The Beef Quality Assurance Program’s mission is to maximize consumer confidence in and acceptance of beef by focusing the producer’s attention to daily production practices that influence the safety, wholesomeness and quality of beef and beef products through the use of science, research and education initiatives.
MOTIVATING FACTORS FOR PRODUCERS

- Doing the right thing
- Learning – management/self improvement
- Economic benefit
- Consumer perceptions/confidence
- Supply Chain requirements
- My boss/wife said I had to
Effect of “BQA” Mention in Lot Descriptions of Cattle Sold in Video Auctions on Sale Price
Jason Ahola, Dan Mooney, Libby Bigler
Ryan Rhoades, and Lily Edwards-Callaway

Prompted by CattleFax *Trends* 3/2018
survey based claims:
“Operations trained in BQA principles and BQA certified… received $42/head more per calf sold…”

“If the operations… have a vaccination program in place and are BQA certified… the calves receive $12/cwt more…”
Peer Reviewed Paper to Come

- Mention of BQA in video auction cattle lots was present, but limited (~3 to 8%).
- Mention of BQA has varied by year, state, class of cattle, and method / phrasing.
- BQA-related wording is often unclear, inconsistent, and BQA status was not verified.
- Among cattle with a BQA mention, an average premium of $16 ± 6 per head was identified in beef calves and feeder cattle as compared to no mention, and holding other factors constant.

Mooney, Daniel and Ahola, Jason. Colorado State Univ. Presentation at 2019 Cattle Industry Summer Conference
BEEF COWS THAT CALVED JANUARY 1, 2019
(1000 Head)

Livestock Marketing Information Center
Data Source: USDA-NASS

US Total 31766

03/04/19
Value of Production, Top 10 Commodities, 2017 ($ billions)

Change in Value, 2012 to 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commodity</th>
<th>TVP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cattle and calves</td>
<td>77.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corn*</td>
<td>51.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poultry and eggs*</td>
<td>49.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soybeans</td>
<td>40.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk</td>
<td>36.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruits, tree nuts, berries</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hogs and pigs*</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, sod*</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheat*</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>35.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Statistically significant difference from 2012
Average Age of Producers

All Producers, by County, 2017

All and Primary Producers, 2002 - 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Primary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>53.2</td>
<td>55.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td>57.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>56.3</td>
<td>58.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>59.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

U.S. = 57.5
Young Producers (Age 35 years or less), 2017

As a Percent of All, by County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Producers</th>
<th>Young</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>321,261</td>
<td>3,399,834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average age</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>57.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farms</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>240,121</td>
<td>2,042,220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average farm size (acres)</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average TVP</td>
<td>$273,522</td>
<td>$190,245</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Producers by Sex, 2017

Female Producers as a Percent of Total

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>1,227,461</td>
<td>2,172,373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average age</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>57.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Farms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>1,139,675</td>
<td>1,867,308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average farm size (acres)</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average TVP</td>
<td>$129,792</td>
<td>$204,513</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Beef Community

• Most **unique and complex** lifecycle of any food, includes variety of segments
• Takes **2-3 years** to bring beef from farm to fork
• **882,692 total cattle & calf operations.** Of these:
  • **729,046** are **cow/calf and stocker/backgrounder cattle farms and ranches** – of these, **91% are family owned** or individually operated. Of these, **31.5% principally operated by women.**
  • **25,776** are engaged in **cattle feedlot production** – of these, **80% are family owned** or individually operated. Of these, **12% operated by women.**
  • **54,599 milk cow operations**
• Average beef cow herd is **43 head of cattle**
• **Feedlots with less than 1,000 head** of capacity compose the vast majority of U.S. feedlots
• **Feedlots with greater than 1,000 head of cattle account for more than 77% of the beef inventory**
• **57.4 years of age** is the average age of a principle beef cattle rancher

Source: 2017 Ag Census  [https://www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus/index.php](https://www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus/index.php)
Key Ag Census Takeaways for Beef Cattle

- Average beef cow/calf herd size = 43.5 cows (total cows/total cattle producers)
- 36% of farms have beef cattle on them (by far the widest scope of any commodity)
- 62% of beef cows on farms with < than 200 hd
- 27% < 25 head and 44% < 100 head
- Farm/Producer data matches NASS Cattle Inventory data
PRODUCER PREFERENCES ON TRAINING

What are your most preferred means of receiving training and accessing training material?

