



# Beef Industry Advertising and Marketing Efforts Paying Off

The beef industry's new advertising campaign and marketing strategies, launched May 18, 1992 by the Beef Industry Council (BIC), are having a positive effect on consumer purchasing habits, according to a recent tracking study conducted by the Gallup Organization Inc.

The advertising campaign, designed to showcase the easy versatility of beef by showing consumers how to fix new, interesting beef meals, is a fully-integrated effort that is using a wide spectrum of channels to market more beef and create greater demand.

Through the retail and foodservice areas, the BIC is promoting variety and versatility. In consumer information, programs are targeting thought leaders with a health reassurance message and in research, evaluations are being done to monitor the success of the entire effort.

According to the Gallup study, which is conducted monthly with 500 randomly selected consumers, attitudes about beef are improving significantly, which should translate into changing purchasing behavior.

Results indicate that consumers intend to eat beef 13 percent more often than they had intended to eat before the advertising campaign began. Assuming these representative consumers follow through on their intent to purchase, this would generate a demand for an additional 1.2 billion pounds of beef.

These changes are occurring because the beef industry has been able to improve how people think about beef. In August, 79 percent of consumers were aware of beef advertising. That compares to only 57 percent awareness in March 1992 and equals the highest awareness ever recorded since Gallup began tracking beef advertising awareness in September 1988.

"We're doing exactly what we wanted to do with the program," says Don Sonnier, a Louisiana cattle producer and BIC advertising subcommittee chairman. "We're showing consumers that beef is easy to use, is versatile and has appetite appeal."

"Ray Larson, an Illinois cattle feeder and BIC chairman, adds that the advertising effort is helping the industry to achieve its overall goal of the beef promotion campaign — to increase consumer demand for beef. "The tracking study indicates the beef industry is heading in the right direction in increasing purchase intent," he says.

Following the recommendations of a marketing study conducted by the consulting firm Booz-Allen and Hamilton, the beef industry invested \$20.5 million during the first five months of the campaign (May through September of 1992). To run beef advertising year-round at the levels seen last summer, the industry would have to invest \$49 million on an annual basis, says Monica Eorgoff, BIC director of advertising. The media budget for the 1992-93 fiscal year, which began Oct. 1, is \$18.8 million, 37 percent of the five-month launch level. The industry was aware that this higher level of spending could not be continued with current checkoff dollars.

What is an appropriate level of advertising by the beef industry? To determine this, Chicago-based Leo Burnett Co., the industry's advertising agency, looked at several factors, including the historical spending rate by beef, spending compared to competitors like poultry and spending versus market share.

"We found that an annual budget of around \$40 to \$45 million in current dollars is needed to continue realizing these same types of gains," says Jim

Thompson, Burnett's executive vice president.

On Jan. 18, the beef industry launched two additional 30-second television advertisements. These ads joined the three ads already airing on prime time, daytime and sports programming. In addition, a new print advertisement, "Nice Thai," began appearing in lifestyle, food and women's service magazines last month.

Part of the campaign's success can be attributed to collateral promotion efforts. The industry's recipe brochure, "30 Meals In 30 Minutes," uses 30 recipes that complement the easy versatility theme of the beef industry ad campaign. The recipes make beef the centerpiece of delicious, easy-to-prepare meals.

In addition, a condensed version of the booklet, a brochure called "Beef It's What's for Dinner," is being widely distributed by state beef councils. It contains nine delicious and convenient beef meal ideas. Nearly one million copies of the two brochures have been distributed to consumers throughout the world.

The beef industry's advertising campaign recently won "Best Of Show" honors at the National Agri-Marketing Association (NAMA) Chicago chapter contest. The ad campaign advances to national NAMA awards competition April 19 in Orlando where it will compete against the best of the best in agricultural marketing and advertising.

Advertising is a checkoff-funded promotion program partially funded by the Beef Board and managed by the Beef Industry Council of the Meat Board, a federation of 44 state beef councils that works to build demand for beef through programs of promotion, research and consumer information.

—Brent Langman

