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Alabama, Nebraska, Iowa, Texas top NACC

The Grand Champion Pen in the 2006 National Angus Carcass Challenge (NACC) was a record-setting group of 68 steers from Iowa's Tri-County Steer Carcass Futurity (TCSCF). They were fed at Ron Barrier's Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB)-licensed Rolling B Farms, Neola, Iowa, on behalf of TCSCF cooperators in Alabama and Georgia.

Harvested May 31 and July 6 at the Tyson Foods plant in Denison, Iowa, the steers achieved 61.8% *Certified Angus Beef*[®] (CAB[®]) brand acceptance, including 11.8% Prime. The trick was putting that together with 67% Yield Grade (YG) 1 or 2 leanness, no discounts and a 754-pound (lb.) carcass weight. The combination made for a record \$108.77 per hundredweight (cwt.) on the NACC contest grid.

Most of those steers trace ownership or genetics to Rocky Creek Farms, owned by Billy Womack, Ashford, Ala. Womack gives Iowa State University beef specialist Darrell Busby and TCSCF management half of the credit.

Besides CAB, NACC sponsors joining forces to help producers discover the value in their Angus cattle were Allflex USA, Alltech, *Drovers* magazine, Merial, ORigen and the American Angus Association's AngusSource[®] program. The annual contest began in 2003 and concluded with the 2006 results.

Groups of at least 38 steers or heifers sired by registered Angus bulls were fed in CAB-licensed feedlots. "We harvested about 5,600 cattle this year," said Mark McCully, NACC coordinator and CAB director of supply development. "That was 1,300 head fewer than last year, but the competition was greater." One measure is the number of pens finishing more than \$4/cwt. above the \$100 base. There were 28 of those pens in the 2006 contest, compared to 16 in 2005, 11 in 2004 and 4 in 2003.

McCully announced winners Jan. 13 at the National Western Stock Show in Denver, Colo., where Busby accepted the \$5,000 NACC check on behalf of the producer group, and another \$1,000 for producers in seventh-place TCSCF showings in the steer and heifer divisions. Pen mates to Womack's steers came from Charles Conklin's Home Park Farm, Thomasville, Ga.; Terry Harris, Boston, Ga.; Mike Davis' Prairie Cattle and (James) Shand & Shand, all of Marion Junction, Ala.

The champion heifers were owned and fed by a regular NACC notable and veteran CAB partner, Beller Feedlots, Lindsay, Neb. Sired by SAF Hi Road and Hoff's Hi Spade, the pen came in second overall in grid value, at \$107.62.

"They did not stand out for highest quality grade, at 47.2% CAB and Prime, but they were the most uniform cattle we've ever seen in the NACC," McCully said. There were no discounts while 97% of them hit the NACC premium carcass-weight range of 750 to 849 lb., harvested at Cargill Meat Solutions in Schuyler, Neb.

Brothers Terry and Mike Beller have bought good cattle from Jim Skavdahl for six years. In 2005, his heifers made up the reserve and third-place NACC pens, and set the previous uniformity record at 90%.

All were present in Denver when the Bellers accepted the check for \$3,000, another \$1,200 for fourth- and tenth-place heifers, and split \$1,000 with Skavdahl for the partnered fourth-place steer pen. Skavdahl also won \$1,000 in semen credit from ORigen, which represents the featured sires used in the 1,400-cow herd.

ORigen awarded \$3,500 credit overall to owners of the five champion-level NACC pens.

A feeding company sometimes called "the other Bellers" owned and fed the champion steer pen. Brothers Doug, Dennis and Duane operate Beller Corp., just down the road from their cousins at Lindsay, Neb., but excel on their own merit. Last year marked the third time Beller Corp. bought steers from Ken Pelster, Bartlett, Neb., at an Elgin, Neb., auction.

It must have been a charm, because they made 82% CAB, including 28.2% Prime, and tallied \$107.12/cwt. on the NACC grid when harvested July 14 at Cargill's Schuyler plant.

The first year of data convinced them to enter the AngusSource[®] program steers in the NACC. Doug said, "From carcass to closeouts, we knew they were the kind of cattle that were going to do everything we needed."

Pelster runs more than 600 cows with other family members, weaning and preconditioning calves prior to the late November sale. "We've been Angus for 55 years," he said, and collecting individual weaning weights since 1958. Bulls come from three main suppliers: RRAM Angus at Elgin, Dethlef Angus at Ravenna, and Gray's

Angus at Harrison, Neb. He watched in Denver as the Beller Corp. brothers collected a \$3,000 NACC bonus for believing in his cattle. Being the top value AngusSource pen added \$1,000.

The most unusual cattle in the NACC made a stunning comeback in 2006, setting an all-time high 94.7% CAB and Prime mark. "If these 38 heifers, really the tail-enders from Woodstone Angus, of New Ulm, Texas, had more size, they would have risen higher than reserve grand," McCully said. In fact, they were only a penny behind the champion pen on the NACC grid. Harvested in a single group at the Swift & Co. plant in Dumas, Texas, in November, carcasses weighed a relatively light 682 lb., but there were no discounts.

The ranch made news with NACC champion steers in 2004, and also came back with third-place steers in 2006. Fed again at Cattlemen's Choice Feedyard, Gage, Okla., by managers Dale and Mary Moore, the calves came from a herd of Irish-origin cows that trace back to the very first registered Angus cattle.

