

# BATTLE FOR THE BEST BEEF

Angus juniors cook up success in a culinary contest.

by Julie Isbell, American Angus Association

The scent of Angus beef fills the air, and there's everything from wizards to superheroes rushing around extravagantly decorated tables. During a week when most of their time is spent in the barn, National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) members make time to fire up their skills for a beef cook-off.

Hosted by the American Angus Auxiliary, the 2023 All-American Certified Angus Beef Cook-Off challenged 28 teams to exhibit creative beef dishes and develop their meat science knowledge during the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) in Grand Island, Neb.

When it was founded in 1983 in Iowa, members did not know it would grow to be one of the biggest contests at the NJAS.

Today it continues to encourage Angus juniors to practice beef education.

The educational opportunities continue past the cooking.

Cook-Off judge and producer communications manager for CAB, Morgan Boecker says it is all about creativity.

"The contestants are all given the same information



The Virginia junior ground beef team won the Ardyce's Apron award. Pictured (from left) are Sophie Salling, Orange; Quincy Clayton, Staunton; Ella Michael, Fishersville; Lindsay Davis, Winchester; Sadie Poole, Staunton; and Anne Patton Schubert, presenting.

about the *Certified Angus Beef*®-brand specifications

and have to figure out how to present it all in a way that is authentic and genuine," she says. "You have to be creative to do that in

five minutes."

Participants use CAB cuts to create dishes in one of three categories: steak, roast or other beef items. Judges also encourage participants to have a theme for their presentation, complete with a costume, table service and unique recipes.

"If junior Angus members are able to study the specs and understand even a little bit about

what Certified Angus Beef does, then they can promote it and supply it later when they own their own cows," Boecker says.

Teams of two to six NJAA members from the same state form groups by age: ages 8-13 for the junior division, 14-17 for intermediate and 18-21 for senior. The oldest member of the team determines the group division.

## Top chefs

The coveted Black Kettle Award established in memory of Paul St. Blanc and known as the overall team



# NATIONAL JUNIOR ANGUS SHOW



The Nebraska senior roast team won the Black Kettle Award. Pictured (from left) are Anne Patton Schubert, presenting; Tavin Uden, Franklin; Addison Cotton, York; Kasey Meyer, Blue Hill; Jessalynn Hudson, Belvidere; Tucker Stagemeyer, Page; and Anne Lampe and Garrett Lampe, presenting.



## BLACK KETTLE AWARD-WINNING RECIPE: HUSKER CUPID COULOTTE ROAST

### INGREDIENTS:

3-lb. CAB® cut top sirloin cap  
1 Tbs. sea salt  
1 Tbs. pepper  
1 Tbs. dried oregano  
½ tsp. cayenne pepper

1 Tbs. chili powder  
1 ½ Tbs. garlic powder  
1 Tbs. onion powder  
1 ½ Tbs. brown sugar



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Preheat grill or cast iron skillet. Score the fat cap of the roast in a cross-hatch pattern. Do not cut too deep into the fat cap. (May need to first slice down fat cap if very thick.)
2. Combine all dry ingredients and season the fat cap heavily with 2 Tbs. of mixed seasoning. Now cut the roast into 1-inch strips of meat. Fold each 1-inch cut over into a "horseshoe" shape, and skewer meat across about 1 inch above each end with center touching. Lightly season both sides of each piece of meat with remainder of dry ingredients.
3. Place on grill or in skillet. Time for 3 minutes on first side, then flip and continue 2 minutes each side until medium rare. (135° F medium rare, 145° F for medium). Remove meat from heat and place in a pan and cover with foil until serving. Don't remove skewer until plating your food.

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## WINNERS OF THE 2023 AUXILIARY-SPONSORED ALL-AMERICAN CAB® COOK-OFF

**BLACK KETTLE WINNER:** Nebraska senior roast team

**PAT GROTE LEAD SCHOLARSHIP WINNER:** Illinois intermediate steak team

**ARDYCE'S APRON WINNER:** Virginia junior ground beef team

### STEAK DIVISION

RANK	RECIPE	SHOWMANSHIP	OVERALL
<b>Junior</b>			
1	Missouri	Illinois	Missouri
2	—	—	Illinois
3	—	—	Kansas
<b>Intermediate</b>			
1	Illinois	Illinois	Illinois
2	—	—	Ohio
3	—	—	Oklahoma
<b>Senior</b>			
1	Virginia	Virginia	Virginia*
2	—	—	Nebraska
3	—	—	Georgia

### ROAST DIVISION

<b>Junior</b>			
1	Iowa	Iowa	Iowa
2	—	—	Missouri
3	—	—	Nebraska
<b>Intermediate</b>			
1	Louisiana	Illinois	Louisiana
2	—	—	Illinois
3	—	—	Virginia
<b>Senior</b>			
1	North Carolina	Nebraska	Nebraska*
2	—	—	North Carolina

### GROUND BEEF DIVISION

<b>Junior</b>			
1	Virginia	Virginia	Virginia*
2	—	—	Oklahoma
3	—	—	Kansas
<b>Intermediate</b>			
1	Illinois	Illinois	Illinois
2	—	—	Indiana
3	—	—	Iowa
<b>Senior</b>			
1	Illinois	Illinois	Illinois

\*Denotes overall winner of the product division.

award, went to the Nebraska senior roast team for the second year in a row. Team members include Addison Cotton, York; JessaLynn Hudson, Belvidere; Kasey Meyer, Blue Hill; Tucker Stagemeyer, Page; and Tavin Uden, Franklin.

Additionally, the top junior division team from Virginia was awarded the Ardyce's Apron award in memory of past American Angus Auxiliary president Ardyce O'Neill, who served as the contest's first chairman. Team members consisted of Quincy Clayton, Staunton; Lindsay Davis, Winchester; Ella Jane Michael, Fishersville; Sadie Poole, Staunton; and Sophie Salling, Orange.

"Each year I am amazed by the work and thought put into the recipes, skits and props at the cook-off," says Anne Lampe, beef education co-chairman for the American Angus Auxiliary. "I love that the participants are having fun while learning about Certified Angus Beef."

The contest creates some friendly competition for all juniors, even those not showing cattle. Beyond the competition, the CAB Cook-Off Contest is a family-friendly event, educating juniors on retail beef as they have fun with their presentations. **AJ**