

**NORTH CENTRAL HIGHLAND CATTLE ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL MEETING AND EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS
FEBRUARY 6-7, 2026**

Event Schedule

Time	Event
8:00 AM – 9:00 AM	Registration, Greeting, Breakfast
9:00 AM – 10:00 AM	Annual Business Meeting
10:00 AM – 10:30 AM	Break
10:30 AM – 12:00 PM	John Keep Presentation (Part 1)
12:00 PM – 1:00 PM	Lunch
1:00 PM – 2:00 PM	John Keep Presentation (Part 2 & Q&A)
2:00 PM – 2:30 PM	Break
2:30 PM – 4:30 PM	Hannah Bernhardt Presentation (Beef Marketing) This includes a break out session to review your own farm web sites after presentation. Bring your laptop or tablet if interested in this.
4:30 PM – 6:00 PM	Silent Auction Ends at 4:30 Cocktail Hour Begins/Bar opens
5:00 PM	Raffle Winners Drawn
6:00 PM	Dinner (Awards ceremony to follow)

**North Central Highland Cattle Association
Annual Business Meeting
February 7, 2026 9:00 am**

Call to Order

Proof of Quorum

Proof of Notice of Meeting

Approval of 2025 Minutes

Officer Reports:

President

Secretary

Treasurer

Committee Reports:

AHCA Representative

Show Committee

Junior Committee

Hoofbeat Committee

Production Sale Committee

Digital Marketing Committee

Calendar Committee

Events:

Farm Tech Day

Minnesota State Fair

Old Business

New Branding Plan

New Business

Election

Director Position (One) – Two Year 2/2026 through 2/2028

AHCA Representative – Three Year: 2/7/2026 through 1/31/2028

Other issues

Adjourn

Board of Directors Meeting To Follow

North Central Highland Cattle Association Annual Meeting February 8, 2025 Minutes

Call to Order

Melinda Cowell called the meeting to order at 10:09 am

Proof of meeting notice

Notice was published in the Hoofbeat, on the website, on Facebook and distributed via email to members

Approval of 2024 Meeting Minutes

Moved by Mark Schulz, seconded by Maureen Matt, motion carried

Officer Reports

President – Melinda Cowell

- This is Melinda's second year as president, so her term is ending.
- The board had a busy year reviewing policies and procedures

Secretary -- Randi Johnson

- 2024 membership grew 13% to 195 member farms from 172 in 2023
- Most farms are in Minnesota and Wisconsin. We experienced growth especially in Iowa and have members from all over the United States
- Recognition is due to farms that have sponsored new members.
- The bulk of the work of the association is done by our committees. Members are encouraged to volunteer.

Treasurer – Julianne Motis

- Treasury is healthy, due primarily to the success of the past production sales.
- The association did not make a profit last year.
- Reviewed last year's financial statement and 2025 budget.

Committee Reports

ACHA Representative – Jan Larson

- Membership is growing
- Finances are solid. Balance sheets and five-year plan are available
- Work has started on a new AHCA website
- New officers for 2025 are Diane Clark, President and Jennifer Lewis, Vice President
- Implemented new committee structure including a split of Breed Protection & Promotion into two standing committees. Volunteers for various subcommittees are welcome.
- NCHCA was approved to host an AHCA gathering in 2027. Volunteers are needed to help with planning
- The board adopted a Breed Standard
- Established a Genomics committee, studying NT821 as well as other genetic
- The board updated the by-laws.

- North Central members are very active on AHCA committees.

Regional Show – Melinda Cowell

- Financial report in treasurer report
- Added several members to the show committee
- Will be making some changes for next year

World Beef Expo – Jan Larson

- September multibreed show with 27 breeds represented
- This year the show was small, only 11 animals due to a conflict with the NCHCA show
- Lost status as AHCA Roll of Excellence sanctioned show
- The highland show was scheduled the first show so people could leave to get to the North Central Show

Juniors – Melinda Cowell

- Year of growth, learning and collaboration
- The junior show went well with 36 juniors attending
- Juniors held a raffle of a Yeti Cooler which raised \$3,350 in addition to \$1,380 raised by the silent auction.
- The committee has focused on mentorship.
- Casey Pape is the new Junior Chair

Hoofbeat – Julianne Motis

- Looking for new membership on this committee
- Four newsletters are created each year.
- The committee is planning to send out a survey to get some input on topics for future issues.
- Members are encouraged to switch to the electronic version of the newsletter. It saves money and provides more flexibility in content.
- Members are also encouraged to help provide content by reaching out to Julianne or Tony

Production Sale – Josh Krenz

- We had two sales this year.
- Frozen sale in March, 2024. We are doing the same again this March. Consignments are open now
- Live sale changed to be in person and in conjunction with the show. Most of the sales were online.
- We are considering holding a bull test sale in 2026. This would help provide more data on young bulls.

