

Fads come, go not science

Dietary fads come and go. But good nutrition based on science has staying power.

Dietitians have known this for years and build their reputations by using sound science to help people with different needs establish healthy eating patterns incorporating all food groups. And they appreciate others who share these values.

"I've proudly worked with the beef industry for more than 15 years," says Dayle Hayes, MS, RD, president of Nutrition for the Future in Billings, Mont. "As a nutrition consultant, I look for industry partners with positive, research-based recommendations, and beef provides those. I especially appreciate the fact that the industry's educational materials focus on how beef fits into an overall healthful eating style and that they always include fitness suggestions, too."

Recognizing beef's important contributions to good nutrition, beef producers have supported nutrition research and education that is science-based and up-to-date for more than 80 years. Today they pay \$1-per-head on cattle sold to help support these and other industry-wide information, education and promotion efforts.

"With our \$1-per-head checkoff, we have established that beef com-

pares favorably with skinless chicken breasts in a heart-healthy diet," says Andrew Murphy, a cattleman from Great Bend, and chairman of the Kansas Beef Council. "In addition, research has shown the importance of iron and zinc, and therefore beef, in the diet of children for both immune issues and cognitive development. We are using our checkoff dollars to ensure that consumers know what an important, naturally nutrient-rich product beef is for their whole family."

Joining Forces

Beef producers and dietitians have long been professional allies in the fight against dietary fads. But their alliance has grown steadily over the past several years, according to Mary K. Young, M.S., R.D., executive director of nutrition for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association. The beef association acts as one of the contractors to the Cattlemen's Beef Board to implement programs funded through the \$1-per-head checkoff program.

"We're proud of our strong relationship with the American Dietetic Association (ADA)," says Young. "It's the largest group of nutrition professionals in the world and takes its role in educating the public about nutrition seriously. Not only do they

utilize a solid base of science from which to conduct their programs, but they actively translate that science in layman's terms so consumers can easily understand how it applies in their lives."

The feeling is mutual. In fact, over the past few years the Beef Checkoff Program and American Dietetic Association have been collaborating on a cookbook to showcase how lean beef plays a role in a healthy diet. The Healthy Beef Cookbook made its debut in October 2005 at the association's annual Food and Nutrition Conference and Expo.

The Healthy Beef Cookbook contains more than 130 delicious and nutrient-rich recipes, color photos, nutrition tips and culinary techniques that feature lean beef. Many of the recipes take 30 minutes or less to prepare.

A focus of the Cookbook is the 29 cuts of beef that meet the government's requirement for designation as 'lean.' Each of these cuts has, on average, just one more gram of saturated fat than a three-ounce serving of a skinless chicken breast.

Common Messages

According to Neva Cochran, chair of the American Dietetic Association Foundation in 2006, it was natural for the groups to work

together. "The American Dietetic Association Foundation was delighted to partner with America's beef producers to show people how healthy eating can taste great and be quick and easy," Cochran says. "This cookbook is a perfect example of how they can do that."

Cochran says she is encouraged by what she has seen from the beef industry over the past couple of decades. "As a registered dietician, I'm very excited about the new beef and the changes that we've seen over the past few years, because it provides nutrients that you may not get in other foods," she says. "So, by including beef in the diet, you can be assured of getting those nutrients and having a balanced, healthy diet."

Betsy Hornick, M.S., R.D., who along with Chef Richard Chamberlain co-authored The Healthy Beef Cookbook, says it makes sense for the dietitian community to work with the various parts of the food industry to get the information out. "Dietitians know that people love beef," she says. "But people are also confused about whether or not it fits in a healthy diet. The cookbook is a wonderful way to help consumers learn that there are 29 cuts of lean beef that can easily fit into a healthy diet."

CONSIDER THIS:

If you eat 100 more food calories a day than you burn, you'll gain about 1 pound in a month. That's about 10 pounds in a year. The bottom line is that to lose weight, it's important to reduce calories and increase physical activity.



According to the Kansas Beef Council's Chairman Andrew Murphy, educating the consumer is not just the job of one group. "I think what's really most important when we're talking about nutrition and beef is that we help people understand that the beef they love is good for them, too," he says. "This collaborative cookbook will really help do that."

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.

People love to eat and talk about what they're eating

It's no secret that people love food. When they're not eating it, they love to talk about it. And when they're not talking about it, there's a good chance they're trying to learn more about it.

"We sometimes call it "eatertainment," says Mary Bartz. "Even if people aren't cooking, they're at least reading about it or watching the Food Network."

Bartz should know. For nearly three decades she worked for General Mills, serving as the director of the Betty Crocker Kitchens for five years. Since November 2004 she has worked on behalf of beef producers to publicize beef recipes and provide nutrition and product information to food communicators.

According to Bartz, beef is one of the leading foods consumers think about.

Passion for Beef

In fact, research shows consumers have a passion for beef. One study found that more than four in

five people who had seen Beef. It's What's For Dinner advertising categorized beef as a flavorful, hearty food. And 79 percent said beef is a food they'd have a hard time giving up.

"Beef is certainly well-loved by consumers, and therefore of importance to food editors and communicators," says Bartz. "But these individuals are also looking for trends and emerging information about beef, as well as new and creative usage ideas. That puts pressure on us to come up with unique ways of presenting the product."

Bartz works on behalf of the Beef Checkoff Program, a producer-funded effort administered by beef producers who volunteer to serve on the Cattlemen's Beef Board, with oversight from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. She serves as the director of food communications for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, a Beef Board contractor.

