

Range Beef Cow Symposium XX

Dec. 11-13, 2007 • Larimer County Fairgrounds and Events Complex, Fort Collins, Colo.

Beef's Role in a Healthy Lifestyle

With continued research, we are learning more about beef's unique nutritional properties.

by **Kindra Gordon**

FORT COLLINS, Colo. (Dec. 12, 2007) — We've all heard the slogan "Beef. It's what's for dinner." But in the future, consumers may also want to remind themselves that "Beef does a body good."

Marilyn Schnepf, chair of the Nutrition and Health Sciences Department at the University of Nebraska- Lincoln, provided an overview of beef's healthful attributes to attendees of the Range Beef Cow Symposium XX in Fort Collins, Colo., Dec. 11.

"Beef is an excellent source of essential nutrients," Schnepf said, as she listed protein, phosphorus, selenium, iron, zinc and vitamin B-12 among the essential nutrients that beef provides.

Schnepf noted that in the past the downfall of beef for those seeking a healthy lifestyle was the perception of its fat content. But, she explained, that negative perception is changing as the nutrition community is learning more about fat.

"We've learned that all saturated fat is not created equal," she told meeting attendees. Schnepf cited research trials that have found some beneficial properties of steric acid from beef sources. Likewise, research into conjugated linoleic acid (CLA), another type of fat found in beef, appears to offer some health benefits.

Schnepf said more research is needed to clarify just how these fats — and how much of these fats — may fit into a healthy lifestyle,



► **Marilyn Schnepf**

but it is a step forward for the beef industry in being recognized for additional attributes.

In closing, Schnepf cautioned that messages on good and bad fat can get confusing to consumers. "We used to think all fats were bad, and that's not true," she reiterated. "We are learning more all the time."

She concluded, "The fat we find in beef has unique properties, and more research is being conducted to learn about people's fat requirements ... We know that fat cells are

more than storage for fat, they have a real metabolic use in producing things for the body."

Until we know more, she said, the best advice is that which most of us already know:

1. Eat a variety of foods; and
2. Eat those foods in moderation to balance calories consumed with calories expended.

If we balance what we eat with the energy we expend, we would all be much better off, Schnepf remarked.

Range Beef Cow Symposium XX is hosted by the cooperative extension services and animal science departments of Colorado State University, South Dakota State University, the University of Wyoming and the University of Nebraska. The symposium is at the Larimer County Fairgrounds and Events Complex, Fort Collins, Colo., Dec. 11-13. Additional coverage of the conference is available at www.rangebeefcow.com.



Editor's Note: API coverage of the Range Beef Cow Symposium XX is made available for distribution to all media via an agreement with the Range Beef Cow Symposium Committee and API. Headquartered in Saint Joseph, Mo., API publishes the Angus Journal and the Angus Beef Bulletin, as well as providing online coverage of events and topics pertinent to cattlemen.