

**The Retail Product - Meeting Consumer Demands**  
**"The Known and the Unknown"**

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We have been asked to address the topic of consumer demands for beef. Our approach is to cover the things we know and point out the things we don't know about satisfying consumer demands.

Failing to act on what we know is a mistake, just as it is a mistake to pretend that we have all the answers to this question firmly in hand.

The following outline is the basis of our presentation:

**What We Know**

- A. People enjoy beef for taste
- B. There are at least two different kinds of taste for beef
- C. People want little, if any trimmable fat
- D. Seam fat is primary contributor to plate waste: the more bone in a retail cut, the greater the seam fat
- E. Consumers want, and are willing to pay for convenience
- F. Different appetites are best satisfied with different portion sizes
- G. Uniformity/consistency is one indicator of quality in the eyes of consumers
- H. While consumers are seeing less fat on beef cuts, that does not necessarily imply that less fat is being produced than 10 years ago

**What We Don't Know**

- A. Does beef taste as good as it used to?
- B1. Are there more than two?
- B2. Precise, marketable descriptions of consumer segments
- C. Impact of trimming before cooking, on palatability... and nutrient profile
- D. How to efficiently, cleanly remove seam fat; genetic/management means to less seam fat
- E. Point(s) of price resistance
- F. Fabrication specs for full range of portion sizes from 750 lb. carcass.
- G. Genetics/management opportunities for enhancing consistency; mechanical/meat
- H. A quality/yield profile of beef supply, i.e. consist study

I. Consumers want minimum-plus quality beef with no plate waste

J. Consumers use color as an indicator of freshness . . . the brighter, the fresher

K. How to centrally cut, vacuum package and then distribute retail cuts of beef

L. "Natural" and "lite" have been used as positive marketing terms for a number of food products

I. Marketplace signal for quality gets through; signal for less fat is lost in retailers' backroom.

J. How to positively merchandise purple-red (not a "fresh" color) of vacuum packaged beef

K. How to communicate the new math cuts; how to vacuum package fresh, and retain bright red color

L. Influence of the terms their credibility and sales potential for beef products