



State & National

# Partnership

The Federation of State Beef Councils

YEAR IN REVIEW  
2014



2014 Federation members to the Beef Promotion Operating Committee are: Top row, from left: Irv Petsch, Wyoming; Steve Hanson, Nebraska; Austin Brown III, Texas; Jerry Effertz, North Dakota; and Cevin Jones, Idaho, Federation chair and BPOC vice chair. Bottom row, from left: Scott McGregor, Iowa; Dawn Caldwell, Nebraska; Jennifer Houston, Tennessee, Federation vice chair; Terri Carstensen, Iowa; and Clay Burtrum, Oklahoma.

# 2014 Federation Division Board of Directors



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Caldwell, Dawn	Nebraska Beef Council Revenue Seat	O'Brien, Kyra	Kansas Beef Council
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Coleman, David	Virginia Beef Industry Council	Para, Liz	Washington State Beef Commission
Cook, Dan	Iowa Beef Industry Council	Payne, Glenn	Oklahoma Beef Council
Crutcher, Chuck	Kentucky Beef Council	Pazour, Karla	South Dakota Beef Industry Council
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Downey, Barb	Kansas Beef Council	Ridder, John	Missouri Beef Industry Council
Effertz, Jerry S.	North Dakota Beef Commission	Rings, David	Kentucky Beef Council
Evans, Morgan	Idaho Beef Council	Runyan, Larry	Missouri Beef Industry Council
Fahsholtz, Wayne	Wyoming Beef Council	Schrunk, Richard	Nebraska Beef Council
Farr, R D	Oklahoma Beef Council	Schulthess, Wallace	Utah Beef Council
Ferguson, Jon C.	Kansas Beef Council	Setzler, Jr., Carl B.	South Carolina Beef Council
Fleming, Tod	Region III (Wisconsin)	Sexten, Bill	Ohio Beef Council
Galimba, Michelle	Hawaii Beef Industry Council	Shelton, Dan	Texas Beef Council
Gray, Rodney	Nebraska Beef Council	Sherron, Dick	Texas Beef Council Revenue Seat
Hanson, Dean	West Virginia Beef Industry Council	Steinbeisser, Jim	Montana Beef Council
Hanson, Steve	Region VII (Nebraska)	Swanz, Linda	Montana Beef Council
Harms, Mark	Kansas Beef Council Revenue Seat	Swenson, Steve	Texas Beef Council
Harward, Marcus J.	North Carolina Beef Council	Taylor, Glenn	New York Beef Industry Council
Hauck, Dana R.	Kansas Beef Council	Thomas, Sally	Missouri Beef Industry Council
Head, Susan	Illinois Beef Association - Beef Council	Tokach, Kathy F.	North Dakota Beef Commission
Hinman, Judy	Idaho Beef Council	Viebrock, Sid	Region V (Washington)
Hinz, Norman	Arizona Beef Council	Walth, Becky	South Dakota Beef Industry Council
Horstman, Joe	Indiana Beef Council	Wehrbein, Buck	Nebraska Beef Council
Inglee, Todd	Colorado Beef Council	Weltmer, Phillip	Kansas Beef Council
Jefcoat, Larry R	Mississippi Beef Council	Wiese, Helen	Iowa Beef Industry Council
Jones, Jerry	Montana Beef Council	Wiley, Garry	Region I (Michigan)
Jones, Larry	Kansas Beef Council	Wright, Thomas R.	Wyoming Beef Council
Jones, Scott	South Dakota Beef Industry Council	Wynn, Weldon	Arkansas Beef Council
		York, Keith	Wisconsin Beef Council



# STATE OF THE FEDERATION

## State Councils Take Advantage of Collaboration Opportunities

Several events coordinated by the Federation of State Beef Councils over the past year have allowed state beef councils to maximize their collaboration not only with national programs, but with other state beef councils as well.

The *Partnerships in Action* conference at the start of each fiscal year provides an opportunity for state council managers to come together and assure that all checkoff efforts are operating as a team. More than 80 state beef council staff representatives attended the 2013 event, held at the NCBA offices in Centennial, Colo., Oct. 8-10. The conference allowed states to not only become better acquainted with national FY2014 checkoff programs, but gave the council managers and staff an opportunity to weigh in on the best ways the programs could be rolled out or extended within states.

An *Orientation* for new state beef council directors is held in the Spring to bring volunteer leaders at the

state level up to speed on both the process for checkoff program development and the programs being conducted at the national level. During the 2014 orientation at the NCBA offices March 17-18, volunteers from 22 states got first-hand information on the structure, coordination and execution of the Beef Checkoff Program.

