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## Speak Up for Beef by March 15

Interested in becoming a local beef industry celebrity? Do you like to speak up and promote beef to friends, family, and even strangers? Have we got a job for you!

The Pennsylvania Beef Council (PBC) and the Pennsylvania Cattlemen's Association (PCA) are seeking young adults, ages 17-20, who are interested in becoming the 2010 Pennsylvania Beef Ambassador. The 2010 competition will be held in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Beef Expo this month at the Snider Agricultural Arena. The winner will be announced at the PCA Awards Banquet which will be held March 25 at Celebration Hall. The deadline to apply is March 15.

The Pennsylvania Beef Amba-

sador will represent the PBC, PCA, and affiliate cattlemen's organizations at agricultural and consumer events across the state as Pennsylvania's beef spokesperson. At the end of his or her one-year reign, the winner of the state competition will receive a \$1,000 scholarship. The contest is designed to identify an individual who will fulfill the role of educating consumers and students about beef nutrition, food safety and beef industry stewardship practices.

For more information regarding program guidelines and the application, contact Nichole Hockenberry, Pennsylvania Beef Council, at (888) 423-3372 or via e-mail, nhockenberry@pabeef.org, for further information.

## Jones Joins Beef Council Staff

BEDFORD, Pa — The Pennsylvania Beef Council recently announced that Lisa Jones has joined the organization as director of nutrition education for the council and director of public relations for the Northeast Beef Promotion Initiative.

In this dual position, Jones will spend 50 percent of her time developing beef nutrition programming in the commonwealth and 50 percent of her time implementing beef checkoff programs along the I-95 corridor. Now in its fifth year, the initiative is funded by checkoff dollars from the Cattlemen's Beef Board and is based out of the Pennsylvania Beef Council office, Bedford, Pa.

Jones most recently taught nutrition classes at LaSalle University as an adjunct professor for the past seven years. An accomplished nutrition communications consultant, she's served as a spokesperson for Beechnut Baby Food, Bagel Bites, and Solis Brands/Zoic. Other consultant work includes wellness and

weight management nutrition counseling, diabetes education, in-service training for dietary personnel, media interviews, and nutrition seminars. Earlier in her career, Jones was training manager for the School District of Philadelphia, supervising the professional development and training of all district foodservice personnel.

Recognized as the Young Dietician of the Year in 1995 by the American Dietetic Association, Jones remains active in the Pennsylvania Dietetic Association, serving as media representative, and the Philadelphia Dietetic Association, chairing the Consumer and Public Relations Committee.

Contact Jones at ljones@pabeef.org or (888) 4BEEFPA.



Lisa Jones



# Quality Care Matters

A Column about Dairy Animal Care provided by the Pennsylvania Beef Council and the Center for Dairy Excellence.



## Upgraded Cull Cows Can Earn More Money

REBECCA LONG CHANEY

Special to the Pennsylvania Beef Council  
and Center for Dairy Excellence

The dairy business continues to be a challenge with fluctuating milk prices, rising production costs and activist groups applying continuous pressure for better animal care practices. In this difficult economic environment, some dairymen may milk a potential cull cow past her productivity and ship her to market in very poor condition, reflecting negatively on all dairymen.

To combat this practice, meat processing company Cargill-Wyalusing (Taylor) established a program more than 15 years ago to reward dairymen for sending cattle to market in better condition.

"The White Cow Program takes a segment of the utility (fatter) cows and merchandises the middle meat cuts for more money to our wholesale customers. In turn, we will pay more money to the producer for those cows that qualify for the program," said Drew Wilkins, Cargill-Wyalusing (Taylor) director of procurement, Wyalusing, Penn.

Working at Cargill-Wyalusing (Taylor) for nearly 26 years, Wilkins sees the White Cow Program working for both wholesale customers and producers. He said the program is simple. "The in-house grader will select those utility (fatter) cows that meet the White Cow specification for meat quality and muscling," he explained. "They are then fabricated as a group, with the middle meat cuts boxed and shipped to those wholesale customers who buy that product."

The White Cow Program's goal is for dairymen to either cull dairy cows in a more timely manner or draft the animal out of the milking herd, dry her up and recondition and rehabilitate her during a 60 to 90 day period where she receives milking herd feed refusals (free food). The extra weight, improved meat quality and better body condition can equal greater profits for the dairyman.

"Those cattle that are selected for the White Cow Program, after delivery to the plant and purchase on a



Rebecca Long Chaney

dressed weight basis, are rewarded an "upgraded" price; price increases, per pound, range between 5 to 25 cents depending on market conditions on the sales side and white cow availability on the supply side," Wilkins said. "The dairyman could gain upwards of \$350 per head because of the animal's higher value and the additional weight gain, as compared to other cull cows.

