

Consumer study reveals meat purchase preferences

Guelph, ON (March 3, 2008) Early results from an ongoing consumer data project are yielding significant information on consumers' meat purchase habits.

Data on chicken, lamb, pork and veal show that while price and value for money are important factors in driving consumer meat purchases, neither is the most influential. For all meat choices, the biggest driver is whether or not the entire family will enjoy eating the product.

Colin Siren of Ipsos-Reid, who collected the data using their consumer online I-Say Panel, notes that “one of the most intriguing findings, something that is common among chicken, pork, veal and lamb consumers, is the degree to which meat and specific cut preference is influenced by the type of dining occasion. This information is critically important for meat producers to understand, as it illustrates how their products are positioned in the minds of their consumers.”

In addition to identifying other leading purchase drivers, such as taste, nutrition, product information, and reduced preparation time, the research shows that buyers value quality and are willing to pay for it. In fact, of all the meats, veal is purchased least on promotion. As well, organic or antibiotic-free meats, particularly chicken and pork, appear to have tremendous market opportunities.

According to Martin Gooch, coordinator of the project for the George Morris Centre, “with knowledge comes the ability to innovate successfully. The results of this study will allow members of the agriculture and agri-food sector to identify potential market opportunities and add value to their products.”

The three-year consumer data initiative is a joint effort from the Canadian Pork Council, Chicken Farmers of Canada, Canadian Sheep Federation, Ontario Veal Association and the George Morris Centre. The project is funded, in part, by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada through their Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food (ACAAF) program.

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