

Striving to Serve

See how the AHA is providing producers the tools to benefit all sectors of their business.



Jack Ward is the executive vice president of the American Hereford Association. He can be reached at jward@hereford.org.

With the holidays behind us, it is time to focus on the 2020 calving season, marketing and breeding. For seedstock breeders, marketing will center on bull sales, and commercial cow-calf producers will focus on marketing feeder calves or perhaps looking at retaining ownership. Marketing is such a big part of making an operation profitable, but it seems to get less attention in most programs. Read more about the following tools the American Hereford Association (AHA) provides to help all segments of your business.

Whole Herd Reporting

The AHA provides significant breed improvement tools for both seedstock and commercial producers to make reliable decisions for traits of economic relevance. Those tools include Whole Herd Reporting and genomics that combine to form one of the industry's most robust genetic evaluations.

Currently, the AHA releases weekly results to the genetic evaluation, so producers have the most current information readily available. In addition to genetic evaluation tools, the AHA has the strongest young sire test evaluation program, and this program proves young sires in a structured program.

Searchable EPDs

As marketing platforms continue to evolve, the AHA continues to update tools for all sizes of operations and types of producers. As a guest user on the AHA's expected progeny differences (EPDs) search engine, you can search the AHA database for animals which fit the needs of your program. This data includes both pedigree and performance information. Authorized users gain more access to progeny and herd information.

Besides the searchable database, the AHA developed an online sale catalog platform, Herefords On Demand, which allows you to search and to study both private treaty and production sales. These catalogs are unique because they have the most accurate pedigree and EPD information available.

Commercial program advancement

The AHA has really strived over the last few years to develop commercial programs to help market seedstock and commercial cattle. Most recently, the AHA has developed a relationship with IMI Global to make the Hereford Advantage a source and age program with a health, genetic and Beef Quality Assurance component, allowing producers to add value to a calf crop.

The Premium Red Baldy program is gaining attention as producers see the benefits of heterosis in building a strong commercial cow. The Red Angus Association of America and the AHA continue to work together to provide a marketing and genetic improvement opportunity from the two breeds with mandatory Whole Herd Reporting to build a red baldy female that is revered as an animal suitable in all environments.

Hereford-influenced opportunities

The AHA continues to build relationships with industry partners to help identify and to create marketing opportunities for Hereford-influenced cattle. Multiple Hereford-influenced feeder cattle sales around the country allow producers of all sizes to join with others to provide load lots demanded by feed lot operators.

Moreover, the AHA is developing relationships with private entities to find additional opportunities for producers to market load lots of calves. Stay tuned for more information.

The AHA will continue to provide the tools for members and commercial producers to make informed and documented decisions that allow for added value in all sized programs. Happy New Year to everyone, and we look forward to a great 2020. **HW**