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**THREE FINALISTS TO FACE OFF IN FINAL ROUND OF COMPETITION IN QUEST FOR BEEF'S RAREST TITLE:
BEEF LOVING TEXANS' BEST BUTCHER IN TEXAS
*Texas Beef Council to Host Finals at Austin Food + Wine Festival***

AUSTIN, Texas – April 11, 2017 – After over a month of regional semifinal competitions throughout the state, [Texas Beef Council](#) introduces the three top butchers in the state of Texas, who will compete in a final test of skill for the title of Beef Loving Texans' [Best Butcher in Texas](#). Houston winner Michael Majkszak, owner of [Majkszak's Meat Market](#) in Conroe, Dallas winner Shawn Knowles, owner of [Old Town Market](#) in Lewisville, and San Antonio winner Bryan Butler, co-owner of [Salt & Time Butcher Shop](#) in Austin, will compete in a final round of competition, concluding with the announcement of the winner on April 29 at the Austin Food + Wine Festival.

A little bit of background on each finalist follows:

- **Michael Majkszak:** At the age of 16, Majkszak started his first grocery store job, where he developed a passion for butchery, which led him to open his own retail butcher shop in 2002.
- **Shawn Knowles:** Knowles began working at Old Town Market when his father opened the market in 1977, and eventually rose through the ranks to own the shop himself.
- **Bryan Butler:** Butler has a lifetime of experience as a butcher, and in 2010 he partnered with Ben Runkle to make Salt & Time Austin's first whole carcass Butcher Shop, Salumeria and Restaurant.

In addition to being heralded as the "rarest of them all," the Best Butcher in Texas will receive a \$5,000 grand prize, a knife set courtesy of Victorinox Swiss Army from their Fibrox Pro Cutlery line as well as inclusion in a one full-page co-branded ad in Texas Monthly. These butchers will also represent Beef Loving Texans as the Best Butcher Council, meaning they will educate consumers on what to look for in the market for their beef needs. Each finalist received \$2,500 for winning their respective semifinal round.

“Butchery is truly both a skill and an art form, and it’s been incredible to watch the state’s top talent showcase their craft during the semifinal competitions,” said Linda Bebee, vice president, domestic marketing for Texas Beef Council. “What’s been most inspiring is seeing the passion these professionals have for their work, and how proud they are to serve their communities by bringing food to their tables. Each of these butchers is so talented, and we’re excited for the final round to see who comes out on top as the Best Butcher in Texas!”

The challenge has brought some of the state’s most skilled butchers together to celebrate an art form that remains a key element in Texas’ cultural heritage. During the finals, competitors will go knife-to-knife by fabricating beef and merchandising it in ways that meet their customers’ needs. Finalists will be awarded top marks based on their technique, creativity, presentation/visual display and ability to interact with the consumers and answer questions. Culinary influencer/personality [Jess Pryles](#) will emcee the finals, while top industry professionals and culinary experts deliberate, culminating in the announcement of the Best Butcher in Texas.

During the past month, competitions were held in Houston, Dallas and San Antonio, to distinguish the best butchers from the many great ones in the state. Each competition yielded over 190 pounds of beef, which were donated to local organizations in each city; by the time the Best Butcher in Texas has been named, these donations will result in over 2,400 meals being served to those in need across Texas. In each regional semifinal city, the Texas Beef Council partnered with culinary schools to host the events, including The Art Institute of Houston, El Centro College in Dallas and St. Philip’s College in San Antonio, providing an educational opportunity for interested students.

For more information, visit BeefLovingTexans.com/best-butcher-in-texas/.

About Beef Loving Texans

Beef Loving Texans is Texas Beef Council’s consumer brand created to share unique recipes, stories, cooking and shopping tips and expert nutrition information. The Beef Loving Texans brand celebrates the pride and values deeply rooted in Texans through family, community and tradition. More information on the mission of Beef Loving Texans can be found at BeefLovingTexans.com.

About Texas Beef Council

The [Texas Beef Council](#) (TBC) conducts the \$1 per head national checkoff program for Texas beef producers and is also the contractor for the Beef Promotion Research Council of Texas (BPRCT), which administers the \$1 per head Texas state checkoff program. TBC’s mission is to increase beef demand in the state through

programs of beef promotion, research and education. TBC also helps fund national and international beef checkoff programs to increase marketing opportunities around the globe. The BPRCT's mission is to improve Texas producer profitability by strengthening and expanding beef demand. The TBC and the BPRCT are directed by a 20-member board of cattlemen and women representing the state's beef producers.

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