

COVID-19 Update: Beef Checkoff at Work in Global Markets

Although positive signs continue from markets in the regions of the world first impacted by the virus, setbacks also serve to remind us that recovery from the pandemic will be a lengthy process. In South Korea, where social distancing guidelines were recently relaxed, a new cluster infection was discovered and linked to nightclubs and bars in Seoul. The reopening of schools, which was scheduled this week for high school seniors, has been postponed.

Just as domestic travel, tourism and consumption were bouncing back in China, two new clusters of cases were also reported hundreds of miles apart. The new clusters have been small compared to the thousands confirmed daily in February, but China is determined to avoid another large outbreak. City officials in Wuhan, where one of the new clusters of infections was detected, are pursuing an ambitious plan to test all of its 11 million residents.

The positive news comes from Japan as Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced this week that the national state of emergency declaration, set to expire May 31, has been lifted in 39 of the country's 47 prefectures. Schools in some regions of Japan have reopened.

Hong Kong has recorded no new domestic cases of COVID-19 in more than three weeks. Hong Kong's success with the virus will be tested this weekend as social distancing rules are relaxed for malls, restaurants and bars. The USMEF is finding increased interest in promotions for U.S. meat in the retail sector.

Taiwan has had a much-publicized success in containing the virus. Schools, offices, restaurants and most entertainment facilities have primarily remained open through the outbreak. In late April, USMEF was able to resume face-to-face promotions of U.S. beef at retail, an important step forward, and there is renewed optimism about U.S. beef sales in foodservice this summer (see restaurant promotion below.)

Below are a few of the ways the Beef Checkoff is at work in markets impacted by COVID-19:

- **Taiwan: Restaurant Promotion for U.S. Beef** – A positive sign of recovery in Taiwan is a 6-week promotion for U.S. beef, beginning in May at four outlets of a western-style steakhouse in Taipei. Jack Brothers' Steakhouse will feature U.S. striploin and will promote the quality attributes of chilled U.S. beef. POS materials and FaceBook ads will support the promotion and content seedings with influencers and through social media platforms.
- **Taiwan: The “Go U.S. Beef” Campaign Kicks Off** – USMEF-Taiwan has kicked off a large-scale campaign for U.S. beef with a promotion at a gourmet meat shop. From May 1 through June 30, U.S. beef is being promoted at four outlets of Thomas Meat, through its online platforms, printed advertisements and on the signage of its delivery trucks. This promotion is the first phase of an extensive and ongoing campaign in Taiwan called "Go U.S. Beef" that will touch all sectors of the market, from importers through retail and foodservice to consumers. To see Thomas Meat's online promotion for U.S. beef, go [here](#).

- **China: Online Campaign Promotes U.S. Beef** -- As home cooking became more and more prevalent and interest grew in healthy and nutritious food in China last month, USMEF-China launched an educational campaign in Shanghai about the versatility and nutritional value of U.S. beef. Product information and recipe ideas for U.S. beef were shared on 10 websites and in an advertisement in the city's largest newspaper. Nutrition and health benefits were highlighted throughout the campaign.
- **Japan: Retail Chain Promotes U.S. Beef** – The second largest retail chain in Japan promoted U.S. beef for one week in April at 158 outlets. Ito Yokado's "American Meat Fair" promoted several U.S. beef cuts, including chuck eye rolls, short plates, striploins, top blade and chuck ribs.
- **Guatemala: Cutting Seminar with Local Distributor** – USMEF conducted a cutting seminar for a target account distributor in Guatemala. The seminar demonstrated portion-control cuts that are better suited to the retail sector, representing a new market direction for the distributor because of COVID-19's impact on the foodservice sector. USMEF demonstrated portion-control cutting for primal cuts such as short loin and bone-in rib eye.
- **Guatemala: A New Channel to Consumers** -- USMEF-Central America is partnering with two target account importers on a new initiative to deliver U.S. meat directly to consumers in Guatemala. USMEF supplied promotional backpack coolers to importers to safely transport the refrigerated U.S. meat items. USMEF also kicked off the new delivery program with a target account in the Dominican Republic and is also looking at the program's feasibility in Panama.
- **Mexico: Consumers, Chefs and Nutritionists Now Online** – With quarantine measures in place, USMEF-Mexico has migrated its popular chef and nutritionist program online. No longer able to place chefs and nutritionists instore, USMEF has made it possible for consumers to sign up for video conferences with them. The video conferences are structured so that consumers will learn about the attributes of high-quality U.S. beef and engage with chefs about proper cooking techniques and recipes for different beef cuts. Two separate programs are being developed with seven chefs, nine nutritionists and several retail chains to promote the programs, which will run from May through December.
- **Hong Kong: Re-Launch Support for Loyal Customers** – USMEF-Hong Kong is working to support the reopening of longtime partner Nebraska Steakhouse through video and digital channels. New neon signage has been developed for the restaurant, which sits in a high foot-traffic area of Wanchai. Nebraska Steakhouse has been a dedicated user of U.S. beef for more than 40 years. USMEF is also helping Frites reopen its six restaurants by producing an advertising video for use in digital platforms to build interest in Frites' new, special menu. USMEF is working with a Hong Kong-based importer/distributor to produce the video, which will be in Cantonese with English subtitles.

