



PHOTO BY CANDACE KREBS

Pictured in front of "Harry," the CHB mascot, are CHB ambassadors Mary Ann Berg and Anna Rhodus.

Berg, Rhodus Serve as Inaugural CHB Ambassadors

In February Certified Hereford Beef (CHB) LLC welcomed Mary Ann Berg, Dalton, Ohio, and Anna Rhodus, Greenwood, Mo., to the CHB® marketing team as 2007 CHB ambassadors. The ambassadors will assist CHB LLC staff at promotional events throughout the year as volunteer spokespersons for CHB product and the breed behind the brand.

This is the first year of the CHB Ambassador Program, which is coordinated by CHB LLC, the National Organization of Poll-ettes (NOP) and the American Hereford Women (AHW). The program's purpose is to help interested individuals learn about and participate in CHB marketing.

After successfully completing an application process, interview and presentation, Berg and Rhodus were selected by program coordinators.

Jared Long, CHB LLC account manager, explains their responsibilities: "The ambassadors will be involved in a wide array of promotional and educational activities involving CHB, such as product demo and sampling, women's food show appearances, and various charitable events that CHB LLC participates in each year."

Event No. 1

The ambassadors' first event was March 29-31 and involved many of these elements. They were called on to assist in promoting the launch of CHB in United Supermarkets stores in Oklahoma. Berg demoed stir fry made with CHB top sirloin on Thursday and Friday in two different stores in Enid. Rhodus did the same in Altus.

"A lot of people were shocked because it (sirloin) was so tender and flavorful," Rhodus says. "They couldn't believe it wasn't marinated." Rhodus explained to the customers that Hereford beef is naturally tender, but some folks found it hard to believe that any steak could be that tender without marinade. "One lady almost argued with me!" she says.

Another woman in the store approached Rhodus with health questions. She was shopping for her husband who recently suffered a heart attack. Frustrated with cooking options low in sodium and cholesterol, but high on taste, she found Rhodus' stir fry a hit. Rhodus, who watches her own sodium intake, had included very little salt in the recipe. She told the woman of different seasonings she could use in dishes to add flavor without adding sodium and also of low-cholesterol substitutes for common ingredients. She also

Be an ambassador in your community

Certified Hereford Beef (CHB) LLC staff helped prepare the 2007 CHB ambassadors, Mary Ann Berg and Anna Rhodus, for their first promotional event in Oklahoma by providing a wealth of information about CHB® to share with consumers. Below are some of the facts that the ambassadors were taught; you can use this information to be an ambassador in your community.

Healthy living

- CHB provides all 29 U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) lean beef cuts. (This means they have less than 10 grams of fat, 4.5 grams or less of saturated fat, and less than 95 milligrams of cholesterol per 3.5-ounce serving.)
- CHB is a complete protein source, supplying all nine essential amino acids in proportions that are most useful to the human body.
- CHB is an excellent source of protein, zinc and vitamin B12.

Taste and tenderness

- CHB cattle are grain fed in the Midwest — the Napa Valley of beef.
- CHB is an USDA certified program, meaning the beef must meet stringent qualifications, ultimately delivering consistently tender, flavorful beef.
- CHB is derived from English breeds only, ensuring ultimate meat quality.

Safety

- CHB is derived from cattle less than 30 months of age.
- Processors of CHB utilize state-of-the-art sanitation facilities and methods to ensure a safe beef supply.
- CHB has never had a food safety recall in its entire history.

Hormones and antibiotics

- CHB promotes the judicious use of hormones and antibiotics to ultimately ensure animal welfare and health.
- Organically produced food is no more safe or nutritious than conventionally produced food (*The Role of Beef in the American Diet*; The American Council of Science & Health, January 2003).
- Both plant and animal foods contain hormones, but beef contains significantly lower amounts of estrogen than many foods. **HW**



explained that Hereford beef is lean and that moderate-sized portions of lean beef are good for the heart, providing protein and iron.

The woman was thankful for Rhodus' help and came back a few times to visit and ask questions. Rhodus made sure to tell her about the new CHB consumer Web site, www.herefordbeef.net, where she could find recipes and healthy living information.

Rhodus reports that Altus customers were overall most impressed with the leanness and tenderness of CHB, and that the cattle came from family-owned operations. Being able to identify her as one of the farm owners was a big plus.

