

A Translation *De Carne*

CAB opens new doors in Latin markets as cultural insider.

by Chelsea Dinterman, Certified Angus Beef LLC intern

Dressed in fashionably bright colors, she greets you with a warm hug and a bright, “*Hola!*”

Ana Luisa Verba is full of personality and passion, especially for Latin American cultures and premium beef. While at the *Certified Angus Beef* (CAB®) partner Sysco for more than 10 years, she was such a fan, people thought she worked for the brand long before she was hired back in 2018.

Enthusiasm for CAB matched an opening to develop new markets for the premium beef.

“Everything just came together,” says the director of international marketing, Latin focus. Her goal is not without ambition: To change the way Latin and Hispanic people think about beef.

“Our people love meat,” Verba says. “We typically eat end meats, but we can also appreciate a good steak, and don’t hesitate to provide the very best for our families and friends.”

The U.S. market alone presents an opportunity to drive demand for high-quality beef, with estimated buying power over \$1 trillion.

“The Latin market is everywhere. If we put it on a map, every corner of the United States is touched by the Latin culture,” Verba says.

“Increased connectivity has also helped spread flavors from Latin America and allows chefs to share their knowledge.”



Verba (second from left) works with partners like Sysco Los Angeles to keep marketing messages relevant to Latinos.

The opportunity continues to widen beyond our borders to the South American tip and “hopefully Spain, too,” reaching out to consumers and those who want to know how to market there.

CAB has focused on Hispanic markets for decades; but Verba, born and raised on Mexico’s Sur

peninsula in Baja California, brings a deep understanding of cultures and traditions. Her parents, a teacher and a pediatric nurse, instilled the importance of living a meaningful life filled with learning and appreciation for other cultures.

“Our vision for Latin America is

about being the leader for this segment, providing the resources they need and training them to become beef leaders themselves,” she says. “Also, it’s about being culturally relevant, which I think is an important difference.”

It’s much more than just translating the brand’s current English marketing materials to Spanish.

“I challenge our team to be more intentional in where and how we focus on the nearly unlimited

possibilities of this market,” she says.

Verba embodies this vision in every part of her day, bringing CAB’s cultural relevance to new sectors through her own perspective on those cultures, creating more targeted marketing materials to better resonate with those of Latin heritage and celebrate them.

“Not everything that we create for our broad audience is going to be translated to this market; it’s more about trans-creation,” she says. “We’re recreating and designing original content because it allows for more intentional resources that connect and resonate with this audience best.”

Constantly moving and innovating, Verba never misses an opportunity to take advantage of a teachable moment. You’re just as likely to learn something about the Spanish-speaking world at lunch with her as you are at a training session.

“In Spanish or Latin cultures, we say before you eat, like a *bon appétit*, *buen provecho*,” she might explain before digging into her salad.

Her knowledge of how to reach these sectors is best seen in the training sessions she holds across the United States and Latin America.

“You can go from giving a Latin market-opportunities analysis to teaching them about the attributes of our brand for those who are speaking Spanish,” Verba says.

“If we are going to call it ‘Latin training’ we must bring elements for the Latin segment,” she explains. “We must focus on not only the parts that are going to show applications but give real examples of real objections they’re having in those markets.”

Verba’s passion for the brand is infectious to brand partners.

“The attendance on our Latin trainings are high,” she says. “They care about the brand so much. Once they are aware and they’re educated, they really take pride in it.”

The ability to hear it in their own language and apply more directly targeted strategies to Latin consumers makes all the difference.

“They’ve invited us again to have additional training for their sales



Executive Chef Florian Durre (left) and his team prepare a beach barbecue at CAB partner Le Blanc Resort & Spa Los Cabos in Mexico.

force, and the impact on sales has been tremendous,” Verba says, noting a domino effect. “We are starting to hear from partners who have not focused on this segment at a deep level. We are planting the seeds.”

One partner that participated in a multi-ethnic training program in Los Angeles increased their CAB product sales by 30%.

The trend is moving brand sales up and to the right, with plenty of growth still to be made. Verba and her team have big plans to expand markets further.

“We really want to continue to be pioneers and start basing in those markets that we have no base in, while attending to those challenges that are coming up and preventing issues,” she says.

It might sound like a lot for just one person, especially when you factor in time for family and a long commute to the office, but Verba often travels and works from her



phone, too. It’s busy for sure, but she wouldn’t have it any other way.

“I love what I do,” she says. “I don’t see it as a job. I see it as a lifestyle.” 