



CAB Corner on Quality
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C-A-B: Say it right

By Amanda Barstow, CAB Brand Assurance Director

If you fly into a big city (aka “consumer center”), you might take a **cab** from the airport to a restaurant. But for the sake of adding value to what you produce on the ranch, don’t simply ask where you can find an “Angus” steak. And don’t ask for “cab” if you mean *Certified Angus Beef*[®] (CAB[®]) brand products.

Of course, people refer to the world’s leading beef brand by its acronym. We expect that, and we added the three letters to our trademarks on your behalf for that reason. But the shortcut was never meant to be pronounced as a word, unlike NASA, AIDS, CARE, or even UNICEF.

You might want to shrug this off as a mere preference of “cab” staff. It’s much more than that. Here’s why:

Licensed CAB packers pay producers \$40/head or more in grid premiums for cattle that hit the brand’s target. There are at least 40 other brands with the word “Angus” in the name, but they don’t do much to add value on the ranch. Premiums paid to producers from all of the other brands combined are a tiny fraction of the cumulative \$200 million paid for CAB cattle over the last 10 years.

When Angus producers come to town, especially when your city cousins know you are Angus producers, you add to consumer demand by saying all three words – Certified, Angus, Beef. You risk eroding the value of your brand when you refer to it in any other way.

You can see why it only adds to consumer confusion if you ask for “cab Angus.” On the other hand, if you refer to your brand sometimes as C-A-B, using the letters, consumers can ask what those letters stand for. It’s your opportunity to tell them why all three words are important.

It’s a little thing, but those are all components of Brand Assurance. Consumers don’t care that our 13,000 licensees around the world sell half a billion pounds of the brand each year. They do care about integrity. We can’t stop them from buying some other brand and concluding that it’s nothing special. We can only make sure it’s the real thing when they buy *Certified Angus Beef*[®] brand products from a licensed outlet.

How do we do that? It’s a little bit like the National Animal Identification System now under development for all cattle. We use computer data reporting to track each pound of CAB product once it is identified. Remember there are more than half a billion pounds sold each year. Items may change hands more than a few times from packer to fabricator to further processors to distributors and outlets. But each licensee is required to report those transactions.

We also empower our licensees with friendly competition among them and prizes for being proactive in explaining brand integrity to customers. Our “Raising the Steaks” contest last year saw greater than 80% participation among distributors in its first nine months, and addressed more than 1,000 trademark concerns.

CAB staff work with licensees to collect and review menus for proper trademark use, including more than 3,700 of them last year. We reviewed another 3,000 retail ads and Web sites, addressing trademark issues along the way.

Our division works in tandem with the customer service team and staff in each sales division to train distributors, retailers and restaurateurs. Because your brand, CAB, has so much value to its licensees, they work to crosscheck all invoices and sales to make sure everything adds up.

We want consumers to ask for the *Certified Angus Beef*[®] brand (or C-A-B, if they are as familiar with it as producers). With our eight unwavering carcass specifications, we know they will enjoy it. Our job is to make sure they find the real thing, and labels or menus say what they mean. When you take that cab ride after dinner, remember the little things count.

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