

# Record Sales and Excitement



Craig Huffhines

The average paid for a Hereford bull sold through a production sale was 21% higher in 2011 compared to 2010. In the first 45 days of the 2012 spring bull sale season, prices for commercial range bulls have increased another 29% (\$1,112 increase).

Early in the spring sale season, we have witnessed three sales that have grossed more than a million dollars. This unprecedented demand for Hereford seedstock has created a buzz across the industry. It is exciting to see the success around the country, and it makes me proud of all of the hard work that you breeders have put into your programs.

In addition to this wonderful sale environment, the National Western Stock Show, home of the National Hereford Show, kicked off the year with one of the largest number of entries on record. More than 740 head of cattle were exhibited in Denver this year, combining 410 head of open show cattle on the Hill with 200 head of pen and carload cattle in the Yards and 133 exhibited in the junior show.

Many of you may agree with me when I say that the

quality of the cattle in the Yards was some of the best we have seen. Furthermore, there were certainly genetics represented on the Hill that are going to push the envelope for breed improvement for years to come.

In the past I have compared the National Western to the U.S. Auto Show, where all the major automakers bring out their new line of trucks, cars and SUVs, showing off all of the new technology from hybrid fuel, high tech transmissions, and all of the bells, whistles, and modern conveniences that a bustling tech world can offer.

Denver is our U.S. Auto Show and hundreds of people stopped to take a look or maybe a test drive or perhaps even decided to switch brands. The Hereford breed has done what GM, Ford and Chrysler have worked hard to do the last 10 years — we have retooled.

Not only have we retooled our product, but the Hereford breed has repositioned itself, boosted its image and proven in head-to-head trials the value the breed can deliver the commercial cow-calf sector. That excitement and buzz is

translating to new customers and new relationships.

I would like to thank David McMahon, owner of Belle Point Ranch, Ft. Smith, Ark., for his wonderful support of the Hereford Youth Foundation of America (HYFA) during the Mile High Night Sale in Denver. He purchased the Lot 1 Foundation Embryo Package for \$20,000 and then donated the embryos back to HYFA to resell to other potential contributors in the future.

We certainly appreciate his support and what it means to our young people. I had a very good conversation with Mr. McMahon the evening after the sale, and he made it clear to me that the development and support of young people in our breed is critical to the long-term viability of the Hereford seedstock industry. Furthermore, he said that we need to encourage more Hereford breeders to support the work of HYFA for this purpose.

Mr. McMahon, I agree with you totally. Again, thank you so much for your support and leadership in this effort. **HW**