

State Beef Councils Utilize Federation Initiative Fund

by **WALT BARNHART**

for the Federation of State Beef Councils

State beef councils in Georgia and Minnesota have extended the reach of the Beef Checkoff Program through checkoff funds made available through

the Federation Initiative Fund, which helps funnel beef checkoff dollars from cattle-producing states to states with large consumer populations. The Federation Initiative Fund is coordinated by the Federation of State Beef Councils.

The Georgia Beef Board (GBB) utilized

a \$15,000 Initiative Fund grant to help sponsor the Georgia Nurses Association Conference in October. The GBB was able to make valuable connections with key health professionals in the state as a result of its participation.

The Minnesota Beef Council (MBC)

utilized part of a \$5,600 grant to conduct a beef industry tour and two workshops for culinary students in the state, positively influencing attitudes of future chefs about beef. Combined with a subsequent workshop conducted in partnership with Sysco Foods, nearly four dozen students and 10 future chef/instructors participated in these MBC culinary efforts, far surpassing initial project goals.

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it was started in 2006.

For both councils, the added funds offered through the Federation of State Beef Councils helped expand the strong checkoff programs already taking place in their states.

“We were able to build lasting relationships with important health professionals as a result of our participation in the Georgia Nurses Association Conference,” says Josh White, GBB executive vice president. “Since our participation, we have had several nurses contact us for beef information to give to their patients. One nurse we got to know as a result of the event has contacted us more than once to get information for her dialysis patients, who greatly need to include more protein in their diets, and two others have asked us to come to their local nurses association to do a cooking demonstration and talk more about beef.”

Karin Schaefer, MBC executive director, says students involved in the MBC culinary project got a lot of value out of the direct contact with Minnesota’s beef industry. As a result the industry received outstanding and lasting support from those who will serve beef in the future.

“The comments we received after the events were very positive, and it’s been rewarding to see how much these students learned from these experiences,” she says. “In addition, the interaction between the students and the beef producers at the events was a highlight. It’s important that these efforts be two-sided events.”

The Federation Initiative Fund, managed by the Federation’s executive committee, has awarded about \$2.2 million to 22 states conducting more than 180 programs since it was started in 2006.



Editor’s Note: *The Federation of State Beef Councils is a division of the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA), which is a contractor to the Beef Checkoff Program. The program is administered by the Cattlemen’s Beef Board, with oversight provided by the USDA.*