Digital Marketing – Randi Johnson

- The board changed the name of the committee from Website to Digital Marketing to better reflect the work of the committee.
- Traffic to the website continues to grow, driven by our classified ads

- Thanks to Maureen Matt for managing Facebook for the association
- Changes are coming to the website for member listings. A map with member information will replace the current listings by state, individual member pages, and the beef list. Members' street addresses will no longer be listed for privacy reasons. Look for this change in the next few weeks.

Calendar – Maureen Matt

- 150 calendars were sold this year
- Submissions of 118 photos were received from 33 farms
- Photos were selected by a vote by 35 member farms
- This year we encountered printing issues, as TJ Associates, our long-time printer, had closed.
- We learned that TJ Associates had been very generous in their pricing for printing and layout. As a result, we need to look at ways to trim costs, and the price of the calendar may need to increase.
- Tony LeTourneau stepped up and did the layout for us. We switched to the printer that has been printing the Hoofbeat and our show programs.
- We intend to retain the same quality.
- Submissions are open on the website now.
- The calendar has moved from a fund raiser to promotion of the association.

Membership committee – Maureen Matt

- This committee has been inactive for several years and we hope to reactivate it.
- Would like the committee to take on organizing events and educational activities.
- Members should consider volunteering.

Farm Tech Days –Dennis Breneman

- Chippewa county 30,000 people went through on Tuesday and Wednesday.
- In 2025, August 5-7 at Clinton Farms, a dairy farm, in Bear Creek Wisconsin
 - Field demos, live cattle demonstrations
 - Looking for more volunteers to help with animals and man the booth

Minnesota State Fair – Mark Schulz

- North Central has been at the Fair since the early 80's
- It is a 12 day event with 1.9 million people attending the fair
- Volunteers help cover the Moo Booth
- Highlands have been featured in the Moo Booth for the last 12 years, and get a lot of interest from attendees.
- Free admission for volunteers with a four-hour shift

Old Business

No old business

New Business

Elections

- President
Maureen Matt was nominated by Randi Johnson, seconded by Tony LeTourneau
Nominations were closed
Maureen Matt was elected by acclamation
- Vice President
Michelle LeTourneau was nominated by Randi Johnson, seconded by Maureen Matt
Nominations were closed
Michelle LeTourneau was elected by acclamation
- Directors (Two two-year terms and one one-year term)
The board directors decided to award the two year terms to the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes, and the one year term to the candidate receiving the third highest number of votes.
Five candidates were nominated
Todd Green
Jeremiah Mewes
Ben Schmitke
Bruce Schmitz.
Jessie Webb
Nominations were closed. Written ballots were distributed and collected and online voting was conducted through zoom.
Jeremiah Mewes and Jessie Webb were elected to two-year terms
Todd Green was elected to the one year term.

Other matters

Highland Cattle Foundation -- Mark Schulz
Mark discussed the mission and work of the Highland Catt

Adjourn

Melinda Cowell moved to adjourn, Tony LeTourneau seconded. The business meeting adjourned at 11:06 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Randi Johnson
NCHCA Secretary