Berg says that her customers in Enid were most excited about CHB as a consistent product, guaranteed tender and tasty time after time.

Still, she did encounter some concerns. Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) was one woman's biggest fear. Berg was prepared to handle this particular situation because of her beef background and the training the ambassadors received from CHB LLC staff. She knew that CHB-harvested cattle must be younger than 30 months of age, whereas BSE affects older cattle. She also knew that the BSE agent isn't found in beef food products, but rather in central nervous system tissue like the brain and spinal cord. She was glad to have the chance to educate the consumer about BSE and says the woman left more assured of the safeness of not only CHB, but all beef.

This was only one of Berg's rewarding experiences. She enjoyed watching many customers purchase CHB. She visited with a man and son who told her that their neighbors had Hereford cattle. After talking with Berg and then among themselves, they ordered a freezer package, which included a large assortment of CHB cuts.

While the ambassadors did a great job promoting the product, United Supermarkets staff also did more than their fair share. "The meat managers were right on their toes for us," Berg says. "Everything

was set up for me, and I cooked the stir fry right there."

She continues, "The setup was very inviting in the meat area. You can see everything they're (meat handlers) doing through glass windows."

After finishing their duties in Altus and Enid, Rhodus and Berg headed for Ponca City on Saturday. They assisted CHB LLC staff, Oklahoma Hereford Association members and Ponca City FFA members in a promotional fundraiser for the FFA chapter and the Oklahoma Youth Expo Hereford Heifer College Scholarship. While others were outside selling CHB smoked tri-tip sandwiches, Rhodus and Berg were enticing shoppers in the store with samples of the sandwich meat and information about the quality of the product.

"The ambassadors were an incredible help," says Shonda Anderson, CHB LLC account manager. "They got a lot of people excited and the meat managers couldn't say enough good things about them!"

Bound to excel

Long believes that it is the women's ties to and knowledge of the Hereford breed that makes them such strong spokespersons for CHB. He says, "These two ladies have a tremendous amount of experience and knowledge of not only the beef industry as a whole, but more importantly, the Hereford breed and what it all entails as both are directly involved in Hereford cattle production."

Berg operates a Hereford cow-calf operation with her husband, Jerry, in the heart of Ohio. She is a 20-year member of the NOP and also the Buckeye Poll-ettes, where she has served as a board member for several years. She received a bachelor's degree in vocational home economics education in 1964, and worked as a home economics teacher and FHA advisor at Dalton High School for two years before resigning to raise her and Jerry's four children.

Berg returned to teaching in 1985 as a substitute for Dalton-area schools. Over the years, she has taught nutrition and consumer classes, and also coached 4-H

members and homemakers in food preparation, demonstration and healthy eating. She is excited to now use her education and experience to promote a product close to her heart — Hereford beef. "It fits my niche in life," she says. Berg explains that she likes promoting CHB especially to young families, informing them of quick and convenient options to accommodate busy work schedules.

Rhodus and her husband, Matt, have raised Herefords for 20 years. In addition to her farm responsibilities, she worked 29 years for Honeywell International, a diversified technology and manufacturing leader. Upon retirement in April 2006, she had served in various manufacturing management positions. Often her positions required the development and presentation of training courses, as well as leadership of diverse teams at plant and corporate levels.

As a wife of 34 years and a mother of two children, Rhodus is a bona fide cook and consumer. She is a strong advocate of the "consistently great-tasting, tender" CHB product that she is promoting as a CHB Ambassador on the national level, just as she has been promoting it locally for years. "This is a great opportunity to get more info out about our breed and the quality of what we do. The more people who know and understand the quality of what we do, the more people will buy our product," she says.

Like Berg, Rhodus is a longtime member of the NOP and her state Poll-ette organization. She serves as the NOP Area 7 Director (Illinois and Missouri) and is a past president of the Missouri Poll-ettes. **HW**

Want to be an ambassador?

If you are interested in being the next Certified Hereford Beef (CHB) Ambassador, contact Connie Couch at (816) 842-3757 or ccouch@hereford.org. The program is open to members of the American Hereford Women (AHW), National Organization of Poll-ettes (NOP) and National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) who are at least 21 years old. Ambassadors are committed to six events per year and may be asked to serve a two-year term. **HW**