

QUALITY IN RETAIL

by Cindy Folck



What is quality for your business? How do you strive toward quality? Attendees at the National Certified Angus Beef Retail Conference, held May 4 and 5 in St. Louis, Mo., heard these questions and others about the effects of quality on their businesses. Approximately 50 retail, distribution and packing representatives attended the conference to discuss issues and challenges facing the Certified Angus Beef Program.

"A total quality program must be in place for companies to move forward," said Rodger Wasson, president, Marketlinks, during the opening address at the conference.

His talk focused on the quality attributes of leading companies and how total quality management can be applied to any business. He encouraged participants to strive toward making quality a vital part of their business plan.

The quality theme was carried throughout the conference as other speakers addressed issues facing retailers.

A special session was held to enable participants to discuss specific concerns and challenges that face retailers selling CAB products. While also discussing quality in their businesses, many participants expressed concern about the limited amount of cattle that qualify

for the Certified Angus Beef label.

Lynne Scott, associate professor at Baylor College of Medicine, talked about the possibility of nutritional labeling requirements on meat products sold through retail stores. She also described what regulations the USDA is considering for food products



Mick Colvin (l), Certified Angus Beef Program, looks at product in a store with Julius Calandro, National Super Markets, St. Louis, Mo.

to be labeled as "lean" and "light."

Scott also discussed a cooperative Texas A&M University and Baylor College of Medicine research study which showed that cholesterol could be reduced through a diet containing lean beef.

Jeff Savell, Texas A&M University, described to attendees the results of the National Tenderness and Age Study. The study showed there is a large degree of variation in tenderness of beef among the different quality grades.

Matt Wineinger, Beef Industry Council, talked about the National Cattlemen's Association task force on value-based marketing. He talked about the effects of quarter-inch trim on beef sold to retailers, but concern was raised about the higher cost that would be incurred from extra labor required at the fabricator level.

A highlight of the conference was touring through two of National Super Markets' 42 stores. National is a licensed CAB retailer, and sells only CAB product in its fresh beef displays. The chains headquarters are in St. Louis.

The conference concluded with a Certified Angus Beef banquet and retail awards presentations. Several retailers and distributors were recognized for their achievements and commitment to the Certified Angus Beef Program and the high level of quality maintained in their businesses. Some of the award winners are highlighted below.

Newcomer Award—

Randall's Food Markets, Houston, Tex.

Advertising Excellence—

National Super Markets, St. Louis, Mo.

Merchandising Excellence

in Retail Promotion—

Olson's Foodstores, Lynnwood, Wash.

Top Five Volume Retail Stores—

1. National Super Markets, St. Louis, Mo.
2. National-Canal Villere, Harahan, La.
3. Pantry Pride, Pompano Beach, Fla.
4. Carter's Food Centers, Charlotte, Mich.
5. Gristede's/Red Apple, New York, N.Y.

Top Five Volume Retail Distributors—

1. Malone & Hyde Inc., Miami, Fla.
2. White Rose Meat Co., Newark, N.J.
3. Oxford Trading Co., Boston, Mass.
4. MacDonald Meat Co., Seattle, Wash.
5. Associated Grocers, Seattle, Wash.