

Beef Ambassadors chosen in Bakersfield

The 2017 California Beef Ambassador Contest was held in Bakersfield on April 28 and 29. Contestants arrived at the Kern Ag Pavillion and began the contest with an Issue Response, where contestants had to respond to a recent publication that was critical of the beef industry. This portion of the competition was followed by a presentation from Jill Scofield of the California Beef Council. Then all contestants and parents enjoyed an ice cream social and prepared for the next day of competition.

Saturday, contestants arrived ready to begin the Media Interview and the Consumer Interaction portion of the contest. After four hours of competition, the contestants were served a delicious lunch prepared by the Kern County CattleWomen (with help from Bret Rogers) of Tacos featuring Rankin Ranch beef.

After lunch, all the contestants and parents loaded into vans provided by Jim Burke Ford of Bakersfield for a ride up to the Rankin Ranch. The group was greeted by the Rankin Family, Bill, Glenda, Amanda Barrett and Sarah Wilder. Contestants and parents were split into two groups and were given a full ranch tour, with presentations by the Rankin Family regarding the operation of the cattle ranch, the guest ranch, marketing Rankin Ranch beef and the history of the ranch.

Contestants, parents and guests then arrived in the “Meadow” of the Rankin Ranch where they were served a dinner of Rib Eye steaks and potatoes. The dinner was sponsored by the Kern Cattlemen and the beautiful tables were set and decorated by Karen Cain and Teresa Rudnick of Kern CattleWomen.

Following the dinner, Erin Rogers, California Cattlewoman Beef Ambassador Chair, presented the awards to the Northern, Central and Southern Region winners in the Junior and Senior Divisions. Awards included gift cards from the California Beef Council which totaled \$3000 for all winners and participants, as well as Beef Ambassador portfolio bags for all participants, and custom award buckles for the Junior and Senior winners.

We are so grateful to those who helped make this incredible day possible:

The Rankin Ranch Family,
Kern County Cattle Women,
Kern County Cattlemen,
The Kern Ag Foundation and Ralph Mendez,
Jim Burke Ford of Bakersfield and our judges.

This will be an exciting year for our 2017 Beef Ambassadors and we encourage our units to reach out to your regional representatives and invite them to participate in your events this year. Our 2017 Beef Ambassadors will be with us at the Mid Year meeting in June at the Harris Ranch to help their units start or improve their Beef Ambassador Program. We look forward to the impact these young people will have in the future of beef agriculture.