NCHCA Budget 2026 - Prepared by Virginia Green, Treasurer

	2020	2021	2022	2023 Actual	2024 Plan	2024 Actual	2025 Plan	2025 Actual	2026 Plan
General Account									
Beginning Balance	\$26,081	\$22,944	\$24,185	\$22,024	\$21,586	\$21,586	\$11,311	\$17,162	\$12,996
Income									
Membership Dues & Hoofbeat Ads	\$2,415	\$4,130	\$5,304	\$6,681	\$5,500	\$5,264	\$4,500	\$7,180	\$7,500
Annual Meeting	\$2,590	\$1,275	\$1,953	\$1,266	\$2,000	\$1,417	\$1,000	\$4,638	\$3,000
Calendar and Calendar Ads	\$2,500	\$2,025	\$2,133	\$2,079	\$3,500	\$4,369	\$4,500	\$4,027	\$4,100
Misc. Income	\$29	\$403	\$1,282	\$449	\$500	\$260	\$500	\$0	\$500
Total Income	\$7,534	\$7,833	\$10,672	\$10,476	\$11,500	\$11,311	\$10,500	\$15,844	\$15,100
Expenses									
Transfer from Sale Account for Show				-\$12,000	\$0	-\$4,000		\$0	\$0
Sponsorship (AHCA ROE)				\$6,000	\$0	\$1,000		\$0	\$0
AHCA Rep Reimb. + AHCA Dues		\$72	\$72	\$75	\$1,075	\$572	\$750	\$792	\$750
Advertising & Marketing	\$5,478	\$4,575	\$6,077	\$4,524	\$6,025	\$6,407	\$6,000	\$5,966	\$6,000
Annual Meeting	\$3,092	\$0	\$4,567	\$9,264	\$5,000	\$3,315	\$3,500	\$3,393	\$5,000
Calendars	\$992	\$944	\$1,474	\$1,598	\$1,700	\$3,365	\$4,500	\$3,655	\$4,000
Bank Fees/Quickbooks/Website	\$485	\$902	\$543	\$1,454	\$1,165	\$2,199	\$2,200	\$3,707	\$3,800
Insurance	\$100	\$425	\$100		\$500	\$2,090	\$2,000	\$1,921	\$2,000
Office supplies, software, misc.						\$785	\$750	\$577	\$750
Total Expenses	\$10,147	\$6,918	\$12,833	\$10,914	\$15,465	\$15,734	\$19,700	\$20,010	\$22,300
General Account Profit and Loss Total						-\$4,424		-\$4,166	
End Year Balance General Account	\$22,944	\$24,185	\$22,024	\$21,586	\$17,621	\$17,162		\$12,996	
Production Sale Account									
Beginning Balance	\$8,294	\$9,882	\$24,477	\$34,815	\$21,692	\$21,527	\$22,325	\$22,325	\$33,834
Income									
Sale Income Total	\$86,024	\$263,909	\$209,895	\$114,078	\$153,000	\$174,301	\$175,000	\$196,568	\$190,000
Expenses									
Sale Expense Total*	\$84,436	\$249,314	\$199,556	\$127,201	\$153,165	\$173,503	\$175,000	\$185,059	\$190,000
Profit & Loss Total	\$1,588	\$14,595	\$10,339	-\$13,123	-\$165	\$798		\$11,509	
Year End Balance - Production Sale	\$9,882	\$24,477	\$34,815	\$21,692	\$21,527	\$22,325		\$33,834	
Junior Account									
Beginning Balance	\$5,974	\$5,294	\$2,835	\$2,422	\$3,031	\$3,031	\$7,872	\$7,372	\$5,669
Junior's Income Total	\$840	\$0	\$1,392	\$2,837	\$2,000	\$8,333	\$3,500	\$2,492	\$2,500
Junior's Expense Total	\$1,520	\$2,458	\$1,806	\$2,228	\$2,000	\$3,993	\$3,500	\$4,194	\$4,000
Juniors Profit and Loss Total						\$4,341		-\$1,703	
Year End Balance - Junior's Account	\$5,294	\$2,835	\$2,422	\$3,031	\$3,031	\$7,372		\$5,669	
Show									
Beginning Balance			\$4,509	\$3,561	\$2,262	\$1,427		\$3,017	\$5,027
Income*			\$8,337	\$9,756	\$11,000	\$15,899	\$15,000	\$16,212	\$16,000
Expenses			\$9,285	\$11,055	\$11,000	\$14,309	\$15,000	\$14,202	\$16,000
Show Profit and Loss Total						\$1,590		\$2,010	
Year End Balance - Show Account			\$3,561	\$2,262	\$2,262	\$3,017		\$5,027	

*includes transfer to Show Account

AHCA Regional Representative Report

Jan Larson

2025 with AHCA has been an interesting year. Due to expired terms of current committee chairpersons, new chairs needed to be elected and new executive board members needed to be elected. Our own Ginny Green was elected to be Executive Secretary. New At-large Directors came on board this past January with Josh Krenz, Kelly Morris, and Pat White.

