

Annual Conference Builds Enthusiasm



The Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) 2000 annual conference led 330 retailers, foodservice distributors, processors and cattle producers to explore the “World of Opportunity” with the *Certified Angus Beef*™ (CAB®) brand. They gathered at the Chateau Whistler Resort in British Columbia Aug. 24-26 to learn about growing supply through the licensing of Canadian packing companies, emerging DNA research and marketing opportunities with the 2002 Olympic Winter Games. An awards program celebrated licensees’ marketing, brand integrity and sales efforts during the past year.

Marketing strength

Looking for opportunities to reach a specific community and trying to outthink rather than outspend the competition are not new approaches to marketing. They are, however, often overlooked and underemployed building blocks of successful marketing, said Jeff Slutsky, founder and president of Streetfighter Marketing.

As the keynote speaker at the CAB annual conference, Slutsky addressed a cross section of beef industry participants associated with the brand. Producers, processors, large retailers and independent-restaurant owners learned how to discern between wasting money and time on anemic marketing efforts and getting the message to their customer base.

“The basic difference is ideas vs. technique,” Slutsky explained. “Everybody has ideas, but they do not have a way to make them work. Ideas are easy. Implementation is hard.”

“Businesses must understand the potential depth that a local marketing approach can have for them,” he said. “It is totally integrated. It takes time and is not cheap, but once you have it, you have it forever if you use it right. It may be more complicated to implement but worth the effort.”

The potential value of marketing is based on the willingness to make the investment.

“To really do it right, it takes a year,” Slutsky said. “There is no white horse, no



Himself a business owner, Jeff Slutsky developed results-oriented, low-cost tactics to build sales. His unique combination of shrewd thinking, innovative problem-solving, shoestring budgeting and hard work became known as “street fighting.”

magic bullet. It involves work and following a program. There are no shortcuts. It takes looking beyond the next quarter.”

Instead of a number of small promotions implemented individually, savvy marketing employs an overall plan. The only way small companies can compete with corporate giants is to face them head-to-head on a neighborhood level. There is equal footing, he said.

Slutsky encouraged attendees to “forget the manual; the manual is useless.” Another mistake he sees clients make is spending a lot of money to develop marketing strategies but failing to use them.

“Good advertising is only as good as everything else you have — staff, etc.,” he added. “Marketing cannot fix operating problems.”

With a background in both advertising and public relations, Slutsky founded Streetfighter Marketing following his experience as part owner of a nightclub and a health club. The marketing dollars came from his own pocket, so he soon began to discover and develop results-oriented, low-cost tactics to build sales. His unique combination of shrewd thinking, innovative problem-solving, shoestring budgeting and lots of hard work came to be known as “street fighting.”



“There’s more to life than skating around in a circle,” speed skater Dan Jansen’s father told him. That advice helped Jansen keep perspective through four Olympic competitions, complete with the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat.

As an example of a street fighter’s mentality, Slutsky related the experience of a barber known for quality and customer service who gave haircuts for \$12. When a chain salon moved into a strip mall across the street from his shop and put up a billboard saying, “We give \$6 haircuts,” the street fighter countered with a billboard that read, “We fix \$6 haircuts.”

His client list includes AT&T, McDonald’s, American Express, Pizza Hut franchises, the state of Arkansas and the nation of India. Slutsky has authored seven books on marketing, plus audio seminars and videos. He is currently developing a new sales musical for major conferences.

— Eileen Keller

Olympian inspires greatness

The favored 500-meter speed skater in the 1988 Olympics, Dan Jansen headed home after the competition without a medal. Life had thrown him a few

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An hour-and-a-half food show allowed licensees to sample the products side by side. "There was so much energy surrounding the value-added products that it couldn't be overlooked," said Brett Erickson of the display.



Since the conference sampling, distributors have teamed with processors to start offering a more developed line of value-added products.

curveballs that affected his performance at the world's greatest sporting event. Willpower and determination transformed his weaknesses into strengths and finally led him to gold six years later.

Skating taught Jansen more about life than he ever expected. It led him to make a difference in the lives of others, too, as he shared his insights with CAB conference attendees.

He first entered Olympic competition in 1984 at Sarajevo. Happy to be an Olympic competitor and with a fourth-place finish in the 500-meter race, Jansen said he learned how much emphasis society places on winning. He was taken off guard when he was met with reactions of "too bad" and

"you'll do better next time." That placed more pressure on his subsequent Olympic competitions.

Favored for the gold in 1988, Jansen had to deal with his sister's death from leukemia and with the media attention, which built up the audience's hopes for Jansen to bring home the gold for the United States and for his sister. He fell.

Jansen trained intensively for 1992, but he still finished fourth. He would have one more chance to bring home the gold — the 1994 Winter Olympics.

Experts advised him to focus on and to train for "his" event — the 500-meter — and to stop training for the 1,000-meter race, in which Jansen said his performance

"As an athlete in the cafeteria having a choice between McDonald's and Certified Angus Beef™ products, I don't have to tell you where they are going to go."

— Dan Jansen

was less consistent. He and his coach ignored the advice and charged on.

In 1994 he slipped in the 500-meter, again losing the medal.

