

Sweet Bran® Farm to Table program helps customers, employees and community

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The COVID-19 pandemic has brought with it depressed market prices, shifts in consumer demand and supply chain challenges.

"It's now part of the challenge of feeding cattle day in and day out. It's tough because it's really out of our control," said Jason Kreikemeier, owner of PK Feeders based in Snyder, Nebraska. Jason, his wife, and children run the operation which typically consists of 2,500 head of cattle. PK Feeders has been a Sweet Bran® customer since the brand debuted in 1995.

Sweet Bran Senior Sales Account Manager J.D. Thibault wanted to help and had an idea to enlist Cargill employees the chance to buy a half or quarter side of beef from PK Feeders at the price of beef before the pandemic. After talking it through with some others on the team, the idea expanded to donating a portion of each order to local food banks and enlisting five other Sweet Bran customers. Here's how it worked and the results:

- To date, 51 Branded Feed employees have purchased a quarter, half, or whole premium beef carcasses, to have cut and wrapped to their individual specifications at a total cost of approximately \$4.50 per pound. With the average retail price for beef at roughly \$6 per pound, that's a savings of more than \$17,000 for employees purchasing high-quality beef they had a role in feeding.
- Because employees are purchasing the live cattle at a price point well above the currently depressed market, PK Feeders, DB Feedyards and other participating customers are getting a total of nearly \$8,400 in premiums. With 23 head of cattle spoken for to-date, that's more than \$36,000 in revenue for customers that otherwise wouldn't have had due to the limited marketing/processing options.
- For every quarter beef sold, five pounds of ground beef is being pulled and distributed to the [Washington County Food Bank](#). That's approximately 400 pounds, or 2,133 servings, of ground beef going directly to community members in need, valued at more than \$1,600.

"When J.D. came to me with this idea my reaction was, 'Yeah, I have plenty of beef. Come get some!' joked Kreikemeier. "But seriously, this is a great idea and happy to be part of it."

"This is a win-win-win for all involved and could be the start of a more permanent, sustainable

program,” said Thibault. Ideas to evolve the program include expanding the opportunity to a broader area and more employees as well as developing a virtual way for employees to place orders and provide more education about how to purchase locally-sourced beef.

“As we think about our Sweet Bran customers, many are independent, family-owned operations,” said Chad Conard. “These people – these families – are the lifeblood of the industry and an essential part of keeping high-quality protein in the supply chain and on dinner tables across the country. I’m thrilled this program can help serve our customers, employees and communities in this time of need.”

Cargill Branded Feed creates proprietary feed ingredients to improve digestive health and performance for production animals in the beef, dairy, aquaculture and pet food markets. Branded Feed is a segment of Cargill Starches, Sweeteners & Texturizers (CSST).

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