



"CHB Bites" is a column designed to keep you in-the-know about Certified Hereford Beef (CHB) program happenings. CHB LLC is celebrating 20 years with a "Farm-to-Fork" series featuring how Herefords become the ultimate eating experience. You can also follow CHB on Facebook at facebook.com/CertifiedHerefordBeef.



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# Certified Hereford Beef: The Next Twenty Years

This month we celebrate Certified Hereford Beef's (CHB®) 20th anniversary. So, the final piece of the Farm-to-Fork series is about our future. Where is CHB going to go in the next 20 years?

Today's consumers already want to know more about their food than any generation before, but we have to combat food myths and misinformation as more and more people become distanced from family farms. Consumers of the future are going to have even more access to information. It will be a challenge for future producers to reach consumers with the truthful information on how their beef is produced and the health benefits of our product.

"The consumer has evolved from wanting to know that their food is safe, to wanting to know why they should consume a product, nutritionally, safely, socially and personally," says David Trowbridge, CHB Board president. "The consumer will continue to evolve into being able to 'feel good' personally about what they are consuming over the next 20 years."

The past two decades have seen beef marketed in a variety of ways. Today, when you step into a grocery market or sit down at a restaurant table, you have a variety of choices in beef. The industry has seen natural, organic, grass-fed, antibiotic- and hormone-free, etc., beef programs marketed to consumers as they

explore different ways to obtain their protein. CHB supply chain manager Trey Befort says these and future consumer trends affect on Hereford producers.

"Because of the introduction of these kinds of programs to the cattle industry, I believe every producer has had to educate themselves as to what the consumer is demanding and make changes to their management accordingly," Befort says. "These topics will continue to be increasingly important as we move forward."

This is a huge opportunity for CHB.

"With our continued growth in the next 20 years, I see a great opportunity for CHB to have a key role in the improvement of the Hereford breed and continued demand growth for the use of Hereford cattle in the commercial cattle industry," Befort adds.

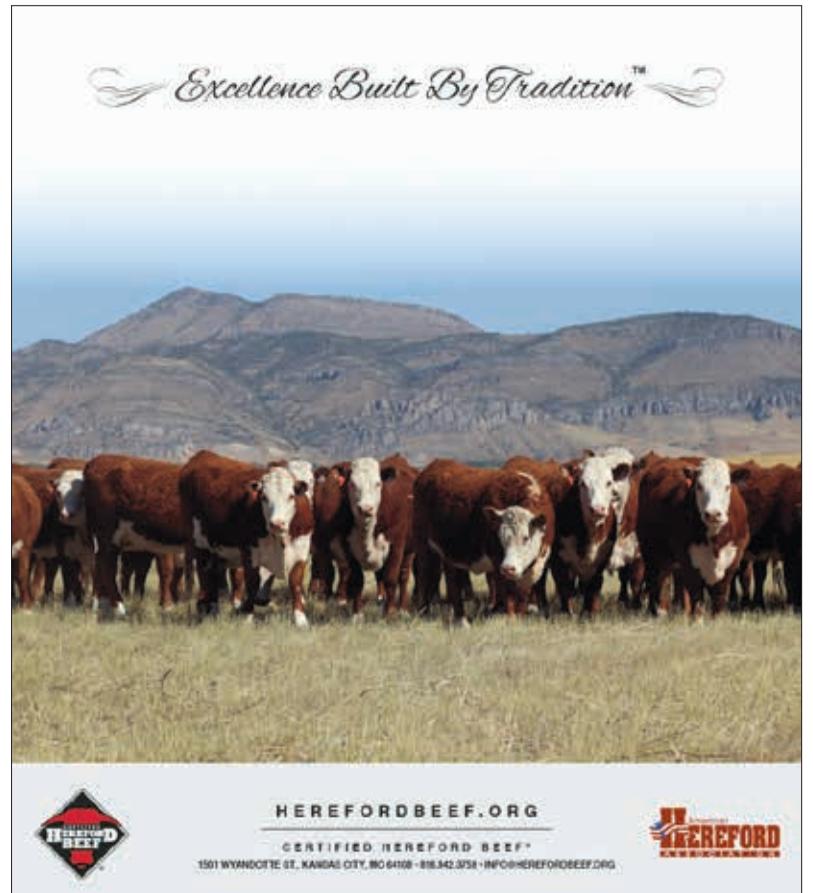
Why have branded-beef programs grown in popularity over the last 20 years? Trowbridge says, "They have let the consumer form a relationship with the brand."

Befort adds, "Branded beef programs have grown in popularity, in my opinion, because consumers associate quality with a brand and a product that has some kind of story to go with it. As consumers continually want to know more about their food, I believe branded beef programs like CHB have a great story and will continue to grow in popularity."

CHB Vice President of Marketing Andrew Brooks says the marketing of CHB has had to change to meet the consumer's expectations. "It definitely has evolved," he says. "Look at 'Beef, It's What's For Dinner,' ads on YouTube from 20 years ago and now YouTube beef commercials from HEB, Kroger SW and Yoke's Fresh Market. Every food aisle is being branded with a farmer's or rancher's face. Nobody believes what the TV tells them anymore. They want to hear and believe what another peer tells them."

The next 20 years will find CHB using more and more of the stories of the hard working, great stewards of land and animals that are the members of the American Hereford Association.

Brooks says the biggest growth opportunity comes from retail and foodservice. "Bottom line growth and revenue would



probably come from retail," he says. "One big chain can change the whole dynamic of your business model. Losing one can also do the same. Retail means tonnage and tonnage hopefully equates to better bottom line, which in turn helps us to better market our product. As far as branding though, that opportunity may lie within foodservice. In one instance, a well renowned chef can plug your product and all of a sudden the whole world could be asking for it. That's why it's imperative for us to go back and work on our menu logo program. People love eating good steaks in restaurants and want to go home and try to imitate that experience."

CHB Director of Retail Marketing Mark Layco says the reasons we would have the largest effect with growth of larger retailers is because of opportunities with "better regimented program follow through, wider customer base, and larger revenue dividends."

What are the next big goals for CHB? Should we look to increase tonnage, focus on revenue growth or look at product line expansions? According to Mick Welch, vice president of sales, it is all the above.

He states, "Over the last number of years we have had to go after tonnage to help create revenue and carcass utilization through boxes sold. However, selling boxes alone cannot

generate enough revenue to finance our growth to cover our needs. As we move forward our tonnage must continue to grow to generate revenue. We will also look at value-added CHB products to help create more carcass utilization and revenue for our CHB program."

CHB Vice President of Retail Brad Ellefson says, "Tonnage produces revenue. We need to focus more on our value added programs and that would be our product line expansion."

The potential for the next 20 years is great, but it starts with you, the Hereford producer. It will take the continued hard work and dedication from the outstanding men and women that are raising Hereford and Hereford-influenced cattle. In order to make the next 20 years of CHB as successful as the first, "the increased use of Hereford genetics in commercial herds will help us meet the growing demand and play an integral role in the production of and future of CHB," Befort says.

Trowbridge summed up the future of CHB with this final thought, "Certified Hereford Beef's producers and consumers trust us to provide a consistently safe, consistently satisfying, consistently desired and consistently a great value product with a truly legendary story and that is our future's most sacred treasure." **HW**

