

Bryan Schaaf: And welcome back to another episode of Meat Speak powered by The Certified Angus Beef Brand, Bryan Schaaf, Chef Tony Biggs, and with us very popular meat scientist. The popularity is scale of meat scientists is one that doesn't really get discussed enough, but number one on our list, Diana Clark, how are you doing?

Diana Clark: Doing pretty good.

Bryan Schaaf: Chef, how are you feeling?

Chef Tony Biggs: I'm good. How are you both doing? You guys doing good?

Diana Clark: I'm doing good.

Chef Tony Biggs: What are we going to talk about today? We're going to talk about a complex situation?

Bryan Schaaf: I think we just need to go there. Where are we going? In the world of culinary, I look at you as the ring master of all things.

Chef Tony Biggs: What does that tell you?

Bryan Schaaf: It's a circus.

Chef Tony Biggs: Cirque de sirloins.

Bryan Schaaf: [crosstalk 00:00:54].

Chef Tony Biggs: Can you say Cirque de sirloin?

Diana Clark: I like that.

Chef Tony Biggs: Matt, have you been the Cirque du Soleil? Both of you, have you seen this?

Diana Clark: I've never been.

Chef Tony Biggs: So what if we did it? What if we did an event called Cirque de Sirloin? Would you like to talk about the sirloin today?

Diana Clark: I would love it.

Chef Tony Biggs: Everything is sirloin.

Diana Clark: The sirloin doesn't get enough love.

Chef Tony Biggs: It doesn't give enough love. Why don't you talk about it from a science stand point here. People listen to what you say and it is the gospel.

Diana Clark: Oh gosh, I don't think it's nowhere close to God's word but-

Chef Tony Biggs: I didn't say that, I didn't say it's the gospel.

Diana Clark: But I do. The sirloin, really, I don't understand why it's not on more menus. People just, they don't think it's a middle meat, but it is a middle meat. And it's gorgeous and you just got to treat it right. And if you treat it right, then that thing can shine.

Chef Tony Biggs: Do you remember when we would have a really high end culinary group at the center and then we would do all these baseball cuts and that is such a neat idea for restaurants and hotels and chefs because you can do a baseball sirloin, a baseball filet, a rib filet and a strip filet. You put those with your favorite bourbon. What is your favorite bourbon Bryan?

Bryan Schaaf: Free.

Chef Tony Biggs: Free bourbon. Yeah, that's exactly what I like. But hey, these are the creative ideas that you can do with these type of cuts, right?

Diana Clark: Oh yeah, and the sirloin is cost savings. I mean [inaudible 00:02:26].

Chef Tony Biggs: The cost saving is amazing, amen. We do what the center that you've done before is the sirloin chateau, so you know the chateau was originated from the center cut of the filet mignon and now we're doing a sirloin chateau at our center and for carving stations and it's amazing.

Bryan Schaaf: Let's talk a little bit about that. The sirloin is this piece, it performs really well. If you really tear into the meat science and you look at that public perception of the sirloin, I think people just... It's a big yawn really because it's seen as your bargain basement. It's going to be okay, it's your 9.99 with a big potato special, but really, man, if you tear into the science behind it, it's really been more of a problem of how it's always been cut, how it's been presented and probably a marketing issue.

Diana Clark: It's definitely, if you think about just from the cut standpoint, so for the longest time we were taking this big chunk when you still have even that cap on there too and doing, they call it face cuts sirloins or the classic seven bone steak, so you're going to have or no, that's a classic pin bone steak. I'm sorry, seven bone from the chuck, but that classic pin bone steak, you're going to have those giant face kept, but you have these muscle fibers that are running in all different directions and you have the big sciatic nerve that's running down the center of it. It just splits between the one thirds and the two thirds.

Diana Clark: So for the longest time we were taking that cut and just cutting these nice old steaks that pretty much your entire dinner plate, but now you're going with the grain and people are trying to cut it, getting good in experience of it, but really

they're just chewing the gristle because they didn't cut it appropriately. And now we realized if we do just a little bit more knife work, if we break that sirloin down a bit more, you peel off the cap, you save that culottes. That's a special piece that can be saved and you focus on that heart, that center cut sirloin, you split that and remove that sciatic nerve and man, you've just upped your game by a thousand.

