



Brand News

► News and highlights from Certified Angus Beef LLC,* compiled by Laura Conaway, Certified Angus Beef LLC

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To order CAB merchandise, visit
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For recipe ideas, storage and handling tips,
restaurant listings, retail store locations
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www.certifiedangusbeef.com.

Bringing research to life

Interactive real-time research presented a new twist at the Range Beef Cow Symposium XXIV (RBCS) in Loveland, Colo., in November 2015.

Ticket holders for an evening meal enjoyed 15 ounces (oz.) of beef in three 5-oz. portions. Dale Woerner, Colorado State University meat scientist, advised taking mental or actual notes on differences in the eating experience among the 21-day-aged center-cut strip steaks, marked with red, blue or green steak picks.

The diners did not know one portion was Select grade and two were the *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) brand.

Woerner used the audience participation software to poll the cattle producers and allied industry representatives in the room.

Asked which steak was their favorite, only 11% chose Select, and a combined 83% chose one of the two CAB options (56% picked “blue” and 27% the “green”). The other 6% couldn’t decide.

Similar findings showed CAB far surpassed Select on individual flavor, juiciness and tenderness questions.

Then came the reveal, and after hearing which steaks were which, the audience was asked, “Which steak was the most desirable?”

Select moved down to 4%, while 56% chose the one simply labeled “USDA Premium Choice” — the same percentage as blue at the beginning of the exercise. Another 41% picked the portion identified as CAB, and that was a 14-percentage-point increase.

“This tells a positive story for our brand,” says Justin Sexten, CAB director of supply development. “Not only did our product handily beat Select in the taste test, but ranchers clearly recognize the brand as superior.”



RBCS PHOTOS BY KASEY BROWN



Earlier in 2015, Kansas State University meat scientist Travis O’Quinn completed research that demonstrated such “brand lift” in a structured project. His work had taste panels compare five different options “blind” and then identified. Knowing the beef was CAB increased overall liking by 10%.

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



First international MBA

Five continents were represented in the inaugural CAB International Masters of Brand Advantages (MBA) program hosted stateside Nov. 8-14.

Licensed distributors from Egypt, Japan,

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Meanwhile at the ECC

Since its establishment in February 2012, the CAB Education & Culinary Center (ECC) has served as a unique gathering place. Partners in and outside of the beef industry are gaining insight into the brand and the quality beef that defines it.

From cattlemen to media guests and scientists to chefs, more than 225 groups have visited the Wooster, Ohio, venue from all parts of the world. This ECC column within Brand News will help keep producers current on recent events there.

- ▶ USMEF Caribbean Chefs, Nov. 2-3
- ▶ Buehlers, Nov. 4
- ▶ Roasting Blogger Event, Nov. 7-8
- ▶ Kings Command Business Review, Nov. 11
- ▶ International MBA, Nov. 12-14
- ▶ Sysco Meat Companies, Nov. 17-19
- ▶ Sysco Cleveland DSM Training, Nov. 20
- ▶ Staff Building Blocks, Nov. 23-24

Digital extras

Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) and the American Angus Association provide these video segments. Readers of our digital edition can click on the photo to launch the respective YouTube video. The url (www ...) for each video is also provided for our print edition readers.



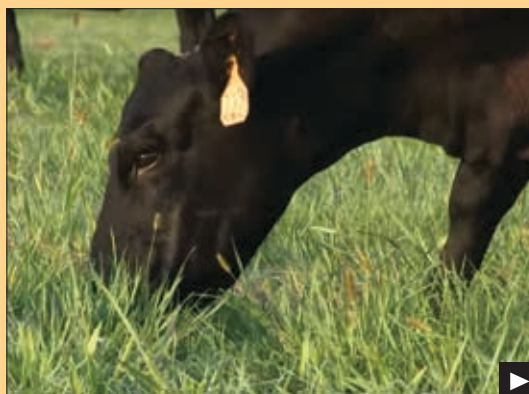
Ag economist Lee Schulz of Iowa State University talks about the changing cattle market and what producers should consider as they are planning herd expansion. Here's the clip: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jvNW8Be_AGk.



Richard Tokach, who operates Tokach Angus Ranch, Saint Anthony, N.D., with his brother Brad, talks about their start in ranching and how the consumer remains their focus. Here's the clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f-Z9FDz6gKQ>.



Kipp Sparrow ranches with his family near Mercer, N.D., where he has built quantity and quality since coming back from college. Here's the clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s19gQDsNWP8>.