Finally, a *Partners in Planning* conference was instituted in 2014 to give state beef council staff members and executives an early start on the next fiscal year's checkoff planning. At this year's event in the NCBA offices June 2-3, about 40 staffers had a chance to find out more about consumer trends and attitudes and national strategies to address them, and provide input into program development for efforts in Fiscal Year 2015. As with the *Partnerships in Action* conference, *Partners in Planning* provided a preview of how state programs might benefit from, supplement and extend the national plan. 🍖



Dear Fellow Beef Producers,

In business we always want to know what's on the bottom line. For the Beef Checkoff Program, the bottom line represents whether or not the return we get as cattle producers exceeds the cost, which is \$1 for every animal we sell.

On that measurement alone you can be proud of your Beef Checkoff Program. Recent independent research shows a return of \$11.20 for every \$1 we put into the national program. That demonstrates the efforts cattle producers are funding through the promotion, information and research programs are really worth it.

Even more impressive, however, is how we got there. These programs weren't ones we merely "purchased" with our checkoff dollars. The process for determining what programs should be funded, and at what amounts, is in the hands of producers themselves. So not only is the return on investment significant, the successful investments themselves were ones made by producers sitting on checkoff-directing committees.

For most of us, that's not more important than the bottom line. But when you put them together, it's very impressive that the process we operate under - which includes so much producer input - is tied to a result that is so substantial. Had we only funded the effort, and not been so integrally involved, it wouldn't have been nearly as exciting. I'm very proud of the producers who have voluntarily given their time to make the decisions that have led to the program's success.

Our new joint committee structure, which is more closely tied to the industry's Long Range Plan, is giving producers even greater focus and input. State beef councils, too, are becoming even better planners, leaders and managers of state-directed checkoff funds. With the increasing sophistication in our process, I hope to see even better returns in the future. Let's keep up the good work.

Yours truly,



Cevin Jones

Chairman, Federation of State Beef Councils



### Federation Executive Committee:

Chair	Cevin Jones (Idaho)
Vice Chair	Jennifer Houston (Tenn.)
Region I	Garry Wiley (Mich.)
Region II	Donna Jo Curtis (Ala.)
Region III	Tod Fleming (Wis.)
Region IV	Clay Burtum (Okla.)
Region V	Sid Viebrock (Wash.)
Region VI	Linda Brake (Ariz.)
Region VII	Steve Hanson (Neb.)
Veal Rep.	Jurian Bartelse (N.Y.)
Rev. Seat	Mark Harms (Kansas Beef Council)
Rev. Seat	Dawn Caldwell (Neb. Beef Council)
Rev. Seat	Dick Sherron (Texas Beef Council)
Non-Voting	Heather Buckmaster (Chair, Fed. Advisory Council)

# STATE OF THE FEDERATION

## Federation Initiative Fund Takes State Efforts to New Levels

A dozen states with key consumer populations are taking their efforts to new levels in 2014, thanks in part to the Federation Initiative Fund. The fund allocated more than \$128,000 in fiscal year 2014 to 15 projects that have helped, or will help, extend efforts to reach the industry's target audiences in meaningful ways.

"Our state beef councils have a unique capacity for personally reaching out to thought leaders. This can be more difficult when conducted at the national level," said Cevin Jones, Federation Chair. "I think it's this 'boots-on-the-ground' concept that makes

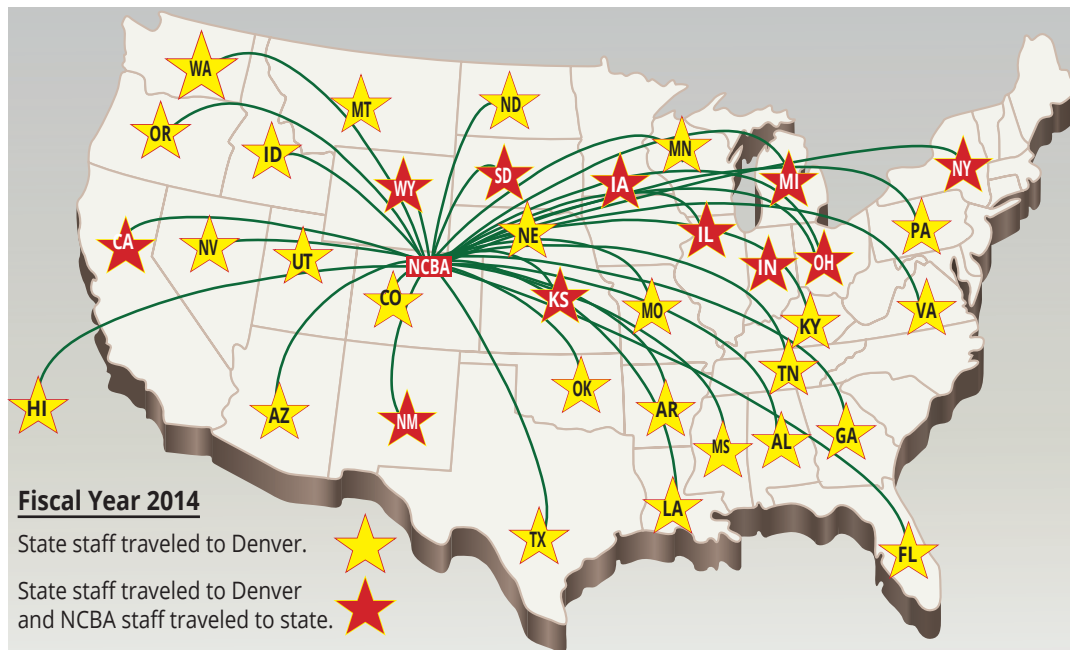
the Federation so strong, and what makes the Beef Checkoff so effective and beneficial to the country's cattle industry."

