

► by **Tosha Powell**, assistant editor

Communicating beef's story

The world of technology is fast-paced and ever-changing. It's time that producers get caught up to speed. The fastest way to spread your story, and, more importantly, beef's story, is through the Internet. Today's younger generation spends 85% of their time on a computer it seems; therefore, the best way to educate them on the importance of the beef industry and agriculture just might be through e-communication.

Reaching today's youth

The newest communication fad on the Internet is blogging. What is a blog? A blog is somewhat of an online diary or journal. Web goers can create their own blog sites to write about particular subjects such as news, photography, knitting, crafts, cooking, etc.

While many blogs include pictures and links to other pages, text is the main point of a blog. To educate today's youth on the importance of agriculture and cast a positive light on the happenings of the beef industry, blogs can be the No. 1 way to get our voices heard.

Beef-worthy blogs

Amanda Nolz, a past National Beef Ambassador, says the best way for her voice to be heard is through her blog space, www.chewingthecud.org. Realizing the challenges the beef industry faces in communicating a positive outlook on beef, Nolz uses her blog to nix the rumors and misinformation spread by environmentalists

and animal rights activist groups that rally to eliminate animal agriculture in the United States. Through her blog, Nolz shares the meaning of agriculture and the truths behind those rumors.

Nolz can also be heard on her radio show, *Chewing the Cud Radio: Loos Tales*, and can be found at www.facesofag.com. Through the radio show, she shares a young person's view on her agricultural adventures and opinions on the latest industry news.

Another past ambassador, Chris Molinaro, uses her blog site to promote agriculture. In her tell-it-like-it-is site, www.beefmatters.com, Molinaro shares her experiences from being an ambassador and addresses national industry news topics, such as food safety, animal health, obesity and general beef promotion. She says it is her responsibility, let alone her passion, to tell the beef story.

Ambassadors aren't the only ones blogging these days. Daren Williams, National Cattlemen's Beef Association

(NCBA) executive director of spokesperson development, also blogs about things such as his experiences in the beef industry, his weight-loss journey and his bicycling journeys. Through his blog, <http://darenwms.blogspot.com/>, he tells tales of the beef industry, hoping to inform his biking buddies of the importance of lean beef as a part of their everyday diet. Williams includes healthy recipes featuring beef, as well as testimonies of what's happening at NCBA.

Why not?

Blogging is just one way of getting the beef story out to an uninformed audience. So, why not get the story out there? Beef issues involving bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) outbreaks, inhumane harvest facilities, *E. coli* O157:H7, and others, often scare consumers away from the beef counter in local grocery stores. Consumers need to know that beef isn't as scary a product as the media makes it out to be. Blogging just may be the newest way to help get these issues cleared up by spreading the good news about beef.

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Recipe of the Month: Tortilla Lasagna

Ingredients:

- 2 lb. CAB® ground chuck, cooked and drained
- 1 cup chopped green onions
- ¾ cup water
- 1½ cup salsa
- 1 can (10 oz.) mild enchilada sauce
- 1 pkg. (1¼ oz.) taco seasoning
- 5 cans (5 oz.) diced green chilies
- 12 6-in. corn tortillas
- 1 lb. grated Monterey Jack cheese

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 350° F. Combine cooked ground beef with taco seasoning, water and green onions. Stir in salsa. Spray 9×13-in. pan with nonstick spray. Place a layer of tortillas in the bottom. Top with one-third of the green chilies, ground beef, cheese and enchilada sauce. Repeat layers twice, using cheese on top. Cover with foil and bake for 45 minutes. Remove foil for last 10 minutes of baking.

Serves 8



Recipe and photo provided by Certified Angus Beef LLC.

Nutrition information: calories: 605, fat: 35 g, saturated fat: 18 g; cholesterol: 134 mg; carbohydrate: 34 g; dietary fiber: 5 g; protein: 41 g; sodium: 924 mg; iron: 25% of daily value