

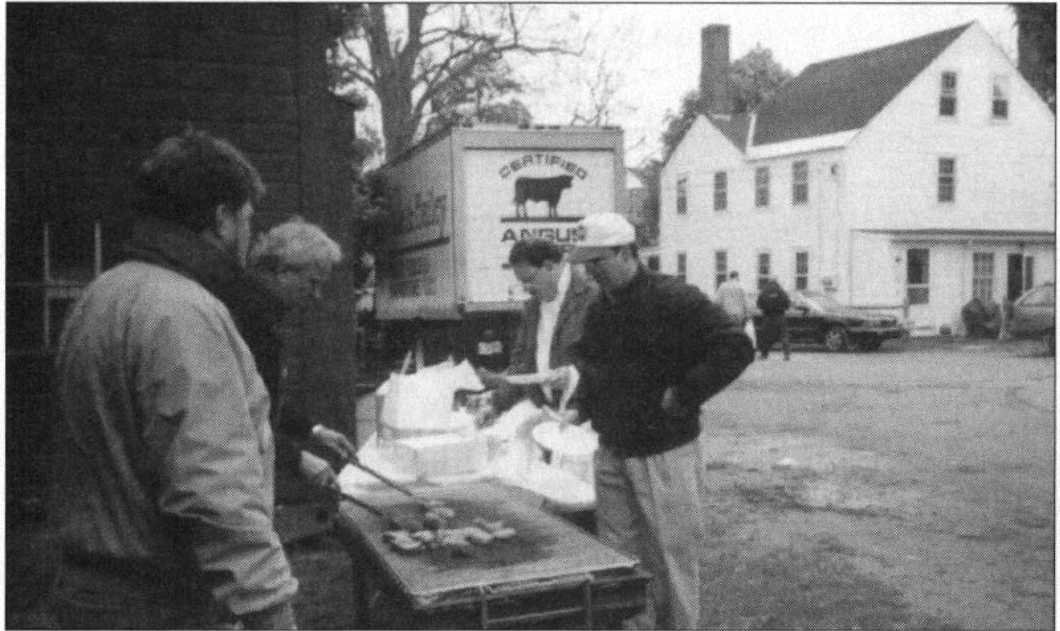
From Downtown to Down on the Farm

The Certified Angus Beef (CAB) Program is unique in many ways as it involves all segments of the beef industry - from Angus breeders, to retail and food service distributors.

Building alliances between these segments helps to integrate the entire beef industry and strengthen the CAB Program as well as consumer acceptance. Education is the first step, for few breeders fully understand the beef marketing process and few distributors fully understand beef production. One of the best educational efforts, to date, has been Angus farm field days.

The colorful fall foliage of New England welcomes Bostonians to the countryside for the annual Dole & Bailey Inc., and Gibbet Hill Farm event. Gibbet Hill Farm, located 45 minutes from Boston, provides a perfect setting for the annual event which attracted 300 attendees in 1993.

Situated on 1,200 acres in Groton, Mass., Gibbet Hill Farm maintains 125 Angus cows. Bill Conley, Gibbet Hill manager, says the farm offers a relaxed atmosphere and gives chefs "the opportunity to get their feet on a farm." (See story page 222.) It began eight years ago as an educational seminar for salespeople. During the early events, the Gibbet Hill management would demonstrate practices ranging from artificial insemination to castration. Conley would chalk a steer so the people could see where the cuts come from. Although he felt they all knew their cuts,



Sampling Certified Angus Beef product is popular at the Gibbet Hill and Dole & Bailey Inc.

they probably didn't know exactly where they were located on a steer.

This has been a valuable experience for many salespeople who had never been on a farm. Participants are enlightened with a new appreciation of the decisions, work and dedication involved in beef cattle production.

"The events have also been good because the sales people get to meet their customers. As an extra bonus, all who attend get to sample the good food," Conley, says.

Nancy Burns, Dole & Bailey vice president and general manager, says this event gives salespeople and chefs the opportunity to see the Angus breed and appreciate the specifications which form the CAB Program.

Within the CAB Program's food service division, "center-of-

the-plate" distributors are licensed to market product. They add value to an already value-added product by aging, cutting, wrapping and personally delivering Certified Angus Beef™ product to restaurants, hotels, clubs and institutions.

Each licensed distributor employs a sales team who develops and maintains accounts by calling on chefs and food and beverage directors. These distributor sales representatives are the final link in marketing Certified Angus Beef product. They are responsible for licensing the establishment facilitating product promotion and educating staff of the advantages of serving Certified Angus Beef product.

Through the years, the Gibbet Hill event has grown and now involves a food show where Dole & Bailey vendors exhibit their products to Boston area chefs.

The food show is a family af-

fair for all participants where they can relax, share professional knowledge and gain insight to beef production and the CAB Program. The American Culinary Federation has accredited this event, therefore, chefs receive professional points for attending.

Building on this event, Waffle Hill Farm, Churchville, Md., and Maryland Hotel Supply have also formed an alliance. Lawrason Sayre, owner of Waffle Hill and a member of the CAB Program board of directors, invited sales representatives from Maryland Hotel Supply to the farm.

The tour included an in-depth look at Waffle Hill Farm, showcasing genetic, breeding and feeding practices. It also highlighted its intensive grazing system for which the Sayres have earned environmental and land stewardship recognition.

Continued on page 221

Continued from page 216

tion. In addition, Lawrason explained the integrated involvement of Angus producers, feeders and packers and how all play a vital role in maintaining the integrity and quality of Certified Angus Beef product.

"This experience opened my eyes to the process of raising cattle," says Bill Frick, Maryland Hotel Supply sales representative. "It also enabled me to make a better presentation to my customers. Once you see it firsthand, you can talk about the CAB Program more intelligently."

Maryland Hotel Supply management was so impressed with the program, they plan to bring their top Certified Angus Beef customers next year. "We need to show them that cattle production is a science. Angus breeders are working to produce cattle that specifically

meet CAB Program specifications - what their customers want," says Dennis Steele, Maryland hotel Supply.

Both Conley and Sayre encourage Angus breeders to become involved with the CAB

Program and learn more about the entire marketing process. "This kind of involvement will give you an appreciation and an enthusiasm for producing product to meet CAB Program specifications," says Sayre.

Bridging the gap between downtown and down on the farm is a significant step in building alliances that will ensure a future for our beef industry.

AJ