

Registered Hereford cattle in New Zealand have had a very strong year and staff and board members are busy providing support to breeders, marketing the successes and determining the future path for the Association.

The Association was fortunate to co-host, with Beef + Lamb New Zealand, the annual “Power of the Beef Cow Field Day” at an outstanding high-country station, Alpha Burn, overlooking Lake Wanaka in the South Island. The McRae family buy registered Hereford genetics to put over the cow herd with a key focus on heifer mating. As opposed to many NZ hill country farms, where cattle are managed around sheep, the McRae family place more importance on cattle management. The introduction of fodder beet and increased winter crop yields has enabled them to winter more heifers and reach their 15-month mating target weights of 300kg LW, which was a critical factor for herd expansion. With 3165 ha of well farmed hill country, stunning views, knowledgeable speakers and great Herefords, the day proved to be a success and fulfilled its aim of marketing registered Herefords to commercial hill farmers.

This year the Annual Hereford Herd Tour was hosted by Taranaki, on the West Coast of the North Island. It was clear to any members who attended that, despite the club’s remoteness, they have some top genetics and young and enthusiastic breeders who are farming well and bringing great ideas to the Association. During the Herd Tour, the Hereford Youth held their annual auction when two heifers were sold from Lance and Janelle Downs’s Stud, Tawanui, for \$6,500 and \$7, 500, which proved to be the top heifer prices for the year. The youth appreciated the support and used the funds to organise a fantastic three-day Technical Tour. On the tour they attended a processing plant that specialised in processing Hereford Prime products, visited Livestock Improvement Corporation for education around semen collection and AI, and viewed some local herds, discussing selection and breeding objectives.

Following on from the Herd Tour, the National Show and Sales, Tru-Test Beef Expo, proved to be another successful show for the breed, once again achieving the highest breed average of NZ \$14, 083 across the sale. Chris and Amanda Jeffries (Hawkridge Run) sold their bull, Grassmere Gallant 152, for the top price of \$40,000, to Koanui Polled Hereford Stud. At the time we were all unaware that we were attending the last Beef Expo after 28 years. Due to increasing costs, greater time demands and Health and Safety requirements, in 2018 the National Sale will be held by video. This change has been accepted well by Hereford members as the ‘grazing unit’, where the Hereford bulls are grazed for 14 weeks prior to the sale, will continue to play an important role. Not only does the grazing unit provide a level playing field for all the entrants but also gives purchasers a great opportunity to view the bulls in a natural environment, prior to the sale.



Bull Walk at controlled Grazing Farm prior to NZ National Bull Sale (2017)

NEW ZEALAND HEREFORD ASSOCIATION

PO Box 503, 75 South Street, Feilding, New Zealand 4740
 T. 06 323 4484 F. 06 323 3878 E. office@herefords.co.nz

Bull sales proved to be strong in both islands, with bulls being evenly sold to commercial farmers and stud breeders. Spring and Autumn calving in both islands was testing this year, due to the higher than average rainfall. Now, as we approach Christmas, the ground is drying out and, typically, the East Coast of both islands needs rain. The dairy/Hereford cross continues to be in high demand with top Hereford/Friesian four day old bull calves fetching between NZ \$260 - \$300.



National Bull Sale Ring Sale Ring at NZ National Bull Sale, Feilding NZ

The most recent success story for the breed was at the Canterbury Show, where the Gibson Family (Foulden Hill Ltd) won the Prestigious inter-breed Meat and Wool cup with their yearling bull, Foulden Hill Mustang 16-381. The judge said Mustang “had tremendous volume and width across the loin, and was a clear winner”. It was certainly their show this year, as they also won several other classes, including the Heifer (2 years), with Foulden Hill Pearl 15335.

The NZ Hereford Association is currently going through a technical change, moving from microsatellite DNA testing to SNP DNA testing. The Association is working with B+L Genetics NZ to identify and test the NZ training population on a 50K SNP chip. Some members have already started testing their progeny on a 10K chip in NZ using tissue sample units (TSUs). The Association hopes that by this time next year all breeders will be using SNP testing and Single Step analysis will be adopted, similar to our Australian colleagues. The NZHA breeders in general are looking forward to using this improved technology, which will assist them further in their breed objectives. The next step for the NZHA technical committee is to have a closer look at our carcass data.

NEW ZEALAND HEREFORD ASSOCIATION

PO Box 503, 75 South Street, Feilding, New Zealand 4740
T. 06 323 4484 F. 06 323 3878 E. office@herefords.co.nz



Blue Tag Bulls Hereford Bulls with Blue 'H' Tags

World Hereford Conference planning has started in earnest and we invite you to keep abreast of developments with our Facebook and web page. Queenstown will be a magnificent venue and the opportunity to see Herefords on iconic high-country stations and learn about the latest farming technology. So, start planning and mark the dates in your diary now – March 8-13th, 2020!

Posy Moody
GM NZHA

NEW ZEALAND HEREFORD ASSOCIATION

PO Box 503, 75 South Street, Feilding, New Zealand 4740
T. 06 323 4484 F. 06 323 3878 E. office@herefords.co.nz

herefords.co.nz