

# Work Smarter, Not Harder



Julie White

More than 8,000 cattlemen and cattlemen recently met at the 2015 Cattle Industry Convention and Trade Show in San Antonio, Texas. Since attending for the first time in 2012, this convention has quickly hit the top of my list of professional events I look forward to each year.

Leading off with Cattlemen's College, we heard from industry experts on a range of producer education subjects from management and cutting-edge technologies for the cow-calf producer to learning the latest in consumer research and what drives consumers' purchasing decisions.

The CattleFax Outlook session has long been a highlight, and the industry has reason to remain optimistic as it's predicted for prices to remain strong in 2015. The trade show is top-notch, and Hereford once again had a strong representation there.

One statement, or theme really, struck me this year, and it wasn't from a cattleman or industry member. It was from keynote speaker Erik Wahl, an internationally-recognized graffiti artist who created these amazing paintings onstage within a matter of minutes and used them to share a message of creativity.

"Work smarter, not harder," he said, encouraging cattlemen to

employ creative problem solving and to think outside the box.

He led off his talk by polling the audience asking "Who can draw?" No hands were raised, mine included. Wahl explained if he asked a group of high school students, he would get a little better response and if he posed the same question to young children they would be jumping out of their chairs saying "I can!"

His point being, in general, we grow adverse to risk as we grow older and become less likely to get out of our comfort zones and beyond our current skills and knowledge.

March is a busy and important time for Hereford breeders. Calves are hitting the ground, the weather seemingly teases us with promises of warmer temps, new herd bulls are being purchased and breeding decisions are beginning to be made. Wahl's message is as appropriate as ever at this time of year and in this point of history for the industry — consider new ideas and creative ideas.

There is great opportunity to make genetic improvement in your herds, and with technology available to Hereford breeders, this can happen quicker and with more confidence than in the past. Now is a favorable time to consider how you are going to market your calves and

what management practices you can utilize to increase your profits and meet the demand of your customers.

Mark Hilton, DVM, Purdue Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences said in a Cattlemen's College session on developing a healthier, more profitable calf to "Look to the future and adopt technology they will pay you for."

In this issue you will find a special section on the 2015 National Western Stock Show (NWSS). Herefords "Took Denver by Storm," breaking records and making their mark on NWSS history. Summer will be here before we know it, and juniors can begin to make plans for the Junior National Hereford Expo June 27-July 3 in Grand Island, Neb.

We recognize the Nash-Deewall family for celebrating 100 years in the Hereford business, and we travel to Kentucky to learn how one family incorporates Hereford cattle into their Thoroughbred farm. Turn the page, and you will find Craig Huffhines' final note to American Hereford Association membership as executive vice president. As he pursues a new opportunity, his leadership in the organization will be missed.

I hope spring 2015 finds you pursuing creative ways to grow and refine your Hereford business. **HW**