

Phase III: Quality Enhancement by the Seedstock, Cow/calf, & Stocker Sectors

Results of a Nationwide Survey



Executive Summary: The 2011 National Beef Quality Audit

The First of its Kind!



Phase III...

Leveraged harvest floor & cooler audit data

Incorporated data from producers (seedstock, commercial cow/calf, and stocker) as to how they influence beef quality

Phase III Objectives



1. Document production practices used by cattle producers
2. Quantify adoption level of BQA-based quality-oriented management practices
3. Develop a benchmark against which to measure future BQA adoption
4. Direct future educational initiatives for cattlemen to enhance beef safety & quality

Survey Instrument



43-question survey

April 2011 to February 2012

Available:

On-line at www.cattlesurvey.com

Printed survey at cattle industry meetings

Segments:

Seedstock, cow/calf, background/preconditioner,
stocker/yearling, feedlot, and dairy

Online Survey



Beef Production Practices Survey

Thank you for participating in this on-line survey of beef producers across the U.S. Please complete this survey on behalf of your cattle operation(s). This survey will only take 10-15 minutes to complete. Please refrain from using your web browser's back and forward buttons

[Click Here to Take Survey](#)

Goal: Our goal is to summarize production and management practices that are currently being used by cattle producers throughout the beef production industry.

Beef Production Practices Survey

In which segment(s) of the beef production industry are you involved? (mark all that apply) *

- Seedstock
- Commercial cow/calf
- Backgrounder/preconditioner
- Stocker/yearling
- Feedlot
- Dairy
- I am not a cattle producer
- Other

If other, please specify:

Next

0%



Beef Production Practices Survey



Funded by
The Beef Checkoff

Printed Survey Booklet



Survey Respondents

3,755 completed surveys
(55% online; 45% written)

45 states represented

75% in the cow/calf segment (avg. = 192 cows)

Years working in cattle industry:

>10 yrs = 84%

>25 yrs = 55%



Definition of “Quality”

Rank	Definition	Score
★ 1 (T)	Producing safe & wholesome beef	1.3
★ 1 (T)	Raising cattle that are healthy	1.3
3	High level of eating satisfaction	1.4
4 (T)	Cattle are free from defects	1.5
4 (T)	Cattle are profitable for you	1.5
6 (T)	Cattle are profitable for others	1.7
6 (T)	USDA Quality Grade	1.7

*When you hear the term “quality” in relation to the beef industry, what comes to mind?
1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Disagree, 5 = Strongly Disagree*



Over 96% of respondents indicated that they intentionally influence “quality” via their on-farm or on-ranch activities



How “Quality” is Influenced

Rank	Method	%
1	Good stockmanship & animal handling skills	93
2	Preventative health care (i.e. vaccinations)	89
3	Use of a sound nutritional program	86
4	Use of best management practices (including how vaccinations/antibiotics are given)	84
5	Genetic selection & breeding systems	79

In what ways do you intentionally influence 'quality' as a beef producer (percent of respondents). Respondents were asked to 'mark all that apply' (values will sum to >100%)



9 of 10 respondents said they had a **working relationship with a veterinarian** in regard to use of animal health products



95% had some level of routine health protocol(s) they followed; yet, only 31% had this plan in **writing**

***Producers need to document their efforts via record-keeping to assure consumers of their hard work*



Route of Injection

		Industry Sector (%)					
Route	All	SS	CC	B/P	S/Y	F	D
IM	16	14	15	16	12	15	52
SubQ	84	86	86	84	88	85	48

IM = intramuscular

SubQ = subcutaneous (under the skin)

Industry sectors: SS = seedstock, CC = cow/calf, B/P = backgrounder/preconditioner, S/Y = stocker/yearling, F = feedlot, and D = dairy.

Location of Injections



Rank	Location	%
1	Front of shoulder (neck)	87.0
2	Top of hip	4.9
3	Front of shoulder (dewlap)	3.3
4	Lower rear leg	1.7
5	Under front leg	1.4
6	Caudal fold	1.0
7	Along topline	0.7

Preferred location of administration of animal health products

Primary Driving Tool



Rank	Driving tool	%
1	Sorting stick	51.9
2	No driving tools	15.3
3	Rattle paddle	14.7
4	Flag	6.0
5	Cane	4.6
6	Other	4.6
7	Electric prod	1.6
8	Multiple	1.4

*Over 98% of respondents did not use an electric prod as their **primary** driving tool*

