



## Checking in on the Checkoff

February 29, 2008

### **This week: WHAT HAS THE CHECKOFF'S *PRODUCER COMMUNICATIONS* PROGRAM AREA DONE FOR ME LATELY?**

*PRODUCER COMMUNICATIONS means expenditures to communicate about checkoff programs – in the areas of promotion, research, consumer information, industry information and foreign marketing – to producers who pay for them. This includes production of a Beef Board Annual Report and other program updates to producers, trade media press releases, participation in agricultural trade shows, and management of a semi-annual producer attitude survey.*

**McC meets CBB** – A CBB agency review panel lead by Joint Producer Communications Committee Chair Richard Nielson, cow/calf operator from Ephraim, Utah, met in Denver to hear presentations from the three agencies chosen as finalists to support the CBB paid producer communications paid media effort. A panel of CBB and Federation members joined with communications staff to unanimously choose [McCormick Company](#), an Amarillo-based full-service marketing communications firm established in 1926 and the 14th oldest advertising and public relations firm in the United States. “The panel members were impressed by McCormick’s enthusiastic presentation which also demonstrated them to be highly qualified with a deep understanding of our target audience – producers who pay the checkoff,” said Nielson. “McCormick’s problem-solving approach and creative ideas won them the contract.”

**A Positive Attitude** – How well do you know your checkoff? Without prompting, 87 percent had heard of the program, and 68 percent consider themselves somewhat or very well informed, according to a recent study by Aspen Media & Market Research, Boulder, Colo. In total, random telephone interviews were conducted with a representative sample of 1,225 beef and dairy producers nationwide between Dec. 27, 2007 and Jan. 10, 2008 to determine their awareness of, attitudes toward, and concerns about the Beef Checkoff Program. Read more about the study [here](#).

**Tradeshaw Mania** – The past two months, CBB staffers have been out and about at numerous tradeshaws across the country, telling the producer story. In early January, a team of officers and CBB staff headed to New Orleans, La., for the American Farm Bureau meeting and tradeshow. Early February kicked off with the 2008 Cattle Industry Annual Convention in Reno, Nev., immediately followed by a week in Tulare, Calif., for the World Ag Expo which drew more than 100,000 visitors. Not stopping there, CBB staff and Tracey Orsburn with the [Beefmobile](#) headed to Omaha, Neb., for the R-CALF annual meeting. And early March brings the National Farmer’s Union meeting in Las Vegas, Nev. March 17 rounds out the first quarter of 2008 with the Dairy Farmers of America meeting in Kansas City, Mo. So if you see weary travelers, remember to “give ‘em a break” – they’ve been working hard to tell the checkoff story.

**Beef Power Producer Advertisements** - New producer ads designed to communicate about the checkoff began to appear in February in national publications (to view the ad, go to: [http://www.beefboard.org/uDocs/final\\_print\\_ad\\_football.pdf](http://www.beefboard.org/uDocs/final_print_ad_football.pdf)), while a new four-page insert will begin to appear this month in regional publications, primarily in the Midwest and Northeast (to view the insert, go to: [http://www.beefboard.org/uDocs/Final\\_Insert\\_2\\_02\\_08.pdf](http://www.beefboard.org/uDocs/Final_Insert_2_02_08.pdf)). In addition, a 30-second television ad is airing on RFD-TV and new radio commercials are slated to run this spring. The goal of the paid producer advertising is to help producers paying the checkoff better understand programs they support. This first round of ads focus on child nutrition programs, while the inserts further discuss how checkoff programs build consumer confidence in beef. The insert also will be used as a leave-behind when CBB participates in national tradeshow, and has been ordered by more than 30 states to support their producer communications efforts.

**“Send” Button Wear and Tear** – Recent trade media relations efforts have kept editors and broadcasters busy in the beef world. During the Cattle Industry Convention, nine program press releases were issued to trade media and three “from the thick of the action” audio interviews were submitted to the National Association of Farm Broadcasters (NAFB). Cattlennetwork.com continues to proudly support checkoff news, most recently with “Five minutes with...” segments such as the Chuck Jolley interview with new CBB Chairman Dave Bateman (to read the interview, click [here](#)). Cattlennetwork.com’s Dusty was also seen front and center with the [Beefmobile at the R-CALF convention](#). Since Sept. 1, 2007, more than 700 checkoff articles have run in trade media outlets with potential viewership of close to 3.6 million. Topping off the broadcast coverage is KTIC 840 Rural Radio out of West Point, Neb. (click [here](#) to read an article).

*\*If you would like to be added or deleted from the distribution list for “Checking in on the Checkoff,” please send a quick note to Diane at [dhenderson@beefboard.org](mailto:dhenderson@beefboard.org).*