



Your Link to

by **LANCE ZIMMERMAN**, industry information assistant, *Certified Angus Beef LLC*



The business brand

On the ranch, we can get stuck in a rut, where even the smallest change is met with suspicion. We drive one make of pickup, own one color of tractor and enjoy one variety of soft drink for decades. Our nonfarm friends and family say we are stubborn, but they aren't immune. To some degree, we all identify with brands.

Human nature defines brand loyalty. We stick to what we like and rarely deviate. Consumer pocketbooks drive a trademark's success, and experts argue they own a brand for this reason. The *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) brand defies that logic.

Pursuing quality

People spanning the entire food industry take pride and ownership in this brand. Assured quality creates an identity for everyone, and Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) has pioneered a profitable, feel-good effect for beef industry stakeholders. Of course, CAB

has always been the producer's brand, but that is only workable because of its universal appeal.

"Joe Consumer" wants a premium eating experience, so he sets his eyes on the same brand that "Joe Producer" uses as a benchmark to select next spring's Angus bull battery. Each Joe finds added value in the pursuit of quality. Brand stability rests on the premiums willingly offered for qualified Angus cattle and willingly paid for CAB product.

Producers who aim for the CAB target find a profit-based incentive to step away from raising commodity cattle and start producing the beef consumers enjoy most. Check out the front page of this month's *Angus Beef Bulletin* and see how Montana producer Blake Huntley uses the CAB target as a benchmark for progress.

As they pursue quality, producers look to the Angus breed and the brand they own to monitor progress. The goal

on any one ranch may vary from a first step of 20% to beyond 70% CAB and USDA Prime acceptance. All stakeholders and steak lovers rejoice when goals are met.

Believing in the brand

The brand helps producers reach their goals every step of the way. Feeding at a CAB-licensed yard provides a like-minded business partner, dependable carcass data and an opportunity to capture grid premiums. Profit is never sure, but it can be more likely in a time-proven system. The CAB brand has set a standard for service as trustworthy as your faded Wrangler® jeans and sweat-stained Stetson® hat.

Scores of feedlot managers choose to partner with CAB to show they believe in the brand and the potential of Angus genetics. It takes work to maintain the partnership, but they know the payoff is worth it. They see satisfied feeding customers on one hand and satisfied consumers on the other.

The brand attracts ranchers and cattle feeders who value quality, data flow and genetic progress. A CAB-licensed feedlot attracts more of these partners as it succeeds. Earned credits allow focused advertising, and new ideas lead to press coverage. Sometimes the feedlot has to consider adding more pen space.

CAB custom feedlots benefit from the increased number of high-quality Angus cattle in the pens. Then, as the collective understanding of Angus genetics grows between staff and producers, grid premiums from CAB-licensed packers increase. That's the financial buy-in that started two decades ago.

CAB paved the way for producers to get a financial bonus for above-average cattle. It happened because packers realized the brand made them money.

Only profitable enterprises can be justified, and packers know profit when they see it. They know putting the brand on qualified cattle creates an incentive worth passing along to producers. After all, that's the only way to get more.

Tradition pitted producers, feedlots and packers against each other. Demand created the opportunity for each link in the chain to profit by pulling for the consumer at the end of the line.

Retail and restaurant managers find the CAB brand gives them a competitive advantage. Anyone can supply a cheap product with marginal quality. It saves money in the short term, but over time, it lets people down, and that means a shrinking customer base.

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

Successful suppliers use the CAB edge to increase customer loyalty and win new business. They do it by providing the best products at a fair price. It works because of what the brand delivers — that delicious eating experience says integrity with every bite.

Cattlemen look to certain brands for a guarantee of quality, longevity and dependability. The ones that meet those high standards find a place on the ranch. Consumers demand the same level of excellence from the beef they buy.

Consumers invest in the brand by purchasing CAB brand products from the meatcase or menu. The purchase says they wouldn't spend their hard-earned dollar on anything less. Producers make the same commitment when they purchase Angus genetics that help them profit from carcass-merit premiums.

It pays to identify with a brand that the consumer associates with excellence; it's just good business. Settle for anything less than CAB, and you could be selling yourself short.