

## AUTHORIZATION REQUEST FOR FY 2019

CBB Budget Category: **Producer Communications**

Name of Contractor: **Cattlemen's Beef Board**

Name of Organization Subcontracting:

Start Date: **10/1/2018**

End Date: **9/30/2019**

### AR OVERVIEW

#### **AR Description:**

This authorization request (AR) describes ongoing efforts to provide information about the beef checkoff to all investors; a requirement of the Beef Promotion and Research Order. The programs defined in this AR align with the Investor Relations Working Group (IRWG) mission to develop strategies that communicate checkoff funded program results, educate, and build relationships with checkoff investors to gain a better understanding of the Beef Checkoff Program.

FY19 will mark a purposeful change in the approach to Producer Communications. Insights from producer leaders, the annual Producer Attitude Survey (PAS), and a comprehensive review of Producer Communications conducted on behalf of the Evaluation Committee, revealed:

- Producer recall for seeing, hearing, or reading about the program is on a downward trend – 43% in 2018 versus a high of 54% in 2015.
- Awareness of who controls their checkoff is low – 46% “don’t know”.
- Interest in the checkoff is low – 56% said they did not want to know more about the program and its activities (12/2016 survey). When asked if there are specific topics producers would like their checkoff to address, 58% said no.
- The Producer Communications Review noted a lack of broad support for Producer Communications.
- Numerous QSBCs sought out more support from the CBB in FY18.
- Producer leaders indicated it is time for a fresh look at producer communications.

The new Producer Communication approach recognizes the need for a stronger overall relationship between producers and the beef checkoff, including state beef councils. Our goal is to build a strong, trusting partnership through listening, transparency, and clear communication. This will be accomplished through the development and execution of the following tactics:

- An ongoing producer listening platform that will amplify listening beyond the annual Producer Attitude Survey
- An integrated producer communications program consisting of a new publishing strategy and platform, an awareness and engagement campaign, and state beef council support
- A proactive public relations program consisting of thought leadership, crisis communications, influencer communications, and media relations

**Total Cost of this AR:**

Source of Funding	Direct Costs	Implementation	Total
<b>CBB/BPOC Funding Request:</b>	\$1,480,000	\$220,000	\$1,700,000
Federation of SBCs Funding Request: (Informational Only)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Funding Source(s): (Informational Only)	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$1,480,000</b>	<b>\$220,000</b>	<b>\$1,700,000</b>

**Long Range Plan Core Strategies Addressed by this AR** *(Check all that apply)*

Grow Beef Exports	Consumer Trust	Protect & Enhance	Beef's Value Proposition
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Digital properties and target audience(s) addressed by this AR:**

- @MyBeefCheckoff
- BeefBoard.org
- Publishing platform website
- Beef cattle producers
- QSBCs
- Beef industry media
- Other influencers.

## PROGRAM INFORMATION FOR THIS AR

**Tactic A**

**Tactic Name:** Producer Communications Listening Platform

**Tactic Description:**

Cattlemen's Beef Board's new approach to Producer Communications recognizes communication is a two-way street; listening is as important as talking. Strategically, we will evaluate and build upon the annual PAS by implementing additional strategies and tactics including: qualitative research, campaign data analysis, social listening and audience profiling. The development of an ongoing listening initiative will better enable us to determine producer awareness and checkoff perceptions, gain insights regarding producer educational interests and needs as well as measure the performance of our publishing platform efforts. This broad listening effort will be inclusive of supporters and non-supporters, the patriarchs and the millennial producers, large cattle-producing states and their smaller counterparts. By working with SBCs, we'll be able to identify where we need to be locally, to find the pockets where further education on the beef checkoff is needed, and target efforts from tactics B and C in those areas.

