Alternative Beef Marketing

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Producer Options

- Retain Ownership
- Sell into a Natural program or other Process Verified Program
OR
- Start your own program

Source Verification

Consumers’ Quality Categories

- Consumption Quality
- Nutritional Quality
- Technological Quality
- Hygienic Quality
- Ethical Quality

(Anderson, 2000)
The Quality of a Product Establishes Customer Loyalty

- Do you get a mental picture of quality beef?

What is Quality?

- Consumption Quality
- Ethical Quality
- Hygienic Quality
- Technological Quality
- Nutritional Quality

Consumers’ Quality Categories

(Andersen, 2000)

Ethical Quality
- Beef cattle welfare
- Production environment (outdoor production)
- Natural/Organic farming
- Religion

Quality: Perception is Reality

- Identification of a customer willing to pay for these definitions of quality constitutes a value-added opportunity for the beef production chain

Quality: Perception is Reality

- Identification of a customer willing to pay for these definitions of quality constitutes a value-added opportunity for the beef production chain

- 2 general ways
  - Superior or unique product quality
    - Breed Specific
  - Social or credence attributes
    - Production Methods
Specialty BEEF

NEW! & improved

2001 Certification Regulations
- Can only be fed “Certified Organic” feedstuffs
- No growth promotants, antibiotics, or dewormer
- Cattle must have access to pasture

2007 - Preliminary USDA Standard
- No growth promotants, antibiotics, or animal by-products
  --- However ---
- Dewormer and probiotics are allowed
- No restriction on CAFOS

2007 - Final USDA Standard
Post-weaning ruminants -
- Only forage from pasture or harvested forage
- Continuous access to pasture during the growing season
- Any grain consumption must be documented explicitly

Commodity vs. Specialty
- No evidence that specialty meat products (Organic or Naturally-Raised) are safer or more nutritious than commodity meat products (Honikel, 1998)
- No USDA claims
Antibiotics and Pesticides

- Human health is not affected by antimicrobials in livestock production
- No proof of human antibiotic resistance
- USDA Pesticide Monitoring Program:
  - All commodities (< 1% above tolerance)
  - Meat generally has fewest above tolerance


Grain-Fed vs. Grass-Fed

- Grass-fed is:
  - Leaner
  - Less saturated fat and cholesterol (Hedrick et al., 1983)
  - More “off-flavors”
  - Tends to be tougher & less juicy (Regan et al., 1977; Hedrick et al., 1983; Crouse et al., 1984)

Than Grain-fed
Starting a Niche Meat Program

- Determining the target audience
- Product quality relative to the demographics of the target audience

Starting a Niche Meat Program

- Assessing the product’s point of differentiation

Starting a Niche Meat Program

- Determining a contract packer

Starting a Niche Meat Program

- Cost Analysis