

## **FAQs: THE NEW FOOD CHECK-OUT WEEK PROGRAM**

### **What is the new theme for Food Check-Out Week?**

*“Stretching Your Grocery Dollar With Healthy, Nutritious Food”*

### **Why have changes been made and who had input?**

As the program has matured since its inception in the 1990s, the original theme (“*Food Check-Out Week—Celebrating Safe, Abundant, Affordable Food*”) has not resonated with the media and consumers as well as it once did due to rising retail food prices and other factors. That is why the American Farm Bureau Women’s Leadership Committee, with the support of the AFBF Board of Directors, pursued a change in direction and messaging for the program, with the goal of providing new opportunities for farmers and ranchers to tell their stories.

Input on the new direction for Food Check-Out Week was solicited from Farm Bureau members and staff involved directly with coordination and/or oversight of the program, including publicity. We encourage each Farm Bureau to creatively use the new theme and be ready to share ideas in the 2009 state report.

### **Will the connection between Farm Bureau and Ronald McDonald House Charities continue?**

Yes. Food Check-Out Week will continue to provide the opportunity for Farm Bureau to support charities such as Ronald McDonald Houses, local food banks and shelters, through food and cash donations.

### **Will we still talk about affordable food?**

Yes. “*Stretching Your Grocery Dollar With Healthy, Nutritious Food*” is the official theme of Food Check-Out Week and is recommended as the new way to communicate the affordable food message. We have moved away from “*Celebrating Safe, Abundant, Affordable Food*” as a key consumer message.

However, we will provide USDA data and media talking points on how much disposable income Americans spend on food each year for those Farm Bureaus with continued interest in using that information as a component of Food Check-Out events. The most recent data from USDA (2007) indicates that Americans on average still spend less than 10 percent of their disposable annual income on food, due mainly to rising personal income levels.

### **What are the dates for Food Check-Out Week in 2009 and future years?**

2009 Feb. 15-21

2010 Feb. 21-27

2011 Feb. 20-26

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### How is the date for Food Check-Out Week set?

Starting in 2009, Food Check-Out Week will be held the third full week (Sunday through Saturday) of February each year, allowing state and county Farm Bureaus to plan well in advance. Another advantage is that it sets the stage for tie-ins to the American Dietetic Association's National Nutrition Month, held each March.

### Is Food Check-Out Week open to everyone?

Yes. The AFB Women's Leadership Committee sponsors a national event and the development of messaging and materials for Food Check-Out Week. However, participation from a diverse constituency of committees, groups, individual members and staff within Farm Bureau has long been the key to successful Food Check-Out Week programs and we encourage that to continue.

### Will there be media and materials support for Food Check-Out Week?

Yes. A new logo, promotional materials and consumer-focused media talking points are being developed. Additional details and background information about the new program will be distributed via email and posted on Silo, AFBF's intranet Web site, as it becomes available. Promotional materials will be available to order online from the Voice of Agriculture Web site, <http://fb-orders.com/afbf/>.

Samples of several new promotional items will be sent to each state Farm Bureau in early October. Additional materials will be developed over the next few months. A draft version of the new logo (not for reproduction or distribution) appears below:



### Who can I contact at AFBF for more information?

You may contact one of the following individuals with questions:

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