

National Cattlemen's Beef Association

AR# 2532-II

AR Title: Issues and Crisis Management and Planning, Beef Advocacy Training and Engagement, Beef Quality Assurance

AR Purpose and Description:

This Authorization Request directly supports cattle producers and producer leaders by providing the resources they need to produce high quality beef and protect the beef industry. In addition to directly supporting producers, this tactic is key to protecting consumer confidence in beef as it enables the beef community to share their stories and supports issues and crisis preparedness work.

The historical impacts of this AR have been significant:

- NCBA's Beef Checkoff-funded work has repeatedly supported and led the industry through major issues like BSE and HPAI H5N1 and continues to prepare for the next issue or crisis. Through participation in the Cross Species working group, NCBA is responsible for housing and updating the FMDInfo.org website and working across animal agriculture to ensure the beef industry is at the table for conversations about issues that could be devastating to the industry.
- The funding of this AR allows for around-the-clock monitoring of more than 200 keywords with relation to beef, to ensure the beef industry is always ahead of the conversation and can make informed, strategic decisions when placing content to correct misinformation or respond to an issue.
- The Masters of Beef Advocacy program has more than 25,000 graduates and has trained more than 100 top advocates to be spokespeople on behalf of the industry and bolster consumer confidence in the people who raise cattle and beef itself by connecting with consumers and sharing their stories/facts about beef on social media and in-person activities along with engaging in media opportunities.
- Today, more than 85% of beef purchased at retail was produced by someone who is Beef Quality Assurance certified (or equivalent) and according to several consumer market research studies, when consumers are shown how cattle are raised according to BQA guidelines consumer confidence in beef production increases by more than 25%.^[1]

As detractors get louder, the beef industry must defend itself and this tactic directly supports those efforts and the people on the front line.

Through these programs, and to accomplish the stated deliverables and outcomes, traveling to/from and attending key influencer/stakeholder/partner meetings may be required. This will enable staff to gain or provide more strategic guidance and training, engage in briefings and/or educational sessions/events and disseminate knowledge. To accomplish this, it may be necessary for the Checkoff to fund international travel to/from the U.S. AR funds may be used to communicate results to stakeholders, including producers, and to implement current and previously funded ARs. Also note that legal counsel may be sought for routine, day-to-day content development, program planning and contracting to ensure compliance with federal rules or regulations.

Citations:

[1] Consumers and BQA, 2018; Raised & Grown Asset Survey, 2023

CBB Budget Category: Industry Information

Start Date: 10/1/2024

End Date: 9/30/2025

FY25 CBB/BPOC Funding Request		
Direct Costs	Implementation	Total
\$386,300.00	\$2,413,700.00	\$2,800,000.00

Beef Industry Long Range Plan (LRP) Core Strategies Addressed by this AR:

- Grow Consumer Trust in Beef Production
- Promote and Capitalize on the Multiple Advantages of Beef
- Improve the Business and Political Climate of Beef

TACTIC DESCRIPTION:

The Issues and Crisis Management and Planning tactic is at the heart of safeguarding the beef industry – from the day-to-day issues that are addressed and managed to preparing for a future crisis like a Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak. Through this tactic, the NCBA Beef Checkoff-funded issues management team is responsible for monitoring media, consumer and industry conversations to stay ahead of issues, developing and updating relevant resources and facilitating issues trainings to ensure the industry is prepared when issues or crises arise. Time and time again, thanks to these resources, NCBA, a contractor to the Beef Checkoff, has led the beef industry through issues and crises. Most recently, an emerging animal health situation in dairy cattle, which was later identified as Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI H5N1), had the potential to threaten consumer confidence in beef. It was through our robust crisis planning program and sophisticated monitoring tools that we were able to stay ahead of the issue and respond appropriately to protect the industry.

It is crucial that the industry be prepared for a crisis and have the resources needed to respond with a unified strategy and voice. Through the funding of this tactic, we can provide partners and stakeholders with both strategic council and tangible resources to ensure the industry is prepared no matter the situation. In addition to monitoring the national conversation, the issues management team provides media monitoring, issues training and issue-specific support on a state level. The team also offers a more comprehensive monitoring service, which for a nominal fee includes detailed quarterly media reports, that more than a dozen state beef councils (SBCs) utilize. Not only does this help state partners save time and resources locally, but the fee also helps support the work of this tactic as we expand our monitoring capabilities.

