

Trade Your Complaints

Exchange your complaints for joy and gratitude.



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Growing up, I discovered one of my favorite old sitcoms was “I Love Lucy.” In fact, I loved Lucy so much my family named our cattle dog after her. Our pup shared a similar spunk and orneriness with her namesake.

In one episode, Lucy finally gets an acting role in a commercial as the spokesperson for a new wellness product advertised to solve all of life’s problems. In an opening line of the script, Lucy asks, “Are you tired, run down, listless?” Several times this year that line came to mind because I have often felt tired, run down and listless. I think many share these feelings as 2021 sometimes felt the same as the year before.

Looking around, it does not take much time to find something that evokes frustration or a similar emotion. If you have ever been surrounded by a group of people who constantly complain, it can be almost too easy to join in. Before you know it, you are also constantly announcing your complaints.

Research suggests some people can complain up to 30 times per day. To account for time you are awake, that would equal almost two times each hour — yikes! So, to counteract this, I am here to encourage the ever-so-popular message of joy for the holidays. However, this joy is less like the type easily found on Christmas morning and more the kind you dig deep to find and intentionally choose.

Farmers and ranchers know all about dealing with the frustration of uncontrollable elements. It can seem like the only thing certain in agriculture is uncertainty. We know in this industry it is better to focus on what we can control. As for the rest, we can prepare for uncertainty, manage risk, control our reactions in problematic situations and exchange complaints for contentment and gratitude.

No, not all our problems can be solved with the contents of one little bottle like Lucy’s concoction suggested, but we can control whether we complain about inconveniences or find reasons for joy and thankfulness.

This year’s American Hereford Association (AHA) Annual Membership Meeting and Conference celebrated such cattlemen and women, as well as youth, who exemplified the theme “Where Grit Builds Greatness.” These folks know well what it means to pull themselves up by the bootstraps and work with what they have. The Hereford breed is lucky to know such tenacious individuals.

In this issue

The AHA hosted its 2021 Annual Membership Meeting and Conference in October. More than 500 attended the event. In a special section starting on Page 26 we honor the many men and women of the Hereford breed who continue to do marvelous work within the Hereford breed and the beef industry. On behalf of the AHA, we would like to thank those who attended as well as our industry sponsors for making this event possible.

Looking ahead, Cattlemen’s Congress is set to take place Jan. 5 in Oklahoma City. The AHA will host the Hereford Night Sale at the event Jan. 7. Sale listings start on Page 65.

Drought conditions are still affecting much of the western United States. Read about ways to manage drought during the winter months on Page 104.

I hope you and yours have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I encourage you to be mindful of the joy you can choose and let go of your complaints. I also challenge you to see how long you can carry out that task into the new year. Perhaps you will make joy a habit. **HW**