

Helping Producers Get To Know Their Checkoff

Producer Attitudes:

Support of the beef checkoff, at 76 percent, is at its highest level in 18 years. The survey of a representative sample of 1,200 beef and dairy producers nationwide was conducted recently by Aspen Media & Market Research.

Key findings of this survey include:

1. Four in five producers say the checkoff influences beef demand and is of value to the industry even in a weak economy.
2. Three in four producers say the checkoff contributes to the profitability of their operations, is there for them in a crisis and represents their interests.
3. Two in three producers believe the checkoff is well managed.

A separate survey of 400 producers also found that while producers understand the impact of inflation on the buying power of the checkoff dollar, they are somewhat reluctant to agree to an increase; more support an increase in the national assessment to \$1.50 than to \$2.

Paid media:

1. The beef checkoff producer communications paid ad campaign continues to help producers get to

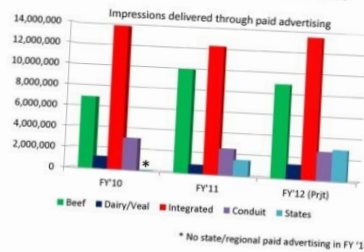


know their checkoff under the theme “My beef

checkoff can...” Ads include producer testimonials that encourage readers to hear more on MyBeefCheckoff.com featuring a continuation of the testimonial as well with copy and video.

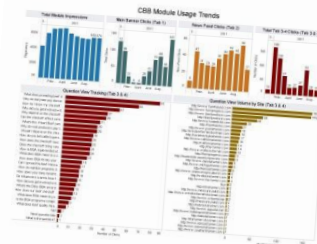
2. Continuous testing of the ads with readers found that overall our ads performed at or above average in the categories of "remember seeing," "read half or more" and "found useful" in FY11 and in the first quarter of FY12.
3. Paid media impressions will increase in FY12, with a

Getting To Know The Checkoff



growing emphasis on state/regional targeted media buys. Engagement – as measured by clicks and visits – also is increasing significantly.

4. A new measurement tool, called Focus Point, is helping the producer communications team measure real time media results and make tactical enhancements or corrections to improve the effectiveness of the paid media effort.



5. Several state beef councils are rolling out the national ads, adding local testimonials or using new ‘generic’ ads through use of resources available in the newly redesigned QSBC Toolkit on MyBeefCheckoff.com.

Earned media:

1. In FY11, we delivered more than 94,000 pieces of mail to media, up more than 60 percent from FY10. Along with daily contact with the editors and

Producer Communications Activities Update – February 2012

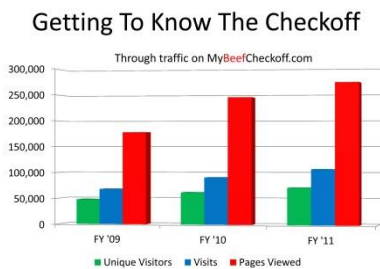
broadcasters, these efforts produced nearly 7,200 news placements in media producers turn to for information about their industry.

2. Video news packages developed in FY11 typically aired on more than 600 TV stations nationwide. In addition, these video news packages were extended through Facebook, YouTube and other online outlets to thousands of additional viewers.

3. Recent checkoff articles and audio files are posted to a Web page on MyBeefCheckoff.com to help media and producers read, see and hear “what others are saying about the checkoff.”

Direct communications:

1. The checkoff website MyBeefCheckoff.com continues to draw a growing number of visitors, with 71,400 unique visitors in FY11 viewing more than 272,000 pages. The site is designed to be the one place producers can find out how national beef



checkoff dollars are invested and is linked to the more than two dozen other checkoff-funded

program sites, and the sites of all Qualified State Beef Councils.

2. MyBeefCheckoff.com had an average open rate of 59 percent and a click-through rate of nearly 20 percent for the 212,700-plus newsletters and other materials it delivered in FY11 – both measures are many times higher than industry averages.

3. More than 200,000 copies of a series of new multi-purpose brochures, “Get To Know Your Checkoff,” have been produced and distributed through 22 state beef councils and directly to livestock markets. The six editions of this brochure have focused on key checkoff’s efforts with more detail than can be delivered through other media.

4. Producers are turning more often to electronic newsletters for information about their industry. The FY12 media strategy takes advantage of this

trend by continuing to issue “My Beef Checkoff News” in beef and dairy editions as part of our direct communications effort. Nearly 4,000 beef and dairy newsletters are now delivered every month and the reach of these newsletters is extended through media partners. A veal edition will be added in FY12. In addition, 11 states are taking advantage of state-specific versions of these newsletters, featuring state-specific mastheads and optional local content. At the same time, an ‘RSS Feed’ updates national checkoff news daily on the websites of 12 participating state beef councils and MyBeefCheckoff.com.

5. National producer communications staff, often coordinating with state beef councils, participates in industry trade shows, including World Dairy Expo, National Association of Farm Broadcasting, National Agri-Marketing Association, American Farm Bureau Federation, Cattle Industry Convention, National Farmers Union, Livestock Marketing Association and Ag Media Summit.

6. The producer communication social media initiative to engage beef and dairy producers in conversations regarding the beef checkoff continues to grow. Producers can engage through www.facebook.com/MyBeefCheckoff; www.twitter.com/MyBeefCheckoff; and www.youtube.com/MyBeefCheckoff.

7. Newly restructured State Beef Council and



Member toolkits were designed to meet needs identified by each audience. Under the theme of ‘less is more,’ these toolkits provide an opportunity for news, discussion and interaction, along with a variety of other references and resources.