



## Red Meat Industry Responds to the World Cancer Research Fund Report

October 31, 2007 – The Beef Information Centre, Canadian Pork Council and the Canadian Meat Council disagree with certain conclusions in the World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF) Report. The report is a global review of diet, physical activity and obesity in relation to cancer risk. Red meat producers value research on health issues, however, they urge caution with some of the Report's recommendations.

There is no convincing scientific evidence that consuming red meat, as part of a healthy balanced diet, increases the risk of cancer. Cancer is a complex disease with many contributing factors including: physical activity, obesity, smoking, alcohol consumption, diet, as well as family history and age. There isn't one single food that causes or prevents cancer. A balanced diet, regular physical activity and a healthy body weight play a key role in cancer prevention.

Scientific findings regarding cancer risk continue to be inconsistent. For example, a pooled analysis of 725,000 subjects conducted by Harvard in 2004<sup>1</sup> concluded there is no positive association between red meat consumption and colorectal cancer risk. The findings were presented at the 2004 American Association of Cancer Research annual meeting.

*Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* continues to recognize red meat in the diet. The Food Guide recommends 1 to 3 servings of Meat & Alternatives per day (75 grams per serving). Canadians on average are eating 74 grams of red meat a day and are well within the Food Guide recommendations. As well, many Canadians are not eating a balanced diet, missing out on the recommended daily minimum servings of vegetables and fruit, and getting 22 per cent of their total calories a day from foods low in nutritional value; like fats and oils, condiments, candy, chips and beverages<sup>2</sup>.

Canadian red meat is lean and nutritious. Several cuts of beef and pork meet the criteria of the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada's Health Check™ program. Red meat is nutrient rich with 14 essential nutrients making it an important part of a balanced diet. Red meat is an excellent source of protein, zinc, vitamin B<sub>12</sub> and selenium.

Canadians can continue to enjoy eating red meat. Farmers and ranchers are proud of the food they produce and the contribution it makes to a healthy diet.

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The **Beef Information Centre** is a national organization formed by Canadian beef producers. Its' mandate is to increase consumer demand for beef.

The **Canadian Pork Council** is the national association representing the interests of Canada's hog producers.

The **Canadian Meat Council** is the national association of federally inspected meat packers and processors.

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<sup>1</sup> Meat and fat intake and colorectal cancer risk: A pooled analysis of 14 prospective studies, Cho et al, Proc Amer Assoc Cancer Res, Volume 45, 2004

<sup>2</sup> Overview of Canadians' Eating Habits 2004: Nutrition Findings from the Canadian Community Health Survey