Today, the Digital Command Center allows for around-the-clock monitoring of more than 200 topics related to beef. That technology, combined with the expert analysis done by the issues management team, gives the beef industry a leg up when identifying areas of opportunity and staying ahead of issues. In FY25, the team will continue to build on and expand our monitoring capabilities, taking advantage of emerging technologies to bolster the learnings and inform strategy. The team will use that data in the continued creation and updating of resources – like talking points and infographics – and look for new ways to utilize all the information gathered and resources created when responding to or getting ahead of potential issues. In addition to the work outlined above, the funding of this tactic also supports Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) preparedness efforts. NCBA's Checkoff-funded issues management team is responsible for developing and maintaining beef-specific FMD resources including crisis plans (at both the national and state level), talking points and fact sheets, market research insights and social media content. The team will continue these efforts, while also maintaining engagement in the Cross Species Working Group. As a key member of the group, NCBA is responsible for the

housing and management of FMDInfo.org, the website that all members of the Cross Species Working Group would turn to in the event of an FMD outbreak.

Measurable Objectives:

Measurable Objective #1

Serve as a Valuable Resource: Maintain the issues management program as a “trusted counselor” and “go-to resource” for SBCs and industry stakeholders by developing or updating at least 12 pieces of content (talking points, infographics, videos, etc.) to ensure the industry is equipped to effectively navigate and respond to issues and crises.

Measurable Objective #2

Lead Issues Workshops: Lead four (4) beef issues training workshops with SBCs and other industry stakeholder groups. This training equips industry partners to respond to local issues and provides them with the resources they need to tell beef’s positive story and/or address misinformation about beef.

Measurable Objective #3

Monitor 200+ Topics: Monitor 200+ Topics: Maintain the digital command center and its monitoring software and monitor at least 200 topics related to the beef industry to identify trending topics, inform messaging and ensure the issues team can quickly identify and respond to issues.

Performance Efficiency Measures:

General Target Audience

- Reach Goal: N/A
- Engagement Goal: N/A

Key Opinion Leaders

- Producer Advocates & Leaders Reach Goal: 40,000
- Producer Advocates & Leaders Engagement Goal: 2,800

LRP Initiatives Addressed by this Tactic:

Grow Consumer Trust in Beef Production

- Measure, document, improve, and communicate the net climate and environmental impact of beef production

Promote and Capitalize on the Multiple Advantages of Beef

- Promote the role of beef in a healthy and sustainable diet

Improve the Business and Political Climate of Beef

- Demonstrate beef’s positive sustainability message and key role in regenerative agriculture
- Develop crisis management plans

Checkoff Program Committee(s): Consumer Trust

TACTIC DESCRIPTION:

The Beef Advocacy Training and Engagement (BATE) program was developed 15 years ago to respond to a critical challenge in agriculture – the limited public awareness of farming and ranching practices. The Beef Checkoff-funded Consumer Beef Tracker, a monthly survey of at least 1,000 consumers, repeatedly shows that consumers view farmers and ranchers, and veterinarians as the top sources of information when it comes to how cattle are raised and grown. When consumers have questions about farming and ranching practices, they respond favorably to answers from the people who produce the food. Thus, the Masters of Beef Advocacy (MBA) certification program was created and remains this tactic's hallmark initiative providing farmers and ranchers the tools and resources they need to address environmental sustainability, beef nutrition, animal welfare and beef safety questions along with foundational information about the beef lifecycle from pasture to plate. Continuing education courses are also available for MBA graduates who want a deep dive into these topics. To date, more than 25,000 individuals have been certified and those seeking MBA certification have expanded from just farmers and ranchers to include students, supply chain members and even consumers who love beef.

With the expansion of MBA certification to more groups, the need for resources increased as teachers and students have become a well-developed audience for the BATE program. The MBA teacher toolkit was created turning the MBA certification courses into lesson plans for classroom instruction and was recently adapted to create more flexibility for classroom delivery. NCBA plans to continue identify opportunities to innovate the toolkit, improve the user experience and collaborate with like-minded groups to encourage wider use by educators and stakeholders.

