

BOARD ACTION

The American Hereford Association (AHA) Board of Directors met Aug. 6 in Chico, Calif., for the summer board planning and budget meeting. The following are highlights of the meeting:

The Board reviewed components of the strategic plan and various initiatives that are in continued progress and formulated a budget for fiscal 2015. The Board acknowledged that in the last three years the Association returned profits to financial reserves of just under \$500,000 and will likely report another profit of \$100,000 in fiscal year 2014.

The Board then approved a deficit budget for the upcoming 2015 fiscal year of -\$115,000 after depreciation, and they advanced expenses in DNA technology, continued breed and commercial industry research, enhanced industry communication, and Certified Hereford Beef (CHB) sale and marketing support.

The AHA is projected to generate \$6.4 million of revenue next year from its parent company and subsidiaries and will work to utilize those funds to advance the breed through member service, promotion and advertising, research, commercial marketing and advertising, and youth development efforts.

Progress of DNA laboratory

The Board reviewed efforts by staff to work with GeneSeek Inc. to improve efficiency of turnaround time so that GeneSeek might meet its promise of 10-day turnaround. Staff is still working toward resolving programmatic issues that will allow for more rapid interpretation and reporting of DNA test results.

GeneSeek has made progress by moving into a larger space, establishing more capacity and moving toward better systems for streamlined testing. It was reported that in July, GeneSeek completed 92,000 DNA tests, all within a 10-day turnaround, which exceeded the volume of samples during peak season in December 2013. This situation is showing progress.

Important Board recommendation

All breeders hosting sales in early 2015 who wish to test for genomic-enhanced expected progeny differences (GE-EPDs) should not wait on the new LD (low density) panel but instead should start the process in September.

Even though the lab is making progress, it may experience an even larger spike of test requests this fall/winter. Waiting later may risk running into the same backlog experienced last December and January.

Launch of new LD panel delayed

Due to the time it has taken to train and properly validate the new and upcoming LD panel and to correlate it to the current HD (high density) panel, the AHA will delay its launch by at least 30 days. This delay is another reason to not wait until the last minute to genotype calf crops. Waiting until mid to late October could create risk of backlog ahead of sale season, which may not be worth the cost advantage.

Working to commercialize new traits

Sustained cow fertility, heifer calving rate and udder score EPDs are all being bid for commercial evaluation. It is hoped that they will be commercialized and released by the first quarter of 2015.



MyHerd progress, new features

MyHerd has expanded and reached more than 824 users, which links 1,455 member accounts to the online registry and performance recording system.

The initial response from breeders has been good. New features of the MyHerd system forthcoming this fall will be the option to go paperless and to store registration papers electronically along with an Excel spreadsheet tool that will allow breeders to work offline and yet will be compatible to MyHerd for data submission.

Marketing committee recommendations approved

More than a \$200,000 investment in print media and electronic advertising was approved. AHA will continue its current advertising campaign through the fall while a new campaign is under development. The committee approved funding for commercial marketing efforts among video marketing venues targeting the commercial sector.

Hall of Fame, Hall of Merit inductees selected

Roger Stuber, Bowman, N.D., was unanimously selected to the Hereford Hall of Fame, and John Ascuaga, Sparks, Nev., was unanimously elected into the Hereford Hall of Merit.

Both, Stuber and Ascuaga, will be recognized at the 2014 AHA Annual Meeting in Kansas City Nov. 1. **BW**