



Why Should You Purchase a Hereford Bull?

Take the Hereford pop quiz.

The following pop quiz can be answered at your leisure and won't require a great deal of exertion or brain power, because we've provided solid answers for you after each question. It's almost spring bull sale season and these questions might get you to thinking about why you should continue to purchase Hereford bulls this year. Perhaps it might convince you to start buying Hereford bulls and might give you a few talking points you can share with your neighbors and friends at the coffee shop when they ask you about your new Hereford bull purchase this spring.

Q True or false? The Hereford breed has significantly advanced the quality of its product in recent years.

A TRUE...The Hereford breed currently has the largest whole herd recording system in the world. More than 20 million animal records have been recorded in the organization, and each year approximately 110,000 cows are enrolled in the performance program. The expected progeny differences (EPDs) generated on your new commercial Hereford range bull were generated out of this massive database.

Q True or false? Stereotypic Hereford problems such as bad eyes or udders have been dramatically corrected in the breed.

A TRUE...The Hereford breed has done more than any other breed to correct functional defects in the national Hereford population. American Hereford Association (AHA) members have instituted the most rigid culling practices of the industry, significantly reducing costly problems during the last 20 years. The AHA Whole Herd Total Performance Records (TPR™) program collects a reason for a disposal code on every cow that leaves production, tracking defects so that corrections might be made over time. Commercial breeders from across the country comment on the longevity of Hereford range bulls and mother cows in harsh environments. Ruggedness and longevity are classic trademarks of the Hereford breed that are only enhanced through AHA's rigid record-keeping system.

Q True or false? Straight breeding Angus bulls on Angus cows in a commercial operation will deliver the most dollars to the bottomline.

A FALSE...Despite what has become a popular trend in the industry, straight breeding Angus on Angus costs the industry money. At least 50 years of research has documented the value of hybrid vigor and breed complementarity. Recent

research at the University of California, Chico, in cooperation with Harris Ranch Beef Co. and Lacey Land and Livestock, indicates more than a \$70 per head advantage in using Hereford bulls on black commercial range cows compared to Angus bulls on the same group of cows. Aside from added growth and efficiency, the biggest economic advantage is health. It's hard to make money selling dead calves.

Q True or false? Hereford cattle won't quality grade with other breeds of cattle.

A FALSE...There are Hereford cattle that will grade adequately for the packing sector. Purchasing bulls from breeders who ultrasound scan their bulls and females or utilize genetics with positive marbling EPDs, or participate in feedout programs will get you closer to identifying higher-grading cattle. If you talk to any feedlot operators, they will tell you they've seen Herefords grade as well as others and blacks grade as poorly as others. Genetics and management drive quality grade.

Q True or false? There is a growing demand for Hereford-influenced feeder cattle, both black and red baldies.

A TRUE...Today there are simply not enough baldie cattle available to meet the growing demand for the feedlot and packer trade. Feedlot managers are realizing the feed efficiency advantage Hereford cattle possess and are seeking to feed more. But they are having a difficult time finding them in pen-size groups. National Beef Packing Co. LLC, a Certified Hereford Beef (CHB) packer, is currently campaigning the Kansas and Nebraska feedlot sector for more Hereford-influenced cattle. Grouping baldie cattle together in loadlots has proven to add anywhere from \$20-50 per head to the feeder cattle price.

If you have questions or comments regarding answers to this pop quiz, the AHA staff would enjoy visiting with you. Please send an e-mail to one of the staff members listed below, and we will be glad to visit with you about these topics or more. If you are interested in making a spring Hereford bull purchase and need more information, drop us a line and we can get you in touch with the right people.

For questions e-mail:

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