



MAMP

MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION OF MEAT PROCESSORS

PROCESSOR NEWS

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Dear Fellow Processors,

I hope you all had an enjoyable summer. Minnesota was well represented at the recent AAMP convention, with McDonald's Meats, Schmidt's Meats, Petty Brothers Meats, and Dehmer's Meats all in attendance. It was a fantastic event, and I want to extend a special thank you to VC999 for organizing the Friday outing—a wonderful evening at Arrowhead Stadium, complete with a tour, cocktails, appetizers, dinner, and live music.

The Fall tour was a wonderful event, and we were thrilled to have so many members join us. We kicked things off Wednesday evening with a tour of our supplier member Friesen's (Detroit Lakes), followed by a full day of tours after departing by bus Thursday morning. A heartfelt thank-you to Ketter's (Frazee), Perham Locker (Perham), Benson & Turner (Ogema), and Lakes Processing (Detroit Lakes) for so generously welcoming our group into your facilities. We are also deeply grateful to our sponsors who made this event possible – Gold Sponsors: Mar/Co Sales, Gohmann Supply, and Kerres, and Silver Sponsors: Multivac, VC999, and Nassau Foods.

I would also like to extend a heartfelt congratulations to Harvey Pfannenstein of St. Joseph Meats on his retirement.

While I'd love to say it's time to relax, we all know what's just around the corner—deer season and the holidays!

Best regards,

Tony Dehmer
MAMP President

SCHMIDT'S MEAT MARKET



SMOKED SUMMER SAUSAGE

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Important Phone Numbers



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MN Meat, Poultry and Egg Inspection Program

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MN Pork Board

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Commissioner's Office

Thom Petersen, Commissioner -

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Small Plant Help Desk

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Website: FSIS Small Plant Help Desk

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Hello Everyone,

I hope this fall season is off to a wonderful start for you!

We had such a successful Fall Tour earlier this month in the Detroit Lakes area. A huge thank you to the processors who graciously opened their doors to us—it was a fantastic opportunity for learning, sharing, and connecting with one another. Events like these remind us just how strong and supportive our MAMP community is.

Of course, this event wouldn't be possible without the support of our incredible sponsors. Thank you to our **Gold Sponsors: Mar/Co Sales, Gohmann Supply, and Kerres**, and our **Silver Sponsors: VC999, Multivac, and Nassau Foods**. Your support makes all the difference!

I'd also like to extend a big congratulations to **Schmidt's Meat Market** on winning Best of Show with their Summer Sausage at the MN State Fair Processed Meats Judging Contest! And an extra shoutout to **Petty Brothers Meats**, who placed in all four categories—what an accomplishment!

Looking ahead, the board is already hard at work planning for the **2026 MAMP Convention**, which will be held **March 19–21, 2026** at the River's Edge Convention Center in St. Cloud. Be sure to save the date! Registration will open in November, so keep an eye out for more details.

As always, thank you for being such an important part of this association. I look forward to connecting with you again soon!

Warmly,

Jordan



Next MAMP Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, January 7, 2026 at 11am
Location TBD