- **E-learning**: #1, 2.24 ARP
- **Off-site, in-person seminars/workshops**: #2, 2.46 ARP
- **On-site, hands-on workshops**: #3, 2.57 ARP
- **Webinars**: #4, 2.74 ARP

Merck Cattle Care & Well-being Survey Report 2018
- 755 respondents
- Cow-calf (47%)
- Stocker (8%)
- Feedyard (14%)
- Beef Vet (19%)
- Nutritionist (2%)

Producer Communications: Social Media is Not the Answer

- 54% say they don’t recall anything about the Beef Checkoff Program, the highest since the surveys started asking this in 2013
- Producers say they rely upon printed information such as ag newspapers, magazines or newsletters (92%) or beef or dairy association printed publications (73%) to help run their operation
- Only 24% of producers say they rely on social media or agricultural apps to manage their operation

From Question 9 of the January 2018 Beef Producer Attitude Study (Weighted Percentage Distributions) conducted by Aspen Media
PAST ADS

JOIN THE TEAM!
Get BQA-certified!

Is BQA certification on your to-do list?
It's free, convenient and available online, anytime.

By becoming Beef Quality Assurance (BQA)-certified, you have a positive story to tell consumers that can increase their understanding — and confidence — in how you’re raising a safe, wholesome and healthy beef supply. It’s a consumer-friendly story, and an opportunity to add more value to cattle by implementing the very latest in best management practices. Get certified! Visit BQA.org.

FREE BQA CERTIFICATION
BQA.ORG

BQA IS MY STORY.
WHAT'S YOURS?

Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) is my consumer-friendly story to tell. Becoming BQA-certified allows us to share our story and ensure consumers that we are responsibly raising a safe, wholesome, and healthy beef supply. The checkoffs BQA practices show us the best management practices for handling cattle, lending to their health, and taking care of the environment.

Now, thanks to a partnership with Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica, Inc. — you and your employees — can earn a FREE BQA certification online from Sept. 15 through Nov. 20, 2015.

FREE Certification
Visit bqa.org/tean to sign up today!
NEW ADS

Doing Things the Right Way. Even When No One is Lookin.

Take the next step. Get BQA certified at BQA.org.

You’re not in the business of phoning it in. Quitting early.

Prove it by becoming BQA certified at BQA.org.
Who is LMA?

- National trade organization for livestock marketing businesses.
- LMA represents over 75% of the regularly selling livestock auction markets (i.e. sale barns / stockyards) in the U.S.
Where can you find LMA Members?
Volume of Livestock Sold

Largest volume of sales are cattle

• 32 Million Head of Cattle Sold Annually
  • Fed Cattle (13% of total purchases by packers)
  • Feeder/Stock Stocker Calves (60-65% of all sales)
  • Slaughter Cows/Bulls (80% of all sales)
  • Breeding Stock (Cows, Bulls, Replacement Heifers)

• 7 Million Hogs

• 3 Million Sheep and lambs

89% of cattle producers use auctions to market at least some of their animals.
Producers Role in Animal Handling at Auctions

Proper handling starts on the farm

“Don’t bring problems to town”

• Timely culling decisions
Consignor / Livestock Owner Certificates

• Tool for auctions to collect seller declarations at the time of consignment.
  • Outside withdraw time frame for drug residues
  • Consignor is not on the USDA/FSIS Residue Repeat Violator List
  • Federal Food, Drug & Cosmetic Act compliance
  • No foreign materials and not fed mammalian tissue
  • Country of origin of livestock
  • Handled in compliance with industry standards
  • BOA/FARM/YQCA certified seller for fed cattle destined to slaughter

• As agents for the livestock seller, the auctions remain protective of their seller lists.

• Auctions collect Consignor Livestock Owner Certificates – We ask that Packers requesting affidavits provide the language recognizing the auctions as agent.
LMA Animal Handling Programs

- 2008: Released 1st Version of Guidelines
- 2009: 2nd Party Assessment
- 2010: Online Training with BCI
- 2014: Began 3rd Party Assessments with Validus & Released Updated Guidelines
- 2012: Membership Required Guidelines & Assessment
- 2014: Recognized by Tyson Farm Check for Auctions
- 2018: Released Updated Guidelines
Focus of the LMA Programs

• Animal Movement & Proper Use of Tools
• Maintaining Surfaces, Pens, Gates, and Temperature Control
• Working with Injured Animals
• Safe & Responsible Euthanasia Across All Species Handled
• Business Policy, Self Assessment, Employee Training
Assessments & Training Focused on Opportunities for Improvement

- 87.5% of member auctions have had at least a 2\textsuperscript{nd} party assessment
- 25% of members have had multiple 2\textsuperscript{nd} party assessments
- 5% of member auctions are assessed by 3\textsuperscript{rd} party annually
Motivations for Market Assessment & Training

- It’s the right thing to do
- Employee safety efforts
- Buyer expectations
- Producer expectations
- My LMA Rep offered me training opportunities

LMA member auctions are REQUIRED to participate in 2nd party assessment of handling practices
Training and Education Preferences

Auction Staff
- In Person
- Arena, Café or Alleyway

Consignors / Livestock Sellers
- Still a need for in person & offline training
- Our BQA wish list includes access to more trainers
- Time... Often unloading is their first introduction to a new training effort
BQA: Going Beyond Producers
Consumers Want Info

Familiarity with How Cattle are Raised

- 24%

Consider How Food Was Raised/Grown

- Sometimes: 26%
- Often/Always: 42%

Source: Consumer Beef Tracker based on June 2018 – April 2019 Data
Unaidedly, animal welfare issues rise to the top of concerns with cattle production, specific topics are low.

