

PRIME BEEF UPDATES

A monthly page dedicated to the beef and dairy industries, The Beef Checkoff and The PA Beef Council.

Editor's Note: This is part of a monthly series of timely articles and information from the Pennsylvania Beef Council, a non-profit organization focused on strengthening Pennsylvania's beef industry.

Quality Care Matters

PA Department of Agriculture and PA BQA Collaborate to Strengthen Producer Resources and Readiness

In a joint effort to strengthen the future of Pennsylvania's beef industry, the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) and Pennsylvania Beef Quality Assurance (PA BQA) have come together to launch a new Biosecurity Certification Program tailored specifically for Pennsylvania beef producers. This voluntary program is designed to prepare beef producers for rapid response in the event of a new or foreign animal disease outbreak. The certification ensures proactive protection of cattle health, public safety, and continuity of business through structured biosecurity planning and on-farm implementation. "The collaboration between PDA and PA BQA reflects a shared commitment to protecting the integrity and resilience of Pennsylvania's beef industry," said Nichole Hockenberry, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Beef Council. "This certification not only reinforces best practices for biosecurity on-farm but also helps producers take proactive steps to safeguard animal health and market continuity."



Return on Investment (ROI) for Producers includes:

- **Priority Movement Permits:** Certified producers are flagged in the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture's system for first approval of biosecurity plans and cattle movement permits during disease outbreaks.
- **Health & Safety Assurance:** Certification ensures the producer is trained in practical biosecurity practices that protect both livestock and human health.
- **Industry Leadership:** Certification highlights the producer's commitment to responsible agriculture and elevates credibility with buyers, regulators, and the public.

"By working together, we are providing Pennsylvania producers with real-world tools to protect their operations," added Hannah Walters, Director of Producer Education and Engagement. "Whether you're a small family farm or a larger commercial operation, this certification is designed to be practical, effective, and producer-driven."

For more information about the Biosecurity Certification and how to participate, visit: www.pa-bqa.org/certification/pa-beef-biosecurity-certification



Pennsylvania
Department of Agriculture



Checking in with the Checkoff

PA Beef Foundation's Beefing-Up Backpacks Expands Distribution of Locally-Sourced Beef Sticks to Fight Childhood Food Insecurity

The Pennsylvania Beef

Foundation is proud to announce the continued expansion of the Beefing Up Backpack program—an initiative aimed at combating food insecurity by providing nutritious, protein-rich beef sticks to children across the Commonwealth. Housed within the charitable arm of the PA Beef Council, the Beefing Up Backpack program partners with organizations that facilitate weekend backpack food programs to reach children who may face hunger when school meals are unavailable. Through the help of these vital partners, the program will have distributed nearly 40,000 PA-sourced beef sticks to youth in need spanning across nine counties throughout Pennsylvania. These shelf-stable, high-protein beef sticks are proudly manufactured by Stoltzfus Meats, a valued partner in the fight against food insecurity. With strong support from dedicated beef industry partners, the PA Beef Foundation is aiming to more than double its reach to date in 2025, with a goal of distributing 72,000 beef sticks to children in need for the inaugural year. The Beefing Up Backpack program is an example of industry-driven compassion in action, reinforcing the role of agriculture in meeting community needs beyond the farm gate.



Penn State Wrestler Tyler Kasak Credits Agricultural Roots and Beef Nutrition for Athletic Success

In the heart of Penn State's elite wrestling program stands a young man whose strength and discipline don't just come from hours on the mat—but from generations of hard work in the fields and barns of rural Pennsylvania. Tyler Kasak, a rising star and standout wrestler for the Nittany Lions, is more than an athlete. He's a passionate advocate for agriculture and a living testament to the power of clean living, hard work, and high-quality nutrition. Read the full story: www.pabeef.org



Scratch Cooking with Confidence: Best Practices for Serving Local Beef on School Menus

The PBC worked to strengthen school foodservice providers culinary skills and food safety knowledge in a focused session at the Annual School Nutrition Association of PA on Wednesday, July 30th. School Foodservice providers learned how to confidently prepare and serve locally sourced beef while following nutrition guidelines and best practices for safe handling. A lively cooking demo put on by Meredith McGrath, a consulting dietitian with the PA Beef Council, showcased efficient scratch cooking techniques and offered creative, student-friendly recipe ideas that celebrate farm-to-school connections. Attendees left with practical tools to bring fresh, flavorful, and safe local beef to their school menus.

