



December 2011

## Wishes Granted

*By Amanda Barston, CAB Director of Customer Solutions*

“This just has to get done, but I wish someone else could do it while I move on to things I’d rather do.” On the farm or ranch, family members or employees often find specialty areas, though all work toward common goals. It’s the same at Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) and among our partners. That quote sometimes comes to mind as we review the to-do list for this week, this season.

What if that problem task could be “farmed out” and magically completed by someone else?

If you’ve worked with others much, you’ve probably noticed the truth in sayings like, “it takes all kinds,” and “to each his own.” Everyone is wired to excel in different areas and we all bring our own special gifts to everything we touch. Amazingly, someone really enjoys that task, or even specializes in it. For a ranching example, consider the custom fence builder or tax accountant.

CAB Customer Solutions is a year-old department focused on ideal “Job Fit.” Like a lot of families or farms with tenure ranging from two to 16 years, we looked first at how to tackle work as a team. There’s much to be gained when everyone can operate within their strengths – sharing workload, divvying up projects and trusting each other. Maybe there are lessons here for cooperating neighbors in farm country.

To capitalize on the opportunities, we built our divisional team with people who are especially organized, multi-talented and ready to take on a wide array of necessary support and creative tasks for CAB and our customers.

No point in developing our team if we can’t use it, so we developed a new request process. We’re officially calling it the Customer Solutions Queue, but Brent Eichar, CAB senior vice president calls it, “the Genie in the Bottle,” and the team has become known as “The Wish Granters.”

It took time to fulfill our own wish of figuring this out. After months of wading through a smattering of random requests to individuals on our team, dowsing fears of over-requesting—or worse, not requesting help for lack of knowing who to ask—the Queue was born.

Kind of like a “suggestion box,” our Genie is a simple e-mail box, but managed by the team with due dates, and who is volunteering to work on what. It’s catching on: those who have engaged the Queue are now more willing to delegate and enjoying more sense of a team-wide “job well done.”

It may take more brainstorming to use this idea in the cattle production world, but it could make an interesting discussion for your Integrated Resource Management team. Here’s how it works within our email system: You’re bogged down and out of your element so you email the Queue. Before long, you have a reply that says someone has taken the lead and the task is underway or even done—it’s practically magic!

In the short term, our goal is to help other staff and customers feel good about delegating to a team that can handle anything thrown their way. In the long term? The sky’s the limit.

Suddenly, everything is possible: close your eyes, hold your breath and make a wish! Better yet, let CAB Customer Solutions help you as a partner, and find other ways to use this concept in your business.

END