

# 2014 Demand Dynamics



Craig Huffhines

A recent exclusive *BEEF Magazine* readership survey reported a 39% increase in the use of Hereford genetics across the commercial cow-calf industry in the last three years. The obvious effect on the breed has been the massive capital investment felt across the country in private-treaty sales and record prices paid for Hereford range bulls and commercial females at public auction.

It's been an exciting chapter in the rebirth of the Hereford breed in America, and it's important to note that all of this revived interest is based on commercial fundamentals. In other words, Hereford breeders have listened to the signals of the marketplace and bred cattle that will provide value to the commercial cattle industry.

When the industry said the Hereford breed needed to moderate birth weight, breeders answered. When the industry said the Hereford breed needed more muscling and cutability, breeders answered. When the industry said the Hereford breed could clean up some convenience traits, breeders dialed in, fine-tuned and made better cattle.

Sticking to fundamentals is and will always be important to maintaining relevance in the beef industry. Hereford seedstock fundamentals start with breeders participating in the American Hereford Association (AHA) Total Performance Records (TPR) program and measuring what's important to the commercial industry. The registration certificate of Hereford seedstock, with all of its information including

pedigree and parentage, expected progeny differences (EPDs), and genomic-enhanced EPDs (GE-EPDs) derived from AHA's research based TPR program, combined with a breeder's high integrity reputation, is what provides assurance that what our commercial clientele is buying is as close to what is being represented as possible. Predictability of product along with a commercial focus is what's drawing the rewards from the cow-calf industry.

## Hereford demand dominates Denver

The National Hereford Show and Mile High Night Sale in Denver in January truly became a celebration of sorts in support of the recent success of the Hereford breed. I am always amazed at the expense and work that goes into bringing a string of cattle to Denver.

Under brutal cold and sometimes inhospitable conditions, Hereford breeders from all across the country travel for days and spend countless hours in the elements preparing their cattle in order to size up their improvements. My hat's off to all of the breeders and their crews who endured the elements with pride. Your work is being recognized across the country with admiration.

The Mile High Night Sale attracted a record crowd in attendance to witness a historic event. Grossing more than \$1.1 million was a remarkable feat for the breed. The capital investment in elite Hereford genetics

has been extraordinary, and this year's national sale is certainly one to put into the record books.

Congratulations to the sales staff for putting on an amazing event. In particular, many thanks go to Eddie and Ruth Sims for the 12 years of service they provided in managing the AHA's Mile High Night Sale. Mr. Sims' final chant from the Mile High block will be one that's tough to top.

For Hereford highlights in Denver, see Page 47.

## Join us for Directions Summit

The AHA Board extends an invitation to all AHA members to the 2014 American Hereford Directions Summit in Springfield, Mo., Sept. 4-5.

The Directions Summit should provide a thought-provoking and challenging forum on the future trends and opportunities within the U.S. beef cattle industry and how the Hereford breed can position itself for future demand.

While the industry teeter-totter on expansion, confronting escalating input costs and facing global competition, we will make an attempt to understand what it is we can do from a selection standpoint that will help our commercial brethren remain competitive. Watch for more schedule and registration information in future *Hereford World* issues and in *eNews*.

Until then, here's wishing you all a successful sales season and the best of luck calving those 2014 babies. **HW**