For Immediate Release

Black and Red Angus: A Comparison

Eva Alvarez and Becky Nguyen, Writers

LOUISVILLE, KY – November 18, 2014 – The Roll of Victory National Angus Show and Red Angus Show commenced with a beautiful rendition of the Star-Spangled Banner sung by Daniel McFarland from Keithville, Louisiana. Both shows happened simultaneously in a split ring inside Freedom Hall. A total of 1,076 Angus cattle arrived at the North American International Livestock Exposition this year—only 198 of them were Red.

Angus are dominantly black, but some are red due to a recessive gene. In the U.S., Angus and Red Angus are distinguished as two separate breeds, with their most obvious difference being their color. Red Angus are believed to be more heat tolerant. This allows them to graze longer in hot, summer months. They also are less susceptible to certain cancers. However, Black Angus dominates the beef market because they are highly recognized among consumers.

“No Black Angus are the top dogs,” said Tom Mathers, owner of both breeds at Top Line Farm in Tremont, IL. “They’ve done the best job in marketing.”

Both breeds produce the same marbled meat, but the public has constructed the idea that Black Angus is higher quality. The Certified Angus Beef brand caters to this notion. The meat they certify must come from cattle that are at least 51% Black Angus. That disqualifies Red Angus beef from their certification. However, the difference between the two breeds’ meat depends solely on management factors and their pedigree.

Because of the greater demand for Black Angus beef, the breed has become a driving force in the beef market as well as the show ring. Angus were one of the first breeds to be shown at the North American International.

(end)