Observations on Successful Feedlots

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Observation #1

- ## The feedyard is never full!

  - There's always room for more cattle.

  - Never (rarely) turn down cattle

  - Work with backgrounding yards, neighbors, etc. to find space for cattle

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Observation #2

- ## They set themselves apart
  - What is special about your feedlot?
    - Partnership opportunities/shared ownership
    - QA training/certified/animal handling clinics/
    - Have your own QSA or umbrella program for ASV
    - Family operation
    - Specific alliances or memberships
  - Don't use cliches!

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Observation #3

- They are professionals
  - Return phone calls
  - Sometimes you must hold hands
  - Appear business-like
  - Personable
  - First impressions last
  - Are straightforward and not elusive when asked questions.
  - Listen to customer
  - Utilize other professionals

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Observation # 4

- Be honest!
  - No "sugar-coating"
  - Be realistic about expectations regarding customer cattle.
  - Share closeout information – ADG, F:G, COG, other items of similar type and kind.
  - Report deads and realizers promptly.

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Observation #5:

- **They work with customers on health and management protocols**
  - Consulting vets – one yard feels this has been paramount to their success in avoiding health issues.
  - Advise clients on the advantages of pre-conditioning and which products work
  - Weaning programs – early, fencline, etc…….anything to relieve stress

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Observation #6:

- Talk to customers about genetics.
    - Everybody's calves top the sale; or do they?
    - Maybe the time to do this is after the cattle are sold!
    - Share benchmarking information.

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Observation #7:

- They manage the cattle like their own; maybe better!
  - Feed cattle on time
  - Use consulting nutritionists to maximize performance
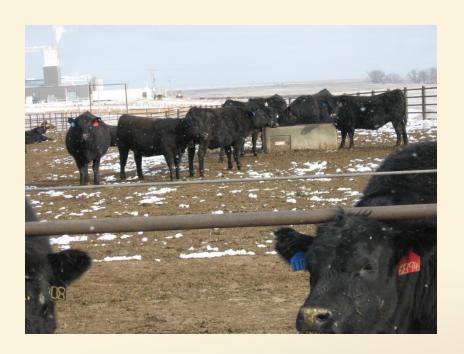 - Recognize health issues early on and address them

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Observation #8

– They take pride in the appearance of their yard.

- Mowed
- Painted
- No junk
- Maintenance on pens, buildings, working facilities, vehicles
- Doesn't have to be fancy; but it does have to be presentable.

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Observation # 9

- They don't burn bridges
  - Sometimes these relationships don't work out.
  - Ask them for another chance to feed their cattle.

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Observation #10

- They take a genuine interest in customer successes.
  - Share data
  - Offer sound advice when requested
  - Help with marketing - unique and not-so-unique

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My Top Six Feedlots

- Yard I – R.O. and Angus
- Yard M - Sort and Feed Ingredient, low ration cost
- Yard P – Business and Performance
- Yard R – Performance and Pen Maintenance
- Yard CC – Innovative Marketing and Relationships
- Experience, Knowledge, Self-Effacing

XYZ Feed Yard
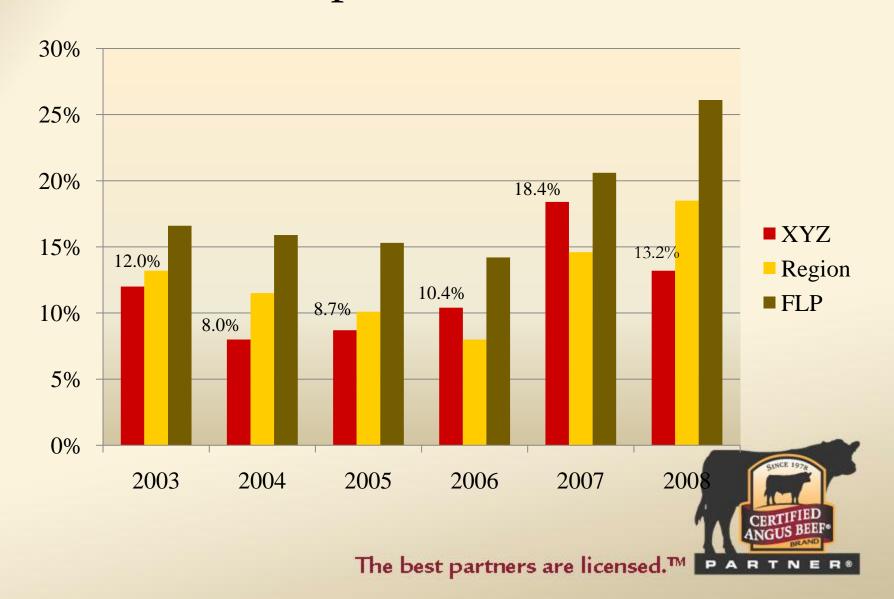## Carcass Grading for Calendar Year 2008*

	YG1	YG2	YG3	YG4	YG5	No YG	XYZ Total	FLP Total	Region Total
Total Harvest							4,144	91,108	28,945
Prime	0.0%	0.1%	0.8%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	2.5%	1.2%
Choice	2.2%	14.7%	24.2%	8.4%	1.7%	0.0%	51.2%	69.2%	62.3%
Select	7.2%	16.8%	13.1%	2.7%	0.4%	0.0%	40.3%	26.0%	33.1%
No Roll/ No QG	1.9%	3.1%	1.5%	0.3%	0.1%	0.0%	7.3%	2.2%	3.3%
XYZ Total	11.7%	34.8%	39.6%	11.7%	2.2%	0.0%			
FLP Total	4.7%	29.1%	51.7%	12.6%	1.2%	0.9%			
Region Total	6.9%	32.0%	45.7%	12.0%	1.4%	2.0%			

Carcass Data by Packing Plant

Item	Packer			
	Packer A	Packer B	Packer C	Packer D
Number of Head	454	2,825	394	733
Steer/Heifer /Mix %	26/74/0	7/42/51	25/25/50	0/50/50
Hot Carcass Wt.	798	771	805	763
Dressing %	64.3%	64.0%	62.9%	62.7%
% Choice & Prime	63.8%	58.1%	36.0%	34.8%
Mileage to Plant	128	109	157	184
% CAB®	13.1%	15.1%	6.1%	8.9%
% YG 4 and 5	29.2%	14.2%	10.8%	5.1%
Total Out Carcasses	35.1%	22.1%	24.0%	12.3%

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Customer Profile
XYZ Feed Yard – 2008

Customer	No. Harvest	# Elig.	% CAB®	% Pr & Ch	% Select	% YG 1,2,3	% YG 4&5	% NR/No QG
Jimmy	725	405	4.0%	32.9%	49.9%	91.3%	8.7%	17.2%
Bobby	471	304	4.9%	36.9%	48.0%	89.8%	10.1%	15.0%
Jimmy Bob	159	107	12.1%	63.5%	28.3%	84.3%	15.1%	8.2%
Bob Jimmy	979	738	15.0%	59.8%	33.3%	85.8%	14.2%	6.8%
Bubba	133	69	15.9%	41.4%	54.9%	93.2%	6.8%	3.8%
Bubba Joe	557	557	17.4%	70.0%	28.7%	74.7%	25.3%	1.2%
Joe Bubba	86	86	18.6%	79.1%	20.9%	79.0%	21.0%	0.0%
Flathead	310	310	19.4%	64.2%	34.5%	75.1%	24.9%	1.3%

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