

## Momentum Matters

Hereford programs and initiatives contribute to the breed's growing momentum.



Sydnee Shive is the managing editor of *Hereford World*. She can be reached at [sshive@hereford.org](mailto:sshive@hereford.org).

Whether it's a football game, sale day or simply implementing a new practice on the farm or ranch, momentum matters. Wherever there is motion, there also can be momentum. Momentum is powerful; without it, it's hard to win.

Hereford continues to establish momentum through American Hereford Association (AHA) programs and initiatives, like the National Reference Sire Program (NRSP). The NRSP is a tool that's been powering genetic improvement for more than 25 years, allowing breeders to test young sires in a real-world, commercial environment.

Similarly, the Dams of Distinction (DOD) program was developed more than 20 years ago and helped lay the framework for continuously improving maternal traits. The program recognizes superior cows in the breed and the cattle producers who manage them based on data submitted to the AHA. Efficient, fertile and productive females are the foundation of the most successful cow herds.

The Sires of Distinction (SOD) program complements the DOD, recognizing Hereford bulls that sire efficient, fertile and productive females. To be honored as a Sire of Distinction, a bull's daughters must have received at least seven Dams of Distinction awards.

### Momentum by design

The 2022-2027 Strategic Plan establishes a method to grow momentum. Since the unveiling of the plan in October 2022, the AHA has worked to fulfill its goals through new programs, initiatives and research.

Hereford-influenced females, like the baldy and tiger stripe, are the most sought-after cattle in the beef business. When the AHA introduced *Baldy Advantage* in lieu of the tabloid issue, it reaffirmed its commitment to the commercial producer. The publication features commercial operations across the U.S. while highlighting the value

of Hereford-influenced commercial females and showcasing ever-increasing demand for Hereford-influenced feeder cattle, meeting more than one initiative outlined in the Strategic Plan.

Moreover, the Hereford Seedstock Academy aligns with Strategy No. 5: Build a Pipeline of Future Leaders. The third annual event will be Sept. 2-5, and applications are now open. The program provides numerous hands-on experiences and exposes young Hereford breeders to the inner workings of the AHA and Certified Hereford Beef<sup>®</sup>, provides a firsthand look at the NRSP test herd at Olsen Ranches, Harrisburg, Neb., and connects future breed leaders with their peers.

Furthermore, programs ranging from the National Junior Hereford Association Fed Steer Shootout and Hereford Feedout to the Whole Herd Total Performance Records (TPR<sup>™</sup>) reporting system also help make the most of momentum.

### In this issue

In the April issue of *Hereford World*, we traditionally feature the DOD and SOD programs. The 2024 list of DODs can be found on Page 28, and SODs are on Page 38. In 2024, 2,488 females earned the Dam of Distinction honor.

We are quickly approaching World Hereford Conference (WHC). The second installment in our WHC informational series, featuring Herefords in Big Sky Country pre-tour information, is on Page 42. Results from our final national show of the 2024-2025 year, the Fort Worth Stock Show, are on Page 48.

Lastly, Shane Bedwell, AHA chief operating officer and director of breed improvement, provides an overview and data from the NRSP's 2023-born calves at Olsen Ranches on Page 20.

Hereford momentum continues to grow thanks to the hard work of breeders and their constant steps toward improvement. **HW**