



VPP Beef Niche Market Cow earns a premium - BCS #3

**DQC**  
Dairy Quality Center  
a Division of Agri-Education, Inc.

# BEEF TRIM



Unworthy of selling into the VPP Beef Niche Market - BCS #1

December 2015

Southwest Region

## TRANSPARENCY . . . What is it?

Transparency - what a great opportunity for you! This word is bouncing all over the press and typically has a negative connotation tied to it. Really the interest by consumers and retailers into food production is an open door for your input! This provides you with the opportunity to set the record straight. Go ahead and give them the scoop on how you care for your animals, your employees and the environment! You produce the food that the world needs to lead healthy abundant lives.

Most people do not know where their milk comes from (especially with the almond, coconut and other brands promoted via the media).

Wow, this is truly great as you are now in charge of what people know and how they receive their information!

Attitude is everything; embracing and controlling what people know about the dairy industry is the way to go. *(Resisting the chance to share an accurate message only allows others to promote their personal agendas.)*

Transparency can include a learning curve for people purchasing and enjoying the food you produce. Don't kid yourself; lack of food knowledge is rampant!

You can promote transparency with your brand or through your milk market! Do you offer tours at your dairy?

Here are several approaches for you to promote transparency:

- Dairy tours can promote teaching about pathogen management.
- Explaining the need to target Biosecurity at your dairy creates a "teachable moment" for healthy animals.
- Discussions on employee training and worker safety conveys your concern for workers.
- Viewing the milkers and the process of collecting milk is anything but routine leading to food safety.
- Learning about cow comfort, udder and teat care and preparation demonstrates your dedication to animal care.

Milk producers are far from common - we like to think of you as exceptional. What are other ways you or your employees can be transparent?

What about inviting the local accounting or business class to your office? Ask them to figure out the feed costs, labor, gallons of water needed, etc. Classroom learning can be applied to real life for students.

Do you volunteer? Community involvement tells people that you care about them.

Transparency is about caring and sharing. You care by producing the best milk and dairy beef for their families. The Verified Premium Plus program is more than an annual process, it verifies your best food production practices! Your licensed veterinarian certifies that you and your employees follow protocols and are dedicated to quality care for the cows. VPP participation enables you to review strategies and enhance communication between your veterinarian, nutritionist and employees. Your decision to make minor changes/improvements will make major progress with consumers. Send an accurate message about food production. You will be reaching out and teaching people who want to know for their families.

When you break down the barriers you become a valuable part of consumers' lives. You will also strengthen community support of your dairy operation. Grow consumer trust and confidence with transparency!

Responsible management - caring for animals, people, the environment and the milk and meat you market - it's a great message.