**Measurable Objectives** *(List at least three outcome-based objectives for this tactic):*

- Identify KOLs from 20 QSBCs who will participate in a semi-annual roundtable discussion, with the purpose of informing the PC program and Tactics B and C on an ongoing basis.
- Conduct in-depth discussion with at least 12 separate producers each quarter to discuss current topics of interest for content development and identifying the most effective communication channels.
- Distribute findings of listening initiative to the broader producer audience twice (2x) per year [16,954 in email database]
- Conduct one independent, national quantitative study/survey of producers to inform the efforts of the Investor Relations Working Group.

**Performance Efficiency Measures**

**Consumer Reach Goal:** 1192

**Consumer Engagement Goal:** 848

**Voice/KOL Reach Goal:** 505

**Voice/KOL Engagement Goal:** 40

**LRP Strategic Initiatives Addressed by this Tactic** *(Check all that apply)*

Drive Export Growth	Grow Consumer Trust	Protect & Enhance Business Climate	Beef's Value Proposition
<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt traceability systems <input type="checkbox"/> Increase market access <input type="checkbox"/> Promote unique attributes of U.S. beef	<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure antibiotic stewardship <input type="checkbox"/> Certify & verify production practices <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure beef safety <input type="checkbox"/> Protect beef's image <input type="checkbox"/> Engage beef advocates	<input type="checkbox"/> Research & innovate new production tech. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure beef's inclusion in dietary recommendations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Motivate producers & stakeholders to engage <input type="checkbox"/> Develop crises management plans <input type="checkbox"/> Attract, develop & enable the next generation <input type="checkbox"/> Defend beef's product identity	<input type="checkbox"/> Revolutionize beef marketing & merchandising <input type="checkbox"/> Measure & improve sustainability <input type="checkbox"/> Research & communicate beef's nutritional benefits <input type="checkbox"/> Connect & comm. with consumers <input type="checkbox"/> Improve product & production efficiency

**Committee(s) to Score this Tactic** *(Check all that apply)*

Consumer Trust	Export Growth	Innovations	Nutrition & Health	Safety	Investor Relations	Mkt. Research
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

**Tactic B**

**Tactic Name:** Integrated Producer Communications Program

**Tactic Description:****Producer Communications Publishing Platform**

In FY19 we will embark on a new strategy to think and act like a publisher for the beef Checkoff program. By using the same strategies that define a publisher's success, the Producer Communications program will focus on educating producers on why and how checkoff dollars are spent to increase beef demand.

This approach begins with the development of a branded publishing platform to make it easier for producers to find information about their checkoff program. We know, from the PAS, producers consume information through a variety of channels. As a result, the branded platform will be available in print, broadcast, digital and social formats.

Much like a publisher would do, the Producer Communications program will develop a message platform and use an editorial calendar to plan, develop and distribute fresh and relevant content on a steady basis. As producers engage with the platform, we will gather analytics to track what they like and dislike. We will gather additional insights through the platform via polls and surveys. This insight will be used to improve the

platform, make the content more relevant and inform other ways to increase usability of the platform.

Components of the publishing platform include:

Publishing Website – This will be a publishing-style website designed to house all content. Content will be organized around categories that align with the Beef Industry Long Range Plan. Producers will be able to sign up for print and digital subscriptions, share content via social media, and provide feedback and input to producer communications.

eNewsletter – Producers can select categories of content they would like to receive as part of an eNewsletter subscription. The subscription will alert producers of new postings in their areas of interest, packaged into a regular digest that links to various checkoff-supported websites for the full article.

Print Newsletter - Because we know producers are heavy consumers of print media, a print newsletter will be available to which producers can subscribe.

Social Media Integration - Every page on the platform will allow for quick and easy sharing of content to social media outlets. The platform will include rich metadata in all new pieces of content that are published. This allows us to optimize for sharing to Twitter, Facebook or Google+ by defining exactly how titles, descriptions, images and more appear in social streams, further elevating how checkoff dollars are driving demand.

YouTube Channel - Using YouTube's built-in tools, we will update our YouTube channel to align with platform content.

