

# Distinction Within the Breed

The newly inducted Dams and Sires of Distinction have been announced.



Jack Ward is the executive vice president of the American Hereford Association. He can be reached at [jward@hereford.org](mailto:jward@hereford.org).

In 2020 the spring equinox fell on March 19, which is earlier than it has been in over a century. This marked the first day of spring. Along with the transition into spring, we recently moved our clocks forward and Easter is fast approaching. For many this means calving is wrapping up and breeding decisions are on your mind.

## Dams and sires of excellence

In this issue of the *Hereford World*, you will find an updated listing of the 2019 Dams of Distinction (DOD) and Sires of Distinction (SOD). As cattlemen we tend to focus heavily on the sires we use each year because they contribute to the success and sustainability of our herds for generations. But females need to perform through cold, drought, heat and any other element throws at them. This performance includes calving without difficulty, caring for and protecting a calf, supplying enough resources for the calf to grow, and then rebreeding within a reasonable interval to start this process all over each year.

A DOD is not recognized after her first calf for good reason. The rigorous requirements for a Hereford cow to reach the DOD status can be found on Page 36 along with the list of recently inducted females.

In addition to recognizing the DODs, it is important we recognize the sires producing these extra special females. In order to qualify, sires must produce at least seven daughters that are recognized as DODs. The updated list of SODs are also recognized in this issue of the *Hereford World* on Page 46.

## Know your options

As you make breeding decisions this spring, utilize all tools and information. Genetics are certainly interesting to study and keep all of us at the top of our game to find the sires we believe will have a positive impact on our herds. You can find the extensive list of all DODs and SODs beyond those recognized this year on the American Hereford Association's website and utilizing the "Select If" feature in the expected progeny differences (EPD) search tool. You can find the DOD and SOD designation at the end of a pedigree name on all animals that qualify. Complete DOD and SOD reports are also listed online under "Recognition Programs" in the "Genetics" tab.

The various environments in the U.S. and around the world give us opportunities to be different in our breeding programs. We each have different goals and challenges, and we need to stay focused on our customers and, ultimately, our final product. You have to start with the basics and select bulls which check off all of the boxes for traits of economic relevance including structure, growth, efficiency and end-product merit. The tools are in place to make these choices. **HW**

## Walking sire DNA rule

I want to remind all breeders the American Hereford Association (AHA) Board of Directors voted to require all walking herd bulls born after Jan. 1, 2011, that sired a calf to be registered must have a DNA profile at the AHA's official lab before that calf can be registered.

Registration requests have come to the office without the sire being DNA tested. This situation becomes an issue with getting registrations completed in a timely manner. Please make sure you have a DNA profile completed prior to breeding season on any bull that heads to a pasture with cows. **HW**

