

## Boot Camp II

*CAB's Basic Training Seminar gives food service distributors a better understanding of the program.*

*By Cindy Folck, CAB Communications Director*

Basic training is provided at boot camp so soldiers can prepare themselves for the battles they will encounter. The basics they learn include background information, survival techniques and strategic maneuvers. Once this basic training is learned, the soldiers use their knowledge toward new challenges.

Certified Angus Beef annually holds a boot camp of its own. More than 70 people attended Boot Camp II, held June 7-9 in Omaha, Neb. Boot Camp II was basic training for sales representatives of licensed food service distributors. Speakers and tours were featured to update the CAB sales representatives.

Representatives boarded buses for the first tour on Friday to Nebraska Boxed Beef, Norfolk, Neb. Jim Addison, director of Certified Angus Beef Sales for Nebraska Boxed Beef, conducted the tour and showed representatives their modern slaughter and fabrication operation. Representatives were also introduced to the USDA grading process. They were shown comparisons between CAB carcasses and other carcasses.

On the bus trip to and from Nebraska Boxed Beef, the representatives exchanged CAB marketing techniques.

Two people received CAB watches for presenting the best ideas. One innovative technique implemented by Connie Mathis, S & S Meat Co., Kansas City, Mo., was a billboard that listed licensed CAB restaurants they serviced. The other winning technique was cited by Todd Miller, Haines Food Service, Tampa, Fla. The

company has branding irons with the CAB logo that licensed restaurants can use to brand steaks.

O'Neill Angus Farm, Logan, Iowa, was the next stop. Jim and Ardyce O'Neill have a 600 acre, production-oriented farm with over 180 registered Angus cows. The CAB sales representatives were taken on hayrides to get a close-up look at a O'Neill's cattle operation. For many of the representatives, it was their first time on a production farm. Jim and Ardyce, as well as many of their employees, were helpful in answering questions and sharing cattleknowledge.

Also at the O'Neills, John Stowell, director of Supply Development for Certified Angus Beef, and Jim Shirley, regional manager for the American Angus Association, talked about production aspects of the cattle industry. The evening concluded with a CAB barbecue.

This kind of hospitality is important in the CAB Program. The sales representatives will be better able to promote CAB with an understanding of the food chain — from producer to consumer.

Now that they had learned the background information, phase two of the mission could begin. "Commander in Chief" Mick Colvin, CAB Executive Director, instructed the representatives on the survival techniques and strategic maneuvers in selling and promoting CAB.

Strategic maneuvers in the form of marketing ideas and programs were presented by Nancy Ann Sayre, marketing/sales director of Dole & Bailey, Inc.

She talked about many of the programs which have kept Dole & Bailey one of the top food service purveyors in the country.

In rotating sessions, the representatives attended CAB merchandising seminars. One was a meat merchandising demonstration by Leonard Berkowitz, professor, Florida International University. He showed the various methods of cutting and portioning beef sub-primals for restaurants. He emphasized the importance of cut quality and overall workmanship of products sold to restaurants.

Mike McBride, Independent Meat Company, talked about selling the higher price of CAB to customers, bringing out the survival techniques necessary for conquering the price wars. He said CAB's value, rather than the actual price, should be stressed to the consumer.

Survival techniques also work together with marketing and strategic maneuvers. Michael Hoffman, president of Marketing Catalysts, showed how these mesh in selling a value-added product. He talked about understanding the buyer and techniques needed to effectively communicate the value, features and benefits of using high quality products, especially CAB.

A summary and conclusion was given by Dr. Bob VanStavern, Ohio State University Meat Science Extension emeritus. He talked about the information received at Boot Camp II and the importance of this training, not only to those in attendance, but also to the management of the companies they represent.



*Jim O'Neill talks about his farm to a group of sales representatives on a hayride during Boot Camp II. It was the first opportunity for many to be on a production farm.*



*Mick Colvin (left), Executive Director, CAB Program, presents Ardyce and Jim O'Neill a plaque in appreciation of their hospitality at Boot Camp II.*