### **Producer Awareness and Engagement Campaign**

Advertising will be used to build awareness of how the checkoff is driving demand for beef while also encouraging producers to engage with their checkoff's publishing platform in the format they prefer. As producers engage their publishing platform, analytics will be gathered to learn what they liked and disliked. All insights will be used to improve the platform, make the content more relevant, and inform other ways to increase overall producer engagement. In FY19, we will adjust the media mix that is used to reach our producer audience, shifting into more traditional channels like beef/cattle industry newspapers and radio, magazines and newsletters. With the learnings from previous years, we will scale back the use of paid social media and identify more purposeful ways to use the channel.

### **State Beef Council Support**

Throughout FY18, the Producer Communications program received numerous requests from QSBCs seeking more support from the CBB. As a result of these inquiries, we will develop a state beef council content hub. Many producers engage with the Beef

Checkoff Program at the state level and we will renew our commitment to supporting the states to meet this need. To maximize cost efficiency, content developed for the platform will be made available to the states via the hub so that they can customize and heavy up, as needed. Making this content available through the hub will allow the investment to be shouldered at the national level, so that the QSBC's can retain more of their resources for other state initiatives. The hub will also be the go-to resource for state executives looking for other marketing and public relations tools and resources. To further our state communications efforts, the Producer Communications program will provide strategic and executional support on an as needed basis.

**Measurable Objectives** *(List at least three outcome-based objectives for this tactic):*

**Producer Communications Publishing Platform**

- Launch a new, producer-facing, publishing platform to pull in producers to view news-worthy content about what the Beef Checkoff Program is doing to drive demand for beef.

**Producer Awareness and Engagement Campaign**

- Increase producer recall of the checkoff to 45%. A 2% increase from FY18

**State Beef Council Support**

- Launch a state publishing platform to provide QSBCs access to content to adapt for state-initiatives and form a closer alignment to the national work.
- Obtain participation from 25 (56%) state beef councils (SBCs who participating in or utilize coordinated producer communications project/programs/ materials from the platform)

**Performance Efficiency Measures**

**Consumer Reach Goal:** 11,313,000

**Consumer Engagement Goal:** 53,100

**Voice/KOL Reach Goal:** 352 (reach out to all 44 QSBCs 1x per month for 8 months)

**Voice/KOL Engagement Goal:** 27

**LRP Strategic Initiatives Addressed by this Tactic** (Check all that apply)

Drive Export Growth	Grow Consumer Trust	Protect & Enhance Business Climate	Beef's Value Proposition
<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt traceability systems <input type="checkbox"/> Increase market access <input type="checkbox"/> Promote unique attributes of U.S. beef	<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure antibiotic stewardship <input type="checkbox"/> Certify & verify production practices <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure beef safety <input type="checkbox"/> Protect beef's image <input type="checkbox"/> Engage beef advocates	<input type="checkbox"/> Research & innovate new production tech. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure beef's inclusion in dietary recommendations <input type="checkbox"/> Motivate producers & stakeholders to engage <input type="checkbox"/> Develop crises management plans <input type="checkbox"/> Attract, develop & enable the next generation <input type="checkbox"/> Defend beef's product identity	<input type="checkbox"/> Revolutionize beef marketing & merchandising <input type="checkbox"/> Measure & improve sustainability <input type="checkbox"/> Research & communicate beef's nutritional benefits <input type="checkbox"/> Connect & comm. with consumers <input type="checkbox"/> Improve product & production efficiency

**Committee(s) to Score this Tactic** (Check all that apply)

Consumer Trust	Export Growth	Innovations	Nutrition & Health	Safety	Investor Relations	Mkt. Research
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

**Tactic C**

**Tactic Name:** Producer Communications Public Relations

**Tactic Description:**  
**Thought Leadership**

There are misconceptions of how the Cattlemen's Beef Board is involved with the Beef Checkoff Program and the industry at large. Additionally, the industry continues to be faced with challenges from opposition groups working hard to discredit the Beef Checkoff Program. A thought leadership program will help address these misconceptions and challenges by establishing a voice in the industry to educate media, influencers and producers about the facts. Tactics will include positioning CBB leadership for media interviews, speaking opportunities, and targeted messaging opportunities in editorial, advertorial and social media.

