

ANGUS JUNIORS PARTICIPATE IN CARCASS CONTEST

The 2023 National Junior Angus Show carcass steer contest teaches youth feeding to finish.

by Julie Isbell, American Angus Association

The demand for carcass merit drives the beef industry. In recent years, the push for quality has increased. National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) members rose to the challenge of providing both during this year's National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) carcass contest.

The carcass contest allows for a shift in perspective at the NJAS. Instead of leading the animal into the show ring, juniors lead steers onto a truck to be harvested. In the days following, the steers are evaluated and their carcass data is reported.

"My experience with this contest has been very good," says 14-year-old Corbin Russell of Paxico, Kan. "I've learned to feed and manage cattle better, and I've had the opportunity

to meet very nice people that run this event."

Twenty-seven entries from eight states competed in the 2023 carcass contest in Grand Island, Neb. The top-ranking steers were announced at the NJAS awards ceremony July 7.

"This contest gives youth exhibitors a look at the final product and outcome of their toils and their breeding in many cases," says Paul Dykstra, director of supply management and analysis for Certified Angus Beef. "They understand more about the drivers of quality, final premiums and discounts. They also see how the production side results in a carcass cutout value that differs based on the quality and attributes of one's cattle."

Carcass champions

Owen Austrino of Dade City, Fla., exhibited the grand champion carcass steer. His steer graded Prime with a yield grade of 2.6 and met the 10 specifications needed to qualify for the *Certified Angus Beef*[®] (CAB) brand. The steer had a 12.8 square inch (sq. in.) ribeye area and a hot carcass weight of 791 pounds (lb.). Austrino received a \$40-per-hundredweight (cwt.) grid premium, \$1 per cwt. higher than the 2022 champion.

Brazos Worrell of Harper, Texas, took home honors for reserve champion carcass steer. His steer graded Choice with a yield grade of 3.3. The steer had a 12.3 sq. in. ribeye area and an 869-lb. hot carcass

2023 NJAS Carcass Contest state group results

Rank	Team	Name	Prem. (\$/hd.)	State Avg.
1	KS 3	Corbin Russell	\$203.58	
1	KS 3	Corbin Russell	\$177.66	
1	KS 3	Kirwin Russell	\$157.70	\$179.65
2	KS 4	Carsen Rinkes	\$210.00	
2	KS 4	Conner Rinkes	\$200.64	
2	KS 4	Carsen Rinkes	\$78.66	\$163.10
3	ND	Alexis Vandeberghe	\$176.64	
3	ND	Alexis Vandeberghe	\$131.24	
3	ND	Kelsey Vandeberghe	\$103.35	\$137.08



NATIONAL JUNIOR ANGUS SHOW



Owen Austrino (left), Dade City, Fla., was awarded champion carcass steer. Also pictured is Pecos Worrell, accepting reserve carcass steer on behalf of Brazos Worrell, Harper, Texas.



Alexis Vandenberghe (left), Cleveland, N.D., was awarded champion B&O carcass steer, and Kye Lehenbauer, Palmyra, Mo., was awarded reserve B&O carcass steer.



The team Kansas 3 won champion state group. Pictured are team members Kirwin Russell (left), Paxico, Kan. and Corbin Russell, Paxico, Kan.

2023 NJAS Carcass Contest Results

Rank	Name	State Group	Live wt. (lb.)	Dressing %	HCW (lb.)	Fat (in.)	REA (sq. in.)	QG	YG	CAB*	Grid prem. (\$/cwt.)	Carcass prem. (\$/hd.)
1	Owen Austrino		1,305	60.6%	791	0.32	12.8	PR	2.6	Yes	\$40.00	\$316.40
2	Brazos Worrell		1,460	59.5%	869	0.44	12.3	CH	3.3	Yes	\$25.00	\$217.25
3	Andrew Jordan		1,355	62.0%	840	0.40	12.1	CH	3.4	Yes	\$25.00	\$210.00
4	Carsen Rinkes	KS 4	1,435	61.0%	875	0.40	11.3	CH	3.6	Yes	\$24.00	\$210.00
5	Zane Anderson		1,405	61.6%	865	0.60	12.3	CH	3.7	Yes	\$24.00	\$207.60
6	Corbin Russell	KS 3	1,305	60.0%	783	0.40	12.4	CH	2.8	Yes	\$26.00	\$203.58
7	Conner Rinkes	KS 4	1,350	61.9%	836	0.56	11.1	CH	3.9	Yes	\$24.00	\$200.64
8	Campbell Mogck		1,295	62.4%	808	0.56	11.8	CH	3.5	Yes	\$24.00	\$193.92
9	Corbin Russell	KS 3	1,410	60.0%	846	0.24	12.7	CH	2.6	No	\$21.00	\$177.66
10	Alexis Vandenberghe	ND	1,290	59.5%	768	0.44	10.4	CH	3.6	Yes	\$23.00	\$176.64

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weight. Worrell's steer qualified for the CAB brand, and he was awarded a \$25.00-per-cwt. grid premium.

The champion bred-and-owned (B&O) carcass steer was exhibited by Alexis Vandenberghe of Cleveland, N.D. Her steer graded Choice with a yield grade of 3.6. The steer had a 10.4-sq.-in. ribeye area, a 768-lb. hot carcass weight, and earned the CAB brand designation. Vandenberghe received a \$23-per-cwt. grid premium.

Kye Lehenbauer of Palmyra, Mo., presented the reserve champion B&O carcass steer. His steer graded Select with a yield grade of 3.4. The steer exhibited a 10.7-sq.-in. ribeye area with a 791-lb. hot carcass weight.

NJAA members also competed in the contest through state groups of carcasses. Three steers grouped together by at least two exhibitors constituted a state group.

As a state group, the Kansas 3 team won, averaging a \$179.65 carcass premium per head. Team members included Corbin Russell and Kirwin Russell of Paxico.

The reserve state group was also from Kansas. The Kansas 4 team averaged \$163.10 carcass premium per head. Team members included Carsen Rinkes and Conner Rinkes of Holton.

The top steer exhibitors were awarded contest premiums beyond their carcass premiums.

Contestants also received carcass data in return to make improvements in their selection decisions, creating teachable moments for the members and fostering the future of the beef industry.

Cash awards presented to exhibitors placing 1st-50th were made possible by the Briarwood Angus Farms/Curtis and Ann Long NJAS Carcass Contest Endowment Fund. Curtis Long and his late wife, Ann Long, placed significance on

pertinent carcass information. Their endowment fund will permanently support the NJAS Carcass Contest.

Exhibitors who presented carcasses that met CAB standards received an additional 25% in premiums. It was the Longs' hope that due to this permanent endowment, Angus youth would develop a better understanding of the economic benefits derived from producing outstanding beef carcasses. **AJ**