Comparison of Earned Sick and Safe Time and Paid Leave

	Earned Sick and Safe Time	Paid Leave
Purpose	Allow for accrual and use of paid time off and provide job protections for employees who are unable to work due to a qualifying reason.	Provide job protections and partial wage replacement for individuals unable to work due to a qualifying condition lasting at least seven days.
Program start date	Jan. 1, 2024 (in effect).	Jan. 1, 2026.
Qualifying reasons	<p>Medical: employee’s mental or physical illness, treatment or preventive care</p> <p>Caring: family member’s mental or physical illness, treatment or preventive care</p> <p>Safety: domestic assault, sexual abuse or stalking</p> <p>Closings: employee’s workplace or their family member’s school or place of care closes due to weather or a public emergency</p> <p>Communicable disease: when an employee or a family member is at risk of infecting others with a communicable disease</p> <p>Bereavement: arrange or attend a funeral or memorial or address financial or legal matters that arise after the death of a family.</p>	<p>Medical: employee’s mental or physical illness, treatment</p> <p>Caring: family member’s mental or physical illness, treatment</p> <p>Safety: domestic assault, sexual abuse or stalking</p> <p>Parental leave: bond with a new child after birth, foster or adoption</p> <p>Active duty: family member on active duty or notified of impending order</p> <p>A health care provider or designated professional must certify the need for leave</p>
Covered employers	Nearly all Minnesota employers, regardless of business size or number of employees.	Nearly all Minnesota employers, regardless of business size or number of employees.
Covered employees	Employees who have worked at least 80 hours in a year for an employer in Minnesota.	Employees who have earned at least 5.3% of the statewide average annual wage (about \$3,600 in 2023) in the past year.
Who is not required to participate?	The law has limited exceptions. Visit sickleave.mn.gov for details.	Independent contractors, federal employees, self-employed individuals, and designated seasonal hospitality employees who work fewer than 150 days.
Amount of leave each year	An employee earns one hour for every 30 hours worked and can earn up to 48 hours each year. Employers can choose to provide a more generous sick and safe time policy.	In a benefit year, an employee is eligible for a maximum of 12 weeks of family leave, 12 weeks of medical leave, or a combination of the two not exceeding 20 weeks.
Payment during a leave	An employee is paid by their employer at their base rate when they take earned sick and safe time; these funds come directly from the employer.	An employee is paid a benefit by the state following an application and verification of eligibility. The Paid Leave program will be funded through employer and employee premiums starting in 2026.
Where to go for more information	sickleave.mn.gov	paidleave.mn.gov



To receive updates about the Minnesota Paid Leave program, visit our website and sign up to receive email notifications.



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In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this information is available in alternative forms of communication upon request by calling 651-201-6000. TTY users can call the Minnesota Relay Service at 711. The MDA is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

Food Licensing Modernization

During the last legislative session, the Legislature approved changes to MINN. STAT. 28A to modernize food licensing. These changes are intended to simplify the application process for new food businesses and align funding to food safety oversight by directing funds to the appropriate regulatory programs.

Starting August 1, 2025, **new** businesses applying for a food handler license will see a one-time \$50 application fee and a new pro-rated fee schedule. Later in 2025, existing Food Manufacturer and Food Processor license holders will have their licenses automatically updated to the single new Food Handler license, and the new fee schedule will be applied for renewals. Then in early 2026, existing retail food handlers will have their licenses automatically updated to the single new Food Handler license and the new fee schedule will be applied for renewals. Custom Exempt Food Handler licenses will remain the same; however, the fees will increase during the renewal period.

If you have questions regarding changes to your license, please contact the Dairy and Meat Inspection Division at 651-201-6300.

Residue Repeat Violators List

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) Residue Repeat Violators List is a list intended to assist meat establishments in identifying producers with more than one residue violation within the last 12 months. This list can be used to support an Equal To slaughter establishment's Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) plan when the establishment has identified the chemical hazard of drug residue as Not Reasonably Likely to Occur. [View the Residue Repeat Violators List though the U.S Department of Agriculture for more information and records.](#)

Minnesota Grown Labeling and Signage Cost-Share



If you are developing product labels, packaging, or permanent signs and add the Minnesota Grown logo in your design, you may be eligible to receive partial reimbursement of design and printing costs, up to \$1,000 per entity in the current fiscal year (July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026).

This program reimburses 75% of the first \$400 you spend on eligible labels, signs, or packaging and 25% of your investment from \$400-\$2,800, while funds last. Applications are processed on a first-come, first-serve basis until our funds for the fiscal year run out. You can submit multiple applications per fiscal year until you reach the \$1,000 maximum.

Examples

You spend \$ on eligible items ...	Cost-share reimburses...		
	75% of the first \$400 you spend	25% of your investment from \$400-\$2,800	Total reimbursement (max \$1,000/entity)
\$100	\$75	+ \$0	= \$75
\$200	\$150	+ \$0	= \$150
\$400	\$300	+ \$0	= \$300
\$500	\$300	+ \$25	= \$325
\$1,000	\$300	+ \$150	= \$450
\$2,800	\$300	+ \$600	= \$1,000
\$3,500	\$300	+ \$600	= \$1,000

Individuals must hold a current Minnesota Grown labeling license to be eligible. Learn more on the [Cost-Share page](#) of the Minnesota Grown site.

