

# Rounding Up Global Sales

International delegates gather for a behind-the-scenes look at CAB.

Story & photos by **Crystal Meier**

**R**etail and foodservice professionals from around the globe converged in Fort Collins, Colo., April 18-20 for the annual *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) Roundup seminar. Since the first Roundup in 1989, the goal has been to take new business associates behind the scenes to develop their understanding of the brand and help them sell it with confidence. This year's session added a stronger dimension for reaching international exporters and distributors, who attended from nearly 20 countries.

Guests from Mexico, Canada and Indonesia relied on the premium-quality CAB brand to help reintroduce U.S. beef when those markets reopened after the border closings related to the first finding of a bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE)-infected cow in the United States December 2003. Approximately 50 international delegates, including representatives from Taiwan, Japan, Hong Kong and Kuwait, attended.

"Demand for premium U.S. beef remains high, even in markets waiting to reopen," says Mark Spengler, international director for Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB). "We had some of the best cold-chain distributors on the planet in Colorado to trade stories, share best practices and become beef experts. They willingly invested a week away from their businesses to learn more about the U.S. beef industry and identify opportunities for growing their sales with the CAB brand."

The message resonated throughout the seminar from industry leaders representing the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF), Colorado State University (CSU) and CAB. International guests stayed involved in presentations with simultaneous translations in Japanese or Spanish via headsets and onscreen images.

"Having such a large group provided the opportunity to share more in-depth information from top-notch speakers," says Elizabeth Wunderlich, USMEF Caribbean consultant, who brings a team of sales representatives from the Caribbean to the United States each year. "Oftentimes, there is a risk of trying to make a domestic program fit international needs," she says. "This session held the focus on the international side, making it beneficial for both domestic and international representatives."

## Beyond borders

Sessions at the new Swift & Co. Research and Development Center in Greeley, Colo., integrated merchandising ideas that reach beyond borders. USMEF Chef Sabrina Yin, from Singapore, and CAB Chef Dianna Stoffer shared opportunities for underutilized cuts and Asian influence on worldwide cuisine. Those factors are of special interest in tourism markets such as the Caribbean.

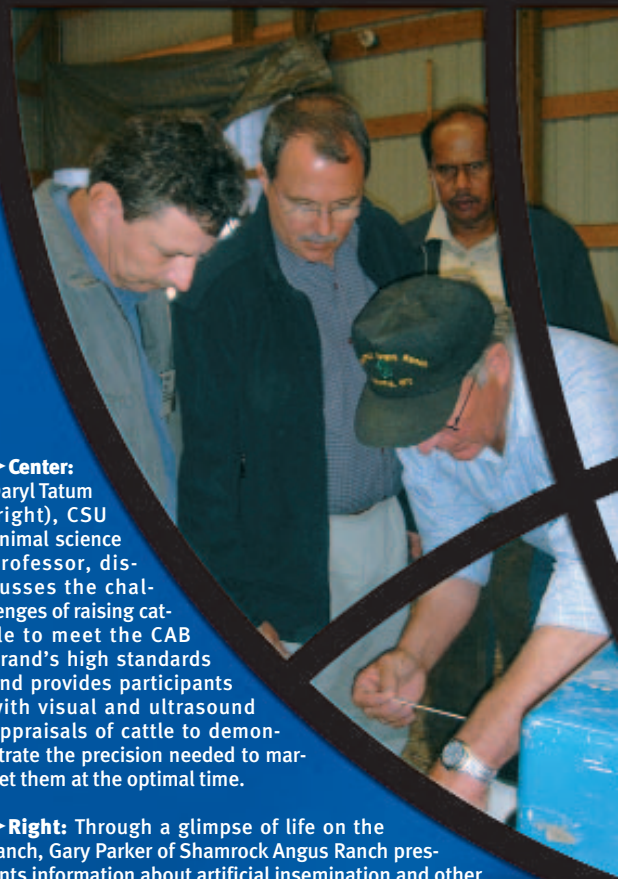
CAB's Mark Gwin and world-renowned meat specialist Stephen Neel from Technical Solutions International, Eugene, Ore., paired their retail merchandising expertise to explain how fabrication techniques in Asian markets and the United States have global applications.

