



Reasons to Transfer

Transferring bull ownership is good for the Hereford business.

by Teresa Oe



The American Hereford Association (AHA) has long asked Hereford breeders to transfer registration papers to their commercial bull customers. With a \$5 per head fee and a sometimes considerable time commitment depending on herd size, many producers have opted not to follow this procedure in the past.

Some have simply given the papers to customers on sale day, while others chose not to pass them on at all. This trend is turning, however, as additional benefits become available to those commercial customers who receive officially transferred AHA papers.

The first and historical reason to transfer is to guarantee what the buyer is getting, says Jack Ward, AHA chief operating officer and director of breed improvement. The pedigree and expected progeny differences (EPDs) are then in the hands of the new bull owner.

“Customers are more confident in you as a breeder if you supply that to them,” says Carl Olson, Olson Hereford Ranch, Argusville, N.D. “If a customer gets a paper on the bull, he feels a little bit more like he’s a valued customer, like he’s getting more than just a bull.” Olson hadn’t always transferred the papers, but began doing so after asking his customers if they would like them transferred. “Most did, so I automatically started doing it,” he says.

For Jerry Johns, one of Olson’s commercial customers, the transfer is a matter of performance and traceability. “I just want to be able to keep track of EPDs and the genetics coming into my herd,” he says. Johns runs Hereford bulls on his Angus cow base, and keeps many of his heifer calves for replacements.

Bill Lowry, also a commercial cattleman, cites an additional benefit of getting registration papers from the AHA — receiving the four *Hereford World* tabloid-style issues.

In 2000 Hereford Publications Inc. (HPI) decided to offer these issues in January, February, August and October. On top of the standard subscribers, the tabloids go to more than 5,000 commercial cattlemen. This outreach and prime advertising opportunity is made possible through the transfer of registration papers and utilization of several mailing lists. When the papers are transferred, the commercial buyer is entered in the AHA mailing list. One issue is sent to the buyer, with the option to return a reply card for three free years of the tabloid. After three years, the producer can again request to continue the free subscription.

“It definitely gives the Association a way to contact them (commercial buyers),” says Bill Bennett, BB Cattle Co., Connell, Wash., speaking of the official AHA transfer. Bennett is one of the seedstock providers who supplies Lowry with transferred papers.

Olson agrees that this is a key benefit of the transfer process. “It gives the Association a record of who out there is buying Hereford bulls,” he says. “It’s important to get that guy on the list, so he gets the proper information from the Association.”

Greg Shaw, Shaw Cattle Co. Inc., is another seedstock producer who has lately begun transferring all of his bull papers. Holding two bull sales a year, this Caldwell, Idaho, ranch annually moves about 125 Hereford bulls, as well as 100 Angus and 50 Red Angus. In the past, Shaws gave registration papers to their customers on sale day. This gave the buyers access to pedigrees and EPDs, but without the official transfer Shaws realized that their buyers would be out major opportunities related to breed verification programs, including eligibility for the genetic, source and age (GSA) option in the Hereford Verified program.

This program, introduced in August 2005, brings together all facets of the beef supply chain — producers, feeders and packers — to create an open market, reliable supply of Certified Hereford Beef® (CHB) eligible cattle. Cow-calf producers who are able to provide the source and age (premise ID and calving season) of their calves receive a \$2 per head premium the first and second years of participation, and \$3 per head thereafter. This bonus comes in addition to having direct access to Hereford Verified partner feeders and receiving both carcass and feedlot performance data with benchmarking. Producers can, but don't have to, retain ownership to receive these benefits.

By transferring their bull papers, Shaws have significantly increased premium potential for their customers. The calves linked to a registered Hereford bull battery are eligible for the same \$2 premium the first year of participation, but \$3 the second year, \$4 the third and \$6 the fourth. By transferring, Shaws and other seedstock providers are qualifying their commercial customers for these higher bonuses.

Eric and Terri Harder of Harder Hereford Ranch in Kahlotus, Wash., are commercial customers of Shaw Cattle Co. They enrolled in the Hereford Verified program in fall 2005, selling their calves to Ford County Feeders in Ford, Kan. These calves were source and age verified. Harders' calves again went to Ford County Feeders in 2006, and this bunch is source, age and genetically verified, stepping up the premium from \$2 per head to \$3.

Harders manage 1,300 commercial straightbred Hereford cows. "We want whoever buys our calves to know we're using Hereford bulls, papered bulls," Terri says.

It's clear that the reasons to transfer are growing in number and significance to the commercial cattleman, and thus to the seedstock producer as well. While it does take time and money, the AHA asks Hereford breeders to look at what transferring can do for the Hereford business. It guarantees the makeup of Hereford bulls, gets information about the breed to commercial producers, provides targeted advertising opportunities for breeders and qualifies customers for premiums tied to Hereford genetics.

How to transfer registration papers

The seller fills out the back of the registration papers (includes name of new owner, date of transfer, etc.).

Seller mails the papers to the American Hereford Association (AHA).

The AHA processes the information and assigns each transfer a code number.

The AHA then sends the papers to the new owners or back to the seller, whichever the seller prefers to complete the process.

Note: *The AHA is investigating ways to streamline the transfer process and lessen the time commitment through electronic transfer possibilities.* **HW**



One benefit of transferring registration papers is that the buyer receives the four *Hereford World* tabloid-style issues in January, February, August and October. The tabloids go to more than 5,000 commercial cattlemen and are a prime advertising opportunity for seedstock producers.

Jim Williams, CHB LLC vice president of supply, also reminds breeders to consider the retail perspective. "Our retail customers, without a doubt, want to know where the genetics came from and how they were managed," he says. Transferring the bull paper is a small step in a big process to improve the opportunities for everyone involved in the Hereford business. **HW**