Free Tuition through Train and Retain Grant

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture and [Region Five Development Commission](#) are partnering with Central Lake College (CLC) Staples Campus to offer free tuition for 22 students enrolling in the Meat Cutting and Butchery program during the 2025-2026 academic year. Any degree-seeking student who intends to pursue a career in meat cutting or processing is eligible to apply.

How to Apply:

1. Apply to Central Lake College
2. Complete the Microsoft Forms application. A link will be provided via Region Five or CLC after enrollment.
3. Confirm eligibility and enroll in the Fall 2025 Meat Cutting and Butchery program.

For more information contact [Staci Headly](#) (218-831-0137) or reach out to Central Lake College Director of Ag and Energy, [Cory Detloff](#) (218-894-5134).

Meat Inspector Calendar No Inspection Dates

September 1, 2025 – Labor Day

November 11, 2025 – Veterans Day

November 27-28, 2025 – Thanksgiving Day and Day after Thanksgiving

December 25, 2025 – Christmas Day

January 1, 2026 – New Years Day

January 19, 2026 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day

February 16, 2026 – Presidents Day

Meat, Poultry, and Egg Inspection Staff

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Questions? Call the Dairy and Meat Inspection Division at 651-201-6300

Phosphates: Aren't they natural?

By Wes Schilling and Courtney Crist

Mississippi State University, Food Science Innovation Hub



Should phosphate be used as an ingredient in meat products?

There is no other ingredient, except for salt, which is as essential as phosphate in meat product applications. As important as phosphate is to functionality, it raises the question as to why there has been a push to remove phosphates as an ingredient over the last 10+ years? Phosphate is made up of 1 phosphorous atom and 4 oxygen atoms and has a negative charge. Phosphate and phosphorous are natural compounds found within our bodies, yet they are commonly replaced on clean label products. Why?

Phosphorous is an essential nutrient and is part of DNA, RNA, bones, and teeth. Muscles use adenosine triphosphate (ATP) to function, and phospholipids contribute to cell membrane flexibility. For the healthy general population, the only potential negative health issue with phosphates is that they are usually combined to sodium when used in foods which slightly increases the sodium content in the diet. The chemical structure of sodium tripolyphosphate, the most used phosphate in meat applications, is Na₅P₃O₁₀ and has a molecular weight of 368 atomic mass units (amu). Sodium makes up 31.25 % of this molecule. If 100 g of meat are eaten with 0.5 % phosphate added, this is only approximately 0.15 g of sodium per 100 g serving of meat.

When does phosphate intake need to be controlled?

At present, there is not any scientific evidence that consuming phosphates is unhealthy for the general healthy population. However, there are two situations where phosphates, and more specifically phosphorous, intake should be regulated. When someone has kidney disease, consumption of excess phosphate will inhibit their kidney function. Phosphorous can also create problems when there is insufficient calcium in the diet since phosphorous and calcium work together. In most cases, phosphate adds more value to a meat product than its potential contribution to health problems. Does this indicate that it is time to reevaluate the use of phosphates in meat products?

Phosphates Improve Protein Functionality in Meat Applications

Phosphates are unique in that they improve the functionality of meat proteins. They improve water holding capacity, oxidative stability, texture, color stability and increase protein extraction (Table 1). Phosphate chain length affects functionality (Table 2), which is why different phosphate blends enhance functionality in specific product applications. Phosphates are like the Michael Jordan or Caitlin Clark of meat ingredients so why don't we want them on the food ingredient label?

