



Brand News

► News and highlights from Certified Angus Beef LLC,* compiled by Emily Krueger, Certified Angus Beef LLC

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<http://pos.certifiedangusbeef.com>. For a source for
recipe ideas, storage and handling tips, restaurant
listings, retail store locations and cooking
information, visit www.certifiedangusbeef.com.

Beef — the other holiday meat

The classic holiday table includes a fowl centerpiece, specifically turkey with the classic stuffing, mashed potatoes and melt-in-your-mouth pumpkin pie. However, with beef as a celebratory protein, many Certified Angus Beef® (CAB®) brand partners kept top-quality beef top-of-mind for their customers during the holiday seasons.

United Supermarkets, a Texas retail brand partner, featured turkey on the front page of its circular for Thanksgiving, but it didn't stop there. Inside the feature, alternatives for center-of-the-plate were CAB holiday roasts, complete with recipes and paired wine offerings. The retailer also promoted the CAB roasts with in-store signage, demonstrations and tastings, flyers and \$2 coupons.

Another partner committed to the brand was Sysco Philadelphia LLC, a foodservice distribution house in the middle of a district-wide CAB sales contest during the holiday season, says the company's CAB specialist Bill Pinto.

He sent a humorous email to his sales team, encouraging them to continue promoting premium beef: "What's all of this talk about turkey?" he asked. "Don't these turkeys know we have a Smackdown (brand sales promotion) going on!" Pinto added an image of a T-bone steak made to look like a turkey, to help spur some laughs and garner enthusiasm for the contest.

Whether comic encouragement or hard-hitting promotions during the holidays, brand partners showed customers the benefits of including beef on their holiday menu.



Technology summit

The American Angus Association and its CAB brand joined staff technology teams in October for a two-day "Information Systems (IS) Summit," the first meeting of this kind between the Association and its subsidiary.

The idea came from Brent Eichar, the Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) senior vice president who has always kept up a close connection to the technology field. He believed the two IS groups could learn from each other and share strategies at the Association headquarters in Saint Joseph, Mo. The eight CAB staff there included IS team members and web design specialists.

A variety of topics were discussed, from

specific software use and Internet security and monitoring to company mobile devices and smartphone app development.

Dave Shock, CAB IS director, says several key takeaways came from the meeting, not the least of which being a common technological foundation for future projects.

"I am confident we will hold another summit like this in the future," he says.

Not backing up on genetics

Producer Marty Hughes of Goldthwaite, Texas, is trying to make the best of a bad situation. After two years of drought he has had to reduce



*Certified Angus Beef LLC is a wholly owned subsidiary of the American Angus Association.

his herd by half, and he's probably still not done.

Although the drought forced him to wean and sell his calves early in 2012, Hughes had previously kept replacement heifers and retained ownership of the rest of his cattle through the feeding process. Generally those calves average more than 90% USDA Choice and up to 30% CAB, earning an extra \$90-\$125 per head in premiums.

When Hughes realized how much culling he would have to do, he wanted to make sure he was only backing up on numbers, not genetics. Previous data pointed out Hughes' best cows, but he needed a way to test unproven females. That was when he decided to start using the GeneMax™ DNA-based test from CAB.

"Right now we want to make sure we aren't selling our tip-top females," Hughes says. He's using the test to index heifers and first- and second-calf young cows that have not had any feedyard data returned.

So far, after testing nearly 100 animals, the results have created a learning experience.

"I think I can look at cattle and know which ones I would like to keep, but some of the test results came back differently than I expected," he says. "Now we've culled some of those heifers because they didn't get a good score."

For now, it is a waiting game until the drought breaks, but when it does, Hughes hopes his efforts will keep him moving forward.

"I wish I could say we're using the tests to expand and things are going great, but right now it's all about culling decisions," he says. "Hopefully we can start over some day, and then we'll be starting with the best."

Commercial heifer premiums

Cattlemen who market commercial Angus heifers do a lot of things right to add value. Beyond conditioning, health and breeding, there's the potential advantage from using a genomic test like GeneMax (GMX). In 2012 fall sales from the Central Plains to the Southeast, Angus breeders marketing GMX-tested commercial heifers saw \$100-\$300 premiums on their highest-scoring females.

Those added dollars send a message: customers in the commercial world are targeting quality and willing to pay for information that helps their aim. Even cattle receiving lower GMX scores saw average prices upward of \$200 more than similar heifers without the information. For more information on how to incorporate GeneMax into a commercial-Angus heifer-marketing plan, visit www.CABpartners.com.

Table 1: Summary of 30.06 qualifiers and honorable mentions from data reported in October 2012



In the On-Target "30.06" program, the Feedlot-Licensing Program (FLP) honors feedlot partners that harvest qualifying groups of cattle with at least a 30% Prime or *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) brand acceptance rate with an allowance for 3% Yield Grade (YG) 4s and 3% carcasses weighing more than 975 pounds (lb.). Sorting is encouraged to bring out the best in each animal, and the minimum group size is 10 head. Honorable mention groups stood out for CAB acceptance but contained at least one discount problem.