Source: Consumer Beef Tracker April-June 2019 Data; coded open end verbatims from consumers
Responsible Beef Exploratory Research

Objectives

Understand consumer perceptions on food and beef production

Understand consumer reactions to BQA

Understand the most relevant and effective ways to communicate BQA and “Responsibly Raised” message

Understand consumer reactions to 2 potential storyboards to be produced into videos

Methodology

9 Focus Groups in 3 regional cities

Survey among 1,003 consumers

2 Online Discussion Boards with 95 Consumers

Source: 2018 Responsible Beef Exploration
Low Knowledge Level

A portion of consumers believe cattle live in confinement all of their lives, and most consumers have little knowledge of how cattle are raised.

Source: 2018 Responsible Beef Exploration
**BQA MATERIALS EVALUATED**

**DESCRIPTION**

Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) is a certification program that educates beef farmers and ranchers on best management practices for raising cattle. These include Care and Well-Being Guidelines, Animal Handling Principles, Transportation Guidelines, Antibiotic Use guidelines etc. The program emphasizes responsible cattle management in an effort to improve beef safety and quality.

**FACTS**

80% of beef cattle are raised under BQA guidelines during their lifetime.

BQA provides robust guidelines on a variety of topics. For example, the program includes a 14 point antibiotic use guideline, ensuring farmers and ranchers judiciously use animal health products.

There are currently over 180,000 verified beef producers that participate in BQA.

The BQA program has a network of hundreds of state coordinators and trainers, as well as online modules, designed to educate farmers and ranchers on the program.

For 30 years, the program has remained steadfast in reviewing the latest research in cattle health and well-being in an effort to remain relevant and impactful in continuously improving beef quality and safety.

Source: 2018 Responsible Beef Exploration; messages are for testing purposes and consumer reaction only
Impact of BQA

Learning about BQA made consumers more confident in safety and animal welfare, while also showing potential to represent the industry.

Source: 2018 Responsible Beef Exploration
Perceptions of Cattle Raising Improved

Perception Of How Cattle Are Raised For Food

Positive perceptions improved by 26 points after exposure to BQA

C1a. What is your perception of how cattle are raised for food? Please select one response.
B11. Now after everything you have read about the Beef Quality Assurance Program, what is your perception of how cattle are raised for food?
BQA to Consumers

• Consumer facing video and supporting content: https://www.beefitswhatsfordinner.com/raising-beef/beef-quality-assurance
BQA Video Test

Background: Better understand consumer reactions and feedback on video ads focused on introducing BQA to consumers.

Methodology:

• Online Surveys with interest tracking
• 700 beef consumers viewed the video, balanced to major demo’s
Beef Perception Shift

Consumers felt better about how cattle are raised after watching the video

Source: Responsible Beef Video Test n=700

What is your perception of how cattle are raised for food in the U.S.
Overall Sentiment

The majority of consumers like the video with almost all having a positive initial reaction.

82% had a positive overall sentiment towards the video.

92% had a positive comment in initial reactions to the video.

"This video portrayed the raising of beef in a serene and welcoming way. It showed how people are choosing to raise cattle because they are already trying to do it the best they can."

Source: Responsible Beef Video Test n=700

Considering everything you saw, how much did you like or dislike the ad?
Interest Tracking

The video had a consistent increase in interest with a jump at the BIWFD slogan and Rodeo music.

Source: Responsible Beef Video Test n=700
Interest Tracking

Animal welfare scenes increased interest the most for consumers while the majority had nothing that decreased it.

- Animal Welfare: 32%
- Right Way is the Only Way: 9%
- Room to Roam: 8%
- BIWFD: 5%

Source: Responsible Beef Video Test n=700

Thinking about the ad you just saw, what part did your interest increase the most?
Brand Awareness

Awareness is high after watching the video

Source: Responsible Beef Video Test n=700

What brand was this ad for?
Word Associations

The BQA video does a great job delivering the quality messaging in an interesting authentic way.

Source: Responsible Beef Video Test n=700
Clarity of Explaining BQA

After reading the BQA description, almost all consumers felt the ads clearly described BQA 94%

94% said the Video Explains BQA Clearly after reading program definition

"BQA does more than just help beef producers capture more value from their market cattle: BQA also reflects a positive public image and instills consumer confidence in the beef industry."

"It means that farmers are trained on how to properly raise cattle. Whether that be with the food they feed them, the space they have, and how they are treated."

Source: Responsible Beef Video Test n=700
QUESTIONS?

Maybe we have an answer???