



Tennessee Value-Added Beef 101 Workshops Evaluation Summary

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United States
Department of
Agriculture

As part of the Tennessee Value-Added Beef Program, the Center for Profitable Agriculture offered Tennessee Value-Added Beef 101 Workshops in April and May 2013. The events were on-farm workshops for farmers interested in direct marketing beef to consumers. The workshops were conducted as part of a project funded by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture and the Southern Risk Management Education Center.

The first event was held April 17, 2013 at Baggett Family Farm, the home of Tennessee Grass Fed Beef, in Montgomery County. The second event was held April 23 in Grundy County at Double A Farm. The third event held in Henry County at Paris Landing State Park and Yoder Brothers Processing. The final event was held May 15 in Knox County at the East Tennessee AgResearch and Education Center (ETREC). In all, 106 people attended the four workshops with 31 at Baggett Family Farm, 17 at Double A Farm, 40 at Yoder Brothers and 18 at ETREC.

A copy of the workshop agenda from the first event is included as Appendix A, and a copy of the evaluation form is included as Appendix B.

A total of 55 completed evaluations were collected with 14 from the Baggett event, 24 from the Yoder event, 8 from the Ahearn event and 9 from the ETREC event. This is an overall response rate of 52 percent.

The evaluation asked participants to choose among three phrases that best described their role in the value-added beef industry. As shown in Figure 1, 17 participants indicated they were a “farmer already direct marketing meat” while 24 were “farmers



Bobby Simpson shows participants around the beef sales area at the East TN AgResearch and Education Center.

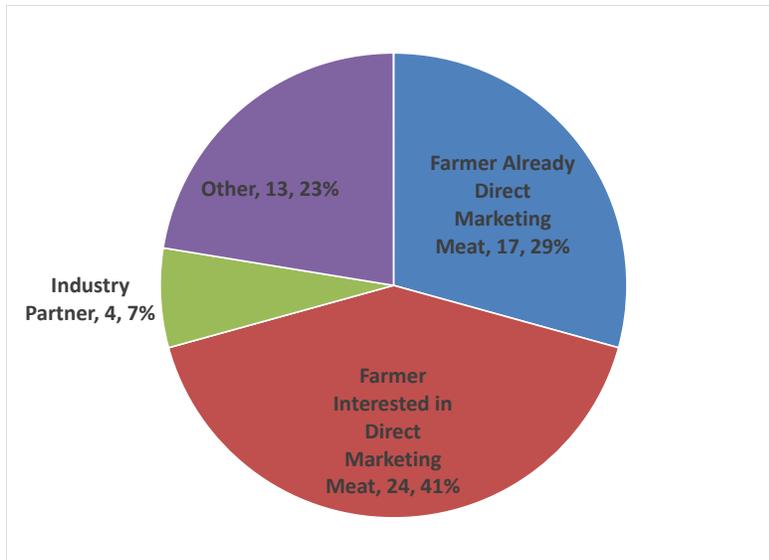


Figure 1: Role of Respondents in Value-Added Beef Industry

interested in direct marketing meat.” Four respondents indicated they were “Beef industry partners other than farmers including Extension, Department of Agriculture and producer organizations.” Thirteen respondents identified themselves as “other.” Of those providing more information, three said they were cattle farmers selling through traditional channels, one was a meat processor and one had a retail store and was interested in selling meat.

Respondents were asked to rate the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with several statements. A rating scale was provided with a numeric score assigned to each text rating. The scale and assigned numeric score were: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Somewhat Disagree (3), Somewhat Agree (4), Agree (5) and Strongly Agree (6). The statements, the number of people responding, ranges of responses and average response ratings are listed in Table 1. All respondents rated each statement as Somewhat Agree (4) or higher except for two Somewhat Disagree (3) ratings. Average numeric ratings ranged from a low of 5.31 for “I will be able to communicate more effectively with meat processors” to a high of 5.66 for “I would recommend this workshop to others.”

Respondents were asked to rate the degree to which they agreed or

Table 1. Rating of Agreement for Impact Statements on a Scale of Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Somewhat Disagree (3), Somewhat Agree (4), Agree (5) and Strongly Agree (6)

Statement	Number Responding	Range of Rating Responses	Average Response Rating
I have increased my understanding of the regulations involved with direct marketing meat.	55	5 to 6	5.60
I have a better understanding of how to conduct financial analysis for my value-added beef enterprise idea.	53	3 to 6	5.42
I will be able to communicate more effectively with meat processors.	52	3 to 6	5.31
I will be able to communicate more effectively with potential customers.	55	4 to 6	5.42
I have increased my understanding of what it takes to develop and operate a successful value-added beef enterprise.	54	4 to 6	5.41
I will implement or change at least one practice or procedure.	50	4 to 6	5.44
I would recommend this workshop to others.	55	4 to 6	5.66