Because of its ability to personally touch key audiences that communicate with or market to consumers, a noticeable aspect of many state programs is bringing these individuals to the message, rather than sending the message to them. Conducting tours and camps for media, chefs, foodservice operators, retailers and others who share beef's message with consumers has been a common method of utilizing the funds.

Federation Initiative Fund • Round 1 (Approved at 2014 Annual Meeting)		
California Beef Council	BEEFlexible Mobile App Updates	\$4,988
Georgia Beef Board	Peachtree Road Race	\$10,500
Illinois Beef Association	Chicago Area Runners Association	\$4,500
New York Beef Council	Farmland Campus Tours	\$12,000
Ohio Beef Council	Team Cuisine Cooks Camp	\$1,500
Pennsylvania Beef Council	May Beef Month Blogger Tour	\$5,000
Virginia Beef Industry Council	Beef Camp	\$6,000
Wisconsin Beef Council	Farm to Fork Tour	\$5,875
Federation Initiative Fund • Round 2 (Approved at 2014 Summer Conference)		
Arizona Beef Council	Gate to Plate Tour Series	\$6,100
Florida Beef Council	Farm to Fork Tours	\$32,000
Florida Beef Council	ProStart Education Initiative	\$7,500
Hawaii Beef Industry Council	Millennial Blogger Ranch Tour	\$5,000
Minnesota Beef Council	Team BEEF Program	\$7,250
New York Beef Council	Social Media Marketing Outreach	\$15,000
Pennsylvania Beef Council	Millennial to Millennial Recruitment Program	\$5,000
<b>Total approved in FY2014: \$128,213</b>		

In addition, state beef councils have used the funds to reach active millennials directly, or chosen to use up-to-date technology to assure that decision-makers are getting the beef message. For instance, runners have been targeted in two projects, and an App for hand-held devices has been developed for use by the foodservice industry.

The Federation Executive Committee meets twice each year to review applications for Federation Initiative Funds from state beef councils, and select ones it believes will have a chance to reach the most consumers. In 2014, eight projects were approved at the annual meeting in Nashville in February, while seven projects were approved in Denver at the 2014 Summer Conference. 🐾



The Federation Vision is "to build beef demand by inspiring, unifying and supporting an effective state/national checkoff partnership."

Deliverable outcomes from this Vision are the multiple state beef council planning sessions conducted locally, and the collaboration meetings held nationally for state beef council staff and directors.

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## Digital Marketing Campaign Builds on Popular Tagline

Every afternoon in homes across the country, the same refrain can be heard: “Hey! What’s for dinner?” And in the minds of the many consumers hearing that question, a dominant answer has been planted: Beef. It’s what’s for dinner.

Not just planted, in fact. Watered, nourished and cared for over the past two decades, the phrase – created and developed by the Beef Checkoff Program – is an example of highly successful promotion that is the envy of most major companies.

Can its true benefit to producers be quantified? And maybe more important, is it still relevant in this digital age?

“It’s invaluable,” according to Jim Boudreau, who was account director in charge of the Beef. It’s What’s For Dinner effort for the campaign-creating Leo Burnett agency from 1998-2002. “In the food category, it’s one of the most successful taglines ever.”

It wasn’t just an advertising campaign, says Mary Adolf, who was vice president of promotion at the National Live Stock

and Meat Board’s Beef Industry Council at the time. It was integrated across just about every facet of the industry’s marketing program. “That really helped propel it forward very quickly,” Adolf says.

The Beef. It’s What’s For Dinner campaign focused directly on the beef product. The campaign hit the streets in May of 1992 with a 17-month, \$42 million campaign that covered a broad range of marketing elements.

“It clicked almost immediately,” says Adolf. “The whole industry got behind it, and saw its potential. We worked hard to find a tagline that would endure and could be owned by the beef industry – something that could resonate with consumers and communicate what we were trying to convey.”

### *Epic Staying Power*

Research shows that almost every year, more than eight of ten consumers have at some point seen or heard the tagline. About half of consumers can recite the beef industry tagline unaided – despite the fact that television advertising hasn’t been conducted for more than a decade.

