

## Building Through Innovation

The AHA continues to offer members new and unique opportunities.



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The American Hereford Association's (AHA) fiscal year (FY) has concluded, and the staff has been working diligently to plan the Annual Membership Meeting and Conference, filled with educational sessions, social activities and, of course, the new Board of Directors election. This year's group of six Board candidates is a passionate group of breeders who will bring great knowledge to the Board. Even if you are not a delegate, get engaged, meet the candidates and share your thoughts with your state's voting delegates.

This year's educational forum will kick off with Sara Place, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, to provide updates on sustainability efforts in the beef industry and will wrap up with a recap of "The Brand" Marketing Summit presented by Mark Core. Be sure to visit the industry trade show to discuss the latest innovations in the business. On behalf of the AHA, I would like to thank the organizations that will be a part of the event.

### Driving Innovation

In business, innovation results when a company applies ideas in order to satisfy the needs and expectations of customers. The AHA continues to focus on innovation to fulfill the

needs of our members. This past fiscal year has been no different. We began FY 2019 by implementing changes to the Certified Hereford Beef® carcass specifications to allow the program to support a high-quality, very consistent and tender product demanded by both food service and retail consumers.

Early in 2019, an updated, mobile-friendly and more efficient version of MyHerd was released. More than 80% of registrations were submitted through a mobile platform and the majority came through MyHerd. This real-time system is one-of-a-kind in the industry and gives breeders the opportunity to register and to transfer cattle, to submit performance data and to request DNA 24/7.

The AHA staff worked with Theta Solutions and leaders in Uruguay and Argentina to relaunch the Pan-American Cattle Evaluation (PACE). Released for the first time this summer, these expected progeny differences (EPDs) allow breeders from both North and South America to compare and to search animals directly across continents.

In June the AHA hosted more than 200 breeders at The Brand Marketing Summit to help breeders develop a stronger marketing strategy. To continue the momentum, the

AHA staff and Mark Core launched a Marketing Fitness Challenge to encourage attendees to continue improving their marketing strategy.

Youth programs continue to provide education and leadership opportunities. During the 2019 VitaFerm® Junior National Hereford Expo, a college and business fair – Bridging the Gap – was introduced to connect junior members with secondary education opportunities and agriculture businesses seeking great young talent. Furthermore, the Fed Steer Shootout continues to grow with a focus on education. I would like to thank the folks at BioZyme® for their continued support of this program.

Additionally, the AHA has worked with HRC Feed Yards, Scott City, Kan., to start a retained ownership program to allow breeders and their customers to collect individual carcass information to add to the AHA genetic evaluation. This program will help identify cattle that perform well in the feedlot and on the rail. Along with the continued growth of the National Young Sire Test program, the Feedout program will identify cattle that work in all segments, while keeping a focus on the Hereford-based female that is known for longevity, fertility and disposition. **HW**