Marketing Plan Fiscal Year 2017

This work plan supports the vision and mission of the Beef Industry Long Range Plan (LRP) by reaching the Millennial audience and focusing on the essential demand drivers of image, health & nutrition, convenience, and safety; all while seeking the industry's transparency and consumer trust.

Mission Statement

The Virginia Beef Industry Council enhances consumer preference for beef and sustains Virginia families.

Target Audiences

VBIC's primary target audience is consumers, and specifically the older millennial parent (age 25-34). This demographic is the largest growing age group in America, with an estimated 80% of America's purchasing power by year 2020. This age group is also determining whether the next generation of children will be beef-consumers, so their influence is two-fold.

VBIC will appeal to the older millennial parents directly and by way of Influencer Channels. Channels include nutritionists, fitness professionals, bloggers, retail/foodservice/point-of-sale outlets, media, and any other audience that impacts the primary target audience's decisions about beef.

This work plan supports project areas that directly and measurably increase beef demand for this target audience by way of the following priority areas.

PRIORITY AREAS

Beef's Image

Beef's Image strives to strengthen the image of the beef community and how beef is brought from pasture to plate. Program emphasis for this area will focus on proactively advocating for the beef industry and various production systems, with an emphasis of how these production systems affect the final beef product. The goal for this area is to shift mindsets or incorrect assumptions about the beef product or industry.

Expected Areas of Focus:
- Farm-to-fork tours for influencers, consumer groups, media personnel
- Sharing producer stories, such as Meat Your Producer website section
- Beef Quality Assurance (BQA); increasing participation amongst producers and sharing that story with the consumer
- Masters of Beef Advocacy graduate & other advocate group activations/training
- Team Beef

Beef's Health & Nutrition

This priority area enhances consumer knowledge of the positive health and nutritional benefits of beef. Specifically, how beef can sustain Virginia families as a nutrient-dense food source.

Expected Areas of Focus:
- Health, nutrition, and fitness events
- Beef nutrition trainings and workshops for RDs and other health influencers
- Social media posts highlighting lean cut options and healthy preparation/recipes
- Team Beef
- Bold Diet information dissemination and training
- Sponsoring nutritionist guest speakers at highly influential conferences, etc

Beef's Convenience

Beef's Convenience fulfills consumer expectations for beef selection, preparation, versatility, and ease-of-use.

Expected Areas of Focus:
- Cooking classes geared towards easy meal-time solutions
- Social media posts highlighting the 30 meals in 30 minutes campaign, cook-once-dine-twice recipes, etc.
- Jerky partnerships to promote beef as a convenient, portable protein option
- Promotions with retailers for the grab-and-go and ready-made sections
- Partnerships with chefs to develop Virginia-specific recipes that meet needs for quick-and-easy meals
- Product Innovation support to outside companies/studies
- Local beef directory and beef-buying resources

Beef's Safety

This priority seeks to continually improve consumer confidence in food safety of beef, and educate consumers about the practices of food safety in the home after purchase.

Expected Areas of Focus:
- Retail/Foodservice: food safety information, partnerships for plant tours, discussions about training staff to address food safety with consumers
- Programs for cooking and public education about food safety tips, use of thermometers, etc.
- Highlighting programs like VQA and BQA that emphasize a healthy end product
- Digital Marketing
  - Including, but not limited to: social media posts about safe food handling
  - Discussion about freezing/thawing beef

        o   Local beef directory/buying resources about safe storage times for beef

Implementation

Programs

Program work shall be implemented by VBIC staff and in partnership opportunities that arise throughout the fiscal year. All program work will be measurable and meet priority requirements as set forth by the Board of Directors. Reports of program effectiveness, cost justifications, measurements, and successes will be required and reported back to the board at physical meetings and through newsletters.

Additionally, outside parties may apply for grant funding to implement programs that meet the priority requirements. Outside grants are not guaranteed to be funded and must be approved by the Board of Directors at a board meeting. Reports of program effectiveness, cost justifications, measurements, and successes will be required and reported back to the board at the end of the fiscal year.

Innovative Contracts

The Council recognizes that there will be opportunities to support the overall goals of the Council that may be larger in scope and cost than a traditional program. Innovative Contracts will accompany the priority areas as a Program Implementation tactic, and is subject to the same measurement and reporting requirements. This area can be used to support a contracted staff person, another Beef Checkoff entity (such as NEBPI or a national research study), or other large projects as approved by the Board of Directors.

Collections & Compliance

Emphasis for this area will focus on collections generated from the Beef Checkoff. This will limit the need for, but include, the costs for printing and mailing compliance forms, envelopes, non-producer status books, etc.

Compliance will be handled by the bookkeeper and producer-relations highlighting the importance of Checkoff compliance will be encouraged by all staff.

Stakeholders

Stakeholders shall be defined as all contributors to the Beef Checkoff as declared in the 1985 Beef Promotion Act and Order.

Potential Project Areas and Resources:

- An annual report shall be published in the VCA paper and available for mailings to any interested party and shipped to them at no charge
- Board newsletters will keep board members updated on project areas and progress to provide opportunity to spread the Checkoff news with other producers and beef industry professionals
- Staff shall attend 2-4 large audience producer events throughout the year to update Virginia producers on the impact of their Checkoff dollars
- Access to resources generated by the Checkoff dollars

Resource Management

National and state Beef Checkoff programs develop numerous print and digital resources that are available for beef promotions, public and private, throughout the state. In an effort to maximize the programs potential and priority area influence of the Virginia Beef Industry Council, the following guidelines will dictate use of purchased resources:

Guidelines:

- Digital resources will be provided whenever possible and appropriate. Electronic copies of PDFs, brochures, recipes, et al. may be requested by producers, teachers, schools, youth programs, agriculture groups and clubs, etc. and may be printed and distributed at requestor's expense.
- VBIC shall allocate a limited quantity of gift items and S.W.A.G. for promotional opportunities. Outside parties may request these on a first-come, first-served basis.
- If gift items or S.W.A.G is no longer available or the request does not meet priority areas for the fiscal year, VBIC will assist in the materials-ordering process by providing vendor and order information for the requestor to fill their needs at the requestor's expense. VBIC discounts and bulk-purchase pricing will be passed on to the requesting party whenever possible.
- Virginia Cattlemen's Association shall implement some producer outreach on behalf of the VBIC. They will request materials through the same online materials form used by all outside parties. Materials may include:
  - Producer-audience S.W.A.G (such as Redbooks, bumper stickers, and license plate frames, etc.)
  - Producer-educational materials (My Checkoff resources, ROI on Checkoff, consumer pieces to showcase success of Checkoff programs, etc)