

It's an Exciting Time for the Hereford Breed

There's no other way to describe the Hereford business right now other than exciting. As I write this column in early October, I can honestly say the last 90 days have been packed full of educational and exhilarating Hereford activities.

It started with the Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE) in Denver and continued with the Hereford Young Guns Conference, the High Plains Hereford Tour and the first American Hereford Association (AHA) media fly-in event and will wrap up with the AHA Annual Meeting in late October.

As a Hereford breeder and a mother of future JNHE showmen, I'm so awed by the JNHE each year. Watching those junior members proudly exhibit their Hereford heifers and listening to the illustrated speech and team marketing contestants makes me swell up with pride and excitement for the future of our breed.



Angie Stump Denton

Those kids and their families are our future. I applaud all Hereford breeders and allied industries for their support of the National Junior Hereford Association and its activities.

Heterosis project results announced

To me a highlight of the third Hereford Young Guns conference in late August was the announcement of the Harris Ranch heterosis research project phase one results. Dave Daly, project coordinator and California State University, Chico, animal scientist, presented the results to Young Guns participants.

Although the data represent only year one, the fact remains that the Hereford-sired steers had nearly a \$78 advantage compared to the Angus-sired calves. To me what is even more exciting is that in the feedlot phase, the Hereford-sired calves had an \$86 advantage, which confirms the feed efficiency message our communication team is striving to focus on this fiscal year in our advertising and marketing campaign.

Results of the Harris project were in the October *Hereford World* and are online at Hereford.org.

These results are only the beginning; in the next three to five years, the Hereford breed is going to have even more real-world commercial industry documentation to prove Herefords are the efficiency experts.

During the Young Guns Conference, we heard from National Reference

Sire Program (NRSP) participants Circle A Ranch and Amana Farms. These two projects represent a huge opportunity for the Hereford breed. With both projects we'll be getting on-the-farm performance data along with feed efficiency data.

From pasture to plate

I also had the chance to attend the High Plains Hereford Tour in mid-September. What an amazing event. The stops were outstanding and the dialog on and off the bus made the trip that much more enjoyable. It was truly a conference on wheels.

Tour organizers Jim Williams and Jay Elfeldt did a great job planning the event that included stops at real-world farms and ranches, and two feedlots and the opportunity to visit a packing plant and witness the entire harvesting process.

The final stop on the tour was Olsen Ranches. The Olsens have participated in the NRSP since 1999. It was a highlight of the event to be able to see so many females sired by some of the most-used Hereford bulls in the breed at one stop.

For more highlights of the tour see the October *Hereford World*.

Spreading the message

With year-one results of the Harris project in hand, the AHA communication team has set out to spread the Hereford heterosis advantage message. To kick off the media blitz, the first AHA media fly-in event was planned for late September.

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Nine media professionals, representing 27 publications including *Drovers*, *BEEF* magazine and *High Plains Journal*, attended the first AHA media fly-in event Sept. 25. Bill Cox, CHB LLC president and AHA board member, updated the media about the Certified Hereford Beef brand. Other presentations included Harris Ranch heterosis project results, an AHA state of the industry report and breed improvement projects update.

Nine editors representing 27 agriculture and livestock publications attended the event. A news conference featuring results of the Harris Ranch heterosis study was conducted along with news updates on the AHA, breed improvement projects and Certified Hereford Beef (CHB) LLC.

The event was a great opportunity to cultivate relationships with media professionals and work to increase the Hereford message in agriculture and livestock publications. Activities such as this will help the Association reach commercial cattlemen and communicate the Hereford message.

Chuck Zimmerman, ZimmComm New Media LLC, attended the event and posted highlights on the *AgWired.com* blog. Visit <http://agwired.com/category/american-hereford> to review the day's activities and listen to audio clips.

As a media professional, I think this is one of the best public relations efforts we've made as an Association in a long time. We'll have the opportunity to experience exponential results from our efforts as we continue to foster these relationships and provide the media who attended, as well as other publications, newsworthy releases and story leads.

To be successful in our mission, the communication team needs your help to continue spreading and strengthening the message. When you have the opportunity, visit with media professionals in your area. Share with them information about how Herefords are the efficiency experts. Talk conversion, hardiness, fertility, longevity and disposition.

There are numerous ways to help spread the Hereford word. State and regional Hereford associations can utilize the national print ad and the radio script that are available to download on the *HerefordResource.com* Web site. Producers and associations can also order the "Power of Black. Only Better." campaign poster to post at local sale barns, feed stores and co-ops. Presenting a uniform message is critical for successful industry communication.

Year of efficiency

I hope you agree there is no better time to be a Hereford breeder. The *2007 Annual Report*, which you will find on Page 16 of this issue, summarizes our last fiscal year. Take time and read about the efforts your Board and staff have made to quantify and explain to commercial cattlemen the Hereford efficiency advantage. **HW**