

## **Beef Checkoff-Funded Hispanic Toolkit Impacts Customers At Meat Case**

(*CENTENNIAL, Colo.*) – The performance results are in for the Beef Checkoff Program’s newly developed beef checkoff-funded Hispanic Toolkit ... and they’re excelente (great)!

With 44.3 million people, the Hispanic population is the largest minority group in the United States and is growing faster than any other ethnic group. To best reach Hispanics and address their shopping needs, the beef checkoff developed a Hispanic Toolkit, designed to help supermarkets to better serve their growing Hispanic customer base by providing beef cuts and information needed to prepare authentic Latino dishes.

### **Methodology**

Before developing the toolkit contents, beef checkoff-funded focus groups and phone surveys were conducted in the spring of 2007 to determine what was important to Hispanic customers when shopping for beef. The findings were then used to develop the Hispanic Toolkit, which includes a bilingual Beef Cuts & Dishes Dictionary, bilingual peel-off recipe labels, bilingual signs and bilingual recipes. These resources were placed in a separate section in the meat case of cuts preferred by Hispanic shoppers.

“Part of our job as producers is to acknowledge changes in consumer attitudes and trends. By utilizing checkoff funds, we were able to embrace change and assist our retail community in marketing efforts to this segment of our population that purchases more beef than any other segment,” says Manuel Rodrigues, dairy producer from Tipton, Calif., Cattlemen’s Beef Board member and member of the Joint Retail Committee. “The purchasing power of Hispanics has a great impact on beef consumption and, in essence, on producer profitability and the future of our changing industry.”

A consumer pilot study was then conducted among 440 Hispanic shoppers at four test and three control Albertsons and Lucky stores in Southern California and Las Vegas to measure reaction to the toolkit resources. One way effectiveness of the toolkit was measured was by evaluating sales data of cuts preferred by Hispanic customers at test stores and comparing them to sales at control stores.

### **Research Results**

Results of this pilot study indicate that the Hispanic Toolkit was successful in boosting sales of beef cuts preferred by Hispanic customers at mainstream supermarkets, provided meat department staff with tools to better identify and merchandise these cuts, and improved communication between store personnel and customers. During this period, test stores achieved a significant sales increase of 28 percent for beef cuts preferred by Hispanics compared to the sales of the same cuts in control stores.

“The goal of the pilot study was to test the effectiveness of the materials we developed in assisting mainstream retailers in their marketing efforts toward Hispanic beef customers at the meat case,” continues Rodrigues. “We first worked to

gain insight into the barriers Hispanic consumers face when shopping at mainstream meat departments, then we tested our findings in-store.”

Consumer response to the Hispanic Toolkit was very positive. More than 90 percent of the study participants picked up the Beef Cuts & Dishes Dictionary that outlines the beef cuts preferred by Hispanics and the most common dishes prepared with them. Additionally, almost all of the respondents who picked up the dictionary rated it as excellent or very good. The bilingual recipe labels also performed very well with customers with 18 percent of test store respondents who noticed the bilingual recipe label saying they purchased a beef item because of the label.

The Hispanic Toolkit also helped to increase customer loyalty in test stores as evidenced by customers’ willingness to recommend the store to a friend. Of the respondents in test stores that had noticed the elements, 83 percent said they were very likely to or have already recommended the store to a friend. After the program was implemented, test store meat department ratings moved significantly higher as well.

The beef checkoff-funded Hispanic Toolkit was recently the recipient of the 2008 Silver Level Effie Award from the American Marketing Association in the Hispanic category, acknowledging the toolkit’s effectiveness in marketing to Hispanic consumers.

The checkoff continues to research and develop new ways to impact beef consumption and believe this toolkit is just one of many retail initiatives that will be a huge acierto (success). The toolkit will be rolled out to national and independent retail outlets later this summer.

For more information about the beef checkoff, visit [www.beefboard.org](http://www.beefboard.org). More information on the beef checkoff’s Hispanic Marketing Initiative and Hispanic recipes can be found on [www.BeefRetail.org](http://www.BeefRetail.org) and [www.LaCarneDeRes.com](http://www.LaCarneDeRes.com).

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