

**2018 Goal of the Beef Checkoff:
Position Beef as the #1 Protein**

How do we do this? By focusing our efforts and investments on three main pillars that influence consumer decisions on what food to buy! Those three pillars are: **People** (Increasing the transparency between beef production and the consuming public); **Pleasure** (The taste of a delicious beef meal our audience knows and loves) and **Protein** (Sharing the nutritional benefits beef provides). And, we do this all through the **Beef. It's What's For Dinner.** brand.

People



The WBC is helping to bridge the connection between consumers and farmers by showing consumers, and those who influence them, that beef is responsibly produced.

In 2018, the WBC hosted five farm tours, taking industry influencers — such as registered dietitians, public health employees, high school and college culinary students and teachers — on a day-long field trip to learn about Wisconsin's great beef and dairy industries.



The WBC launched our "Behind the Beef" consumer advertising campaign in December 2017. This new campaign's goal is to educate and connect consumers through digital advertising and social media posts. Each month a different Wisconsin beef farming family is featured showing the care and responsibility they take in raising beef and sustaining their land. The campaign made 2.27 million impressions, garnering 9,500 engagements since its launch.

Over 7,000 future beef consumers are reached in high school through the WBC "Beef in the Classroom" grant program. Eighty-five high school family and consumer science teachers were awarded grant money to purchase beef to include in their classroom teachings about beef recipes and cookery, nutrition and beef production messages.

Pleasure



The WBC made over 5.3 million digital impressions with Wisconsin consumers promoting beef recipes and nutrition in FY2018. WBC placed digital banner ads on website and social media platforms most frequently visited by older-millennial parents, age 22-45, who are food and health involved. By utilizing the websites these consumers visit, and the social media platforms they use daily, WBC generated almost 480,000 engagements. In turn, this drove 52,500 new users to our website and increased our social media followers by 25%, all while keeping BEEF top-of-mind!



In 2018, the WBC appeared on network television 166 times, receiving over 60 minutes of FREE news time each month. Segments reached 277,300 viewers in the six largest Wisconsin television markets — Milwaukee, Madison, Green Bay, La Crosse, Eau Claire and Wausau. The yearly value of this TV time is \$263,600!

Foreign Marketing Efforts Continue

Over the last year, the WBC continued efforts to grow export markets for beef in Central America. Through the first 9 months of 2018, export volume to the region has increased by 20% over 2017. Your beef checkoff investment in Central America was used to educate importers and distributors in the region about U.S. beef's quality brand image, which helped to expand the number of cuts and concepts being promoted to retail and foodservice customers. The WBC provides funding to support the USMEF's 8th Annual Latin American Product Showcase, which provided 54 U.S. exporters the opportunity to showcase your beef products to 190 regional beef buyers from 20 countries in this region.

Protein

Team Beef 2018



Team Beef 2018 included 50 athletes from around the state who participated in a variety of races, including Cellcom, Crazy Legs, the Madison Mini and the Brewers Mini Marathon. Each Team Beef member receives a Team Beef jersey and up to \$50 race reimbursement. Athletes are required to complete the Masters of Beef Advocacy program before receiving race reimbursement. New this year was a Team Beef Ragnar team which included 12 women that completed in the Chicago Ragnar competition.

WBC Teams up with the American Heart Association

The WBC's partnership with the Milwaukee American Heart Association continues to grow. The WBC was a Corporate Sponsor in 2018. Exposure for the WBC included the Workplace Health Symposium, the Red Dress Collection Event and the Go Red Luncheon. A booth with AHA recipes, beef nutrition and an interactive Spice Rub Station was present at all events. One of the AHA-approved recipes, Spicy Korean Beef and Cucumber appetizer, was served during the Red Dress Collection Event. WBC Dietitian Sarah Agena also had an opportunity to go on air in Milwaukee to feature a heart healthy chili recipe during heart month in February.

Wisconsin Beef Council

Fiscal Year 2018 Expenditures

Promotion.....	\$192,282
Research.....	\$4,201
Consumer Information.....	\$244,807
Industry Information.....	\$46,600
Producer Communications.....	\$78,400
U.S. Meat Export Federations.....	58,600
Federation of State Beef Councils.....	26,000
Administration.....	178,387
Total Expenses.....	\$829,277



2018 Wisconsin Beef Council Annual Report
Building beef demand by inspiring, unifying and supporting an effective state and national checkoff partnership.



Dear Cattle Producer,

2018 has been a testing year for everyone in the cattle industry and all of agriculture. Whether it is low prices or the weather that is too much or not enough, it has been tough for all who are involved. The Wisconsin Beef Council (WBC) continues to provide support to our state's beef, dairy, and veal industries by promoting beef and veal while carefully utilizing the beef checkoff dollars entrusted to us by Wisconsin cattle producers. The WBC has undergone its own set of challenges and changes in 2018 as well. In September, we said farewell to John Freitag, our long time Executive Director. We were pleased to have Tammy Vaassen join the WBC in August and take over as the new Executive Director in October.

