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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Meat Industry Associations Release Results of In-Store Label Study**

#### **Industry Leaders Partner to Measure the Impact of On-Pack Labels at the Meat Case**

**Chicago, IL (August 10, 2005)** – On-pack recipe labels help educate consumers and drive increased sales at the meat case, according to a recent study funded by the National Pork Board, Yerecic Label, the Cattlemen's Beef Board, and the National Cattlemen's Beef Association. The study examined the effects that recipe labeling, with corresponding signage, has on retail meat products. During the study, an increase in performance was seen across labeled products, with incremental dollar sales gains ranging from 2.9% to 5.3% in the various meat and poultry categories.

The study was designed to gain further understanding of the value of on-pack labels for consumers by testing various existing labeling concepts across the entire fresh meat case. This study was conducted following the success of the Beef Made Easy Program (Beef Checkoff Program) and the Integrated Meat Case Program (National Pork Board), both coordinated with Yerecic Label.

"The controlled store test measured the sales results from the label design that consumers told us they wanted to see at point of sale. This included cooking directions, easy to follow recipes and appetizing photos of the finished recipe," said Randy Irion, director, retail marketing for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association. "We decided to put the labels and signage to the test with two geographically dispersed accounts and found that the labels generated incremental sales."

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An in-store intercept study was also conducted where the new labels and signage were test-marketed. Interviews were conducted with shoppers in the meat department of selected stores.

Store surveys with consumers found that the meat case remains a key destination for shoppers, with 86% of shoppers claiming to eat meat three or more times per week. Of all shoppers interviewed, 54% were purchasing meat during that particular trip, while 28% were purchasing meat for a specific recipe or meal. Of those who intended to purchase meat, 37% planned to make purchases of more than one kind of meat.

Additionally, over the course of the study awareness of signage rose to 35%, and label awareness increased to 54% among consumers. Nearly 20% of shoppers who noticed a label on a meat product referred to the recipe or cooking instructions located on the label when preparing the meal at home.

"Retailers should consider adopting a recipe label program in order to maximize their sales potential at the meat case," said Karen Boillot, director of retail marketing at the National Pork Board. "Consumers like these new labels and we know that sales also increased across the total category when on-pack labels were used. And not surprisingly, we learned that labels can actually influence the store where consumers shop because 25% of consumers told us they were more likely to shop at a retailer that used the labels."

"Participating in this research helps us ensure the labels meet consumers' needs," said Art Yerecic, president of Yerecic Label. "The study's findings confirmed our previous consumer focus group research indicating label information, such as nutrition facts, photos, cooking instructions and meal ideas aid in purchasing decisions."

Over the long term, labels can help increase category sales as consumers become more comfortable with purchasing meat and preparing it at home. And this translates into a "win" for both retailers and their customers.

For more information on this study and meat industry labeling programs, contact Randy Irion at 312-670-9403 or Karen Boillot at 515-223-2787.

### **Beef Checkoff Program**

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.

### **National Pork Board**

The National Pork Board has responsibility for Checkoff-funded research, promotion and consumer information projects and for communicating with pork producers and the public. Through a legislative national Pork Checkoff, pork producers invest \$0.40 for each \$100 value of hogs sold. Pork importers also invest a comparable amount. The Pork Checkoff funds national and state programs in advertising, consumer information, retail and foodservice marketing, export market promotion, production improvement, technology, swine health and pork safety. For information on Checkoff-funded programs, call the Pork Checkoff Service Center at 800-456-PORK or check the Internet at [www.porkboard.org](http://www.porkboard.org).