His last chance came with the 1,000-meter race. This time, he brought home the gold.

"You cannot discover new oceans unless you lose site of the shore," he quoted. "Don't ignore your weaknesses. Work on them," he said. "They inspire your strengths." Small steps are most effective in the process and ultimately help individuals achieve their goals.

Throughout his career, Jansen held eight world records in the 500- and 1,000-meter races, and he earned 50 World Cup medals and 20 World Championship medals. He was first overall in World Cup Standings from 1991 to 1993.

"Whether I won or not, I woke up the next morning the same person," he said. "I was at peace." He had given his all.

"The 500-meter was my race. I know I can't change not having a medal (in that event)," he said. "In everything, there is a new beginning." Jansen has found his new beginning in helping others.

In 1998 he founded the Dan Jansen Foundation to support leukemia research and youth sports and education programs. The foundation has helped 16 families to date. Jansen is a past member of the Special Olympics International Board of Directors. He also shares his story at special events and corporate gatherings.

Value-added sales heating up

This year's conference opened the doors for monumental growth of value-added-product sales during the next three to five years, meaning more of each certified carcass will be marketed to consumers with the CAB brand. Initial projections are for a sales increase from the current 8 million pounds (lb.)/year to 60 million lb. in 2005. This growth rate would bring value-added

products to nearly 10% of the brand's overall sales. It will be made possible by a combined effort among CAB staff and its processor, foodservice and retail licensees.

"Our licensees are embracing the time-saving benefits these products offer their customers both in restaurant and consumer kitchens," said Brett Erickson, director of value-added products sales and marketing. "Their efforts to promote and market these products will develop continued use among consumers and restaurateurs."

The driving forces behind recent interest in value-added products are consumer demand, the Olympic suppliership and national awards from groups like the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA).

Erickson said the full effect of these factors may not be evident until 2002 when the brand's frankfurters, pot roast, barbecue beef and deli meats will be on the menu at the Olympic Winter Games in Salt Lake City, Utah.

To help licensees experience these items and gear up for all the excitement, this year's conference fully explored sales potential and marketability. The focus on value-added products came across in the Olympic suppliership general session with Don Pritchard, director of foodservice for the Salt Lake Organizing Committee (SLOC).

"The *Certified Angus Beef* brand is the industry leader when it comes to quality, and the Olympic Games are known for attracting the best and most dedicated athletes. SLOC is committed to providing the total Olympic experience, and foodservice will play an integral role," Pritchard said.

Retail, foodservice and international sessions at the conference also compelled licensees to participate in value-added-product discussions both inside and outside the sessions.

"There was so much energy surrounding the value-added products that it couldn't be overlooked," Erickson said. Part of the emphasis came with an hour-and-a-half food show for licensees to sample the products side by side.

Items sampled included the NCBA-award-winning Quick-N-Easy™ top sirloin steak in bourbon sauce and the BUBBA burger™ hamburgers; items to be supplied to the 2002 Olympic Winter Games; and new items, such as gourmet, all-beef sausages by Aidells Sausage Co.

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Brand leaders honored with awards

SUPPLY DEVELOPMENT

Seedstock Producer: Brian McCulloh, Woodhill Farms, Viroqua, Wis.

Commercial Producer: Mike Gebhart, Meadows, S.D.

Progressive Partner of the Year: Samson Inc., Platte Center, Neb.

Feedlot Partner of the Year: Irsik & Doll, Cimarron, Kan.

Top Three Volume Feeders of CAB-Accepted Cattle

1. El Oro Cattle Feeders, Moses Lake, Wash.
2. McPherson County Feeders, Marquette, Kan.
3. Darnall Feedlot, Harrisburg, Neb.

MARKETER OF THE YEAR

Fabricator: Excel Corp., Wichita, Kan.

Processor: RMH Foods, Morton, Ill.

Retailer: Raley's, West Sacramento, Calif.

Exporter: Hanwha International Corp., Cranbury, N.J.

International Distributor: Sumikin Bussan Kaisha, Tokyo, Japan

International Restaurant: Buenos Ayres Bar & Grill, San Juan, Puerto Rico

International Retailer: Overwaitea Food Group, Langley, British Columbia

Foodservice Distributor: Middendorf Meat & Quality Foods, Saint Louis, Mo.

Restaurant Chain: Mr. Subb, Cohoes, N.Y.

Restaurant: El Gaucho, Seattle, Wash.

VALUE-ADDED PRODUCTS MARKETER

International: Butterfield & Vallis, Hamilton, Bermuda

Retail: King Soopers, Denver, Colo.

Foodservice: Parkway Food Service, Clearwater, Fla.

COMMITMENT TO INTEGRITY

Fabricator: IBP, Dakota Dunes, S.D.

Retail: Giant Eagle, Harmony, Pa.

International: Intercity Packers, Vancouver, British Columbia

Foodservice: Independent Meat Co., Twin Falls, Idaho

TOP SALES VOLUME

Fabricator: IBP, Dakota City, Neb.

Processor: Excel Specialty Products, Wichita, Kan.

Purchaser/Retail Distributor: Topco Associates, Skokie, Ill.