As the need for farmers and ranchers as credible spokespeople in mainstream media outlets grew, the program responded. A top advocate program, currently the Trailblazers program, was developed to turn farmers and ranchers with baseline MBA instruction into well-trained spokespeople ready for national media interviews and tough questions. This tactic has trained more than 100 individuals as top advocates and several have appeared in national media outlets such as the Washington Post and the Kelly Clarkson Show, along with countless regional publications. In FY25, NCBA plans to continue developing top advocates through the Trailblazers program and finding opportunities for them to engage with media and consumers. Training efforts by the BATE program allow for the continuation of an enhanced database of go-to spokespeople. Furthermore, the continuation of adding new MBA graduates and conducting advanced training programs will assist in creating empowered, well-informed, and prepared community members of grassroots advocates who can be mobilized and called upon to act

within their respective communities, further exposing beef production practices and the work of the Beef Checkoff to new audiences.

NCBA, as a contractor to the Beef Checkoff, will continue to offer MBA graduates access to webinars, monthly newsletters and the program's Facebook community where updates are given on the latest consumer trends. NCBA plans to continue identifying opportunities to create an engaged user experience and additional educational opportunities through the Center for Beef Advocacy – the online hub for advocate engagement and development efforts.

Collaborating with state beef councils (SBCs) is also a vital part of the BATE program. The SBCs network establishes connections with top producer advocates across the country, provides opportunities for leadership development and the state MBA coordinator network advances MBA certification efforts, particularly in high school classrooms. Extending MBA in-person and virtual trainings, speaking engagements, resources, traditional and digital media content, webinars, and other engagement opportunities through SBCs, state cattlemen's and breed associations, 4-H and FFA programs, state extension programs, and other agriculture industry organizations and stakeholders willing to partner in promoting or expanding the BATE program will continue to be a focus. The BATE program will also continue to collaborate with the Checkoff-funded NCBA issues management and public relations team and brand marketing team to identify trained advocates to aid in their efforts to promote beef and protect the reputation of the beef industry. It will also continue efforts to promote training and certification through relevant award recognition, public relations, advertisement, sponsorships, face-to-face and virtual training opportunities. External review of the MBA program, tools and materials will be considered as a strategy to increase program credibility and standing with key stakeholders.

Measurable Objectives:

Measurable Objective #1

Recruit New Advocates: Add 1,400 new MBA graduates to the nationwide network and expand the footprint of the MBA classroom toolkit with the facilitation of at least one MBA Classroom Toolkit workshop, where participants will then be able to utilize the MBA Classroom toolkit with their class/group.

Measurable Objective #2

Inform and Educate Advocates: Produce and distribute at least 12 email campaigns for advocate information, activation, or engagement, providing advocates with the data and resources they need to respond to questions about beef production and share beef's positive story, maintaining an open rate of at least 17%.

Measurable Objective #3

Engage and Inspire Advocates: Offer at least four (4) webinars to engage advocates in continuing education efforts to inspire their advocacy journey averaging 50 participants per webinar and conduct a post-survey to gauge effectiveness and participant interest in content.

Measurable Objective #4

Expand Advocacy Network: Conduct at least 15 in-depth training sessions and/or educational sessions for state and national advocates, staff and third-party subject matter experts, and/or key food and agriculture influencers from across the beef community to provide them with the content and skills to respond to misinformation and address concerns about the beef industry and conduct a post-survey to gauge participant confidence in advocating for the beef industry.

Measurable Objective #5

Train Top Spokespeople: Select and employ the 2025 cohort of 10 Trailblazers to participate in a yearlong training as national spokespeople for the beef community, equipping them with the tools and resources to participate in top-tier media interviews, higher-profile national opportunities and social media activity, and survey Trailblazers quarterly to determine advocacy engagement efforts.