30.06 lots	Sex ^a	Head	%CAB	%Prime	%YG1-2	AngusSource
Shaw Feedyard Inc.	S	34 ^b	67.65	5.88	52.94	No
Shaw Feedyard Inc.	S	39 ^b	51.28	5.13	33.33	No
David Ranch	M	83 ^b	38.55	1.20	49.40	Yes
Pratt Feeders LLC	H	11 ^b	36.36	0.00	45.45	No
Shaw Feedyard Inc.	S	36 ^b	30.56	0.00	44.44	No

Honorable Mentions	Sex ^a	Head	%CAB	%Prime	%YG1-2	AngusSource
Pratt Feeders LLC	S	58 ^b	74.14	6.90	39.7	No
Pratt Feeders LLC	S	50 ^b	60.00	0.00	40.0	No
Chappell Feedlot	S	12 ^b	50.00	8.33	8.3	No
Chappell Feedlot	S	18	41.18	0.00	22.2	Yes
Pratt Feeders LLC	H	66 ^b	39.39	4.55	45.5	No
Chappell Feedlot	H	52	35.42	0.00	15.4	No
Chappell Feedlot	H	25 ^b	32.00	4.00	12.0	No
Ford County Feed Yard Inc.	H	113 ^b	30.97	1.77	67.3	No
Ford County Feed Yard Inc.	S	50 ^b	30.00	2.00	68.0	No

^aH=heifers; M=mixed; S=steers.

^bIndicates 100% CAB eligible. All acceptance rates figured on eligible portions.

Lots that exceed 15% YG 4 and YG 5 are not included on the honorable mention list.

Call 785-539-0123 or visit www.cabfeedlots.com for a complete and current list of feedlot licensees.



local licensed restaurants to support brand partners and to offer Association members a great steak dinner.

This year, CAB went a step further



and issued special event licensing agreements with Z's Oyster Bar and Steakhouse and Volare Italian Ristorante. The steakhouses are conveniently located near the hotels where participants and exhibitors stayed.

"We wanted to give the Association

members a memorable dining experience with the *Certified Angus Beef* brand," says Kim Arseneaux, mid-central region brand executive account manager.

Flyers were distributed among guests staying at nearby hotels, welcoming them to "Enjoy a flavorful, tender and juicy *Certified Angus Beef* brand steak" at one of the restaurant locations.

"The operators and chefs of both steakhouses are good people, culinary artists and strong promoters of the brand," says Arseneaux.

Bringing the brand to breeders

The American Angus Association 129th Annual Convention of Delegates, convened in conjunction with the North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE), marked the first year the CAB brand tied a restaurant promotion to these events.

CAB has maintained a presence at the Louisville, Ky., expo and at the Association meeting for several years. Each year Angus enthusiasts and breeders are directed to

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A direct result of the temporary licensing agreement, Volare committed to serving their patrons top-quality beef year-round by becoming a 100% CAB licensee.

Kevin Rice, Z's Oyster Bar and Steakhouse executive chef, was also pleased with the results of using premium beef in his restaurant. Since transitioning from USDA Prime to CAB Prime, he says he has not received one steak quality complaint.



The beef in food photography

A picture tells a thousand words, as the saying goes.

Mark Merryweather, CAB multimedia designer and food photographer takes this adage to heart as he plans each individual photo, adding to the already extensive virtual brand library of more than 600 beef pictures. The library contains images of raw cuts, plated steaks, juicy burgers, melt-in-your-mouth roasts, value-added products and more.

"Each shot tells a story. Within a photo, the props, the food and other elements help convey the story we are trying to tell," Merryweather says.

Food photography is an integral piece to many of the marketing materials the brand provides for partners, whether they are used in promotional pieces, advertisements, on websites or on menus.

Nearly seven years ago, CAB began taking many of the food photos for marketing pieces in-house, rather than using an outside professional photography company to capture all of the needed images. Now it is a team effort with Merryweather, corporate chef Michael Ollier, Donna Hann (a recent addition to the culinary staff) and many other talents across the company helping to plan each photo shoot, gathering props and ingredients, food styling and executing the photo shoot.

To help the photography team "set the stage" for each picture, an exciting partnership and antique rental agreement recently formed with Walnut Street Antiques store, located less than 10 miles from CAB headquarters. The collaboration opens a new opportunity to create eccentric photos that



Chef-to-Chef: 13 Trends for 2013

Everybody likes to envision the year ahead and plan accordingly. You can't predict the weather, but what about trends with beef products?

The CAB brand recently hosted a diverse group of chefs from around the country at its Education & Culinary Center in Wooster, Ohio. The Chefs Panel represented a cross-section of restaurateurs, corporate chefs and academia who discussed the past year, exchanged ideas and anticipated trends in the kitchen for 2013. Here's 13 trends they see shaping up for the upper end of foodservice 2013.

