

# Leveraging an Increase of the Canadian Beef Cattle Check-Off for Research



The National Beef Strategy is about setting the Canadian beef industry up to be more profitable, to grow, and to continue to produce some of the world's finest beef. The Beef Cattle Research Council (BCRC), funded by the research allocation of the Canadian Beef Cattle Check-Off, works on all the Strategy's pillars – Productivity, Beef Demand, Connectivity and Competitiveness.

The Canadian Beef Cattle Check-Off is scheduled to increase from \$1.00 to \$2.50/head in most provinces in the spring of 2018. Each province decides how much of the check-off is spent on research and marketing but it is recommended that \$0.75 be allocated to research to maintain and enhance research investments that have the greatest potential to advance the industry.

Increased research funding from the Canadian Beef Cattle Check-Off will enable:

## **Continued investment in priority research programming**

Ongoing long-term investments in research will ensure continued improvements are made in:

- Forage and Grassland Productivity
- Environmental Sustainability
- Feed Grains and Feed Efficiency
- Animal Health and Welfare
- Antimicrobial Use, Resistance and Alternatives
- Food Safety
- Beef Quality

These research priorities will continue to focus on 1) improving competitiveness in the production of beef cattle, 2) supporting science-based policy, regulation and trade, 3) supporting science-based public education and advocacy, 4) supporting the Canadian Beef Advantage, and 5) accelerating the adoption of beneficial innovations by the Canadian beef industry.

Existing funding is too low to support all the research our industry needs. In fact, research will be cut back even more without an increase in producer funding. Greater industry investment is also needed to make sure that governments also continue to support beef research. Government funding and resources are limited unless industry invests too, meaning that if we don't invest, they won't either.

## **Strategic investment in research capacity in priority areas**

Some research outcomes identified under the National Beef Strategy cannot be achieved at current funding levels. There simply aren't enough industry research dollars available to support all the research projects, positions, and facilities that we need. The increased Canadian Beef Cattle Check-Off will build research capacity and program funding in areas that have been on the decline in Canada.

As one example, Canada's beef industry relies on productive, high quality forage. But Canada's forage researchers have been retiring faster than new ones have been hired. Forage research and extension can make significant improvements in forage yields, productivity and cattle performance, as well as the environmental sustainability of Canada's beef industry. The increased Canadian Beef Cattle Check-off will ensure that new producer-focused forage breeders, agronomists and grazing researchers are trained and hired in Canada.



## Research surveillance networks

Governments have been reducing their involvement in animal health and disease surveillance and monitoring activities for many years. Surveillance is critically important, and industry needs to take a greater role in it. Maintaining and building better surveillance networks for production limiting diseases, animal health, and antimicrobial resistance is critical for our industry to demonstrate the integrity of the Canadian beef supply chain to consumers, food companies and global trading partners. Surveillance allows us to validate our animal health and welfare practices, as well as overall efficiency (which has environmental benefits). Surveillance is also critical to identify areas where research and/or changes in production practices can help us raise cattle better and more profitably.

## Domestic and international research liaison

Sometimes it's simpler to adopt practices that already work for other producers. A domestic and international research liaison will look for practices and technologies from across Canada and around the world that have the potential to benefit more producers here and find ways to modify them so Canadian producers can use them on their own operations.

## National/regional producer network extension support

Technology transfer and extension to industry is essential to get research results, knowledge, improved practices, and technology from scientific publications into the hands of producers. We will develop more economic decision-making tools and resources to help producers weigh the costs and benefits of adopting new technologies or management practices. The delivery of extension initiatives through national and/or regional producer networks will also be supported to encourage broader and more rapid uptake of new technologies.

## Ongoing delivery of the Verified Beef Production Plus (VBP+) program

In addition to funding research, the BCRC is responsible for the delivery of the Verified Beef Production Plus (VBP+) program, which verifies on-farm practices related to food safety, animal care, biosecurity, and environment. Ongoing national industry investment will ensure the consistent delivery of the VBP+ program as it becomes a core pillar in verifying sustainable beef production in partnership with end-users.

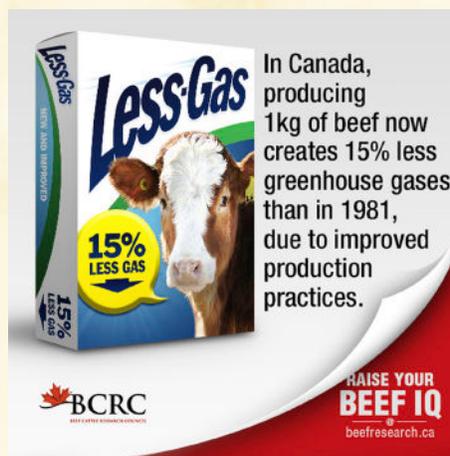


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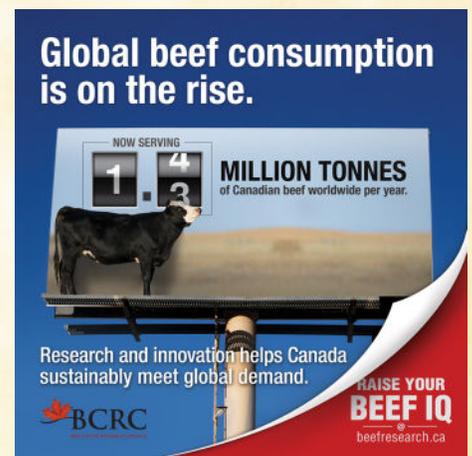
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In Canada, producing 1kg of beef now creates 15% less greenhouse gases than in 1981, due to improved production practices.

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For more information, visit [www.beefresearch.ca](http://www.beefresearch.ca) and sign up for the BCRC Blog to receive useful science-based information and interactive tools that help producers make informed decisions.

