

The screenshot shows the BuyHereford.com website interface. At the top, there are navigation tabs for 'AUCTIONS', 'REGISTER', 'TIPS', 'ENTRY FORMS', and 'CONTACTS'. Below the navigation is a search bar and a 'BuyHereford.com May Online Sale \$25 - \$2710' banner. The main content area displays a list of cattle for sale, including 'Lot # 1' (a bull) and 'Lot # 2' (a semen sample). Each listing includes a photo, a 'Photo (C/P)' link, a 'Description' column, and a 'Price' column. The descriptions provide detailed information about the animals, including their lineage, registration numbers, and contact details for the consignor.

# Matching Buyers and Sellers

**BuyHereford.com is a marketing tool for producers, regardless of size, looking to buy or sell Hereford genetics.**

by Angie Stump Denton

In November the American Hereford Association (AHA) launched *BuyHereford.com*, an online auction Web site that features regular consignment auctions.

This new marketing site gives Hereford breeders the power to reach potential customers worldwide. Designed to help producers with any herd size, this service provides a marketing option for those producers who do not host annual production sales but can also be a

complementary outlet for those who do host a production sale.

AHA members can consign females, bulls, steers, cow-calf pairs, donor dams, embryos, semen, picks of the herd or flush rights. Commercial female lots and groups of feeder calves can also be listed. Offerings are not just limited to Hereford genetics; consignments can also include equipment such as chutes, trailers, show tack and equipment, or feed.

"*BuyHereford.com* is an excellent way for livestock producers with smaller numbers that do not have production sales every year to merchandise their cattle to anyone in the world via the Internet," says Jeff Koch, Showtime Cattle Co., Greenfield, Ind.

Koch consigned heifers to the second sale in December. "Even if you do not sell what you have on *BuyHereford.com*, you are still getting nationwide attention that you would not have had before consigning," he says.

Koch's personal Web site experienced an increase in traffic, which he credits to his listing on *BuyHereford.com*.

Hereford producers can participate in the monthly *BuyHereford.com* consignment auctions, or producers can host their own private online auction. Jerry Huth of Huth Polled Herefords, Oakfield, Wis., utilized *BuyHereford.com* the week before his open house bull sale on May 22. Visitors to *BuyHereford.com* could view videos and information about the offering as well as place a bid online.

"It worked well in referencing people to certain bulls," Huth says. "I had a couple of people call and ask about the bulls, and I told them to look at the videos on *BuyHereford.com*. It did work as I did get a couple people buying bulls that watched the videos."

## The price is right

"If you are looking for exposure for your Hereford cattle at an economical price — this is an avenue worth considering," says Joe Rickabaugh, American Hereford Association (AHA) director of field management and seedstock marketing.

Since the inception last November, eight *BuyHereford.com* sales have been conducted. The *BuyHereford.com* site has had 125,145 hits since the first auction began, an average of 15,643 hits per sale. There have been 18,209 unique internet/computer

connections, an average of 2,276 per sale. The average number of page visits per person while on the site is 6.87.

In early June, *BuyHereford.com* had registered bidders from 34 states and Canada.

"*BuyHereford.com* is a tremendous opportunity for smaller breeders to market their Hereford genetics nationally — honestly, world-wide — at a very minimal cost," says John Meents, AHA northeast field representative. "It gives the small breeder an equal playing field."

To consign to the sale there is an initial nonrefundable, up-front fee of \$50 per pictured animal or product or \$75 for a videoed animal or product. Once the animal or product is sold, a 12% commission will be deducted from the sale price for registered cattle and 6% for commercial cattle.

### The service

The idea for *BuyHereford.com* is not new to the livestock industry. A similar online auction system has been very successful in the pig industry.

Kevin Wendt, a bonded professional auctioneer and owner of The Wendt Group, started [www.showpig.com](http://www.showpig.com). "After the first year, it doubled the volume of animals sold," explains Meents. "The next year it doubled again. In fact it doubled in dollars every year the

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— Jeff Koch

first five years. I think *BuyHereford.com* could very possibly take the same growth curve."

To start *BuyHereford.com*, AHA has contracted with the The Wendt Group. This organization has a team of customer service people led by representative Tyler Humphrey, who works with breeders to post their listings on the site. Breeders can also contact their AHA field representative to help them with the process. See "The process: consigning" and "The process: bidding online" for tips on how to consign or bid online.

### Upcoming sales

Meents says, "This summer and early fall we are going to have some special sales like a show steer sale in August and a show heifer sale in September. The goal of these sales is to target the market for show prospects."

In July there will be a special *BuyHereford.com* sale to raise funds for the Hereford Research Foundation, a division of the Hereford Youth Foundation of America, to support research and breed improvement efforts (see Pages 170-171).

If you are interested in consigning or obtaining more information about *BuyHereford.com*, contact your AHA field representative; Joe Rickabaugh at 816-218-2280 or Tyler Humphrey of The Wendt Group at 419-230-3450.

"To date, not every *BuyHereford.com* story has been a success," Meents says. "We are still improving and growing the program. I truly believe that someday it will be a major marketing tool in the Hereford breed." **HW**

## The process: consigning

- Go to *BuyHereford.com* and click on the "Entry Forms" tab to find the consignment agreement. Read this page and follow instructions.
- Then, at *BuyHereford.com/EntryFormList.html*, you can choose an entry form to submit.
- An initial nonrefundable, up-front fee of \$50 per pictured animal or product or \$75 for a videoed animal or product will be charged to consign. Once the animal or product is sold, a 12% commission will be deducted from the sale price for registered cattle and 6% for commercial cattle.
- Consignors can post photos and video clips. See *BuyHereford.com* for format guidelines. One week before each auction, an online catalog of consignments will be available.

Note: all pedigree information, photos and entry fees may be submitted online. For more information, visit [BuyHereford.com/FAQ.html](http://BuyHereford.com/FAQ.html) or [BuyHereford.com/contacts.html](http://BuyHereford.com/contacts.html). **HW**

## The process: bidding online

Every buyer must sign up on the site and be prequalified to be an approved buyer at the auction. The Wendt Group is responsible for collection of the proceeds for each purchase before delivery and will guarantee consignor payment within 30 days of the auction. To sign up as a bidder:

- Go to *BuyHereford.com* and click on "Register" at the top of the page.
- Read the "Online Auction Terms and Conditions/User Agreement."
- If you accept the agreement, you will then need to select "I Agree" and this will prompt you to fill out a bidder profile with your name, contact information and credit card information.
- After you submit a profile, the auction system will e-mail you a bidder number.
- You can use this bidder number and a password you selected when registering to bid on all *BuyHereford.com* online sales. **HW**