AHCA financed a new website platform that came online in November with updated functions, easier navigation, and the ability to expand services, such as selling AHCA merchandise, among other things. I can't wait to see how it benefits our members once we are able to utilize it to its fullest potential!

A new advertising venture is beginning and you will be seeing more of it in 2026 with the goal of expanding breeding animal and beef sales.

The Genomics Committee has been working to find ways to compile data, not just within the U.S. but collaborating with other countries as well, on EPD's, the NT821 gene, and other Highland attributes.

The Show Committee is reporting that most of the current shows have been holding steady with their entry numbers and new shows have been approved. You will see the new ones in Tennessee, Washington and Oregon in 2026. Sovereign and Market animal shows continue to be small but the committee is looking into different ways to help remedy that. The National Show this year was held in the new NWSS facility and seems to have been well received by all our members. Entries for this year's show wound up being 227 after a few scratches. This is up from last year. The Highlands are the largest breed Show in Denver, CO. at the NWSS and seems to be growing. How cool is that?! There was some discussion on the AHCA board regarding the banquet fee that follows the NWSS Show. At \$125 per plate it made it cost prohibitive for many members to attend, which was a shame, so several AHCA Board members volunteered to help find sponsorships or ways to help defer that cost.

The National Sale grossed over \$1,000,000 this year, with online viewership over multiple countries such as, but not limited to, Great Britain, Mexico, New Zealand, Canada, etc. The average sale cost for females this year was \$19,429.35, similar to last year, and average for bull sales was \$35,500. It was an amazing sale and the sale committee is, as always, looking to improve it, and bring the "best bang for the buck" for both consignors and buyers. They have already had a meeting and discussed options for next year's sale.

The Ethics Committee had only one issue this year that it resolved efficiently.

The AHCA Finance Committee announced that finances have been holding steady, but future projections are a bit concerning due to changes in our everyday world. The process of copy writing and trademarking our herdbook and logo has become a priority. It is an effort to protect and preserve the data that has been painstakingly compiled over decades. Yes, in this day and age we all know that we have to protect our personal information from scammers, hackers, and pirates, and it's no different for our organization. Because of this and some other things, insurance premiums are also expected to rise. There are also changes closer to home. We have had to hire more office staff to accommodate for the huge influx of new members, registrations, and the use of more office supplies. To help defer some of these expenses a change in membership dues, after 17 years of stability, may be coming, as well as a review of other expenses. The Finance Committee is very aware of their responsibility, and does a great job explaining to the board how to help keep the money under control. Financial decisions are not taken lightly by them or the Board Members.

One of the fun things I was able to be a part of this past year, as a member of the Nomination Committee, was to help nominate and present the awards for the Member of the Year, and the AHCA Hall of Fame. It was a great honor for me to be able to give each award to Randi Johnson and Mark Johnson, respectively. These awards are not given out lightly. They represent a large amount of dedication and hard work within AHCA, not just for a single year, but over the course of many years. They are given to members who make long lasting and significant contributions to AHCA and its membership. How lucky is NCHCA to have them both in our region?

Show Committee Report for 2025

Committee members: Jessie Webb, chair, Katie Baker, Kyle Baker, Ginny Green, Todd Green, Randi Johnson, Michelle LeTourneau, Casey Pape, Cindy Weideman

Big thanks to Melinda Cowell for her hard work over the past 8 years with the show. We appreciate all you did. This year she turned the reins over to Jessie Webb with the help of Katie Baker and Ginny Green. We're all excited to help out!

The 2025 North Central show was held in mid September at the Mower Co. Fairgrounds in Austin, MN. The junior show judge was Colby Lind. 24 juniors showed 30 heifers, 1 sovereign and 2 market animals. The open show judge was Jeff Bunker. 30 farms were present showing 53 heifers, 3 cow/calf pairs, 8 bulls, 1 sovereign and 3 market animals. So many high quality animals at the show. The "Females of Fall" sale was held the same weekend and was a success as well.

In the end, the association was able to profit just over \$2,000 from entries, sponsorships and the silent auction. It was a successful show all around and we look forward to some exciting things for our show this coming Fall!!

