



Agricultural
Research
Service

South
Atlantic
Area

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MARKETING CATTLE THROUGH GEORGIA BEEF CHALLENGE

Why Does it matter?

In years past, feeder cattle from the Southeast received a 7% discount in sales price as compared to Midwestern cattle because they were presumed to be inferior. The Georgia Beef Challenge (GBC) was started in 1994 as a method for Southeastern producers to retain ownership of their feedlot cattle and obtain carcass data for use in improving their herd's genetics. Our ARS research unit (JPC) did not have performance and carcass (meat quality) data to evaluate genetic progress and management practices.

What was done?

Prior to shipping:

- Minimum 45 days post weaning
- Eating 5 lb/hd/d from feed bunks
- Weigh, tag and muscle score
- Vaccines and health certificate

Feed Lot schedule:

- Weighed, fed 28 day warm-up ration, placed on 80% concentrate
- Weighed 3 times
- Harvested when grade met
- Carcass data collected



What was found?

Cost of GBC included reservation fee of \$20 per calf (money is credited to feed costs), calves sold for \$5 to co-op and \$8 per head for data collection.

Carcass data (percent fat, ribeye area score) showed a decrease in yield grade with an increase in quality grade and ribeye area.

Carcass data allows for Certified Angus Beef (CAB) premiums

Performance data showed an increase in feedlot average daily gains.

Returns from investment in a sound health program are better realized by retaining ownership

Increased recognition of the quality of JPC cattle.

What is the impact?

JPC animals receive nationwide recognition for size consistency, gentle dispositions and above average performance. Performance and carcass data that make it possible to test our management practices increases animal marketability. Participation in GBC increased our beef quality giving us access to markets not traditionally available to Georgia producers. Feed lots harvest a more valuable animal because they receive and feed out better quality cattle, thus satisfying consumers with leaner more tender beef.

Research Team and Contact information

Cooperating Personnel:

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