Explanations of competing Angus brands and strategies for overcoming objections provided day-to-day sales tools. CSU hosted sessions on cattle and carcass evaluation, Meat Science 101, and innovative beef fabrication techniques. The group toured the Swift & Co. Greeley plant, gaining firsthand experience of the brand's identification and certification procedures.

"To actually see everything happen really enhanced my knowledge of the

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► **Right:** USMEF Chef Sabrina Yin from Singapore demonstrates cooking methods from the Pacific Rim using the top blade. She made beef curry, teriyaki beef and smoked beef.



► **Center:** Daryl Tatum (right), CSU animal science professor, discusses the challenges of raising cattle to meet the CAB brand's high standards and provides participants with visual and ultrasound appraisals of cattle to demonstrate the precision needed to market them at the optimal time.

► **Right:** Through a glimpse of life on the ranch, Gary Parker of Shamrock Angus Ranch presents information about artificial insemination and other management practices that help provide high-quality beef to world markets.

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CAB brand and beef industry,” says Roger Leung, sales and purchasing executive for Hoover Food Supplier Ltd., Hong Kong. “Even if someone had little knowledge of the beef industry, they understood how things work.”

Hoover supplies five-star hotels, private clubs and chains throughout Hong Kong with a wide range of food products, but it specializes in fresh chilled meats. The marketplace already had access to CAB products from Canada, so Leung has put information he gained to the test.

“Roundup helps me add more detail to my presentations and gets people to grasp the quality and integrity of the brand,” he says. A Hong Kong food show provided him with a forum to share what he had learned with many current and potential customers.

### Understanding markets

Lessons learned were just as beneficial to other attendees from the Pacific Rim. With the Taiwan market reopening to U.S. beef as the seminar began, attendees gained a last-minute boost for making the CAB brand the preeminent beef in the marketplace. *[Editor’s*

*Note: Taiwan shut the border again June 24, after the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced confirmation of the United States’ second case of BSE, the first in an animal born and raised in the U.S.]*

“The seminar equipped me with valuable tools for expanding my knowledge and increasing our company’s sales,” says Becky Cheng, purchasing assistant for Shuh Sen Co. Ltd., one of Taiwan’s largest meat importers. “We understand the value of the brand’s consistent flavor, tenderness and juiciness. With it, we can best satisfy our customers.”

When re-entering its Middle East markets, United Source One of Baltimore, Md., also relied on the CAB brand for its sales focus.

“It gives us value and provenance that are more prized by our retail and foodservice customers,” says Paul Sellers, advisory board member for the company. “The CAB brand is a key factor for distancing United Source One from the commodity battleground where price, rather than value, is the overriding determinant.”

Since attending Roundup, the firm renewed its partnering effort with retail and

foodservice distributors that also value quality. It brought the chief operating officer (COO) of Jawad Supermarket, Manama, Bahrain, to the CAB Executive Office in June for an educational program and plans to bring more guests in October. The goal is to form long-term business relationships built around the brand’s core values.

One of the most memorable Roundup sessions took attendees to Shamrock Angus Ranch near Laramie, Wyo. Owner-manager Gary Parker was impressed with the depth of attendees’ questions and their understanding of the beef industry.

“They inquired about price structure, cattle marketing and ranch size, along with feeding and health practices,” he says. “They wanted to know about cattle genetics and the environmental practices we have in place to care for our cattle and our land.

“I wish there had been more time for me to ask questions and learn as much about global beef marketing,” he adds. “It is a lesson that would help us as producers better appreciate all the CAB brand does to create high demand for our cattle and end product.”

