



Brand News

► News and highlights from Certified Angus Beef LLC*

Smackdown on sales

Trash talk, wrestling, boxing costumes and calculated tournament-style brackets aside, a select group of *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) brand licensed distributors increased sales of CAB rib and loin cuts (“middle meats” from the middle of the carcass) by nearly 1.85 million pounds (lb.) over the previous year’s base in a matter of six months.

The CAB Middle Meats Smackdown was accompanied by plenty of tomfoolery, but it was all in good fun and financial gain. The Smackdown broke distributors into five categories and challenged them in head-to-head sales competitions in an elimination-based bracket contest to see which sales force could move the most high-value CAB product.

“Distributors were eliminated and re-matched in each round of the contest,” explains Dave Shock, CAB information systems director, who tracked numbers for the contest. “They were matched up to play on the competitive nature and rivalries that



► A distributor sales meeting turns into a mock-boxing match as sales team members tune into the spirit of the “Smackdown.”

already exist between those houses and their management teams.”

It worked, that’s for sure. The Sysco broadline distributors alone increased their sales by nearly 30% during the contest, which ran from February through September 2010.

The Knoxville, Tenn., division of U.S. Foodservice Inc. increased CAB middle-meat sales by nearly 200% over the previous year’s base to win its division. In the independent distributor category, Palmer Food Service won with a similarly outstanding 190% increase in sales. The Sysco broadline distributor division was won by its Central Pennsylvania division, with a 110% sales increase, pushing nearly 300,000 additional pounds of CAB ribs, strips and loins into their marketplace. The Buckhead Beef Co. and GFS Calgary (Alta., Canada) houses also took home top honors in their divisions.

“The ultimate goal of the contest was to give these houses some incentive to focus on selling the most valuable cuts of CAB,” Shock says. “Those sales teams are now more comfortable with selling middle meats, and the hope is they will continue to emphasize the value of our product to foodservice professionals because of that added comfort and excitement.”

Winners of each division received a complimentary trip to the brand’s Annual Conference in Puerto Rico in October, along with “bragging rights” as Smackdown champions. Planning has already begun for Smackdown 2011, Shock says. After this year’s success with distributors, several Smackdown spinoffs have begun to challenge retailers and

other licensees to step up to the plate (or mat) in CAB sales.

CAB history book released

A story that has been told many times by those close to its history can now be read by a wide audience with the publication of a company bio-history book — *The Brand That Changed Beef: How the Certified Angus Beef® Brand Became a Worldwide Icon of Quality*.



The book, launched Oct. 1, details the brand’s ascent from its roots as Harold Etling’s reaction to a tough steak on his plate, through expansion into international markets, the CAB presence at the 2002 Olympic Winter Games in Salt Lake City and its present-day partnerships. It offers a moving

narrative, complemented with hundreds of full-color photographs and yearly time capsules.

Mick Colvin, who served as executive director from the brand’s inception through 1999, offers insight into the early days, when the fledging nonprofit was nearly shut down before it ever began. Current president John Stika, who assumed his post in 2006, shares his thoughts on the brand’s unprecedented growth over the past seven years.

Dedicated to the staff, licensees, board members, producers and others who contributed to its success, the book is authored by Fred Minnick. *The Brand That Changed Beef* makes a great gift or conversation piece. It retails for \$39.95 and can be purchased at www.cabpartners.com.

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To order CAB merchandise, visit www.angussalebarn.com. For a source for recipe ideas, storage and handling tips, restaurant listings, retail store locations and cooking information, visit www.certifiedangusbeef.com.

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► Foodland employees take a break from grilling at one of their extravagant CAB-focused summer grilling events.

Hot deals in paradise

Hawaii's only CAB-licensed retail chain hosted a series of grilling events this summer to invite islanders to "Taste the Difference" in branded beef. Foodland stores across the Oahu Island made CAB the star of the summer on six weekends from July through September with samplings, grill give-a-ways, advertisements, radio events and internal meat-department contests.

"Most retailers have one big event, and then they're done," points out CAB sales marketing manager Diane DiDonato. "Putting together a promotion that lasts nearly two months takes a lot of time and money. This says a lot about Foodland's commitment and belief in the brand."