Diana Clark: It's an incredible piece that a lot of, even retailers, they're jumping on the bandwagon because they realize that it's the right portion size, it looks beautiful, man, that's setting up on the plate. It looks beautiful. And if you still want maybe a bigger sirloin piece, you can cut that out of the two thirds portions and then have that nice filet looking sirloin out of the one thirds portion.

Bryan Schaaf: Excellent. Chef, you'd mentioned it already, sirloin chateau. Of course it's a sirloin version of the chateaubriand.

Chef Tony Biggs: Chateaubriand.

Bryan Schaaf: Yeah, but can you talk about that from a Chef perspective? Obviously it's coming from the sirloin. It's not coming from the Tenderloin, so it's going to be less tender, but there are some other things that you gain.

Chef Tony Biggs: Well, like Diana hit on, economically, you're doing very well. And chefs are always looking for that new idea for carving stations. So why are you using tender of the middle meats when you can go to a beautiful sirloin chateau, as Diana mentioned, you could take that sciatic nerve out and you've got some great cuts of beef. You cook those medium to medium rare and you serve that with a béarnaise sauce. And I love lobster because I'm from new England and boy, I'll tell you, you've got an economically beautiful plate and I tell you for chefs, you can take these for weddings, sear them off, roast them to medium, take them out at 125 and they are just absolutely mouthwatering gorgeous.

Diana Clark: They are incredible.

Bryan Schaaf: Lovely, if you want to see a diagram of what we're talking about, if you visit certifiedangusbeef.com/news, there are a couple of stories all about the sirloin up there with some diagrams that actually Diana had some input in, in terms of exactly where it pulls apart, where to cut it, where to do this thing. But when we talk about that, we've talked about the center cut portion pretty much exclusively, but there's two other cuts. We're going to talk about the culottes or the picanha in actually another episode coming up, but the mouse muscle is the other piece of them. And I bring that up because I know it sits near and dear to your heart.

Diana Clark: Yeah, it does. It's one of my favorites. So like we have a sales rack for those of you that aren't employed at Certified Angus Beef, and on that sales rack, I

usually put this cut and it's called the mouse but because it really doesn't have a great name, there's a story behind that but we could talk about that in another date. But it's called the mouse and so I usually label it mouse and put it on the sales rack for a dollar knowing that very few people are actually going to buy said mouse. So once it's there for a couple of weeks, it goes on sale and I usually store them in my freezer for 25 cents apiece and they are my favorite by far.

Diana Clark: And we actually have one group that we work with that cuts a lot of top sirloin center cuts for a chain restaurant, and so they've ended up with a ton of these mouse muscles. And what they've done, they've partnered with another restaurant and they put that mouse muscle as a six ounce portion on their plate for \$26 apiece and they call it steak frites and it is amazing. I just want to see that used more and more. The hard part is you can't just order the mouse. It would be a byproduct of cutting top sirloins, but if you work with the cut shop, I'm sure that you could try to figure something out if the volume is there, but it has some great potentials or at least a limited time offer on a menu.

Bryan Schaaf: We've talked a little bit about, there's a pretty huge learning curve to a chef or somebody without a meat cutting background to breaking down a chuck roll, but if you bring in a whole top sirloin, a whole top, but that's not the hardest thing to do to break down your yourself, right?

Diana Clark: No, definitely not. We have videos on it as well and it's going to take a few times, but really once you do it two or three times, you could get it. So that was probably one of the first cuts that I had to figure out here on my own. So one day I came in on a Saturday and I broke down four top sirloins and after that I felt pretty good about it. So four and you should get it.

Bryan Schaaf: There you go, that's only two cows.

Diana Clark: Yeah.

Chef Tony Biggs: That mouse reminds me of the oyster on a large bird-

Diana Clark: That's a really good point.

Chef Tony Biggs: Like a turkey or when you turn the turkey over and you have those two beautiful pieces of meat that are like indented into the bone and they are just melting your mouth, this is what the mouse remind me of.

