



# Brand News

► News and highlights from Certified Angus Beef LLC,\* compiled by Jennifer Kiko & Erin Mohler

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## Earning an MBA

It's not every day the average Joe in America makes a to-do list that includes fix windmill, plant corn or bottle-feed a calf. It's not a typical day for the folks who sell beef, either, but that's just what happened one fine day in cattle country this spring. Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) invited 25 beef salesmen and women from 17 states and two countries on a field trip.

The adventure was part of the company's MBA program, offering a Master's of Brand Advantages degree in everything from cattle production to meat-cutting to product yield testing and sales skills. Students follow the steak trail from farm gate to dinner plate over a period of months. Educational opportunities culminate in a graduation ceremony.

Recently the group was out "riding the range," so to speak, in Nebraska. They spent time at an Angus ranch, toured the Tyson plant in Lexington, Neb., and visited Chappell Feedlot 160 miles to the west. It was an opportunity to connect all segments of the beef industry, according to event mastermind Deanna Walenciak, CAB marketing director.

"MBA class members — folks who sell *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) brand products — had a chance to meet amazing ranching families committed to the best Angus beef. It was an action-packed day



of watching cows being moved to summer pasture, planting corn, fixing windmills and basically experiencing a typical day in the life of a rancher, if there is such a thing," she says.

It started with the class gathering in Denver and driving to North Platte, Neb., where events kicked off with a steak barbecue at Rishel Angus. On Day 2, the group divided into three segments, allowing for a more personal experience at host ranches including the Krab Family in Paxton; Rusty and Rachael Kemp of Tryon (see "Pride and Economic Sense" on page 114); and Jeff and Kelsey Ruggles of McCook.

The experience clarified misconceptions about modern beef production.

"It was interesting that the ranchers and visitors shared a sense of camaraderie through it all," Walenciak says. "They found similarities between the restaurant business and ranching: long days, hard work and a passion for being and producing the very best. We're all connected, and that's key."

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

## Food and fine art

Culintro is an eclectic gathering of chefs, food and great conversation. It's networking at its best for restaurant, culinary, food and industry professionals, and it's earning rave reviews in the New York City and San Francisco culinary scenes. The creation of New York native Stephanie Berghoff and Texan Alina Munoz combines their expertise and passion for food and fine art into a culinary trade organization that helps develop the knowledge and skill of its members.

Chef Rory Schepisi of the CAB partner Boot Hill Saloon, Vega, Texas, recently participated in a "How I Became A Chef" session. Participating chefs shared stories and advice on what it takes to be successful, and whether their testimonies included starring in shows on Food Network or representing the United States at the Bocuse d'Or, each imparted unique insights.

The session proved that no matter how different they may be, every successful chef has a few things in common with peers: a drive to succeed, an uncompromising appreciation of food, unique creativity, and pride in a delicious and well-executed plate.

The CAB brand also sponsored a late night event at Colicchio & Sons restaurant in New York, where Culintro welcomed the city's most talented and passionate cooks for late-night professional networking. Guests included Food Network star and restaurateur Marc Murphy with Marc Sarrazin of DeBragga, New York's Butcher®; Tracey Erickson of CAB; and Chef Charlie Palmer.

## Like-minded

Gary White had high expectations for a recent harvest group of 24 heifers from Montana.

"They were good black cattle, so I wasn't too surprised that they were also good beef quality," says the manager of White Land & Cattle Co., Lexington, Neb., upon seeing the carcass data.

The cattle went 38.1% CAB and were favorably lean with more than 70% yield grade (YG) 1 and 2. Those numbers earned a spot in CAB's monthly 30.06 program highlights (see Table 1).

Order buyer Steve Christensen, Helena, Mont., put the group together from three Montana ranches. He noticed none of them had enough cattle for individual loads, but that each had "a really nice group of Angus cattle, so when put together they would have the potential to capture more value."

White and Christensen have worked together for nearly 15 years and the two are like-minded when it comes to cattle.

"Gary likes what I like; he only wants good cattle, and I find them for him," says

**Table 1: Summary of 30.06 qualifiers and honorable mentions from data reported in May 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 <sup>a</sup>	Head	%CAB	%Prime	%YG1-2
Guggenmos River Ranch Ltd.	H	30 <sup>b</sup>	76.67	0.00	43.33
Chappell Feedlot	H	48 <sup>b</sup>	68.75	8.33	18.75
Chappell Feedlot	S	17 <sup>b</sup>	58.82	0.00	11.76
White Land & Cattle Co.	H	24	38.10	0.00	70.83