- ▶ **The year of the strip:** Showcase the flavorful strip steak instead of those traditional middle-meat favorites, the ribeye and filet.
- ▶ **Surf & turf 2.0:** Make use of more economical cuts, such as the ball tip and *teres major*, paired with seafood options currently available at lower market prices.
- ▶ **History tells us:** Reintroduce guests to alternative cuts of flavorful beef that have been braised and slowly cooked in international cultures for centuries.
- ▶ **Thinking globally local:** Use local ingredients to create international dishes. For instance, prepare heirloom rice from North Carolina to create Risotto, a Northern Italian-style rice; or add global ingredients like kimchee juice from fermented veggies to give rice a Korean spin.
- ▶ **Craft-driven programs take center stage:** Implement craft-driven cocktail, charcuterie, bourbon, cheese and pickle programs, which continue to draw the attention of guests interested in how foods are created.
- ▶ **Gourmet American junk and fair food:** Experiment with high-end nostalgic favorites and fair food such as corn dogs, but with lobster meat.
- ▶ **Broaden protein horizons:** Add lesser-known cuts of beef (chuck flap and sirloin flap, for instance) and dark-meat chicken to the menu as they become more accepted by American palates.
- ▶ **Saving on specials:** Turn undervalued cuts, like chuck steaks and chuck short ribs from the chuck roll, into creative specials and profit centers.
- ▶ **Tapas for one:** Deliver these bite-sized, finger-food dishes styled after the Spanish tapas, offering a more catered experience for guests to try multiple dishes.
- ▶ **Refined and relaxed:** Serve in a more casual style and setting but with elevated menu items like artisan sausages or gourmet burgers customers can enjoy without the fuss.
- ▶ **Tell stories with social media:** Incorporate social media to communicate directly with customers, sharing behind-the-scenes stories of product sources, seasonal specials and delivery to the plate.
- ▶ **Hand-held neighborhood butcher:** Communicate with customers, through smartphones, information previously acquired from the traditional butcher. Chefs will continue to innovatively educate consumers on cuts, preparations and ways to save at home.
- ▶ **School customers:** Offer more and more educational programming for guests, including cooking classes, book clubs with menu pairings and chef-exchange events. Guests want to have stories behind dishes to share with friends.

The chefs also took time to experiment with such new cuts of beef as the Vegas Strip, as well as participate in a hands-on butchery session with CAB meat scientist Phil Bass.

Participating trends panel chefs: Brad Barnes, CMC – Culinary Institute of America, Hyde Park, N.Y.; Craig Deihl, Cypress, Charleston, S.C.; Jorge de la Torre, Johnson & Wales, Denver, Colo.; John Doherty, consulting chef, New York City; Cindy Hutson, Ortanique, Coral Gables, Fla., Grand Cayman and Harbour Island; Ric Rosser, Saltgrass Steakhouse, 57 locations in Texas, Oklahoma and Colorado; Rory Schepisi, Boothill Saloon, Vega, Texas; and Cedric Tovar, Rosemary's and Bobo, New York City.

licensed retailers, restaurants and distributors can use to promote the brand. Props such as dishware, tables and place settings will be rented for the food photography.

“Antiques already have a story,” Merryweather points out. “There is a story within them that adds to the character of a photo.”

Capturing one great beef photograph typically requires between three and four hours, plus the prep-time before the day of the photo shoot. Ultimately, this investment of time pays off for CAB and its partners, as the images are placed in numerous marketing pieces, demonstrating that mouthwatering taste to consumers across the world.

Beef's a trip

The Black Ink Blog (*blackinkwithCAB.com*) for November was a daily journal of sorts, a

30-day look at beef from gate to plate called “Beef's a trip.” The idea was inspired by Holly Spangler of *farmprogress.com*, who challenged other ag bloggers to step it up for the month, and by the thousands of CAB partners who work at every level to add value to this chain.

“You keep worrying about your four years, and I'll keep worrying about my four minutes,” a chef partner once told ranchers. He was saying he understood that it takes details and hard work, recordkeeping and sweat to create that perfect steak, and that left a lot of responsibility on his shoulders.

After all, depending on the degree of doneness, he only had 4 to 10 minutes to get it right. Whether or not a diner was going to leave thinking about that amazing meal; whether or not feeding cattle in the heart of a blizzard or hauling water to the herd in the heat of a midsummer drought was worth it,

all depended on that final person who cooked the meat.

The blog covered the spectrum: from the time a seedstock producer makes his matings to the bull sale, to breeding season at a commercial ranch, to weaning and growing and then feeding. From the packing plant and cooler to the cutting rooms, from the ideal temperature and humidity in an aging room to that in delivery trucks, there are details at every level.

Through CAB, all of the people components interact and gain a better understanding of their role in the whole. The November blog series just tried to help that experience along by taking its readers on that trip.



Editor's Note: *Emily Krueger is marketing specialist for Certified Angus Beef LLC.*