Diana Clark: That's a really good point.

Bryan Schaaf: What do you do with the mouse? Obviously you see quite a few of them, and I only... So every one of these episodes is transcribes. This one's probably going to make the search engines go crazy. How do you cook a mouse?

Diana Clark: Pair it with cheese.

Chef Tony Biggs: You got to trap it first.

Bryan Schaaf: Peanut butter or cheese.

Diana Clark: I am a common person of grilling, salt pepper grill. That's all I use.

Chef Tony Biggs: Salt pepper grill that's it.

Bryan Schaaf: And it's tender enough?

Diana Clark: Oh yeah, it really is.

Chef Tony Biggs: Its beautiful.

Diana Clark: It's a great piece. A lot of fine muscle fibers running through there. It really is incredible.

Bryan Schaaf: That's interesting, about turning the page to a subject that we've discussed it at length but surprisingly, we didn't touch on this yet, dry aging. Have you dry aged a sirloin?

Diana Clark: Oh yeah.

Chef Tony Biggs: We have and it's amazing. Really amazing. It's amazing.

Diana Clark: And that's one thing to even hit on from an aging standpoint alone, for sirloin. Want to make sure that you go to a minimum of 28 days?

Bryan Schaaf: Now why? Why is that?

Diana Clark: It helps with the overall tenderness and we've noticed that sirloin can be a little bit of an outlier and it takes some time to break it down a little bit further, so we recommend 28 days. We've actually seen here in house, we ordered in product and it was at 21 days. We cut it and served it and the chefs were not happy with it. They said it was tough. Well, a week later, we needed more sirloin. I didn't tell them but I actually cut the sirloin out of the same box that came from before and this sirloin all of a sudden was incredible.

Chef Tony Biggs: Always tricking us, always tricking us. Watch her.

Diana Clark: I am very at first in first out, waste not one not kind of person.

Bryan Schaaf: Can you trust the meat scientists? Can you really trust the meat scientist?

Chef Tony Biggs: Wow, yeah.

Bryan Schaaf: It's interesting because it's... And again not to railroad the conversation back into aging and dry aging. Everything has a... We talk about different cuts have different degrees of done this, that are right for that cut. Different cuts also have different ages that are right for them, wet or dry.

Diana Clark: I completely agree, yeah.

Bryan Schaaf: 21 days for most, 28 for the sirloin. What are some of other outliers?

Diana Clark: So your chuck flap, you usually want to take that a little bit further to 28 days. Your clod heart at times too, then your tenderloin and your flat iron, you don't need much age on those. 14 days is usually what we'll say with those. And some of your longer cuts man, we've taken eye round six months before wet age. It's pretty fantastic.

Bryan Schaaf: Eye round six months at wet age? Its practically bresaola, right.

Chef Tony Biggs: It's amazing what we've done with the eye around. That's another conversation but it's just amazing.

Bryan Schaaf: This is a selfish question, so one of the strangest questions that I ever heard actually Chef Justin Brunson from Denver or from Old Major in Denver from Red Bear American Meats, great, great, great guy. He was in our Meat Lab and he asked Dr. Phil Bass, our former meat scientists, "Where does the pin bone steak come from?" You've touched on it already, and correct me if I'm wrong, the pin bone steak is when you think about growing up watching cartoons and it was that classic steak that cartoonists would draw. It's got the bone right in the middle of it. It's got all the different cuts around it. Yeah, why don't we see that anymore?

Diana Clark: So we've realized one, that product ships a lot better with bone not in it, so we try to remove the bone from the product and two, we get way more value out of the animal by breaking it down, especially moving that culottes, removing the mouse muscle, because then you're going to get the product that you want, that's easier for the end consumer to handle. Easier even for the chef to handle. They don't have to deal with all the trim and waste and everything. They get just what they want and need to cook.

Bryan Schaaf: Excellent, and to be clear, we are specifically talking about the top sirloin.

Chef Tony Biggs: Correct.

Bryan Schaaf: The bottom sirloin is a whole other piece of meat, right?

Diana Clark: Correct. Call it the pieces of meat [crosstalk 00:13:12].