**Crisis Communication**

Events or situations may arise that challenge or attempt to compromise the reputation of the beef industry and/or the Beef Checkoff Program. Producer Communications must be prepared to handle these issues proactively. To do so, crisis communications plans, protocols and message platforms will be developed in advance of anticipated situations.

Additionally, Producer Communications will provide as-needed council, media training, and media support to CBB members and state executives.

### **Influencer Communications**

A working partnership with industry influencers, state associations, and QSBCs is an important function of Producer Communications. Providing educational materials and communication support offers all influencers the opportunity to access factual information about the Beef Checkoff Program and disseminate relevant content to local media and producers. We will engage state executives for input on communications support needs and provide turnkey materials on the state council content hub.

### **Media Relations**

Producers rely heavily on industry media for important news and information about the industry, including the Beef Checkoff Program. To ensure information about the checkoff is clear and transparent, it is imperative that Producer Communications develop strong, open relationships with the media. Ongoing media relations efforts will include news release development, content distribution, and ongoing editorial support.

### **Measurable Objectives** *(List at least three outcome-based objectives for this tactic):*

#### **Thought Leadership Objectives**

- Schedule six (6) speaking opportunities or media interviews with KOLs on the value of the beef checkoff.

#### **Crisis Communication Objectives**

- Develop a crisis communications plan that anticipates industry objections to the beef checkoff and provides turnkey materials and response processes to aid in reputation management.
- Media train three (3) Cattlemen's Beef Board representatives and train ten (10) state executives on the crisis communications materials.

#### **Influencer Communication Objectives**

- Establish a core group of 20 producer influencers (KOLs) for the Cattlemen's Beef Board and beef checkoff.
- Assist two or more producer influencers in media outreach once a month, placing one story per month (12 stories total in the year) to further educate consumers on a state or regional level.

#### **Media Relations Objectives**

- Develop a strong relationship with 25 percent (10) of the top beef and ag media, resulting in one (1) positive article a month for a total of 12 articles for the year.

### **Performance Efficiency Measures**

**Consumer Reach Goal:** 1,976,000

**Consumer Engagement Goal:** 3,162

**Voice/KOL Reach:** 139

**Voice/KOL Engagement Goal:** 43

**LRP Strategic Initiatives Addressed by this Tactic** (Check all that apply)

Drive Export Growth	Grow Consumer Trust	Protect & Enhance Business Climate	Beef's Value Proposition
<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt traceability systems <input type="checkbox"/> Increase market access <input type="checkbox"/> Promote unique attributes of U.S. beef	<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure antibiotic stewardship <input type="checkbox"/> Certify & verify production practices <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure beef safety <input type="checkbox"/> Protect beef's image <input type="checkbox"/> Engage beef advocates	<input type="checkbox"/> Research & innovate new production tech. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure beef's inclusion in dietary recommendations <input type="checkbox"/> Motivate producers & stakeholders to engage <input type="checkbox"/> Develop crises management plans <input type="checkbox"/> Attract, develop & enable the next generation <input type="checkbox"/> Defend beef's product identity	<input type="checkbox"/> Revolutionize beef marketing & merchandising <input type="checkbox"/> Measure & improve sustainability <input type="checkbox"/> Research & communicate beef's nutritional benefits <input type="checkbox"/> Connect & comm. with consumers <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improve product & production efficiency

**Committee(s) to Score this Tactic** (Check all that apply)

Consumer Trust	Export Growth	Innovations	Nutrition & Health	Safety	Investor Relations	Mkt. Research
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

**SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION FOR THIS AR**

1. Will all work detailed in this AR be completed by the end of the fiscal year?

Yes

*If not, please provide an explanation.*

2. Please explain changes from FY 2018 approved AR:

As noted in the AR description, our recommendations for FY19 represent a purposeful departure from how things have been done in the past. As required, the annual Producer Attitudes Survey will be repeated again in FY19, although some revisions will be made to improve our ability to capture actionable insights.