Participants were asked to provide a comment regarding how they planned to use the information learned at the workshop. The majority of comments related to assessing and evaluating the idea of marketing meat to consumers. Two producers mentioned that the information helped them to decide not to sell meat. Four respondents indicated they would be better able to communicate with customers and/or processors. Two other producers said they would use the information to improve their label. A sampling of comments regarding how respondents planned to use information learned at the workshop is provided below by category:

Assessing and Evaluating Meat Sales

- Assess viability of this for my operation
- To evaluate and improve my business
- To use the information on my decision to do direct marketing or not
- I plan to make decision to continue to produce beef or get out of beef production
- Making the decision on going into the direct marketing business
- Go back and re-evaluate our business plan
- Will consider the information for planning
- Better develop an improved marketing plan
- Everything was very useful to help start up the beef program
- New to Tennessee and this helped with the regulations that are different
- Selling grass fed beef
- It will help me evaluate how I will market my beef
- To start my own direct market business
- Plan to direct market and improve freezer beef business
- Starting a direct marketing shop
- Stay only with bulk sales, definitely not retail
- Stop selling meat

Better Communicate with Customers and Processors

- I'll be better able to understand the customers point of view
- Talk to processors and study up for customers
- I have increased knowledge to communicate with processors and customers
- Communicate with customers better

Improve Label and Other Marketing

- Use this information to help improve my label
- Develop label and marketing
- Importance of developing a web site (marketing)

Other

- I plan to begin making changes to our program as early as tomorrow
- Share with producers and consumers
- Better serve, advise clientele interested in retail/value-added beef
- Learn more about different cuts of meat
- To fine-tune what we are correctly doing

Participants were also asked to provide ideas and suggestions on how the workshops could have been improved. There did not seem to be a clear trend on suggestions for improvement as they covered a variety of topics. Suggestions are listed below in addition to some examples of positive comments given.

Suggestions for Improvement

- More financial info
- Would like Potential for Profit done on selling live on the hoof from farm to buyer
- More information on marketing
- Would have been perfect if a USDA employee could have been present
- Provide PowerPoint on disk
- Think we should have “Advanced 201” Tennessee Value-Added Beef next year
- If you are an advocate for small farmers direct sales then ask more questions of us on how you could get regs changed or removed that hinder us from expanding our markets
- Would like more talk from farmers
- Accommodate more time for presentations (it felt rushed)
- Could have had workshop during meat sale time (see in action)
- Not able to understand the questions asked
- Don’t feed me so much. I almost fell asleep
- Serve something besides cookies for breakfast
- Air conditioning – that is about it
- Less noise from upstairs



UT Extension's Dwight Loveday helps teaches participants about the various cuts of meat in order to more effectively communicate with processors and consumers.



James Yoder of Yoder Brothers Meat Processing provided a tour of their facility and demonstrated the breakdown of a half carcass for workshop participants.

Example Positive Comments

- Don't know – well run, interesting, informative, with handouts and free
- Not sure it can – very good program
- It's very good – keep it up. Excellent the way it is. Presenters were knowledgeable and informative
- I think it covered everything very well
- Don't know – great job. Appreciate having slides printed so I could write additional notes

Finally, participants were asked to list the key resource, information or training still needed in developing or growing a local beef marketing enterprise. The most comments related to marketing, financial analysis and pricing. Comments were also given related to processing, beef production and networking. Comments are listed below by category.

Marketing

- More info on Internet marketing
- What items sell best
- Need contacts to sell on hoof beef to
- Maybe help in advertising
- Marketing into municipal, state or federal institutions
- More marketing information
- Would like to have a session on accepting food stamps at farmers market
- Website and marketing
- I need information to educate customers on proper defrosting of a frozen cut of beef. Also, information on country of origin requirements and sites for recipes
- Need handouts to give to people to help them understand the cuts of meat and how to cook them for best use of meat
- Contact with TDA rep and USDA label design help

Financial Analysis and Pricing

- What are some of the “hidden costs” you might not know starting out
- Pricing structure
- To help break down the financial gain per head vs. cost to know where your market price should be
- I will seek more advice on the finance
- Any computer programs for record keeping

Networking

- Plan to check out the webinars
- Future updates as time passes and laws change
- Continue to stay in touch with UT Extension
- None at present, but know whom to call when I do need help
- Experienced people
- More lessons learned

Processing

- Dealing with processors and making it efficient and cost effective
- Mobile processing in East Tennessee
- We need USDA processor
- Tour of processing plant

Beef Production

- Pasture management and genetics for grass fed producers in Tennessee and Kentucky
- Information on genetics
- What types, breeds, characteristics of cattle make good freezer beef

Other

- Everything helps but give thought to a second day
- Education – good job by this team

Summary

The Center for Profitable Agriculture held four Tennessee Value-Added Beef 101 Workshops in April and May 2013 for 106 participants. The events were on-farm workshops for farmers interested in direct marketing beef to consumers. The workshops were conducted as part of a project funded by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture and the Southern Risk Management Education Center.

