



# National Hereford Feedout Proves Hereford Efficiency, Carcass Merit

In the winter of 2010-11, 312 cattle were fed at Fairleigh Feeders, Scott City, Kan., through the National Hereford Feedout. This was the seventh year for the National Hereford Feedout, which allows producers from across the country to test Hereford or Hereford-cross steers and heifers.

The first 100 head of cattle began the test in December 2010. Bookcliff Herefords, Russell, Kan.; KEG Herefords, Valentine, Neb.; Linton Polled Herefords, Miller, Neb.; and MM Ranch Polled Herefords, Chanute, Kan., consigned cattle for the feedout.

The steers in this trial had an average daily gain (ADG) of 3.58 lb. per day. In the feed efficiency and cost of gain department, these steers had a feed efficiency of 5.10 lb. of feed per lb. of gain on a dry matter basis. The yard average was 5.73, giving the Hereford cattle a 12% advantage at the feedbunk.

In the cost of gain, the test cattle fed for \$.86 per lb. of gain while the yard average was \$.9657. This difference represents a cost savings of 12% again for the Herefords. The cost of gain in this trial and in the yard average does contain all costs, including feed, yardage, medicine and processing costs. This information is important to note, as it shows that the Hereford cattle cost less at the bunk and also in the overall costs, such as the cost that goes with treating sick cattle.

On the rail, this set of cattle really proved their worth. They had an average ribeye area of 13.21, an average marbling score of 5.10 (Choice), a hot carcass weight of 817 lb., an average backfat score of .52 inches and an average dressing percent of 63%. These factors made them have an average Yield Grade of 3.02. Their average live weight was 1,289 lb.

Test coordinator and Kansas Hereford Association (KHA) Secretary Tom Granzow says, "Overall, many positive things can be said about this trial, but one thing comes to mind immediately. Because of severe weather and blizzard conditions in December, when these cattle were started, the days on feed were somewhat higher

than in years past. This could explain the advantage to the yard average in gain. It is important to note that the Hereford cattle had an average carcass Yield Grade of 3.02. With all those days on feed and the efficiency of the gain, in today's market the Herefords showed the muscle and carcass merit to pay their way in an elongated feeding regimen. We have made tremendous progress in the muscle and carcass quality areas, without sacrificing our efficiency at the bunk and in the cost of gain. This equates to more flexibility in the marketing of the Hereford and Hereford-sired cattle."

In February 2011, 177 steers and 35 heifers were placed on feed, representing Rausch Herefords, Hoven, S.D.; Carver Polled Herefords, Winfield, Kan.; Harmony Herefords, Quinter, Kan.; Steve Douthit's 4V Herefords, St. Francis, Kan.; Shumaker Polled Herefords, Wetmore, Kan.; Krieg Herefords, Basco, Ill.; and Simon Polled Herefords, Seneca, S.D.

The steers in this group had an average gain of 3.81 lb. The yard average during the same time frame was 3.67, a 7% advantage to the Herefords. The average days on feed for the Herefords was 149, and the yard average was 142.

When it came to feed efficiency, the cost of gain for the Hereford cattle was \$.88 per lb. of gain. The yard average was \$1.04. This difference gave the Hereford and Hereford-sired cattle an 18% advantage over the yard average.

In the actual dry feed consumed by this group of steers and how it compared to the yard averages, the test cattle converted at a 5.03 lb. of feed per lb. of gain, while the yard average for steers during this same time frame was 5.91. This difference equates to a feed savings of 17%.

On the rail this set of steers did well. They had an average ribeye area of 13.55 inches, an average marbling score of 4.8 (high Select), a hot carcass weight of 821 lb., an average backfat score of .44 inches and an average dressing percent of 63%. The average Yield Grade was 2.84, excellent by industry standards. Their average live weight was 1,303 lb.

The Hereford heifers also did well. In respect to gain, they had an average 3.19 lb. The yard average was 3.29 lb.

The heifers fed efficiently, too. Their average cost of gain was \$.98 per lb. of gain while the yard averaged \$1.08, a 10% advantage to the Herefords. They converted at a 5.58 lb. of feed per lb. of gain. The yard average was 6.15 lb. of feed per lb. of gain.

As for the carcass data, the females had an average ribeye area of 12.10 inches, an average marbling score of 5.7 (Choice), a hot carcass weight of 756 lb., an average backfat measurement of .56 inches and an average dressing percent of 64%. The average Yield Grade was 2.96. Their average live weight was 1,185 lb.

Granzow says, "In summary, thank you to all of the participating breeders. These breeders brought a set of cattle that represented the whole Hereford breed very well. They showed that horned or polled, male or female, large groups or small, we can and do compete very well in the modern beef industry. A 10% to 17% advantage in feeding costs is very significant in any market, especially when you can have high-quality carcass and gain results as well. These steers and heifers were not handpicked and represented diverse genetics and management techniques from many different environments. This kind of a study does much to show the industry and prospective commercial customers that all of the old myths about Hereford cattle are being dispelled by progressive Hereford breeders."

The National Hereford Feedout allows producers from across the country to consign. 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, 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](mailto:kansashereford@tctelco.net). **HW**