



# Brand News

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

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## Beef on board

Adding a new meaning to “land and sea,” Norwegian Cruise Lines launched the *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) brand in its *a la carte* steak houses aboard 12 cruise ships. Kicking off the partnership April 15 was the Norwegian Dawn, setting sail from Tampa, Fla. Product launch followed for the remainder of the fleet’s Cagney’s Steakhouses and Le Bistro’s.

Staff for the brand and Sysco South Florida, supplier for the cruise line, tag-teamed interactive training aboard each ship. CAB Marketing Manager Natalie Miller, who led one of those sessions, says she was “inspired by excitement level” among waitstaff, who were engaged and enthusiastic about the menu changes and proud to join the CAB program.

The Norwegian Cruise Line is the only line currently licensed to serve and promote CAB. Three Sysco South Florida staff were key in setting up the connection: Kathy Murray, director of cruise line sales; Rob Crook, CAB specialist, and Cindy Thomson, vice president of sales.

CAB steaks for the Norwegian Cruise Line are aged 28 days for the most flavorful and tender steak-eating experience. Menu selections include center-cut strip loin, bone-in ribeye, boneless ribeye and center-cut filet.



## Meat the experts

Most children don’t dream of being professional meat cutters, but it seems natural for Ty and Brian Spinks, father and son. Stack & Van Til highlighted the pair in beef promotions, along with the stories of Strack’s meat-cutting experts across all 20 Indiana and Illinois locations. The retailer chose to focus meat-marketing efforts on the passionate and experienced meat cutters who share a common desire to provide quality beef for customers.

A CAB partner for more than 15 years, Strack began focusing beef promotional efforts around its meat department experts in 2012. Plans are in

the works to grow on the initial campaign during the 2013 summer grilling season. Billboards, in-store signage, web ads, local newspaper ads, Facebook contests, and a meat department contest will help customers recognize Strack meat cutters’ passion for beef.

## Marketing healthful beef

Healthcare companies are an ever-increasing focus in the foodservice trade, and many fresh beef cuts meet USDA guidelines for leanness. Moreover, dozens of value-added items like meatloaf, pot roast, shredded beef and deli meats fit the needs. They have no monosodium glutamate or added transfat and less than 600 mg sodium, but more than 11 g protein per 3-ounce (oz.) cooked serving. Yet CAB’s greatest benefit for hospital patients and doctors, assisted-living residents and the like is exceptional taste.

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

That's why CAB participated in the Sysco Healthcare Conference in March near the distributor's base in Houston, Texas. Representatives from companies that supply this sector nationwide visited with CAB and sales associates from most Sysco houses.

"Many healthcare entities assume they can't afford our products," says Diane DiDonato, CAB manager for its "Focus on Health" initiatives. "Many of our fresh cuts and value-added items are actually cost-effective, and they taste great. Taste is incredibly important where well-balanced nutrition plays a key role in recovery and wellness."

The brand's first outing at this event netted several leads.

"We are in contact with several entities that could provide a new outlet for across-the-board sales — underutilized cuts, lean cuts, classic steaks and value-added items," she adds.

Staff also had one-on-one conversations with Sysco representatives, where they shared sales and marketing tools. Resources included the launch of online healthcare information for prospective customers.

### Nebraska's best burger

Located in the heart of Nebraska cattle country, Mike Hendrickson's guests travel from miles around to get a taste of The Cellar Bar & Grill's delicious fare. Most are local families, farmers and ranchers who regularly visit Kearney, Neb., to enjoy beefy dishes and freshly fried onion rings.

That loyal customer base recently helped The Western Burger take home the inaugural "2013 Nebraska's Best Burger" title in the Consumer Choice Awards. Sponsored by the state's beef council, the contest called for online submissions, and then a panel of judges selected the winner from a preliminary top five.

Starting with fresh CAB chuck patties and stacked with American-Swiss cheese, bacon, barbecue sauce and a homemade onion ring, it's no wonder The Cellar's most popular entrée won wider accolades.

### Culinary meets cattlemen

They came from all around to see, hear, feel and fully experience the beef industry.

A great steak is no mystery to these culinary professionals, as each one prepares CAB entrées for his or her restaurant customers routinely. However, this tour took nearly 50 chefs and restaurant owners across the plains of Texas on April 16-17 to learn about where beef comes from and how it finally arrives in a box at their restaurants' doors.

