

AUTHORIZATION REQUEST FOR FY 2022

CBB Budget Category: **Producer Communications**

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

Name of Organization Subcontracting:

Start Date: **10/01/2021**

End Date: **09/30/2022**

AR OVERVIEW

AR Purpose and Description:

The programs defined in this AR align with the Stakeholder Engagement Program Committee's purpose to "*engage beef community stakeholders in programs that enhance understanding of the Beef Checkoff and the advance of the beef industry.*"

The Producer Communications program has recently proven to be more important and central to the success and continuation of the Beef Checkoff than perhaps any other time in recent history. As the key conduit to engage and inform stakeholders in the Checkoff - beef producers and importers - producer communications have provided a consistently strong and nimble platform for disseminating information about both state and national Checkoff efforts.

Having built a strong communication vehicle over the past several years in *The Drive* platform, continuing to strengthen the reach of those publications will continue. A focus on engagement and relationship-building with key stakeholders will move our communications efforts outward toward additional audiences that seek better understanding of how the Checkoff operates, contractor program updates, and clarity around Checkoff misinformation that plagues the beef industry. Specific attention to ag trade media relationships and having producer interviews plus presence in various mediums will carry forward into FY22.

| Funding | Direct Costs | Implementation | Total |
|----------------------------------|--------------|----------------|-------------|
| CBB/BPOC Funding Request: | \$1,575,000 | \$275,000 | \$1,850,000 |

| Other Potential Funding | Direct Costs | Implementation | Total |
|--|--------------|----------------|-------|
| Federation of SBCs Pledges: (Informational Only) | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Other Funding: (Informational Only) | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |

Beef Industry Long Range Plan (LRP) Core Strategies Addressed by this AR

| Drive Growth in Beef Exports | Grow Consumer Trust in Beef Production | Develop & Implement Better Business Models & Value Distribution Across All Segments | Promote & Capitalize on the Multiple Advantage of Beef | Improve the Business & Political Climate of Beef | Safeguard & Cultivate Investment in Beef, Industry Research, Marketing & Innovation |
|------------------------------|--|---|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

PROGRAM INFORMATION FOR THIS AR

Tactic A

Tactic Name: Key Audience Listening and Analytics

Tactic Description:

Actively listening to producers - and key audiences surrounding them - on a national level is what provides a meaningful link between all strategies and tactics outlined in this AR. Listening is done best when communication is clear and efficient. Each effort under this tactic seeks to better identify and understand key audiences, and create more targeted, purposeful messaging that can be shared and leveraged across national and state Checkoff programs.

Quantitative: Key Audience Research and Insights: As the need grows from both state and national Checkoff programs to better understand producers - where they live, what they do, who influences them, what organizations they belong to, their educational background, and even their generational ranching footprint - so too does the need to research and capture as much data and information as possible about our farmers and ranchers. By taking a deeper look at the layers of data surrounding producers and key audiences, we will have the ability to develop even more targeted messaging based on a producer’s own journey and operation. This strategy is important to the growth of

producer communications efforts and overall state and national Checkoff sentiment and understanding. Key research insights will be pulled from a variety of data sources and shared with Checkoff stakeholders to help define how to engage with producers and key audiences most efficiently, and will also inform our messaging and content strategy for FY22 and beyond.

Quantitative: The Producer Attitude Survey (PAS): The annual PAS is a national, quantitative, random, independently guided survey of 1,200 producers. The sample size is a statistically valid representation of producers and participants spread across six regions of the U.S. The annual survey provides valuable benchmarks of producer awareness and affinity for the Checkoff, and it highlights the strengths and weaknesses of ongoing producer communications efforts. Additionally, each Qualified State Beef Council (QSBC) has the opportunity to further fund expansion of this study within its respective state to gain deeper producer insights there. Insights from the PAS will be used as a data source for key audience research in FY22.

