



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Wisconsin Beef Council Statement on Status of State Beef Industry

MADISON, Wisconsin — In uncertain times, it is only natural to question the safety and status of the most important aspects of the world around us. Consumers can rest assured that Wisconsin's beef industry remains committed to producing safe, high-quality beef; and know that at this time, there is no shortage of beef.

"Wisconsin farmers continue to care for their cattle on a daily basis, and we want to ensure there is beef on the shelves in grocery stores across the state," stated Val Gaffney, a beef producer from Barneveld, Wisconsin, and current Wisconsin Beef Council President. "Our work to provide safe, wholesome and plentiful beef is ongoing."

The empty shelves seen in grocery stores at the beginning of this crisis were caused by both a surge in consumer demand and shifts in the supply chain as restaurants closed their doors to in-person dining. Retail stores are working hard to keep shelves well-stocked in order to meet consumer demand for beef.

"All members of Wisconsin's beef supply chain, from the farm gate to your plate, are working to balance the safety of the workforce and ensure beef is available at grocery stores and restaurants," said Tammy Vaassen, executive director of the Wisconsin Beef Council. "Consumers should feel confident that their beef purchases meet the same levels of quality and safety they know and love."

Both the United States Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration are closely monitoring the situation and continue to remind consumers that the United States food supply is safe. Consumers seeking additional information can find it on FDA's website at <https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/food-safety-and-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19> or on USDA's website at <https://www.usda.gov/coronavirus>.





“Wisconsin is home to several beef processing plants,” Gaffney said. “As the beef industry copes with the spread of COVID-19, plants are slowing processing speeds to allow for the distancing of workers and the use of additional protective equipment to keep employees healthy.”

Although food processing facilities are essential infrastructure, the spread of COVID-19 has caused some facilities to close for a period of time in order to minimize the spread of the virus within the employee population.

The Wisconsin Beef Council represents the state’s beef and dairy farmers, working to educate consumers about how to purchase, prepare and enjoy beef. An entire ‘At Home with Beef’ web page has been created on the Wisconsin Beef Council website (beeftips.com), providing consumers with tips on freezing and thawing ground beef, cooking lessons, kid’s activities and recipe collections featuring kid-friendly recipes, ground beef recipes and meal ideas for under \$15.

The Wisconsin Beef Council is dedicated to monitoring the impacts of COVID-19 related to all segments of the Wisconsin beef industry. We remain resolute in our commitment to ensuring a safe and nutritious beef eating experience for consumers on behalf of Wisconsin’s hardworking cattlemen and women.

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The Wisconsin Beef Council is a producer-directed not-for-profit organization funded by the \$1.00 per head assessment on all cattle sold in the state of Wisconsin per the Federal Beef Promotion and Research Act & Order. Half of one dollar remains in Wisconsin for local beef promotion, while the other half is forwarded to the Cattlemen’s Beef Board. The purpose of the Council is to fund beef promotion, research and consumer education activities supporting Wisconsin’s \$2.1 billion beef industry. The WBC operates under the guidance of its Board of Directors. The Board is comprised of representatives from cattle-related organizations around the state of Wisconsin.