- **South Korea: U.S. Beef through E-Commerce** –Travel restrictions and social distancing had more people at home during the May holiday weekend, so USMEF-Korea launched several promotions for U.S. beef on e-commerce sites to boost holiday sales. U.S. beef promotions featured Korean barbecue, steak cuts and steak meal kits on two leading e-commerce sites, while a third site launched a new multi-pack U.S. beef product with three separate U.S. beef cuts and a promotional giveaway.
- **Mexico: Meal Kits for First Responders** – USMEF-Mexico teamed up with Jaso restaurant to deliver meal kits featuring U.S. beef for an entire week to doctors and health care workers experiencing long workdays at the Nutrition Institute in Mexico City. USMEF promoted the meal delivery effort through social media.
- **Mexico: Connecting Retail with Delivery** – USMEF-Mexico is working with Corner Shop and RAPPI, two delivery services that work closely with major retailers such as City Club. USMEF is partnering with both delivery services to promote U.S. beef to consumers directly on their delivery platforms.
- **Korea: Retail promotions for U.S. Beef** – In addition to month-long promotions currently taking place for U.S. beef with six retail chains and 258 outlets, USMEF is conducting U.S. beef promotions with six additional chains and their 23 outlets from mid-April through May 6.
- **Taiwan: U.S. Beef Promoted at Chain** – USMEF-Taiwan is supporting a marketing campaign featuring four U.S. beef products at Hi-Life, a convenience store chain with more than 1,300 outlets in Taiwan. In the campaign, Hi-Life highlights the wet-aged features and high-quality U.S. beef. The products will be introduced at 141 trial stores and will also be available online. USMEF is launching a three-minute video interview with Hi-Life on USMEF's Facebook fan page to support the campaign.
- **China: E-Commerce Promotions** – U.S. beef products are featured on banner pages of JD.com and Womai.com. U.S. beef availability on these two platforms will be highlighted by short videos disseminated via Tik Tok and by a live streaming show. The promotion period is set for April 25 to May 20.
- **Korea: JW Marriott Delivery Service Promotion** – JW Marriott's all-day dining restaurant, Tabolo 24, launched "JW Safe Meal to Go" in partnership with USMEF. The five-star hotel developed a new delivery menu featuring U.S. beef. Along with pickup service, the restaurant also delivers to locations within a radius of 3.5 km from the hotel.
- **Japan: U.S. Beef Recipes on Instagram** – USMEF has initiated a new promotion campaign on Instagram, featuring delicious recipes, attractive images and cheerful messages with U.S. beef dishes. "Today's Dinner" is posted every day at 16:00.
- **Japan: U.S. Beef Burger Challenge** – As part of a more extensive promotional campaign for American burgers, USMEF conducted a social media contest. From more than 800 applicants, USMEF chose 10 food-related Instagram influencers with large

followings to post eye-catching photos and cooking-related articles with American beef hamburgers they prepared. USMEF will carry this hamburger campaign forward into on- and off-line promotions this summer.

- **South Africa: Goodwill Support** – USMEF is gaining goodwill for U.S. red meat by providing hand sanitizers with point-of-sale signage to two retail chains in South Africa. Jwayelani and Chester Butcheries have 60 outlets in South Africa.
- **Mexico: “Pick Up & Go” Retail Promotion** – USMEF-Mexico kicks off a new curbside, order and pickup promotion featuring U.S. beef with the Ramos retail chain next week. Customers will order and pay online, and then the goods are delivered to them in their car in the parking lot. USMEF is also planning Mother's Day and Father's Day promotions for U.S. beef at Ramos outlets.
- **South Korea: Month-Long Retail Promotions for U.S. Beef** – USMEF-Korea supported numerous retail promotions for U.S. beef with target retail chains in Korea through early May. Sixty-five outlets of six target account retail chains promoted U.S. beef from April 2 through May 3.
- **South Korea: Supporting Foodservice Workers** – In a show of support to the foodservice industry, USMEF-Korea provided sanitation gloves and hand sanitizers, with USMEF logos, to six restaurant chains with 258 locations. More than 750,000 nitrile gloves and 10,000 bottles of hand sanitizer were provided on behalf of the U.S. red meat industry.