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Photos: http://www.certifiedangusbeef.com/photos/SOBE_Chefs030310.jpg

From left: Chef Peter Vauthy, of Red, the Steakhouse; *Certified Angus Beef*[®] brand Corporate Chef Scott Popovic, and Iron Chef Michael Symon

http://www.certifiedangusbeef.com/photos/SOBE_group2010-019.jpg

From left: Bill and Jennifer Davis, chefs Peter Vauthy and Michael Symon; Ginger and Steve Olson

http://www.certifiedangusbeef.com/photos/SOBEBurger_2010-008.jpg

Quality beef admired from Montana to Miami

Ranchers visit about top-notch beef with celebrity chefs

As a rancher, you like to stand back and admire your herd from time to time – especially when you can see the results of your work, like right after the rush of calving season or in preparation for the bull sale. It's the settling satisfaction of knowing the job was well done, and your herd is better for it.

You're not the only one who likes to admire the handiwork of ranching from time to time.

"What those ranchers do makes us look good," said Chef Peter Vauthy. "I get compliments from people all the time: 'Chef, this steak is so good!' Well, I would love to take credit for that, but all I did was call up [distributor] Buckhead Beef and order 400 filets. I know I have to care for it and season and cook it correctly, but the product itself comes in beyond consistent. I know when I order a box of filets, they're going to be good."

Vauthy, executive chef of Red, the Steakhouse, in Cleveland and Miami, recently co-hosted a prelude dinner to the Food Network South Beach Wine & Food Festival, one of America's premier "foodie" events, where 200 or more paid \$200 a plate to admire the work of Angus producers.

"I would like to have every rancher who is raising Angus cattle come and see this end of it, so they can see what the beef is at its pinnacle," Vauthy said. Both his restaurant locations feature *Certified Angus Beef*[®] (CAB[®]) brand Prime steaks.

Bill and Jennifer Davis, Sidney, Mont., joined Steve and Ginger Olson, Hereford, Texas, to attend the event with CAB and to represent ranchers.

"When we go back to the ranch after this, I try to remember how differently these people look at beef," Jennifer said. "We're on the seedstock end, looking at it genetically and while it's walking through the pastures on four legs. They just want the best steak they can possibly get, and it's the CAB brand they're looking for."

The appreciation between chef and rancher went both ways when they met with Vauthy and co-host Michael Symon, who is famous as a Food Network Iron Chef. The quality focus of both groups didn't stray far from traditional ranch values.

"Details are the ultimate deciders in anything we do in life," Steve said. "How we go about details on the ranch makes a difference in the final product. These folks are the top chefs in the culinary world, and they attend to the details it takes to make a great product and enhance it even more."

Both ranch families agreed, attending the event gave them more appreciation for the importance of aiming toward carcass quality in their production.

"It makes us proud and encourages us to continue to try even harder to produce the type of beef that makes for a great center-of-the-plate experience for consumers on an everyday basis," Steve said.

"These chefs have to start with a consistent product; they all relayed that to me at the dinner," Bill said. "We all need to be more dedicated to a focus on producing CAB and getting more people involved in creating this product. The people who were at that dinner were there for the beef. The wait staff and the chefs are dedicated to it and believe in *Certified Angus Beef*[®].

"They want an eating experience that is above and beyond anything they can get anywhere else," Bill noted. That's good for consumers, but it's also good for producers like these from Montana and Texas. "There's no doubt in my mind that's the reason there is a premium for high-quality black cattle in today's market," he said.

Chef Symon also knows cattlemen aren't the only ones who can capture premiums for quality products. In the restaurant world, "Quality is king," he said. "I loved meeting the Davis's and Olsons and getting to the source of this product – they're what makes us profitable."

When black cattle in the pasture equal black ink on the ranch and in the restaurant, it's something they can all admire.

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