

**2017 Annual Meat Conference**  
**Questions and Answers – Communicating the Story to Consumers**  
**Brad Greenway, US Farmers and Ranchers Alliance**  
**Angela Anderson, National Pork Board**

**How concerned are you that current trends from consumers actually make Pork less sustainable?**

There will always be a concern that consumer trends do not align with real sustainable practices, primarily because of misinformation about how animals are raised on the farm. For the retailer (or supplier) it becomes a challenge to balance perceived consumer demand to a real change in how protein is sourced and the larger impact those changes can make on their bottom line. For example - a buyer directed mandated antibiotic free policy to pork would significantly increase mortality, increase consumption of feed (need more days for growth), and therefore also increase greenhouse gas emissions (which all impact the retailer's/supplier's numbers as well). In addition, there would be increased costs of segregation, traceability, and assurances to the supplier and retailer and eventually the consumer. All antibiotic free turns into an additional animal welfare concern, above just a less sustainable product. All unforeseen ramifications for a change in sourcing policies.

**From the metrics you displayed, do you think Facebook is a declining medium for social media outreach?**

Facebook continues to be a strong player in social media, but is not the only social media platform out there today. The challenge is meeting the consumer where they are today (Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, etc.). To continue to share the story to consumers does require engagement in multiple channels of social and digital media.

**It seems that the interested/concerned consumer is pretty limited; how important is the producer story in the mix of promoting proteins to the broader uninterested public?**

Great question – unfortunately the “producer or farmer story” has also become a very strong marketing aspect for many brands and it is what differentiates them at the meat case. We continuously find that labels, in-store materials, etc. that have a farmer story tied to it will sell better than a brand or product that is not sharing any additional information (granted if price is about the same). It is a value-added bonus to share something rather than nothing with the consumer.

**Please clarify the statement that the consumer expects the retailer to tell the story. Does the onus rest with suppliers or retailers?**

The onus rests with the retailer – from our research with Maslansky + Partners. In reality, the retailer is likely working closely with their suppliers to help tell the story – but the consumer doesn't understand all those relationships behind the scenes with the retailers. In their minds – everything they buy at XYZ retailer represents that retailer and they should be able to answer any consumer questions about those products sold.