

Strategic Plan

2010-2015



Vision Statement

To be the preferred beef breed for producers and consumers.

Mission Statement

AHA will provide the leadership to record, protect, promote and facilitate the production and consumption of Hereford beef.

Strategic Intent Statement

The American Hereford Association will grow its herd book cow numbers by 1% a year, registrations 3-5% per year and its commercial bull market share to 22% by 2015. This will be achieved by delivering practical tools, trusted documentation, targeted education, innovative marketing and member services to progressive, profit-oriented seedstock producers, commercial cow-calf producers, feeders and packers who value increased efficiency, predictability and differentiation.

Core Strategies

- I. Improve the overall quality, consistency, predictability and profitability of Hereford genetics.
- II. Build strategic alliances.
- III. Continue to grow the Certified Hereford Beef (CHB[®]) program.
- IV. Increase investment in member and customer education and service.
- V. Increase focus of communicating the profitability advantage of Hereford genetics.
- VI. Grow non-traditional revenue.
- VII. Cultivate the growth and development of juniors and young breeders.

Core Strategy 1: Improve the overall quality, consistency, predictability and profitability of Hereford genetics.

Objective A: Increase the accuracy of breeding values in young cattle and manage functional defect rates by developing a plan for including genomic information into genetic evaluation.

Tactics

- Build test populations for discovery purposes.
- Develop DNA tests for measurable traits (birth weight and calving ease are priorities).
- Collect DNA for cosmetic/functional problems (prolapse, cancer eye).

Objective B: Grow research and National Reference Sire Program (NRSP).

Tactics

- Expand NRSP cow numbers by 50% to increase accuracy of young sires.
- Collect non-traditional traits (docility, feed intake, tenderness).
- Continue to collect economically relevant traits (ERTs).

Objective C: Evaluate the economic relevance of existing traits and develop new traits or indexes that will affect cow-calf, feedlot and packer profitability.

Tactics

- Educate membership about the value and proper methods of collecting accurate data at all levels of production.
- Develop applications/tools for user-friendly data collection and submission.

Objective D: Recognize members who are breeding cattle humanely and properly and integrate into Gold TPR program.

Tactics

- Get 20% of Hereford members to complete NCBA's Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) and/or Masters of Beef Advocacy (MBA) program.
- Establish a training and certification program for animal handling standards.
- Develop promotional opportunities that recognize Hereford breeders as progressive animal care operators and stewards of the land.
- Establish industry partners interested in sponsoring such a program.

Core Strategy 2: Build strategic alliances.

Objective A: Develop research alliances with genomic laboratory entities (including universities, companies or labs) to support breed improvement plan.

Tactics

- Develop genomic-enhanced expected progeny differences (EPDs) with revenue implications with the goal of keeping product affordable and thereby enhancing uptake of technology.
- Continue University of Illinois initiative.
- Explore corporate opportunities (Pfizer, Igenity).
- Participate in USDA research projects that will benefit the Hereford breed.
- Identify funding mechanisms (foundation, sponsorships).
- Develop partnerships with technology companies for data management.

Objective B: Develop corporate marketing alliances with feeders, marketing companies, end-users, influencers, processors to gain leverage in the market.

Tactics

- Effect the marketing of 1 million feeder cattle through branded alliances.
- Influence the market for 50,000 certified/specification replacement females annually.
- Investigate regional opportunities for marketing alliances (Texas/HEB supply chain alliance).
- Develop strategies for merchandising Hereford-influenced females with industry trade partners, possibly utilizing *BuyHereford.com*.
- Investigate other niche market opportunities to market Hereford-influenced cattle.

Objective C: Increase collaboration with multiple breeds and other species.

Tactics

- Explore national corporate funding/education opportunities.
- Research collaboration with other associations.
- Promote registry system service opportunities.
- Explore providing registry and data management services to international entities.
- Offer Creative Services opportunities to industry partners.
- Include all viable products in the production of documented information.

Objective D: Enhance electronic data management system.

Tactics

- Add 20,000 registry records from other associations/entities.
- Improve on-farm software systems and support that will influence the dataflow of more than 80% of cow inventory, registration and performance information.
- Launch ILR Online system developed by ABRI.
- Develop immediate on-farm software strategies for making data collection and submission more user-friendly.
- Develop new novel technologies that might enhance data collection and submission through phone applications.