Primary driving tool used when working/sorting cattle



50% of respondents did **not** use
an **electric prod** at all

Among those that did, 86% used
it on less than 10% of their cattle

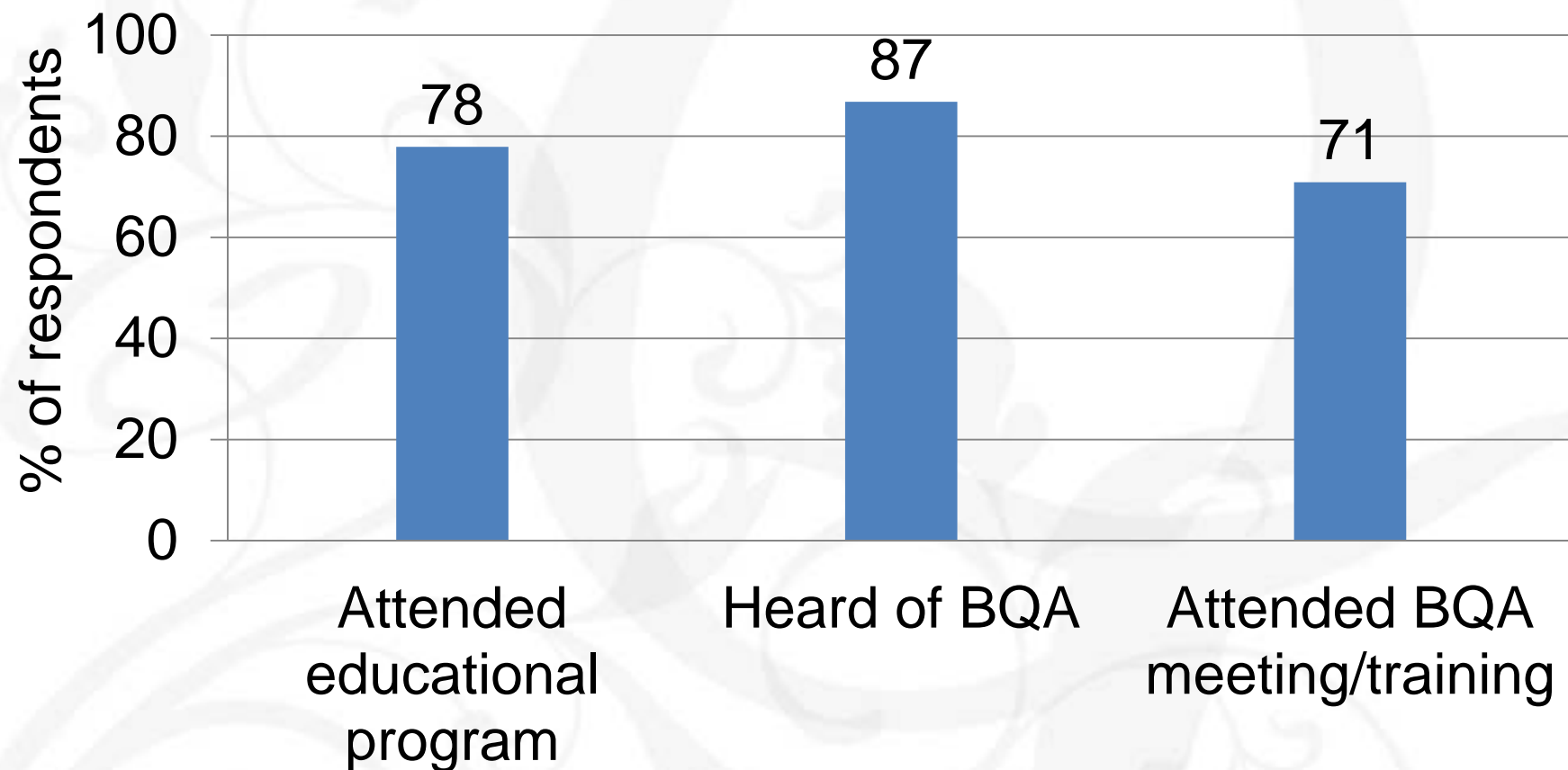
BQA Certification



- Voluntary
- Education/training program of producers about influential on-farm & on-ranch day-to-day management practices that affect beef quality
- By participating, producers accept responsibility for managing cattle to produce the safest, highest quality beef products possible



BQA Exposure



Have you ever been to, or participated in, an educational program that addressed how to avoid beef quality defects... in cattle and beef products?



Reasons I Follow BQA

Rank	Reason	%
1	It's the right thing to do	87
2	I'm committed to improvement	84
3	I receive a premium	35
4	It's required by the buyer	12
5	Other	4

Of those that attended a BQA training, reason(s) they chose to follow BMPs consistent with BQA. Respondents were asked to 'mark all that apply' (values will sum to >100%).



Those who attended a BQA meeting were **more likely** to use individual animal ID, keep written records, have a VCPR, give SubQ injections, and train workers in BQA



Closing Thoughts...

- The BQA Program can be credited with a significant amount of progress seen in NBQA-2011 results vs. previous audits.
- But, during the past 20 years BQA has been run on a near-shoestring budget...imagine what can be accomplished if it were fully funded!