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NEWS

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Photo: http://www.cabpartners.com/news/photos/2009_01_beef_carcass_grading.jpg

Beef grading explained

CAB brochure explains carcass grading

When USDA graders stamp carcasses they estimate the eating experience for consumers and provide report cards for producers. They also measure cutability, or red meat yield.

Most carcasses are graded, but very few qualify for the top of the USDA pyramid. Understanding beef grades is not only important to consumers' purchase decisions, but also to the profit goals of producers.

"It's important for diners and shoppers to be able to buy beef that's consistently enjoyable," says Lance Zimmerman, supply development marketing manager for Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB). "That was the idea behind the *Certified Angus Beef*[®] brand when it was founded in 1978, and that exceptional eating experience is a standard the company still upholds today."

To help producers and consumers understand how beef qualifies for the brand's stamp of approval, CAB created a brochure explaining the grading process.

"We tried to produce a quick guide for cattlemen who want to know what goes on during the few seconds their animals are evaluated in the packing plant," Zimmerman says. "It should help answer some of the most frequent questions we get about quality and yield grades."

The "Beef Carcass Grading Overview" also details the four most common carcass defects—all of which prevent cattle from earning the CAB stamp—and what causes them. In addition to marbling and cutability details, the brochure presents a short history of the USDA grading system and how CAB fits into that.

For free brochures, contact Marilyn Conley at mconley@certifiedangusbeef.com or call 330-345-2333.

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