

A Destination for All

The AHA Annual Meeting and Conference is a must-attend event for Hereford breeders and cattle industry members.



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The American Hereford Association (AHA) recently hosted its Annual Meeting and Conference in Kansas City, Mo. The three-day event included an educational forum, the AHA Board of Directors election, an update of year-end statistics and social activities.

The AHA continues to strengthen its position in the industry. In fiscal year (FY) 2017, the AHA documented growth in all segments of the Association, including registrations, transfers, cow inventories, membership and pounds of Certified Hereford Beef (CHB®) sold.

During FY17, *Hereford.org* received a facelift with focus on making access to important information easier from the field with a simple-to-navigate, mobile-friendly site. The AHA built a stronger presence on social media, and a fresh design of the *Hereford World* was released in July. With a continued focus on efficiency, electronic registrations reached an all-time high through *MyHerd.org*, with 77% of all registrations being recorded electronically.

Keep looking forward

The health of the AHA is strong, but it is always important to keep looking at the future and identify the needs of all segments of the industry. You should have received the current AHA Strategic Plan in the October issue of the *Hereford World*. During the conference, the process of how the strategic plan was developed was shared with the membership. Other breakout sessions during the conference included updates on what is happening on Capitol Hill, consumer trends, marketing opportunities for Hereford and Hereford-influenced feeder cattle, estate planning and how breeders can implement a marketing plan to increase awareness of their programs.

During the Friday morning session, breeders heard about the new genetic

evaluation. Dorian Garrick, AL Rae Centre chief scientist, and Bruce Golden, Theta Solutions LLC, CEO, presented the changes in the model along with the development of new traits and how the evaluation will handle the magnitude of genotypes that will be added. AHA Director of Breed Improvement Shane Bedwell and AHA Director of Records Department Stacy Sanders shared the process and expected release of the new evaluation.

On Friday evening, the membership was able to gather for a fantastic evening of fellowship as the Association honored its newest members to the Hereford Hall of Fame and the Hereford Hall of Merit at the Hereford Honorees Reception. In addition, the awards for the first National Junior Hereford Association Fed Steer Shootout were presented. CHB honored those who continue to grow the CHB program in all segments including packers, food service, retailers and chefs. The evening finished with the presentation of more than \$140,000 in scholarships to Hereford youth.

The delegates elected three new Board members from a fantastic slate of six. Nate Frederickson, Spearfish, S.D.; Mark St. Pierre, El Nido, Calif.; and Joe Waggoner, Carthage, Miss., will serve four-year terms. The weekend ended with another great Ladies of the Royal Sale, junior and open Hereford shows, and the crowning of the 2018 National Hereford Queen.

Throughout the weekend, the attendees visited with vendors in the trade show. It was a great weekend, and I would encourage you to put the 2018 Annual Meeting and Conference on your calendar for next fall. In the next few weeks, you should receive a survey asking each of you to give us your thoughts for topics for next year's conference. This event needs to be a destination for all Hereford membership and allied partners. **HW**