Qualitative: Checkoff Communication Roundtable Discussions: Roundtable discussions have continued to be a useful communications platform, bringing industry voices together. In FY21, the roundtables were expanded to include quarterly discussions between QSBCs, national Checkoff contractors and ag trade media groups to share updates, fulfill content needs, and seek program input. In June 2021, the Producer Communications program hosted a roundtable of livestock market owners at the Livestock Marketing Association (LMA) annual convention in Nashville, TN. In FY22, we will build off progress made in FY21 by continuing these roundtables to engage with QSBCs, contractors and now livestock markets, and seek further opportunities to gather insights from other important groups inside and out of the Checkoff.

Qualitative: Direct Producer Listening: Simply listening to producers is important. We will continue to seek out producers for individual listening efforts in a way that is convenient for them, so we can better understand what their experiences are with the Checkoff and what shapes their perceptions of it. For the tactic of Direct Producer Listening, we will expand our efforts to listen and review producer feedback in the digital space through the Checkoff website, ongoing digital surveys, tracking and organizing organic producer calls that are received, exploring roundtable opportunities to help inform key audience research, and by strategically attending events where producers gather.

Listening Tools: Our program has sophisticated monitoring systems and media analytics built into our channels for social media, print, digital and websites. These analytics provide context around a specific message's public impact and visibility. These analytics reports provide a 360-degree view of current topics, real-time monitoring, and provide quarterly communications analytics for the Producer Communications program.

Measurable Objectives

(For tactics \$100,000 or less two measurable objectives are required, and for tactics over \$100,000 at least three to five measurable objectives are required by the Checkoff Evaluation Committee):

1. Plan, develop and share insights from one key audience research initiative to define how to engage with producers and key audiences most efficiently.
2. Conduct one independent, national quantitative study/survey of producers to gauge input and sentiment of the Beef Checkoff and the PC program.
3. Conduct four roundtable discussions across QSBCs, Contractors, Brand Inspectors, and Livestock Markets to seek feedback into the PC program and provide updates.

Performance Efficiency Measures

Producer Reach Goal: 12,332

Producer Engagement Goal: 1,307

Key Opinion Leader Reach Goal: 2,318

Key Opinion Leader Engagement Goal: 634

LRP Initiatives Addressed by this Tactic ****SEE NOTE BELOW FROM CONTRACTOR**

| Drive Growth in Beef Exports | Grow Consumer Trust in Beef Production | Develop & Implement Better Business Models & Value Distribution Across All Segments | Promote & Capitalize on the Multiple Advantage of Beef | Improve the Business & Political Climate of Beef | Safeguard & Cultivate Investment in Beef, Industry Research, Marketing & Innovation |
|---|---|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drive adoption of traceability <input type="checkbox"/> Identify & address export customer needs and values <input type="checkbox"/> Collaborate with targeted partners to promote U.S. beef in foreign markets <input type="checkbox"/> Invest in research, marketing & education programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Measure, document, improve & communicate the net environment impact of beef production <input type="checkbox"/> Educate medical, diet & health professionals about beef & beef production <input type="checkbox"/> Align and collaborate with traditional & nontraditional partners to tell the positive story of beef production <input type="checkbox"/> Engage positively in the sustainable nutrition conversation <input type="checkbox"/> Expand efforts in education the general public about BQA program & it's impact on animal well-being <input type="checkbox"/> Expand BQA program to include verification <input type="checkbox"/> Develop a direct-to-consumer beef safety campaign | <input type="checkbox"/> Use innovative methods & technologies to value carcasses based on eating satisfaction & red meat yield | <input type="checkbox"/> Promote the role of beef in a health & sustainable diet <input type="checkbox"/> Implement a marketing campaign that communicates beef's advantage compared to alternative proteins <input type="checkbox"/> Develop targeted marketing programs focused on the highest opportunity market segments <input type="checkbox"/> Cultivate collaborative promotion partnerships <input type="checkbox"/> Promote innovative online marketing, packaging & shipping solutions to enable the direct marketing of beef <input type="checkbox"/> Engage consumers in a memorable beef eating experience <input type="checkbox"/> Develop a more interactive & exciting beef purchasing experience <input type="checkbox"/> Promote underutilized beef cuts & new variety meat product | <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate beef's positive sustainability message & key role in regenerative agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> Defend beef's product identity <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure beef's inclusion in dietary recommendations <input type="checkbox"/> Drive continuous improvement in food safety <input type="checkbox"/> Develop crisis management plans | <input type="checkbox"/> Attract innovative & intellectual capital into the beef industry <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage the cooperation & collaboration of existing industry advisory committees to identify & prioritize research efforts |

