



# Angus Stakes

► by *Shauna Rose Hermel*, editor

## An inspiring evening

*I wish every Angus producer — registered or commercial — could have been there. The dinner reception to announce the working partnership of Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB), the Beef Marketing Group (BMG) and Tyson Fresh Meats to produce Certified Angus Beef® (CAB®) brand Natural was no less than inspiring.*

### Compounding the value

John Butler, BMG chief executive officer (CEO), called it the most significant announcement of the 2006 Cattle Industry Annual Convention in Denver, Colo., Feb. 1-4. I would agree.

“The joint commitment by BMG, Tyson and CAB to produce CAB brand Natural raises the bar for production standards and product quality for all natural beef brands,” said Jim Riemann, CAB president. “This joint effort gives consumers a choice that will exceed their expectations for natural beef products.”

A billion-dollar market, the “natural” beef segment is outgrowing its moniker as a niche. And, the cooperation of CAB, BMG and Tyson will allow the beef category to realize its potential.

With four — and soon to be five — of BMG’s 14 feedyards committed to feeding for CAB Natural and Five Star Natural Angus beef, BMG cooperators have committed to a more intensive management scenario than most cattle feeders.

Butler said feedyard employees were excited about the program. They understand

that these are higher-value cattle intended for a special purpose, and they take great pride in “coddling” them while they are in the yards. The attendance of more than 20 BMG feedyard personnel at the dinner supported Butler’s comments of how enthusiastically they have embraced the concept and how well these cattle will be managed.

Jerry Holbrook, senior vice president of fresh meat sales and marketing for Tyson, said they were going after “the richest cattle there are” to supply the two brands, adding that Tyson doesn’t mind sharing value — as long as there is reciprocation.

Holbrook shared his expectations for growth of the natural market and the difference in marketing a natural product vs. a commodity beef product. Because of the untraditional management required in producing the live animal for a natural end point, it is more important to establish relationships with retailers preharvest, he noted.

Certainly, Tyson’s involvement provides the opportunity to move natural from niche to mainstream as consumer demand allows.

Once again, the folks at CAB have found a

way to set a target and add value to those willing to produce for the target. It’s not for everybody, but it provides the feedyard, packer and retail support for those willing to provide the Angus genetics and work with their customers to supply higher-value calves worthy of coddling.

Kudos for setting a positive incentive to go beyond the necessary and meet consumer demand with excellence.

For details about the CAB natural program, see page 355. Butler shares some of his comments with *Angus Journal* subscribers on page 360.

### Breeder’s Reference Guide

Be sure to take note of the *Breeder’s Reference Guide* inserted in this issue. It contains the American Angus Association’s charter and bylaws, rules, and articles to explain various Association services and programs.

### Convention news

Many of the highlights of the 2006 Cattle Industry Annual Convention are published in this issue beginning on page 268, but it is impossible to include every aspect of the industry’s largest meeting. Visit the newsroom at [www.4cattlemen.com](http://www.4cattlemen.com) for additional coverage, including more award winners and products showcased in the trade show.

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