Junior Committee Casey Pape

- Year of growth
- The junior show went well, with 24 juniors attending with 33 animals. Officers were awarded with NCHCA Vests for being consistent in group calls and involvement.
- Juniors held a raffle of a Highland Quilt, donated and made by Julianne, which raised \$2,500.
- Junior of the Year Award for 2025 was awarded to Beretta Semmler
- The Juniors have made changes to the timeline of Junior activities that are held throughout the year and are looking forward to more collaboration as a group for 2026.
- Junior Officers for 2026 are as follows:
 - President - Lauren Cowell
 - Vice President - Tate Pape
 - Secretary/Treasurer - Nikki Schmitz
 - Hoofbeat Reported - Shaelynn Cowell

The Hoofbeat Committee 2025

Tony LeTourneau, Julianne Motis, Julie Schaar & Maureen Matt

Hoofbeat 2025, told a story of the activity of members and the future of the highland breed.

We covered things like....

Breed Integrity & Standards

A central thread throughout this year was the importance of protecting Highland breed integrity. We covered things like accurate registration, sound breeding decisions, and adherence to established standards. As the breed continues to grow in popularity, the association's role as a steady guidepost—ensuring credibility, consistency, and trust...has never been more important.

Education & Knowledge Sharing

Member education remains a cornerstone of the association's mission. We highlighted ongoing efforts to provide practical knowledge on animal health, breeding practices, herd management, and show preparation. There is a clear desire for peer-to-peer learning, real experiences from real farms so that both new and seasoned members can benefit from shared wisdom.

Shows, Events & Community

Coverage of shows, annual meetings, and regional events underscores the value of gathering in person. These events are more than competitions; they are where mentorship happens, relationships are built, and the culture of the Highland community is reinforced.

And lastly....the Hoofbeat was The Voice of the Membership

The Hoofbeat is strongest when it reflects the diversity and experience of its members. The publication is not just a newsletter—it is a record of who we are, what we value, and how we steward the breed together.

Call to Action: Your Story Matters

As we look ahead, we are actively seeking articles, photos, and content submissions from member farms for future issues of Hoofbeat. If you've got Highlands, you've got stories—and odds are, at least one of them is worth sharing.

Did a cow surprise you (in a good way)? Did calving season humble you? Did you finally figure out a system that works... or one that absolutely didn't? Farm profiles, breeding wins, hard-earned lessons, junior highlights, and thoughtful opinions are all welcome. If it made you laugh, sigh, or say “well, that figures,” it probably belongs in The Hoofbeat.

So...If you've ever caught yourself thinking, “Someone should really write about this,” congratulations—you've just volunteered. Don't worry, it doesn't have to be fancy or Pulitzer-worthy. Clear sentences, real experiences, and a little honesty go a long way.

So sharpen a pencil, fire up the keyboard, or dictate it from the tractor seat. Submit your content, share your story, and help keep The Hoofbeat as authentic, informative, and entertaining as the people (and cattle) behind it—steady as the North Star.

2026 - NCHCA Sale Committee Report

Members: Josh Krenz - Chair, Brad Barnes, Stacia Danielson, Ginny Green, Randi Johnson, Jeremiah Mewes, Julianne Motis, Kevin Opperman, Bruce Schmitz

The NCHCA hosted two sales in 2025.

In March, NCHCA held its annual Frozen Genetics sale. It featured 245 straws of semen that sold for an average of \$255/straw, generating \$62,683 in sales. The high lot went for \$2,100/straw. The sale also sold 24 embryos for an average of \$1,027 with a high of \$1,525/embryo. The 2026 Frozen Genetics Sale will be March 21, 2026, and is currently accepting entries until February 21. You can enter at HighlandSale.org.

The Females of Fall sale was held in conjunction with the NCHCA Show in Austin, Minn. It featured 16 head, which totaled \$160,500 for an average of \$10,031 with a high of \$26,000. This is a new sale average high. Only one animal stayed in Minnesota and the other sold animals went all across the USA. We look forward to working with the show committee to host our third in-person Females of Fall Sale in coordination with the NCHCA Show this Fall.

The NCHCA Sales provide a great platform for member farms to advertise their farm and expose their cattle to new markets. In 2025, NCHCA spent more than \$1100 on hosting, marketing and advertising these events on behalf of their members. We keep the commission low for members; however, the sales do provide a source of income for NCHCA. This year, NCHCA raised \$11,509 through our sales.

