



Brand News

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

CAB STAFF CONTACTS

206 Riffel Rd., Wooster, OH 44691-8588;
330-345-2333; fax: 330-345-0808
www.cabpartners.com

John Stika, president
Brent Eichar, senior vice president
Tracey Erickson, vice president, marketing
Mark Polzer, vice president, business development
Larry Corah, vice president, supply development
Mark McCully, vice president, production

SUPPLY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

Kansas staff:

CAB Program Satellite Office
1107 Hylton Heights Rd.,
Manhattan, KS 66502
785-539-0123; fax: 785-539-2883

Larry Corah, vice president
Gary Fike, beef cattle specialist
Wendy Nichols, office and data manager

Kara Lee, supply programs manager
30731 172nd St., Leavenworth, KS 66048
812-653-0020

Nebraska staff:

Paul Dykstra, beef cattle specialist
782 5th St., PO Box 856,
Chappell, NE 69129
308-874-2203

Miranda Reiman, assistant director,
industry information
75845 Rd. 417, Cozad, NE 69130;
308-784-2294

Ohio staff:

Marilyn Conley, administrative assistant

INDUSTRY INFORMATION DIVISION

Steve Suther, director
16360 Victory Rd., Onaga, KS 66521
785-889-4162

Blogs:

Consumer-oriented: www.GoRare.com
Supply Development:
<http://blackinkwithCAB.com>

Twitter:
@BlackInkBasics
@CertAngusBeef

Find us on Facebook:
• [BlackInkBasics](#)
• [CertifiedAngusBeef](#)

To order CAB merchandise, visit
<http://pos.certifiedangusbeef.com>. For a source for
recipe ideas, storage and handling tips, restaurant
listings, retail store locations and cooking
information, visit www.certifiedangusbeef.com.



► Nothing but net for Sysco-Raleigh CAB Specialist Scott Redden's victory lei when the company won "Smackdown Madness," thanks in part to North Carolina State Wolfpack basketball star Derek Whittenburg's inspiration. The foodservice staff show who's No. 1.



Meat Madness!

The game was tied with four seconds to go. Then came one of the greatest upsets in college basketball history.

North Carolina State University's win over the University of Houston Cougars in the 1983 NCAA finals saw the underdog "Cardiac Kids" come from behind for a fifth straight time.

In those last seconds, the Wolfpack's high, arching shot from 30 feet out was falling just short when a buzzer-beating dunk made all the difference. It was a true fight to the finish.

History can repeat itself, and the Certified Angus Beef® (CAB®) brand's 2014 "Smackdown Madness" resulted in an upset of its own. The six-month middle-meat sales contest among a select group of CAB distributors showed North Carolina could once again claim victory over a Texas team.

Designed to increase volume sold and drive business at a time of year when supply often outstrips demand, participating CAB partner houses jumped at the opportunity for some friendly rivalry that kicked off in late January.

Like the NCAA March Madness of its namesake, brackets are made, winners predicted and upsets celebrated.

"We try to build some energy off of that, and it's been pretty effective," says Dave Shock, Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) information systems director.

Effective, as in 1.4 million pounds (lb.) more CAB ribs, strips and loins sold than last year. Winning the Sysco broadline division was Sysco Raleigh with what Shock describes

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

as an “impressive” victory. With a 69.9% sales increase, that team moved more than 384,000 lb. before the final seconds in late July.

“What makes the numbers so tremendous is that overall beef supplies are down, yet we continue to grow business, and grow on the highest-price items, middle meats,” explains Mark Polzer, CAB vice president of business development.

“The houses that really embrace it, like Houston and Raleigh, really saw the benefit from it,” says Bryan Schaaf, media and communications manager for the brand. “At the end of the day, it was a huge volume increase, which affects their bottom line — and it’s a good example that a focused effort really can make a difference.”

Like North Carolina’s Wolfpack three decades prior, Raleigh wanted it bad enough to win it. With Sysco Columbia looming in their periphery as back-to-back winners, the game was on.

