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Statement
Beef Checkoff Enhancement Working Group Efforts

By Bob McCan
President, National Cattlemen's Beef Association

As contractors to the national Beef Checkoff Program, the National Cattlemen's Beef Association is proud of our contributions to the \$11.20 return on the \$1-per-head investment all U.S. cattle producers make in the effort. Furthermore, we remain committed to making the program as efficient, effective and accountable to producers as it can be.

For the past few years we have met with other industry groups in an effort to find ways to enhance the program to be an even better tool for producer profitability. There have been honest differences of opinion as we deliberated on various methods for achieving that end.

For instance, it was suggested that the rules governing the Beef Checkoff Program be relaxed to allow newer organizations to contract for checkoff work. That was suggested to the Secretary of Agriculture, and today there are dozens of organizations eligible to submit projects to the Beef Promotion Operating Committee for funding consideration. A new joint committee structure with only federation and CBB members, no policy organization representation, has also been implemented that is focused on protecting and increasing beef demand.

We remain committed to our state beef council partners, their involvement in the Federation of State Beef Councils division, and the structure that allows us to work together as a team. It is this grassroots involvement that was envisioned by crafters of the Beef Checkoff Act & Order, and was supported by a nearly 4-1 vote in the referendum that made the Beef Checkoff Program permanent in 1988.

Producer support for the program is at 78 percent today, with eight of 10 producers saying the beef checkoff has contributed to a positive trend in beef demand. Surveys show the vast majority of checkoff payers recognize the value of their beef checkoff investment in product and nutrition research, promotion and consumer education.

We will continue to work with other industry organizations to look for ways to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of the program. However, we should be careful about jeopardizing a beef checkoff that has overwhelming support from producers, and is having terrific success domestically and internationally.