Property	Mechanism
Antioxidant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tying up metal ions prevents their participation in oxidation reactions
Texture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contributes to improved tenderness
Protein Extraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improves salt soluble protein extraction by adding ionic Helps to relax and open up muscle protein structures to accept more water
pH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alkaline phosphate products increase pH and improve water Many of these phosphates have pH ranges from 7.5 to 12.0 in 1% solutions and increase pH values of the muscle food system
Buffering Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phosphates (especially monophosphates) add buffering capacity and therefore help the system resist changes when acids (or bases) are added to the system

Table1: Properties affected by phosphates in meat systems

Phosphate component	Chain Length (phosphorous units)	Primary Functions
Monophosphate (Orthophosphate)	One	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> pH buffering
Diphosphate (Pyrophosphate)	Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Binds magnesium in water extracts muscle proteins
Tripolyphosphate	Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Binds calcium
Polyphosphate (Tetra- or Hexametaphosphate)	Six or More	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Binds calcium Improves solubility of the phosphate

Table 2. Properties of various phosphate components

Phosphates: Aren't they natural?

By Wes Schilling and Courtney Crist

Mississippi State University, Food Science Innovation Hub

Replacing Phosphates in Meat Applications

Manufacturing clean label processed meats commonly includes removing phosphates from the product formulation and the ingredient label. This is challenging since phosphates provide many functions and cannot be replaced by any one ingredient. The best strategy for removing phosphate from a meat formulation is to substitute multiple ingredients that can provide acceptable functionality and product quality. It is important to understand that this approach of adding alternate ingredients will not achieve the functionality of phosphate.

Product Yields (Cooking Loss, Purge Loss, Chill Loss)

Native potato starch, meat proteins (e.g., collagen, broth), milk proteins (e.g., whey protein concentrate), and vegetable fibers can all be used to bind and entrap water (both in the meat matrix and water in the formulation). These ingredients are sufficient in managing water, but they function differently than phosphates because they do not enhance the water holding capacity of the indigenous meat proteins. Alkaline phosphates increase pH, ionic strength, unfold proteins, and separate myosin from actin, all of which enhance the water holding capacity of the meat proteins. Potassium carbonate can be used as a processing aid to increase ionic strength, increase pH, and chelate metal in the water that is used in the brine or marinade. Antioxidant Rosemary, oregano, green tea, parsley, and cherry powder chelate metals, protect color, and prevent flavor oxidation. The active ingredients are ascorbic acid (cherry powder and parsley), catechins (green tea), rosmarinic acid (oregano), and carnosic acid (rosemary). Cilantro, onion, and garlic have also been added to products to chelate metals, prevent oxidation, and increase yields.

Texture

Phosphates provide enhanced protein extraction and binding properties that allow processors to thinly slice deli meat without tearing and contribute firm texture in deli and emulsion meat products. The same ingredients listed under the product yields section above contribute to the texture of products without phosphates. In addition, a mixture of iota and kappa carrageenan can be used to increase the firmness of meat product texture. Carrageenan is a key textural ingredient in deli meats, especially in products with no phosphate since it allows thin slicing due to the gel matrix formed by proper carrageenan application. Soy protein isolate also has gel properties for firm texture. Further, pea protein can be used to enhance texture and is gaining traction in non-meat imitation analogues.

Conclusions

A multiple ingredient approach is necessary to impart the functional characteristics of phosphates when it is replaced in processed meats where phosphates have been traditionally used. Phosphate functionality cannot be fully replaced since along with salt, it is one of the two key ingredients in whole muscle, deli, and emulsion-type processed meats with respect to yields and texture. In addition, there is not any scientific evidence that phosphate consumption is unhealthy for the general population.