Bill and Yvonne Woods keep half of their 500 linebred cows in Texas, the other half near Hackett, Ark., with managers John and Angela Wiggins. The Woods family accepted the \$3,500 NACC award for the two pens in Denver.

Mason Fleenor, Ida Grove, Iowa, still has everything clicking. His GG Genetics reserve grand pen of steers made 58.3% CAB and Prime, at \$106.97 on the NACC grid, harvested last spring at the Cargill-Schuyler plant. He also had the sixth, eleventh, fourteenth and fifteenth place steers, and the third, fifth and eighteenth place heifer pens. His top two heifer pens went 61.9% and 48.6% CAB, including 29.7% Prime in the latter. In all, Fleenor collected \$4,800 from the NACC, and another \$750 in ORIGen semen credit.

High quality grades are built in, as Fleenor noted, "Our whole calf crop is in the top 10% for IMF." Indeed, no other feedlot or farm in the four-year history of the NACC can match his top nine groups over time. They have made 59.7% CAB and Prime with an NACC grid average of \$105.85/cwt., including grand champion pens in 2003 and '05.

To round out the top steer pens, Jim Gregory and his feedlot manager David Trowbridge, Tabor, Iowa, partnered with longtime customer James Washburn, of King City, Mo. The 40 steers were 45% CAB and 70% YG 2 with no outliers for a contest grid score of \$106.29/cwt.

None of the top winners were Merial SureHealth® certified, so no bonus was awarded. Besides the award to Beller Corp. on the Pelster cattle, another AngusSource bonus of \$1,000 went to Beller Feedlots and partner Jimmy Thomas, Homedale, Idaho, for their ninth and thirteenth-place steers, second- and third-high-value in that program.

Allflex offered free AngusSource® tags for up to 50 head per entry in the 2006 NACC, which introduced radio frequency ID as a demonstration. Allflex also supplied early enrollees and owners of 2005 winning pens with matched-pair sets of visual ear tags and RFID buttons.

Although there is no NACC for 2007, the network of CAB feedlot partners remains committed to helping Angus producers with post-weaning value discovery. In addition, 20 or more state or regional feed-out programs are available through state Extension beef specialists and Angus associations. For a list of those feedlots and state programs, visit CABpartners.com, email info@certifiedangusbeef.com or call 1-877-241-0717.

END



2006 National Angus Carcass Challenge

Leader Board -- 2006 FINAL

Grand Champion							
Grid Value	CAB %	Prime %	% YG 4-5	Avg. HCW	# Head		Participant / Owner Name
					Harvested		
Grand Champion	\$108.77	50	11.8	0%	754	68 (steers)	TCSCF - Rocky Creek Farms, Harris Livestock, Home Park Farm, Shand & Shand, and Prairie Cattle

Steer Division								
Placing	Grid Value	CAB %	Prime %	% YG 4-5	Avg. HCW	# Head		Participant / Owner Name
						Harvested		
Champion	\$107.12	53.8%	28.2%	10.3%	798	39	Beller Corporation	
Res Champion	\$106.97	44.4%	13.9%	0.0%	780	36	Mason Fleenor/GG Genetics	
3	\$106.31	73.7%	10.5%	5.3%	772	38	Bill Woods/Woodstone Angus	
4	\$106.29	45.9%	13.5%	5.4%	819	37	Beller Feedlots/Jim Skavdahl	
5	\$106.29	45.0%	0.0%	0.0%	754	40	Jim Gregory, James Washburn, David Trowbridge	
6	\$106.08	50.0%	19.4%	8.3%	759	36	Mason Fleenor/GG Genetics	
7	\$105.68	46.8%	2.5%	0.0%	785	79	TCSCF	
8	\$105.35	59.5%	5.4%	2.7%	818	37	Leland and Kevin Cain	
9	\$105.32	44.7%	18.4%	13.2%	771	38	Jimmy Thomas/Beller Feedlots	
10	\$105.15	36.6%	24.4%	9.8%	742	41	Mike Kasten	

Heifer Division								
Placing	Grid Value	CAB %	Prime %	% YG 4-5	Avg. HCW	# Head		Participant / Owner Name
						Harvested		
Champion	\$107.62	38.9%	8.3%	0.0%	813	36	Beller Feedlots	
Res Champion	\$107.61	86.8%	7.9%	0.0%	682	38	Bill Woods/Woodstone Angus	
3	\$105.68	40.5%	21.4%	7.1%	727	42	Mason Fleenor/GG Genetics	
4	\$105.58	44.7%	2.6%	0.0%	771	38	Beller Feedlots	
5	\$105.13	18.9%	29.7%	10.8%	783	38	Mason Fleenor	
6	\$104.67	40.0%	7.5%	2.5%	767	40	Hones/Peterson Livestock	
7	\$104.67	38.8%	2.0%	0.0%	776	49	TCSCF	
8	\$104.61	26.3%	5.3%	2.6%	740	38	Cottrell Farms & Painter Farms	
9	\$104.25	41.0%	5.1%	2.6%	769	39	Elmer Peterson/Peterson Livestock	
10	\$103.63	22.7%	4.5%	9.1%	797	44	Beller & Friends/Beller Feedlots	

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