Performance Efficiency Measures:

General Target Audience

- Cattle Producer/Beef Community Reach Goal: 190,000
- Cattle Producer/Beef Community Engagement Goal: 96,000

Key Opinion Leaders

- Cattle Producer/Beef Community Reach Goal: 2,000
- Cattle Producer/Beef Community Engagement Goal: 1,000

LRP Initiatives Addressed by this Tactic:

Grow Consumer Trust in Beef Production

- Align and collaborate with traditional and nontraditional partners to tell the positive story of beef cattle production
- Engage positively in the sustainable nutrition conversation

Promote and Capitalize on the Multiple Advantages of Beef

- Promote the role of beef in a healthy and sustainable diet

Improve the Business and Political Climate of Beef

- Demonstrate beef's positive sustainability message and key role in regenerative agriculture

Checkoff Program Committee(s): Consumer Trust, Stakeholder Engagement

TACTIC DESCRIPTION:

For more than three decades Beef Quality Assurance has provided systematic information to U.S. beef producers on how good cattle husbandry techniques can be coupled with accepted scientific knowledge to raise cattle in a way that positively impacts consumer trust and demand for beef. BQA programs have grown over time to include best practices around cattle handling, facility management, cattle transportation, good record keeping and protecting herd health, which all result in better outcomes for cattle, producers, and consumers. Today, having an active BQA certification is more important than ever because the full beef supply chain is leveraging the program to ensure our commitment to food safety, cattle well-being, and beef quality.

Collaborating on BQA training and certification efforts with the state BQA coordinator network is a hallmark of the program. Support of states will continue with in-person training resource development and data management support, as well as continued efforts to maintain consistency across programs. National BQA will also collaborate on research, often with state BQA program coordinators, which strengthens BQA guidance and/or content. Extending BQA promotion resources, content and tools through state beef councils (SBCs), state cattlemen's and breed associations, livestock marketing organizations, state extension programs, veterinary organizations and other livestock organizations willing to partner in promoting BQA will continue to be a focus through traditional and social media, demonstrations, seminars/webinars, providing speakers for panels and other engagement opportunities. The National BQA program will continue efforts to promote training and certification through relevant award recognition, public relations, advertisement, sponsorships, face-to-face and virtual training opportunities. BQA and the Masters of Beef Advocacy program will continue to leverage Checkoff efficiencies by sharing technology platforms and customer service resources for Checkoff-funded online training programs at NCBA.

In FY25, BQA programing will provide updated content, including revisions of BQA print content, additional online training module updates and development and other relevant training and education tools. These tools are being developed for producers in each sector, and in partnership with sector specific partners (seedstock; cow-calf; stocker/backgrounder; feeders; youth, through support of the Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA); dairy, through support of the National Dairy Farmers Assuring Responsible Management (FARM); calf ranches through the Calf Care & Quality Assurance (CCQA) program, auction markets and transporters). These efforts support cattle owners, managers and workers to be certified and/or adopt current cattle rearing techniques and methods. External review of the BQA program, tools and materials will be considered as a strategy to increase program credibility and standing with key stakeholders. Promoting the understanding of the BQA and equivalent programs and the

positive outcomes they provide for the cattle industry will be leveraged to the supply chain. The 2022 National Beef Quality Audit results will continue to be leveraged to both producers and supply chain audiences in 2025. Development of improved resources for Spanish language speakers will be a priority.

Measurable Objectives:

Measurable Objective #1

Certify Cattle Producers: Maintain the number of producers who are BQA certified (or equivalent) with 2024 certification numbers to continue the industry’s commitment to effectively “walk the walk” in raising healthy, thriving cattle that meet consumer expectations.

Measurable Objective #2

Update and Deliver Compelling Content: Revise at least two (2) educational tools such as the BQA Producer Field Guide, state coordinator training resources, or Antibiotic Stewardship for Beef Producers, to reflect updated BQA manual (2024) content, accounting for the latest scientific advances, technological innovation and regulatory changes.

Measurable Objective #3

Engage and Inspire BQA Leaders: Engage at least two-thirds of the nation’s state BQA coordinators (coordinators from at least twenty-nine states) by conducting a minimum of three “in-person” and/or virtual meetings which focus on continuing education and collaboration toward compelling and aligned BQA programs.

Measurable Objective #4

Assure Alignment and Effectiveness: Survey state BQA coordinators to evaluate national program support, services and resources so that successes (or challenges) in these areas can be tracked and improved over time.