It wasn’t long before the Texas vs. North Carolina connection was made. The now-famous game video (www.youtube.com/watch?v=8l5N2eKdvL4) was shown in Sysco-Raleigh meetings to inspire the team, and Dereck Whittenburg, author of that final 30-footer, visited before and during the contest to ignite the fire and help cut the celebratory net.

“That’s the ideal kind of situation that we like to see come out of this,” Shock says. “Everybody gets energized, everybody gets fired up about it and has some good fun.”

While the winners continued their celebration with a September complimentary trip to the brand’s Annual Conference to pick up the traveling trophy, Polzer says Angus cattlemen have even more cause to rejoice.

“The real bottom-line takeaway,” he says, “is even though overall supplies are down, by raising a disproportionately higher amount of quality beef, they provide just what these teams need to continue building demand for their future seasons of production.”

CAB tracks beef ads, sales

Steve Ringle is accustomed to speaking in terms of volume. As business analysis director for CAB, his focus is less on the amount of money coming in and more on the product moving through the supply chain. At least that was the case until cattle numbers began dropping and prices went in the opposite direction.

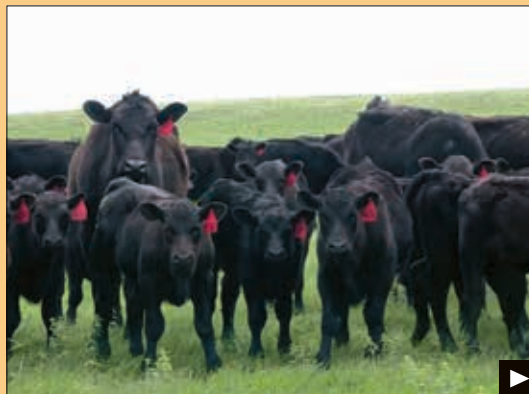
“That’s the biggest reason we are taking such an interest in charting beef ads right now,” he says. “As those prices remain very, very high, it does have that ripple effect all the way down the supply chain.”

That’s why Ringle and his team began looking more closely at the retail ad data they’ve collected for years. Those ads come

CONTINUED ON PAGE 138

Digital extras

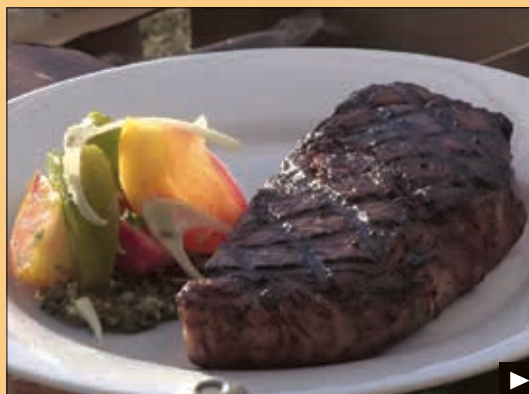
Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) and the American Angus Association provide these video segments. Readers of our digital edition can click on the photo to launch the respective YouTube video. The url ([www ...](http://www...)) for each video is also provided for our print edition readers.



Frank Hinkson is a seedstock producer from Cottonwood Falls, Kan., whose experience in breeding high-quality Angus cattle has told him that if he wants to be successful he must give the customers what they want at a price they can afford. Here’s the clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WCBMOZiOm0>.



Bart Beattie and herdsman Dave Schledewitz, Sumner, Neb., find profitable opportunities by partnering with a local feedyard on the two-way street of producing better beef. Here’s the clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1VnsNsmfYOA>.



Feed is a significant budget item, so efficiency is always an important topic. Susan Duckett, Clemson University animal scientist, talks about beef as a source of Omega-3 and other beneficial fatty acids. Here’s the clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VkvkLrFe-sw>.



Grid marketing continues to gain popularity in the cattle business, and feeder Sam Hands, of Garden City, Kan., explains why. Here’s the clip: <http://youtu.be/NLT-VafTRazw>.

from circulars that promote discounted prices to get shoppers in the stores.