“Most companies would love to have that kind of success,” says Adolf, who is now executive director of the International Pizza Hut Franchise Holders Association. “The Beef. It’s What’s For Dinner theme has stood the test of time. That’s a rare thing – to find a slogan that can do that. It’s almost unheard of today.”

Jennifer Houston, a beef producer from Sweetwater, Tenn., and vice chair of the Federation of State Beef Councils, agrees. “There are not too many brands that have had this kind of sticking power – and relevance,” says Houston, who has served on numerous checkoff committees since the 1980s. “At the time the first Beef. It’s What’s For Dinner campaign got started, I don’t think anybody thought it (the beef tagline) would have lasted as long as it has. We were so proud of what it became.”



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“Beef. It’s What’s for Dinner is worked into everything we do,” according to Martin Roth, executive director of marketing, advertising and new media for the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association, a beef checkoff contractor that manages the campaign for The Beef Checkoff Program. “It’s not just a tagline – it’s the brand. It’s the authority for all things beef.”

Roth says the credibility of the beef industry’s message has been enhanced significantly because of the beef industry’s efforts to develop an identity over the past two decades. “It’s established in the consumer mindset from all of the years of producer investment (through the checkoff) in it,” he says. “Consumers and others look to Beef. It’s What’s For Dinner and have confidence in it. It’s who we are. And it’s really paying off for farmers and ranchers.”

## Digital Communications

Houston says because of the investment producers made through their Beef Checkoff Program at the beginning of the first campaign, a foundation has been established. “We don’t always have to come up with something new,” she says. “We already have something that we know works.”

She says all of those putting checkoff dollars to work can utilize the tagline as a “springboard for what they want to get across” – including state beef councils, which leverage the message for numerous efforts that reach consumers.

According to Houston the efforts only work, though, if the right message reaches the intended target. Today the method of conveying the message has changed significantly.

The 1992 campaign included an initial \$20.5 million advertising budget, utilizing mostly television, magazine and radio. Today the strategy is to reach millennials through a targeted digital approach that shows up on their laptops, tablets, hand-held mobile devices and computers with information they need, when they need it.

“Digital is the lifeblood of today’s millennial,” according to Roth. “It’s the first thing they look at in the morning, and it’s the last thing they look at before they go to bed. A screen is always in front of them.”

Fortunately, says Roth, the Beef. It’s What’s For Dinner theme is just as effective with today’s consumer as it was

when it was introduced in 1992. “Millennials have the same concerns as other generations have had – marriage, kids, finding and preparing meals that the whole family will enjoy,” he says. “But what has changed is the way they get their information. Digital is the way to reach this audience.”

## Right Audience, Right Time

Roth says the payoff for the beef industry comes when a campaign moves people to purchase more beef more often. The Beef. It’s What’s For Dinner digital marketing campaign, which is managed by NCBA under contract to the Beef Checkoff Program, is key to accomplishing that goal for today’s generation.

“The ‘Beef. It’s What’s For Dinner digital campaign is the solution,” he says. “It targets the right people at the right time.” Unlike mass media, which reaches



Four of the digital advertisements from the 2014 campaign, which included a general ad, and one each focusing on nutrition, ease of use and taste.



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some people who have no interest in the product, Roth describes digital media as an “under-the-radar” approach that is “a different delivery system that is laser focused on the person needing beef information, or who would benefit from specific beef information. While it’s one-on-one communication through a consumer’s computer, it’s also across millions of people.”

The campaign aims to direct consumers to its flagship website – BeefItsWhatsForDinner.com. The site contains recipes, tips, nutrition, safety and other information consumers want and need. Various digital elements drive consumers to that site, including:

- **Banner Ads** on sites like AllRecipes.com and MensFitness.com, which inspire consumers to think about their dinner tonight with beef photos and recipes and bits of information. The ads and sites are targeted toward those consumers who have health and recipes on their minds;
- **Search Advertising** on engines such as Bing and Google, for people proactively searching for information on recipes and food information, but who may not have beef on their minds;
- **A Beef. It’s What’s For Dinner Facebook page**, with more than 830,000 fans who receive recipe posts with photos on a regular basis, and who are encouraged to visit the flagship website;
- **Collaboration with other established recipe and nutrition-related websites**, such as Martha Stewart.com, which will imbed beef recipes and tips directly on their sites;
- **Videos** that run before online television shows, using both recipe and non-recipe approaches;
- **Other “cutting edge” elements in digital marketing** that allow the industry to target millennial consumers who might be in the market to purchase beef.