Performance Efficiency Measures:

General Target Audience

- Cattle Producer/Beef Community Reach Goal: 400,000
- Cattle Producer/Beef Community Engagement Goal: 60,000

Key Opinion Leaders

- Cattle Producer/Beef Community Reach Goal: 18,100
- Cattle Producer/Beef Community Engagement Goal: 11,150

LRP Initiatives Addressed by this Tactic:

Grow Consumer Trust in Beef Production

- Intensify efforts in educating consumers as well as supply chain decision makers about the benefits of animal care programs like BQA and their impacts on animal well-being

Improve the Business and Political Climate of Beef

- Demonstrate beef's positive sustainability message and key role in regenerative agriculture
- Drive continuous improvement in food safety

Checkoff Program Committee(s): Consumer Trust, Stakeholder Engagement

Supplemental Information for This AR

1. Please explain significant changes from the FY24 approved AR.

The same tactics are utilized but efficiencies were identified compared to previous ARs.

2. List any proposed vendors/agencies that will be used to complete the work in this AR.

FoodMinds, CattleFax, Swanson Russell, Linhart PR, Ready Inc, Grant Communications, Baxter Communications, Vivayic, NCBA's Cattlemen to Cattlemen, Angus Media, National Milk Producers Federation, Youth for the Quality Care of Animals, Calf Care & Quality Assurance, Sprinklr, Nuvi, Brand Watch, Meltwater, and other subcontractors as needed.

3. Will all work with vendors/agencies be competitively bid? If no, please provide a brief description as to why.

Vivayic has been contracted to assist with BQA and BATE online learning platforms, which is a multi-year process. Swanson-Russell has been contracted to assist BQA with cattle producer focused marketing and public relations, ongoing work subject to competitive bid about every five years.

4. Has this AR built upon past work or projects that have been previously funded by the BPOC? If yes, please provide a detailed list and background information on the project and contractor(s) involved.

This AR is a continuation of the industry's issues management program, which began in the 1980s. This AR is also a continuation of the industry's quality assurance initiative and further builds upon and expands previous efforts and programs developed and implemented by the industry's quality assurance initiative. The beef industry's quality assurance commitment and initiative began in 1987. The AR includes iteration and new resources for Beef Quality Assurance programs, projects and educational materials to be developed as outlined in this fiscal year AR which will further support and advance the producer's commitment to addressing consumers' concerns about production practices that influence the safety,

wholesomeness and quality of beef and beef products.

5. If applicable, explain how this AR can be extended by state beef councils or other contractors.

Both the BATE and BQA programs are extended by most states through in-person and locally focused training and/or activation events.

Issues and Crisis trainings and materials are provided to state beef councils. Additionally, state-specific issues monitoring, and support is provided when needed.

Detailed Budget Summary

The tables in the following three sections report program budget information from the following funding sources:

- Cattlemen's Beef Board/Beef Promotion Operating Committee (CBB/BPOC) Funding
- Other Funding sources such as:
 - Federation of State Beef Councils (FSBC) Funds
 - Individual Qualified State Beef Council (QSBC) Funds
 - Government Funds (e.g., Market Access Program, Foreign Market Development)
 - Grain/Oilseed Funds (e.g., National Corn Growers Association, American Soybean Association) Corporate Funds (e.g., tech and pharma companies)
- Other

Section 1 – FY25 Funding Requested by Tactic

FY25 CBB/BPOC Funding Requested by Tactic

The following table outlines the amount of CBB/BPOC funding that is being requested for each tactic within this AR, and the committee(s) that has been selected to score each tactic.

FY25 CBB/BPOC Funding Requested by Tactic					
Committee Name	Tactic	Tactic Name	Direct Costs	Implementation	Total
Consumer Trust	Tactic A	Issues and Crisis Management and Planning	\$87,000.00	\$480,100.00	\$567,100.00
Consumer Trust Stakeholder Engagement	Tactic B	Beef Advocacy Training and Engagement	\$92,500.00	\$547,100.00	\$639,600.00
Consumer Trust Stakeholder Engagement	Tactic C	Beef Quality Assurance (BQA)	\$206,800.00	\$1,386,500.00	\$1,593,300.00
		Total	\$386,300.00	\$2,413,700.00	\$2,800,000.00

FY25 Other Funding Sources Requested by Tactic

The following table reports the amount of proposed and/or anticipated Other Funding sources that would be applied to this AR's tactics. The funding information in this table is for informational purposes only and demonstrates external collaboration as delineated in the 2021-2025 Beef Industry Long Range Plan.

