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NEWS RELEASE

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Montana Beef Council Hosts Japanese Media Team

Japanese media team tours Big Sky Country learning about U.S. beef production

BILLINGS, Mont. – (June 18, 2016) – The Montana Beef Council partnered with the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) to bring a team of editors and photographers from Japan to provide first-hand knowledge about the U.S. beef production and safety systems, and the variety of U.S. beef products available. The tour demonstrated how U.S. beef is produced, marketed and consumed, giving the team greater knowledge and experience in promoting U.S. beef to their readers.

The team was able to visit the ranches, families and facilities in Montana that clearly highlight the natural conditions in which beef is raised, the care that producers take to ensure the highest quality, as well as demonstrate the exceptional taste, quality and health benefits of the end product.

The two-day tour began with a field-to-fork panel presentation including Kiley Martinell as a cow-calf producer, Travis Choat as a feedlot operator, Bob Cook representing auction markets, Kelsi Gambill as a meat processor, Mike Callaghan as retail representative and Chef David Maplethorpe as a foodservice representative. The team then toured Project Meats, followed by a trip to Stovall Ranches, LLC for a Dutch oven lunch in their cow camp and a tour of their ranching operation. The first evening concluded with dinner at The Northern and a visit with Chef Nick Steen.

The second day began at the expo and starting line of the Heart and Sole race where Team Beef members were suited up to run and promote beef. The media team spent the rest of the morning touring the Hollenbeck Ranch and was then treated to Montana-style Shabu Shabu, or pitchfork fondue. In the afternoon, Montana Beef Council Registered Dietitian Lisa Murray shared a presentation about beef in a healthy diet and the tour concluded with a visit to the Sip & Sizzle, a community barbecue event held at Yellowstone Cellars and Winery.

“The detailed information on U.S. beef production, coupled with cultural experiences of visiting the American West, will help team members increase their understanding of U.S. beef and further improve their overall impression, which will ultimately be communicated back to the beef end-user in Japan,” said Greg Hanes, USMEF Assistant Vice President of International Marketing and Programs.

Currently ninety-six percent of the world’s population is outside the U.S. and the growth of the global middle class is growing exponentially. Just in Asia, it is expected to grow by over eighty percent by 2030—accounting for sixty-six percent of the global middle class. At that time the U.S. will account for just seven percent of the global middle class. In addition to this growing purchasing power, the beef cuts demanded in the international markets are typically different than the high demand cuts in the U.S. As a result, the international markets boost demand, and prices, for a wide variety of cuts that are considered “underutilized” in the U.S.

“The additional value that is derived by exporting U.S. beef adds significant value to each head of fed cattle. Japan is the largest export market for the U.S., both volume and value, and provides some of the largest margins for “underutilized” cuts. So we were very proud to be able to showcase Montana ranching to this Japanese team and provide further value for beef producer’s checkoff investment right here in Montana,” said Kristin Larson, president of the Montana Beef Council.

The Montana Beef Council is active throughout the year on Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest and can be found at www.montanabeefcouncil.org.