

STRATEGY 3: MAINTAIN & ENHANCE STRONG COMMUNICATION & COLLABORATION WITH ALL SEGMENTS OF THE INDUSTRY

The American Lamb Board represents all sectors of the industry. ALB's constituency and contributors are complex and diverse, from traditional packers to direct marketers, from grass-fed to grain-finished lambs, from large-range sheep operations in western states to small farm flocks in the Midwest and eastern states.

- ALB will continue to keep contributors and industry partners informed about ALB programs.
- ALB will work to improve the value of ALB programs for nontraditional first handlers.
- ALB will work to improve industry communication, collaboration and coordination.
- ALB will serve as the lamb (meat) information source for the industry, including information about nutrition, cooking, cuts and industry background.
- ALB will work to advance utilization of ALB information and resources and increase stakeholder engagement with ALB programs.
- ALB will be responsive to industry needs.
- ALB will strive to enhance relationships with industry partners, including state and national industry organizations and traditional and non-traditional first handlers and suppliers.

STRATEGY 4: INCREASE REVENUE

In order to expand efforts to promote American Lamb, maintain strong demand and provide a good return on the industry's investment, ALB needs to increase its revenue.

- ALB will continue to work to increase the collection of assessments owed.
- ALB will identify new funding sources including grant opportunities from USDA, foundations, industry partners, etc.
- ALB will work with industry partners to expand promotional efforts and leverage promotional dollars.
- ALB will minimize administrative expenses to maximize promotional revenue.

STRATEGY 5: EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAMS

It is critical that ALB measures the effectiveness of programs to maximize the effectiveness of every checkoff dollar spent.

- ALB will conduct evaluations of its programs at least every 4 years.
- ALB will continue to track the industry's return on investment.
- ALB will develop annual program plans that include measurable objectives that are tied to the ALB long-range strategic plan.
- ALB will annually review and evaluate program results.



AMERICAN LAMB BOARD STRATEGIC PLAN 2012-2016



The American Lamb Board (ALB), established in 2002, is a national promotion, research and information organization (national checkoff program) whose purpose is to increase demand for American Lamb and increase the value of American Lamb for all segments of the industry. The board is appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture, and represents all sectors of the industry. The work of the American Lamb Board is overseen by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the board's programs are supported and implemented by the staff in Denver, Colorado.

VISION: *A unified, thriving American Lamb industry that concentrates its resources around priorities and a measurable plan that fosters the opportunity for profitability for all contributors.*

MISSION STATEMENT: *To increase the value of American Lamb for all segments contributing to the American Lamb Checkoff Program.*

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STRATEGY 1: ENHANCE DEMAND FOR AMERICAN LAMB

Initiative #1—*Increase consumer awareness about the benefits of American Lamb & influence consumers to increase their purchase frequency*

Increasing consumer demand for lamb is key to the growth and expansion of the U.S. lamb industry. Lamb is purchased by only a small number of U.S. consumers; the average annual consumption of lamb in the U.S. is less than one pound per year, and more than one-third of U.S. consumers have never tried lamb. Many consumers are missing out on a wonderful culinary experience based on lack of knowledge and awareness when it comes to American Lamb. The interest in lamb is increasing, yet consumers are not confident in how to buy and prepare it. There are still many U.S. consumers who have never eaten lamb—they have never had a chance to try it. While price is still cited as the top barrier to purchasing lamb, there is great opportunity to increase lamb consumption by educating consumers about the variety of cuts and how to cook lamb.

- ALB will work to increase awareness of lamb as a healthy, easy, versatile, flavorful meal option.
- ALB will work to increase consumer awareness of how to cook American Lamb.
- ALB will target key lamb markets (highest lamb sales markets and markets that show lamb sales growth).
- ALB will work to increase use of lamb beyond holidays/expand consumer utilization—targeting infrequent lamb users.
- ALB will position American Lamb as a high-quality, fresh, local, premium product.

Initiative #2—*Minimize the volatility of seasonal sales and encourage year round utilization of the whole carcass*

Most people associate lamb with Easter or Passover and nearly 20 percent of U.S. lamb consumption occurs during the spring holidays. Many lamb cuts are seasonal, causing the industry to build inventories of certain cuts during certain times of the year. The industry needs strategic promotional support to consistently move all cuts year round.

- ALB will create seasonal campaigns to keep American Lamb top of mind year round.
- ALB will work with industry partners to identify strategic seasonal promotional opportunities for specific cuts.
- ALB will work with industry partners and retailers to encourage consistent availability of the major lamb cuts year round.
- ALB will work with industry partners to encourage innovative new product uses.
- ALB will continue to educate target audiences about cut variety and versatility.

Initiative #3—*Maintain market share in traditional foodservice and retail markets*

It is critical for the industry to protect its position in retail and foodservice and maintain market share in order for there to be a future for domestic lamb. The industry needs to maintain strong demand to keep American Lamb on the menu and in the meat case. Traditional retailers and restaurant chains market two-thirds of all American Lamb and these accounts are crucial to maintain revenue and profitability for sheep producers.

- ALB will work to strengthen relationships with retailers and foodservice operators that are committed to American Lamb.
- ALB will identify promotional opportunities for American Lamb retailers and restaurants.
- ALB will work with industry partners to ensure American Lamb products are relevant and competitive with other proteins in foodservice and retail.
- ALB will continue to monitor retail sales and foodservice menu trends.

Initiative #4—*Expand market share*

Imported lamb represents approximately 50% of the lamb consumed in the U.S. market. Competing successfully with Australia and New Zealand requires the U.S. lamb industry to focus on differentiating American Lamb from imported lamb.

- ALB will work to differentiate American Lamb from imported lamb and create value messages that resonate with target audiences.
- ALB will support American Lamb suppliers' efforts to encourage imported retail and foodservice accounts to switch to domestic lamb programs.

Initiative #5—*Build new markets/new customers*

The emergence of new and alternative markets for lamb offers a great opportunity for the lamb industry to stop or slow down the decline in consumption and production.

- ALB will work to understand and support nontraditional market opportunities.
- ALB will work with U.S. Meat Export Federation to maximize export opportunities and monitor trade barriers.
- ALB will monitor new opportunities for American Lamb, including mutton promotions and foodservice opportunities beyond fine dining.

Initiative #6—*Protect and enhance the image and credibility of lamb and the American Lamb industry*

The lamb industry has a great story that resonates well with the target audiences. The target audiences want and need confidence in the integrity of the production system and quality of the product.

- ALB will evaluate target audience perceptions of American Lamb and provide relevant feedback to the industry along the supply chain to facilitate improvements in American Lamb.
- ALB will analyze existing research and identify gaps and new research opportunities that address improving the quality of lamb.
- ALB will work with industry organizations to increase awareness and understanding among key target audiences of the sustainable, humane production systems in the U.S. lamb industry.
- ALB will manage issues to minimize current and emerging threats that negatively impact demand and/or producer productivity.
- ALB will promote the environmental stewardship and welfare standards of the industry.

STRATEGY 2: MEET DEMAND

As ALB and the lamb industry work to increase demand for lamb in the U.S., it is important that the industry be prepared to fill the increased supply needs with American Lamb, rather than with other competing products.

- ALB will encourage and support industry efforts to increase lamb production in the U.S.