

# Quality and Carloads

Buyer interest grows for Hereford-influenced feeders.

by *Wes Ishmael*

Offer load lots of Hereford and Hereford-sired baldy calves and feeder cattle to buyers, and they sell for as much or more than any same-class cattle in the market. A growing number of Hereford-influenced calf sales underscore the fact.

So far in 2023, more than 8,000 head have sold through six sales in six states.

“When you look at the growing numbers of cattle marketed through these sales and the price averages relative to the overall market, there’s no question more buyers are finding value in these Hereford and Hereford-influenced calves and feeder cattle,” says Trey Befort, American Hereford Association (AHA) director of commercial programs.

Some of these sales are organized and managed by individual auction markets in areas where Hereford use is prevalent and supported by Hereford breeders.

“The reason we’re doing this Hereford-influenced sale is because we’ve had some exceptional sets of Herefords come through our barn. When they come through, they’re bell ringers and can really go right up there with the best of the blacks,” explains Jarrid Herrmann, owner and manager of Cherokee Sales Co. (CSC), Cherokee, Okla. “We said, ‘Let’s offer something that you can kind of see is becoming a thing of the future.’ I feel like I need to

get in on this thing, and it’s providing an opportunity to not only market great Hereford cattle, but also be a part of something bigger.”

CSC hosted its first Hereford-influenced sale this year. However, Herrmann also now owns Mitchell Livestock Auction in South Dakota where Hereford-influenced calf and feeder cattle sales have been a successful staple for years. Hereford breeders organized the first Mitchell sale and continue to drive its development.

“As far as the quality of cattle that will run through this ring, I will put these Hereford genetics up against any black cattle in America.”

— Brent Lowderman,  
Carthage Livestock Inc.

Brent Lowderman and his family’s Carthage Livestock Inc. at Carthage, Ill., hosted their first Greater Midwest Hereford-Influenced Feeder Calf sale in 2007. There were about 300 head in the first sale. It has grown by 200-300 head every year since with consignors from eight states.

“I’ve said it for years here, as far as the quality of cattle that will run through this ring, I will put these Hereford genetics up against any black cattle in America,” Lowderman says. “These guys

around my area buy good bulls. They know good cattle, and it proves when you lay your eyes on them in this sale ring. We’ll sell several black baldies too.

“... I keep telling the guys with the black cow herds that they need to put a Hereford bull on them. It’s going to put more value in your calves when you sell them across the scale with a little more hybrid vigor. They’re absolutely going to add 25 to 50 more pounds to those calves.”

Besides the quality of the cattle, Lowderman explains, selling load lots enables the cattle to capture top prices.

“You don’t have a guy or guys showing up in a truck and trailer and buying a gooseneck-load of cattle to feed out anymore,”

Lowderman explains. “They absolutely have to be load-lot cattle to get the true top dollar.”

As alluded to, some Hereford-influenced sales are organized by Hereford breeders providing additional marketing avenues to their bull customers, while also serving the interest of buyers.

One example is Burwell Livestock Market’s inaugural Hereford-influence sale held last year in Nebraska. It was organized by the Nebraska Hereford Association (NHA).

“This was definitely membership driven, coming

together to put loads together for feedyards and for slaughter,” says Rudy Pooch, NHA general manager.

“The great quality of cattle here runs parallel with the breeders who manage them, the breeders who raise them. That’s why there’s a premium here. At the end of the day, the buyers follow that. They know they can get carloads together and that gives them better bang for their buck.”

## What buyers want

Genetic potential brings the buyers. Stringent health protocols established by individual sales adds buying confidence.

“There’s very few Hereford cattle that I’ll pass up if I get the opportunity,” says Tom Bedwell who owns and manages Bedwell Feeders at Medicine Lodge, Kan., and also serves as an order buyer. “The quality of cattle has really improved the last 10 years.”

Closeouts of recent pens of straightbred Herefords offer a sterling example of the potential attracting buyers. One notable pen of steers and heifers from Reed Polled Herefords, Clifton, Kan., graded 97.6% USDA Choice and Prime (10% Prime). They were fed at HRC Feed Yards, Scott City, Kan., as part of the Hereford Feedout Program (see below). One of the steers placed fourth overall in the storied, highly competitive Beef Empire Days contest at Garden City, Kan. The steer

hung up a Prime carcass with a Yield Grade of 2.66.

Lee Mayo, HRC Feed Yards general manager, notes one of the packer representatives at the contest pointed out that based on carcass maturity, the steer was also one of the youngest in the competition.

“The data has been invaluable. It shows us that our cattle are on the right track, and the genetics are truly doing what they say they will do,” says Darrin Reed of Reed Polled Herefords. “This was the fourth year we participated in the Hereford Feedout Program, and we’ve made more money than we ever did selling at the sale barn. I highly recommend participating in the AHA Feedout program.”

