Feed Efficiency, Meat Quality, Docile Temperament, all in a Whiteface Package

By Tom Krauss, Chairman & Tom Granzow, Manager of the National Hereford Feedout

Reprinted with kind Permission of Hereford America

Above: Steers at Upstream Ranch, Taylor, NE.

The Hereford breed has long been known for being fertile, efficient, and easier to handle than the other breeds, but data gathered over the past several years backs this up conclusively, and also shows that the Hereford breed excels in meat quality, too. More and more, the industry is waking up to realize that this great breed of cattle does indeed have what it takes to be a vibrant part of the beef industry and is poised to improve the beef cattle herd as a whole in the United States and around the world. Efficiency is the buzzword, and the Hereford breed has compiled the firepower in data to prove that we are the most efficient breed in the industry. Efficiency is inherent to Herefords, and we prove it every day.

In data collected through the Genetic Outreach Program and more recently the National Hereford Feedout, the Hereford breed shines through in gain, efficiency of gain and in meat quality. The GOP was started in 1994 by the American Hereford Association (AHA) and has been administered every year since then, currently being managed by the Kansas Hereford Association and the AHA. With over 12 years of data collected on over 7,000 steers, the results show that Herefords had an average daily gain of 10% better than the Kansas yard averages of the time frame, converted dry matter feed at a 9.2% better average and also had a more than 9% overall advantage in cost of gain. What is more interesting is that over the time of the test, the Herefords actually have improved against the averages in all of these categories. We have indeed made significant progress through the diligent breeding practices of Hereford breeders. These cattle were efficient way before $4.00 corn and $100 grass hay. It proves that efficiency goes hand in hand with Herefords, so let's take it to the industry now. The facts are in.

In meat quality these cattle have also shown to do quite well. Ribeye area has steadily improved along with the marbling scores. Yield grades have consistently been exactly what the industry wants with an overall average of 3.15. This shows that the genetic trends in the Hereford breed are right on target with industry needs. In recent studies conducted by independent entities, preliminary

Pairs at Rausch Herefords, Hoven, SD

results that were reported on at Kansas State University's Cattlemen's Day showed that Hereford cattle have more DNA markers for tenderness than any other breed. These preliminary studies also show that Hereford beef eats as good and is as tender and juicy at the Select grade as other breeds are at Choice. These studies seem to show what the Hereford breed learned in the Colorado State trials that were run in the early '90s that started Certified Hereford Beef. Less fat with just as good of an eating quality should be touted as a healthier product for the consuming public.

Recently, Iowa State University released the results of a study on temperament and how it affects the final product of the beef industry and how this relates to profit. Their results showed that more docile cattle are worth as much as $62 per head more when compared to less docile cattle. That is significant. They also showed pictures of Hereford cattle when publishing the results of the study. It is certainly well known that Herefords are the most docile and easy to handle cattle in the industry.

Furthermore, the U.S. Meat Animal Research Center's recent Germplasm Evaluation Progress Report No. 22 adds even more proof to the Hereford's claim of as the leader in feed efficiency. Six harvest points were evaluated for performance per unit of feed energy consumed comparing Hereford, Angus, Red Angus, Gelbvieh, Limousin, Charolais and Simmental genetics against each other. In 4 of the 6 harvest points (fed for 187 days as calf feds, fed for 550 lbs. gain, fed to a backfat endpoint of .43 inches, and a fed to a fat trim endpoint of 24.8%) Herefords were the most feed efficient for all the breeds tested. When fed to a marbling endpoint of Small 35, Herefords came in third behind Angus and Red Angus and were substantially more efficient than the Continentals. Finally, when fed to a retail product endpoint of 456 lbs. of red meat yield, Herefords came in 4th, but easily outperformed Angus and Red Angus genetics as well as outpacing the Gelbviehs.

The data revealed in this article, collected over time, should be the selling point in today's modern beef industry as to why Hereford genetics are the smart way to go when making selections to improve the beef cattle of today. These trends enhance the position of Herefords and add to the time-honored and many times proven range efficiency and fertility of the Hereford sired female that we all know about and has been proven time and time again.

These studies and trials are being backed up every day by studies being conducted in the U.S. and around the world, but here are results that can be used now to show the industry what we have and how it can benefit the beef industry.

