



Breaking Barriers

“CHB Bites” is a column designed to keep you in-the-know about the Certified Hereford Beef® (CHB) program. To get involved with CHB on social media, search *Certified Hereford Beef* on Facebook and Pinterest, or @certifiedherefordbeef on Instagram.

This might sound familiar.

Even when the bulls you’re offering ring the bell for prospective customers, ones who understand the quality and benefits, they can be reluctant to make a change, unless what they’re currently using is failing miserably. Even then, it may take a turnover in decision makers before truly getting your foot in the door.

This is also a primary challenge facing food distributor salespeople as they work to get new retail and foodservice customers to add Certified Hereford Beef® (CHB) to their offering.

“CHB performs exceptionally well in the marketplace. It speaks for itself in terms of product quality and consistency and the integrity of the Hereford breed and the story behind the product,” explains Amari Seiferman, CHB president and CEO.

In fact, domestic and international CHB sales grew by 2% in Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23) despite historically high retail beef prices and increasing pressure on consumers’ disposable income.

“Even though our brand succeeds for customers, from an operational standpoint, adding a new premium branded product line to their current offering is a



complex decision for a restaurant or grocery store,” Seiferman explains.

Think in terms of everything from changing in-store signage and menus to training employees about the new brand and why it will benefit customers.

“Our CHB services are designed to make these transitions as seamless as possible for new licensees while also continuing to add value for current ones,” Seiferman says.

Using retailers as an example, CHB staff provide customers

in-depth training about CHB products and the compelling story behind them. CHB also provides partners with marketing and advertising assets that can be displayed at the point-of-purchase, such as in-store or meat case materials, as well as advertising and circulars designed to drive business to the retail location. Materials are available in English and Spanish.

“Our goal is to help drive traffic into the stores, so we work hard to help promote our partners in all forms of marketing and advertising platforms,” Seiferman says.

Introducing and building

Food shows are a key tool in the CHB arsenal to foster one-on-one interactions that drive customer retention and recruitment.

These shows can be sponsored by a variety of organizations and associations. Food distributors sponsor many of them to showcase products and programs to new and prospective customers.

These shows also enable CHB staff to leverage time and dollars by getting in front of many current and prospective customers at one time. Staff and partners displayed *Certified Hereford Beef* at 27 food shows in FY23. Attendance at each show ranged from a couple hundred to thousands.



TASTE *the tradition*

Beyond the Beef Packer

Unless you spend significant time working with or within a particular beef industry segment, it can be hard to understand how the other sectors fit together.

Folks in the cattle business know the live side of the business — how seedstock producers provide genetics for commercial cow-calf producers to build cattle that will make their way through the stocker and backgrounding sectors, then on to the feedlot and ultimately the beef packer. Of course, it's not always a direct step-by-step progression.

Beyond the packing house door, the line of progression and the sectors involved can seem as straightforward.

Broadly speaking, once beef leaves the packing house, it will flow one of three directions: to a further processor, a food retail distributor or a foodservice distributor. These distributors range in size from a few employees to thousands.

"Processors further fabricate carcass subprimals into value-added items such as cut steaks, patties, deli meat and pre-cooked products. This industry segment adds value to under-utilized cuts which helps maximize carcass utilization," explains Amari Seiferman, Certified Hereford Beef® president and CEO. "Food safety, product

quality and consistency are crucial in this sector because customer loyalty is dependent on product performance." She adds that further processors establish pricing and are instrumental in developing global markets.

Processors deliver product to retail /foodservice distributors, which also receive product from packers and packer processors.

"Retail and foodservice distributors provide sales and marketing solutions to grocery stores and restaurants," Seiferman explains. "They are responsible for sourcing, pricing, selling and delivering product to grocery store and restaurant locations in their specific market areas. Product quality and consistency are also essential in this segment."

So, when it comes to marketing CHB, the first step is getting distributors to carry the product. Then, it's up to the sales force of each distributor to sell the CHB program and specific CHB products to retail and foodservice customers. **HW**

"So much of what we do in marketing CHB revolves around breaking barriers," Seiferman says. "For food retailers and foodservice unfamiliar with CHB, we're trying to break through and establish brand awareness. For those already familiar with or marketing the brand, we aim to establish and grow brand recognition, which in turn fosters brand loyalty."

Along the way, CHB staff works to break through the broader barrier that exists between customers and consumers and the producers who grow their food.

That's why CHB staff work hard to include Hereford producers at food shows, and in promotional material and the like.

"The science and technology behind management practices employed by cattle producers is amazing, whether it's utilizing cover crops to improve soil health, the commitment to animal wellbeing or the use of embryo transfer to advance genetic gain" Seiferman says. "Producers do these things

every day without necessarily thinking about what it means to customers, and it's powerful."

The agricultural production story resonates with food distributors and their retail and foodservice customers, especially when they hear it from a producer, according to Seiferman. It resonates because, like much of society, this is the first time many hear about how much care goes into growing their food. Couple that with the story behind Hereford and CHB, and she says these folks often quickly become advocates for agriculture. **HW**



CHB chuck short rib tacos with pickled red onion and cilantro were served to restaurant owners and chefs at last spring's Performance Foodservice Nashville Spring Food Show in Nashville, Tenn.

For more information about Certified Hereford Beef, visit CertifiedHerefordBeef.com or email info@herefordbeef.org