



Embracing Change

“CHB Bites” is a column designed to keep you in-the-know about the Certified Hereford Beef® (CHB) program. To get involved with CHB on social media, search *Certified Hereford Beef* on Facebook and Pinterest, @certifiedherefordbeef on Instagram and @crtherefordbeef on Twitter.

In order to grow, we have to embrace change. Change can be hard and can require extra time and effort to make sure the change is successful. If the challenges faced are perceived as opportunities for growth and improvement, success is sure to follow. When do you know it is time to change? Do you have the capacity to understand your own strengths and weaknesses and to assess what needs to be changed in order to grow and to develop?

Certified Hereford Beef is changing. We are changing to better position the brand for market relevance and to allow the brand to compete with the exceptional quality the consumer market is demanding. We are changing to embrace our rich history and our past experiences and to learn how we can be better at providing a high-quality product with services to support and to grow

“The secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new.”

— Socrates

our industry partners. Change is not without its obstacles and, though a few obstacles have been presented, the *Certified Hereford Beef* brand has the resilience to continue the path to exponential growth and success.

Competitive spirit

Certified Hereford Beef was formed to create demand for the Hereford breed and continues to gain market share in the industry and

to expand its distribution footprint throughout the U.S. and globally. An aggressive strategic plan, which will translate into additional demand for the Hereford breed, is in place to continue the growth of the brand. The consumer market is rich with opportunity for high-quality Hereford-influenced programs to offer differentiation in a saturated market consisting of “me-too” programs. To capitalize on the opportunity in the market, *Certified Hereford Beef* adapted and improved to meet these needs.

Because of the exceptional strides that have been made in the Hereford breed to improve quality and the integrity that the *Certified Hereford Beef* brand commands, the decision to elevate the brand to a strictly United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Choice and higher program was made with great confidence. In a short period of time, this decision has already elevated the brand in the consumer market and has created relevance to compete with the top beef brands which dominate the industry.

With much respect for the foundational efforts of the *Certified Hereford Beef* brand, sustaining the program’s initial standards will no longer suffice in marketing a superior product. For years the Classic program, known as a blended program, incorporated a much higher percentage of USDA Choice product than USDA Select product. However, the brand could only be marketed as a USDA Select program, and

“Change does not change tradition. It strengthens it. Change is a challenge and an opportunity, not a threat.”

— Prince Phillip of England

industry partners could not highlight the high-quality Choice beef dominating the product boxes. Marketing a lower quality-grade product while commanding a premium price presented challenges for *Certified Hereford Beef* brand partners.

This concept was a disservice to the hardworking producers who continue to put forth effort every day to produce high-quality Hereford and Hereford-influenced cattle. Industry wide, carcass quality has improved drastically and, frankly, USDA Select beef seems to be going away. Articles from reputable industry organizations concerning this trend have become available recently to support the push for continued higher quality beef production.

The Hereford breed is positioned to take charge and to make a difference in the beef cattle industry. This is an exciting time for all of us to come together to continue the long-standing tradition of the Hereford breed and to give thanks to our predecessors for their wisdom and foresight which have led to our successes. The possibilities are infinite. Thank you. **HW**

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