Consumer Trends: Consumers Don't Recognize Health Benefits of Meat

WASHINGTON (AMI) — Most consumers don't fully recognize the unique nutrition benefits that meat and poultry offer, according to a recent survey conducted online by Harris Poll for the American Meat Institute.

Only 12 percent of consumers correctly identified animal products like meat and poultry as the only natural source of Vitamin B_{12}, which keeps the nervous system healthy. Twenty percent said cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli and cauliflower were the natural source of B_{12} and 13 percent thought the correct answer was citrus fruit. Neither of these foods contain Vitamin B_{12}.

The Harvard Health Blog reports that [1] "Vitamin B_{12} deficiency is relatively common, especially among older people. The National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey estimated that 3.2% of adults over age 50 have a seriously low B_{12} level, and up to 20% may have a borderline deficiency."

AMI's survey also showed consumers don't know that the body absorbs more iron from meat and poultry than from other foods. Meat and poultry contain "heme" iron, the most absorbable form, but 52 percent of consumers incorrectly thought the body absorbed the most iron from spinach, kale and other leafy greens, which are high in iron, but contain the less absorbable "non-heme" form. Only 17 percent correctly named meat, poultry and fish. Adequate iron intake is important because the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention identifies iron deficiency anemia as the most common nutritional deficiency [2] in the United States.

When asked which food groups Americans consume at the recommended levels, one in three (31 percent) consumers said the protein group. According to USDA, this group, which includes meat, poultry, seafood and beans is the only one consumed in the correct amount. Twenty two percent answered grains, 21 percent answered dairy and 20 percent answered fats, oils and sweets. Half of consumers (48 percent) said they did not know.

These findings are similar to recent research by NPD Group, which found that most consumers agree that protein is necessary in a healthy diet, but three quarters of consumers said they didn't know the recommended daily amount. [3] In general, men and women need between 46 and 56 grams of protein per day.

The American Meat Institute Foundation has released a dietitian-authored brochure "Meat: A Key Player on Your Wellness Team," [4] that details meat and poultry's nutrition benefits and how it can be part of healthy, balanced diet. The brochure may be downloaded or requested by sending a 4 x6 self-addressed envelope with .69 cents postage to Nutrition Brochure/AMI, 1150 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 1200, Washington, DC, 20036.

Abbreviated Methodology

This survey was conducted online within the United States by Harris Poll on behalf of AMI from March 24-26, 2014 among 2,167 adults ages 18 and older. This online survey is not based on a probability sample and therefore no estimate of theoretical sampling error can be calculated. For complete survey methodology, including weighting variables, please contact Janet Riley, jriley@meatami.com [5]

About Nielsen & The Harris Poll

On February 3, 2014, Nielsen acquired Harris Interactive and The Harris Poll. Nielsen Holdings N.V. (NYSE: NLSN) is a global information and measurement company with leading market positions in marketing and consumer information, television and other media measurement, online intelligence and mobile measurement. Nielsen has a presence in approximately 100 countries, with headquarters in New York, USA and Diemen, the Netherlands. For more information, visit www.nielsen.com [6].

Source URL (retrieved on *04/01/2015 - 10:31am*):
http://www.foodmanufacturing.com/news/2014/05/consumer-trends-consumers-dont-recognize-health-benefits-meat

Links:
[1] http://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/vitamin-b12-deficiency-can-be-sneaky-harmful-201301105780
[2] http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/basics/vitamins/iron.html
[3] http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/basics/protein.html#How%20much%20protein
[4] http://www.meatami.com/ht/a/GetDocumentAction/i/97304
[5] mailto:jriley@meatami.com
[6] http://www.nielsen.com/