## **Certified Angus Beef Meets Lancaster County**

BRICKERVILLE, Pa. -Will Rogers once said: "Even when you're on the right track, if you're standing still, you'll get run over..." That was the quote Turk Stovall left with producers attending an annual cattle feeders' meeting conducted in August.

Stovall is Assistant Director of Feeder-Packer Relations for the Supply Development Branch of Certified Angus Beef (CAB), based in Manhattan, Kansas. After a roast beef dinner, the crowd of 110 cattle feeders from Lancaster and surrounding counties, learned about CAB's efforts to meet the growing demand for their beef products through the CAB Feedlot Licensing Program.

While he was here for the meeting, Stovall took a few extra days to get to know the area, the people, and see some good

cattle. AB feedlot consultants Jim Hogue and Curt Umble, along with Pennsylvania's Beef Quality Assurance Director. Wendall Landis, served as tour

Stovall told the crowd, "I got my Feedlot Nutrition degree in the Midwest, and I thought I knew it all. But after traveling to your feedlots here with Jim, I found out you are some of the most innovative cattle feeders I've been to."

"What took my eye, was the quality of the cattle fed here, the way they're put together, and the strong Angus influence in the feedlots we visited," Stovall said before the meeting, during a brief tour stop at the New Holland Sales Stables. "It's nice to see that here. In some areas, it's hard to come by."

Standing at ringside, watch-

cattle during the sale, he asked many questions about the various buyers and wondered aloud, "Where are those cattle going?" The wheels were turning, when it became obvious that most were not being purchased for CAB plants.

More impressive than the cattle, Stovall said, were the people he met. "There's nothing better than sitting down with salt of the earth people and talking about the industry, hearing their concerns and ideas, and seeing the unique style with which they do things."

He found producers were responsive and interested in the CAB feedlot licensing program. But he also received some feedback to take home with him on the obstacles, mainly the desire for higher packer premiums on CAB qualifiers. He also visited ing the gavel fall on CAB-type the Karl Hess farm in Willow

Street. Hess has been doing custom feeding for cow/calf producers and recently dedicated a portion of his feedlot for CAB licensing, the first in the area to

"This (feedlot licensing) program can help us both out. The feeder helps us make more certified product to meet the demand, and we partner with him to expose his name and feedlot through the Angus Association so he can get good Angus influenced cattle to feed," Stovall explained.

Presently, 80 percent of the beef processing plants in the U.S. are licensed CAB, but the acceptance rate for carcasses meeting the stringent quality and yield grade criteria is only 20 percent.

Meanwhile, CAB is moving more end meats through new product development, and more middle meats than ever before. They want to expand internationally, but they just do not have the volume to go where

they want to go, Stovall said. Plus, CAB will be supplying heat and serve beef, including pot roast, deli items and all beef frankfurters for the venues of the 2002 Olympics.

Thus, the CAB feedlot licensing program was developed to get more Angus-influenced cattle into the CAB product chute. Currently, 49 feedlots are licensed in 14 states, a few of them in Pennsylvania, Ohio and Virginia.

"Feedlots will play an increasingly important role in the coordination of the beef industry," he said. "Today, 2,075 feedyards sell 85 percent of the nation's fed cattle. The top 25 companies have 98 yards that account for 38 percent of all fed cattle, and the trend continues

bigger every year."
But CAB doesn't think bigger necessarily means better in terms of achieving its supply development goals. "Size is not an

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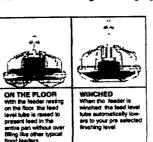
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