

Grazing BMP survey shows consumers believe in Australian product

THE resounding results of an AgForce survey have shown approximately 98 per cent of consumers believe Australian farmers are delivering safe, nutritious and a high quality product.

The survey, conducted by the Grazing BMP Project, interviewed visitors to the Ekka, Queensland's biggest event, over 10 days. Grazing BMP was launched in 2013 and is an industry benchmarking initiative supported by AgForce, the Queensland Government and the Fitzroy Basin Association (FBA).

Although many of those surveyed said they had no direct association with farming, the survey found consumers were still mindful of where they bought their beef, and what type of beef they purchased.

Other key results included:

- 44pc of respondents said they preferred to purchase locally grown beef, while 33pc preferred grass fed;
- 25pc of respondents bought their meat direct from farmers, and 46pc bought their meat from farmers markets;
- 82pc of those surveyed said they had no environmental concerns about eating Australian beef;
- 87pc of respondents were confident about the quality and safety of Australian beef;
- 87pc of those surveyed believe beef is good value for money;
- 75pc of respondents eat beef twice a week or more.

The survey also indicated 74pc of consumers surveyed would be willing to pay more for beef to support the Australian beef industry in developing better outcomes for environmental and animal welfare matters.

AgForce Projects Grazing BMP Officer, Michael Taylor, said the program was launched in 2013 to help graziers identify steps to improve the long-term profitability and sustainability of their grazing enterprise.

"The program, which is designed for producers, by producers, helps graziers self-assess and identify opportunities and threats in their current practices in order to become more drought-resilient and sustainable," Mr Taylor said.

He said Grazing BMP is also the best way for the grazing industry to be demonstrate its good environmental and animal stewardship.

"As consumers increasingly demand produce sourced from sustainable production systems, we are confident the industry can utilise their Grazing BMP tool and capture industry progression, foster and support the ongoing development of a sustainable product, and also deliver the real facts across the whole industry."

The Grazing BMP Partnership includes the Fitzroy Basin Association, AgForce and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

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Survey Parameters

243 people were randomly selected by the Grazing BMP team to complete a survey on beef consumption at the Ekka 2014. The team surveyed the respondents over the ten days of the show and set out to survey city-based consumers to gauge attitudes towards beef consumption and purchasing habits. Attendees at the Ekka were engaged directly by the BMP team, being approached in the Agricultural Pavilion throughout each day. Consumers were engaged by the team and the survey was completed by the individual.

The BMP team were based in the Agricultural Pavilion to ensure that the survey engaged consumers, rather than graziers or those within the industry. The Agricultural Pavilion attracts a diverse range of consumers including families, school groups and consumers interested in learning more about their local community.

The survey targeted city-based families and independents consumers - who were more likely to make their purchasing decisions autonomously (i.e. as a person living on their own or as a couple); or as the head of a household (i.e. as a parent or caregiver). Only adults over the age of 18 were selected to complete the survey, but no upper age limit was imposed.

88% of survey respondents lived in the Brisbane Metropolitan, Moreton Bay, Sunshine Coast or Gold Coast regions. Respondents came from 131 different postcode regions in Australia, including 8 in New South Wales and 3 in Victoria. The team also spoke with consumers from a wide range of professions including teachers, accountants, university students, nurses, council workers, security guards, miners, truck drivers and doctors.