The NCHCA Sale Committee has also been exploring the possibility of a bull test sale. We originally had plans to hold the sale in May 2026, however, due to an issue with the original host yard, we had to postpone our plans. We are optimistic about finding a location for a sale in 2027. If you know of a feedyard or a University willing to work with NCHCA on a long-term committee, please contact a member of the Sale Committee. More information will be shared as plans are developed.

Digital Marketing Committee Report Annual Meeting February, 2026

Committee membership:

Randi Johnson, Chair, Paul Hartwig, Josh Krenz, Tony LeTourneau, Maureen Matt, Becky Meyer, Cherie Mewes, Jose Rodrigues, Julie Schaar, Ken Schaar, Bruce Schmitz, Jamie Schulz, Jessie Webb

Committee activities in 2025:

Website traffic:

Traffic on the NCHCA.org website has started to decrease. Unique visits dropped from 22,600 in 2024, to 20,300 in 2025. Referrals come mainly from Google searches. The sale website (highlandsale.org) dropped this year to 7,600 visits with traffic being mainly active in the months around the sale dates. This likely is the result of increased social media presence.

Website changes:

In 2025, the membership information on the website was changed from by state membership pages to a member map that provides locations and contact information for members as well as identifying beef producers. The intent was to make it easier to find members in addition to simplifying maintenance of the website.

Social media:

The committee uses social media for promoting the association. Maureen Matt and Cherie Mewes lead the efforts managing the Facebook group and posting on the Facebook page. The page has grown to 4800 followers and Facebook group now has over 1400 members.

Classified advertising:

This member benefit drives traffic to the website from Facebook and email. The volume of classified ads has maintained at 80-90 ads submitted each year. Many members using classified ads have reported success in sales. The classified ads are one of the highest traffic pages on the NCHCA website.

Semen directory:

The website has a semen directory with free listings for members. This continues to be an underutilized member benefit. Members with semen to sell are encouraged to take advantage by listing their available sires.

Goals for 2026:

1. Significant redesign of website
2. Explore Google Analytics
3. Continue to expand use of social media for promotion
4. Continue to expand content for members.

Action plan: Discuss at the annual meeting, feature in future Hoofbeat articles, utilize social media and email to promote association benefits and expand membership.

2026 Calendar Committee Report

Members: Maureen Matt, Teri Ahlgen, Tony LeTourneau, Jan Larson, Stacia Danielson, Randi Johnson, Tina Broderick, Emily Klatt, and Mary Webster

The committee accepted photo submissions from February 2025 to March 2025. This year was the fourth year that photo submissions were limited to four per member farm and submissions were slightly down from 2024 with only 113 photos submitted. Voting was once again done by online ballot. The overall response for votes came from 51 member farms, which is up a bit from 2024.

The calendar committee once again reviewed printing options. Three printing estimates were collected to see what options were available. With the change in printer the calendar was formatted by fellow highland breeder, Tony LeTourneau, he also reviewed the three printing estimates and helped us better understand the graphic design terminology that was used. The committee agreed to use Tri M Graphics out of Owatonna MN, who is also used for printing the Hoofbeat and programs for the show and sale in September. Having sold all 150 calendars in 2023 and 2024, 200 calendars were ordered and would be ready for shipping and in person purchases at the July summer picnic held at Windland Flats.

Calendars could be purchased through the NCHCA.org website with payments accepted via paypal or by mailing a check to our treasurer, Julianne Motis/Ginny Green. Mary Webster was once again responsible for mailing calendar orders received via paypal.

The cost for printing the calendars did increase a little bit so the price of calendars was increased to \$22.50, this also includes a little bit to cover the packaging for mailing them. The committee agreed to keep the cost of shipping the same at \$8.50 per calendar. The committee was feeling ambitious and felt that because calendars had sold out the two previous years we would increase our order to 200 calendars. We have calendars here today for sale and they are still available on the website.

