

Ethical Shopping -- Up in Flames?

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LONDON, Aug 03 (MARKET WIRE) --
The RSPCA has today (August 3 2009) launched an online consumer campaign, called 'BBQ Source' offering help and advice to welfare-conscious but budget-driven consumers who don't want to forget the 'source' of their meat when cooking on the BBQ.

This comes as new research* shows that one in four shoppers (28%) actively seek higher welfare meat when doing a normal shop, but this desire to buy welfare-friendly produce drops to just one in six (17%) when shopping for the BBQ.

"With around 93% ** of the population eating meat, we know that people's buying habits can have a very direct influence on how farm animals reared for meat are raised. That is why we feel it is so important that as many people as possible are informed about and encouraged to choose meat raised to higher welfare standards," said Mel Andrews, campaign manager for the RSPCA.

"If more people go out of their way to choose or ask for welfare-friendly food such as RSPCA Freedom Food labelled products, more of the 900 plus million animals reared for food each year in the UK will be raised under higher welfare standards," she added.

To mark the launch of 'BBQ Sauce,' the RSPCA has posted lots of barbecue-related hints and tips on its campaign website www.giveanimalsavoice.org.uk. There is also a shopping guide with information on what labels to look out for when choosing higher welfare, as well as price comparisons, ideas on how to use leftovers and a portion calendar to help cut down on food waste. It also includes information on the key welfare issues affecting farm animals.

With the economic situation still uncertain, it is unsurprising perhaps that the survey found price was seen as a major factor when buying higher welfare. When respondents were asked what would convince them to buy higher welfare meat, 72% said it was dependent on price, or if it was on special offer.

"Price can sometimes be seen as a barrier when buying higher welfare meat, and this is where the RSPCA's online shopping guide can come in handy," adds Andrews. "You can still save money when buying higher welfare meat by preparing the food yourself, getting the portions right and using up leftovers for another meal the next day."

According to the government funded 'Love Food Hate Waste' campaign*** which sets out to encourage shoppers to make the most of the food they buy, and waste less of it, in the UK we throw away the equivalent of 33 million chickens and 3 million pigs per year. This is a waste of money and animals' lives.

Notes to editors:

For further information, photography, video and audio please contact the press office on 0300 123 0244/0288.

* 2054 GB adults age 18+ took part in an RSPCA survey conducted through YouGov, between 14-16 July 2009. Results were weighted in order to be nationally representative.

** According to YouGov 93% always or sometimes eat meat, while 7% of respondents said they never eat meat.

*** The Love Food Hate Waste campaign (lovefoodhatewaste.com) helps UK consumers cut back on the amount of food they throw away through offering tips and advice on planning, storing and cooking food. The campaign is run by WRAP (waste & resources action programme) a Government funded organisation which encourages recycling and resource efficiency.

The survey also found that:

- Animal welfare is considered more important than Country of Origin (CoO). It found that 28% of respondents listed animal welfare as an important factor when buying meat from the supermarket compared with 22% for CoO.
- Convenience is still an important factor when shopping, with 64% of people saying they always or sometimes buy pre-prepared BBQ packs; yet of those a massive 69% of people never, or only sometimes check about animal welfare on these pre-prepared packs.
- The age-old battle of the sexes still rages: even though 63% of women are doing the shopping for the BBQ, 70% of men want to wield the BBQ fork!

The full survey results are available from the press office.

According to Love Food Hate Waste, www.lovefoodhatewaste.com:

We throw away the equivalent of 350,000 sheep each year-made up of cuts of lamb which have been left uneaten or leftover lamb portions.

The equivalent of 33 million chickens go to waste each year in the UK; this includes chicken based meals, uncooked portions and leftovers.

We throw away GBP 140 million worth of fish including fresh, battered and breaded; 40% of this is thrown away whole and in unopened packs.

Image Available: http://www2.marketwire.com/mw/frame_mw?attachid=1035191