****While the full Beef Industry Long Range Plan mentions the need to add further industry attention to the Beef Checkoff and its programs, the LRP Initiatives listed above do not feature producer communications as part of the needs of the Checkoff for FY22.**

The Purpose Statement of the Stakeholder Engagement Program Committee reads “Engage beef community stakeholders in programs that enhance understanding of the Beef Checkoff and advance the beef industry”. The Cattlemen’s Beef Board submits this tactic under the premise that it meets the full purpose of this committee.

Committee(s) to Score this Tactic

| Consumer Trust | Domestic Marketing | International Marketing | Nutrition & Health | Safety & Product Innovation | Stakeholder Engagement |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Tactic B

Tactic Name: Integrated Producer Communications Platform

Tactic Description:

Every communications effort needs a strong mechanism to push out information - and the Integrated Producer Communications Platform is the machine for all-things Checkoff. A multi-channel publishing platform, housing *The Drive*, *The Drive in Five*, social media properties, the Checkoff website, multimedia campaigns, and more, this tactic focuses on the expansion of the producer reach and recall of the Checkoff. Focus in FY22 will be on expansion of visibility for all pieces for *The Drive* platform, demonstrating growth of outreach to producers.

The Drive Publishing Platform: At the center of the Producer Communications efforts is *The Drive*. A multi-channel publishing platform that includes a quarterly print newsletter, *The Drive in Five* quarterly video segments, online at DrivingDemandforBeef.com, regular eNewsletters, social channels like Facebook, YouTube, and LinkedIn, and serves as our base for communication about Checkoff programming and education. Since establishing the producer-focused publishing platform *The Drive* three years ago, the Producer Communications program has been able to greatly expand its reach to producers and key audiences across the country.

In FY22, the focus will remain on platform growth and consistent, quality content. By increasing the total number of producers reached, we will expand Checkoff visibility, and the overall footprint and recall of Checkoff efforts. Consistently creating quality, educational and relevant content and stories gives producers the access to the information needed - in the format they prefer - and keeps them engaged.

A critical part of *The Drive* is the state/national partnership with Qualified State Beef Councils (QSBCs). Throughout FY21, *The Drive* partnered with more than 30 QSBCs to share state content through the national distribution channels - via eNewsletters with state-specific modules, and/or with stand-alone paper inserts, mailed inside the national quarterly printed editions of *The Drive* newsletters. This partnership provides valuable,

cost-effective opportunities for QSBCs to extend their messages to a broader producer audience within their state, along with providing more local breadth to the national Checkoff content, too.

Producer Awareness and Engagement Campaign: Capitalizing on our key audience research and insights effort in Tactic A, we will use limited, targeted paid media to reach those producers across the country that lack an understanding of the Checkoff and the value it provides to them as producers. A strategy for this paid media is to make the ads feel more organic: a paid radio segment that sounds like an interview featuring a board member; a print advertorial or column - written by a producer of our choosing; or digital stories placed specifically to lead back to DrivingDemandForBeef.com.