The procurement director said that only 10 to 15 percent of dairy cull cows meet the White Cow standards. Limited barn or pasture availability and increased labor sometimes deter dairymen from rehabilitating and/or reconditioning their dairy cattle.

Tom Craig of Murmac Farm LLC in Bellefonte, Pa. has used the White Cow Program for years. The family milks 1,000 Holstein dairy cows and said that his cows can only have so many strikes against them, including drops in milk production, feet and leg problems, history of mastitis or other health issues, before they are culled. "Anything that makes her a liability," Craig said. "She's in the milking herd until she meets the magic definition of a cull cow -- she has issues with production, health or reproduction."

The Craigs move their cull cows to another barn where they receive wayback, or the refusal feeds, of the milking herd. "The wayback from the other animals is higher in protein," he said. "We kill two birds with one stone. The excess feed that we clean from the feed bunk would be removed anyway, so

there's no additional labor and we use the wayback for the cull cows instead of throwing it away. The farm benefits by putting extra pounds on these cows."

Murmac Farm usually has 20 to 30 cull cows in their reconditioning lot and Cargill-Wyalusing (Taylor) calls when they need a load of White Cow Program cows. "We make it work and we've benefited from it," Craig said. "Cargill knows we have this group of cows in reserve and call if needed. By accommodating Cargill, they take care of us -- it's a win/win situation for everyone."

Craig feels fortunate that they have the work force and space to recondition and rehabilitate cull cattle but understands it's not possible for all dairymen. "It takes space and some dairymen might not have room," he said. "They might need to send cull cows right away because it's more difficult to take care of them."

Reconditioning and rehabilitating cull cattle can offer an excellent opportunity to dairymen to increase profits since beef is the last crop dairymen can market from their dairy cows. "Through the use of refusal feeds, dairymen will not only be able to rehab and recondition a cull dairy animal into a more desirable animal for us, the packers, to process -- but they will create a heavier and more valuable animal to market," Wilkins said.

For more information on the White Cow Program options, visit [www.pabqa.org](http://www.pabqa.org) or [www.centerfordairyexcellence.org](http://www.centerfordairyexcellence.org).

*This is the fourth of several articles focusing on the dairy and beef quality assurance programs available throughout the United States. These articles provide information for dairy and beef producers to better manage the quality care of their animals.*

*Rebecca Long Chaney is a full-time mom to four-year-old twin daughters. She is an author, award-winning freelance journalist and speaker. The Chaney's have been in Maryland for six years living on the old family farm that had been in the Long family more than 100 years. Rebecca and her husband manage the Randall Land and Cattle Company registered Hereford beef operation on the farm.*

## Kindergarteners Learn About Veal

On March 5, more than 80 kindergarten students at Canton Elementary School in Bradford County learned about veal production from Patty Melt, the Pennsylvania Beef Council's costumed burger mascot.

### Veal Recipe Ideas Online

Can you eat veal parmigiana if you're on a diet? Yes you can, if you follow the recipe for fast veal parmigiana on the Web site [VealMadeEasy.com](http://VealMadeEasy.com). At 268 calories per serving, it's a guilt-free way to liven up your dinner routine. What's more, you can make it at home in just 15 minutes.

The Web site also offers cooking tips, videos and nutritional information to educate consumers about this delicious, versatile meat that is nutritious and an excellent source of protein.

Consumers should also look for peel-off recipe stickers with fast veal parmigiana featuring Colavita's extra virgin olive oil on fresh veal packages in local supermarkets. For details and other recipe ideas for cooking with veal visit [VealMadeEasy.com](http://VealMadeEasy.com).

Coordinated by school nurse Debra Keppler and the Pennsylvania Veal Growers Association, the Patty Melt visit was an installment of "Farm Fresh Fridays" at the school. Funded by a Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture "Healthy Farms and Healthy Schools" grant, Farm Fresh Fridays teach students, and their families, about choosing locally produced food by making them more aware of Pennsylvania agriculture. Pennsylvania is a national leader in veal production.

During the short assembly, students also viewed a life-size veal calf cutout and answered questions about common veal farming practices. Most importantly, they learned that veal is a nutritious meat choice. Following a handshake and high-five from Patty Melt, the kindergartners returned to their classrooms to sample a veal meatball provided by New Great American Veal, Newark, N.J. and Formula One Feed, New Albany, Pa. Canton FFA member Tyler Barnes participated in the event by dressing up in the burger costume. All students also received a veal activity book.

Farm Fresh Fridays will culminate Thursday, April 22, with a community event, "From Our Farms to Your Arms" from 6:30-8 p.m. at Canton Elementary School. Participating farm groups, such as veal, will showcase their commodity and offer educational materials to the public.

For more information on the event, contact Debra Keppler at (570) 673-5134.



Carrie Bomgardner of the Pennsylvania Beef Council talks to Canton Elementary School kindergarteners about veal. "Patty Melt" and a veal calf cutout are in the background.