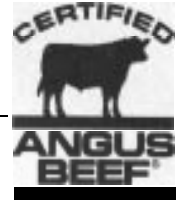


CERTIFIED ANGUS BEEF



Carcass Contest Serves as a Cattlemen's Classroom

Having faith that Angus cattle's carcass traits could provide consumers with a consistent, high quality beef product, the American Angus Association — more than a decade ago — launched the Certified Angus Beef Program.

The Association's confidence in both the product and consumers' quest for tender, juicy and flavorful beef proved true. Today the program is marketing more than 81.5 million pounds of product each year.

Although the program is experiencing rapid growth in merchandising the product to food service, retail and export markets, the supply division is suffering a decrease in the percentage of cattle meeting CAB carcass specifications. In 1991 only 15.7 percent of the cattle identified as meeting the program's live animal specifications went on to qualify for certification.

Proving Angus cattle can meet the rigid palatability characteristics consumers want rather than simply believing it, has become a critical program and industry issue. Learning more about Angus cattle's carcass performance is the only way Angus producers can prove quality and value differences and continue to provide the CAB Program the product supply necessary to meet future demand.

The CAB Program and Association offer several opportunities for producers to learn more about their end product. The sire evaluation program, carcass data collection service and the annual feedlot gain and carcass contest are available for those

who want to educate themselves about the product they are marketing to packers and end-users.

The Oberlin, Kansas High School provided the perfect setting for the May 2 contest open house. Mick Colvin, CAB Program executive director, commended consignors for their interest in learning more about their cattle's feedlot and carcass performance.

"The beef industry should focus greater attention on designing product specifications to provide a high quality product for consumers rather than changing specifications to meet demands of the production sector," said Colvin.

The open house agenda also included a presentation about retained ownership by Bandy Blach, Cattle-Fax director of market analysis; a review of the use of EPDs in sire selection by John Crouch, American Angus Association director of performance programs; and a contest update by Kelly Elkins, the CAB Program's director of feedlot and packing operations, and contest coordinator.

Consignors spent the remainder of the afternoon in a practical outdoor classroom setting — Decatur County Feed Yard. Warren Weibert, Decatur County Feed Yard general manager, spent time with individual consignors studying and analyzing the cattle's status and progress. Weibert told the group this year's contest cattle were an improvement over last year's entries and should continue to perform well

through the remainder of days on feed.

Preliminary carcass data was released to consignors on the first group of 45 steers. Final results on the entire group of 495 steers will not be announced until the July 25 awards reception to be held in conjunction with the National Cattlemen's Association mid-year meeting in Denver.

The CAB Program hopes the contest, as well as other ongoing activities, will help producers of Angus-sired steers better understand feeding and finished cattle marketing procedures in addition to CAB carcass specifications. Assuring increased CAB product supply and continual advancement of the Angus breed will require producers to take a pro-active role and be a student of cattle performance.

Most professional occupations — from veterinarians to teachers — require individuals to obtain continuing education credits to be licensed to perform their jobs. Although licensing might not be practical for cattle producers, providing consumers with a high quality wholesome beef product is a big responsibility and should incorporate an individual obligation to be equipped with the most up-to-date and complete production knowledge available.

If you want to prove your cattle's performance capabilities and help the CAB Program continue to grow, become a student and get involved in the program and Association's educational opportunities.

- *Jenny Plocher*



Certified Angus Beef Feedlot Gain and Carcass Contest consignors evaluate their cattle's progress during the May 2 open house at Decatur County Feed Yard, Oberlin, Kan.

CAB GROWTH BY YEAR			
Year	Percent Acceptance	Cattle Identified	Cattle Certified
1985	20.5	779,205	159,454
1986	23.1	1,135,814	262,136
1987	24.2	1,307,857	316,942
1988	23.0	1,572,573	361,628
1989	20.2	1,750,808	354,338
1990	17.6	2,197,380	386,230
1991	15.7	2,315,238	363,896
1992 (projected)	15.7	2,566,621	397,826