

What Is Life Without Change?



Julie White

“I would like ketchup,” she said to the server, as a group of us sat in an open-air restaurant in Costa Rica while the rain fell around us one evening. The server gave her a questioning look, clearly not understanding. “Ketchup, I want K-E-T-C-H-U-P,” she said louder and louder, as if being more articulate would cross that language barrier and get her that dipping sauce for her fries.

For many of us college animal science students, that short-term trip to Central America got us our first stamp on our passports and our first experience with a different culture, a different language, different foods and an all-around different way of living life.

The frustration my classmate felt and the frustration I have felt whether living abroad, moving to a new city or changing jobs stems from the difficulty of adapting and changing to our surroundings. The excitement I experienced opening up a care package containing real, American peanut butter from my aunt after two months studying abroad in Italy was just the tip of the iceberg of my difficulty to adapt to my changing environment.

Here I was living in a country with some of the best foods in the world, and all I was craving was a taste of home. But as the semester progressed and I started to accept and appreciate the differences, the little town of Viterbo, Italy, began to take on its own version of home for me.

The great adventurer Theodore Roosevelt said, “There can be no life without change, and to be afraid of what is different or unfamiliar is to be afraid of life.” There’s always going to be a barrier to overcome, and there’s always going to be adaptation to make.

Herefords east to west

During the past few months, I’ve had the opportunity to get out of the office and to travel to see Hereford herds in the Southeast and the Northwest — two opposite parts of the country. It’s also two very different climates for raising cattle and two environments that cause two very different sets of challenges.

In middle Tennessee, cattlemen receive ample rainfall and have lush grasses but fight heat and humidity each year. In the Northwest, access to water is a hot-button issue, but cattle can make rocky land, unproductive for farming, productive and profitable.

The takeaway for me from these two trips is that Herefords are adaptable and efficient in numerous environments. In both regions, I saw healthy cows weaning healthy, heavy calves, and I saw structurally sound yearling bulls ready to be sold to commercial cattlemen that also had the data and expected progeny differences (EPDs) to back them up.

In this issue

In this issue is the *2015 American Hereford Association*

Annual Report: The Brand That Does It All. You’ll find in this year’s report growing numbers in registrations, transfers and membership, along with record-setting sale prices. This information proves that Hereford cattle are in demand, not in just a limited region of the U.S., but from the East to the West Coast, cattlemen are realizing the advantage Hereford genetics bring to their herds.

While there will always be room for change and adaptation in the future, it’s evident that from the direction the breed is going, it’s ready to meet those head on.

I also attended a media event in Denver to learn how Beef Checkoff dollars are leveraged to conduct nutrition research. It’s comforting to know that the beef industry as a whole is poised to share with our main customer, the Millennial consumer, the science-based research proving that beef fits in a healthy diet. Our industry has adapted to the times and is working together to keep our market strong.

In this issue you will also learn more about our 2015 American Hereford Association President, Eric Walker, and how he used what he learned from running two successful businesses to lead the Association through a year of change.

Once you’ve made the decision to accept changing circumstances and figure out a way to adapt, the result is success. **HW**