

Dr. Temple Grandin endorses natural beef producer's animal welfare rules

Country Natural Beef also be involved in developing Country Natural Beef's 120 ranches produce 'humane, sustainable' beef, says Grandin audit processes.

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Country Natural Beef said Thursday the nation's foremost authority on humane livestock handling, Dr. Temple Grandin, has officially endorsed its "Raise Well" animal welfare standards.

Vale, Ore.-based CNB is made up of 120 family-owned ranches that market and sell over \$50 million annually worth of meat to retailers such as Whole Foods, its largest customer, as well as Northwest retail chains New Seasons Markets and PCC Natural Markets, and fast-food chain Burgerville.

"The ranching families who form Country Natural Beef are really dedicated to producing beef in a humane, sustainable manner. When I went to the CNB annual meeting, I was impressed with how each rancher had an opportunity to voice their opinion on the guidelines," said Grandin in a statement. "They are hardworking, honest people who are close to the land, and they have enthusiastically implemented a three tier auditing process. This will help insure that the cattle are handled and raised according to high standards."

A film based on the life of Grandin, the nation's foremost authority on humane livestock handling, will premiere Feb. 6 on HBO. (See the trailer below).

Despite dealing with the challenges of autism, Grandin, a professor at Colorado State University, is one of the world's very few livestock-handling equipment designers and has designed the facilities in which half of the nation's cattle are handled.

She is a renowned author of several books, including her recently released "Animals Make Us Human: Creating the Best Life for Animals."

All CNB is free of added hormones or antibiotics and is third-party certified for humane animal practices and environmentally sensitive land management by Portland, Ore.-based Food Alliance, a nonprofit that certifies farms, ranches and food processors for sustainable agricultural and production practices.

CNB was founded in 1986 by 14 family ranchers in eastern Oregon with a vision to protect open spaces and raise beef cattle in harmony with the land.

Grandin worked with CNB over the past year to help the 120 ranch families of the Country Natural Beef cooperative write their animal welfare standards. She will also be involved in developing Country Natural Beef's ranch audit processes.

"Dr. Grandin's guidance in developing and endorsing our standards confirms that the welfare of animals is respected by both the agricultural community as well as by the consumers of our beef products," said Dan Probert, executive director of Country Natural.

Last year, Grandin had her name on a certification program for naturally raised meats producer Niman Ranch that combines an evaluation of both sustainable and humane treatment practices.

Dubbed "Dr. Temple Grandin Certified, Sustainable & Humane," the certification program is still in the development stage.

Grandin told **Sustainable Food News** in an email last week that she is "still working with them on guidelines." The label has yet to be released.

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