

## Proof of Progress

Hereford continues building momentum in 2026.



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The 2026 Winter Olympics recently wrapped up, and there's a lot to be proud of when some of America's best athletes come together to represent our flag on a global stage. I have fond memories of gathering around the TV with my family to watch legends like Apolo Ohno, Lindsey Vonn and Simone Biles, and every two years, I seem to find a couple of new favorites.

I love the stories that come from the Olympics. Stories about hard work, progress made and goals reached. The stories about overcoming obstacles and challenges. The underdog stories, surprise winners, come-from-behind finishes and the grit it takes to get a gold medal.

I also enjoy seeing the progress different countries make every two years — we see which countries catch up, which countries fall behind and who continually offers strong competition.

With the Olympics, it's pretty easy to measure progress based on the podium. For example — a U.S. man medaled in cross-country skiing for the first time in 50 years when Ben Ogden secured silver in the sprint classic. That is progress.

Two months into 2026, it is evident the Hereford breed has made positive progress over the past 5-10 years and is positioned to make more history. During January and early February, Hereford and commercial sales have had unprecedented levels of success. We can measure progress in the historically high sale averages, crystalline increased demand for bald-faced cattle and the supreme champions named in the showing. The proof is easy to see.

### In this issue

There's no doubt the first two weeks of January, between Cattlemen's Congress and the National Western Stock Show (NWSS), started the year off on the right foot. Between the two shows, more than 800 head of cattle were shown, and nearly \$1.7 million worth of cattle were sold. That dollar amount is even higher when you consider commercial sales from both events. Results from Cattlemen's Congress start on Page 38 and results from the NWSS begin on Page 71.

Between the 2025 Cattlemen's Congress and 2026 Cattlemen's Congress, four different Hereford bulls were named supreme champion at five national shows. One of my favorite memories from the 2025 World Hereford Conference was watching the legendary Jim Williams name a Hereford bull supreme champion at what was likely the last show in the American Royal's Hale Arena. More information about those supreme champions can be found on Page 26.

On Page 100, you will find Sales Digest: 2025 in Review. There are several reasons I look forward to the March issue each year, but I particularly like compiling and reviewing the yearly production and consignment sale data and comparing it to the previous year. Hereford bulls averaged \$8,778, and females averaged \$8,616 — this is a significant increase from 2024. January and early February Hereford sales were off to an unbelievably hot start, and I expect those year-end numbers to be even higher in next year's March issue.

Lastly, the annual AI Book rides along with the March *Hereford World*. This year's book features 72 pages of bulls from breeders coast-to-coast. Flip through the pages, study the sires and use it to make more progress. **HW**