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Restaurant event highlights locally grown food

Houston Business Journal - by [Greg Barr](#) Senior Reporter

Participating eateries around the region are gearing up for the second-annual Go Texan Restaurant Roundup that highlights locally grown or raised products.

Texas Agriculture Commissioner Todd Staples and former [Houston Astros](#) star pitcher Nolan Ryan attended a Sept. 23 dinner at Spencer's for Steak and Chops in the lobby of the [Hilton Americas-Houston hotel](#) to kick off the statewide event.

Spencer's, one of 22 area restaurants included in the Go Texan event, is the first Houston restaurant to serve Nolan Ryan All-Natural Beef. Ryan's cattle are raised on grasslands and fed locally grown grains, with no antibiotics or hormones injected into the animals.

"More consumers like to know today where their food comes from and like to have those choices for their dining experience," Staples said in an interview after the event.

Ryan, also the president of the [Texas Rangers](#) baseball team, said the deal in which Spencer's is now selling his steaks was a "breakthrough" into a new marketing category for his company, which sells its beef products in grocery store chains and some other mid-scale restaurants around the state.

"It's the first white-tablecloth establishment to carry the beef," Ryan said. "Our focus had mainly been on the supermarket side."

Spencer's also carries naturally produced lamb and pork sourced from out-of-state companies. Joe Palmieri, general manager of Hilton Americas-Houston, said he is constantly reviewing the hotel's food offerings to bring the sources closer, such as using Texas-made bottled water products and locally grown vegetables in season, as well as seafood trucked to the hotel from Galveston.

California winery Paul Dole Vineyards served several of its products at the event, grown using carbon-neutral, sustainable organic methodology.

The restaurant roundup runs from Sept. 28 to Oct. 4. For a complete list of participating restaurants, go to www.gotexanrestaurantroundup.com. Some of the restaurants involved will make donations to local food banks using proceeds from the event.