

Beef Bites

- UPDATE FROM THE MONTANA BEEF COUNCIL -

AG EDUCATION

At this year's annual FFA Convention, **Anna Sponheim** and **Al Koenig** made time for the ag teachers across the state. Their conversations centered around ways that MBC can be a free resource for classrooms and curriculum to assist in future education needs.

STRATEGIC FUTURE

Montana Beef Council Board Members recently completed their strategic planning process and will vote on the final plan next month. Leading up to the in-person session, the board participated in a virtual preparation meeting to review progress under the 2023–2025 Strategic Plan and identify key priorities for the future.

Discussions highlighted the impact of Beef Checkoff investments in building consumer trust, educating key audiences, supporting youth and athletic partnerships, and leveraging national and global collaborations. Board members also explored opportunities to strengthen outreach to new audiences, improve measurement of program results, and ensure Montana's voice continues to add value within the broader beef industry.

This process positioned the board to focus on forward-looking strategy, prioritization, and defining measurable success, ensuring the next plan continues to build beef demand and deliver value for Montana producers.



COOKING UP CONFIDENCE

The annual Montana Family and Consumer Science teachers conference was in Dillon, MT this month and hosted nearly 60 teachers to learn, share, network, and celebrate. **Sue Broyles** and **Chaley Harney** attended and shared knowledge on Friday of the conference that featured a two-hour beef cuts training and cooking demonstration with Butcher Sierra Anthony that resulted in creative beef lunch dishes for all attendees.

MEAT MEANS BUSINESS

The Montana Meat Processors held their annual convention in Billings, hosting fellow meat shops and suppliers for three days of training and networking. **MBC staff** hosted a tradeshow booth and provided an educational session on understanding the beef market and tips to market beef during high prices. MBC sponsored the Innovative Beef Contest and six processors brought their beefy creations for judgement. Raising the "bar" on innovation, the winner was Matt's Old Fashioned Butcher Shop (Livingston) with a trail mix bar called "The Hiker" that contained a compressed mixture of chopped beef jerky, oats, seeds and raisins. Another highlight of the convention was the election of officers and **Charlie Hollenbeck** was elected as president to lead the association.

THAT WESTERN FEEL

The Montana State University Spring Rodeo in Bozeman boasted sold-out performances and BEEF was there. The partnership featured "Beef Night" where MBC was the premier sponsor with our logo and 30-second video on the jumbotron, live public announcements, banner in the arena, flag in the grand entry, logos throughout the concourse, and an interactive booth for rodeo fans with help of **Jake Callantine**, **Al Koenig** and **Chaley Harney**. The MBC booth featured a Q&A prize wheel, beefy photo booth, and roping contest that attracted attendees of all ages, plus a few beef producers to see their checkoff dollars in action. Building on the success of last year, this helps reinforce beef as an integral part of a healthy, active Montana lifestyle.

- INTERNATIONAL CORNER -

INTERNATIONAL UPDATE:

EXPORTERS MEET PROSPECTIVE BUYERS AT U.S. RED MEAT SYMPOSIUM IN MEXICO CITY USMEF, CONTRACTOR TO THE BEEF CHECKOFF

USMEF recently held the U.S. Red Meat Symposium in Mexico City, enabling U.S. exporters to meet face-to-face with prospective buyers from throughout Mexico. The symposium included an examination of Mexico's economic and political climate and provided opportunities for buyers to connect with U.S. farmers and ranchers. A delegation of 18 producers and other industry leaders participated in the symposium and market tours. **Debbie Andersen** attended on behalf of Montana.



UNITED EXPORT STRATEGY

USMEF conducted two full-day workshops on its global marketing priorities – the first focused on U.S. beef, the second on U.S. pork – gathering stakeholder input from a wide range of industry sectors. Montana Beef Council was invited to attend the Denver meeting and **Chaley Harney** represented MBC. Later this spring, USMEF will submit its Unified Export Strategy (UES) to the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service, outlining its proposed utilization of USDA Market Access Program and Foreign Market Development Program funds in the next fiscal year. The feedback collected at these annual workshops helps guide USMEF's preparation of the UES.

More information on the UES will be presented at the USMEF Spring Conference, May 20-22 in Oklahoma City. **Justin Iverson** will be representing Montana at this meeting.

U.S. BEEF BACK DOWN UNDER

For 23 years, following the first detected case of BSE in the U.S., the beef industry and the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative have worked diligently to regain access to the Australian market. In 2025, U.S. beef and beef products were officially declared eligible for importation into Australia. USMEF expects the foodservice sector to be the primary channel to develop niche opportunities in high-end steakhouses, premium Western restaurants, and American-themed barbecue or burger concepts.

BEEF-ORE YOU LEAVE:



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VIRTUAL BOARD MEETING