Core Strategy 3: Continue to grow the Certified Hereford Beef (CHB®) program.

Objective A: Grow retail box beef program.

Tactics

- Generate 15 million lb. of new retail fresh beef sales.
- Grow 7 million lb. of ground beef sales from different chub/case-ready formats.
- Move 8 million lb. of box beef into retail stores, adding an additional 150 stores.
- Evaluate case-ready opportunities that will assist in marketing CHB fresh products into retail.

Objective B: Maintain 100% existing customer retention rate.

Tactics

- Implement retail relations strategy.
- Develop promotional plans to sustain interest in brand.
- Investigate retail advertising partner opportunities.
- Conduct business review meetings and store audits.

Objective C: Develop value-added revenue streams, generating \$500,000 in new revenue through product development.

Tactics

- Expand Nuestro Rancho seasoned, marinated line — \$300,000 annually.
- Continue to build food-service hot dog and hamburger program — \$100,000.
- Investigate other value-added concepts that will generate \$100,000 annually.

Objective D: Energize packer relations and marketing.

Tactics

- Involve National Beef Packing Co. LLC in marketing and point of sale (POS) plan.
- Involve packers in more sales opportunities.
- Investigate social media marketing strategies that might bring awareness to Hereford story.
- Participate in major industry trade shows.

Objective E: Develop and market a high-marbling Hereford beef program.

Tactics

- Generate demand for 1,000 head a week of upper $\frac{2}{3}$ Choice Hereford brand.
- Establish Hereford program with Greater Omaha Packing Co. Inc. utilizing middle meats from 500 head per week.
- Convince other packers to develop an upper $\frac{2}{3}$ Choice Hereford program.

Core Strategy 4: Increase investment in member and customer education and service.

Objective A: Educate members and non-members on strengths of the Hereford breed.

Tactics

- Produce educational videos — value of AHA fees, whole herd reporting, Circle A research, genetic defect management.
- Continue to enhance *eNews*; investigate opportunity to produce a “commercially focused” e-newsletter.
- Maintain and expand Web site. Develop online packet of information (new members).
- Investigate social media strategies for broadcasting the Hereford message.
- Expand *The Whiteface* — make available at tradeshow and meetings.
- Create templates for newsletters and advertisements for breeders.
- Utilize field service as extension/education arm.

Objective B: Transform Annual Membership Meeting into an educational convention that attracts more members.

Tactics

- Establish convention break-out sessions and training opportunities.
- Bring in top speakers in specific fields of interest.
- Bring in Cattle-Fax to discuss economics of business.
- Establish ongoing Board training program.

Objective C: Improve the skills and competencies of Hereford leaders (directors, youth, women).

Tactics

- Have leaders complete MBA program.
- Develop online Hereford education course covering:
 - ◆ Registrations/transfers
 - ◆ Breed advantages
 - ◆ Heterosis
 - ◆ History
- Implement Hereford Extension strategy — beef 101 issues.

Objective D: Promote present services to improve members' awareness of available services.

Tactics

- Investigate and improve Google/Yahoo ranking of *Hereford.org*.
- Develop strategies to drive Web site traffic.
- Customize breeder communication strategy (field service, university partners, updates, regional).
- Produce a low-cost promotional packet/video brochure to utilize for new members and member recruitment.
- Develop an electronic communication strategy for new and old members.
- Train field service to give presentations to member groups.

Objective E: Create a member herd marketing profile for maximum market exposure.

Tactics

- Develop profile template for breeders that describes their operation and product to help expose their cattle to a much larger audience.
- Develop marketing standards that will qualify the herd and breeding program (i.e. BQA, MBA, humane handling, TPR).
- Identify exposure methods for breeders to link to commercial industry.
- Evaluate a commercial transfer volume rate or credit rebate.

Objective F: Establish a coordinated member service promotional program through Hereford Publications Inc. (HPI).

Tactics

- Refocus HPI sales strategy to involve an annual promotional plan contract for breeders.
- Identify all products and services of value to membership and train all personnel regarding those products and services and how they are to be sold.
- Bundle products, services and pricing under an annual promotion strategy contract.

Objective G: Evaluate efficiencies and customer service improvements in all companies.

