

## Uniformity parameters finalized

**Table 1: Ten carcass specifications of the CAB® brand**

- Modest or higher degree of marbling
- medium or fine marbling texture
- "A" maturity
- ribeye area within 10-16 square inches (sq. in.)
- hot carcass weight of 999 lb. or less
- backfat of 0.99 in. or less
- moderately thick or thicker muscling characteristics
- no hump on the neck exceeding 2 in. in height
- practically void of internal hemorrhages
- no dark-cutting characteristics

The Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) Board of Directors voted in November 2006 to accept a final form of the brand's new product uniformity standards. It had voted in September 2006 to replace the original Yield Grade (YG) 3.9 limit with more specific consistency requirements.

Those included a ribeye size bracket of 10 to 16 square inches (sq. in.) and a carcass weight cap of 999 pounds (lb.). After conducting and reviewing research on cutability, and consultations with licensed packers, CAB staff concluded the most logical limit for external fat thickness to be 0.99 in.

The changes were in response to

a trend toward heavier cattle, closely trimmed fabrication and other technical advances since the brand was founded in 1978, said Board Chairman Bob Norton.

Newly appointed CAB president John Stika (see page 68) noted, "Our original limit of YG 3.9 allowed too many outliers with as much as 1.2 inches of external fat." The brand's 2005 consist study of 26,700 carcasses at plants in four states also found calculated YG 3 carcasses with a ribeye range of 6.9 to 19.0 sq. in., and carcass weights of up to 1,169 lb.

The limit on fat thickness should address cutability concerns not met by today's fabrication styles and the other newly refined *Certified Angus Beef*®



(CAB®) brand specifications. Since one of the original eight carcass specifications was reconfigured into three parts, future references will note 10 carcass specifications, Stika said.

After finalizing logistics with its packers, CAB will petition the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for the changes to take effect in early 2007.

## Honor roll of quality

Feeding for the CAB Natural program isn't without challenges, but Thomas County Feeders is making it look easy. The Colby, Kan., feedlot

has been targeting natural cattle since November 2005, and is now a 100% natural lot. Switching from

conventional cattle may have increased the number of Yield Grade (YG) 4s, but that is outpaced by an increase in quality.

"We have the opportunity to feed some very nice, high-quality, good Angus genetics," Manager Mike Hunter says. "Then we do everything we can to keep them healthy and gaining. Since changing to the all-natural program, we spend a lot more time evaluating pens that are harvest-ready, and then sorting them accordingly to manage Yield Grade 4s."

From July to September, the feedlot earned a 32.2% CAB acceptance rate on 8,257 head, more than double the national average. "We market and sort to hit the CAB target, and it's working," Hunter says.

In September, Thomas County had 16 "honorable mention" groups in CAB's 30.06 program (see Table 2). It is an affiliate of the Beef Marketing Group (BMG), which procures the high-quality cattle and serves as the production link between CAB brand Natural and Tyson Foods.

**Table 2: Summary of 30.06 qualifiers and honorable mentions from data reported in June-October 2006**

In the On-Target "30.06" program, the Feedlot-Licensing Program (FLP) honors feedlot partners that harvest qualifying groups of cattle with at least a 30% Prime or *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) acceptance rate with an allowance for 3% Yield Grade (YG) 4s and 3% carcasses weighing more than 975 pounds (lb.). There is no minimum group size because sorting is encouraged to bring out the best in each animal. Honorable mention groups stood out for CAB acceptance but contained at least one discount problem.

Licensed CAB® Feedyard	Head	Sex <sup>a</sup>	%YG 1&2	%CAB	%Prime
<b>June 2006:</b>					
Hergert Land & Cattle Co.	19 <sup>b</sup>	H	36.8	47.37	10.5
Circle 7 Feedyard Inc.	32 <sup>b</sup>	S	50.0	46.88	3.1
Hergert Feeding Co.	30	H	63.3	42.86	3.3
Chappell Feedlot	15	M	66.7	41.67	0.0
Beller Feedlots	46 <sup>b</sup>	S	28.3	34.78	4.3
Chappell Feedlot	28 <sup>b</sup>	H	21.4	32.14	0.0
Decatur County Feedyard LLC	28	H	67.8	30.0	3.6
Chappell Feedlot	43 <sup>b</sup>	S	25.6	27.91	4.7
<b>July 2006:</b>					
Rolling B Farms Inc.	54	S	37.0	77.36	14.8
Chappell Feedlot	18	M	5.6	57.14	5.6
Beef Northwest/Nyssa	59 <sup>b</sup>	S	57.6	52.54	3.4
Beller Feedlots	41 <sup>b</sup>	S	7.3	46.34	14.6
Gregory Feedlots Inc.	41 <sup>b</sup>	S	39.0	43.90	0.0
Gregory Feedlots Inc.	12	H	58.3	40.0	0.0
Solaris Feeders LLC	38 <sup>b</sup>	S	31.6	34.21	0.0
Beef Northwest/Nyssa	24 <sup>b</sup>	S	20.8	33.33	0.0
Beef Northwest/Nyssa	45	S	46.6	30.23	0.0
Gregory Feedlots Inc.	43 <sup>b</sup>	S	32.6	30.23	0.0
Decatur County Feed Yard LLC	19	H	79.0	30.0	5.3
Gregory Feedlots Inc.	31	M	51.6	26.92	3.2
<b>August 2006:</b>					
Pratt Feeders LLC	25	M	60.0	50.0	0.0
Decatur County Feed Yard LLC	13 <sup>b</sup>	S	46.2	30.77	7.7
<b>September 2006:</b>					
GG Genetics	11 <sup>b</sup>	S	9.1	72.73	0.0
<b>October 2006:</b>					
Beef Northwest/Nyssa	46	S	37.0	45.45	2.2

<sup>a</sup>H=heifers; M=mixed; S=steers.

<sup>b</sup>Indicates 100% CAB eligible. All acceptance rates figured on eligible portions.

Call (785) 539-0123 or visit [www.cabfeedlots.com](http://www.cabfeedlots.com) for a complete and current list of feedlot licensees.

### ON TARGET

30.06

## CAB feedlots honored

Three Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) feedlot partners are found deserving of extra recognition as they continue to set the bar for turning in consistent, high-quality cattle.

CAB recently recognized Silver Creek Feeders (SCF) for reaching Bronze in the 30.06 program, and Chappell Feedlot and Gregory Feedlot for reaching the Silver level.

SCF harvested more than 500 head of cattle that reached 30% CAB and Prime with no more than 6% outliers. Chappell and Gregory enrolled more than 1,000 head that fit the same criteria.

A 3,000-head feedlot located near Treynor, Iowa, SCF has a 26.37% *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) acceptance rate. Manager Roger Chambers says he tries to recruit cattle that have the ability to reach CAB. The feedlot is known for its

ability to sort cattle and manage yield grade challenges.

Chappell Feedlot, 2006 Feedlot Partner of the Year, is a 6,500-head yard near Chappell, Neb. The feedlot specializes in sorting cattle with the use of ultrasound technology. Tom

Williams, manager, says he enjoys working with his many retained ownership customers to help them improve their herds. During the 2005-2006 award year, the yard posted a 28.45% CAB acceptance rate.

Tabor, Iowa's, Gregory Feedlot has enrolled more than 15,000 head in the CAB program since 1999 and has an overall acceptance rate of 19.35%. Manager David Trowbridge forges relationships with customers who see value in producing high quality, and tries to manage their cattle to work on a grid.

