

Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) Program

Making a Difference

Focusing on Food Safety and Beef Quality

- ◆ In the mid-1980s, the focus of the beef industry was on addressing food safety and quality issues in beef products.
- ◆ These issues led to a decline in consumer confidence and established the need for the first National Beef Quality Audit (1991), which identified quality defects that impaired beef's competitiveness with other meat products.

Extension's Response

- ◆ In response to the first National Beef Quality Audit, the National Cattlemen's Beef Association initiated the BQA Program to educate beef producers on management practices to ensure production of a safe, high-quality beef product.
- ◆ In partnership with the Texas Beef Council and the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service began educating Texas producers on BQA principles.
- ◆ Participants can become BQA-certified through the program.
- ◆ The mission of the BQA Program is to promote management practices that enable cattle producers to

improve beef quality and strengthen consumer confidence in beef as a safe, nutritious, wholesome food product.

- ◆ Program participants receive education and hands-on training to learn about animal health products, feedstuffs, feed additives and medications, care and husbandry practices, and other core practices.
- ◆ The BQA Program also provides systematic information to cattle producers nationwide on production methods and practices for improving beef quality and safety under a wide variety of management and environmental conditions.

Economic Impact

- ◆ BQA-certified calves receive an estimated \$1.59 per hundred weight price premium (Montana State University estimate).
- ◆ For approximately 790,000 head of weaned and stocker calves owned or managed by participants in the Texas BQA Program, the increase in gross returns was estimated at \$7.2 million for 2011.



Contact:

Dean McCorkle
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
ph. 979.845.1861
e-mail: d-mccorkle@tamu.edu
agrilifeextension.tamu.edu/impacts

MKT-3558AE, September 2012