

Polled Hereford Young Sire Test enrollments announced

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — The Polled Hereford Young Sire Test (PHYST) is off to a strong start with five test sires, four reference sires, 15 cooperating herds and 445 cows enrolled in the program, according to Jim Gibb, American Polled Hereford Association (APHA) Director of Education and Research.

The primary objective of this new program is to allow owners to gain early listing of young bulls in the Polled Hereford Sire Summary by providing complimentary semen and A.I. certificates to cooperating registered Polled Hereford herds. In turn, cooperating herds earn A.I. certificates and semen on test sires and reference sires in exchange for collecting and submitting performance data on the calves to the APHA.

The five test sires enrolled are FLF King Pin 2003, owned by Falklands Farm, Schellsburg, Pa.; Anhinga Vic 37J 69R, owned

by Anhinga Farms, Tallahassee, Fla., and Marshall Lee, Quincy, Fla.; EF Power Driver 254P, owned by Ellis Farms, Chrisman, Ill., Randall Cromer, Spencer, Ind., and Tony Schantz, Bloomfield, Ind.; EF 964 Victor 309P, owned by Ellis Farms and Don Haas, Borden, Ind.; and WSF Mainstream 186P, owned by Wooden Shoe Farms, Othello, Wash., and Hawley Polled Hereford Ranch, Cottage Grove, Ore.

The reference sires used in the herds were all 1984 Total Performance Trait Leaders. Included were Gold Seal Sire GK Justification, Gold Standard Sires RWJ Victor J3 212 and WSF PRL Justa Banner, and Superior Sire Vindicator. The cows bred to the nine sires are scheduled to calve in the spring.

To become involved in the PHYST program as a cooperating herd, a breeder contacts the APHA and requests a list of available

bulls. Each breeder must be willing to breed a minimum of 10 cows to a test bull and 10 cows to a reference sire. The cooperators send a list of the test sires selected and the cows to be bred in the program to the APHA, who then randomly assigns the matings.

The breeders are responsible for sending to the APHA the breeding date and pregnancy status of the cows, plus birth date, calving ease score, birth weight, weaning date and weight, yearling date and weight, scrotal circumference and hip height for the calves.

Each cooperator is eligible to receive one free A.I. certificate for every two calves with complete data sired by the test and reference sires, if 20 or more progeny of these sires are produced in the herd. If there are less than 20 calves sired by the test and reference sires in the herd, the cooperator is eligible to receive one A.I. certificate for every three

calves sired by the bulls. Semen is provided at no cost to the cooperator.

Commercial herds are also welcome to participate in the PHYST program. Instead of being compensated with A.I. certificates, commercial herd cooperators will be paid a straight fee for each calf produced with complete records.

Nominations for PHYST bulls

for future tests will be accepted at any time, with an Oct. 1, nomination deadline for bulls to be used in fall calving programs and a Feb. 1, deadline for bulls to be used in spring calving herds. The APHA is also searching for more cooperative herds to participate in the fall 1984 breeding season. The cost for the test bull owner is \$1,000 per bull to cover semen and certificate cost of the reference sires and semen shipping costs.

USDA urges horse owners

to vaccinate for sleeping sickness

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A U.S. Department of Agriculture veterinarian today urged all horse owners to have their animals vaccinated for encephalitis, also known as "equine sleeping sickness."

Dr. Chester Gipson of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service said the disease often becomes a serious problem when mosquito populations build up during warmer months.

"Vaccines are effective for only one year, so revaccination is necessary each spring or early summer," he said.

Gipson said combination vaccines are available for western, eastern and Venezuelan equine encephalitis.

The western and eastern encephalitis strains occur seasonally in many parts of the United States. The Venezuelan strain has not appeared in this country since 1971, but vaccination against it is

recommended along the Mexican border and the Gulf Coast, he said.

"Research has shown that Venezuelan equine encephalitis has many hosts," Gipson said. "It is not known which of these hosts may harbor the virus or when the disease may reemerge."

All three kinds of sleeping sickness could affect humans as well as horses. Birds usually function as a disease reservoir and carry the eastern and western viruses. Mosquitoes transmit these diseases from the birds to horses and, in rare cases, to humans. (In 1983, 20 cases of equine encephalitis in humans were reported in the United States.)

"But," said Gipson, "with the Venezuelan strain of the disease, the virus multiplies so rapidly that mosquitoes that have bitten infected horses at certain stages of the disease can pass the virus directly to nonvaccinated horses or sometimes to humans."

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