In addition to the change in our leadership, the Wisconsin Beef Council has also been included in a court case with other beef councils from numerous states to verify that we are upholding the intention of having governmental oversight of the messages we share on behalf of the checkoff as it began back in 1985. The process began in another state from a different area of the U.S., but this fall the complaint was expanded to include Wisconsin and 12 other states. All of the WBC staff and board of director members remain dedicated to promoting the beef and veal produced by Wisconsin's producers to enhance the demand for our product, educate about how you are raising beef in our state, and keep beef top of mind for consumers.

The WBC is affiliated with the National Cattlemen's Beef Association board and is part of the Federation of State Beef Councils. We utilize these national connections to help provide expertise and align with national marketing campaigns such as the well-known Beef. It's What's for Dinner. campaign. We remain as an independent group that serves the wishes of the Wisconsin cattle producers through the decisions of our board members that represent the various segments of our industry. If any individual producers have questions or input on our activities, please let Tammy, me, or one of our staff or directors know so we can bring the new ideas into our discussions. The WBC's ultimate goal is to best support our Wisconsin cattle industry with the resources we oversee. I believe the WBC has provided many benefits during its time so far and we hope to continue that into the future.

Here's to a more successful 2019 for everyone!

Sincerely,
Arin Crooks
2018 Wisconsin Beef Council President



New Leadership at the WBC: Meet Tammy Vaassen

Greetings! It is with great pleasure and excitement that I joined your Wisconsin Beef Council staff in August. The Council has been fortunate to have had John Freitag's leadership for a number of years, and I hope to continue to carry his efforts forward. My goal over the next year is to learn from each of you, hear your feedback, and work toward the Council's mission of building beef demand that is sustainable for future generations.

I grew up on a diversified livestock and grain farm near Platteville, where we milked cows, fed steers and had a farrow-to-finish hog operation. After obtaining my Animal Science degree from UW-Platteville, I spent the next 25 years on the staff of the Wisconsin Pork Association. I enjoy working to support farmers, promoting your products, and serving as a face to the consumer on your behalf. My husband and I reside near Cuba City and we have two kids in the midst of their college careers. I hope to get the opportunity to meet many of you over the next year.



Dear Fellow Producers:

Surveys show beef consumers are interested in knowing more about the beef they eat. They still want it to be tasty, tender, convenient and provide value, of course. But today they also want to know that the animal was raised with care and in an environment that is wholesome and environmentally sound.

That desire led the Beef Checkoff Program to include a “Rethink the Ranch” element to its *Beef. It’s What’s For Dinner.* relaunch. The component gives consumers – the majority of whom have very little connection to agriculture, let alone the beef they buy – a chance to see how beef producers are combining good husbandry and production practices with new technology to assure the best possible results in terms of care and products.

The promotion’s added direction compliments the broader messages within the *Beef. It’s What’s For Dinner.* brand and campaign. Those messages highlight the most critical aspects of what consumers expect from the beef they buy, taste being the most important. Recipes, nutrition and cut information and more is available on the industry’s upgraded website and is being broadly promoted digitally. Let’s face it: Beef will always be among the preferred meats because it tastes so good.

The relaunched national campaign features opportunities for state beef councils to join in outreach and messaging to consumers and marketers at the state level. This creates a state/national team with which our industry is having a real impact on demand for our products.

You can read all about it in this report. Thanks for your support and engagement in continuing to make beef what’s for dinner.

Yours truly,

Dawn Caldwell

Dawn Caldwell
Edgar, Nebraska
Chairman, Federation of State Beef Councils



Rethinking the Ranch

In October 2017 the Beef Checkoff Program relaunched its iconic *Beef. It’s What’s For Dinner.* campaign, with exceptional results. The campaign sought to drive more consumers to the checkoff’s *BeefItsWhatsForDinner.com* website, where information on all things beef could be obtained.

Created 25 years ago, *Beef. It’s What’s For Dinner.* was introduced with promotion that included television and print advertising that captured the imagination and taste buds of consumers. Times change, however, and while the concept is still strong, the ways consumers get their information is different than it was in the early 1990s. Social and digital media have become the key ways information is delivered to consumers today.

Through the refocused and strengthened campaign, visitors to the website over the past year have totaled more than 8 million – compared to about 3 million the year before. The primary purpose for visiting for many consumers are the recipes, cut information and nutrition advise found on the site. Increasingly, however, consumers want to know even more about how the beef they eat is raised. A new feature of the campaign called Rethink the Ranch is giving consumers an up-close-and-personal look at the people who make beef possible. The campaign features real ranchers and farmers and their real stories about how they produce beef.

Last summer a camera crew traveled 3,800 miles across the United States, visiting six different cattle operations in four states. They captured more than 100 hours of video, as well as images and

stories about the people who raise beef animals. The images and video they developed have become a big part of the checkoff’s new consumer outreach.

Nationally, the videos have generated more than 765,000 video views, and reached more than 3.5 million consumers. State beef councils have downloaded Rethink the Ranch content for use on their own social media properties and other consumer and thought leader outreach.

