



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



# BEEF TRIM



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

November 2013

Southwest Region

## Responsible Ripple Effects

Would you have ever guessed that your 'job' influences hundreds and maybe even thousands of people by providing safe, nutritious and delicious food? Decisions that you make in caring for your cows have a ripple effect from your dairy to the dinner table across the country. So how does it feel to be providing high quality milk and dairy beef to people who don't even know what a cow is? But what's new ... you've been marketing milk for years... but have you realized that you are also marketing beef? Quality beef for far more than hamburgers!

Beef Trim and muscle cuts - that's what you're selling when you load up your cull cows and ship them to Caviness Beef Packers ... approximately 50% of each dairy carcass becomes beef trim with the remaining meat going into muscle cuts. How does your dairy operation impact the quality of beef harvested? Let's turn the clock back and check it out. When the calf is young she needs vaccinations to stay healthy and again throughout her life she will require additional vaccinations and boosters. Location, location, location - of the vaccination site is important. Think twice before you administer vaccines - is the dose and route appropriate?

The care, specific location and route of vaccinations do make a difference! Injection sites commonly leave scars and lesions in the meat. Want to see for yourself? Let us know if we can coordinate a tour of Caviness Beef Packers when they are processing your market dairy beef and check out your cows to learn more about the quality of your dairy beef. These injection sites are highly visible once the hide is removed at the packing plant. The lesions in the tissue catch the eye of the USDA inspector which leads to further scrutiny. Carcasses are trimmed further or can be condemned if lesions are present or excessive. Meat quality and appearance is the key to further testing for violative drug residues.

What are the ripple effects of a violative residue for you? How about...restricted marketing of dairy beef/cull cows, milk quality fines or perhaps

higher insurance premiums? It could even result in the loss of your key employees as you toughen up protocols and expectations and enforce the need to maintain accurate record keeping. How important is it that you and your dairy comply with procedures and expectations? Answer: Very important if you desire to continue dairying.

What is zero tolerance and why is this phrase so important to you as a milk producer? It should influence you in two areas... zero tolerance for employee behaviors and zero tolerance for violative drug residues in your milk and dairy beef. Do you have a zero tolerance policy in place relating to animal care/abuse/employee behaviors? Do you enforce it? Secondly, are you confident that the milk you are marketing is free of antibiotic residues? What about your dairy beef? Answer: It is very important that at least one person verifies treatment records and withhold times to approve the sale of every animal going to market before loading the truck.

One way to view your dairy beef is to take the mindset of 'leasing' your cows to produce milk and young stock but in the end she is returned in good health to market as dairy beef!

The responsible marketing of cows for dairy beef is serious business. There is a growing need for high quality dairy beef due to the repercussions of the droughts on the beef industry. This is your time to shine and fill the need for high quality beef for consumers. Dairy beef is a valuable product and the market is right for responsible beef production practices. The ripple affect is sure to stick around for you for the next 2-3 years so make the most of it!