"Through our brochures, recipes and photography, personal contact, deskside visits, seminars and other events we have earned the reputation as the best source of beef material," says Bartz. "Food editors have found they can trust us for not only providing accurate nutrition and product information, but for doing it in a way that will attract the interest of their readers."

Wide Ranging Needs

Andrew Murphy, a Kansas beef producer and chairman of the industry's Joint Public Relations Subcommittee, a volunteer group that recommends food communications efforts to fund with checkoff dollars, says the job is multi-faceted.

"Not only does our staff have to work with daily newspaper food editors who need information and material immediately, they need to be able to work with magazine editors, who need more in-depth information and deal with long lead times," Murphy says. "And they have to be able to do it all with an enormous amount of credibility and dependability."

Through the years, statistics prove they have. The checkoff program's Food Communications program directly contacts the food

reporters or editors of the top 250 newspapers (circulation 33.4 million) and the 70 top women's and service magazines (circulation 146.3 million) each year. In fiscal year 2005 (ended Sept. 30), contact with these publications resulted in 6,743 placements of beef information, with a combined circulation of 1.7 billion.

Much of that work goes unrecognized even by those who are helping fund the program. That's because most results of this "behind-the-scenes" work doesn't carry the "beef check logo" associated with the Beef Checkoff Program or recognize the information source. The logo is often seen on checkoff-funded consumer advertising and other retail and restaurant promotional efforts.

Nevertheless, Murphy says thanks to a mandatory \$1-per-head assessment that created the Beef Checkoff Program 20 years ago, efforts that provide information have become more visible.

"Our industry has worked hard to establish a relationship with editors over the past 80 years," Murphy says. "But it's really over the past 20 that we've been able to build a significant foundation for beef information, which is now showing up

everywhere."

Electronic Age

Today the information distributed in this food-communications program increasingly appears in electronic form. A weekly consumer E-newsletter called Beef So Simple is distributed to about 37,000 subscribers. Tens of thousands of consumers regularly visit the Beef. It's What's For Dinner web site (www.BeefItsWhatsForDinner.com). And media relationships are further strengthened through Beef Insights, a quarterly E-newsletter to that audience.

"We've worked hard to enhance our relationship with state councils," says Bartz. "We recognize them as full partners in this process."

According to Murphy, food communications is an exciting area of

the checkoff program. "Sometimes good news doesn't get the attention that other news will get. Our results speak for themselves, though. Consumers and editors need what we're providing, and that information and material is helping build demand for beef."

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Brown rice adds flavor

FARMER'S MARKET VEGETABLE, BEEF & BROWN RICE SALAD

Brown rice has a nutty flavor and is full of fiber and vitamins, making it a healthy foundation for this garden fresh salad.

Total preparation and cooking time: 50 minutes
Marinating time: 6 hours or overnight

1. Combine marinade ingredients in small bowl. Place beef steak and 1/4 cup marinade in food-safe plastic bag; turn steak to coat. Close bag securely and marinate in refrigerator 6 hours or as long as overnight. Reserve remaining marinade in refrigerator for dressing.
2. Remove steak from marinade;

discard marinade. Place steak on rack in broiler pan so surface of beef is 2 to 3 inches from heat. Broil 12 to 13 minutes for medium rare doneness, turning once. Remove; keep warm.

3. Heat oil in large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until hot. Add asparagus and squash; cook and stir 7 to 8 minutes or until tender. Toss with rice, tomatoes, beans, basil, salt and reserved marinade in large bowl.

4. Carve steak into thin slices. Serve over rice salad.

Makes 4 servings.

Cook's Tip: To grill, place steak on grid over medium, ash-covered coals. Grill, uncovered, 8 to 9 minutes for medium rare doneness, turning occasionally.

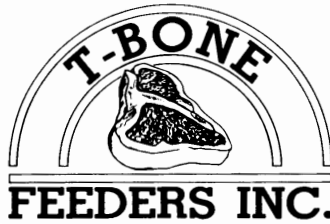
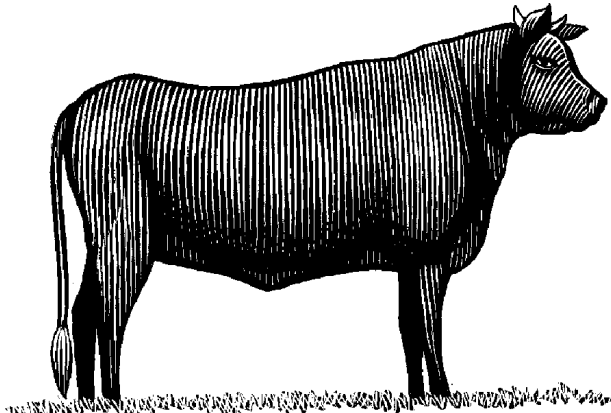
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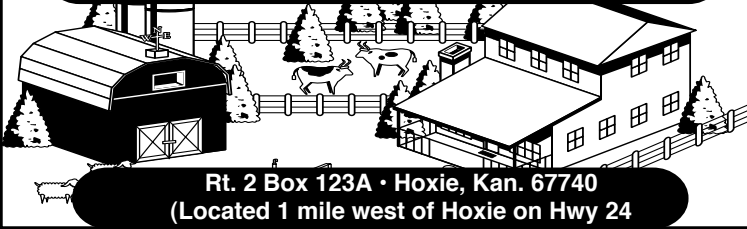
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