



The Value of Whole Herd TPR

In many of my articles the past few years, I have referenced the importance of the Whole Herd Total Performance Records (TPR™) program to the demand for Hereford genetics in the commercial market. In 2000 the American Hereford Association (AHA) Board of Directors adopted this performance program, which is fully endorsed by the Beef Improvement Federation (BIF).

The basic concept of beef cattle performance records is to measure genetic differences between animals for traits of economic importance. These traits include calving ease, growth, carcass, fertility, longevity and efficiency and even disposition.

We know that fertility is perhaps the most economically important trait to a cattleman, and we have been able to develop two new traits — heifer calving rate (HCR) and sustained cow fertility (SCF) — to help producers make genetic progress in these areas, and these traits were developed through the TPR information.

The AHA allows quite a lot of flexibility in its TPR program in order to accommodate both the most

sophisticated record keeper and those who prefer to record only the basics.

Truly, the only two traits that are ultimately required are reproductive status on the females on inventory and a weaning weight of calves. However, if you choose to collect information at various times of production, then we do require data to be submitted on the entire calf crop, or we will not allow the data to be used in the analysis. This approach is simply required to stay away from selective reporting.

The AHA updates expected progeny differences (EPDs) twice a year by combining old and new data submitted by breeders, and this updating is done in July and December of each year. The deadline for data submission is always June 1 and Nov. 1 to be included into the genetic evaluation.

If you are a TPR breeder, I think it is good to be reminded of what is necessary to stay a compliant breeder and what allows the EPDs on your cattle to stay available for you and your customers.

It is really pretty simple. If you register a calf while a compliant breeder, then the EPDs of that calf

can be found forever by doing an EPD inquiry on the AHA website. This record is important because it will allow commercial cattlemen to always have access to the most current and accurate information available.

On the flip side, if you register cattle while you are not a compliant breeder and market cattle to a non-TPR breeder like a commercial cattleman, then he may or may not have access to that information based on your compliancy.

For you to be a compliant breeder, we look two years back, to make sure your information is complete. For instance, to be a compliant breeder for spring 2012, your 2010 calf crop must be complete. Remember that the only traits that have to be complete are reproductive status of cows on inventory and weaning weights.

However, remember that if you have taken measurements at other stages of production, they must be completely reported. If you are not compliant, you do receive a “yellow sheet” that reminds you what information is missing in order for you to stay compliant. You can also track this on your own

through the “calf crop tracker” on your authorized user account.

In addition to the basics, it is important to really take a step forward and provide as much information on your cattle in order to continue to build on the power of the AHA genetic evaluation. Through the Gold TPR program, we give recognition to those breeders who really go a step forward and collect data at all levels of production and submit the data in a timely fashion. See Page 10 for a list of the Spring 2012 Gold TPR Breeders.

This is how EPDs command power and allow breeders and their customers to make decisions that will positively influence their herds for the future. EPDs are still the tools to use to make informed genetic decisions.

I was reminded recently that selection should be made on information and not adjectives. So, for the future, set some goals. Stay compliant and work toward Gold TPR status. **HW**

American Hereford Association National Reference Sire Program

Responsibilities of Test Herd:

- Select from nominated bulls
- Contact bull owner for semen shipping instructions
- Breed 55-60 cows at a random mating across genotypes
- Breed 30 cows to one reference sire that has been tested in previous years (at the cost of the test herd, semen and shipping at a commercial rate)
- Provide complete data on NRSP forms
- Breeding data: Cow ID, specific breed makeup (based on percent), age of cow at breeding time, date bred and sire used
- Birth data: Calf ID, date of birth, weight and calving ease score
- Weaning data: Calf ID, date weaned and weight
- Interim data: Calf ID, date, weight
- Carcass data: Calf ID, carcass weight, marbling score, fat thickness, ribeye area, internal fat and yield grade
- Test herd must provide at least 55% conception rate
- Test herd must retain ownership or partnership at 50% or greater on cattle until they have been harvested

Test Herd Cost:

- All costs will be covered by test herd
- Test herd will pay for the reference sire semen for the 30 cows, and shipping semen will be priced at a commercial rate, data collection will be paid by test herd on all cattle

Responsibilities of Bull Owner:

- Nominate bulls for test sire
- Nominate bulls to American Hereford Association (AHA) by March 1, 2012
- Furnish 60 straws of semen and pay shipping cost to test herds
- Pay fees as required

Bull Owner Cost:

- Semen and shipment of semen
- Pay the test herd fee per bull tested when semen is shipped — contact Jack for details.

Responsibilities of AHA:

- Receive data and report all data back to bull owner and to test herd

AHA Cost:

There will be no cost to the test herd or the bull owner for the data reporting done by the AHA

2012 National Reference Sire Feedlot and Carcass Testing Program

Sire Nomination Form

Ranch Name _____ Contact person _____

Address _____

Phone No. _____ E-mail: _____

Test Bull Information: Name and Registration No. _____

Name and Registration No. _____

*I acknowledge that any information or samples I provide to the AHA or _____ through AHA programs may be used by the AHA for any purpose. _____ Signature

Benefits of Test Sires:

1. Obtaining high accuracy carcass EPDs.
2. Obtaining performance data compared to other sires tested in herd contemporaries
3. Opportunity to market semen as a reference sire in the National Reference Sire Feedlot and Carcass Testing Program, after nominated and selected
4. Opportunity to test sires next to the top Hereford genetics in the breed

Send application by **March 1, 2012** to:
 American Hereford Association
 Jack Ward
 P.O. Box 014059 • Kansas City, MO 64101-0059
 816-842-3757 • jward@hereford.org