

# What's Cooking at CAB

With Chef Michael Ollier

## The great burger battle

If you've ever met a Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) employee, you may have heard them refer to their co-workers as the "CAB family." Call it corny, but we're a pretty close bunch. That said, we're also a pretty competitive family of employees.

I'll admit that a little friendly competition gets me excited, even when it is against my fellow CAB Corporate Chef Scott Popovic. Chef Scott and I usually work side-by-side in the kitchen and for the brand. But thanks to Fox 28 News in Columbus, Ohio, we got to go head-to-head in an on-air Burger War: Charcoal vs. Gas grilling.

We shared grilling tips and burger ideas on the TV show *Good Morning Columbus* this summer at the peak of grilling season, then had a taste test of our favorite burgers. I'm a fan of smoke and charcoal grilling; Scott speaks in BTUs and manned the gas grill. Whether or not you have a personal preference, here are a few of the general grilling tips we shared with our friends in Columbus:

► **Start with the best product** – the *Certified Angus Beef®* (CAB®) brand, of course! Beyond that, Chef Scott and I both prefer an 80/20 chuck grind for burgers.

► **Don't pack it too tight.** If you're forming your own burger patties, mold them loosely. This allows the burgers to "breathe" a little while they cook, letting the juices flow and avoiding a more dense meatloaf-like texture.

► **Add a dimple.** When you mold your burger patties, form them to have a slightly concave shape. When they cook, the center will rise. If you start with a dimple in the middle, the burgers will cook up to a flat surface, which allows it to cook more evenly and is perfect for toppings.

► **Use a super-hot grill.** Your grill should be around 450° F-500° F before putting a burger on it. The meat should sizzle when you place it on the grates, which will help seal in the flavor and give it the perfect crisp outside everyone loves.



I love charcoal grilling because of the great, smoky flavor it adds to the burgers. You can't beat the natural robustness of a CAB burger kicked up a flavor notch with natural charcoal taste.

But, as Scott pointed out in our on-air battle, charcoal grilling is a little more time-intensive. It takes time to start and heat

the coals, and you probably need to cook burgers a little longer on a charcoal grill than you would a gas one. You'll also need to watch for a tendency for uneven cooking on a charcoal grill because of the way the grill heats.

The best advice I can offer to combat these grilling obstacles is to use a chimney starter with your charcoal grill. This is a pretty inexpensive grill accessory that can make a big difference in your prep time and cooking heat. The chimney will help evenly heat all the briquettes before you spread them under the grate. It's like the preheat setting on your stove, and will ensure the grill is hot and ready to make those burgers sizzle!

It might seem like a lot of extra work, but who ever said winning is easy? My burger won the taste test in a four-to-one on-air vote this summer. But the on-air hosts agreed, regardless of a gas or charcoal grill, *Certified Angus Beef* makes for the best burger they've ever had. Check out [www.certifiedangusbeef.com](http://www.certifiedangusbeef.com) for more grilling tips and great burger ideas. Enjoy!



Until next time,  
— Chef Michael



► CAB Corporate Chefs Michael Ollier and Scott Popovic go head-to-head in an on-air Burger War: Charcoal vs. Gas grilling for Fox 28 News in Columbus, Ohio. Chef Michael's charcoaled burger won the taste test after a "heated" competition.