TABLE 8. BREED OF SIRE MEANS FOR ESTIMATES OF FEED EFFICIENCY (LIVE WEIGHT GAIN PER UNIT METABOLIZABLE ENERGY CONSUMED PER LB/MCAL) FOR ALTERNATIVE INTERVALS AND ENDPOINTS

Sire Breed	Time 178 days	Weight 750-1300 lb	Marbling Small 35	Fat Thickness .43 inches	Fat Trim 24.80%	Retail Product 456 lbs.
Hereford	0.1306	0.1275	0.1289	0.1334	0.1331	0.1256
Angus	0.1248	0.1236	0.1344	0.1312	0.1319	0.1214
Red Angus	0.1227	0.1202	0.1329	0.1273	0.1291	0.1159
Simmental	0.1265	0.1271	0.125	0.1226	0.1233	0.133
Gelbvieh	0.1221	0.1201	0.1182	0.1185	0.1182	0.1246
Limousin	0.1281	0.123	0.1223	0.1243	0.1248	0.13
Charolais	0.1202	0.1202	0.1117	0.1151	0.1158	0.1264

NATIONAL HEREFORD FEEDOUT (GOP) RESULTS									KANSAS YARD AVE		
TEST	HEAD	ADG	Dry Feed Eff.	REA	FAT	YG	IMF	COG/lb.	Feed Eff	ADG	cog/cwt
2006 Spring	63	4.27	4.91	13.26	0.48	3.4	4.74	0.441	5.81	3.33	52.45
2006 Winter	294	3.8	5.04	13.3	0.56	3.2	4.8	0.45	5.82	3.02	52.55
2005 June	26	3.63	4.65	12.75	0.54	3.25	4.6	0.415	5.82	3.67	50.09
2005 Spring	142	3.57	5.24	13	0.54	3.12	4.6	0.44	5.86	3.4	50.61
2005 Winter	224	3.6	4.78	12.6	0.43	2.8	4.6	0.41	5.91	3.24	51.72
2004 Winter	139	3.72	4.72	13.34	0.52	2.81	4.35	0.48	5.81	3.31	51.72
2004 Winter	43	3.88	5.09	12.78	0.49	3.09	4.96	N/A	5.81	3.31	51.72
2004 Spring	183	3.99	5.22	13.51	0.73	3.68	4.68	N/A	5.81	3.31	56.98
2003 Spring	227	3.88	5.43	12.3	0.61	3.6	3.7	0.48	5.7	3.4	52.21
2003 Winter	115	3.61	5.15	12.8	0.54	3.1	4.9	0.46	5.7	3.4	52.21
2002 Test	395	3.84	5.89	12.9	0.62	3.4	4.7	0.44	5.91	3.32	48.26
2001 Test	421	3.73	5.47	12.3	0.56	3.5	4.9	0.45	6.01	3.15	49.16
2000 August	30	3.1	6.06	12.36	0.46	2.92	4.86	N/A	5.98	3.59	44.65
2000 Spring	155	3.13	5.69	12.3	0.48	3	4.8	0.45	5.87	3.3	43.16
2000 Fall	814	3.75	5.32	12.4	0.5	3.1	4.9	0.4	5.87	3.3	43.16
1999 Test	1380	3.45	6.28	12.4	0.4	2.91	254	0.49	5.81	3.41	43.49
1998 Test	790	3.4	5.6	10.6	0.48	2.9	292	0.48	6.16	3.2	54.67
1997 Test	385	3.85	5.88	12.3	0.46	2.86	360	0.51	6.08	3.31	54.67
1996 Test	574	3.49	N/A	11.78	0.55	3.28	N/A	N/A	6.02	3.3	67.04
1995 Test	309	3.19	N/A	12.15	0.5	3.09	N/A	N/A	6.25	3.11	54.96
1994 Test	408	3.56	5.7	12.43	0.51	3.16	N/A	N/A	6.14	3.18	54.71
AVE.	7117	3.64	5.37	12.55	0.56	3.15	4.67	.4526/lb	5.91	3.31	51.43/cwt

Starting with the 2000 fall test, coventional IMF scores are used

Pre-2000, standard packing marbling scores are used

Marbling Score	
200-249	slight
250-299	slight
300-399	small
400-499	modest
500-599	moderate
600-699	slightly abundant

all Kansas Yard Average data was compiled by Kansas State University from the following feedlots

Brookover Ranch Feedyard, Decatur County Feedyard, DM&M Feedyard, Supreme Cattle Feeders, Hy Plains Feedyard, rs, Kearney County Feedyard Inc., & Poke; Inc, Pokey Feeders & Hy Plains Feedyard