All of these types of information streams are important, says Roth. “There are thousands and thousands of products out there, and they’re all on the internet,” says Roth. “But they

## A Rousing Start

The Beef. It’s What’s For Dinner digital marketing campaign generated significant results for the beef community in 2014. After just over four months in the marketplace, more than 1.7 million consumers were reached through the campaign’s website, and the “no-recipe recipe” videos were viewed more than 5 million times on YouTube and other video online channels. Furthermore, associated social media sites hosted a total of more than 1 million engagements, such as likes, comments, shares, re-tweets and click-thrus to checkoff resources, such as recipes.

“We continue to engage consumers during their moments of meal planning, inspiration and decision-making, and results show we’re having an impact and that every interaction matters,” says Terri Carstensen, chair of the checkoff’s Domestic Consumer Preference Committee and a beef producer from Odebolt, Iowa. “Digital/social media is such a great tool because it is available 24/7.”

State beef councils in Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Texas, Utah, Kentucky, Mississippi and Minnesota are using digital platforms from the national media buys. These states used digital media, such as Facebook and paid Google search advertising, to share positive beef messages with millennials.

Research shows that 97 percent of consumers have positive opinions about beef after visiting the Beef. It’s What’s For Dinner website. 🍖

remain hidden on the internet unless they’re promoted. We need to be targeting the right people, and targeting them when they’re in the right frame of mind.”

According to Roth, using a digital approach to marketing is very cost effective and efficient, since its aim is to focus on those who are in a position to purchase the product, not those who aren’t. “Digital provides a new, more surgical approach to the industry’s opportunities,” he says.

## A Great Run

Though they couldn’t have predicted how it would eventually be used, beef producers who sent the Beef. It’s What’s For Dinner theme on its mission can take satisfaction today in what it has created. “We didn’t have any inkling that it would become what it has,” says Houston.

And the value to beef farmers and ranchers? No question, says Houston. “It’s been priceless. It has really built tons of brand equity.” 🍖

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## States Take the Beef Message on Tour

State beef councils have often been taking their beef message to the people by doing just the opposite – bringing the people to the message. Farm to fork tours, where influential professionals who regularly counsel consumers on what should be on their plates, are showing that face-to-face encounters just very well could be the most effective way to change consumer attitudes about how the beef industry conducts its business.

From coast to coast, border to border, beef producers have been showing off modern beef production methods that leave tour participants amazed – in a very good way. And research shows the attitude shifts are significant.

“I believe if more people knew how farmers raise cattle, people who don’t eat red meat may start eating it,” said one participant of a Minnesota Beef Council tour, which was partially funded by a Federation Initiative Fund grant. The culinary students who were part of the tour were treated to not only a visual tour of the Lawrence Farm of Princeton, Minn., but a question-and-answer session with a meat scientist from the Agricultural Utilization Research Institute.

“Coming on this tour has opened my eyes to realizing how the farms are clean and how happy the cattle are,” said a participant in a pasture-to-plate tour for chefs, culinary instructors and foodservice professionals conducted by the Kansas Beef Council. “The farmers love their jobs and love what they do.”



Oklahoma rancher Mike Armitage visits with South Korean journalists on a tour about production practices in the state.

A blogger attending a tour of the Masonic Village Farm in Elizabethtown, Penn., found her participation useful in her day-to-day efforts. “I took away more understanding of the farming end of the process, adding depth to my normal consumer outlook,” she said. Among the industry segments she experienced: a pasture operation, feedlot and a retail farm market — as well as the Beef Quality Assurance and environmental stewardship efforts along the way.

In almost all cases, pre- and post-tour surveys were conducted to determine just how well the messages are getting through. Before an Explore Beef tour in Florida, only 43 percent of tour participants would give cattle farmers and ranchers an “A” grade. After the tour? A full 87 percent said they would give farmers and ranchers an “A” for their efforts in raising beef.

“Our Explore Beef Farm to Fork Tours were more successful than we could have imagined,” according to Ashley Hughes, Florida Beef Council director of beef marketing and promotion. “The participants truly valued the transparency of the tour and the tour hosts, and the comprehensive coverage that was provided all the way from the pasture to harvest.” The FBC tours, too, were partially supported by the Federation Initiative Fund.

Fund grants also helped sponsor tours in Arizona, where Tiffany Hayes, Arizona Beef Council director of consumer education and producer communications, was enthusiastic about results. “Our tours were a resounding success,” she said. “It gave influential professionals the opportunity to see how cattle are raised, handled and harvested, and provided them a first-hand experience they can share with others.”



Participants of the Pennsylvania blogger tour.

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## An Evolution of Lean Beef: Building on a Success Story

Responding to its market, the beef industry began making important changes in both perceived and actual nutritional properties of its products nearly 40 years ago. Those changes and the resulting impact they have had in marketing beef are more significant than most producers realize.

The industry's first wake-up call came in 1977 when a U.S. Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs released the Dietary Goals for the American People. Among other things, that document recommended Americans decrease consumption of meat in favor of poultry and fish.

