after birth
- 7 – Aborted
- 8 – Open
- 9 – Dam died, calving difficulty
- 10 – ET donor dam, no calf reported
- 11 – Recipient dam, ET calf not reported
- 12 – Multi-owned dam, data reported in another herd

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## Whole Herd TPR



After a producer has completed Form 1 they will then receive Form 2.

### Turn in weaning weights

The next step is to complete Form 2, Birth Report and Weaning worksheet.

After submitting Form 1 to the AHA, the customer service department will register calves as instructed, record the calving and performance data provided and return Form 2 to the breeder.

If actual birth weights were reported Form 2 will show the actual birth weights as well as adjusted birth weights and ratios. If you have not reported birth weight information then those areas on the form will be blank.

Actual birth weights are adjusted for age of the dam when the calf was born. If actual birth weights were not recorded then the breed standard birth weight will be used to calculate adjusted weaning weights. The standard birth weights will not be used in the calculation of birth weight expected progeny differences (EPDs). Birth weight EPDs will be calculated based on the pedigree of the calf plus the correlation of birth weight to other weights such as weaning weight.

Form 2 allows producers to record the actual weaning weight. The weaning age window is from 110 to 300 days. Breeders should collect all weights for a contemporary group within seven days.

It is also important to remember that every dam listed on a producer's female inventory must have a weaning weight submitted for her calf or an appropriate disposal code must be recorded when the weaning weight form is submitted. If no weaning weight or disposal code is recorded the process of recording the performance data will be stopped until that information is submitted.

A space is also provided for the breeder to record the dam's weight and body condition score on the date the calf is weaned. Ward suggests breeders collect cow weights at weaning along with body condition scores. If time is an issue when weaning, there is a 45-day

window on either side of weaning that allows producers to weigh cows when it is more convenient.

"This is extremely important to do as we begin to measure cow efficiency and strengthen the power of our profit indexes," adds Ward.

[Click here for more on body condition scoring.](#) (See Body Condition Scoring fact sheet.)

The next important step is to report the weaning management codes and weaning group. On the back of Form 2 is a list of management codes and weaning group options. Producers must assign management codes and weaning groups so that they create a unique combination for each group of calves that were treated differently. Producers do not have to record anything in the weaning group column but should use it to subgroup animals that have the same management code recorded if the calves were managed differently.

Contemporary groups are key for an accurate herd performance comparison. A contemporary group will consist only of animals in an individual herd that are of the same sex and same management group within a relatively narrow age range.

Ward encourages breeders to turn in all weights so that they can be compared together within the contemporary groups. Remember that contemporary groups consist of those calves raised together and managed in the same manner so that each calf's data can be fairly compared against all of the other calves within the group. According to Ward contemporary groups are the foundation behind EPDs and thousands of groups are considered in EPD calculations. It sets the foundation of accuracy allowing for breed comparisons across herds in different regions of the country.

Performance comparisons with TPR records should be restricted to animals within the herd and given contemporary group. Producers must pay close attention to the proper construction of contemporary groups. Whole Herd TPR "slices" birth and weaning, yearling and

ultrasound groups into 60-day windows. You can control where the slices begin by using group codes.

An example of a reason to assign management groups could be if an area is going through a drought and one group of calves was managed on irrigated pastures compared to a group that did not have the same opportunity.

Once producers have completed Form 2 they return it to the AHA for data entry and calculation. At that time the AHA will record the weaning portion of the data and then return Form 3 — Computed Weaning Report and Yearling Worksheet. Form 3 lists the calculated weaning records, the latest EPD information for each calf and the most desirable dates to collect yearling information.

### Use of master accounts

If a herd is comprised of animals in the ownership of multiple accounts (i.e. a ranch account and various additional family member accounts for children, partners, etc.) and the member would like to have all of the performance data processed as if they were a single herd entity, producers may request or download Form 11, Member Account Relationship Development Form, from the AHA to designate a Master Account. The ownership of the animals within each account will not be changed and there is no charge for this activity. The account that is designated as the Master Account will receive all future Herd Inventory mailings and general correspondence from the association regarding the accounts.

**Current AHA policy:** all fees for Whole Herd TPR inventory must be paid in full before registry or performance work is released. Likewise, monies received from breeders will be applied first to their longest outstanding balances on items charged. MasterCard and Visa are acceptable means of payment, particularly if a breeder wishes to insure that none of his work is held for payment of funds.