



Next Generation

► Postcard from an NJAA director and state spotlights

Recipe for success

As the Thanksgiving holiday is just around the corner, I really look forward to one of my favorite holidays. As a society, we associate Thanksgiving with football games, family and a delicious dinner. It came to mind, these football players have to give up a family tradition, solely to be successful within their respective profession. I asked myself, what are the ingredients to the recipe for success?

One of the most important ingredients is to have a vision. I recently read a quote that states, "It takes one who can see the invisible to accomplish the impossible." To me, having a vision is imperative, because without knowing where you want to be in the future, how would you ever be able to set personal goals? Successful leaders cannot only set goals for themselves, they are



Christopher Cassidy

also able to open the eyes of their colleagues and transform their visions into reality.

To be successful, you can never be satisfied with what you have already accomplished. I firmly believe that satisfaction leads to laziness, and laziness can ultimately result in failure. Once you reach one of your personal goals, don't quit there! Raise the bar that you have already set to a higher level, and challenge

Remember this: "It is a funny thing about life – if you refuse to accept anything but the best, you very often get it."

– W. Somerset Maugham

yourself to bigger and more prestigious rewards. There is nothing out in the world today that you cannot accomplish if you set your mind to it. Hard work and dedication will always pay off!

The final ingredient — the whipped cream on the pumpkin pie — is proficiency and the ability to have patience. In more laymen's terms, whatever you must do

2008 National Junior Angus Show Contest Winner

Intermediate Division Prepared Public Speaking, ages 16 through 17

Niche Marketing

by Hannah McCabe, Elk City, Kan.

Trump towers. Trump plaza. *The Apprentice* television show. Donald Trump. A household name familiar to nearly everyone in America. Most people are either amazed at his success or can't stand the guy. But like him or not, you have to admit he knows how to market. When he unveiled his new *Certified Angus Beef*® Trump Steaks that retail for \$100-\$1,000 per package, he knew that he was not targeting the average consumer. On the contrary, he was targeting the upper-class, high-income demographic group. He was aiming for a niche market.

Niche marketing. According to Webster, it's a specialized but profitable corner of the market. This catchphrase can apply to virtually any product, from Nike shoes to Stetson hats to Hummer SUVs. This market does not have to be for "luxury products" only. For example, 100 years ago there was a huge demand for buggy whips because most people traveled with a horse and carriage. Today, the buggy whip business would be a

very small, specialized or "niche" market, but hardly a luxury for those who need one.

A look back in history would tell us that mankind's challenge was to provide the staples for life, which are food, clothing and shelter. In fact, many countries in the world that we live in today still operate under those conditions.

However, as societies become more affluent, people's needs become less of an issue, and they are willing to pay for desires. Just look around. Our country's lifestyle is very much dominated by what we drive, what kind of a house we live in and what we wear. The food industry is no exception to this rule.

In 1976, the United States Department of Agriculture, or USDA, changed the grading standards for the beef quality grades, which for all practical purposes lowered these requirements to make the minimum Choice grade. Realizing the desire of people to have a consistent and pleasurable beef eating experience, the American Angus

Association's Board of Directors and staff acted quickly and in 1978 organized the Certified Angus Beef (LLC), or CAB, program. Requirements to meet the brand were established, and it is these stringent rules that set it apart from generic beef.

The preliminary requirements are that the cattle must be at least 51% black-headed or carry an AngusSource® tag. The other requirements are the cattle must have a Modest degree of marbling or higher, and the marbling must be of a medium to fine texture. Marbling is the tiny flecks of fat that you see in your meat. It is the main contributor to beef flavor, tenderness and juiciness.

The cattle must be of 'A' maturity. This includes cattle ages 9-30 months. They must have a ribeye area of 10-16 square inches (sq. in.). The carcasses cannot have a fat thickness exceeding 1 in., or a hot carcass weight exceeding 1,000 pounds (lb.). This ensures a more boxable and consistent product.

The cattle cannot have a hump on their neck exceeding 2 in. in height, and they must exhibit moderately thick or thicker muscling characteristics. These requirements eliminate any significant Brahman or dairy influence. Research shows that cattle that have a high

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to reach your goals, you must have the competence and know-how, and practice extreme professionalism. If you don't know how to complete a certain task, don't be afraid to ask for assistance.

