

## **Full length version of articles abbreviated in TCFA Newsletter print edition.**

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### **NCBA Disputes New Study Linking High Red Meat Intake And Cancer**

The December 2007 edition of *PLoS Medicine*, an online journal by the Public Library of Science, published a study this week suggesting that individuals with high red meat intake have elevated risk of esophageal, colorectal, liver and lung cancer. However, NCBA says the study does provide information about distribution and determinants of disease for further study, but it doesn't establish cause and effect. Nothing in the study should change the way people enjoy eating red meat as part of a healthy balanced diet.

NCBA also noted that the researchers' definitions of red and processed meat overlap. For example, bacon and ham were included in both categories. Such overlap was cited in the "Editors' Summary" of the study as a limiting factor. Additionally, the authors of an accompanying discussion article concluded that "red and processed meat intake might not be solely responsible for the higher cancer risk."

Meanwhile, an online survey by *msnbc.com* suggests this study and similar ones are not turning the general public against red meat. More than 14,000 responses were registered with 67% saying reports of increased cancer risk have not prompted them to eat less red meat. Also 55% of respondents said that they eat red meat a few times a week and 12% said they eat red meat every day.

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**The Next Texas A&M University President** will apparently be Dr. Elsa Murano, the current vice chancellor of agriculture of the A&M System and a former USDA undersecretary for food safety. This week, A&M System Regents named Murano as the sole finalist for the president's job. She'll be eligible to take the helm on Dec. 28.

**Where The U.S. Beef Herd Is Headed** in the next year or so is an open question, according to analysis by CME Group. Indicators favorable to herd expansion include the fact that cow-calf operations have been profitable for most of the past 20 years. On the negative side, some observers believe running beef cows has become less attractive in many areas due to transition to new land uses such as housing developments, hunting and cultivation. CME says, although the pace of decline has slowed, the beef cow herd has not bottomed out since it began to shrink in 1995.