



CELEBRATING 25 YEARS

From Farm to Fork

Hereford producers welcome foodservice sales managers and restaurant chefs for Certified Hereford Beef® (CHB) educational field day events.

by *Grace Vehige*

Every day Hereford producers work to provide a quality product for consumers and do so without question. As representatives of the *Certified Hereford Beef* brand and the breed, Hereford producers are ready and willing to seize opportunities to forge a connection between consumers and producers. Over the past few years, *Certified Hereford Beef* has encouraged different producers across the U.S. to host wholesalers and other industry professionals at their ranches. These field days are pivotal in educating wholesalers and consumers on the farm-to-plate process.

“Hereford field days provide a valuable educational tool to our industry partners and allow them to connect the breed to the brand,” says Amari Seiferman, CHB president and CEO. “We are grateful for our producers who take the time out of their busy lives to educate them on the time, care and integrity commitments behind the breed.”

In the following pages, join in on the various CHB field days to see how fellow Hereford breeders are “ag”vocating the breed and the beef industry.

Worrell Enterprises LLC

Located in Mason, Texas, the Worrells are fifth-generation Hereford breeders. Worrell Enterprises is owned and operated by James, Shannon and Jarrett Worrell. When their family received a call to host industry members at their ranch, they jumped on the opportunity.

“Ranchers love to work with *Certified Hereford Beef* because it’s the end-product,” Shannon says. “It’s what we work for, so anytime we can help represent the brand, we will do what we can.”

For the Worrell’s field day, a handful of wholesalers from US Foods® and restauranteurs were welcomed at the ranch. Together, the Worrells, buyers, pit masters

and salespeople enjoyed a ribeye lunch as one of the day’s highlights. During the tour, the attendees were able to see pastured cows, as well as penned feeder calves. One of the most important principles of the day was to draw connections between what a Hereford family looks like and what a cow family looks like. Shannon says the attendees were impressed by how the Worrells knew as much about their cow families as their own family.

The field day provided an opportunity for hands-on education. In fact, a US Foods® sales representative used some of the time on the ranch to teach his

colleagues where cuts of beef are located on a live animal, Shannon says. This simple effort highlights the need for ranchers to embrace hands-on learning and to help educate others on where their beef comes from.

For those looking to host a CHB field day in the future, Shannon provides the following advice: “Don’t be intimidated by it. The more people we can get out to see how we do things, the better. This is what we do. This is why we do it.”



Representatives from US Foods® gather with the Worrell family as cattle graze behind them.

White Hawk Ranch

The Hereford breed has been the center of business for the Hedrick family since 1926. Despite a pause in their ranch operations in the '90s and early 2000s, Gary Hedrick worked to build back a registered herd with depth. When the operation started back up in 2008, Gary focused production on improving carcass data and expected progeny differences (EPDs).

"I thought about how we produce cattle and started from the plate backwards," Gary describes. "We raise these cattle to put quality beef on the consumer's plate."

During White Hawk Ranch's field day, Gary welcomed salespeople from US Foods with *Certified Hereford Beef* burgers for lunch and then a tour following. Gary had herd bulls, cows with calves and numerous other aspects of the Hedrick's operation on display in order to show the field day guests the process of growth in cattle from birth to the packing house.

The tour included visiting pastures to explain White Hawk Ranch's intensive grazing system, as well as an



Visitors at White Hawk Ranch take pictures of cattle in pasture.

opportunity to explain the feed products the ranch uses. Field day attendees were taught how beef cattle take lesser quality feedstuffs and transform them into a high-quality beef product for human consumption.

"Beef cattle are a necessity to optimize the value of land that can't be used for crop ground. They are economical and play a role in the food chain," Gary told his visitors.

White Hawk Ranch enjoyed hosting this CHB field day because the Hedricks were able to show the men and women who sell *Certified Hereford Beef* products how passionate and dedicated ranchers are in providing humane treatment to animals and quality food for consumers.

