



TEXAS CATTLE FEEDERS ASSOCIATION

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More Than 5,000 Cattle Industry Professionals Have Descended On San Antonio for the 2010 Cattle Industry Convention and NCBA Trade Show. The event, the largest of its kind in the cattle industry, includes the annual meetings of NCBA, the Cattlemen's Beef Board (CBB), American National CattleWomen, Cattle-Fax and the National Cattlemen's Foundation.

"This is an important time for the future of the beef industry," Gary Voogt, NCBA president told thousands of producers attending the Opening General Session yesterday. "Our business and our way of life are under attack.

"Our committees are addressing this and other problems this week as we work toward a unified plan to make the business profitable and sustainable again," he told attendees. "The buck stops with you. Get after it."

The NCBA Trade Show also opened its doors with more than 260 exhibitors showcasing their products and services.

The Convention wraps up tomorrow (Jan. 30) when the annual meetings of NCBA and the CBB are conducted. *TCFA Newsletter* will have more coverage of the Convention in next week's edition.

The Beef Checkoff Released Its Annual Report On Research, Education And Innovative (REI) Efforts during the Cattle Industry Annual Convention. The report offers examples of consumer confidence-building efforts integrated through key areas: Beef Quality Assurance (BQA); product enhancement, safety, human nutrition and market research; beef innovations and culinary services.

Here are a few highlights from the report:

- **Safety Research:** A research survey quantified the types of pathogen interventions being applied, methods used to validate, sampling procedures and protocols used and the use of industry Best Practices
- **Human Nutrition:** Following several years of checkoff research, a comprehensive resource on the epidemiologic associations of red meat and processed meat and cancer has been published under the title, "Red Meat and Processed Meat Consumption and Cancer...A Technical Summary of the Epidemiologic Evidence." This 94-page summary concludes "the available epidemiologic evidence is not supportive of a causal relationship between red meat and any of the cancers evaluated."
- **Market Research:** In 2009, the team completed 40 research projects to help direct nutrition, safety and product strategies to enhance and improve consumer perceptions of beef
- **Beef Innovations Group:** The Checkoff-funded new chuck roll cuts add an additional \$1.4 billion to the industry annually, according to Cattle-Fax
- **Culinary Services:** To ensure consumers have good experiences, this team conducted between 250 and 300 tests to determine the right cookery methods for chuck roll cuts
- **Instrument Grading:** This long-anticipated tool arrived in 2009, due in large part to the \$2.5 million in Checkoff dollars beef producers invested in bringing the technology to reality
- **BQA:** A published, Checkoff-funded dairy auction market report helped provide useful information for dairy producers on how to optimize the value of their market cows and bulls – 95% of which go directly to harvest

For more information about Checkoff-funded research projects, go to <http://www.MyBeefCheckoff.com> or <http://www.BeefResearch.org>.

New Authorizations: The Beef Checkoff's Promotion Operating Committee approved amendments to the following Fiscal Year 2010 authorization requests during the Cattle Industry Convention:

- \$89,000 for the National Beef Cook-Off;
- \$250,000 for South Korea promotions;
- \$136,825 for Foodservice partnerships;
- \$91,220 for New Products & Culinary Services;

- \$170,000 for Beef Quality Assurance programs;
- \$239,130 for Issues Management efforts.

In addition, a new authorization request for Fiscal Year 2010 was presented and approved for \$547,6501 for an early grilling season, middle meat, advertizing/retailer blowout. The allocated funds were made available with the release of unused dollars from Fiscal Year 2009 projects. The work will be completed during the 2010 Fiscal Year.

Oprah Winfrey, Michael Pollan And *Food, Inc.* How's that for a combination? All three came together on Oprah's show Jan. 27, which she devoted to promoting *Food, Inc.* – the documentary released last year that was produced by activists, including Pollan, who are intent on undermining modern agriculture practices. During her show, Oprah played several lengthy excerpts from *Food, Inc.* and told the audience that after she watched the documentary recently she decided: "We've got to spread the message" about how food is produced. However, Oprah made a point of telling her audience that her concerns about the healthiness of conventionally-produced food were only her opinions and that they needed to decide for themselves what to think about where their food comes from. As for Pollan, during his time on the show he trotted out his familiar themes: feeding grain to cattle is bad for the animals and produces unhealthy beef, modern agriculture practices have driven up the rates of disease such as diabetes, and people should eat a diet that is mostly plant-based. The show had no representation from the livestock industry.

President Obama Is Nominating Dr. Elisabeth Hagen As USDA Under Secretary for Food Safety. The Food Safety mission of USDA includes the FSIS.

Dr. Hagen is currently USDA's Chief Medical Officer, serving as an advisor to USDA mission areas on a wide range of human health issues. Prior to her current post, she was a senior executive at FSIS, where she helped develop and execute the agency's scientific and public health agendas. Before joining the federal government in 2006, Hagen taught and practiced medicine, most recently in Washington, D.C. She holds an M.D. from Harvard Medical School, and a B.S. from Saint Joseph's University. Dr. Hagen completed her specialty medical training at the University of Texas Southwestern and the University of Pennsylvania, and is board certified in infectious disease.

The Dietary Advisory Guidelines Committee Will Hold Its Fifth Meeting Online Feb. 9-10. The deadlines for written comments is 4 p.m. (CST) on Feb. 3.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans are the cornerstone of federal nutrition policy and nutrition education activities. To register for the meeting and for more information about the committee's activities, go to <http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/dietaryguidelines.htm>.