Jimmy and Jim Collins, Collins Farms, Cusseta, Ala., share their recipe for success that includes listening to the cattle customer and consumer. Here's the clip: https://youtu.be/MX_DFJQNApM.

South Korea and elsewhere began their tour with the first stop in Denver and ended in Wooster at the brand's Education & Culinary Center (ECC).

Jam-packed into a condensed version of the typical three-week MBA, the international guests got a front-seat view of U.S. beef production that culminated in a visit to CAB headquarters to see the marketing focus.

"Many of these partners are truly leading our success at a distance in places we can't be on a weekly or monthly basis," said Geof Bednar, CAB international director, "so it's gratifying to see that we have this caliber of people who are going back into their markets to represent the brand."

They were connected the entire time, and the depth of questions they asked was inspiring. It gives confidence that we've identified the right partners," he said.

As in the traditional MBA curriculum, the international guests began at a seedstock operation, followed by a visit to a feedyard and a licensed packer. Hitting close to home for the wholesalers was the schedule addition of Buckhead Beef Denver, where they witnessed subprimals broken down into portion-control cuts.

A Wednesday night flight and shuttle brought the travelers to Wooster, Ohio, for

three intensive days in the culinary center with the CAB education and culinary teams. A final evening at the ECC celebrated the 13 as they graduated with the brand's MBA.

"The group represented various countries and cultures, but they all came together in a way that can't really be put into words," Danielle Foster said. The CAB meeting planner added, "Our business is about relationships, and a lot of those were formed during that week."

Ian Lavery of Gulfwest Co. Ltd. said, "The passion each and every one of the employees have for the brand was passed on to us." Having attended three other beef tours around the world, the Irishman who now works in Saudi Arabia shared, "This was by far the most enjoyable and educational. We enjoyed it the whole way through and have taken it back to Saudi."

For Bednar and his team, it was just the beginning of strong relationships in both established and emerging markets.

"MBA, to me, is to help our most gifted individuals have a platform for learning. The more we engage, the more we find our international partners can lead our discussions in their markets. Even though we're not in the market with them, they're confident and capable of going to share information with their client base."

Story behind the numbers

Numbers are everywhere.

The CAB team has taken a little good-natured heckling over its fascination with numbers.

If there's a management tweak that might make a rancher more money, they want to see it in black and white. New marketing idea? Let them crunch the numbers. If there's a genetic advancement, show them the ROI.

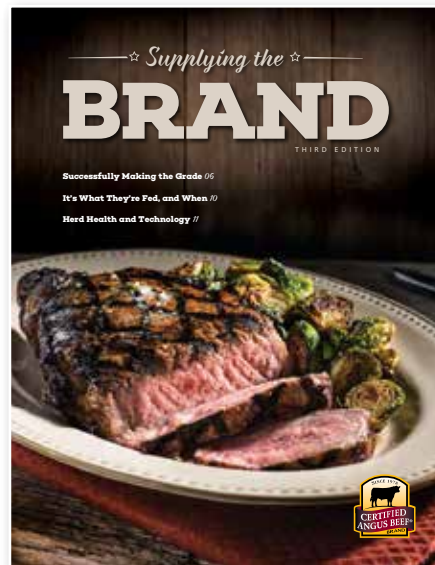
They love numbers, because they know the numbers matter to farmers and ranchers, too.

Perhaps there's someone who carefully studies expected progeny differences (EPDs) or the price of a feedstuff or other expenses that directly affect their bottom line — possibly the most important number of all.

A natural progression, the team set out to uncover stories behind both common and

irregular numbers that affect a cattleman's future. From 120 million to -2.26, each one tells a story of how even the seemingly random and only-slightly-related are intertwined to affect profitability. As the title suggests, every number has a story.

To check out the entire series, visit the Blacklink blog here: <http://cab.info/2c2>.



Plans are already in motion for another international event.

On 'Supplying the Brand'

What does it take to supply a brand owned by Angus producers that's closing in on marketing a billion pounds of quality beef per year? Aside from a great, motivated team, it takes great plans. Those are documented in the newest edition of CAB's *Supplying the Brand*, a magazine-style guide available now.

It's filled with ideas and examples from cattlemen and women who hit the CAB target profitably, says Kara Lee, marketing coordinator for the brand. Rather than study textbooks, farmers and ranchers would rather "learn from those who have made it fit their business model," she says.