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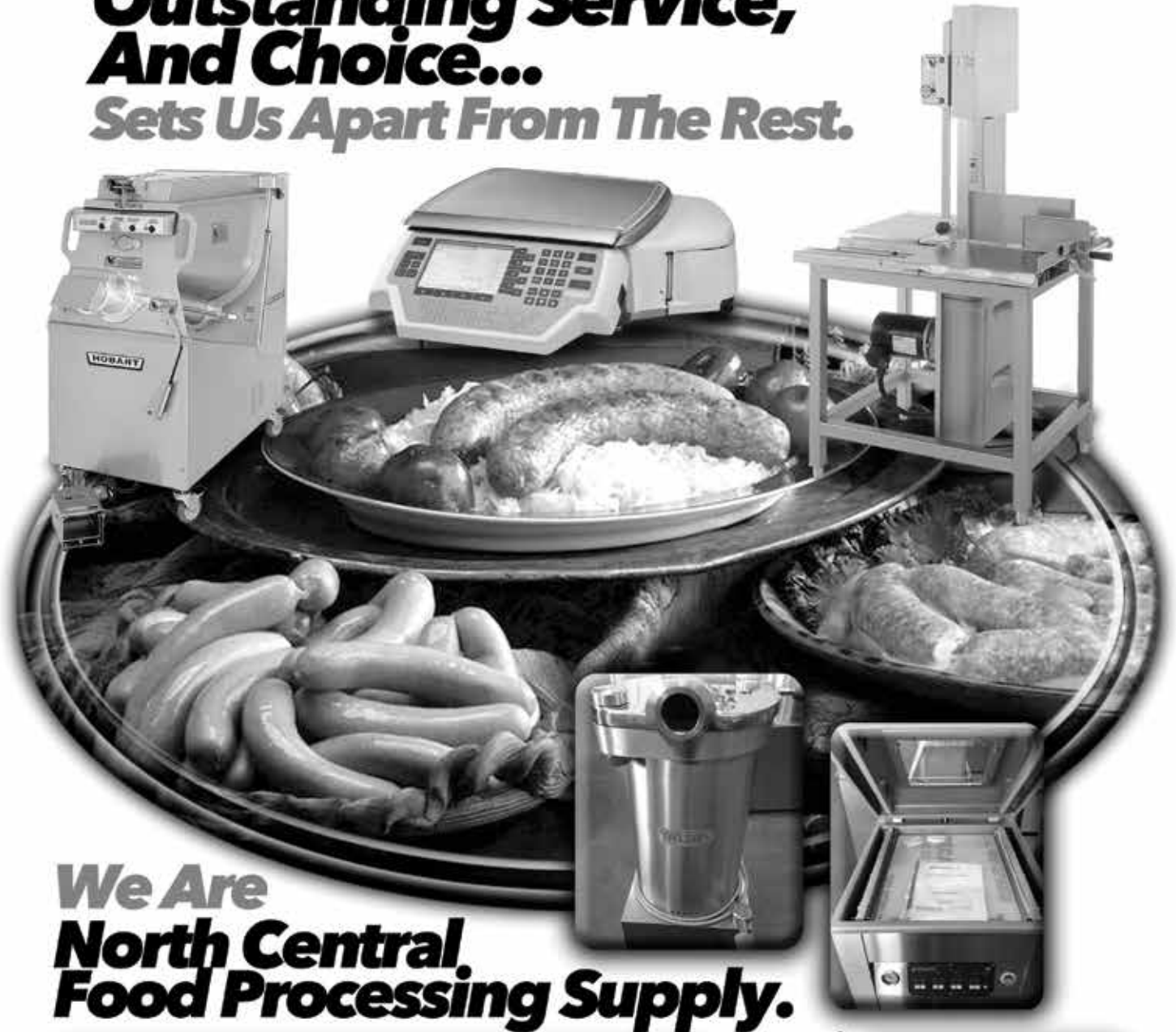
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SURPRISING FACTS ABOUT LEAN BEEF

Many people are often surprised to learn that the bundle of nutrients in lean beef, like high-quality protein, iron, zinc and many B vitamins,¹ comes in such a delicious package with relatively few calories. Let's bust some common myths about our favorite protein, beef.

MYTH #1: Beef consumption should be limited because it's bad for your heart and raises cholesterol.

