Hereford Breeders Continue Commitment To Improve Genetics

than 300 serious Hereford breeders from 22 states learned the importance of improving genetics and defining their customer bases at the Hereford Directions Summit in Stillwater, Okla., June 20-22.

The American Hereford Association (AHA) and Oklahoma State University (OSU) hosted the event.

Close to half of the audience was made up of producers with 200-head cow herds. Throughout the three-day event live cattle

KANSAS CITY, Mo. - More evaluations were conducted to generate conversation and get seedstock producers thinking about the type and kind of cattle that meet industry standards.

Black, black baldy, red baldy and Hereford steers from K74 Ranch in Sulphur, Okla., were fed for the conference to illustrate the differences in feeder cattle and how to add value to Herefords.

John Tucker, North Platte Feeders and Glen Dolezal, Excel Corp., told producers to concentrate on moderate size, problemfree cattle that meet consumer demand. A carcass workshop at **OSU's Food Animal Processing** Center highlighted the event, and participants were able to see the harvested steers and learn how the carcasses measure up in the cooler.

Academia and industry-leading seedstock and commercial panels shared marketing advice, and attendees were eager to learn what they need to do to be profitable in this industry, the changes they needed to make in their breeding programs and what their customers demand.

Bob Kropp, OSU, moderated the event and stressed that seedstock producers must be committed to consumer and customer service. The white face gives a producer brand integrity, he said. In his summary, he told breeders to focus on Hereford cattle as Hereford cattle and never to compromise the strengths, which are fertility, cow maintenance, adaptability, feed efficiency and disposition.

Tom Field, Colorado State University, discussed where the breed has been and where the breed should be going. He left the audience with a few positive words to think about.

After in-depth discussions with seedstock and commercial panels, it became evident Hereford breeders need to focus on balanced trait selection. Everyone agreed it is highly important to collect more data and convert the data into information for their individual programs and their customers.

Dan Moser, Kansas State University, emphasized the need to identify genetically superior individuals by increasing the use of AI to high accuracy sires.

Scientists Gear Up To Counter Soybean Rust Disease

URBANA, Ill. - A showdown biodiesel and printing ink. is simmering. In one corner are Agricultural Research Service (ARS) scientists and collaborating researchers. In the other is a fungal rust disease whose 2001 arrival in South America has cast a menacing shadow over U.S. soybeans.

At stake is a nearly 2.9-billion-acre legume crop whose protein, oil and derivatives are used in everything from baby formula and salad dressing to

The rust fungus hasn't appeared on the U.S. mainland yet, but ARS researchers Reid Frederick, Morris Bonde and Glen Hartman aren't wasting any time. Frederick and Bonde, for example, have already developed a molecular method to rapidly detect the rust fungus based on specific DNA sequences that are unique to it.

Since 2000, all three ARS researchers have worked with scientists abroad to learn as much as they can about their fungal foe's basic biology, genetic variability, life cycle and pathogenicity.

The so-called Asian rust strain - the more aggressive of two known forms - has spread to Africa and South America, notes Hartman, at ARS' Soybean/ Maize Germplasm, Pathology and Genetics Research Laboratory at Urbana, Ill.

Hartman, Frederick and

Bonde also will spearhead a project supported by the United Soybean Board to coordinate field tests at rust "hot-spot" regions in China, Thailand, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Brazil and Paraguay. There, they'll search for the best sources of soybean resistance to the rust fungus.

Inside a biocontainment facility operated by ARS' Foreign Disease-Weed Science Research Unit at Fort Detrick, Md., they'll also expose domestic and exotic soybean lines to multiple races of the fungus to determine which offer the broadest range of disease resistance. And in fungicide trials, they'll examine the chemicals' effectiveness and potential phytotoxicity to soybean plants.

Meanwhile, Iowa State University collaborator X.B. Yang is using computer modeling to simulate rust disease outbreaks on U.S. soybean-growing regions based on climate, wind patterns and other criteria. By one simulation, the fungus' establishment causes soy crop losses of up to 40 percent.



Pennsylvania Egg Production Down One Percent In May

HARRISBURG (Dauphin January-May 2002 was 64.6 mil-Co.) — Egg production in Pennsylvania during May 2002 totaled 557 million eggs, down one percent from the 560 million eggs produced in May 2001, according to the Pennsylvania Agricultural Statistics Service (PASS).

The total number of layers on hand averaged 23.5 million during the month, which was down six percent from May 2001. Production per 100 layers was 2,375 eggs, up five percent from the 2,252 eggs produced during the previous May.

Egg-type hatch totaled 4.2 million chicks during May 2002, which was down 26 percent from May 2001. Cumulative egg-type hatch for January through May, at 22.1 million, was 20 percent less than the corresponding period in 2001. Broiler-type hatch totaled 13.4 million during May 2002, unchanged from May 2001. Aggregate broiler-type hatch for lion, up one percent from the previous vear.

United States' egg production totaled 7.26 billion during May 2002, up slightly from last year. The total number of layers during May averaged 334 million, slightly lower than the average number of layers during May 2001. May egg production per 100 layers was 2,172 eggs, up one percent from 2,160 eggs in May 2001.

Egg-type chicks hatched in the United States during May totaled 38.9 million, down nine percent from May 2001. Broiler-type hatch totaled 798 million, up two percent from May of the previous year. There were 25.6 million turkey poults placed in the United States during May 2002, down four percent from the same month a year ago.

