

Getting it Done Right

Drinnin joins
CAB feedlot network.

by Lyndee Patterson

As a business with more than 50 years under its belt, Drinnin Feedlots of Columbus, Neb., has some long-standing traditions. One of those is a willingness to make changes that better serve customer needs. The latest example was becoming a partner in the Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) Feedlot-Licensing Program (FLP) this summer.

Licensed feedlots help connect all the segments of the beef industry by sharing extensive feeding and harvest data. The information is placed in context when customers compare those numbers to data from their own cattle. Then they use what they learn to improve the quality of cattle they send to the feedyard.

Beyond gaining access to all the information, owner-manager Mike Drinnin says the partnership with CAB should increase their marketability as a custom feeder.

"We wanted to diversify so we could supply all types of customers and clientele with the services they need," he says.

Drinnin Feedlots finishes cattle from herds ranging from Montana to Virginia. Starting with the ability to feed 700 head, the home feedlot expanded to 3,000-head capacity.

And customer demand prompted a move to lease another 10,000-head feedlot this



PHOTOS BY MIRANDA REIMAN

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summer. Since customers generally own 85% of the cattle in the pens, it's important to keep communication lines open, Drinnin says. He frequently e-mails his suppliers with updates about billing, cattle weights, feed and average daily gains.

"I believe a rancher has the right to know how their cattle are performing," he says.

To get the most from those calves, the feedlot employs consultants to help determine the optimal rations and implant programs. Age-and-source or other third-party verification systems are available through the yard as well as such other services as reading and applying electronic identification (eID)

tags or tag-transfer to keep track of individual animal performance.

"Our longstanding goal has always been to give customers the best service we possibly can to maximize their profitability," Drinnin says.

Now he's excited to include more services through the CAB program.

Paul Dykstra, beef cattle specialist for CAB, worked with Drinnin to get the feedlot licensed.

"Mike is a get-things-done kind of person, an outgoing individual who wants to keep driving ahead," Dykstra says. "He's genuinely interested in focusing more on grid marketing and information flow back to ranchers and investors."

Drinnin says, "We always strive for top performance that pays on the bottom line, and you get that by feeding higher-quality cattle."

Although he looks to the relationship with CAB as a means to grow the feedlot, Drinnin knows that the effects will reach much farther, because he and wife Beth are partners in a smoked meats business as well.

"We understand about the consistency of the Certified Angus Beef® (CAB®) brand," he says.

"What we do here is for the consumer. The finished product goes on their plate, and that's important to us."



Editor's Note: Lyndee Patterson is industry information intern for Certified Angus Beef LLC.



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