

Mini Grants Give Students a Taste of Beef



By Scooter Pursley for the North Dakota Beef Commission

Beef Mini Grants provided by the North Dakota Beef Commission (NDBC) are helping North Dakota educators introduce students to the basics of beef handling and meal preparation.

Ag Education and Family and Consumer Science (FACS) **Mini Grants** funded by the Beef Checkoff are assisting educators in purchasing beef and needed tools and utensils to be used in classrooms to teach students proper selection, storage and preparation techniques.

The NDBC awarded \$35,000 in the form of **Mini Grants** to 32 North Dakota Family and Consumer Science educators, 26 agriculture education programs and nine North Dakota State University Extension programs. The grants were awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis to North Dakota schools.



Nicole Wardner,
NDBC Consumer
Marketing and
Industry Relations
Specialist

“North Dakota Beef Commission **Mini Grants** help educate young consumers on the best ways to select and prepare beef as part of a healthy diet,” said Nicole Wardner, NDBC consumer marketing and industry relations specialist. “The NDBC is proud to be able to make this program possible.”

Beef in the Classroom

Schools are using the grant funds throughout the school year to develop unique ways to teach about beef in the classroom. Turtle Lake-Mercer students processed primal cuts of beef into retail cuts and then will have a spaghetti feed with the ground beef they made.

Oakes’ ninth-grade ag class learned basic knife and food preparation skills and made beef jerky.

Ashley’s ag processing class purchased equipment, including knives, gloves, scales, cutting boards and aprons needed for processing and conducted blind taste tests using grain-fed

beef, grass-fed beef and beef from a grocery store.

Hettinger School used funds to purchase beef that was made into retail cuts, summer sausage and jerky, and to get students interested in meats judging. It also received a FACS mini grant that was used in a cultures and cuisines class in which each student received a cut of beef to prepare using curriculum purchased through the mini grant.



Other FACS mini grants helped Central Cass students learn of Latin American and Asian cuisine and conduct a lab featuring beef dishes; Bottineau students prepared soup and stew and also chili they served at a district volleyball tournament; Minot students learned knife skills while preparing steaks and fajitas; and Carrington students prepared round and chuck eye steaks to compare marbling, tenderness and flavor.

McClusky School held a competition to see who could cut the most retail value from a portion of beef. Students were given sirloins from which to cut steaks to practice knife skills and consistency of product. The steaks were then served to community supporters in an effort to share what they learned as well as thank the community for their support.

“We are looking forward to all the other success stories yet to come from the many schools and educators that are participating in the **Beef Mini Grant** program this year,” Wardner said. “This program is an excellent example of what can be accomplished with our producers’ Beef Checkoff dollars.”

