

Masters of Beef Advocacy Developing the Next Generation of Beef Advocates



By Kylie Blanchard for the North Dakota Beef Commission



The Masters of Beef Advocacy (MBA) program was developed by the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) in 2009 to address the growing gap between producers and consumers, as well as help farmers and ranchers share their stories and

advocate for the beef industry. The goal of the beef checkoff-funded MBA program is to look to the future of the industry by developing the next generation of beef advocates.

More than 19,000 individuals nationwide have graduated from the program and 285 individuals have completed the program in North Dakota. "Today's consumer wants to know where their beef comes from and how it was raised, but they don't know exactly how it got to their plate. Through the MBA program, cattlemen and women are able to tell their story and use science to explain the benefits of beef production to the environment as well as the health benefits to their diet," says NDBC Board Member Lilah Krebs.

Providing Resources and Tools

The MBA program is a free, self-guided online course that provides resources and tools to answer questions about raising cattle and the beef industry. The program encourages involvement from individuals at every stage of beef production. "I suggest every producer complete the MBA program. They'll gain an understanding of consumers, and how to share the beef industry's story with them," Krebs notes.

The online lessons address sustainability, beef nutrition, animal welfare, and beef safety, as well as the cycle of beef from pasture to plate and the history of the U.S. beef industry. The program's five interactive lessons provide graduates with skills and information to share the beef industry's stories:



Lilah Krebs, NDBC Board Member

Lesson 1: The Beef Community - Raising beef from pasture to plate.

Lesson 2: Raising Cattle on Grass - The first step in the beef lifecycle and the benefits of raising cattle.

Lesson 3: Life in the Feedyard - The role of feedyards, including animal care, nutrition and environmental stewardship.

Lesson 4: From Cattle to Beef - An in-depth look at the slaughter process and the humane handling and safety measures in place today.

Lesson 5: Beef. It's What's For Dinner. - Choosing and cooking the right cuts of beef and the role of beef in a healthy diet.

MBA participants graduate from the program following the completion of the online lessons. Advocates remain active through monthly newsletters and an exclusive Facebook community where updates are provided on the latest consumer trends and beef research.

MBA graduates also gain access to a variety of continuing education resources, including online courses and in-person training. The NCBA also partners with state beef councils to host training workshops that offer graduates more in-depth training. The North Dakota Beef Commission is planning a seminar in early 2022 for current graduates to revisit or extend their advocacy efforts.

"The MBA program is a way for producers to make a connection with consumers. It is a great way to show consumers we are families who work together to bring wholesome, safe foods to their tables," says Krebs. "There are ways to connect with people who do not live the same lives we do. If we find those connections, and share them, we have a consumer that trusts us and how we are nourishing their family."

For more information and to apply to participate in the MBA program, visit www.MastersofBeefAdvocacy.com.

