

# Your \$2 CHECKOFF UPDATE

Investing in programs that build beef demand to keep beef top-of-mind for consumers.



### Decoding the Label

**Know Your Beef Choices**  
Like the farmers and ranchers who choose how best to raise their cattle for beef, you have choices when it comes to the beef you buy. Cattle are raised responsibly and beef is safe, wholesome and nutritious – but you may see a variety of statements that reflect different production practices on beef packages in your grocery store or on a menu. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) approves these labels for beef based on specific criteria.

**GRAIN-FINISHED**  
(Most beef is raised this way and likely doesn't have a specific label claim)  
This beef comes from cattle that...  

- Spend the majority of their lives eating grass or forage
- Spend 4-8 months at a feedyard eating a balanced diet of grains, feed-level ingredients, like protein meals or sugar beets, and hay or forage
- May or may not be given U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved antibiotics to treat, prevent or control disease and/or growth-promoting hormones

**GRAIN-FINISHED OR GRASS-FED**  
This beef comes from cattle that...  

- Spend their whole lives eating grass or forage
- May also eat grains, forage, hay or straw at a feedyard
- May or may not be given FDA-approved antibiotics to treat, prevent or control disease and/or growth-promoting hormones

**CERTIFIED ORGANIC**  
This beef comes from cattle that...  

- Never receive any antibiotics or growth-promoting hormones
- May be either grain or grass finished, as long as the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) certifies the feed is 100% organically grown
- May spend time at a feedyard

**"RAISED WITHOUT" CLAIMS**  
(Not to be used in a "raised with")  
This beef comes from cattle that...  

- Never receive the compound noted (antibiotics, growth-promoting hormones, etc.)
- May be either grain- or grass-finished
- May spend time at a feedyard

**DID YOU KNOW?**

- Cattle eat grass for most of their lives.
- 100% of beef processed in federally inspected packing plants is overseen and inspected by the USDA.
- All cattle are commonly fed vitamin and mineral supplements to balance their diet.



## Cutting Through Food Label Confusion

With labels like grass-fed and non-GMO filling the meat case, consumers can easily feel overwhelmed by “food noise.” In a recent interview with WDTN, Anna Gest, MS, RDN, LD, with OBC, explained that research shows no significant nutritional difference between grass-fed and grain-finished beef, and that beef itself is not genetically modified—making some labels confusing or misleading. This science-based outreach helps consumers shop with confidence and reinforces beef as a nutritious, trustworthy choice.

## 2025 Year in Review: Celebrating Ohio Beef

In 2025, the Ohio Beef Council (OBC) continued its work on behalf of Ohio's beef producers by investing Beef Checkoff dollars in programs designed to strengthen beef demand, build consumer confidence, and communicate how beef is responsibly raised in Ohio.

Throughout the year, Checkoff-funded efforts focused on sharing accurate, science-based information about beef nutrition, animal care, and sustainability through strategic partnerships, digital and social media campaigns, retail and foodservice promotion, and hands-on educational outreach. These initiatives helped connect with consumers, retailers, educators, influencers, and community leaders across the state.

**Watch the 2025 Year in Review at [ohiobeef.org](http://ohiobeef.org)** or on the @OhioBeefCouncil YouTube channel to see how Beef Checkoff investments helped turn opportunities into momentum and continued to advance Ohio beef throughout the state.

Ohio Beef Council • 10600 U.S. Highway 42 • Marysville, OH 43040 • 614.873.6736 • [www.ohiobeef.org](http://www.ohiobeef.org)



Forms and postage-free envelopes for remitting beef checkoff funds are available by contacting the Ohio Beef Council office. Please remember the Ohio Beef Council is required by federal law to collect a two percent late payment charge on any assessment due and not postmarked by the 15th of the month following the month of transaction. For example, all beef checkoff dollars collected during Mar are due by Apr 15. Any late remittance will automatically be assessed the two percent late payment charge. As always, we appreciate your assistance in the collection and conveyance of these funds.



Heart-healthy Meals with  
**Anna Gest, MS, RDN, LD**

## Supporting Nutrition Messaging with Science-Based Guidance

The council continues to invest Checkoff dollars in science-based nutrition education that helps consumers feel confident, including beef in a heart-healthy lifestyle.

The Heart Health and Beef content on [ohiobeef.org](http://ohiobeef.org) highlights more than 20 research studies demonstrating that lean beef can be included in a heart-healthy eating pattern when consumed in recommended portions. The article emphasizes that a 3-ounce serving of lean beef provides 10 essential nutrients, including high-quality protein, iron, zinc, and B-vitamins—key nutrients often underconsumed by Americans.

By focusing on balanced meals, lean cuts, and practical preparation methods, this content reinforces beef's role as a nutrient-dense, everyday protein that aligns with current health and wellness priorities. This proactive, research-backed approach helps address common health misconceptions, maintain beef's relevance in dietary guidance, and ultimately support long-term beef demand.



**Careers in Agriculture**

## Connecting Classrooms to Careers in Agriculture

Preparing students for tomorrow's workforce starts with showing them what real careers look like today. Through a partnership between the OBC and the Ohio Soybean Council, the new Careers in Agriculture video series helps Ohio educators bring agriculture into the classroom in a meaningful, hands-on way. This program includes a complete lesson plan and downloadable worksheets that connect classroom learning to real-world agriculture, helping students better understand how careers in beef production, science, and business contribute to a strong, sustainable industry.

**Access the full lesson plan and worksheets:**  
[ohiobeef.org/education/classroom-resources/ag-classroom](http://ohiobeef.org/education/classroom-resources/ag-classroom)



## Beef Takes the Ice with the Columbus Blue Jackets

The Council's partnership with the Columbus Blue Jackets highlighted beef's role in performance nutrition and its versatility in everyday meals, reaching millions of hockey fans both inside the arena and at Central Ohio Chillers Ice Rinks. OBC branding appears on dasher boards during all home and away games throughout the season, council staff engaged with fans face-to-face at two home games and the 5th Line 5K, while handing out collectible trading cards featuring recipes and beef nutrition facts. Bringing the partnership to life, Stinger, the Blue Jackets mascot, cooked up a game-day beef meal in the OBC kitchen and hit the ice—passing the puck with Chuck Roast—to spotlight youth sports nutrition in a fun, memorable way.

**Feed your Game at [ohiobeef.org](http://ohiobeef.org) or watch the spots on YouTube @OhioBeefCouncil**

**Find us at the Ohio Beef Council booth during the Ohio Beef Expo, March 19-22.**

Beef Checkoff programs, producer tools, and educational resources available.

## FY26 CALENDAR

<b>Mar 1</b>	<b>Beef Promotion Grant Due</b>
Mar 19-22	Ohio Beef Expo
Mar 29	CBJ Game Night
Apr 12	OSU 4Miler
May	Beef Month
<b>June 1</b>	<b>Beef Promotion Grant Due</b>
July 29-31	Ohio State Fair
Aug 1-9	Ohio State Fair
<b>Sept 1</b>	<b>Beef Promotion Grant Due</b>
Sept 22-24	Farm Science Review

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