As the direction of paid media shifts to be less about traditional ads and more about content placement, we will evaluate the campaign efforts. The nationally award-winning *Your Dollar Does* multi-faceted Checkoff ad campaign features producer portraits from across the country paired with strong statements about the Checkoff's successes. This campaign has been well-received in-market since the campaign launched in FY19. To maintain resonance and proper visibility, in FY22 we will test additional concepts for this campaign with producers.

The Hub: The newly updated online platform *The Hub* allows QSBCs, Cattlemen's Beef Board members, Federation of State Beef Council Directors, and Checkoff Contractors access to ready-made and customizable PC marketing materials that have been USDA-approved through a convenient and secure online portal. New materials are added every month - from collateral materials like Checkoff-wide program update pocket cards and private-treaty fliers, to articles, print ads, graphics, and regional photography assets. This ensures easy replication and alignment of Checkoff messaging and content assets across state and national entities.

Through collaboration with the CBB, *The Hub* now also contains key information for new board members to access when onboarding; Checkoff collections compliance; educational materials and presentations about the Checkoff; and important regulatory and branding information that may be used throughout state and national partners.

Measurable Objectives

(For tactics \$100,000 or less two measurable objectives are required, and for tactics over \$100,000 at least three to five measurable objectives are required by the Checkoff Evaluation Committee):

1. Maintain a base distribution and focus on growth in *The Drive* print and email subscribers by 10%, based on the FY21 Q3 benchmark.
2. Develop and distribute four episodes of *The Drive in Five*, utilizing our publishing platform channels including *The Drive* eNewsletters, Checkoff social media properties, *Beef Brief*, and DrivingDemandForBeef.com.

3. Distribute state-specific content through *The Drive* print and email platforms for an average of 15 QSBCs per quarter.

Performance Efficiency Measures

Producer Reach Goal: 4,224,268

Producer Engagement Goal: 6,021

Key Opinion Leader Reach Goal: 17,432

Key Opinion Leader Engagement Goal: 3,200

LRP Initiatives Addressed by this Tactic ****SEE NOTE BELOW FROM CONTRACTOR**

| Drive Growth in Beef Exports | Grow Consumer Trust in Beef Production | Develop & Implement Better Business Models & Value Distribution Across All Segments | Promote & Capitalize on the Multiple Advantage of Beef | Improve the Business & Political Climate of Beef | Safeguard & Cultivate Investment in Beef, Industry Research, Marketing & Innovation |
|---|---|---|---|--|--|
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Purpose Statement of the Stakeholder Engagement Program Committee reads “Engage beef community stakeholders in programs that enhance understanding of the Beef Checkoff and advance the beef industry”. The Cattlemen’s Beef Board submits this tactic under the premise that it meets the full purpose of this committee.

Committee(s) to Score this Tactic

| Consumer Trust | Domestic Marketing | International Marketing | Nutrition & Health | Safety & Product Innovation | Stakeholder Engagement |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Tactic C

Tactic Name: Industry Collaboration and Outreach

Tactic Description:

The thirty-five-year-old Beef Checkoff program plays a key role in developing demand for beef amid an increasingly competitive protein market both in the U.S. and abroad. However, a generation of producers have been born and raised since the Checkoff was first implemented in 1986, and many do not fully understand the important role the Checkoff plays in the industry.

The goal of this tactic is to communicate the Checkoff’s efforts in driving beef demand by connecting key Checkoff voices with those who can amplify the message -- especially trade media and industry influencers.

CBB Thought Leadership & Checkoff Spokesperson Development: While producer communication efforts continue to work diligently at connecting with producers, many still don’t understand how the Beef Checkoff works or who manages the program. This knowledge gap provides an opportunity for opposition groups to distort the truth and further misconceptions about the Checkoff and the beef industry as a whole.

Past years have established the CBB and Federation Officer teams, Checkoff committee leadership, and CBB staff as key thought leaders when representing the Checkoff. By identifying, developing and positioning these key thought leaders for speaking opportunities around the country, and as resources for print, online and radio interviews, as well as on social media, we can educate beef industry stakeholders and present the Checkoff in the most positive manner. Extensive media training and spokesperson development programs will continue for these individuals, supporting their knowledge of how to tackle important issues that arise seemingly during every event and interview about the Checkoff program.