3. List any proposed subcontractor/agencies that will be used to complete the work in this AR.

Swanson Russell – agency support and strategic council  
 Aspen Media & Market Research – producer research

**4. Will all work with subcontractors be competitively bid?**

Yes

*If not, why not?*

**5. Please list any relationships between this AR and projects previously funded by the Operating Committee:**

The Producer Communications program began with the Beef Checkoff Program. The authorizing legislation, the Act, calls out the importance of informing producers about their investment in the checkoff. The Producer Communications program is the only program designed to deliver this critical information to producers and meet this requirement of the Act. While the strategy in FY19 is new, the function of informing producers about their checkoff investment remains the core of this program.

**DETAILED BUDGET SUMMARY:**

**CBB/BPOC Funding Request:**

Committee	Tactic	Tactic Name	Funding Source	Direct	Implementation	Total
<i>Producer Communications</i>	A	Producer Communications Listening Platform	BPOC	\$ 180,000	\$ 74,000	\$ 254,000
<i>Producer Communications</i>	B	Integrated Producer Communications Program	BPOC	\$ 1,160,000	\$ 73,000	\$ 1,233,000
<i>Producer Communications</i>	C	Producer Communications Public Relations	BPOC	\$ 140,000	\$ 73,000	\$ 213,000
<b>AR Totals</b>				\$ 1,480,000	\$ 220,000	\$ 1,700,000

**Federation of SBCs Funding Request: (Informational Only)**

Committee	Tactic	Tactic Name	Funding Source	Direct	Implementation	Total
<i>Producer Communications</i>	A	Producer Communications Listening Platform	Federation			\$ -
<i>Producer Communications</i>	B	Integrated Producer Communications Program	Federation			\$ -
<i>Producer Communications</i>	C	Producer Communications Public Relations	Federation			\$ -
<b>AR Totals</b>				\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

**Other Funding Source(s): (Informational Only)**

Committee	Tactic	Tactic Name	Funding Source	Direct	Implementation	Total
<i>Producer Communications</i>	A	Producer Communications Listening Platform				\$ -
<i>Producer Communications</i>	B	Integrated Producer Communications Program				\$ -
<i>Producer Communications</i>	C	Producer Communications Public Relations				\$ -
<b>AR Totals</b>				\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

**Total Cost Summary for All Funding Sources: (Informational only)**

Committee	Tactic	Tactic Name	Funding Source	Direct	Implementation	Total
<i>Producer Communications</i>	A	Producer Communications Listening Platform	All	\$ 180,000	\$ 74,000	\$ 254,000
<i>Producer Communications</i>	B	Integrated Producer Communications Program	All	\$ 1,160,000	\$ 73,000	\$ 1,233,000
<i>Producer Communications</i>	C	Producer Communications Public Relations	All	\$ 140,000	\$ 73,000	\$ 213,000
<b>AR Totals</b>				\$ 1,480,000	\$ 220,000	\$ 1,700,000

Summary of Prior Year Budget:	FY 2018 Approved Budgets						
	CBB/BPOC	FSBCs	Other Source(s)	Total	Direct Cost	Impl.	Total
AR Total	\$ 1,100,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,100,000	\$ 915,000	\$ 185,000	\$ 1,100,000

Summary of Prior Year Actual Expenses:	FY 2018 Actual Expenses (through May 30, 2018)						
	CBB/BPOC	FSBCs	Other Source(s)	Total	Direct Cost	Impl.	Total
AR Total	\$ 1,100,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,100,000	\$ 915,000	\$ 185,000	\$ 1,100,000

Historical Summary of Budgets and Expenses	Total Approved Budgets			Total Actual Expenses		
	FY 2017	FY 2016	FY 2015	FY 2017	FY 2016	FY 2015
	AR Total	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 1,496,814	\$ 1,497,968