

Chapter 1 Quality Issues

montana
BEEF
network

Consumer Issues

End-Users' Top Five Quality Concerns with Beef

- Lack of uniformity
- Inadequate tenderness
- Low palatability
- Excessive external fat
- Price too high for value received

—NBQA, 1995

How is the consumer's lifestyle changing?

- Less time
- Seeking convenience
- Aging
- Less knowledge of beef cuts and preparation



Factors considered "very important" in food selection

- Taste
- Nutrition
- Price
- Product safety
- Storability
- Food preparation time

What do consumers feel are the greatest threats to the safety of the food they eat?

- Spoilage
- Freshness/shelf-life/expiration dates
- Bacteria/E. coli/germs
- Pesticides/residues/insecticides/herbicides
- Quality control/improper handling/storage
- Unsanitary handling by supermarket employees
- Processing/preparation of foods

—Smith, CSU

Processor Issues

Incidence of Quality Outliers in the 1995 NBQA Audit

| Item | Unacceptable |
|--|--------------|
| Yield Grade 3.5 or less | 20% |
| USDA Quality grade (P, Ch, Se) | 9% |
| Carcass weight >900 and <600 lbs | 11% |
| Side brands on the hide | 17% |
| Ribeye area >15.0 and <11.0 sq. inches | 31% |
| Liver Condemnation | 22% |
| Dark Cutter | 3% |
| Injection Site Blemish | 11% |

Processors' Top 5 Quality Concerns with Beef

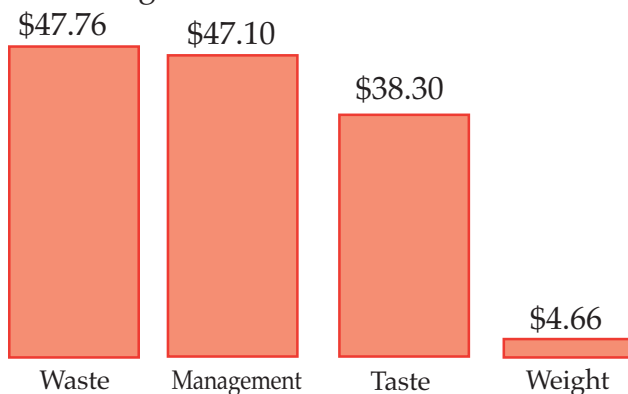
- Lack of uniformity
- Liver condemnation
- Hide damage
- Bruise damage
- Dark cutters and external fat

—NBQA, 1995

Industry Costs

How much reward is possible with a consistent quality product?

\$138.00 per head is the estimated potential loss in value for every fed steer or heifer marketed; \$47 was due to management-related issues.



Examples of Beef Quality Assurance – Greatest Management Costs

| | |
|------------------------|----------------|
| Hide Defects | \$24.30 |
| Injection Site Lesions | \$ 7.05 |
| Dark Cutters | \$ 6.08 |
| Bruises | \$ 4.03 |
| | <u>\$41.46</u> |

What can we do?

Beef Quality Assurance to improve quality and consistency includes awareness of:

- Injection sites
- Use of implants
- Cattle handling
- Good management practices
- Recorded documentation
- Breeding season

