

NCBA Supports Transparency In Nutrition Labeling

WASHINGTON (NCBA) — The National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA) has submitted comments in support of a proposed rule by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) to require nutrition labeling of meat products.

“As an industry, it’s our responsibility to provide accurate information about the nutritional value of our products—because consumers have a right to make educated decisions about the food they purchase for their families,” said Steve Foglesong, NCBA president. “Cattlemen and the beef industry have a great story to tell, especially when it comes to the nutritional value of our product, and we’re fully committed to transparency as we continue to meet growing consumer demand for high-quality beef.”

If finalized, the rule would amend the federal meat and poultry products inspection regulations to require nutrition labeling of major cuts of single-ingredient, raw meat and poultry products. FSIS specifically requested comments on “lean percentage” labeling requirements and point-of-purchase vs. product labels.

NCBA supports the mandatory inclusion of both “lean percentage” and “fat percentage” on all ground meat labels. The Beef Checkoff has funded consumer research that indicates both designations are important to consumers as they decide which ground beef products to purchase. NCBA also supports requiring nutrition information to be displayed on ground beef packages, rather than at the point-of-purchase. Fat content is often hard to visualize in ground products which is why beef producers believe it’s most beneficial to have the nutrient content easily accessible on the Nutrition Facts Panel on the package.

NCBA continues to encourage FSIS to work with all stakeholders as this rule moves forward in being finalized and implemented in the marketplace. Cattlemen have long supported the inclusion of beef’s complete nutrient profile on beef products, as the information is helpful for consumers to make educated purchasing decisions. NCBA’s comments continue to encourage FSIS to include nutrient information on the label that is helpful to consumers. The comments can be found at: [Nutrition Labeling Comments - March 2010](#) [1].

Calorie for calorie, beef is one of the most naturally nutrient-rich foods there is. A three-ounce serving of lean beef is considered an excellent source of: protein, zinc, vitamin B, selenium and phosphorus; and a good source of niacin, vitamin B, iron, choline and riboflavin. Twenty-nine cuts of beef meet government guidelines for lean, with less than 10 grams of total fat, 4.5 grams or less of saturated fat, and less than 95 milligrams of cholesterol per 3-ounce serving. Research also suggests

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that high-quality protein plays an increasingly important role in weight management, muscle development and maintenance, and disease prevention.

“As producers, processors and marketers of the nation’s beef supply, we’re committed to providing safe, wholesome, nutritious beef products, and to communicating accurate information about beef’s nutritional qualities and the role of beef in a healthful diet,” said Foglesong.

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Links:

[1] <http://www.beefusa.org/uDocs/ncbafsisnutritionlabelingcomments-march2010.pdf>