

**BEEF
BOOSTER**



BULLSENSE



WHY CONSUMERS WANT SUSTAINABLE BEEF

It can seem sometimes like the consumer demand for sustainable beef has come out of nowhere. A decade ago you'd rarely hear the words "sustainable" and "beef" together in the same sentence. Now it's everywhere, a demand that producers ignore at their peril. It's gotten so strong that even McDonald's, the largest purchaser of beef in the world, has declared that they want all their beef to be produced sustainably by 2017 and have made Canada their first test market.

Where did this demand come from? It's the product of a number of trends that have been developing for the past two decades. By learning about what's driving the demand producers will be better able to respond to and meet consumer expectations, keeping their operations (as well as the environment) healthy and thriving.

Successful Activism - the change in consumer demands in the past two decades across a range of products (not just beef) has been the result of decades of successful advocacy and public relations by environmental groups. In the 60's through the 80's groups like Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth focused their efforts on getting people to lobby government for new laws and regulations. While they might have urged boycotts of certain companies or countries' products they did not focus primarily on consumer actions. With political will for new legislation increasingly hard to muster they have shifted their focus to what people buy.

The coming of the Internet in the late 1990s allowed this advocacy to take off. Now campaigners no longer had to compete for the attention of overtaxed news organizations or purchase expensive television commercials - now they could, through their websites and social media presence, bring their message directly to consumers. (1)

Economic Success - It's an old story: the parents work hard to raise their kids, making many sacrifices for them, and the kids wind up with different values than the generations before them. It's the same in economies as it is in families: the new generation of consumers have different demands than their parents. While they still want to consume they also want to express their values and, in particular, feel like they are making the world a better place through their choices.

Identified as “Aspirationals” by marketers who study consumer trends, they are the largest segment of the market. They have grown up in comfort thanks to the economic success of their parents and, increasingly, value things other than simple material possessions. They favour taking exotic vacations every year over saving up for a home, for example, or being knowledgeable about foreign foods and global issues over knowing everything about how their vehicle works and how to repair it. While not limited to the rising Millennial (18-35) generation they are most prevalent among that demographic. (2)

It is these consumers who are the primary drivers of the demand for sustainable beef. It means a lot to them to be able to say that their meat was raised locally, for example, that it was raised without antibiotics or that it was raised on grass rather than wheat. These are the people who feel they must upload pictures of what they eat for dinner to show off their cultural sophistication and caring. Environmental groups have been very successful in appealing to this demographic through online media and celebrity activism, playing into their belief that small actions like what you eat can have very large significance.

Increased Communication - The final driver of the demand for sustainable beef is greater communication. We mentioned the Internet in the previous two points, and it’s worth addressing by itself. Particularly with the spread of high speed internet and ubiquitous video cameras in phones, what were previously isolated incidents and abuses in livestock production can be made known to world quickly and inexpensively, creating the impression that entire industries are full of wrongdoing.

The aspirational consumers, the primary audience for such news, are also increasingly connected to one another. They share stories about food production practices and rave about their favourite artisanal restaurants, delis, and organic markets. They also enforce peer pressure on each other to follow trends in diet and consumption. While this makes them difficult customers, it also makes them both valuable and loyal if you can win their support - not only will they buy your products, they’ll get their friends to buy them too. (3)

Producers looking to attract consumers will have to, individually and collectively, make sure they align their messages with these new consumer demands. Environmental groups were here before us and have had a long time to shape the views of the new generation. They can be changed back, but for now we’re playing a game whose rules were set for us by them.

It’s not enough anymore just to say “not all feedlots are like that” or to show that a single video was selectively edited to make it look as bad as possible. Now producers and industry have to work together to create positive messages about beef, showing that they care about the environment and consumer health just as much as environmentalists who’ve never set foot on a real farm or ranch. The best thing about the Internet and social media platforms is that they are available to producers just as much as to environmentalists, making it possible for us to start changing the conversation by making our own voices heard.

Links:

- (1) http://e360.yale.edu/feature/tapping_social_medias_potential_to_muster_a_vast_green_army/2424/
 - (2) <http://www.globescan.com/98-press-releases-2013/291-two-and-a-half-billion-aspirational-consumers-mark-shift-in-sustainable-consumption.html>
 - (3) <http://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/blog/how-to-tell-sustainability-stories-social-media>
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TEST RESULTS-FEBRUARY 2015

Strain	M1	M2	M3	M4	Tx
No on Test	77	39	117	177	25
Ave Birth Date	May-04	Apr-15	Apr-26	Apr-14	Apr-14
Ave Birth Wt	92	93	68	97	100
Ave Wean Age	175	184	186	185	189
180 Day Wt	540	580	445	537	475
On Test Wt	592	740	503	673	675

End of Test results will be posted in the March Newsletter.



SALE DATES

April 28, 2015 | M1/M2
 April 29, 2015 | M4
 April 30, 2015 | M3/TX



BULL PRICES

Red | \$5950.00
 Orange | \$5450.00
 Green | \$5200.00
 Yellow | \$4950.00

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Guarantee a selection spot at the Beefbooster sale [book today](#) for the bulls of tomorrow

UPCOMING EVENTS

VERIFIED BEEF WORKSHOP - QUALITY STARTS HERE

FEBRUARY 10 2015

BALZAC COMMUNITY HALL

1:00PM "

FOR MORE INFORMATION :

WWW.BEEFBOOSTER.COM/VERIFIED-BEEF-QUALITY-STARTS-HERE-WORKSHOP-2/

STILL TIME TO BOOK YOUR 2015 BULL REQUIRMENTS

WWW.BEEFBOOSTER.COM/EARLY-BOOKING/

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