Tactics

- Implement an easy credit card payment system.
- Reduce labor and increase user-friendly billing and communication of junior dues and Junior National Hereford Expo fees.
- Offer *Hereford World* subscription payment option online.

Objective H: Develop a transfer ownership program.

Tactics

- Identify sales management software that will allow for easy transfer information exchange with AHA headquarters.

Core Strategy 5: Increase focus of communicating the profitability advantage of Hereford genetics.

Objective A: Increase our focus on communicating the profitability advantage of Hereford genetics.

Tactics

- Benchmark and report marketshare and commercial industry perception.
- Increase online marketing (banner ads and e-blasts).
- Develop a social media strategy (Facebook and Twitter).
- Research the opportunity to advertise on RFD-TV.
- Create promotional videos to load on YouTube.

Objective B: Engage and equip state and regional associations to spread the Hereford message.

Tactics

- Investigate opportunities to cost-share advertising.
- Offer national ad campaign customization option to states.
- Develop custom ranch signs.

Objective C: Explore new avenues and continue practices to promote Hereford genetics.

Tactics

- Develop billboards.
- Create more news releases.
- Network with ag media to tell our story (media events).
- Trademark “baldie” name.

Core Strategy 6: Grow non-traditional revenue.

Objective A: Develop electronic marketing opportunities that can generate \$250,000 over five years.

Tactics

- Expand Web site development options.
- Offer logo ads on the pedigree/EPD search pages.
- Consider the cost of charging for links.
- Market banner ads to corporate customers.
- Offer Creative Services to ABRA customers.

Objective B: Research developing a crossbreed registry program.

Tactics

- Do a cost-benefit analysis for crossbreed registry.
- Revisit alternate breed inventory system.

Objective C: Research and develop programs to streamline data flow to AHA and from herd management software.

Tactics

- Evaluate systems that will sync with ILR2 system.
- Develop applications for data collection and submission.
- Research non-traditional electronic applications.

Objective D: Grow *BuyHereford.com* sales.

Tactics

- Increase gross sales 50% per year during the next five years.
- Develop marketing campaign for *BuyHereford.com*.
- Target privately branded breeder sales, adding five per year.
- Integrate into breeder national advertising contract.
- Develop special sales (female, semen, embryos, etc.).

Core Strategy 7: Cultivate the growth and development of juniors and young breeders.

Objective A: Implement membership growth strategy.

Tactics

- Increase NJHA membership 20% by 2015.
- Re-brand the NJHA with a fresh look and strategy.
- Use social media to recruit new members.
- Develop a recruitment incentive program.
- Create online membership recruitment and payment option.
- Develop strategy for communicating with and recruiting ag instructors as Hereford breed supporters.
- Produce educational videos targeting youth and communicating the value of the organization.

Objective B: Implement issues management, leadership training and industry networking training programs.

Tactics

- Incorporate alumni into educational and leadership programs.
- Create young breeder Masters of Beef Advocacy Academy.
- Continue to expand online “Educational Center.”
- Incorporate more beef industry issues into PRIDE Convention.
- Conduct media training for junior board and Hereford youth.

Objective C: Cultivate alliances with other junior organizations.

Tactics

- Create synergistic efficiencies, attract new members and corporate support for youth-related activities that will assure the funding of dynamic educational and networking experiences.
- Bring multiple breeds together to host junior national expos in one location, possibly for multiple-year contracts.
- Co-host national and regional leadership conferences with other breeds or species groups.
- Align with NCBA to train our national youth leaders.
- Consolidate efforts to have a beef seedstock presence at National FFA Convention.

Objective D: Grow HYFA funds to \$5 million to advance educational and scholarship opportunities.

Tactics

- Plan face-to-face meetings to discuss HYFA mission, NJHA strengths and gift strategies with prospective donors.
- Forge corporate partners to support leadership and development.
- Utilize RFD-TV and other media to promote NJHA efforts.
- Identify grant writers and/or contract fundraisers.
- Develop ongoing online financial support campaign through Internet or social media strategies.

Objective E: Assure Junior National Hereford Expo long-term sustainability. Create self-funding mechanism to assure JNHE remains one of the premier livestock junior events in the world.

Tactics

- Brand the JNHE as the world-class event for Hereford youth.
- Seek corporate funding through alliances with other breeds.
- Increase HYFA support through gifts, contributions or earmarks.
- Develop a strategy for funding the show program.