It’s the first time *BeefItsWhatsForDinner.com* has promoted both the product and the people who produce it, a story focused on promoting beef’s greatest strengths: unbeatable taste, variety and ease of cooking, nutritional attributes that can’t be matched and the people that make it all possible, caring for the animals and environment with appreciation and respect.

State beef councils are also extending the campaign, exciting their states’ consumers about beef’s many benefits. Of special interest has been the campaign’s Rethink the Ranch anthem video and related video spots showcasing real farmers and ranchers from around the country.

It’s important consumers understand how committed producers are to serving as faithful stewards of the valuable natural resources that have been entrusted to them. That’s part of the Rethink the Ranch message. It’s why the website provides consumer-friendly, easy-to-understand information on how beef producers are being effective stewards of the land and resources, from drones to help observe and manage cattle to solar technology to generate power and help operate water systems, cattle producers are using technology responsibly.

Good and Getting Better

Of course, cattle producers have always prided themselves in their dedication to animal welfare, beef quality, sustainability and community involvement. Recent research shows they are getting better in all four of these areas.

The checkoff-funded Cattlemen’s Stewardship Review gathered data from an independent 2017 telephone survey of beef producers to deliver a comprehensive profile of the U.S. beef community today. The research showed improvements in all four areas, compared to a 2010 checkoff-funded benchmark survey.

It found that the well-being of cattle is the top priority for 95 percent of producers, that 97 percent of cattle farmers and ranchers believe producing safe beef is crucial to the future of the industry, and that 95 percent of producers believe conservation of land is extremely important to them.

Results of the research were shared with key national media.

More Foundation from Research

Checkoff-funded research providing answers to complex questions about beef production is helping create clarity to issues such as beef sustainability. The checkoff-funded sustainability research program has developed a series of 19 fact sheets that explain many benefits of U.S. beef production, such as how the global impact of beef production could likely be dramatically reduced if other countries could achieve the same productivity as U.S. beef – the most efficient beef production system in the world. To see these fact sheets, go to www.beefresearch.org.

BQA Certifications Add to Evidence

Further strengthening the case that cattle producers recognize their societal role is the fact that online certifications in the beef checkoff-funded Beef Quality Assurance program have surpassed 20,000. First available in early 2017, online BQA certifications join those conducted at in-person training events offered by state beef councils, cattlemen’s affiliates, extension programs and other local efforts.

Both in-person and online certifications show how common-sense husbandry techniques can be coupled with accepted scientific knowledge to raise cattle under optimum management and environmental conditions, helping beef producers capture additional value from their market cattle and reflecting a positive public image for the beef industry.

Producers Telling Their Stories

The Raising Beef section of the new *Beef. It’s What’s For Dinner.* website has featured several graduates of the checkoff-funded Masters of Beef Advocacy program. MBA graduates – who now

number nearly 11,500 – are helping people rethink the ranch by sharing their personal stories on the site. The collaboration between programs is an example of how the beef checkoff-funded Beef Advocacy Training and Engagement program works to help members of the beef community leverage their advocacy and spokesperson skills, benefiting many checkoff programs.

Expanding International Beef Demand

Thanks in part to beef checkoff-funded efforts to promote to and educate our international customers, global beef demand was up in 2018, with markets outside of the United States buying a larger share of U.S. beef production at higher prices. According to USDA data compiled by the U.S. Meat Export Federation, through June, U.S. beef and beef variety meat exports set a record pace in both volume (662,875 metric tons) and value (\$4.03 billion). In previous years, export value had never topped the \$4 billion mark before August.

The same data suggests the U.S. has exported 13.5 percent of its total 2018 beef production, up from 12.8 percent last year. Export value per fed steer or heifer slaughtered averaged \$317 – up 18 percent from a year ago.

Noteworthy export markets in 2018’s first half included Japan (\$1.02 billion – up 12 percent from last year’s pace), South Korea (\$802.1 million, up 52 percent), China/Hong Kong (\$510.8 million, up 43 percent) and Taiwan (\$249.7 million, up 39 percent). Also showing strong demand for U.S. beef were Mexico (\$506.7 million, up 10 percent), Central America (\$38.8 million, up 26 percent) and South America (\$63.9 million, up 20 percent).

Cattlemen’s Beef Board Fiscal Year 2018 Expenditures

Promotion	\$9,225,692
Research	\$8,042,093
Consumer Information	\$7,345,798
Industry Information	\$3,560,607
Foreign Marketing	\$7,640,567
Producer Communications	\$1,179,898
Evaluation	\$230,795
Program Development	\$295,075
USDA Oversight	\$601,681
Administration	\$1,811,956
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$39,934,162

Unaudited Numbers

An independent survey of beef producers has found 74 percent continue to approve of the Beef Checkoff Program. That’s 5 percent higher than it was a year earlier. The survey found that the more producers know about the program, the more supportive they are.

Seventy eight percent said the checkoff has value, even when the economy is weak, and 71 percent say the checkoff represents their interests. The survey was conducted from December 2017 to mid-January, 2018.