"All of a sudden, red meat became demonized," according to Jeff Savell, Ph.D., university distinguished professor at Texas A&M University, who has been involved in beef industry research since the late 1970s. "We found this attitude was sometimes based on ancient data."

Savell and colleagues, in fact, found the biggest impediment to good dietary recommendations at the time was faulty product information. For instance, Savell says that up until 1986, data for the beef Porterhouse Steak showed the cut had more than 42 percent fat – and this information was based on just a few heifers from the 1950s.

"It was a horrible lag in data," Savell says. "We had outdated information for decades. Furthermore, we needed to define the concept of lean beef." Compounding that was the fact the industry was actually marketing beef with too much fat – "dinosaur cuts, as we look at it today," he says.



The results of the industry's "war on fat" were impressive by any standard. Since the late 1970s the industry has demonstrated a 44 percent reduction in available fat (from 13 percent to 7 percent), and a 29 percent reduction in saturated fat contributed by beef per capita (from 13 percent to 9 percent). Furthermore, more than 65 percent of whole muscle beef cuts sold at retail today meet government standards for lean, and 17 of the top 25 most popular cuts sold at retail (including Sirloin Steak and Tenderloin) are lean.

Since the 1980 Dietary Guidelines for Americans were issued, external fat on retail beef cuts has decreased by 81 percent. Retail data show that sales of 90 percent or greater lean ground beef increased by 25 percent between 2008 and 2013.

### *All Hands on Deck*

The "gate-to-plate" effort to increase leanness involved every segment of the beef chain – cattle ranchers and farmers who raised leaner animals, packers and processors who closely trimmed beef cuts, supermarkets and restaurants that offered a growing number of lean beef cuts to consumers, and researchers who made sure accurate data were used in calculating what was actually in the products. Also playing a critical role was the Beef Checkoff Program, which helped fund much of the research and many of the efforts to get information into the right hands.

"It was the perfect storm," said Savell. "The need for good information came at the same time as the availability of funding. And without the checkoff, it would not have been done."

"Every pivotal point in this journey has had a checkoff element," says Shalene McNeil, Ph.D., R.D., executive director of human nutrition research at the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, a beef checkoff contractor that manages checkoff nutrition research programs. "For instance, checkoff work led to collaboration that updated the entire gold-standard nutrient database for beef."

With information in hand, the beef industry made a huge push through its checkoff program in the 1980s and 1990s to reach out to health professionals. For instance, a program with state beef councils and the American Dietetic Association (now the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics) starting in the late 1980s and continuing today provides seminars to local and state Academy groups on nutrient density and the new lean data.

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From a production and processing standpoint, Savell says the key milestone was a major checkoff-funded National Consumer Retail Beef Study in 1986 that demonstrated consumers would buy more beef, and pay more for it, if they were offered a leaner product. “That was probably my ‘aha’ moment,” says Savell.

At that time, retail beef trim was about .5 inches of external fat. The information from the study created a “domino effect” in the retail industry to reduce external fat on retail cuts, Savell said, with one retailer trying to outdo the other when it came to closer trim.

The move by retailers to reduce fat trim led to increased efforts by packers to reduce the amount of fat going into the back of the store, according to Clay Burtrum, a cow-calf producer from Stillwater, Okla., and chairman of the checkoff’s Nutrition and Health Committee. The results were demonstrated by a checkoff-funded National Beef Market Basket Survey in 2005, which found that overall fat thickness for the cuts in individual store packages had been reduced to an average of .09 inches, 81 percent less than it had been just 25 years earlier.

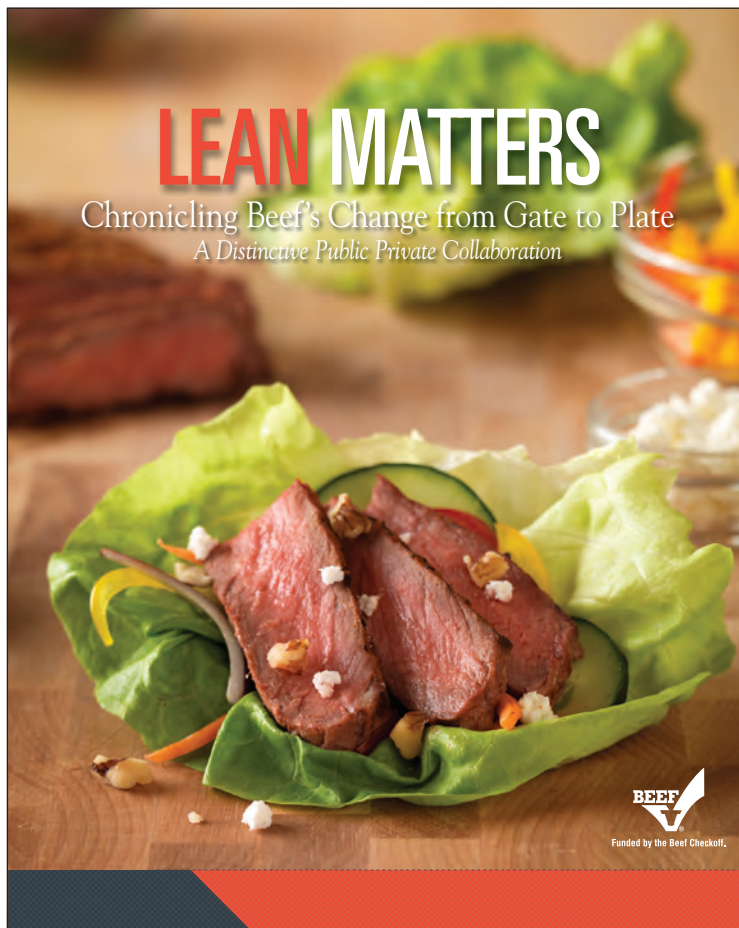
“When you go to the meat case today, it’s a sea of red,” says Savell. “There is just no visible fat. Over time, we have seen a redefinition of lean.”

