

## Reputation beef

By Miranda Reiman

There's Midwestern nice and Southern charm. New York has its bright city lights and there's the West Coast sunshine.

Every region is known for something. When you dial down into the agriculture world, certain states or areas seem to have a stronghold. Wisconsin and dairy go hand in hand. Then you have Florida oranges, Kansas wheat, Georgia peaches—and who could think about the great expanses of states like Texas and Montana without also thinking of cattle?

Move outside the U.S. borders and you may not see as clearly what American cattle producers are connected with around the world. Luckily for the beef industry, but not just by chance, that image overwhelmingly has been built on quality.

For the most part, global consumers hear U.S. beef and they think marbling, corn-fed, unique flavor. In a word: tasty.

That's a prestigious reputation to own. But there's an old adage, "It takes years to build a reputation and seconds to destroy it."

If you're a Middle Eastern beef consumer, who has just paid a pretty penny (or whatever currency might be involved) for your American beef, that's undoubtedly true. After all, there are extra costs for freight, inspections, and repackaging already built into that beef. It costs more across the ocean and through the Strait of Hormuz than it does just raised down the local dirt road. So that foreign consumer has shelled out some big bucks for a special meal out or to entertain in style and it all comes down to those first few bites. Is it

moist? Tender? Tasty?

It better be, because it has to live up to that reputation.

The U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF)—a trade group that represents all domestic red meat production—says it promotes American beef as the high-quality player. These folks build demand on the fact that the U.S. can consistently provide the best to five-star hotel and restaurant establishments.

As cattlemen and women it's your job to protect that reputation—build on it, grow it.

A family in South Korea or tourists in Barbados are probably not the first things you're thinking about as you sit down to pencil out a new breeding or management strategy, but you have to remember that those very people are adding dollars to your bottom line.

Last year, USMEF estimated that exports added more than \$153 per head to each animal. No matter what prices are doing in this often-low-margin business, you can't afford to give that up.

The good news is those international consumers aren't really that different than a domestic beef eater. Sure, they might take a few more livers, tongues or short plates than any given U.S. market buys, but everybody wants the same thing: a good eating experience.

If you let that focus define your farm or ranch, you'll be in good shape for keeping that reputation on solid footing.

Next time in *Black Ink*, we'll look at numbers in a new light. Meanwhile, if you have questions for us, call toll-free at 877-241-0717 or e-mail [mreiman@certifiedangusbeef.com](mailto:mreiman@certifiedangusbeef.com). 🐾

## Feeding Quality Forum moves up; registration opens

"Ahead of the feeding curve" is a good place to be with the volatile markets and ever-changing dynamics in the cattle feeding business. It's also the theme of this year's Feeding Quality Forum, slated for August 23 in Omaha, Neb., and August 25 in Garden City, Kan. Cattlemen and women, educators and allied industry are invited to learn more about topics that will impact their livelihoods at the sixth annual event.

Registration by August 5 is \$50 and includes a Certified Angus Beef® brand lunch. Space permitting, late registration will be \$75. Check-in and refreshments begin at 9:30 a.m., with a welcome at 10 a.m. The program wraps up at 4:15 p.m.

Popular market analyst Dan Basse, AgResource Company, will kick off the agenda by addressing the human food protein and livestock feedstuff outlook.

Other topics include:

- Today's Feedlot Profitability Factors by Shawn Walter, Professional Cattle Consultants
- Beef Quality Scorecard with Glen Dolezal, Cargill Meat Solutions
- Managing the New Workforce in the New Economy, Don

Tyler, Tyler & Associates

- Clearing the Air: Livestock, Air Quality and Climate Change, Dr. Frank Mitloehner, University of California-Davis

The lunch program will feature the second annual Feeding Quality Forum Industry Achievement Award winner, Max Deets. The longtime Kansas cattle feeder and past president of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association will make comments at both locations.

"Max has always been an early adopter of new ideas, a true innovator," Corah says. He helped set up some of the first feed-out programs and bull tests, and pioneered the win-win concept.

"He is a great believer in the differences in genetics, and the merit that attention to quality has for ranchers, feeders and ultimately the end consumer," he says.

The meetings are sponsored by Pfizer Animal Health, Land O' Lakes Purina Mills, Feedlot magazine and CAB.

To register, visit [www.cabpartners.com/events](http://www.cabpartners.com/events), or contact Marilyn Conley by phone 800-225-2333, ext. 298, or email [mconley@certifiedangusbeef.com](mailto:mconley@certifiedangusbeef.com). 🐾