



National Hereford Feedout Tests Hereford Efficiency

In 2010, 465 cattle were fed through the National Hereford Feedout. Divided into a winter test and a spring test, the National Hereford Feedout has been testing cattle for six years.

“The data from the 2010 feedout has been gathered and the results clearly show that the trend for Hereford cattle working in the feedyard and carcass phase is confirmed again. Over the years, Hereford breeders involved have improved the muscling, marbling, growth and yield of the Hereford cattle tested without negatively

affecting the most important trait of all, efficiency,” says Tom Granzow, test coordinator and Kansas Hereford Association (KHA) secretary.

In the winter test, 281 cattle were placed on feed in December 2009. The steers gained 3.87 lb. per day at a cost of gain at \$.59 lb. of gain total. Average feed intake was 5.26 lb. of feed per lb. of gain compared to a yard average of 5.69. This is a 9% advantage to Herefords in feed consumed and a 12% advantage in feed costs. Yet, the Hereford steers were even with the yard average on gain at

3.60 lb. per day. This is a \$42.38 feed savings per animal to the Hereford cattle tested. In the carcass phase, the Herefords had a yield of 65.14%, a Yield Grade of 2.97, hot carcass weight of 810 lb., a backfat measurement of .49 inches, and a marbling score of 5.0 (low Choice). The ribeye area averaged 13.35. The live weight on this group of steers averaged 1,243 lb.

The spring phase of the test began in February with 184 steers. The steers gained 3.87 lb. per day. On the rail, the steers had an average ribeye area of 13.62 inches, an average

backfat of .51 inches, an average marbling score of 5.1 (low Choice), and a hot carcass weight of 857 lb. All of this computed to an average Yield Grade of 3.14. The average live weight on this group was 1,327 lb.

The National Hereford Feedout allows producers from across the country to consign whiteface cattle. The KHA organizes the program in such a way that Hereford and Hereford-English-cross pens can be entered in the test with just a minimum of five head. The steers in the 2010 feedout represented a diverse cross section of Hereford genetics and were all handled the same. They were sorted by weight and body type, and after 75 days on feed, ultrasound data for backfat was collected.

The cattle were then marketed according to ultrasound data, with a desired backfat thickness of .4 inches. In this manner, the cattle were all subjected to the same environmental conditions and feed. At harvest they were individually weighed again, and final carcass information was gathered. The feed efficiency of each steer was calculated based on a Cornell University formula that breaks down pen statistics into individual feed efficiency figures by accounting for maintenance and growth requirements of different sized animals.

At the end of the trial, each participant gets a graph analysis of his or her cattle ranked in comparison to the others in cost of gain (COG), as well as other performance and carcass data measures. For producers who consign sire groups, this service provides for genetic selection and rapid herd progress.

For more information and to find out how you can participate in future tests, contact Granzow at 785-466-2247, 785-466-6790 or kansashereford@tctelco.net. **HW**