## *Taking a Different Tack*

Are there still opportunities when thinking about lean beef? Yes, agree industry experts, but not necessarily in the direction it has taken over the past 40 years.

“We’re now to the point we just can’t get any leaner,” according to Savell. “Even if the only grade eaten by consumers was Select, it wouldn’t change fat intake (by Americans) appreciably.”

The industry’s message on lean could hardly be more positive. Today more than 38 cuts, when cooked and visible fat trimmed, have been shown to fit the USDA definition of lean, which is less than 10 grams of total fat, less than or equal to 4.5 grams of saturated fat and less than 95 milligrams of cholesterol per 3½ ounces. This compares to seven cuts just 20 years ago.



McNeil says, however, the industry’s best messages may sometimes get lost in the discussion on lean. “While the focus on lean is important, it’s only part of our great beef nutrition story,” she says. “All beef provides 10 essential nutrients, including high-quality protein, important to good health.”

Still, she says having the tremendous lean message is very important – even if it isn’t the particular message the industry decides to utilize in every instance. “Historically, it’s been an important focus,” McNeil says, “because unfortunately, when consumers and health professionals think of nutrition and beef, they often think of fat first.”

“Today we’re suggesting to our state beef council partners they don’t need to talk as much about the numbers, because lean cuts have become so prevalent,” she says. “We need to stress that many popular cuts of beef are lean and all beef has 10 essential nutrients.”

While fat is still a leading barrier for consumers choosing beef, “the lean story is giving us many chances to tell a good nutrition story,” says McNeill. “We have a great opportunity to show that beef is surprisingly more lean and nutritious than [consumers] think.”

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McNeill points to the Beef in an Optimal Lean Diet – or BOLD – Study as a means of doing that. The BOLD Study demonstrated that a diet containing 5 ounces a day of lean beef was just as heart-healthy as the government’s “optimal” diet based on chicken as a protein. It also showed that the diet with beef can lower total and LDL-cholesterol levels by 10 percent.

“We found that researchers were surprised not just by the results, but by the terrific nutrition profiles of the beef cuts,” McNeill says, noting that even beef cuts that don’t fit the government’s definition of lean can fit into properly balanced diets.

“The unintended consequences of such emphasis on lean cuts of beef might have contributed to a ‘good cut/bad cut’ perception,” says McNeill. “Because all beef has become leaner, any beef cut can be part of a healthy and balanced diet. People are really open to a balance of fat today,” she says.

Savell says it’s a matter of providing the right type of fat. “Consumers want taste fat, not waste fat,” he says. “We can’t avoid the need for a certain amount of fat for eating acceptability.”

## Brave New Approaches

Efforts that help build positive messages about the nutritional benefits of beef have been managed for the industry and the Beef Checkoff program by NCBA. McNeill says that while it’s great the industry has developed a positive message about its lean products, it isn’t necessarily one it will use predominantly in the future.

“The nutrition landscape is getting more complicated,” says McNeill. “Now instead of ‘eat less fat,’ there’s more guidance to ‘eat a plant-based diet.’ So we have to start understanding how beef benefits the changing philosophies in diet and health.

“It also raises the question, what is the future optimal diet? We need to stress the point that beef is simply a better food – a great tasting, nutritionally valuable food for a better eating experience,” she says.

Staying engaged in the nutrition arena is still critical for the industry, says Clay Burtrum, who serves on the 20-member Beef Promotion Operating Committee representing the

Federation of State Beef Councils. “It’s still very much an important issue because of today’s health awareness,” he says. “Consumers are increasingly aware of their diets.”

For that reason, Burtrum says he believes the Beef Checkoff Program needs to be involved. “We have to be forward-thinking about what is going to happen next,” he says. “We know there will continue to be Dietary Guidelines from the government, and we need to help make sure those are based on the most current, most accurate data. At the same time, we need to educate consumers about the nutritional benefits our products offer. Not just the lean, but the entire package.