As the committee chair I would like to thank our committee members for taking time out of their busy schedules to meet and discuss the calendar throughout the year. Thank you also to the member farms who submitted photos and cast their votes, without all of you, the NCHCA calendar would not be the success that it is. At this time the calendar committee would like to announce that the calendar website link is officially open for your member farm photo submissions for the 2027 NCHCA Calendar! Photo submissions are limited to 4 per farm and due by March 15th. We are anticipating the same great response and looking forward to another beautiful calendar

Thank you,
Maureen Matt
NCHCA Calendar Committee Chair

2025 MN State Fair Moo Booth Report

- The Moo Booth sees **500,000+ visitors** over the **12 days** of the MN State Fair
 - They stop to watch demonstrations, 4-H presentations, fun competitions and to learn about agriculture
 - There is a sheet they can fill out using information available in the Moo Booth for fabulous Moo Booth prizes! Highlands were part of the questions this year. The last question is to have a farmer sign the document – which is often done by people manning the Beef Cow/Calf (Highland) booth.
 - According to multiple Moo Booth staff, “where are the Highland cattle” is the most asked question at the Information tables at the entrances to the Moo Booth
- Over the years, Highlands have been highlighted in numerous TV, radio, and sports team appearances
 - 2025 was the 12th year Highlands were on the Garage Logic show, now a podcast, with Joe Soucheray <https://garagelogic.com/episode/8-29-live-at-the-state-fair-pat-donohue-steven-c-animals-fair-fun/> - we are the first “guest” on this year’s podcast
 - We walk the cow/calf across the fairgrounds – it takes a small village to get there without incident
 - We had a very small area between the bleachers, keyboard, and stage that the Garage Logic crew were on. A lot of prayers said during that appearance.
- 2025 Fair Attendance was **1,940,869 people** over 12 days
- Most popular materials
 - NCHCA materials
 - Beef brochure on the back on the fact sheet
 - Information about the show is popular due to the close timing of the event – we rarely have enough material on this event, and in 2025 didn’t have any handouts on it
 - For people looking to get into highlands, we encourage them to join NCHCA and start networking with members and visiting farm – we use the fact sheet to share the web address – some people take a photo of the web address to research later
 - AHCA materials
 - Tri-fold brochures
 - Pens are put out for people to take
 - AHCA key chains are given to people who engage in meaningful conversations – they are very appreciated
- Manpower:
 - Mark and Jamie:
 - Mark and the cattle are up there for **13 days** (cow/calf pair are switched every 4 days with the barn clean-out between encampments)
 - Jamie is up there for 9 days

- Mark and Jamie are up there by 5am every day (often earlier) and stay until close of the Moo Booth at 8pm, with a barn check about 10pm every night
 - Mark spends weeks ahead getting pastures set up and chores lined up for being gone from the farm
 - Mark and Jamie pay someone to do chores for the 9 days they are gone from the farm- and that is a bargain for what they do while we are gone. He does rabbit chores all 13 days so Jamie has time to reset pasture paddocks for the final 4 days of the fair.
 - Mark makes 3 total trips up and back from the fair over the 13 days. It is 118 miles one way, or a 236 mile round trip for a total of **708 miles** to represent the association and breed at the fair
- **36 volunteers** helped man the booth in 2025
 - Volunteers give Mark and Jamie a much needed break to catch up on sleep during the day hours – this is the only way we can do this
 - Mark takes vacation to be at the fair
 - Jamie does a combination of vacation time and working at the fair to be there
 - We really appreciate everyone dealing with the issues that increased attendance and lack of parking near the fairgrounds have caused. They have to pay \$25+ to park nearby, or deal with a park and ride which can be full or have delayed buses dues to popularity of the site
 - Doris provides free admission for volunteers who man the booth for 4 hours or more – these tickets come out of her budget
- Doris Mold, Milking Parlor and Moo Booth superintendent at the Minnesota State Fair, has been a great promoter of the breed:
 - She appreciates the work of the association to man the booth and talk with fair goers – which is why we have such a long run in this spot
 - Doris has done a lot to get promotional opportunities over the years across the fairgrounds – our cows have been to most corners of the fairgrounds
 - Doris does what she can to make our time at the fair as hassle-free as possible
 - Doris pays for a camp site out of her budget for us. We would not do it without the camp site
 - This year Doris updated the moo booth education material to include Highland Cattle!

We thought it was important to send a report because of the financial support that the NCHCA provides in way of a \$500 check to Mark and Jamie Schulz to help cover some of the costs incurred. It is appreciated.

Submitted by: Jamie Schulz