Media Relations: Developing relationships with editors and broadcasters is critical for earned media coverage. A strong media relations effort can support the authentic

partnership of transparent communications, foster media relationships and help tell the Beef Checkoff story. It also helps ensure that editors and broadcasters include CBB execs and members when developing their own stories about current topics affecting the beef industry. Access may include the opportunity to interview board members and state executives to demonstrate their commitment to the programming of the Checkoff and the beef industry at large. We will continue to provide ag trade media with data and valuable access to regional or local Checkoff insiders to ensure that they are able to present their producer audiences with the most transparent and accurate program information, as well as their own personal perspectives as cattle producers.

Ag Trade Media Roundtables: In previous years, the Producer Communications program brought together several virtual roundtables with ag trade media, including print, radio, broadcast, podcast and television representation. These roundtables provided very specific feedback from editors and key media contacts about what their audiences want to hear from the Beef Checkoff and what types of content are most in demand for their channels. Their feedback was positive about our past and current efforts, but the media also pointed out some areas of improvement, like providing more authentic producer voices for interviews and other opportunities. In FY22, we will follow-up with a new set of media roundtables to again seek input and benchmark improvement since last year.

Industry Outreach: In FY22, we will communicate with those who communicate with producers. We will align and collaborate with traditional and non-traditional partners to tell the positive story of beef cattle production. This year our efforts will focus primarily on outreach to livestock auction markets and brand inspectors across the country. Together with QSBCs, we will develop an engaging, customizable outreach program that can be used at the state level, with materials, talking points, best practices, videos, and in-person meetings. As we develop and implement this program, we will seek feedback from QSBCs and livestock markets / brand inspectors to determine how we can improve it.

Additionally, we will define and identify other industry thought leaders outside of the Checkoff and explore how to best build relationships with them to expand our messaging. Once we've established these relationships, we will provide training modules on Checkoff basics and program successes so that these new grassroots spokespeople can be activated on behalf of the Checkoff.

Measurable Objectives

(For tactics \$100,000 or less two measurable objectives are required, and for tactics over \$100,000 at least three to five measurable objectives are required by the Checkoff Evaluation Committee):

1. Conduct 4 media training and Checkoff spokesperson development sessions reaching new board members, CBB officers, Checkoff program committee co-chairs, QSBC executives and staff, and Checkoff stakeholders.
2. Grow total number of Checkoff media hits across ag-industry print and broadcast by 8% over FY21 Q3 benchmark.
3. Conduct one focus-group style roundtable of ag-industry trade media individuals, consisting of at least 10 participants spanning various types of media.
4. Develop a set of 4 shareable materials for use by QSBCs and Checkoff spokespeople when engaging with livestock markets and brand inspectors.

Performance Efficiency Measures

Producer Reach Goal: 29,388,836

Producer Engagement Goal: n/a

Key Opinion Leader Reach Goal: 1,097

Key Opinion Leader Engagement Goal: 436

LRP Initiatives Addressed by this Tactic ****SEE NOTE BELOW FROM CONTRACTOR**

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Committee(s) to Score this Tactic

| Consumer Trust | Domestic Marketing | International Marketing | Nutrition & Health | Safety & Product Innovation | Stakeholder Engagement |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION FOR THIS AR

1. Please explain changes from FY 2021 approved AR:

The work described in the tactics above build heavily on past PC ARs with enhancements and new additions. We will fully launch a new platform called *The Drive In Five* video series to reach as many producers as possible in their communication channel of preference. Additionally, we’re building in avenues for greater collaboration with the QSBCs and livestock markets and brand inspectors via enhanced listening efforts and content support.

