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Beef cattle tales connect with consumers

Cattlemen tell stories in a lot of ways – across a fence gate, over coffee at the feed store, through the pickup window or atop a good horse in the back of the ropin’ pen. Now, producers focused on quality can also tell their stories at www.certifiedangusbeef.com.

Ranchers from nearly every state are now featured on the *Certified Angus Beef*[®] (CAB[®]) brand’s consumer Web site at <http://certifiedangusbeef.com/producers/index.php> right next to the product they work to create.

“It comes down to consumers making that connection with the producer,” says Christy Johnson, CAB special projects manager. “We have always loved the story behind the brand, and this is one way we can share it with our consumers.”

The site features a diverse set of ranches, from sprawling hundred-thousand-acre Southwestern spreads to quaint New England farmsteads. Despite differences, each producer shares a desire to grow something consumers enjoy and understand.

“People in our country don’t always associate Certified Angus Beef products with producers, or even the company itself,” says rancher Brian McCulloh. “They associate it with the grocery store or the restaurant where they buy it.” McCulloh is a partner in Viroqua, Wis., Woodhill Farms, one of those featured on the site. Consumers are increasingly interested in where their food comes from and how it’s produced, and McCulloh says this feature meets their demands. When consumers are happy, producers feel the benefits.

“This is taking the branding efforts of CAB one step further and putting a face to the brand. Ultimately, that should create more pull-through for our product,” he says.

That’s especially important, Johnson says, in areas that have high consumer and low producer concentrations. “I hope this helps consumers gain a deeper appreciation for the brand and the producers who are a part of it,” she says. “When they buy our product, now they can feel like they’re not just feeding their family, but also supporting the farmers and ranchers in their states.”

While increasing consumer understanding of their food’s origin, McCulloh says featuring production stories also creates a transparency within the industry, and that drives quality. Retailers

and foodservice establishments that serve the CAB brand are monitored for quality, but producers are only driven by their own goals, he points out.

“I hope that as Angus producers, we can each look at this and ask if I’m doing all I can to ensure the quality and wholesomeness of my product.” The bottom-line significance of having your face linked to the brand? McCulloh says, “It means we as producers must uphold our end of the deal.”

Those who target the CAB brand quality standards and would like to join in sharing their story may contact Christy Johnson at cjohnson@certifiedangusbeef.com or call (800) 225-2333.

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