

## Celebrate Summer with Beef

Grilling season kicks off with the first days of summer.



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The high temperature in Kansas City, Mo., March 10 was 72 degrees — the warmest since Oct. 30, 2024, according to the National Weather Service. I suppose that about sums up the long winter the Midwest experienced. However, the signs of spring and the upcoming summer season are showing — the grass is getting greener, the days are getting longer and the weather is getting warmer. Calving has wrapped up for many producers, and spring sales are winding down.

With the arrival of spring and summer, it's also more common to fire up the grill. Already, when walking around my neighborhood, there's a clear, dramatic increase in grills on patios. And beef remains a popular protein choice for consumers.

According to the most recent *Beef Industry Review and Consumer Insights* (BIRCI) from the industry's Beef Checkoff-funded research program, fresh beef retail sales eclipsed \$40 billion last year and represented more than 55% of all fresh meat sales.

In terms of dollars, beef occupies a majority of the retail fresh meat sales and has one of the largest shares in terms of volume sales, per the BIRCI, with fresh ground beef encompassing half of beef sales in volume at the retail meat case and 36% of dollar sales.

Furthermore, 2025 marks the 30th anniversary of Certified Hereford Beef® (CHB). Established in 1995, CHB is a unique premium branded beef program that draws in consumers with a consistent, flavorful and tender product.

Hereford producers have worked hard over the past 30 years to improve the breed's carcass quality and increase demand for *Certified Hereford Beef*. Consumers can see it on their plates, and breeders can see it in the ever-

increasing quality grades on the rail and the high demand for Hereford and Hereford-influenced feeder cattle.

Consumer demand for beef remains strong, even amidst economic uncertainty. Do not forget to speak with your dollars too, and serve *Certified Hereford Beef* at your sales, events and upcoming summer gatherings.

### In this issue

The May/June issue of *Hereford World* annually celebrates *Certified Hereford Beef*. This year's CHB Sires of Distinction list can be found on Page 32 — almost 1,400 bulls made the list. All must be in the top 25% for the *Certified Hereford Beef* (CHB\$) profit index and have a minimum accuracy level of 25% for both ribeye area (REA) and marbling (MARB) expected progeny differences (EPDs). The program recognizes bulls in the Hereford breed excelling in bottom-line profit potential in the feedlot and on the rail. All bulls have the opportunity, but only a small percentage qualifies for this honor.

Domestic meat sales reached a record high of \$104.6 billion last year, and pounds sold climbed 2.3% year over year, according to the 20th annual *Power of Meat* report. The full report is featured on Page 28.

The 26th annual VitaFerm® Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE) is quickly approaching. A preview of this year's JNHE, "Live from Louisville," July 12-18 in Louisville, Ky., begins on Page 51. This includes the schedule and bios for this year's judges, along with information about two new events in 2025, including the National Junior Hereford Association Meet-Up – Powered by Sure Champ® and the oral reasons contest. **HW**