They visited Steve and Ginger Olson

at Olson Cattle Co. and interacted with the hard-working and passionate family members who dedicate their lives to raising top-quality cattle. They saw the great care taken for the cattle both at

Keeling Cattle Feeders Inc. and Cargill Meat Solutions.

"It's an honor for us to bring the culinary world together with the beef industry and

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### Meeting of the minds

It wasn't the typical "girls night out" celebration, but it certainly was an entertaining few days. Board members from the American Angus Auxiliary convened in Wooster, Ohio, April 13-14 for their Spring Board Meeting, full of education and discussions revolving around beef.

Women on the board conducted business meetings throughout their first-ever stay at Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) headquarters. They also spent time learning about the science behind the brand, in a setting much like meat lab class, with David O'Diam, meat expert and CAB business development assistant director. Corporate Chef Donna Hann conducted

a beef grades comparison on the grill, with *Certified Angus Beef*<sup>®</sup> (CAB<sup>®</sup>) Prime and traditional product vs. USDA Choice and Select cuts.



**Table 1: Summary of 30.06 qualifiers and honorable mentions from data reported in March 2013**

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*<sup>®</sup> (CAB<sup>®</sup>) 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 <sup>a</sup>	Head	%CAB	%Prime	%YG1-2	AngusSource
McPherson County Feeders Inc.	M	11 <sup>b</sup>	63.64	27.27	81.8	No
Honorable Mentions	Sex <sup>a</sup>	Head	%CAB	%Prime	%YG1-2	AngusSource
Pratt Feeders LLC	S	121 <sup>b</sup>	63.64	4.96	57.0	No
McPherson County Feeders Inc.	S	62	62.26	1.61	41.9	No
Chappell Feedlot	M	31	60.00	3.23	25.8	No
Pratt Feeders LLC	S	168 <sup>b</sup>	51.79	4.76	51.2	No
Ford County Feed Yard, Inc.	H	198	47.19	10.61	50.5	No
Pratt Feeders LLC	S	206	46.99	0.49	62.1	No
Pratt Feeders LLC	H	74	44.07	1.35	54.1	No
Pratt Feeders LLC	M	114	43.18	2.63	67.5	No
Ford County Feed Yard Inc.	H	188	39.88	0.53	68.1	No
Keeling Cattle Feeders Inc.	H	91	35.59	3.30	47.3	No

<sup>a</sup>H=heifers; M=mixed; S=steers.

<sup>b</sup>Indicates 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](http://www.cabfeedlots.com) for a complete and current list of feedlot licensees.

see chefs' eyes light up when they realize the connection the farm and ranch has with their businesses," says Mark McCully, CAB vice president of production. "We as an industry and as a brand want to be an open book, as transparent as possible so chefs and culinary professionals can better understand beef and share the industry's great story with their customers."

Helping restaurateurs tell the story is part of an established program. Eleven chefs stayed an extra day to gain media training, joining the honorary ranks of now 55 Brand Ambassadors worldwide. They will benefit from media and public relations support from CAB and serve as the "beef expert" for media to consult in their respective communities.

### **Finding balance**

If hitting the bull's eye is a statement, then two "Honorable Mentions" in the 30.06 Program (see Table 1) speak volumes for Ford County Feed Yard. The 50,000-head yard near Ford, Kan., recently closed out a pen of 198 heifers at 1,115 pounds (lb.), with an average daily gain of 2.89 lb. and feed conversion of 6.33.

Manager Danny Herrmann balances the goals of enjoyable eating experience with the feedyard's bottom dollar. That's not an issue with the right Angus cattle.

"A good Angus steer — he'll perform well; he'll give you a Choice product and will normally do well in the feedlot also," Herrmann says.

To find the good ones, you need a good order-buyer, and these two 30.06 lots came in via Huffman Livestock, Lexington, Va. Perry Huffman has been supplying the Kansas yard for more than a decade through yard partner John Herrmann.

Huffman stays consistent to keep his customers happy, mainly buying English-breed crosses rather than exotics. As for the standouts, they come from volume and an area with good cattle.

"Buy enough of them and you're bound to get that sooner or later. We ship 2,500 to 4,000 head a week," Huffman says.

The Ford County feeder appreciates having local eyes in Virginia sale barns. "As long as a calf performs for me, holds his health together, and the whole nine yards, that's what I really want," Herrmann says. "That's what I need."

