

## Decisions, Decisions

Make the right selections this winter and spring.



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We're quickly approaching the holidays and picking a Christmas tree is hard work. The options are endless. Do I want a 7-foot artificial fir with white lights, or maybe multi-colored lights? I even considered a pink tree or one of those upside-down trees — nothing is off the table.

And then, I need to answer the question: How am I going to decorate it? I grew up decorating a tree with mix-matched ornaments, from Barbies and Breyer horses to John Deere tractors and handmade glass icicles. Our Christmas tree was adorned with a collection of experiences, sentimental items, things we enjoyed and places we've been. Do I deviate from family tradition and pick up a box of carefully curated ornaments from Hobby Lobby?

I had too many questions and not enough answers. So, I went to work, researching prices, reading reviews, seeking advice from friends, etc.

The hunt for a Christmas tree suiting my budget and snug apartment is not unlike the search for the next bull prospect or donor pen addition. There are questions to research, goals to outline and budgets to consider. While the fall sale season is complete, bull sale season is right around the corner. And whatever you end up with, you'll have to look at, maintain and use. Similar to my Christmas tree, the animal will call your place home for years. It must be a good fit.

I didn't put a Christmas tree up last year. I didn't think I needed one, until its absence made me homesick. This year, I landed on a 7.5-foot artificial Augusta pine. I'll spend the rest of my life collecting ornaments and decorations for my tree, as is my family tradition. A box of ornaments from a store would only be a short-term solution — and not one that works for me.

I know what's going to suit me. Like the Christmas tree, there are countless options and ways you can go, and every herd and its needs are different. Make sure you know the same when purchasing your bulls and other livestock this spring.

### In this issue

The December 2023 *Hereford World* is packed with coverage from the American Hereford Association (AHA) Annual Meeting and Educational Forum, held Oct. 19-22, beginning on Page 26. You'll find the newly elected Board of Directors, Hereford Hall of Fame and Merit inductees, American Royal champions and more throughout the special section.

The holiday season means events like Cattlemen's Congress are approaching quickly. This year's Hereford Herdsman of the Year candidates and Cattlemen's Congress preview can be found on Page 68.

This year's Annual Meeting theme was "Efficiency Pays. Numbers Matter." However, throughout the four days, another theme was present: people. The people are what make the Hereford breed successful.

Hall of Fame inductee Marty Lueck summed it up best: "I had a friend and a mentor I worked with while I was on the American Polled Hereford Association Board when he was director of field staff, Johnny Winston. If I've heard him say this once, I've heard him say it 100 times. He'd get up and give his pre-sale speech, and he'd say, 'Folks, we all call this the cattle business. But it's really a people business.' And because of all the people in this room, and the ones that came before us and the ones that will come after us, that's going to hold true." **HW**