

Dakota Beef moves, enters co-packing partnership  
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by Bryan Salvage

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HOWARD, S.D. — Dakota Beef, the nation’s leading producer of premium certified organic beef, and North Dakota Natural Beef (N.D.N.B.), a growing supplier of natural Angus beef, have entered into a co-packing partnership that will merge each company’s harvest and fabrication operations.

Effective Feb. 8, Dakota Beef will begin to process its organic product in N.D.N.B.’s facilities.

Dakota Beef, which operates its own 150,000-acre organic Angus ranch in the high country of Eastern Oregon, is the largest vertically-integrated organic beef processor in the U.S. Their products, which are certified 100% organic by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, sell under the “Dakota Beef” brand to major retailers and foodservice distributors nationwide.

In 2005, N.D.N.B. was established as the direct result of a mandate from the North Dakota state legislature forming a Beef System Center of Excellence. North Dakota Natural Beef sells products under the “Dakota Farms” brand name.

As a result of this new partnership, Dakota Beef is leasing its Howard, S.D. plant to another beef operator. “We feel pleased that the new tenant seeks to employ much of the former workforce at the Howard facility,” said Daniel Feinberg, Dakota Beef chief executive officer. “A number of employees at the Howard facility will be offered relocation packages in North Dakota.”

Mr. Feinberg said the company has enjoyed the loyalty of the Howard community and did not arrive at this decision easily.

“Over the last several months, we have studied all aspects of a facility renovation and have determined that it would not be cost effective for us,” he said. “We need to meet increased demand for our products, and N.D.N.B. offers excess capacity in their modern, state-of-the-art facilities. We believe the new partnership will enhance Dakota Beef’s ability to supply gourmet organic beef of the highest quality.”