

YOUR VIEW

by Maddie Fugate, Angus Ambassador



The “smart” choice

I am part of the generation that is the most informed of any in history. We have smartphones, smart TVs, social media and daily electronic updates reporting anything and everything nearly every hour throughout the day.

In short, all of these devices might make us more informed, but I don't believe that all of these electronic devices make us any smarter.

This subject hits close to home as I scroll through my phone and see news articles discussing substitutes and knockoffs for beef and ads promoting veganism.

With all of these harmful and conflicting press stories, consumers are starting to question the value of beef in their everyday diets and the world.

Beef and our diet

As far as the everyday diet goes, meat and protein are an essential part. With a very diverse and ever-changing market, we remain the name brand — the real stuff.

Beef is an excellent option on any plate as it is rich in bioavailable minerals such as iron, zinc, calcium, and Vitamins A, C and B12.

Beef is also known to help combat diabetes since it is a nutrient-dense food that imparts satiety and helps

minimize insulin insensitivity. With this, each serving of beef offers 25 grams of protein and represents 51% of all protein growth in 2017.

It is expected that consumers will eat 8.9% more beef this year than they did in 2014. These are just some of the facts that support beef as a healthy option on our plates, as well as proving the value that beef offers as a food source is nearly immeasurable.

Beef and our economy

As far as a worldview, just looking at the economic impact that cattle have on the United States, the cattle industry is composed of 720,000 operations, which make up 35% of America's farms.

Live cattle alone provide more than 800,000 jobs, and it has been said that every dollar in cattle sales produces \$5 in additional revenue.

Last year the beef industry contributed \$165 billion toward the American economy. These numbers are just from the live cattle industry alone. The packing and meat industries also provide many jobs in

a variety of areas, from harvesting, packing to retail.

Being raised in the agricultural industry, questioning how beef fits into our everyday lives never crossed my mind. But with the growing trend toward meatless, plant-based or cell-cultured “meat,” these concerns seem to be at the forefront of consumers' minds.

As so, we need to encourage open communication with consumers to answer these questions as well as alleviate concerns about beef production. We can offer the information that consumers crave while also sharing what a “smart” choice beef is. **AJ**

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