Doss Hereford Farms

Located in Smithville, Mo., Gary and Debbie Doss operate Doss Hereford Farms. For the Doss family, raising Hereford cattle and has been their passion for years. Gary says when



Field day attendees interact with cattle at Doss Hereford Farms.

the American Hereford Association launched the *Certified Hereford Beef* brand 25 years ago, he challenged the brand to be the best representation of the Hereford breed.

The Doss family has always believed in delivering a quality product for consumers. When the time came to host a CHB field day, Doss Hereford Farms was a great option to showcase a *Certified Hereford Beef* family.

"We do this because we love meeting new people, and *Certified Hereford Beef* can bring people to our farm as we are not too far from the airport nor the American Hereford Association," Gary says.

The Doss family loves raising Hereford cattle and having an opportunity to showcase them. With the Doss children grown, spending time with the cattle is what Gary and Debbie enjoy most.

Falling Timber Farm

At a foodservice distributor tradeshow, John and Heidi Ridder were welcomed to take part in the *Certified Hereford Beef* booth, which was in place to showcase *Certified Hereford Beef* products to restaurateurs. While at the tradeshow, John and Heidi talked to individuals from the other side of the business: restaurant owners and distributors' salespeople. These individuals were then able to identify the origin of the product they sell, which helped deliver a more meaningful sales presentation.

"We were able to connect to the people who are out representing the CHB brand. I would recommend this experience to anyone," John says.

The tradeshow offered the Ridders a chance to represent the *Certified Hereford Beef* brand off the farm by sharing stories with salespeople about their day-to-day work in production on the farm. John and Heidi operate Falling Timber Farm in Marthasville,



John and Heidi Ridder share their knowledge of the beef industry with foodservice professionals.

Mo., with the help of their children and focus on being a seedstock supplier for the beef industry. The tradeshow welcomed the opportunity to place a connection of *Certified Hereford Beef* products from farm to plate.

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Frank Hug & Sons

Frank Hug & Sons, located in Scranton, Kan., hosted its CHB field day in May 2018. The Hugs welcomed representatives from Kohl Wholesale® of Quincy, Ill., as well as other *Certified Hereford Beef* representatives. The day's events provided a great opportunity for the businesses who market *Certified Hereford Beef* to visit a ranch and to see one of the many sources of cattle that enter the *Certified Hereford Beef* program. Wholesalers were able to gain a deeper understanding

of the *Certified Hereford Beef* brand and how its beef is a quality, competitive product by attending a herd tour with the Hug family.

Through a local locker plant, the Hugs have realized a new market for some of their steers by selling beef directly to a rapidly growing customer base. The Hugs recognize the curiosity of consumers wanting to know the source of the beef on their plate.

2018 was a great year to celebrate the Hug family and Hereford cattle alike. For the Hugs, hosting a CHB field day was a way to commemorate their dedication to the breed. George Hug was the family's first descendant to immigrate from Germany to the U.S. in 1854. He eventually purchased land in Kansas and established a cattle and farming operation in 1864. However, it wasn't until 1896 that the Hugs first introduced registered Hereford cattle into their family operation, but that purchase coined their ranch name. They have been Frank Hug & Sons ever since and have continued raising Hereford cattle throughout the years. The operation has remained a family business over the course of five generations and is currently co-owned by Bob and Tisha Hug and Ed and Gretta Hug. For over 100 of their 124 years in business, Hereford cattle were the only breed to graze the Hugs' pastures.



Two visitors capture an enthusiastic selfie with the cattle.

Schu-Lar Herefords

Bryce Schumann and his family own and operate Schu-Lar Herefords based out of Lecompton, Kan. Having purchased his first Hereford in 1971, Bryce has worked alongside his family in building a Hereford operation focused on advancing the efficiency of beef cattle and providing quality products to consumers. Bryce described his operation by stating, "It's not just about the output for us; it's about reducing the input."