USDA Is Not Moving Ahead On A Meat Industry Request That It Approve Carcass Irradiation as a processing aid, agency officials told the executive committee of the North American Meat Processors Association (NAMPF), according to *Meatingplace.com*.

"This issue is not currently moving forward as FSIS believes the petitioner has several concerns that need to be addressed," a NAMP summary of the meeting stated. "The reason carcass irradiation is an issue is because the request is for it to be classified as a processing aid (no labeling requirement)." FSIS stated that, because of other recent events, processing aids in general are under greater scrutiny.

The NAMP group met with representatives of FSIS and AMS.

Carcass irradiation is often cited as viable tool in the fight against *E. coli* O157:H7. *Meatingplace.com* said keeping the word "irradiation" off labels or even changing its description to something like "pasteurization" have been suggested as ways to increase public acceptance.

USDA Has Announced The Allocation Of \$234.5 Million To 70 U.S. Trade Organizations to help promote American food and agricultural products overseas. The U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) is among 70 organizations receiving funds. USMEF will receive approximately \$15.7 million under the Market Access Program (MAP) and about \$1.7 million under the Foreign Market Development (FMD) Cooperator Program.

MAP uses funds from USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) to share the costs of overseas market development and promotional activities with U.S. nonprofit agricultural trade organizations, state regional trade groups, and cooperatives. Activities conducted with MAP funding include market research, consumer promotions for retail products, technical capacity building and seminars to educate overseas customers.

Under the FMD program, USDA's CCC establishes a partnership with nonprofit U.S. agricultural trade organizations. Funding priority is given to organizations that represent an entire industry or are nationwide in

membership and scope. Program activities focus on reducing market impediments, improving the processing capabilities of importers, modifying restrictive regulatory codes and standards in foreign markets and identifying new markets or uses for U.S. products.

The Beef Checkoff Is Kicking Off A New "I Heart Beef Campaign" in the month of February. The program is designed to help strengthen interest in beef middle meats by reminding consumers of their passion for great steaks like the T-bone and tenderloin. Not only that, but February is Heart Health Month. "A growing body of evidence shows that lean beef, trimmed of visible fat, can be a part of a low saturated fat diet that does not increase heart disease risk factors," says Dave Fugate, a Tennessee cattleman and chair of the Checkoff's Joint Public Relations Subcommittee. "The Checkoff's I Heart Beef campaign is strategically positioned during a time when consumers tend to focus on dieting, and we're trying to make them aware of the heart health benefits of lean beef."

A Checkoff-funded consumer survey used as a foundation for the campaign found:

- In this month of romance, beef is the preferred choice of Americans (62%) because nothing says love like a great steak dinner for Valentine's Day.
- Americans associate steak as a "best match" for love (44%), romance (42%) and passion (41%) – more so than other high-end proteins.
- When it's time to share that Valentine's Day meal, beef wins. A ribeye (35%) or T-bone steak (32%) are chosen as the best meal to share with a significant other.
- Americans most often associate beef with celebrations (50%), compared to chicken (18%), pork (17%) or fish (15%).
- When they are looking for gratitude or appreciation from their dinner partner, 62% Americans say they choose to prepare beef.
- Filet mignon is identified by 53% of Americans as the food most associated with candlelight romance and 50 percent of Americans think filet mignon is the best way to say "I love you."

The campaign includes numerous media outreach components and a recipe contest geared toward registered dietitians, encouraging them to share their love for lean beef.

The US Trade Representative Office (USTR) Says Taiwan Has Destroyed its bilateral agreement with the United States on beef imports. The USTR also said there is no basis for renegotiation of the issue, *Radio Taiwan International* reported.

As reported in last week's *TCFA Newsletter*, leaders of the U.S. House Ways and Means Committee recently sent a letter to USTR asking it to apply pressure on Taiwan to honor the terms of the October 2009 bilateral protocol, which expanded market access for U.S. beef. Earlier this month, Taiwan's backed away from the agreement and reinstated restrictions to block U.S. ground beef and beef offal.

USTR said it will ask Taiwan to do whatever it can to implement the October agreement. USTR also said it would consider all alternatives that could help achieve that objective

The Economic Slump Appears To Have Dampened Enthusiasm For Products Labeled "All Natural" Or "Organic." The market research firm Mintel says foods and beverages with all natural claim decreased from 15% of all new product launches in 2008 to 13% in 2009. The organic claim, showed a similar decline of 12% to 10% in the same timeframe. Mintel attributes those declines to the "higher price points" such products carry. However, ethical and environmental claims increased from 9% of all product launches in 2008 to 17% in 2009. Specifically in this category, the "environmentally friendly" packaging claim nearly tripled, growing from 3% of all products launched in 2008 to 9% in 2009. Overall, 2009 was a down year for the introduction of new food and drink products. New product launches fell by 30%.

The Masters Of Beef Advocacy (MBA) Continues To Build Momentum. To date, more than 1,700 students have enrolled in the online courses and more than 650 have graduated, entering the "real world" of everyday beef advocacy. With graduates in 39 states and the District of Columbia, the MBA program has quickly built a nationwide network of beef advocates engaged in sharing the story of modern beef production with consumers in their local communities and in the global online community through social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter.

TCFA encourages its members to participate in this free program. Prospective students can request an application by sending an e-mail to MBA@beef.org.

Please note: All links are still available at <http://www.tcfa.org> under This Week's Newsletter links.