



25 Future Icons

BY ANDY HANACEK
editor-in-chief

In the October issue, *The National Provisioner* honored 25 past icons who made their mark on industry since 1991. This month, to wrap up the magazine’s coverage of its 125th Anniversary, the editorial team decided to take on a bigger challenge: Select 25 individuals we expect will change the industry over the next decade or two. As such, we present our 25 Future Icons.

In similar fashion to our Past Icons, Future Icons were nominated by industry peers, and final selections were determined by the editorial staff of *The National Provisioner*. If last month’s list of Past Icons didn’t spark any debate, we are certain this list of Future Icons will.

Again, we believe we have chosen an excellent list — who would be on yours? The future is now; let the debate begin:

PHIL BASS, CERTIFIED ANGUS BEEF



Certified Angus Beef’s own “Dr. Phil” already has developed a bit of a cult following among meat scientists, chefs and culinarians who work with beef. Bass’ collaboration with chefs (in-house and at the customer level) sets a stellar example for how the industry can work with end users to innovate new, useful cuts of beef and novel uses for those cuts.

MINDY BRASHEARS, TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY



Brashears’ dedication to research and contribution to education in the areas of food safety and food microbiology stand out, as well as her accomplishments in bringing much-needed scientific knowledge to the meat industry. Brashears has improved the critical thinking skills of students, domestic and foreign, and has stimulated discussion and implementation of new ideas to improve the food and livestock industries.

BETSY BOOREN, OFW LAW

Booren’s new role as senior policy adviser at OFW Law will allow her to remain front-and-center as a strong influence on the industry’s direction at the regulatory/legislative level. In her previous role with the North American Meat Institute, Booren set the tone for what’s to come, always stressing science as the foundation for policy and regulatory decisions — a belief she is expected to continue to champion at OFW Law.



CAMERON BRUETT, JBS USA

Bruett has been a vocal proponent of the work of the Global Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (GRSB) and possibly its most open book in terms of sharing innovative stories between processors, customers and stakeholders in that arena. He has been and should continue to be a champion of sustainability initiatives across beef, pork and chicken, given his position with JBS USA.



DOUG BUSH, BUSH BROTHERS



Bush is a fast-rising up-and-comer in the industry, growing more involved and more visible at industry-related events as time passes. Bush represents his family's fifth-generation processing company (Bush Brothers) on the North American Meat Institute's Board of Directors and served previously on the boards for NAMA and NAMP.

He's an approachable, vocal influence who peers believe is bound for great things in the industry.

ROBERT DELMORE, COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

Delmore oversaw the design of the Meat Processing Center at Cal Poly State University, and he currently is working on the new Global Food Innovation Center at Colorado State — in addition to teaching meat science, meat safety and meat processing. His expertise is wide-ranging and widely respected, and his nomination states, simply: "Delmore is a tremendous asset to the industry and academia — his many contributions are equaled by few and exceeded by none."



KAY JOHNSON SMITH, ANIMAL AGRICULTURE ALLIANCE



Johnson Smith was named president and CEO of the alliance in 2011 and is a leading advisor on farm animal-welfare issues. As a national spokesperson, she provides hundreds of presentations and interviews to media, government and industry stakeholders about the importance of animal agriculture, and stresses the need for a unified

voice to represent animal agriculture's interests. Johnson Smith also provides strategic guidance to managing activist campaigns.

STEVE LARSEN, NATIONAL PORK BOARD

Larsen has applied innovative leadership and technical expertise on critical issues, and his proficiency concerning issues affecting foreign and domestic food, agricultural technical trade barriers, market access, and food safety and quality is both extensive and unmatched. Larsen has established a reputation for his consummate ability to manage multifaceted projects, resources, issues and constraints through complex pre- and post-harvest pork safety, quality, and nutrition initiatives.



KERRI GEHRING, TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY



Gehring has developed a strong research program focused on food safety and nutritional composition of meat products, and has disseminated food-safety information across the U.S. by serving on multiple panels and programs. Gehring has conducted industry HACCP/food-safety training courses for more than 2,000 people and provides valuable assistance with HACCP implementation today. Her dedication to food safety has been recognized through numerous national and international honors and awards.

GRETA REMINGTON, FOSTER FARMS



Under Remington's direction, Foster Farms has developed and brought to market new and innovative products — specifically in the frozen cooked chicken product categories — helping move the company from regional leader to national contender. Not only has Foster Farms transformed its product-development pipeline and product offerings on her watch, but the company's product-innovation work may yet revolutionize the chicken products that consumers see across the country.

DOUG HANKES, THRUSHWOOD FARMS / AAMP

Hankes is part of the second generation of his family to run Thrushwood Farms Quality Meats of Galesburg, Ill. He's helped guide the company through numerous expansions as it has phased out custom meat processing in favor of its nationally distributed snack sticks and other cured meat products. He was elected president of AAMP in July, where his potential to impact the industry will certainly increase.



JANET RILEY, NORTH AMERICAN MEAT INSTITUTE

Riley already has built an iconic following, serving as primary spokesperson of the North American Meat Institute's consumer and industry outreach programs, appearing in numerous videos and interviews, and proudly championing her role as the "Queen of Wien" on social media and the Internet. Her passion and leadership in educating consumers will continue to be invaluable to industry as end users demand to know more about the meat products they're purchasing.