FY25 Other Funding Sources Requested by Tactic (Informational Only)			
Funding Source	Tactic	Tactic Name	Total
Other: N/A	Tactic A	Issues and Crisis Management and Planning	
Other: N/A	Tactic B	Beef Advocacy Training and Engagement	
Other: N/A	Tactic C	Beef Quality Assurance	
		Other Funding Total	

Use the space below if you wish to provide additional comments/information on the FY25 CBB/BPOC or Other Funding amounts that are being requested for this AR's tactic(s).

N/A

Section 2 – Summary of FY24 AR Budgets and Expenses

Classification:

This AR is a continuation of, or builds upon, program work from last year. CBB will report information in the "FY24 CBB/BPOC Funding" table and the contractor will provide information for the "FY24 Other Funding Sources" table.

FY24 CBB/BPOC Funding

This table reports the amount of awarded and expended CBB/BPOC funding for this Authorization Request in FY24.

FY24 CBB/BPOC Funding			
<i>Note: The Cattlemen's Beef Board completed the fields in this table.</i>			
	AR# 2433-II		
	Direct Costs	Implementation	Total
Funds Awarded	\$457,150.00	\$2,247,300.00	\$2,704,450.00
Actual Expenses <i>(October 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024)</i>	\$264,876.00	\$1,237,150.00	\$1,502,026.00

FY24 Other Funding Sources

The following table reports the amount of committed and expended "Other Funding Sources" for this AR in FY24. The funding information in this table is for informational purposes only and demonstrates external collaboration as delineated in the 2021-2025 Beef Industry Long Range Plan.

FY24 Other Funding Sources (Informational Only)			
AR# 2433-II			
	Other Funding Source	Funds Committed	Funds Expended (October 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024)
A	FSBC Funds	\$327,700.00	\$127,933.00

Use the space below if you wish to provide additional comments/information on the FY24 CBB/BPOC or Other Funding amounts that are being requested for this AR’s tactic(s).

N/A

Section 3 – Historical Summary of AR Budgets and Expenses

Classification: This AR is a continuation of, or builds upon, program work from the last two years or more. CBB will report information in the "CBB/BPOC Historical Summary" table and the contractor will provide information for the "Other Funding Sources Historical Summary" table.

CBB/BPOC Funding – Historical Summary

The following table reports the amount of awarded and expended CBB/BPOC funding for this AR in FY21, FY22, and FY23.

CBB/BPOC Funding - Historical Summary				
Note: The Cattlemen’s Beef Board completed the fields in this table.				
		FY23 AR# 2333-II	FY22 AR# 2233-II	FY21 AR# 2132-II
AR Period ¹	Start Date:	Oct. 1, 2022	Oct. 1, 2021	Oct. 1, 2020
	End Date:	Sep. 30, 2023	Sep. 30, 2022	Sep. 30, 2023
Funds Awarded		\$2,500,000.00	\$2,473,820.00	\$3,081,611.00
Actual Expenses ²		\$2,493,732.00	\$2,472,111.00	\$3,063,013.00

¹For multiyear ARs, the "End Date" reflects the date that the AR is scheduled to be completed.

²If the AR "End Date" has not occurred, actual expenses will be reflective of the following time period: AR Start Date - June 30, 2024.

Other Funding - Historical Summary

The following table reports the amount of "Other Funding Source" expenditures for this AR in FY21, FY22, and FY23. The funding information in this table is for informational purposes only and demonstrates external collaboration as delineated in the 2021-2025 Beef Industry Long Range Plan.

Other Funding Sources – Historical Summary <i>(Informational Only)</i>						
	FY23 AR# 2333-II		FY22 AR# 2233-II		FY21 AR# 2132-II	
	Other Funding Source	Total Expenditures	Other Funding Source	Total Expenditures	Other Funding Source	Total Expenditures
A	FSBC Funds	\$472,049.00	FSBC Funds	\$341,415.00	FSBC Funds	\$962,154.00

Use the space below if you wish to provide additional comments/information on the historical CBB/BPOC or Other Funding budget and expense summaries.

N/A