



Contact: Janet Riley, 202/587-4245  
David Ray, 202/587-4243

**American Meat Institute Urges Consumers to Treat Study on Beef Consumption and Male Fertility With Healthy Dose of Skepticism**

*(Attribute to AMI Foundation Vice President of Scientific Affairs Dr. Randy Huffman)*

Washington, DC, March 28, 2007 -- “Announcement of a study on the impact of beef consumption during pregnancy and sperm concentration and fertility in adult male offspring should be viewed with a giant dose of skepticism.

In conducting this study, adult men who had already conceived children were told to ask their mothers what they ate decades earlier during pregnancy. It is a widely accepted that food recall can be notoriously poor from even a day or a week before, let alone multiple decades.

Asking a woman of advanced age to recall with any degree of accuracy her beef consumption patterns 20, 30 or 40 years ago is absolutely absurd. Furthermore, professional interviewers were not used in this study. Instead, the male study subjects were asked to interview their own mothers. The study authors even admit the mothers’ food recall is ‘undoubtedly subject to error’.

The most glaring fault with this study is the purely speculative conclusion that certain chemical components of beef were the cause of associations observed between the questionnaire responses and the count of sperm in the male subjects. The study does not include any laboratory analysis of the compounds suggested to be contained in beef, much less the beef that may have been consumed by the mothers decades ago. To conclude that some undetected compound is the cause for an association seen in these data is of questionable validity.

Finally, it is noteworthy that the 387 men in this study all successfully conceived a child without medical assistance. This appears to be a health study in search of a health problem.

Consumers should continue to eat balanced diets in moderation, get plenty of daily exercise consistent with government recommendations and reduce their consumption of news about poorly designed studies and overdone headlines.”