In terms of patience, not all actions are complemented by an immediate consequence. For example, those football players competing in the Thanksgiving Day game have spent countless hours in the weight room and at practice, as well as studying films, just waiting for their chance to make the game-winning touchdown on the fourth Thursday of November.

Being successful is not given; it's something you must work for every single day. I challenge you today to chase your dreams or visions, and set your goals as high as you can. Never be satisfied

with where you are today and what you have accomplished. There are many opportunities in the world today, and I challenge you to "step out of the box" and take a risk for the hope of nothing but the utmost success.

Finally, work as hard as you can, control what you can control and let the outcome take care of itself. Let your actions do the talking, and there's no doubt, poetic justice will be in your favor. Good luck in accomplishing your goals for the future!

— **Christopher Cassady, Illinois**

► Bronze and Silver Awards

► **Teasa Nauta**, 19, Douglas, Wyo. She is the daughter of René Nauta.

► **Hannah Rowlett**, 17, Hurricane Mills, Tenn. She is the daughter of Buddy and Kelley Rowlett

► Oregon State Fair Roll of Victory (ROV) Angus Show, Salem, Aug. 24



► **Katelyn McCoy**, Imbler, is the Oregon Angus Queen.

percentage of these breeds in their genetics tend to compromise the tenderness of the beef.

Finally, there should be no evidence of internal hemorrhaging and no dark-cutting characteristics in CAB product. When an animal becomes excited or stressed slightly before harvest, the glycogen level drops dramatically, resulting in a product that is dry, tacky and almost dark in appearance.

Only 8% of all beef cattle actually meet these stringent specifications. This first-ever fresh branded beef "niche" raised the bar for the entire beef industry. In fact, the CAB story is incredible in terms of growth and even developing specialized markets within the market they have already established. *Certified Angus Beef* also paved the way for a multitude of other branded beef products to get a start in the branded beef market.

The CAB program was slow to take off. It took 22 months to sell the first 1 million lb. In fact, in one of the meetings of the American Angus Association Board of Directors in those early days, the program was canceled. However, after careful consideration, it was reinstated.

Today, we sell 1 million lb. every 18 hours. Even though it may have been ahead

of its time, the folks at the American Angus Association saw a need for this value-added program for the beef industry.

And sometimes a niche market takes on a life of its own. What started out to be a very small and specialized "niche" in the industry has become mainstream. With CAB-licensed feedlots, packing plants and retail outlets, this brand has become a huge part of the beef industry. Premiums over and above the normal market price are paid directly to the owner at the packing plant on cattle that qualify for the CAB brand. Those carcasses are then routed through the CAB system to end up at licensed retail outlets, grocery stores and restaurants.

More recently, the CAB staff saw the need to even further intensify its efforts toward a target market. The first one is the development of CAB Natural for those consumers who desire to have their beef fed without any antibiotics or growth hormones. This allows product that has met certain specifications in addition to normal CAB requirements to go into the booming natural food market.

Also, a second niche within the CAB brand was targeted with CAB Prime. This brand has also met the original CAB

requirements in addition to the fact that it qualifies for USDA Prime. CAB Prime is targeting the "white tablecloth" type of restaurants and consumers who desire to have highest-quality eating experience and are willing to pay for it. These new products are not going to be purchased by the average consumer on a daily basis, but they will be considered by a select group of consumers.

Trump's CAB steaks, at up to \$1,000 per package, will probably never become mainstream. They will likely never be what the average consumer runs to the grocery store to pick up for a backyard barbecue. However, to a select few the name on the package will signify quality beyond what they can buy anywhere else. They are a niche that only Donald Trump or someone like him may be able to reach. It's hard to imagine a fifth-generation Montana rancher, an Iowa corn farmer and a western Kansas feedlot manager being in a close partnership with Trump Enterprises. But those are partners even Donald can't fire.

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Editor's note: *The Angus Journal will be including the winners of the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) prepared speech and creative writing contests with the "Next Generation" column in the coming months.*