Schu-Lar Herefords has hosted multiple CHB field days in the past. The Schumann family believes in providing an opportunity for foodservice professionals to piece together the factors outside boxed beef. The goal of each ranch tour is to get the attendees to understand a bit more about the production that goes into qualifying for the *Certified Hereford Beef* program. Bryce and his family take their guests to see cattle in the pasture, which is their chosen location to answer questions about the beef industry.

"Hosting a CHB field day is a great opportunity to have some dialogue with folks that deal with end users and understand what their customers are looking for," Bryce explains. "A lot of the folks are foodservice people, but whether its retail or foodservice, it's interesting to learn what they need and want and value. It gives us as producers an opportunity to share a positive message about beef production and creating a sustainable, nutritious and high-quality product they can stock for customers."



Attendees gather to ask questions and learn more about the production sector of the beef industry.

Deer Track Farms

Bob Schaffer, born and raised in the Washington, D.C., area, has a unique upbringing in the Hereford cattle business. Bob grew up without any connection to the agricultural industry, but he developed a passion for cattle and has spent his life making a dream a reality. His current program is Deer Track Farms, which is operated out of Spotsylvania, Va. Bob got into the cattle business in 1993,



Bob rounds up his herd to feed in the pasture.

and he believes in the mission to educate consumers and to provide them with quality food.

"Everyone thinks their beef comes from the grocery store. . . . People need to be informed where their food comes from and what goes into getting it from the farm to the plate," Bob says.

Prior to hosting a field day, Deer Track Farms helped promote the *Certified Hereford Beef* brand at an event, and soon after, Bob received a call to showcase his operation. During the ranch tour, sales representatives were able to see the whole operation from cattle to handling facilities. The field day attendees were given the opportunity to ask questions and to learn as they participated in the tour.

Throughout the ranch tour, Bob spent time explaining the process of growth in cattle. He says he recognizes the negative press livestock producers receive because of how people think animals are treated and that issue is the reason why he showed the salespeople at his farm that the cows live better than he does.

"Today, the only task at hand is to enjoy the farm and raise the best Hereford cattle we can," Bob says.

Fowken Farms

Norris Fowler and his family have been in the Hereford business since 1946, with Norris' father starting the business shortly after his service in World War II. Fowken Farms is located in Jonesville, S.C., and acts as both a proud representative of *Certified Hereford Beef* and a producer of the Hereford breed.

"It's important to be able to merchandise and sell our product — there's competition out there," Norris says. "The wheel that squeaks the loudest gets the most grease. Producers will listen to the consumers' demand."

When beginning the planning process of hosting the CHB field day, Fowken Farms wanted to enhance the knowledge of the individual who serves or sells the final product. By speaking with a chef, Norris says they were able to identify what the producer could do to help sell more *Certified Hereford Beef*. Fowken Farms analyzed their production data and created a program to show field day attendees a complete farm-to-plate process that could be used as a sales tool.

Of all the highlighted points of the field day, Norris says he hoped attendees were able to recognize the



Using their production data, Fowken Farms provided attendees with a program that could be used as a sales tool.

humane way the cattle are treated and, in doing so, be able to describe the supreme way of producing a *Certified Hereford Beef* final product.

For producers looking to host a field day in the future, Norris recommends taking time to methodically plan the day's events and to have an end goal identified.

"We believe in the commodity and we believe in what we produce," Norris says. "We want to find an outlet. Anything we can do to enhance CHB, we will do. We believe our product is superior to other types of beef."

Get involved

The *Certified Hereford Beef* brand is built on the tradition of family farmers and ranchers across the United States. Since the brand's origin in 1995, Hereford producers have not wavered from their dedication to raising high-quality cattle and superior beef. The field days are a testament to that dedication and these end goals. Each field day works to bridge the gap between producers and consumers, as well as to further the mission of the *Certified Hereford Beef* brand.

Contact *Certified Hereford Beef* staff at info@herefordbeef.org with any questions or to request information on how to get involved with *Certified Hereford Beef*. **HW**