Bryan Schaaf: Pieces of meat, including though your tri-tip.

Diana Clark: Yes.

Bryan Schaaf: Right, your sirloin flap.

Diana Clark: Uh huh[affirmative] and-

Bryan Schaaf: What am I forgetting.

Chef Tony Biggs: The ball tip.

Diana Clark: Yes.

Bryan Schaaf: Ball tip, yeah.

Chef Tony Biggs: One of my favorites.

Bryan Schaaf: Two out of three. Two out of three ain't bad, right? How about from a just a restaurant usage standpoint, you bring in a top but that's pretty much mostly usable stuff where you're going to have a little bit of fat trim and breaking things down but really it's a pretty usable piece, right?

Diana Clark: Yeah, if you're bringing it in you will have, to me that is one of your, I guess it's a probably a 70% yield on it. You're going to have some fat loss on there especially when you're start to trim things down. If you can order just in which you can, a center cut top sirloin, it's going to cost a little bit more money but then your yield is going to be much, much higher, much more valuable. They actually see a lot of retailers now are going to, they call them a two piece top sirloin, where they're buying both of them, but they're already separated. That mouse muscles already removed at the packing plant so you get just usable product. So there are options out there too to make it more advantageous to bring in.

Bryan Schaaf: Excellent, and while we're on the subject, you just danced around it a little bit the idea of cost-effectiveness. It's going to cost you a little more to bring it in already cut. We're not ones to necessarily talk about pricing on anything, but by and large, when you look at the influx of prime, USTA prime, Certified Angus Beef prime, it's out there, there's a lot of it. The sirloin is probably the best bargain for your [crosstalk 00:14:47]. If you get that in prime, correct?

Diana Clark: And it's fantastic. We always say that the sirloin is the gateway drug into prime. Once you start there, you're like, "Wow, this can be good, everything can be good." So it just gets you hooked on it and it is great. Prime age, 28 days, man, that's actually it was Christmas last year, that's what we served. Everyone was pleased.

Bryan Schaaf: Man, that's a lot of pressure.

Diana Clark: That was a step up. We went from clod heart to top sirloin.

Chef Tony Biggs: Wow, did you prepare it?

Diana Clark: I did.

Chef Tony Biggs: Really?

Diana Clark: I was a little nervous.

Chef Tony Biggs: How did you prepare it.

Diana Clark: I actually still eat it.

Chef Tony Biggs: [inaudible 00:15:22].

Diana Clark: I know, right? Gosh, I've been hanging in the culinary world too long.

Bryan Schaaf: It's like you're a Meatster. Everybody else is doing these grand standing red bros.

Chef Tony Biggs: You're like, "I'll do clod heart." Till it worked out.

Diana Clark: I'm just cheap. It's really that.

Bryan Schaaf: Know your economically.

Chef Tony Biggs: You're normally economical, it's right.

Bryan Schaaf: Well, I'll tell you what, we are actually going to because we have so much affection for the one part of the top sirloin that we have barely even scratched the surface. We're going dedicated it entire episode all around the coulotte. Also known as a picanha. The classic cut of the Brazilian Steakhouse. So we're going to put a wrap, we're going to put a bow on this episode. If you do have any questions, if you want to pick Diana's brain or Chef Tony's brain about ways to use that center cut sirloin because you're going to be able to get it at a better price generally than most of your middle meats. And there's a lot of things that you can do that maybe you just never went down that road because when you hear the term sirloin, it doesn't sound all that exciting.

Bryan Schaaf: We employ you to give it another try and stick around. This is then Meats Speak powered by The Certified Angus Beef Brand on Bryan Schaaf, Chef Tony Biggs, Diana Clark Meat the Scientists, and we will be back. I don't know how long it's going to be. I don't follow this podcasting thing and when they post, but if this is your first time tuning in, know that you can find us at certifiedangusbeef.com/podcast. Catch us on Google Play, Apple, Spotify, I don't know. You name anywhere that you can find podcasts. So Chef, Diana Clark.

Chef Tony Biggs: Take care.

Bryan Schaaf: Thanks for coming guys.

Chef Tony Biggs: Bye.