Retailer: Publix Super Markets, Jacksonville, Fla.

Exporter: IBP International, Dakota Dunes, S.D.

International Distributor: Nippon Ham Co., Tokyo, Japan

Foodservice Distributor: Buckhead Beef Co., Atlanta, Ga.



Items sampled included new items, such as gourmet, all-beef sausages by Aidells Sausage Co.; products to be supplied to the Winter Olympics; and NCBA award winners.



Auctioneer Ken Pearson accepted final bids totaling \$24,750 for three items during the Colvin Scholarship Auction Aug. 26.

"A more developed line of products with quality-minded processors is coming together to fully address retail and foodservice needs," Erickson said. Several new companies came on board this year, including Aidells Sausage, Dan's Prize deli meats for foodservice, Hudson Meat Co. and Allied Steaks for Philly cheese steaks.

Since the conference sampling, distributors have teamed with processors to start offering these products. Jim Holten, CEO at Holten Meat Inc., said the past month had been unbelievable.

"We've had nothing but rave reviews ever since," he added. A number of the distributor and retail representatives who sampled the burger are ordering it for introductions to staff and customers. "Our Thick-N-Juicy® beef patty tastes great even when cooked to a safe temperature. They (conference attendees) kept coming back for more," Holten said.

He also identified upcoming sales meetings with distributors and their customers to discuss opportunities for use. The product also has been included in three restaurant distributor food shows this fall.

"With growing time constraints in restaurant kitchens and demand for high-quality entrées, distributors and restaurants are seeking these types of products," Erickson said. "It makes sense for them to start with a brand their customers rely on." He expects three-quarters of the 94 licensed,



The Colvin Scholarship Fund was developed in 1999 to benefit young adults who are interested in the beef industry, have established themselves as leaders and excel academically, said Louis "Mick" Colvin, retired executive director of the CAB Program.

U.S. foodservice distributors to embrace the value-added product line in the coming year. They are ideal solutions for room service, family restaurants, employee dining, banquets and health-care menus.

Going once, going twice, SOLD!

After asking for a starting bid of \$600 from the crowd and receiving an automatic \$1,000 bite, the rhythmic chant of auctioneer Ken Pearson resonated throughout the crowd of 300. The Colvin Scholarship Auction was underway.

A total of \$24,750 was raised after selling three auction items for the scholarship fund on Aug. 26 during the CAB annual conference.

"With this support, we can award at least one student a \$1,000 scholarship for fall 2001," said Bob Van Stavern, professor emeritus of meat science at Ohio State University. Van Stavern sits on the advisory committee overseeing fund-raising, judging criteria and the recipient-selection process. Other committee members are Henry Bergfeld, manager of Summitcrest, Summitville, Ohio, and Mick Colvin, the scholarship's namesake and former CAB executive director. The committee hopes to award a second scholarship within three years, depending on growth and interest earned by the fund.

"We were nervous and anxious for the first bid," Bergfeld said. "After the first items

sold, I couldn't wait for the auctioneer to continue."

The first auction item was a one-of-a-kind papercast featuring the Salt Lake 2002 Olympic Winter Games emblem with the CAB logo inset in the mat. Saltgrass Steak House, Houston, Texas, made the winning bid.

Next on the auction block was a limited-edition lithograph titled "Speed Skating." Created by artist Bill Sienkiewicz for the 1994 Winter Olympics in Lillehammer, Norway, it sold for \$10,200 to Eaves Foods, Elberton, Ga. Olympic gold medalist Dan Jansen had signed the print earlier in the day.

"We purchased the print for two reasons," said Edward Eaves, sales manager for Eaves Foods. "What Dan Jansen stood for (as an Olympic athlete), and the scholarship fund as a step in the right direction for us and CAB. We need to keep education going in a circle. This will help bring qualified students into the industry."

As the world watches the 2002 Olympic Winter Games, Jim Holten of Holten Meat Inc., Sauget, Ill., and his wife, Shirley, will be in attendance. Holten made the winning bid on a ticket package for two to attend the Games. His bid contributed \$13,500 to the scholarship fund. On Feb. 15-17, 2002, the Holtens will attend the 19th game of the men's hockey finals, the first and second qualification jumps of the men's and women's freestyle aerial skiing, and the women's super giant slalom. They also will stay two nights at the Angel House Inn Bed & Breakfast in historic Park City.

Ken Pearson of Langley, British Columbia, is an auctioneer at Fraser Valley Auctions. Pearson donated his time, expenses and talent to work the event.

The scholarship fund was developed in 1999 to honor Louis "Mick" Colvin as he retired from CAB. The scholarship is designed to benefit young adults who are interested in the beef industry, have established themselves as leaders and excel academically. Applicants will be judged on activities, scholastic achievement and communication skills.

Tax-deductible donations can be made payable to the Angus Foundation-Colvin Fund and sent to Colvin Scholarship Fund, Certified Angus Beef LLC, 206 Riffel Rd., Wooster, Ohio 44691.

Starting in January 2001, college juniors and seniors can obtain applications at www.2eatcab.com or by writing to the Colvin Scholarship Fund address. 