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# HEREFORD WORLD

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The High Plains Hereford Tour included visits to four Hereford seedstock ranches: Monahan Cattle Co., Jamison Hereford and Quarter Horses, Sandhill Farms, and Van Newkirk Herefords. At each stop participants had a chance to see some of the top Hereford genetics in the country.

## More Than a Cattle Tour: 1,600 Miles of Education

*High Plains Hereford Tour includes stops at seedstock and commercial ranches, feedlots, and packing plants plus hours of discussion and knowledge sharing.*

by *Angie Stump Denton*

"An eye-opening experience" summarizes most tour participants' comments about the High Plains Hereford tour. The group included 45 seedstock and commercial producers and farmer feeders from 16 states.

The tour started in Rapid City, S.D., Sept. 10 and traveled through Nebraska and Kansas returning to Rapid City Sept. 13. Stops included seedstock and commercial ranches, three feedlots, and the opportunity to tour a packing plant.

"Leadership in action," is how Darrell Ailshie, Tennessee Livestock Producers general manager, Columbia, Tenn., described the tour, saying participants are excited about their breed and are being proactive.

The event was more than a cattle tour; participant John Woolfolk, Columbia, Tenn., calls it a rolling seminar. Between tour stops, producers had the chance to discuss different topics ranging from \$Profit Indexes to Hereford Verified to DNA testing.

Greg Shaw, Caldwell, Idaho, says what he enjoyed most about the tour was how all facets of the industry were represented. "It was a captive audience and there was great dialog," he says. "With all the discussion on the bus, it makes you realize how difficult it is for the Board — how many pieces to the puzzle there really is before they make a decision."

Greg's wife, Cleo, adds, "It was neat how participants shared their ideas and then just agreed to disagree."

A highlight was the opportunity to tour a packing plant. One group toured National Beef Packing Co. LLC while the other toured Cargill Meat Solutions "Excel." More than two



The finale was a stop at Olsen Ranches, which has been testing Hereford bulls through the National Reference Sire Program since 1999. "Visiting Olsen's was like being in the heart of Hereford genetics," says Glenn Kopp, Peterborough, N.H. "It was amazing to see all those genetics side-by-side."

thirds of the group had not been in a large packing plant during the last 20 years.

Kansas Hereford breeder Glenn Olen says, "Seeing a packing plant firsthand you really realize how elaborate the process really is." He also says the tour showed the differences and similarities of various feeding operations, packing facilities and producers. The three feedlots had different management and marketing objectives. Decatur County Feedyard Inc. specializes in individual cattle management and retained ownership. "There's no more average management and no more average marketing," says Warren Weibert, Decatur County Feedyard owner and general manager.

Later, on Tuesday, the group visited Ford County Feedyard Inc. The yard had 32 pens of cattle enrolled in the Hereford Verified program. Ford County markets to specific brand niches and commodity cash.

Wednesday the group visited Royal Beef Feedyard, which is one of Irsik & Doll's feedlots. Royal Beef is a 95% investor or customer-based feeding operation that markets cattle on grids and commodity cash.

Jim Williams, Certified Hereford Beef LLC vice president of supply and tour co-chairman, says, "It was the most intriguing tour I've ever been on. It was not the places we went or the people we met. It was the group we were with. They were hungry for knowledge. They made the tour a success."

See Pages 20-21 for more highlights of the tour.

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On Monday the first stop on the tour was at Monahan Cattle Co., Hyannis, Neb. On display were herd bulls, cow-calf pairs and replacement heifers.



Tuesday morning Decatur County Feedyard Inc. hosted breakfast in Oberlin, Kan., and then the tour group traveled to the feedlot. At the lot Decatur staff demonstrated Micro Beef Technologies' AccuTrac system. The system sorts cattle based on a wide range of physical and economic measures.



The second stop on Tuesday was Jamison Herefords and Quarter Horses near Quinter, Kan. Three generations of Jamisons manage and work on the ranch. On display were herd bulls, replacement heifers, cow-calf pairs and quarter horses.



At Ford County Feedyard Inc., Ford, Kan., participants were able to see 32 pens of Hereford Verified cattle. Since 2004 Ford County has supplied more than 15,500 eligible cattle to both the CHB and Hereford Verified programs. After leaving Ford County, the bus drove through Greensburg, Kan., giving participants a first-hand look at the remains from a tornado that devastated the town in May.



## Thank you to these tour hosts and sponsors:



Baker Herefords and JBN Livestock



Monahan Cattle Co.



Decatur County Feedyard Inc.



Jamison Herefords and Quarter Horses



Ford County Feedyard Inc.



Sandhill Farms



Royal Beef Feedyard



Van Newkirk Herefords



Olsen Ranches Inc.





The final stop on Tuesday evening was Sandhill Farms, Haviland, Kan. The Schultz family had cow-calf pairs, donor cows and replacement heifers on display. After looking at the cattle, participants enjoyed a Certified Hereford Beef® steak dinner before loading the buses to head to Dodge City for the night.



Lorna Marshall, manager of sire acquisition for ABS Global Inc., said ABS is experiencing more demand for Hereford bulls from its commercial customers. The company has had several large breeding heifer projects — more than 1,000 heifers inseminated — that have utilized Hereford bulls. She commended Hereford breeders who are stepping up and producing bulls that commercial producers are demanding.



Wednesday afternoon, following tours of a packing plant, the bus traveled to Royal Beef Feedyard near Scott City, Kan. At Royal Beef participants toured the feedmill and processing facilities. Royal Beef has been home to the Hereford Feedout for four years.



Doug Stanton, IMI Global Inc., talked about QSAs (quality system assessment) and PVPs (process verified program). He discussed the differences and how producers and feeders are currently getting paid for participating in the programs.



The first stop Thursday morning was Van Newkirk Herefords, Oshkosh, Neb. At Van Newkirk's participants could view sale bulls and cow-calf pairs.



The final tour stop was Olsen Ranches Inc. near Harrisburg, Neb. The Olsen family had National Reference Sire Program (NRSP) cattle on display, including feeder steers and heifers, replacement heifers, and cow-calf pairs. The Olsens have participated in the NRSP since 1999, so participants had a chance to see progeny of numerous Hereford test sires in production. **HW**