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

Swanson Russell – agency support and strategic council
 Luce Research – annual Producer Attitude Survey
 Flywheel - Website hosting
 Dot Digital- Email Service Provider
 Regal- Printing services
 High Plains Communications – sponsorship and outreach support

**3. Will all work with vendors/agencies be competitively bid?
 If not, why not?**

Yes. Cattlemen’s Beef Board routinely goes to RFP for competitive vendor and agency contracts.

4. Please list any relationships between this AR and projects previously funded by the Beef Promotion Operating Committee (BPOC):

The Producer Communications program began at the start of the Beef Checkoff. The authorizing legislation, the Beef Promotion and Research Act of 1985, 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 to meet this requirement of the Act. While the strategy in FY22 is a continuing effort to remain relevant to the beef industry and our Checkoff-paying producers, the function of informing producers about their Checkoff investment remains the core of this program.

5. If applicable, explain how this AR can be extended by State Beef Councils.

Nearly every tactic and measurable objective in the Authorization Request works alongside State Beef Councils to ensure producers become informed and educated to all-things Checkoff. Special attention has been given over the past two fiscal years in providing efficiencies between national and state producer communications efforts, and to share resources as much as possible.

DETAILED BUDGET SUMMARY

AR# 2250-PC

CBB/BPOC Funding Request:

| Committee Name | Tactic | Tactic Name | Funding Source | Direct | Impl. | Total |
|-------------------------------|---------------|---|-----------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| <i>Stakeholder Engagement</i> | A | Key Audience Listening Platform | BPOC | \$ 100,000 | \$ 85,000 | \$ 185,000 |
| <i>Stakeholder Engagement</i> | B | Integrated Producer Communications Platform | BPOC | \$ 1,370,000 | \$ 105,000 | \$ 1,475,000 |
| <i>Stakeholder Engagement</i> | C | Industry Collaboration and Outreach | BPOC | \$ 105,000 | \$ 85,000 | \$ 190,000 |
| AR Totals | | | | \$ 1,575,000 | \$ 275,000 | \$ 1,850,000 |

Federation of SBCs Pledges/Other Funding: (Informational Only)

| Committee Name | Tactic | Tactic Name | Funding Source | Direct | Impl. | Total |
|-------------------------------|---------------|---|-----------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| <i>Stakeholder Engagement</i> | A | Key Audience Listening Platform | Federation/ Other | | | \$ - |
| <i>Stakeholder Engagement</i> | B | Integrated Producer Communications Platform | Federation/ Other | | | \$ - |
| <i>Stakeholder Engagement</i> | C | Industry Collaboration and Outreach | Federation/ Other | | | \$ - |
| AR Totals | | | | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |

Summary of Prior Year AR Budgets and Expenses:

AR# 2250-PC

| FY 2021 Approved Budgets | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------|-------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|
| | CBB/BPOC | FSBCs | Other Source(s) | Total | Direct Cost | Impl. | Total |
| AR Totals | \$ 1,689,915 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 1,689,915 | \$ 1,439,915 | \$ 250,000 | \$ 1,689,915 |

| FY 2021 Actual Expenses (through June 30, 2021) | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------|-------|-----------------|--------------|-------------|------------|--------------|
| | CBB/BPOC | FSBCs | Other Source(s) | Total | Direct Cost | Impl. | Total |
| AR Totals | \$ 1,081,212 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 1,081,212 | \$ 980,391 | \$ 100,821 | \$ 1,081,212 |

Historical Summary of Budgets and Expense: *(includes all funding sources listed in original AR)*

| | Total Approved Budgets | | | Total Actual Expenses | | |
|-----------|------------------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | FY 2020 | FY 2019 | FY 2018 | FY 2020 | FY 2019 | FY 2018 |
| AR Totals | \$ 1,645,993 | \$ 1,700,000 | \$ 1,100,000 | \$ 1,621,479 | \$ 1,699,485 | \$ 1,099,405 |