### Documenting potential

The recently concluded winter-spring Hereford Feedout program included more than 1,400 head of Hereford and Hereford-influenced feeder cattle from 94 participants in 22 states. The numbers encompass the Hereford Feedout Program and the National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) Fed Steer Shootout.

The Hereford Feedout Program offers Hereford breeders and commercial users of Hereford genetics an opportunity to send a few head or entire pens to HRC Feed Yards. Participants receive ongoing updates about how their cattle are performing while on feed and then receive individual carcass data along with a collective summary of all cattle enrolled in the program to see how their cattle performed relative to the entire group.

“Every year, we see increased interest in these programs from our members and their customers because

of the value they find in benchmarking feedlot and carcass performance in their programs and then tracking subsequent performance relative to their benchmark,” Befort says.

Growing interest in the program led AHA to offer an added feeding period each year.

“The value of this information and being more closely engaged with the cattle feeding sector has always been important. It is becoming invaluable as more cattle are channeled into specification-based, value-added areas of the supply chain,” Befort says. **BA**

For more information about participating in the Hereford Feedout Program, please see [Hereford.org/genetics/breed-improvement/feedout-program](https://www.hereford.org/genetics/breed-improvement/feedout-program). For a listing of upcoming Hereford-influenced feeder calf sales, visit [Hereford.org/commercial/programs/feeder-cattle-sales/](https://www.hereford.org/commercial/programs/feeder-cattle-sales/)

## Hereford-influence Feeder Sales

### Faith Livestock Auction Hereford Influence Grass Cattle/Yearling Special

Date: Aug. 21, 2023  
Location: Faith Livestock Auction – Faith, SD  
Contact: 605-967-2200

### Ogallala Livestock Yearling Special featuring Hereford & Red Angus Section

Date: Sept. 28, 2023  
Location: Ogallala Livestock Auction Market - Ogallala, NE  
Contact: 308-284-2071

### Aberdeen Livestock Sales Co. Hereford Influenced Yearling Special

Date: Oct. 9, 2023  
Location: Aberdeen Livestock Sales Co. – Aberdeen, SD  
Contact: Kevin Larson, 605-225-2062

### Faith Livestock Auction Hereford Influence Feeder Calf Special

Date: Oct. 16, 2023  
Location: Faith Livestock Auction – Faith, SD  
Contact: 605-967-2200

### Ogallala Livestock Calf Special featuring Hereford & Red Angus Section

Date: Oct. 26, 2023  
Location: Ogallala Livestock Auction Market - Ogallala, NE  
Contact: 308-284-2071

### Cherokee Sales Co. Hereford-influenced Calf Special

Date: Nov. 15, 2023  
Location: Cherokee Sales, Co. - Cherokee, Okla.  
Contact: Jarrid Herrmann, 785-564-0869

### Tennessee Hereford Marketing Program Feeder Calf Sale

Date: Nov. 15, 2023  
Location: United Producers Columbia Livestock Center - Columbia, Tenn.  
Contact: Richard Brown, 931-239-9785

### Nebraska Hereford Assn. Hereford Influence Sale

Date: Nov. 17, 2023  
Location: Burwell Livestock Market – Burwell, Neb.  
Contact: Trevor Toelle, 308-214-1543

### Kansas Hereford Assn. Feeder Calf and Female Sale

Date: Dec. 13, 2023  
Location: Parsons Livestock Auction - Parsons, Kan.  
Contact: Wade Dillinger, 620-421-2900

### Kentucky Hereford Assn. Certified Hereford-influenced Feeder Calf Sale

Date: Dec. 14, 2023  
Location: Blue Grass Stockyards - Lexington, Ky.  
Contact: L.W. Beckley, DVM, 859-779-1419

### Premium Whiteface Feeder Calf Sale hosted by MN Hereford Breeders

Date: Dec. 14, 2023  
Location: Pipestone Livestock Auction Market - Pipestone, Minn.  
Contact: 507-825-3306

### Aberdeen Livestock Sales Co. Hereford Influenced Feeder Special

Date: Dec. 18, 2023  
Location: Aberdeen Livestock Sales Co. – Aberdeen, SD  
Contact: Kevin Larson, 605-225-2062

### Cherokee Sales Co. Hereford-influenced Calf Special

Date: Dec. 20, 2023  
Location: Cherokee Sales, Co.- Cherokee, Okla.  
Contact: Jarrid Herrmann, 785-564-0869

For more information about these sales, please contact the representatives noted above. For a listing of sales including those scheduled for 2024, please see [Hereford.org/commercial/programs/feeder-cattle-sales/](https://www.hereford.org/commercial/programs/feeder-cattle-sales/). **BA**