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BEEF INDUSTRY, GENERAL MILLS TOUT 'DINNER MADE EASY'

Partnership Delivers Retail Promotion To Drive Consumers to the Fresh Meat Case

DENVER (February 1, 2005) – On January 16, America's beef producers, through Beef Checkoff Program funding, partnered with General Mills on a nationwide freestanding insert in Sunday newspapers as part of the 'Dinner Made Easy' program. The coupon page featured beef as the main entrée, pairing beef steak with Green Giant® vegetables and Betty Crocker® instant potatoes for a quick and delicious meal.

The FSI appeared in Sunday papers and reached over 50 million households. The promotion offered consumers \$1 off savings on beef in addition to cents off coupons for General Mills' Green Giant vegetables and Betty Crocker potatoes.

The program was funded in part by America's Beef Producers and coordinated on behalf of the Cattlemen's Beef Board (CBB) and state beef councils by the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA). The NCBA serves as one of the Beef Board's contractors for checkoff-funded programs.

"We're pleased that General Mills sought us out as a partner for their first promotion of the year," said Randy Irion, director, retail marketing at NCBA. "During these long winter months, consumers are looking for hot, hearty meat-and-potatoes meals to serve their families. The 'Dinner Made Easy' program makes it just that – easy -- to sit down to a delicious, wholesome dinner."

The promotion is considered instrumental in driving shoppers to the fresh meat department and reinforcing beef as America's No. 1 protein. Across the country and throughout the year, strong retailer support for programs like these is integral to growing beef demand at retail.

"We're always looking for partners such as General Mills, who have a long-standing reputation as a company with strong retailer and consumer relationships," said Terry Wyatt, chair, retail committee and CBB member. "The 'Dinner Made Easy' promotion not only puts beef at the center of the plate but also gives us the opportunity to partner with such a great company as General Mills. We're very excited to promote beef this January through the 'Dinner Made Easy' program."

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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 NCBA 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.