The National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA), a contractor to the Beef Checkoff Program, is soliciting research proposals in the area of Product Quality Research.

Research ideas should be novel and of high industry value and proposals should focus on improving the quality and consistency of beef tenderness and/or juiciness attributes.

Example Considerations (not limited to):

- Impact of steps implemented pre- and post-harvest [i.e., feeding, aging (traditional- and long-aging, wet- and dry-aging, etc.) cooking methods, degree of doneness, etc.]
- Investigation of cuts beyond middle meats and different beef types or quality levels
- Marbling impact
- Impact of increased carcass and cut sizes

**Submission Instructions:**
Proposals must be submitted in Microsoft Word format. Proposals not meeting the submission deadline or following the guidelines in this RFP will not be considered. Accepted projects will be funded (or funded in part) by the Beef Checkoff.

Research objectives should be clearly defined and studies should be well-controlled. Proposals should clearly state their relevance and potential benefit to the beef industry. The program budget and the budget for this RFP are very limited. Therefore, competition will be tough and the maximum allowable budget amount per request is $50,000. Leveraged funding through collaborations with industry, foundations, government and other sources with matching funds is encouraged. In addition, collaboration with additional researchers is encouraged where appropriate.

PIs may submit more than one proposal. A CV is not required. If included, CVs will not count against page totals.

**Questions related to this RFP should be directed to Dani Shubert (dshubert@beef.org).**

**PROPOSALS MUST BE SUBMITTED BY JANUARY 15, 2016. PROPOSALS WILL BE SUBMITTED USING AN ONLINE FILE SHARING WEBSITE. [PLEASE USE THIS LINK TO SUBMIT PROPOSALS.]**
Proposal Outline - Maximum Length of 5 Pages:

I. Investigator(s) & Institution Contact Information
II. Title
III. Objectives
IV. Description & Methodology
V. Benefit to the Industry
VI. Detailed Budget Table & Timeline – Projects should be completed by 5/31/2017

Research Timetable – Project timeline can begin on or after 3/1/2016; projects must conclude and final reports must be submitted by 5/31/2017. Projects can conclude prior to 5/31/2017.

Additional Detail:
PIs should review completed Product Quality projects to avoid submitting an idea that already has been covered. Completed project summaries are available at http://www.beefresearch.org/productqualityresearch.aspx.

We understand that PIs do not know the nature of ongoing research projects. However, a list of ongoing projects cannot be made available due to contracting sensitivities. Please understand this limitation and use your best judgment to submit proposals that are both novel and industry relevant.

Project Deliverables:
Project deliverables will include, at minimum, a final technical report with a full listing of research results and implications, and abbreviated executive and lay summaries highlighting key points from the full technical report. Final technical reports must follow a standard outline and be thorough and interpretive in nature. Deliverables also will include a final statement outlining all project expenditures from the institution’s business office. Funds cannot be spent beyond the project end date established in the project contract. Deliverables will be due on or before the project end date established in the contract.

Review Criteria:
Proposals will be reviewed by a panel of independent industry experts and applicants will be notified of funding decisions by February 15, 2016. Proposals will be evaluated for: uniqueness, relevance, soundness, potential for success, budget appropriateness and potential benefit to the industry/return on investment.

Disclaimer:
We are aware that academic institutions have financial obligations for administering the research grants awarded to their faculty members. However, overhead costs, principal investigator salaries, tuition and equipment purchases will not be considered as part of the funds made available for this research.

Please share this RFP with interested colleagues.

Visit www.beefresearch.org for additional information on the checkoff-funded Product Quality Research program.