



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Kaylen Alexander, kalexander@hereford.org

Nov. 16, 2017

Hereford Excels in 2017

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – In Fiscal year 2017 the Hereford breed continued to strengthen its position in the industry as commercial producers find value in Hereford genetics.

The AHA documented growth in all segments of the Association including registrations, transfers, cow inventories, memberships and pounds of Certified Hereford Beef (CHB®) sold.

“FY17 was another great year for the Hereford breed, and the AHA has committed itself to continue to grow and identify genetics that will make cattlemen profitable and the beef industry sustainable,” says Jack Ward, American Hereford Association (AHA) executive vice president.

The second largest cattle breed in the U.S., Hereford reported 79,586 registrations (a 0.64% increase) and 44,232 transfers (a 4.3% increase) with 117,645 cows on inventory. The Association has 4,187 active adult members (a 3.7% increase), 3,307 active junior members (an 8% increase) and 55.1 million lb. of CHB product sold (a 0.55% increase) during the fiscal year, which ended Aug. 31.

Over the course of 2017, the AHA developed an aggressive strategic plan to set a path for the next five years, which includes updated mission and vision statements and a set of core strategies with specific goals in mind.

“Hereford breeders are committed to using tools to find cattle with strength for economically relevant traits,” Ward says. “This dedication gives power to the Hereford breed as the commercial industry adds heterosis to its cow herd and builds a product that is profitable in all segments of the beef chain.”

The foundation of these tools provided by the Association is the AHA’s Whole Herd Total Performance Records (TPR™) program. Now 17 years old, the program has helped the AHA and Hereford breeders build a database that documents the breed’s strengths. This registration and performance tracking system has given the information to build tools for fertility and efficiency selection in the Hereford breed.

The Association has long been dedicated to offering its members the most robust genetic evaluation possible, and due to Whole Herd TPR and the current 53,000 genotypes on record, the AHA is poised for a stronghold in the DNA era, making Hereford cattle even more predictable.

In FY17 the AHA Board of Directors pursued a genetic evaluation overhaul — Biometric Open Language Tools (BOLT) — which allows for better use of genomics.

BOLT provides a more robust evaluation by calculating true accuracy on animals. Utilizing BOLT, all factors associated with contemporary group makeup will be accounted for in the calculation of true accuracy. This genetic evaluation system moves away from a full multi-trait model, decoupling models to better estimate traits of interest as well as modifying

contemporary group structure of the models to allow for as much data as possible to affect the evaluation.

BOLT also utilizes a cutoff strategy which only includes animals born after 2001 and animals related by three generations of pedigree. A genetic evaluation backed solely by Whole Herd TPR data strengthens the evaluation and takes out selection bias that occurred pre-Whole Herd TPR.

The value of Hereford genetics and heterosis is documented to help cattlemen remain competitive in a challenging commercial and seedstock market. The Hereford breed has witnessed an increase in domestic and international semen sales. According to the National Association of Animal Breeders (NAAB), domestic Hereford semen sales increased 38 percent from 2012-2016.

A total of 201 Hereford production sales were reported by AHA field representatives during the fiscal year. Bull sales averaged \$4,899 and females average \$4,569. Hereford breeders moved a total of 6,889 bulls in FY17.

In August, the AHA unveiled “The Bald-Faced Truth About Hereford Genetics” (Hereford.org/genetics). The Hereford breed offers a well-documented advantage to the cattle industry and brings legendary hybrid vigor, improved fertility, feed efficiency and easy-handling docility to commercial programs.

On March 1, 2017, the AHA launched a revised version of Hereford.org. The new site is an update from the previous website created in 2009, and meets the technology needs of AHA

members. Hereford.org is now mobile friendly through responsive technology — meaning the site will seamlessly format to whatever device (tablet, cell phone) is being used to access it.

The top five breeders by registration numbers were Upstream Ranch, Taylor, Neb., 1,011; Rausch Herefords, Hoven, S.D., 975; Alexander Mih, Chanute, Kan., 525; Van Newkirk Herefords, Oshkosh, Neb., 522; and Fawcetts Elm Creek Ranch, Ree Heights, S.D., 460.