Honorable Mentions	Sex <sup>a</sup>	Head	%CAB	%Prime	%YG1-2
Pratt Feeders LLC	H	34 <sup>b</sup>	64.71	5.88	41.2
Guggenmos River Ranch Ltd.	S	54 <sup>b</sup>	53.70	3.70	46.3
Chappell Feedlot	S	31 <sup>b</sup>	48.39	0.00	6.5
Chappell Feedlot	S	21	45.45	0.00	0.0
Chappell Feedlot	H	39 <sup>b</sup>	43.59	7.69	2.6
Pratt Feeders LLC	M	40 <sup>b</sup>	42.50	2.50	32.5
Panhandle Feeders Inc.	S	123 <sup>b</sup>	41.46	6.50	26.8
Chappell Feedlot	H	32 <sup>b</sup>	40.63	0.00	18.8
Chappell Feedlot	S	10 <sup>b</sup>	40.00	0.00	60.0
Chappell Feedlot	S	23 <sup>b</sup>	39.13	0.00	4.3
Pratt Feeders LLC	M	63	38.89	9.52	44.4
Pratt Feeders LLC	H	64	38.33	9.38	67.2
Keeling Cattle Feeders Inc.	H	91	35.85	3.30	52.7
Pratt Feeders LLC	S	51 <sup>b</sup>	35.29	0.00	41.2
Chappell Feedlot	S	62	34.48	3.23	14.5
Chappell Feedlot	M	14	33.33	0.00	21.4
Keeling Cattle Feeders Inc.	H	89	32.00	3.37	47.2

<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.

Christensen, who does that by using data from plants and feedyards to seek out high quality.

"It is easier to do business if I can back up what I have with data," he says. "Gary doesn't expect me to send him cattle that I don't know anything about."

## Changing steaks

Have a tough time deciding on dinner? A fun new feature from the CAB brand makes choosing the ideal steak a no-brainer. Steak Daily is a personality quiz that suggests your favorite choice for the day. Answer quick questions and the application determines the cut that best suits your mood and the kind of day you've had. It also suggests recipes, where to buy the CAB brand and links to beef cuts information. Access the quiz at [www.GoRare.com](http://www.GoRare.com).



## Night at the ballpark

The CAB brand had the opportunity to partner with Bi-Lo on the first ever "Bi-Lo at the Ballpark," where the retailer offered an all-you-care-to-eat spread, with the brand at the forefront. Hosted at the home of the Greenville (S.C.) Drive, proceeds from the \$10-per-person ticket were donated to the collective charities that Bi-Lo supports. The brand had the opportunity to not only provide product, but spent time answering consumer questions and sampling product.

## ExpHotel

Think of a giant foodshow — three levels worth — that brings together all of the top food and beverage directors, buyers and chefs from hotels, restaurants and resorts in the area of Cancun, Mexico. CAB was there in June, in Comercial Norteamericana's booth with product samples provided for the likes of Ruth's Chris, Royal Resorts, Xel Ha, Hyatt Regency, Fairmont, Grupo Palace and Bubba Gump.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 104



A five-course meal capped off with a CAB flat-iron steak was the star of the closing banquet at CAB partner Hyatt Regency, catering to the tastes of 30 top chefs and the purchasing directors. CAB sponsored it with Provimi, Hormel, ComNor, the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF), Cargill and Las Nubes. It was the first time several of the chefs had tried a flat-iron, which created some enthusiasm for trial in their operations.



► For lunch at “Cattle in the Vines,” it was time for “Best of the Reds,” with a choice of wines and CAB brand Prime dry-aged steaks.

**Cattle in the vines**

For many people, the best thing to go with a good steak is a good red wine. Make those great and add education into the process and you have “Cattle in the Vines,” at the vineyard of CAB strategic partner Chateau Ste. Michelle, Woodinville, Wash.

Invited guests formed teams to follow along as winemaker Raymon McKee demonstrated the art of blending the Cabernet, Merlot, Malbec and Petit Verdot vintages. The teams developed names and labels for their blends, all judged by McKee based on style and flavor.

For lunch, it was time for “Best of the Reds,” with a choice of wines and CAB brand Prime dry-aged steaks.

Afternoon education was all about the cattle, as Chuck and Julie Boggs conveyed their passion for the breed at their Westbrook Angus Ranch near the Olympic Peninsula in Washington. American Angus Association Regional Manager Rod Wesselman completed the crew of cattle experts who described how focused management helps Angus genetics live up to their potential for quality.

**Winning a burger war**



Chef Howie “Bulldog” Kleinburg put his CAB- and blue cheese-inspired entry up against five other teams in the June battle that was “Burger Wars” at the Key West (Fla.) Bacchanalia. The longtime CAB partner won the war.

**Aspen Food and Wine**

The brand hooked up with a Caribbean partner many miles from their home at the Aspen (Colo.) Food and Wine Classic in June. CAB worked with the Cayman Tourism Board to promote its sponsorship of the Cayman Cookout. Approximately 3,000 samples were given out along with the recipe from Corporate Chef Scott Popovic, who attended with Tara Adams, CAB assistant director of sales marketing. Angus breeders Bob and Becky Tiedeman, North Platte, Neb., were there to help consumers associate the brand with Angus ranchers.

**Lessons in branding**

Although they’re no strangers to cattle and farm life, two CAB employees learned a great deal about Western ranching on a trip to Colorado with fellow staffer Heather Hays.

The trio joined the Hays family and their friends for a cattle branding.

“I already had a general understanding of the branding process, but I’m from Michigan and branding isn’t very common in my neck of the woods,” says Danielle Foster, CAB marketing manager trainee. She finds cowboys on horseback particularly intriguing.

“In Michigan we use four-wheelers and ATVs to move our cattle, but the guys on Heather’s family ranch truly saddled up. Seeing cowboys and cattle coming up over the hill as the sun was rising behind them is a view I will never forget. I tip my hat to American Angus Association members and their families.”

For more photos of the trip, visit the brand’s blog, [www.GoRare.com](http://www.GoRare.com).

