

In the Spotlight

Certified Angus Beef LLC names December, January monthly winners.

Story by
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Hergert Feeding Co. (HFC), Mitchell, Neb., has shown through practical application that sorting high-quality Angus cattle is worth the effort, says Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) feedlot specialist Paul Dykstra. "Wayne Smith, manager, and assistant Tim Brost sort as many cattle as possible to be marketed in groups that can realize positive results for carcass merit." The result is a combination of 30% Certified Angus Beef® (CAB®) brand acceptance on more than 4,000 head of cattle enrolled in the Feedlot-Licensing Program (FLP) in 2004. At the same time, Yield Grade (YG) has been kept in line with just 6% YG 4 and 5 carcasses.

"This is ample justification for recognizing HFC as Feedlot of the Month for December 2004," Dykstra says.

Kendall Hopp, manager of Hays (Kan.) Feeders LLC, is the December 2004 CAB Quality Assurance (QA) Officer of the Month. "Kendall has recently taken over the reins upon Bill Saba's retirement last fall, but has long been a key partner in the CAB program," says Gary Fike, CAB feedlot specialist. "Kendall has done an outstanding job enrolling cattle and following through — all the more impressive because more than 10,000 cattle were enrolled during 2004." The yard ranks seventh in overall CAB enrolled volume, with a data capture efficiency rate of 92.5%.

January honors

Irsik & Doll Feedyard, Garden City, Kan., was named CAB Feedlot Partner of the Month for January. Licensed since 1999, Irsik & Doll was one of the first feedlots to partner with CAB.

"Manager Mark Sebranek and quality assurance officer Jerry Jackson have put a great emphasis on feeding quality cattle for the brand," Fike says. "They work with both purebred and commercial Angus cow-calf producers on retained ownership programs and as sources for procuring high-quality Angus genetics for other customers."

CAB-acceptance rates at Irsik & Doll are among the highest in the region at more than 20%, all the more remarkable in view of the high volume of enrollments at this Premier Partner.

Lane Ciminski, Heritage Feeders LP, Wheeler, Texas, was chosen as January QA officer of the month.

"We're proud to have Lane on board as QA officer," Fike says. "He has excelled in this role by aggressively enrolling cattle and following through with a data capture efficiency of nearly 100% — obviously it doesn't get much better than that. Lane has taken this role very seriously and has done a great

job by boosting enrollments throughout the year."

Heritage Feeders was among the top 10% of all feedlots in enrollment numbers, helping it attain

Premier Partner status.

On target honorees

The FLP honors partners that harvest "30.06" groups of cattle, with at least a 30% Prime or CAB-acceptance rate, with an allowance for 3% YG 4s and 3% for carcasses weighing more than 975 pounds (lb.). A summary of accomplishments from both the December 2004 and January 2005 reports is included in Table 1.

Reap benefits with records

Harvesting cattle on a grid can translate into a wealth of information for the producer. Information can turn into profits when cow-calf owners are willing to put pencil to paper and make sense of the numbers.

Sebranek says few have made recordkeeping translate into added profits like Ernie Giddens, owner of 4-G Ranch, Springfield, Mo. Two groups of 4-G cattle met 30.06 requirements during the final quarter of 2004.

Giddens sends his cattle out to the feedlot with each animal's individual health record correlated to producer tag numbers and an electronic identification (ID) tag in each calf's ear. Some would point to that as added work, but Sebranek believes it is an advantage.

"Ernie wants to know the dollars of profit made and lost on each animal from start to finish," Sebranek says. "He keeps a lot of records, and when a pen of cattle comes out to us, he sends a big envelope full of cattle documentation."

In September, Giddens had 41 steers that harvested at 31.8% CAB acceptance with 58.6% YG 1 and 2. December brought more of the

same when 28 heifers reached 41.2% CAB acceptance at 57.1% YG 1 and 2 (see Table 1).

Quality performance on the grid doesn't come easy, but requires extra work from both the producer and the feedlot, Fike says. Detailed records and feeding with CAB-licensed feedlot partners can translate to lower breakevens and heavier pockets at harvest time.

Quality from all over

Quality just comes naturally for some producers. Allan Sents, McPherson County Feeders Inc. manager, knows customers bring high-quality cattle to feed at his Marquette, Kan., yard, but sometimes he wonders where they come from.

"I have been quizzing some of my customers for years, and, honestly, I am not coming up with anything that says they are really onto something," Sents says. "We focus on feeding them the best we can on this end by sorting to maximize potential — getting the grade without hitting the Yield Grade 4s."

Sents is amazed at the quality he gets from some producers with sale barn cattle, and location isn't a limiting factor. Long-distance

customers from Kentucky to local Kansas customers all bring Sents "put together" cattle groups that meet CAB's most demanding quality target.

The feedlot is a regular on the 30.06 monthly listings, and January was no exception with four of the seven harvest groups meeting the 30.06 target.

Sents says his customers know how to make purchased cattle feed to their advantage.

"The producers handle enough cattle when they start backgrounding that they are sorting them out on their end before they arrive here," Sents says. "The cattle are sorted into more uniform load lots there, and then we are sorting them here as they reach the end of the finishing period."

Working on both ends to improve the consistency of the cattle has paid off for the producers. However, quality genetics factor into the production system.

"Apparently they have access to quality cattle, and, in that case, it works for producers," Sents says. "We just try to do the best we can at feeding and marketing them."



Table 1: Summary of 30.06 qualifiers from December 2004 and January 2005 harvest reports^a

Licensed CAB® Feedyard	Head	Sex ^b	%YG 1&2	%CAB	%Prime
<i>December 2004:</i>					
Beller Feedlots	44*	H	45.5	45.5	2.3
North Platte Feeders Inc.	10	M	50.0	37.5	10.0
Flint Rock Feeders Ltd.	11*	H	18.2	36.4	0.0
Irsik & Doll Feedyard ^c	20*	M	25.0	35.0	5.0
Irsik & Doll Feedyard	41	S	58.6	31.8	0.0
McGinley-Schilz Feedyard Ltd.	70*	H	85.8	27.1	10.0
<i>January 2005:</i>					
North Platte Feeders Inc.	34	S	67.7	66.7	5.9
Irsik & Doll Feedyard	20*	H	15.0	55.0	0.0
McPherson County Feeders Inc. ^d	58	S	68.9	53.3	6.9
McPherson County Feeders Inc.	12*	H	33.0	41.7	16.7
McPherson County Feeders Inc.	16*	M	50.0	37.5	0.0
Ashland Feeders	34*	S	41.2	32.4	2.9
McPherson County Feeders Inc.	35*	S	60.0	31.4	0.0

^aIndicates 100% CAB eligible. All acceptance rates figured on eligible portions.

^aIn the On-Target "30.06" program, the FLP honors partners that harvest qualifying groups of cattle with at least a 30% Prime or CAB-acceptance rate with an allowance for 3% YG 4s and 3% carcasses weighing more than 975 lb. There is no minimum group size because sorting is encouraged to bring out the best in each animal.

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

^cSee highlight, "Reap benefits with records."

^dSee highlight, "Quality from all over."

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