

Investing in Improvement

Continue the momentum in breed improvement by getting involved in the AHA Cow Herd DNA project and the Hereford Research Foundation.



Shane Bedwell is the chief operating officer and director of breed improvement of the American Hereford Association. He can be reached at sbedwell@hereford.org.

As the sun sets on another great year at Hereford, it sure is humbling to sit back and think about all the momentum the breed has right now. The amount of positive energy that enveloped the American Hereford Association (AHA) Annual Meeting was incredible and confirmed the quality membership of the Hereford breed. I would like to thank all of you for your commitment to the breed, and I appreciate your time, dedication and effort in making strides in breed improvement.

Get involved

As discussed in previous articles and during the Annual Meeting, the Cow Herd DNA Project will conclude at the end of the month. Many breeders have already taken advantage of the low \$20 per head cost to get their cow herds genotyped, and I'm very appreciative of those forward-thinking breeders who have been early adopters of genotyping and have taken the initiative to enroll in the project.

There are a couple of things I want to point out regarding the project. First, allow for some lead time in placing an order for a tissue sample unit (TSU), as it takes about 10 days to receive the TSUs from the time the order is placed. For those of you electing not to participate due to either the quickly approaching project deadline or having already processed your cows for breeding shots, please understand DNA samples don't need to be submitted by Dec. 31 — you just

DNA samples for the Cow Herd DNA Project don't need to be submitted by Dec. 31 — you just have to enroll in the program by that deadline.

have to enroll in the program by that deadline! You are free to take samples at your convenience.

Another point I want to mention is that if you participated in the program last spring, you can enroll again and catch up your bred heifers that will calve this spring. The spring 2019 cow inventories have already been billed, so getting enrolled again is the first step. In order to get the \$20 price, though, you will need to submit the DNA samples via the custom TSU ordered with the specific cow herd ID number. If you have any questions about the project or want to get an order started, please reach out to Tena Martin or me.

Finally, I would like to invite all of you to participate in the Hereford Research Foundation auction that will be taking place Dec. 11 at Smartauctions.co. This auction will offer a variety of items for you last-minute Christmas shoppers as well as some exciting genetic packages of semen and embryos. This auction will be one you don't want to miss, and I appreciate your support in advance. The Hereford Research Foundation was put in place to be able to conduct research outside the scope of the AHA budget, and I'm proud to say we have been able to continue to make progress in our breed improvement tools and performance programs because of the selfless giving and previous donations to the foundation. For this I say thank you, and your generosity is certainly noted by the AHA staff and members.

I want to wish everyone a merry Christmas and hope you have time to cherish your family and to give thanks to the good Lord for all of the blessings He has dealt us. **HW**