

Hereford History and Progress Up Close

World Hereford Conference pre-tour offers a rare opportunity.

“I’m excited for the World Hereford Conference because I think that no matter where you’re from, the love for Hereford cattle runs deep. The love for the breed spans oceans,” says Denise Loyning of L Bar W Cattle Co., Absarokee, Mont. “It’s going to be a once-in-a-lifetime experience not only for folks displaying cattle but for those making the trip.”

Loyning is talking about the World Hereford Conference (WHC) tours before and after the event. As a stop on the pre-conference “Herefords in Big Sky Country” tour, she looks forward to showcasing their operation and Hereford cattle in the state.

“These tours before and after the conference in Kansas City are designed with the thought in mind of showing the great hospitality and the great progress that U.S. Hereford breeders have made,” says Shane Bedwell, American Hereford Association (AHA) chief operating officer and director of breed improvement. “Whether you’re 100 miles away from the tour locations or thousands of miles away, we want you there.”

Montana is an apt place to set the stage for the WHC and tours. It is home to plenty of breed history and current-day breed leaders. The state is also commonly regarded as the fountainhead

of Line 1 Hereford cattle, founded in 1934 at USDA’s Fort Keogh Livestock and Range Research Laboratory in Miles City.

Montana ranked seventh among all states for bulls and females registered through the AHA during fiscal year 2023-24. It ranks sixth in the U.S. for the number of beef cows, with 1.3 million head as of Jan. 1, 2025 (4.5% of the U.S. total), according to the USDA *Cattle* report. In fact, cattle are key to making agriculture the largest industry in the state.

Besides having the opportunity to see globally recognized Hereford genetics and seedstock producers, visitors will meet tour hosts who have attended the WHC in other host countries. Along the way, participants can enjoy the Big Sky Country’s rugged, breathtaking beauty, which spans 147,042 square miles.

“I think the opportunity for all Hereford enthusiasts to make connections and interact with one another during these tours is going to be priceless,” Bedwell says. “I know of nowhere else you’re going to be able to spend time with a really great nucleus of Hereford breeders than on these tours, while getting to see some great Hereford cattle in the process.” **HW**



Big Sky Tour Schedule

Thursday, Oct. 16

1. Arrive in Billings, Mont.

Friday, Oct. 17

2. Tour NJW Polled Herefords, Decker, Mont.
Evening event to be determined

Saturday, Oct. 18

- Hereford cattle on display at Northern International Livestock Exposition (NILE)
3. Tour L Bar W Cattle Co., Absarokee, Mont.

Sunday, Oct. 19

4. Tour Feddes Herefords, Manhattan, Mont.
5. Tour Churchill Cattle Co., Manhattan, Mont.
6. Tour Storey Hereford Ranch, Bozeman, Mont., with Ehlke Herefords, Townsend, Mont. (7), as guests
8. Cooper Hereford Ranch, Willow Creek, Mont.
9. Holden Herefords, Valier, Mont. (at Cooper Herefords)
Evening event at Cooper Hereford Ranch

Monday, Oct. 20

- Explore Big Sky Country on your own
Optional activities include:
10. Explore Yellowstone National Park, Gardiner, Mont.

Tuesday, Oct. 21

- Travel from Bozeman, Mont., to Kansas City, Mo.

For updates, please see WorldHerefordConference.com/Herefords-in-Big-Sky-Country. HW



Big Sky Tour Herds



Churchill Cattle Co.
Manhattan, Mont.
churchillcattle.com



Holden Herefords
Valier, Mont.
holdenherefords.com



Cooper Hereford Ranch
Willow Creek, Mont.
cooperherefords.com



L Bar W Cattle Co.
Absarokee, Mont.
lbarw.com



Ehlke Herefords
Townsend, Mont.
ehlkeherefords.com



NJW Polled Herefords
Sheridan, Wyo., and Decker, Mont.
njwherefords.com



Feddes Herefords
Manhattan, Mont.
feddes.com



Storey Hereford Ranch
Bozeman, Mont.
storeyherefordranch.com