

News Release

Consumer behaviours provide innovative opportunities for farmers

Guelph, ON (March 31, 2009) Canadian farmers are already seeing opportunities to reap rewards from a three-year study of consumer meat purchasing habits. Results are providing more detailed information on consumer behaviour than has ever been available.

“The information from this project will help hog producers better respond to the needs and wants of consumers. These efforts could ultimately enhance the profitability of our industry”, states Jurgen Preugschas, Chairman of the Canadian Pork Council.

The recently completed *Consumer Data for Farmers* project is the first of its kind to access such a vast array of data on the drivers and behaviours of consumers, and share that information with the industry. It was undertaken in partnership with the Chicken Farmers of Canada, the Canadian Sheep Federation, the Canadian Pork Council, and Ontario Veal.

“The detailed consumer research this project provided is valuable to our farmers and stakeholders. It provides insight on what the chicken industry is doing well, and highlights new areas for consideration. It also identifies key information for all segments so that marketing and promotion plans can be adapted accordingly”, says Lisa Bishop-Spencer, Manager of Communications for the Chicken Farmers of Canada

According to Martin Gooch, Director of the Value Chain Management Centre, “no matter how good a product is, knowledge of consumer behaviour is critical to the success of any business. The consumer insights gleaned from this project will allow producers to target the right markets, reduce costs, and capture added value”.

A key benefit for producers is the ability to build a more detailed picture of their consumer base, then enhance those product attributes consumers deem critical to their satisfaction.

Jennifer Haley, Executive Director of the Ontario Veal Association notes that “the depth of information available through this study is tremendous, and will no doubt assist not only Ontario veal farmers, but also our supply chain partners, to continue forging relationships with Canadian consumers.”

“The scope and quality of information provided through this project has been invaluable to the Canadian sheep industry. Members of the sheep industry have been using the data provided to focus discussions and decisions on how to provide consistent quality and quantity of lamb to Canadian consumers”, states Jennifer Fleming-MacTavish, Executive Director of the Canadian Sheep Federation.

This project was funded in part by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada through the Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food (ACAAF) program.

Reports and workshop presentations may be accessed through the Value Chain Management Centre website: www.vcmtools.ca. Report customization is also available upon request.

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