

Feedin' Stock to FEEDIN' FOLKS

Feedstore BBQ uses Certified Hereford Beef to impress customers old and new.

by Brooklyn Adam



The big city lights were in their rearview mirror as they embarked on a new journey. At that time Southlake, Texas, provided Bill and Phyllis Lafavers an escape from the big city scene and the opportunity to give their four children — Mike, Eva, Mark and Matt — room to grow.

The first thing on the agenda was finding the right home for their young family. Luckily, they soon found the perfect parcel down a two-lane blacktop behind Miller's Grocery. Little did they know the nostalgic, two-gas-pump store serving the rural community by means of a meat counter and feedstore would soon become their livelihood.

The historic retail establishment — which had changed hands several times since the Miller family — came up for sale again in 1997. After seeing the store evolve over the years, it was only fitting the Lafavers would take the leap to purchase. This was just the beginning for Bill and Phyllis. The feed and tack store took on a new identity — Lafavers' Enterprises Inc. It was the perfect completion to the Lafavers' land.

The Lafavers family ran the store for a while until they figured out the animals were moving out and the people were moving in. They turned their mission from “feedin’ stock” to “feedin’ folks” instead. The building was remodeled, maintaining the feel of the original feedstore while bringing in neon lights and hanging license plates. Feedstore BBQ came to life in April 2001, and with a few family recipes and the support of a great community, it was destined to be the best Texas BBQ around.

Commitment to consistency

With quality a top priority, Feedstore BBQ switched to serving Certified Hereford Beef® exclusively in September 2018. General Manager Mike Lafavers says, “The overall quality of beef we feel is better. We believe in the fact that because it is a more docile breed, it is therefore a higher quality product.”

Certified Hereford Beef is no stranger to offering first-rate beef products. In fact, the brand recently upgraded its program specifications to ensure consumers enjoy a quality, consistent and memorable eating experience. Feedstore BBQ no doubt shares the same mission



By hosting interactive events for customers, the Feedstore BBQ staff communicates how *Certified Hereford Beef's* high standards complement those of the restaurant.

and has held tight to its dedication of serving quality dishes to satisfy its customers' tastes.

Lafavers enjoys spending time visiting with patrons explaining the tight specifications associated with *Certified Hereford Beef*. To him, it is important people understand how the high standards of the program complement the company's commitment to excellence. "[*Certified Hereford Beef*] has a very tight spec and our customers know what they get when they purchase it," Lafavers points out.

Customers have recognized this increase in quality, too. Lafavers says their regulars are thrilled with the upgrade in the beef on the menu. A

line out the door is certain to stay at Feedstore BBQ with its dedication to serving up premium beef and a loveable atmosphere.

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Everything is bigger in Texas

After US Foods® Dallas' soft launch of *Certified Hereford Beef* at the well-known GKB Ranch in Waxahachie, Texas, Lafavers was hooked on *Certified Hereford Beef* and never

turned back. "It was a good dinner, and [Gary and Kathy Buchholz] were very passionate about their livestock," he recalls. "The folks at GKB led us to believe that [Hereford beef] is truly better, and it has increased our sales."

The heavy weather was unrelenting when it came time for Feedstore BBQ's official launch of the *Certified Hereford Beef* program, but the Lafavers family was determined. While Mother Nature was flooding the streets of Southlake, customers were flooding the doors of Feedstore BBQ. "We had an enclosed tent and people would come in and try it then go inside and purchase it," Lafavers recalls. "We had quite a bit of traffic coming in for a house that seats 116 people. We were really excited to promote a new product for us."

Certified Hereford Beef representatives Kaylen Alexander, director of marketing and communications, and Ty Ragsdale, regional brand manager, were on hand at the event to speak with customers about the brand's current product offerings.

"The Feedstore BBQ launch of *Certified Hereford Beef* was a phenomenal event," Alexander says. "There was a line out the door — even in the

pouring down rain. It was apparent Feedstore BBQ has a loyal customer base, and after talking with numerous lunch-goers about the *Certified Hereford Beef* product and how our program supports Texas Hereford families, they were hooked."

Feedstore BBQ advocated long before the launch day. For Lafavers, everything had to be perfect down to the smallest of details. "We'd advertised it and put it out on social

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Gary and Kathy Buchholz's passion for the Hereford industry was extremely appealing to Feedstore BBQ in its search for a new beef program.

media,” he describes. “We even sent out invitations and hand delivered them to quite a few people personally asking them to come.”

Since the switch in September 2018, the hometown restaurant has seen a 20 percent increase in sales, and Lafavers feels confident in more successes to come. Not only have the sales grown, the company is buying the largest volume of *Certified Hereford Beef* of all restaurants in the Dallas market. Partnering with *Certified Hereford Beef* has resulted in an inundation of customers to its doors, and Lafavers is ecstatic to share his love for the brand with his customers, friends and family.

“We want to be the largest, and I’m glad we are the first,” he says. “Hopefully we stay the biggest in the area.”

Lafavers is dedicated to promoting the program, and uses the marketing materials provided by *Certified Hereford Beef* extensively. Whether it is signage on the sidewalk, on the building or even on the table, he wants customers to know where their beef is sourced.

“When we go out, we talk about *Certified Hereford Beef*, no matter what we are doing,” Lafavers says. “While we cater events our employees wear *Certified Hereford Beef* aprons and are happy to tell people, ‘This is what you’re eating.’”

It is natural for Lafavers to push the product to his customers — considering what the product has done for his family’s business. He and the regulars can agree the new beef program has undoubtedly taken their restaurant to the next level.

“We started rising back up after we launched the Hereford beef. I think it has been an excellent choice,” he says, and jokingly adds, “My father tells me that I did a good job on that. He doesn’t tell me that often.”



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He and his team are excited to continue serving the best BBQ around to the best customer base around. His hope is lines out the door will be commonplace and people will not hesitate to stand in them.

In addition to a reputable product, Lafavers reveals his family’s secret to success is upholding the consistency of customer service.

“We are family owned and operated, and we treat our employees like family,” he says with a grin. “I love developing and keeping long-term relationships with people who enjoy our food regularly.”

The marriage of *Certified Hereford Beef* and Feedstore BBQ is off to a shining start, and the future looks even brighter. The Texas BBQ joint promises to prepare the best beef with consistency, patience and dedication to bring out the best flavor and tenderness — and the best of the brand. **HW**



Feedstore BBQ is known for its brisket, which has only elevated in quality since adopting the *Certified Hereford Beef* program.

Proven products

Lafavers has seen an improvement not only on the sales side but also in the kitchen. The ease of preparing and cooking the product has proven its merit.

“We hand trim all of our briskets and used to cut off a lot more fat than we do now,” he explains. “Now our consumers are eating our traditional cut brisket.”

“Our brisket is our best-selling product right now, and we are gaining a reputation for our hamburgers as well,” he continues. “That’s in part because we’ve moved to *Certified Hereford Beef*. We would really like to incorporate more products as they [become] available to us.”

For Lafavers, this is only the beginning of Feedstore BBQ’s success with the *Certified Hereford Beef* brand.