



Let's 'Talk Hereford'

The American Hereford Association (AHA) just completed its fiscal year, and AHA staff has been working diligently to put together another great Annual Meeting that will be filled with education, social activities and, of course, the AHA Board election.

You will find details of the meeting on Page 30, and I would personally like to invite all of you to attend. This year we are offering more educational activities on Friday afternoon. There will be two sessions that will have three breakout meetings in each, allowing you to pick the sessions that interest you and could benefit your operation.

In addition, there will be a small trade show so you can have an opportunity to interact with industry partners. On behalf of the AHA, I would like to say thanks to the businesses that have agreed to be a part of this first trade show at the AHA Annual Meeting.

The Annual Meeting is always exciting for a variety of reasons, but the election of new directors is certainly the focus. This group of six candidates

that the nominating committee has put together is a great group of breeders that have a passion for the breed and would bring great knowledge to the AHA Board.

It is important for all to make plans to attend the meeting, even if you are not a delegate, to meet and to engage with these candidates and to share your thoughts with your voting delegates. It is just as important to visit with other breeders, to attend the educational meetings to "Talk Hereford" and to meet the current Board and staff.

New genetic evaluation software

There are certainly plenty of things on the agenda for next fiscal year and beyond as we work toward new genetic evaluation software, BOLT, that will allow us even more frequent runs and will give us the ability to run the evaluation with pedigree, performance data and genotypes together. This will give our breeders access to the most robust evaluation in the industry.

One of the key components to this evaluation will be the ability to parentage

identify any animals with genotypes. This is important as we see about a 10-15% issue with parentage identification due to a variety of errors. The pedigree portion of any evaluation is the building block of how it starts, and when there are issues to start, they only compound as the process moves forward.

The AHA Board and staff are committed to developing programs that will help identify cattle that can work in all segments of the industry and to provide the type of genetics that will have a focus on economically relevant traits. With this in mind, we will continue to build programs that identify cattle for the cow-calf, feedlot and packer sectors.

In the next year, we plan to release updated profit (\$) indexes with the addition of our new traits, built through BOLT and reflective of the new economic factors that are focused on the future. These indexes will allow you and your customers to make selections based on a goal and will be built with profitability in mind and not just the most output.

Genomics are here to stay, and the AHA has built a good repository of genotypes, but we need to continue to focus on genotyping animals. I have mentioned the importance of pedigree, but as we move forward, these genotypes will be imperative to identify and to add proof to genetics that will be beneficial to the industry and will decrease risk for you and your customers.

We have just started to chip away at the value of genomics in the beef industry, and the AHA is committed to staying in touch with what the industry requests.

It has been a great year for the AHA, and we would like to invite all of you to attend the meeting so we can share the success and build for the future. I look forward to seeing you Oct. 28-30 so we can "Talk Hereford." **HW**