

Evaluating the Top 20 Hereford Sires by Registration



Jack Ward

Since I joined the American Hereford Association (AHA) staff, I take time annually to review the breed's genetic change and the list of sires by registration numbers. The 2009 top 20 sire list by registration is really interesting to look through. Here are some facts about those top 20 bulls:

- 1) Six of the top seven bulls are leased by an artificial insemination (AI) company, and the average price per straw of semen on those six bulls is \$19.
- 2) Ten of the bulls were part of the National Reference Sire Program (NRSP).
- 3) The average of the expected progeny differences (EPDs) would put this set of bulls in at least the top 25% of the breed, and each has a profit index value in the top 20%. Specifically, this set of bulls would be in the top 25% of the breed for calving-ease direct, top 15% for scrotal, top 20% for ribeye area and top 10% for marbling.
- 4) The average number of progeny registered to these bulls is nearly 170 head. Remember that a calf crop is usually not complete for about two years.
- 5) All of these bulls have been advertised in at least one *Hereford World AI Book*, and in all but one case, they have been advertised multiple times.
- 6) The average age of these top 20 bulls is six-and-a-half years.

These are certainly interesting facts, and they show that AHA members have taken on the challenge of moving this breed in the right direction by implementing a sound breeding program. Most importantly, the bulls on this list are good bulls with proven pedigrees that have EPDs on the right side of breed average and can have a long-term positive effect on the breed.

Just as important, this list proves that getting a sire used within the breed is a process. The process starts by using the right genetics that are demanded by breeders.

Second, the bull must have some proof, and the method of choice is to get a bull proven in the AHA NRSP. After all this is complete, the bull must be recognized and this recognition can be

accomplished with a good advertising program. In addition, breeders will use bulls with moderately priced semen.

Research foundation

Last fall the AHA Board of Directors, along with the Hereford Youth Foundation of America (HYFA) board, formed a research foundation committee that is intended to raise funds to help support special research projects.

As Hereford demand continues to increase we will continue to be challenged to produce a product that is useful to the commercial industry. With this in mind, special projects will be designed to quantify the value of Hereford genetics in the beef industry.

The groundwork has been laid to begin to collect as many phenotypes on traits of economic relevance, and the extra funds will be used to work in these areas of research to incorporate them into our strong genetic analysis.

There will be some special fund-raisers in the near future for the foundation. If you have ideas for research projects or fund-raising projects, call me at 816-842-3757 or e-mail jward@hereford.org and share your ideas. **HW**

BIF convention planned

The 2010 Beef Improvement Federation's (BIF) annual conference will be June 28-July 1 at the Holiday Inn Select Executive Conference Center in Columbia, Mo. Visit the BIF Web site, www.BIF2010.com, to find registration and schedule information.

Attending the BIF conference is a great way to stay current on what is happening in the areas of research in the beef industry. **HW**