Each of the six Saturdays of the promotion included front page circular ads for CAB specials, "super hot" deals on middle meats on grilling day, live radio broadcasts from store locations, and upscale samplings that featured CAB ribeye, sirloin or strip steaks. Steak plates were for sale in the store parking lots, enticing shoppers to taste the CAB difference in more than just one sample-sized bite. More than 1,000 \$1-off CAB product coupons were handed out on the day of the grilling events, giving shoppers one more reason to stop by the meat counter.

"All of these things are geared toward converting people who wouldn't normally buy CAB. Once you get the product in their mouths and get them pointed to the meatcase, they're usually converted," DiDonato says. "That's what builds long-term sales and demand for our product."

Gator interns with CAB

Laura Conaway, a senior at the University of Florida, is the fall CAB industry information intern.

The public relations student has extensive agriculture experience, from growing up on a commercial cow-calf and feeding operation to participation on the intercollegiate meats judging team. She served on the University's Animal Science Public Relations team and is active in the Florida Cattlemen's Association,

Table 1: Summary of 30.06 qualifiers and honorable mentions from data reported in July 2010

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[®]) 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.



Licensed CAB [®] Feedlot	Sex ^a	Head	%CAB	%Prime	%YG1-2
Beller Feedlot	H	39 ^b	69.2%	7.7%	61.5%
GG Genetics	H	38 ^b	63.2%	21.1%	60.5%
Beller Feedlot	S	42 ^b	57.1%	4.8%	35.7%
GG Genetics	M	44 ^b	54.6%	6.8%	63.6%
Thomas County Feeders Inc.	S	46 ^b	54.4%	2.2%	21.7%
Guggenmos River Ranch Ltd.	M	107	50.5%	3.7%	67.3%
Chappell Feedlot	M	11 ^b	45.5%	0.0%	9.1%
David Ranch	S	102 ^b	42.2%	4.9%	49.0%
Beller Feedlot	S	44 ^b	40.9%	2.3%	65.9%
Beller Feedlot	S	40	38.9%	5.0%	52.5%
Nemaha Valley Angus Inc.	S	42	37.5%	14.3%	19.1%
Honorable Mentions	Sex ^a	Head	%CAB	%Prime	%YG1-2
Osborn Farms	S	31 ^b	77.4%	19.4%	41.9%
Beller Feedlot	S	39	48.6%	5.1%	33.3%
Pratt Feeders LLC	M	57 ^b	43.9%	0.0%	21.1%
Bassett Feeding Inc.	H	148	43.8%	1.4%	56.8%
Panhandle Feeders Inc.	S	141	43.1%	5.0%	41.8%
White Land & Cattle Co.	S	27 ^b	37.0%	7.4%	25.9%
Keeling Cattle Feeders Inc.	H	79	35.7%	1.3%	58.2%
Pratt Feeders LLC	M	68	35.7%	8.8%	51.5%
Pratt Feeders LLC	S	54 ^b	35.2%	1.9%	35.2%
Ford County Feed Yard Inc.	H	205	33.7%	4.4%	57.1%
Ford County Feed Yard Inc.	H	137	32.8%	0.7%	38.7%

^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.

the American Meat Science Association and Gator Collegiate Cattlewomen.

Conaway will work with the supply development team to produce feature stories, news releases and web content that help cattlemen profitably hit the CAB brand target.

A happy surprise

Ray Carr, Bassett (Neb.) Feeding, didn't expect the kind of harvest data he got on a recent group of "put-together" heifers.

"Of course I like a pleasant surprise," he says, noting he figured the Angus-Charolais-cross cattle from North Dakota would have good yield grades (YG) and above average quality. "It was the percent CAB that surprised me."

Carr's northern cattle buyer purchased several drafts to make the 148-head load that arrived at Bassett weighing 689 lb. in February. It was a tough winter, so the heifers

weren't as fleshy as they could have been and took longer to finish, he says, but at the end of the 154-day feeding period they hit all the right numbers.

They gained 3.33 lb. per day and converted at 6.78 lb. of feed per pound of gain, which Carr calls "respectable" given the weather conditions. The group went 45.1% CAB and Prime (see chart), and favorably lean with more than 56% YG 1s and 2s. That qualified them for honorable mention in CAB's 30.06 program.

"I sold them flat (cash), but I would have gridded them if I knew they were going to have that much CAB," he says. Next time, he'll be a little more certain.

"The order buyer I work with knows that whole country up there, because he was born and raised in the area," Carr says. "I'll ship him all of these closeouts, and we'll try hard to buy these cattle again."