“We always talk in volume,” he says, “and we’ve taken notice of the volume impact when we lose out on a hot front-page feature at one of our licensed partners.”

Retail stores can still feature CAB in their weekly ads and succeed financially without sacrificing quality, taking a step down or switching proteins altogether.

Another part of the message, Ringle says, is this: “Don’t make the decision for the consumer. Go ahead and put CAB in the ad. If a consumer wants to enjoy a high-level eating experience, give them that choice and let them take that product home and have it exceed their expectations.”

Otherwise, if retailers cut back and drive their shoppers to lower-quality items, “that may have an impact on their business moving forward,” he says.

In fact, in spite of some middle-meat items showing up as high as \$9.99 compared to last year’s \$6.99 or \$7.99 per lb., many retailers have run the ads and experienced positive sales. Ringle admits the decision-makers have to “step out of their comfort zones” to reap those rewards.

Table 1: Summary of retail ad data

Week ending Aug. 8, 2014 summary			
	2013	2014	
Total ad count	20	18	
Retailers	12	13	
			% Change
Grind count	1	4	
Grind price	\$3.24	\$3.41	5.3%
End meat count	10	7	
End meat price	\$3.06	\$4.95	61.9%
Middle meat count	9	7	
Middle meat price	\$7.46	\$8.32	11.5%

Ads drive volume, which comes back to the data from Ringle has tracked for years, along with the high-quality approach.

“Even in light of higher prices and huge price swings, beef demand definitely is still there, and high-quality beef demand is still there,” he says.

Carcass 101 North

With differences in the market structure for finished cattle in Canada, price signals

for quality have not been as strong as those in the United States, but they are emerging. Canadian Angus producers are learning how and why to meet the growing demand.

With that in mind, the Canadian Angus Association co-sponsored Carcass 101. The sold-out, two-day seminar at Alberta’s Olds College National Meat Training Centre explored beef grading, ultrasound technology and consumer trends, with emphasis on genetics and management.

Chef coats and cow pens

“How many of you grew up on a farm?”

That was the first question Mary McMillen posed to a group of 19 culinary students from the Charlotte, N.C., Johnson & Wales University (J&W) as they stood in their brand new chef coats under the barn at Back Creek in Mount Ulla, N.C.

No hands moved.

“How many of you have ever eaten a hamburger?” McMillen asked next.

All hands stretched high in the air.

“They all eat hamburgers. They all know what a good hamburger or a good steak is,” McMillen explained. “So that was the point of entrance into engaging them in what we were going to do. We had to interact with them in a way they would understand.”

McMillen, CAB public relations director, continued the conversation by asking what makes that hamburger or steak stand out. She answered for them this time.

“It’s the beef.”

During a busy summer, full of events both in Wooster and afar, this one to Back Creek’s Angus Farm wasn’t exactly planned.

“It was a quick turnaround, a spur of the moment,” she said.

“Two of the J&W staff went on our chef tour in May and came back charged up. One called me and said ‘This is amazing. I want to take those students and faculty to a farm right now.’”

The next month the group was standing on one just an hour outside of Charlotte.

While it’s typical for CAB to host staff from the esteemed academy to educate them on beef quality and production, working with students was a first. Having just begun their culinary expeditions, many questions were posed — and then answered through firsthand experience.

“It’s a special thing to catch them as they’re starting their careers,” she said. “These students had only been in their classes for two weeks. One kid had literally just graduated from high school. So it was a good thing.”





“We wanted to create an awareness of the demand for quality from a consumer standpoint,” says CAB Vice President of Supply Development Larry Corah, “and then from a production standpoint, look at how to get at creating that quality — genetics, but also the management that ties into that.”

Corah and CAB meat scientist Phil Bass presented and discussed marketing initiatives in support of the Canadian organization.

Carcass 101, the first of its kind and planned as an annual event, was modeled after those in the United States where ranchers and feeders mix with those on the retail and foodservice side, creating dialogue and an opportunity to learn from one another.

