

for immediate release
NEWS

September 10, 2008

Executive Office

206 Riffel Rd.

Wooster, OH

44691-8588

Phone: 330/345-2333

Fax: 330/345-0808



Manhattan Office

1107 Hylton Heights Rd.

Manhattan, KS

66502-2822

Phone: 785/539-0123

Fax: 785/539-2883

Japan Office

Japan Business Center

WBG Marive East 14F

Nakase 2-6 Mihama-ku

Chiba-shi, Chiba 261-7114

Japan

Ph.: 011/81-43-297-3363

Fax: 011/81-43-297-3374

www.

certifiedangusbeef

.com

Contact:

Steve Suther, Director of Industry Information
(785) 889-4162, SSuther@certifiedangusbeef.com

Family Values Meet Consumer Demands

By Lindsay Domer

This summer marks the Mull family's 100th year in the cattle business. In 1908, the family bought the section that now houses the headquarters of Mull Farms and Feeding. The Pawnee Rock, Kan., feedlot still relies on family values to develop customer relationships.

"We are the kind of family business other family businesses trust their cattle with," says Amy Harter, fourth-generation feeder.

Part of the original Beef Marketing Group (BMG), Mull Farms moved to become a Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB)-licensed feedlot in May 2008, enrolling almost all of its cattle in the CAB Natural program. Harter says the 12,000-head feedlot began marketing Angus cattle for the natural target in 2006 and decided partnering with CAB was the best way to make the most of data and premiums.

"Licensing with CAB was a perfect fit for our operation," Harter says. "It's geared toward CAB Natural and 100% of our cattle are shooting for that target."

She says only 1% to 2% of all their cattle fall short of the natural program due to their need for antibiotics, and are sold as commodity calves.

After licensing, the yard qualified 30.6% of its first set of harvested cattle for CAB Natural, with 80.1% grading USDA Choice or better. To qualify for the CAB Natural program, calves must be raised in a "never, never, never" system, meaning they are never given antibiotics, growth hormones or animal by-products.

“Natural cattle are more difficult to manage,” Harter says. “But there’s a growing demand for CAB Natural from consumers, and ultimately that is who we are feeding for.”

They’re also meeting market demands by working with producers to get their calves age- and source-verified. USDA-approval for the feedlot’s Quality Systems Assessment (QSA) program allows it to qualify cattle for Japanese export. Harter says about 33% of cattle there are now age- and source-verified, and she would like for that to reach 100% in the next few years.

Mull Farms and Feeding has kept up with the ever-changing market, without losing the sense of being a family business. “On any given day we have three generations working at the main yard,” Harter says. “There aren’t many operations that stay in a family as long as ours has, and remain successful.”

END