

Carcass Data Project Winners Named

Enrollments double, gain and grade showcased.

by Meg Drake & Steve Suther



The Kansas Angus Association (KAA) 2012 Carcass Data Project (CDP) named winners and closed out its second year at McPherson County Feeders, Marquette, Kan., with plans to return this fall.

"We're excited that our participation doubled this year," said KAA Manager Anne Lampe. She thanked Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) for partnering on the 79-head project, and for sponsoring awards of more than \$1,200.

"It was another great year of feeding some of the best Angus cattle in the country," said Landon Shaw, assistant manager at the CAB-licensed feedlot. "Having an Angus-sired pen that gains almost 4 pounds (lb.) a day, grades 93% Choice and makes 47% *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) certainly proves the value of the breed."

Cattle in the pen came from nine consignors across the state: Hinkson Angus Ranch, Cottonwood Falls; Hobbs Ranch, Penokee; Jeff Klausmeyer, Clearwater; Thomas Klausmeyer, Conway Springs; Dean Larson, Tescott; Dan Melton, Walton; Andy and Mary McCurry, Burrton; Nemaha Valley Angus, Bern; and Howard Woodbury, Quenemo.

Final standings were based on the top

three calves from any owner, taking gain and CAB acceptance into account. There were excellent cattle in each consignment, said Gary Fike, beef cattle specialist with the brand.

In a letter of congratulations to all, Fike noted that the top three gainers (regardless of grade) from each owner had an average range of 3.91 lb. to 4.86 lb. average daily gain (ADG). "Anybody who tells you Angus-sired cattle cannot gain *and* grade simply doesn't know what they're talking about," he said.

Considering the individual carcass data received, there were no losers, but the formula of gain plus CAB acceptance highlighted a top cut for the CDP.

In the family

"I'm glad my dad won. That's how it's supposed to be. I'll get my chance," said Jeff Klausmeyer, whose cattle came in tied for third. The champions, winning \$500 and CAB merchandise, were from Thomas Klausmeyer's consignment that included

three calves from other son, Todd. The K3 Angus family represented nearly 18% of cattle harvested, and they were the right kind.

Eleven of the family's 15 head were

accepted for the brand, and the top three for the gain/grade combination were 100% CAB, averaged a marbling score of 623 and gained 3.89 lb. per day.

Jeff's trio, winning \$200 and CAB merchandise, made 67% CAB, marbling at 577 with a 3.85-lb. ADG. In fact, all other groups of three in the finals turned out with 67% brand acceptance.

Five calves were out of artificial insemination (AI) sires. The rest were sired by home-raised bulls that trace back to the top K3 cow family for moderation and marbling. Nearly half of the steers

were progeny of first-calf heifers.

"I think we're steering in the right direction," Thomas said. Cattle that competed in the CDP were backgrounded in a fall grazing program — two weeks in a grass trap, then rotating to an alfalfa patch before wheat-stocking and on to McPherson County Feeders.

"It was another great year of feeding some of the best Angus cattle in the country."
— Landon Shaw

Cooperative competition

A little friendly competition never hurt anyone. The family behind K3 Angus, Conway Springs, Kan., identifies likes to mix in with cooperation.

Thomas Klausmeyer and sons, Jeff and Todd, competed in the 2012 Kansas Angus Association's Carcass Data Project (CDP) with two separate entries. There would have been three if Todd had two more steers ready.

At home, their 150 Angus cows are commingled, but each maintains ownership of specific cows, and one-third of those are registered.

"We split things very fairly," Jeff says. "Say we take 100 pair somewhere and 30 of them are mine, I pay 30% of all expenses." When shipping a load of steers to McPherson County Feeders, it was simpler to maintain separate entries.

Their first Angus bull purchase was from Molitor Angus of Zenda, Kan., in 1995, and they subsequently bought registered females there in 2002, followed by more from Green Garden Angus, Lorraine, Kan., in 2004.

Since then, the family has used artificial insemination (AI), and more recently embryo transfer (ET) on "two or three of our best," Todd says. However, they gain great satisfaction in seeing home-raised sires equal the AI sire groups.

That hints at another competitive angle. The fact is, they openly compete in the Kansas Bull Test, Beloit, Kan., to develop and market bulls while comparing them to peers in the business.

"If they're easy-calving, with good growth and out of good cow families, those are the registered bulls we'll put on the test," Jeff says. "They could be from our herd sires or AI. Either way, they have to be the kind that throws the kind of heifer calves that become good mama cows."

Registered calves that don't meet the Klausmeyers' breeding credentials for bulls or replacements have gone out to pasture before marketing as yearlings. The future may see them retained in a commercial feedlot with their other calves.

The Klausmeyers rarely retain ownership of any cattle on feed, but after this showing, they may do more of it in the future.

"With the genetics we use, it'd be nice to get paid for what we've put into them," Jeff said.

More results

Terry Hobbs came in second (winning \$300 and CAB merchandise) in the CDP, just like last year even as the award switched from individual cattle to groups of three.

"We still came in second," he said. "Like last year, and like next year, the steers are one sire group and out of first-calf heifers." The 2012 reserve champions were sons of Ironwood New Level out of the New Design line on their dams' side. Superior marbling was the edge, with that score at 603 and ADG at 3.77 lb.

Dean Larson's third-place steers (winning \$200 and CAB merchandise) came from a group of five from heifers that were pasture-bred to a calving-ease Green Garden Angus bull.

"I didn't breed them for growth, but they sure gained," he said of the 3.77-lb. ADG and 553 marbling score.

"We aim for moderate rather than the biggest cattle," Larson said of his 135 commercial cows that all have similar bloodlines from the same breeder.

"This was kind of a learning experience," he added. "I'm proud of my cattle and those steers represented our herd. It's nice to know they did well."

Aside from the combination cash prizes, KAA recognized the top-gaining group overall with CAB merchandise. The 14 head from Nemaha Valley Angus had a 4.26-lb. ADG and 50% made CAB.

"I would like to think the bulls we kept for breeding stock would do even better,"

said farm owner-manager Neal Haverkamp. "I entered the CDP to see how they stack up against other quality cattle and to get an idea about what traits we could improve."

Lampe said the KAA mission in the project is, "that our participants gain valuable information that they can, in turn, use to improve and promote their programs and genetics."

Haverkamp said, "I'd love to see over 100

entries this next year. Competition keeps us working hard to improve our product, and this is a good way to draw attention to the quality of Angus cattle in Kansas."



Editor's Note: Meg Drake is an industry information intern with CAB's Supply Development team. Steve Suther is director of industry information at Certified Angus Beef LLC.