TOM HAYES, TYSON FOODS



Hayes brings veteran consumer-products experience to Tyson Foods, and is expected to help the company leverage its scale and develop brands to drive growth. Hayes was appointed Tyson Foods president in June 2016, and his ultra-versatile prior experience in various executive roles at several CPG companies make him an excellent

candidate to drive the success of the numerous legacy brands that Tyson Foods now owns.

ANGIE SIEMENS, CARGILL PROTEIN



Siemens leads Cargill Protein's food-safety efforts and is known throughout the protein industry for her efforts to continuously seek enhanced, fact-based and science-based solutions to improve food safety and reduce risk from foodborne illness. Siemens represented Cargill at a White House summit on antimicrobial resistance. Additionally, she served as chair of BIFSCo (Beef Industry Food Safety Council) and remains involved in the council's efforts.



JEFF SINDELAR, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



As the only meat extension specialist in Wisconsin, Sindelar covers a lot of ground in supporting about 375 state inspected processors and locker shops, as well as larger federally inspected companies — which he has done with exceptional energy, skill and enthusiasm. His signature accomplishment thus far has been the Wisconsin Master Meat Crafter Program, a first-of-its-kind, meat-processing certification program held at the University of Wisconsin Meat Science Laboratory.

JOHN STIKA, CERTIFIED ANGUS BEEF



Engaging and engaged throughout the industry, Stika's versatility, approachability and wide net of expertise make him an excellent candidate to move the beef industry forward. His focus on innovation, open communication and intentionality, with a thorough understanding of the many dynamics impacting all parties in the beef community, continues to create opportunities for growth for both Certified Angus Beef and the industry at large.

JAMES SNEE, HORMEL FOODS

After 27 years in various roles with Hormel Foods, Snee became the company's president and CEO on October 31. Under his leadership as president, the company's international segment delivered double-digit sales and earnings growth, and drove impressive growth of operations in China. Most recently as president and COO of Hormel Foods, Snee led companywide implementation of Hormel's cultural beliefs, which is expected to serve as a roadmap for future success.



SUZANNE STRASSBURGER, STRASSBURGER MEATS

It's not just the cowboy hat that Strassburger wears throughout Manhattan (New York) that makes her iconic. Her determination to push the industry forward, both at home and internationally, knows no bounds. Strassburger's involvement and visibility at higher levels in the industry has grown exponentially in recent years, and one of her own projects currently in progress — the Meat Museum — promises to thrust her further into icon status.



JOHN SPINK, MICHIGAN STATE



The threat of food fraud has grown significantly in recent years, with incidents receiving much more attention and scrutiny of late. Spink stands as a "canary in a coal mine" guiding processors toward safety from a danger many still do not seem to see — while food-fraud concerns may not yet seem to carry the same weight for processors as straight food safety issues do, Spink is prepared to help processors weather the worst.

KEN SULLIVAN, SMITHFIELD FOODS



Sullivan has spearheaded initiatives to catapult Smithfield Foods toward becoming a world-class CPG company. Through his hands-on leadership, Sullivan helped remove silos and create a single operating structure, allowing its family of brands to expand. Although he has been a key decision-maker for many years, in his new position Sullivan has further transformed Smithfield and created a company culture guided by responsibility, operational excellence and innovation.

BRUCE STEWART-BROWN, PERDUE FOODS

Stewart-Brown has captained Perdue Foods' precedent-setting approaches to antibiotic-free and animal welfare. Stewart-Brown has moved Perdue away from relying on antibiotics to raise poultry — which became a clarion call for the industry. Additionally, he has led development of Perdue's Next Generation Commitments to Animal Care, going beyond the basic needs of animal welfare to improve relationships with farmers, and to commit to transparency and a company culture of animal welfare.



KARI UNDERLY, RANGE INC.

Underly established Range Inc. to meet the growing need for meat knowledge, meat marketing expertise and basic cut knowledge. As the meat industry evolves, Underly's passion for educating the next generation of meat cutters and butchers stands out. Through Range, Underly offers corporate training and certification, marketing services and workshops — including a tremendously popular, award-winning program targeted to women in agriculture called "Women in the Meat Business."



KURT VOGEL, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-RIVER FALLS



Vogel, who was named Kraft/Oscar Mayer Faculty Scholar of Livestock Welfare and Behavior in 2013, already has tread a path toward icon status, teaching University of Wisconsin-River Falls students next-generation strategies on animal welfare. Vogel is a disciple and former student of Dr. Temple Grandin, but he has made his own way in the industry, revolutionizing it one project, one study and one student at a time.

CHRIS YOUNG, AAMP



Young was named executive director of AAMP one year ago after serving as the outreach specialist since 2013. He has worked in the meat industry for more than 20 years, and under his leadership, AAMP increased membership for the first time in several years and gone on a streak of collaboration with industry partners. One of Young's stated goals for AAMP is to develop a stronger presence in Washington, D.C. **NP**

DAREN WILLIAMS, NCBA

Williams heads the Beef Checkoff's Masters of Beef Advocacy (MBA) program, which is expected to celebrate 10,000 graduates in the coming year. Those MBA graduates engage consumers in conversations about beef through social media and in-person interactions. The program has also begun a series of engagement campaigns and added a high-level advocacy training program called MBA Top the Class — an intense two-day training seminar in Denver for five graduates.



Looking Back... *with Andy Hanacek*

Editor-in-chief Andy Hanacek discusses the Future Icons and shares his memories of his time on NP in his latest "From the Editor's Desk" videos, exclusively at ProvisionerOnline.com: <http://bit.ly/FEDNov16>

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