“We want to create a linkage between the production sector and the licensee base in Canada, just as we do in the United States,” Corah said.

One highlight was the chance for attendees to evaluate cattle on both live and carcass merit.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 140



► **Above and right:** Restaurant and distribution partners from several Central and South American countries visited the Wooster office and covered topics from cattle production to beef cuts utilization. Guests got a very inside view of what artificial insemination and embryo transfer work looks like, and some even got to try their hand at Aling a repro tract!

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 175 groups have visited the Wooster, Ohio, venue from all parts of the world. This ECC sidebar within “Brand News” will help keep producers current on recent events there.

- Hosted TAO Restaurant group menu ideation session, Aug. 4-5
- Sales Meetings with the CAB® team, Aug. 12-15
- Building Blocks, Aug. 14-15
- NCBA Dinner, Aug. 27
- Hosted Sysco Gulf Coast, Aug. 27-28

Table 1: Targeting the Brand Honor Roll

Targeting the Brand Honor Roll is a report for *Angus Journal* and other media to highlight groups of at least 30 cattle harvested by CAB Feeding Partners that are at least 40% *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) and Prime with 10% or fewer “out” cattle [heavy or light carcasses and Yield Grade (YG) 4] and 0% no-rolls, Standard or A grades, dark cutters or YG 5s.

At least half of the cattle in a group must be eligible for CAB (>51% black-hided). Groups that meet the 40% criteria but fall short in other areas may be listed as an Honorable Mention.

Previously known as the “30.06” program (for 30% CAB and Prime with 6% “outs”), this feature has been adjusted to reflect a higher percentage of cattle qualifying for CAB in the marketplace and tolerance of a trigger level of outs on some grids.



Licensed CAB Feedlot	Sex ^a	Head	%CAB	%Prime	% YG1&YG2	% YG 3
Targeting the Brand Honor Roll:						
McPherson County Feeders Inc.	S	40*	67.50	12.50	20.00	75.00
McPherson County Feeders Inc.	H	75	52.00	5.33	69.33	29.33
Pratt Feeders LLC	S	31*	45.16	6.45	22.58	67.74
Chappell Feedlot	H	39	44.12	7.69	48.72	48.72
McPherson County Feeders Inc.	H	42*	40.48	26.19	23.81	69.05
McPherson County Feeders Inc.	S	40	35.71	5.00	52.50	45.00
Honorable Mentions:						
Pratt Feeders LLC	S	116	53.85	1.72	34.48	58.62

^aH=heifers; M=mixed; S=steers.

*Indicates 100% CAB eligible. All acceptance rates figured on eligible portions.

(Lots that exceed 15% Yield Grade 4 & 5 are eliminated from the honorable mention lists.)

Call 785-539-0123 or visit www.cabfeedlots.com for a complete and current list of feedlot licensees.

“We broke a carcass down completely, starting with the chuck to the round, and walked everybody through the different cuts and how they’re used from a consumer standpoint — how it’s ultimately marketed to the consumer,” Corah said.

With what he says has been “a gradual evolution” since CAB began production in Canadian plants 15 years ago, emphasis has shifted from primarily weight to now quality grade. Corah reiterated the opportunity ranchers there have to supply more quality product to meet the growing demand.

He said the next step is up to packing partners to further incentivize quality to drive demand. That has begun in some areas, and it’s something producers can support through collaboration.

“We had a lot of dialogue between the different sectors of the industry as to how they can work together to create that quality eating experience,” Corah said.

Looking to implement changes in the herd? Regardless of location in North America, he advised producers to select based on genetics, consider retained ownership to see what they have and work with specific feedlots that are comfortable marketing cattle on a grid and sharing information.

“It’s a networking system, where cow-calf producers start becoming aware of what their calves can do on the rail,” Corah said. “Then getting that information, working with feedlots that are able to get them premiums to drive the whole thing. So it’s really an information-sharing system.”



► Attendees of Carcass 101 North evaluated cattle on both live and carcass merit.

