



Little Details Can Have Big Effect

This issue of the *Hereford World* is being delivered at a time when many of you are very busy with harvest, weaning or perhaps in the middle of fall calving or maybe even doing all three. Yet, with all the irons in the fire, you cannot forget to pay attention to the details that can really add to the bottom line of your operations.

Whether it be the corn crop, hay crop or calf crop, you have made the decision to incorporate the right genetics to produce the most yield that your environment will allow. Unfortunately, when you do your homework and make the right decisions with your genetics, your job will not be done. Management can still be the difference in success.

Paying attention to the details in whatever you do can really be a driving force in an operation's bottom line. One of the biggest drivers of profit in a cattle operation, after incorporating the right genetics, is the attention that is paid to herd health.

In most cases a group of calves in the feedlot with a death loss of less than 2% are the ones that still have a chance to be profitable. The old saying that feedlots know more about your

herd than you do seems to hold true even today.

Whether it is a show heifer calf or a load of feeder steers, buyers do not like buying health problems. So, producers need to continue to fine tune health programs within their herds.

Health programs take different shapes for different operations, but a proper health program starts at the cow level. There are a multitude of pharmaceutical companies that offer comprehensive health programs. I would suggest you talk with your local veterinarian, sale barn operator, Extension specialist or even the pharmaceutical representative in your area to build a program that fits your needs and your customers' needs.

As I write this column, the American Hereford Association's (AHA) fiscal year has come to an end. It has been a good year with the demand for Hereford cattle continuing to increase. As times become a little tougher, commercial cattlemen have begun to look again at crossbreeding schemes that can add to their bottom lines.

During the past few years, the AHA has put together numerous projects that have shown the value of

Hereford genetics in crossbreeding and predominately Angus-based commercial herds.

This demand has been made possible by the commitment of Hereford breeders to provide genetics that are useful within the industry. This commitment to genetic improvement in the areas of calving ease, adequate growth and carcass traits has given commercial cattlemen the confidence they need to continue to add Hereford genetics to their programs.

New tools to be introduced during breeders' forum

The breed improvement committee members continue to challenge themselves to add tools that will assist AHA members in making decisions that can make genetic improvement and ultimately add value to Hereford cattle.

On Saturday, Oct. 31, at 7:30 a.m., a breeders' forum during the AHA Annual Meeting weekend will include the introduction of two new tools that will be added to the genetic analysis. These tools will look at ways to document cow herd fertility and survivability.

The research has been done during the past couple of years and these

tools will be useful because of the commitment Hereford breeders have made to whole-herd reporting.

In addition, the breed improvement committee has been working on the development of a research foundation committee that will be part of the Hereford Youth Foundation of America (HYFA). It is our intent to grow a pool of funds that can be used outside the AHA budget to work in the area of breed improvement. These extra dollars could let us expand our research in the areas of heterosis, efficiency, fertility, health or any other economically relevant trait that could add value to Hereford genetics.

The opportunities are endless for the Hereford breed. As times have become tougher, cattlemen begin to remember the value of Hereford genetics. Keep up the good work and we will see you on Halloween. **HW**