

Never Take Freedom for Granted

Build on American and Hereford history.



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Founders of the United States of America gathered in Philadelphia to sign the Declaration of Independence July 4, 1776, proclaiming the new nation's independence from England.

Philadelphians marked the first anniversary of independence in 1777 with spontaneous celebrations in the streets. The first recorded use of the name "Independence Day" occurred in 1791. Independence Day celebrations only became common after the War of 1812. By the 1870s, Independence Day had become the most important secular holiday on the American calendar, evolving into what is now known as the 4th of July.

Once again, Americans will enthusiastically celebrate our patriotism and independence this year with parades, barbecues, picnics and fireworks throughout the country. Please keep the citizens of Ukraine in your thoughts as we do, and pray their conflict will end soon.

Former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo was the keynote speaker at this year's Hemphill County Beef Conference (HCBC) in Canadian, Texas. He talked about Russia's invasion of Ukraine, beyond the obvious humanitarian concerns.

For instance, Ukraine was the world's fourth largest grain exporter in 2020-21. Continuing conflict will prevent that nation from planting, producing and distributing as much grain this year, impacting Ukraine's economy and global grain prices. Looking ahead, Secretary Pompeo explained global leaders are concerned a similar war and disruptions could happen in the future, with China as the protagonist and Taiwan the victim.

Plenty of opportunity ahead

The American Hereford Association (AHA) and Hereford breeders were proud supporters of this year's HCBC, which drew about 700 participants from

10 states. The two-day event featured a powerful slate of speakers who shared thought-provoking messages.

Troy Applehans, Cattle-Fax cow-calf and stocker market analyst, described current challenges facing all cattle producers, from drought to inflation, to rising input costs.

Applehans also shared reasons cattle prices could reach historical highs in the next couple of years. Those reasons include the shrinking U.S. beef cow herd and the strong domestic and international beef demand for quality U.S. beef. He explained beef continues to capture an increased share of consumer protein dollars as its quality and consistency increase.

Also at the conference, Sara Place, Elanco chief sustainability officer, explained why cattle producers must be involved in the unfolding conversation about sustainability, which is currently dominated by global climate change and the carbon footprint of various industries. In this issue, you can read about a new research project AHA is conducting with Colorado State University to begin documenting genetic differences related to greenhouse gas (GHG) production.

Bottom line: U.S. cattle producers have an extraordinarily positive story to share with consumers. Part of that has to do with historic increases in production with fewer inputs.

Within the beef industry, Hereford genetics are positioned even stronger, due to inherent advantages in traits that contribute to efficiency, such as feed consumption, fertility and longevity, as well as the growing use of Hereford genetics to capture direct and maternal heterosis in commercial crossbreeding systems.

Hereford advantages for increased efficiency also contribute mightily to net cow-calf profit potential. **HW**