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The Beef Checkoff Launches Guide to On-Package Nutrition Labeling of Beef at Retail

Nutrition labeling helps retailers increase beef sales and customer loyalty

Denver, Colo. (September 18, 2008) - The Beef Checkoff Program announced the launch of the On-Pack Nutrition Labeling Implementation Guide to help retailers execute the program in their stores.

The On-Pack Nutrition Labeling Implementation Guide includes the following information, and will be available to retailers on September 19, 2008 at www.BeefRetail.org/uDocs/OPNLImplementationGuide.pdf.

- How to best communicate nutrition information on beef cuts.
- What information should be included.
- Resources for retailers to identify accurate beef nutrition information.
- Dual declaration labels for ground beef.
- Staff training.

“Research shows that consumers are overwhelmingly interested in consuming foods with health benefits and are making strides to improve the healthfulness of their diets,” said Randy Irion, director of channel marketing for the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association, which contracts to manage retail programs for the beef checkoff.

Consumers love the great taste of beef and are also interested in knowing more about beef’s nutrient profile. On-pack nutrition labeling of meat packages is an effective way retailers can meet this need and differentiate themselves from their competitors by providing valuable nutrition information about beef to their customers. In a 2006 beef checkoff-funded research study with Marsh Supermarkets, Inc., results indicated that on-pack nutrition labeling programs and supporting materials can build awareness, provide valuable nutrition education and increase customer loyalty.

- 34 percent of consumers said they would either be somewhat or much more likely to choose their store based on the availability of nutrition information, a 15 percentage point increase.
- 25 percent of consumers were aware of the on-pack nutrition labeling program.
- 33 percent of respondents were able to recall messaging that stated that beef is an excellent source of protein.
- 33 percent also recalled that cooked ground beef is lower in fat than uncooked from the ground beef dual declaration labels.

(more)

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- 25 percent were able to state that beef is a good source of iron, zinc and many B-vitamins.
- After seeing the point-of-sale messaging over the 16-week test period, 45 percent of consumers rated beef as “Very Healthy”, up nine percentage points from pre-launch numbers.

“To further our support of on-pack nutrition labeling of beef packages, we developed the implementation guide to encourage retailers to execute this program in their meat cases,” said Irion. “The on-pack nutrition labeling program has been proven to benefit retailers through increased sales, customer loyalty and differentiation from competitors. The guide will help retailers quickly implement this important nutrition information on-pack.”

The Beef Checkoff Program was established as part of the 1985 Farm Bill. The checkoff assesses \$1 per head on the sale of live domestic and imported cattle, in addition to a comparable assessment on imported beef and beef products. States retain up to 50 cents on the dollar and forward the other 50 cents per head to the Cattlemen's Beef Promotion and Research Board, which administers the national checkoff program, subject to USDA approval. The checkoff assessment became mandatory when the program was approved by 79 percent of producers in a 1988 national referendum vote. Checkoff revenues may be used for promotion, education and research programs to improve the marketing climate for beef.

Producer-directed and consumer-focused, the National Cattlemen's Beef Association is the trade association of America's cattle farmers and ranchers, and the marketing organization for the largest segment of the nation's food and fiber industry.

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