Following the workshops, participants at the workshop had increased their understanding of regulations involved with direct marketing meat, had a better understanding of how to conduct financial analysis for value-added beef enterprises, would be able to communicate more effectively with meat processors, increased their understanding of what it takes to develop and operate a successful value-added beef enterprise and were planning to implement or change at least one practice or procedure.

Participants were asked how they planned to use the information learned at the workshop. The majority of comments related to assessing and evaluating the idea of marketing meat to consumers. Two producers mentioned that the information helped them to decide not to sell meat. Four respondents indicated they would be better able to communicate with customers and/or processors. Two other producers said they would use the information to improve their label.

Participants were asked what key resource, information or training they still needed in developing or growing a local beef marketing enterprise. The most comments related to marketing, financial analysis and pricing. Comments were also given related to processing, beef production and networking.

Special thanks are extended to the following organizations and individuals for their contributions to the Tennessee Value-Added Beef 101 Workshops:

- **Our funding partners at the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture and the Southern Risk Management Education Center**
- **Our hosts at Baggett Family Farm, Double A Farm, Yoder Brothers Processing and the East Tennessee AgResearch and Education Center**
- **Our teaching team:**
 - **From UT Extension - Dwight Loveday, Hal Pepper, Megan Bruch**
 - **Value-Added Beef Producers - Phil Baggett, Steve Ahearn, James Yoder, Bobby Simpson, Mark Campbell**
 - **From Tennessee Department of Agriculture Regulatory Services - Ed Watson, Ricky Young, Ken Golden, Nathan Hannah**
- **Lynne Scott for assisting with a new on-line registration process**
- **Kim Giorgio for countless efforts to assist in making the workshops successful**

Programs in agriculture and natural resources, 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences, and resource development.
University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture and county governments cooperating.
UT Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

Appendix A – Sample Agenda



Tennessee Value-Added Beef 101 Workshop Agenda On-Farm Workshops for Farmers Interested in Direct Marketing Beef to Consumers Baggett Family Farm – April 17, 2013

9:00 am	Registration, Refreshments and Networking
9:30 am	Welcome, Announcements, Introductions – John Bartee, UT Extension and Megan Bruch, CPA
9:40 am	Lessons Learned from a Value-Added Beef Producer – Phil Baggett, Tennessee Grass-fed Beef
10:10 am	Pencil Out Your Potential for Profit -- Hal Pepper, CPA
10:45 am	Break
11:00 am	Basic Retail and Wholesale Meat Regulations – Megan Bruch, CPA
11:45 am	Networking and Lunch Featuring Tennessee Grass-fed Beef
12:30 pm	Making Special Claims on the Label and Off – Megan Bruch, CPA
1:00 pm	What You Need to Know About Your Product – Dwight Loveday, UT Extension
2:00 pm	Break
2:15 pm	Tips for Working with a Processor—Dwight Loveday, UT Extension
2:45 pm	Tour of Value-Added Beef Facilities
3:45 pm	Retail Meat Sale Inspections: An Inspector's Perspective – Ed Watson and Ricky Young, TDA
4:30 pm	Announcements, Collect Evaluations and Adjourn – John Bartee, UT Extension and Megan Bruch, CPA

Funding Partners

Special thanks to the following agencies for providing funding support for these events:



United States
Department of
Agriculture

National Institute
of Food and
Agriculture



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Appendix B – Evaluation Form



Tennessee Value-Added Beef 101 Evaluation Form On-Farm Workshops for Farmers Interested in Direct Marketing Beef to Consumers April & May 2013

1. Please read the following options carefully and choose the ONE that best describes you.

- a. Farmer ALREADY direct marketing meat
- b. Farmer INTERESTED in direct marketing meat
- c. Beef industry partner other than farmer (including Extension, TDA, producer organizations, etc.)
- d. Other. (Please specify.) _____

2. Please rate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

Due to today's workshop, ...	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Somewhat Disagree</i>	<i>Somewhat Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>N/A</i>
I have increased my understanding of the regulations involved with direct marketing meat.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
I have a better understanding of how to conduct financial analysis for my value-added beef enterprise idea.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
I will be able to communicate more effectively with meat processors.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
I will be able to communicate more effectively with potential customers.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
I have increased my understanding of what it takes to develop and operate a successful value-added beef enterprise.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
I will implement or change at least one practice or procedure.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
I would recommend this workshop to others.	<input type="checkbox"/>						

3. How do you plan to use the information you learned at today's workshop?

4. How could this workshop have been improved?

5. What is the key resource, information or training you feel is still needed to assist you in developing or growing a local beef marketing enterprise?

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