Within its pages are stories of commercial cattle operations from across the United States achieving high CAB acceptance rates in different environments, as well as technical updates on applied research.

"We know marbling is a lifetime event," Lee says, "so whether it's cow nutrition during gestation, management at weaning or feedyard selection criteria, we try and capture all of those factors, and put it in a context beyond just carcass traits."

For state Angus association meetings, production sales or other educational events, the resource is available free of charge. Just contact Marilyn Conley at 330-345-2333, or visit www.CABpartners.com.

Beef on the big screen

Foodie and cinema buffs came together Oct. 22 to celebrate each group's passion in one mutual setting, and CAB was there. In its ninth year, the annual Food Film Festival hosted its flagship series of competition and

#SundaySupper at ECC

Great round tables and the ECC's holiday décor served as the perfect backdrop for a group of 20 "Sunday Supper" (yes, that's #SundaySupper) bloggers to share a family meal centered on beef.

To further promote its "Roast Perfect" app and strengthen a foundation of organic support from the group, CAB hosted the network of family-focused foodie bloggers at the ECC in November. They were selected to incorporate the mobile app into an original roasting recipe later perfected by CAB chefs and shared on the app itself.

The 20 were chosen from the Sunday Supper network of 2,000 based on indications they would "love the brand, appreciate the experience and want to talk about CAB before and after their visit, for no other reason than they love beef," said Margaret Coleman, CAB assistant director of digital marketing.

"They worked hands-on in the kitchen," she said of the four-day affair. "Not only did we want them to learn about CAB and different roasting techniques, but we wanted to set them up to be even more successful food bloggers."

That meant lessons went beyond the grill and included tips on marinades, flavors, food photography, how to prepare for video interviews and the difference between common roasts.

"Sure, it was teaching them about roasting and the brand, but it was also professional development to help them in their personal businesses," she said.

The weekend came to a close at suppertime on a Sunday, prime time for the blogger movement, but this time, instead of them spending the night in their home kitchens and communicating via Twitter, the bloggers spent it together dining at the ECC.



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"We were able to create that holiday experience here," Coleman said of the chef-prepared family-style sides and CAB prime rib and tenderloin.

"The great thing was they wanted to talk about us," she added. "While it's common to buy an opportunity for a mention, this group partners with brands they truly believe in. They love the ranching families behind CAB and our philosophy on education. It's a different type of expectation, and it's working very well."

To check out the recipes and recent happenings at #roastperfect, visit www.certifiedangusbeef.com/rpa/index.html.

events in New York City followed by other showings in Charleston, S.C.

Is CAB hitting the big screen? Not exactly, but it seemed like it to the theater crowd of nearly 500 as a seven-minute film, *The Science of the Burger*, made its debut.

Brand staff came to the Big Apple in response to an invitation from longtime partner Schweid & Sons, which served a CAB burger at the reception shown in the video.

"It's quite the fun concept," says Mary McMillen, CAB director of public relations. Filmgoers sampled the dishes that were showcased immediately following each screening.

"At the invitation of our distributor partner, our role was one of support and gratitude," she says. Filmmaker and author George Motz included CAB in his recent *The Great American Burger Book* and now in his video.

Angus Convention cooking

The savory scent of CAB cooking welcomed cattlemen and women who made their way to Overland Park, Kan., for the Angus Means Business National Convention & Trade Show Nov. 3-5.

A live cooking demonstration featured CAB's Director of Culinary Arts Chef Tony Biggs as he shared take-home tips and techniques for anyone looking to prepare the perfect roast.

Biggs brings years of experience to the brand and, through personal interaction with the Angus crowd, sheds light on how the ranchers' brand serves the end user through education and culinary ideation.

Mark McCully, CAB vice president of production, says the culinary focus aimed to give American Angus Association members and cattle producers insight into what the brand does on their behalf to promote quality beef.

"Specific to our ranching partners, we really wanted to show what happens further downstream, both directly to consumers and those who interface with our consumers," he said.

The dialogue during and after the two days of cooking demos was mutually beneficial to both sides of the industry, said Danielle Foster, CAB meeting planner.

"We truly appreciate all the cattlemen and cattlemen who dropped by our booth to interact with Chef Tony and our team," she said. "We love to hear questions because that helps us as we continue to work on our new Roast Perfect app and other marketing pieces."

To continue the conversation Chef Tony started about roasting, download Roast Perfect in the mobile app store.

