

# Continuing to Meet the Challenge

In this issue we recognize the Dams of Distinction (DOD) and Sires of Distinction (SOD) (See Pages 24 and 28). The DODs are cows that meet the highest standard of production by calving at 2, maintaining a proper calving interval and having a strong nursing ratio.



Jack Ward

We must always remember why the good Lord put Hereford cattle on earth. They are here as a maternal breed that are known to withstand different environments and produce a good, healthy calf at the end of each season while being pregnant. Congratulations to the producers who have bred and or owned these prestigious cows.

While it is very important to recognize the females each year, it may be even more important to recognize the sires of the DODs. With this in mind, the American Hereford Association (AHA) Board voted in 2007 to begin to recognize SODs. A sire qualifies as a SOD when he has produced daughters that have been recognized seven times as DODs. When selecting potential sires to use in an artificial insemination (AI) program, you can find the SODs on the Web by using the "Select if" section of the expected progeny difference (EPD) search. Again, congratulations to the breeders and owners of these prestigious sires.

As spring starts, I have a few reminders and requests to share with members:

1) Remember to collect udder scores on all females at calving time.

You can remind yourself about how to properly collect these scores by visiting the "Education Center" at [Hereford.org](http://Hereford.org).

- 2) If you would like to market semen on a bull, please consider the non-certificate AI program. This program allows you to market semen without the hassles of AI certificates. In other words, sell the semen, and when breeders go to register the calves from these sires, they will not need to bother you to purchase an AI certificate. Calves sired by non-certificate bulls can be registered; you just do not need to have an AI certificate to do so. Note: to participate in the programs, bulls still need to be AI permitted.
- 3) If you have a young sire that you would like to get early proof on, nominate him for the young sire test program. To do so call 816-842-3757 or e-mail [jward@hereford.org](mailto:jward@hereford.org).
- 4) Please make plans to attend this year's Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) convention that will be in Columbia, Mo., June 28-July 1. Registration information and schedules will be available on [Hereford.org](http://Hereford.org) when they become available.
- 5) I would like to begin to collect DNA on some of the cosmetic issues that still limit the use of Hereford genetics by some commercial producers. My request is for you

to collect blood into a purple-topped tube on any animals that you have with cancer eye, prolapse or any other problem. We would like to work to find DNA markers that may help select against these problems. In addition to the blood, we would like a picture of the affected animal. A close up of the eye or whatever the problem. Send the blood and photo to me at the AHA office or directly to Jon Beever at the University of Illinois (contact the AHA office for shipping instructions).

The final reports on heifer calving rate (HCR) and cow fertility are in the final stages and will be released online and in a future *Hereford World* issue. Remember that these two traits will be sire model traits that will help with selection for both fertility and stayability.

Finally, I would challenge each of you to collect and submit performance data and utilize that data in selection and culling decisions. Commercial producers around the country continue to choose Hereford genetics. With this increased demand comes tremendous responsibility. Every Hereford breeder needs to be stringent with data collection and culling practices. You have worked hard to gain the trust of commercial cattlemen, and now the challenge is to produce the product that they need to stay profitable. Keep up the good work. **HW**