“With a shrinking budget, we need to focus on those areas that are most important,” Burtrum says. “Nutrition is important. We’re fortunate to have this kind of research and foundation to use in telling our story.”

*For a copy of a publication called Lean Matters on which this article was based, contact Wendy David at [wedavid@beef.org](mailto:wedavid@beef.org).*

**PROTEIN BENEFITS**

Beef gives your body more of the high-quality protein you need to achieve and maintain a healthy weight and preserve and build muscle.

**WHY FOCUS ON PROTEIN?**

Heart healthy diets with high quality lean protein helps lower cholesterol (the bad kind!), **reduce the risk of chronic disease and reduce high blood pressure.**

Protein helps support strong, lean bodies.

Get more from your workout! Studies show exercise is more effective when paired with a higher-protein diet, and beef provides the amino acids necessary for **building and replenishing muscles.**

Feeling hungry? People who eat a higher-protein diet (about 30% of daily calories from protein) feel **more satisfied, which may help prevent overeating.**

**50%**  
of your recommended Daily Value of protein

a 3-oz serving of beef provides 25 grams of protein and 10 essential nutrients in one tasty package.

A single serving of beef is about the size of an iPhone.

# SUMMARY OF STATE BEEF COUNCIL INVESTMENTS

## For the year ending 09/30/14



State	Beef	USMEF Prioritized	USMEF Earmarked	NCBA Earmarked	Total SBC Revenue	Federation Initiative	Grand Total
Alabama	46,000	0	0	0	46,000	0	46,000
Arizona	20,000	0	0	0	20,000	0	20,000
Arkansas	26,000	0	8,600	0	34,600	0	34,600
California	23,000	0	8,600	696	32,296	0	32,296
Colorado	58,000	0	8,600	696	67,296	0	67,296
Florida	40,000	0	0	0	40,000	0	40,000
Georgia	14,000	0	0	0	14,000	0	14,000
Hawaii	1,641	0	0	0	1,641	0	1,641
Idaho	164,000	102,900	0	1,392	268,292	50,000	318,292
Illinois	17,000	0	0	8,000	25,000	0	25,000
Indiana	14,000	0	0	0	14,000	0	14,000
Iowa	500,000	100,000	8,600	11,392	619,992	0	619,992
Kansas	2,301,600	40,000	0	87,783	2,429,383	0	2,429,383
Kentucky	26,000	0	8,600	35,000	69,600	0	69,600
Louisiana	17,000	0	0	0	17,000	0	17,000
Michigan	14,000	0	0	0	14,000	0	14,000
Minnesota	23,000	0	8,600	0	31,600	0	31,600
Mississippi	20,000	0	6,000	3,000	29,000	0	29,000
Missouri	213,052	0	8,600	10,000	231,652	0	231,652
Montana	243,189	100,000	8,600	0	351,789	11,811	363,600
Nebraska	1,584,634	426,400	8,600	17,783	2,037,417	0	2,037,417
Nevada	12,804	0	0	0	12,804	0	12,804
New Mexico	29,000	0	8,600	0	37,600	0	37,600
New York	14,000	0	0	0	14,000	0	14,000
North Carolina	14,000	0	0	0	14,000	0	14,000
North Dakota	124,913	0	8,600	0	133,513	0	133,513
Ohio	14,000	0	0	0	14,000	0	14,000
Oklahoma	295,217	270,000	8,600	117,783	691,600	0	691,600
Oregon	19,000	4,000	0	0	23,000	0	23,000
Pennsylvania	17,000	0	0	0	17,000	0	17,000
South Carolina	16,977	0	0	0	16,977	0	16,977
South Dakota	239,189	100,000	17,200	0	356,389	0	356,389
Tennessee	29,000	0	0	0	29,000	0	29,000
Texas	574,000	373,400	8,600	0	956,000	0	956,000
Utah	23,000	0	0	30,000	53,000	0	53,000
Virginia	20,000	8,600	0	0	28,600	0	28,600
Washington	20,000	8,600	0	0	28,600	0	28,600
Wisconsin	26,000	0	0	0	26,000	0	26,000
Wyoming	150,000	0	43,000	0	193,000	0	193,000
	<b>7,004,216</b>	<b>1,533,900</b>	<b>178,000</b>	<b>323,525</b>	<b>9,039,641</b>	<b>61,811</b>	<b>9,101,452</b>
Net deferred investments adjustment	(17,758)	32,095	0	29,058	43,395	15,117	58,512
	<b>6,986,458</b>	<b>1,565,995</b>	<b>178,000</b>	<b>352,583</b>	<b>9,083,036</b>	<b>76,928</b>	<b>9,159,964</b>





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