FACT: Research consistently shows that a heart-healthy diet and lifestyle including lean beef, even daily, can reduce risk factors for heart disease.²⁻⁶ A randomized-controlled trial found that participants who consumed lean beef, as part of a dietary pattern that was rich in fruits and vegetables, low in saturated fat, and included low-fat dairy, experienced a 10% decrease in LDL cholesterol and a moderate decrease in blood pressure, both markers of lower heart disease risk.^{3,4} Another study found that subjects who followed a healthy, higher-protein, weight-loss dietary pattern, combined with physical activity, and consumed lean beef four or more times a week, saw reductions in total cholesterol, LDL cholesterol, triglycerides and systolic and diastolic blood pressure.⁶ In addition, evidence has shown that lean beef consumed in the context of an overall heart-healthy diet pattern rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy maintains blood lipid levels similar to other lean proteins like poultry and fish.⁷ The current body of evidence provides convincing support that eating lean beef, as part of a healthy dietary pattern and lifestyle, can support a strong heart.

MYTH #2: Americans already consume too much protein.

FACT: Although the American diet has evolved over time, Americans have not increased their percentage of calories from protein in 30 years.⁸ On average, Americans (aged ≥ 2 years of age) consume 5.8 oz from the Protein Foods Group each day (meat, poultry, eggs, fish/seafood, nuts, seeds and soy products), which is at a level consistent with the recommendations of the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGAs).⁹ Including high-quality protein, like beef, in a healthy dietary pattern can help Americans meet their protein needs, improve satiety and preserve lean muscle mass.^{10,11}

MYTH #3: Americans consume too much red meat, especially beef.

FACT: On average, Americans consume 1.5 ounces of cooked beef daily, well within the recommended amount of 5.5 ounces from the Protein Foods group per day.^{9,20} The fact is, beef is a natural source of essential nutrients with relatively few calories,¹ which makes it a great lean protein option that Americans can enjoy at any meal.

MYTH #4: Beef is the primary source of fat in the diet.

FACT: Lean beef contributes approximately five percent of total calories and ten percent or less of saturated fat and total fat to the American diet.¹² Many people are surprised to learn that half of the fatty acids in beef are monounsaturated – the same heart-healthy type of fat

found in olive oil.¹ Furthermore, approximately one-third of beef's total saturated fat is stearic acid, which has been shown to be neutral in its effects on blood cholesterol levels in humans.¹³

MYTH #5: It is difficult to find lean cuts of beef in the grocery store.

FACT: Thanks to advancements in cattle breeding and feeding, today's beef is leaner than ever as approximately 65 percent of the whole muscle cuts sold through the supermarket meat case are lean when cooked and visible fat is trimmed.¹⁴ In fact, many beef cuts qualify as "lean" including some of the most popular cuts at retail like Top Sirloin, Tenderloin, Strip Steak, Flank Steak and 93% lean ground beef and leaner!¹

WHAT DOES "LEAN" MEAN?

According to USDA, a cut of cooked fresh meat is considered "lean" when it contains less than 10 grams of total fat, 4.5 grams or less of saturated fat and less than 95 mg of cholesterol per 100 grams (3½ oz) and per RACC (Reference Amount Customarily Consumed), which is 85 grams (3 oz).¹⁵

MYTH #6: Beef is difficult and time-consuming to prepare.

FACT: Beef is a nutrition powerhouse that can be easy to prepare by using common ingredients and matching the right cooking method to the right cut. By planning ahead, you can also save time in the kitchen when preparing recipes made with beef. Beef pairs well with other healthful foods like fruits, vegetables and whole grains, and many cuts of beef are available in the marketplace. Therefore, you have an endless amount of culinary possibilities to create a delicious, satisfying and healthy meal. Find beef recipes for all meal occasions, cooking tips and nutrition information at BeefItsWhatsForDinner.com.

Myth #7: Grass-finished beef is more nutritious than grain-finished beef.

FACT: The variety of beef choices available to you, including grain-finished and grass-finished, are delicious and nutritious. Most people don't realize that cattle spend the majority of their lives grazing on pasture. On average, over their lifetime, grain-finished cattle consume less than 11% of their diet as grain and close to 90% of their diet as forage (e.g., grass and hay) and other human-inedible plant leftovers (e.g., dried distillers grains).¹⁶ In general, all varieties of beef are equally nutritious as all are a natural source of more than 10 essential nutrients, like protein, iron, zinc and many B vitamins.¹ While grass-finished beef tends to be a little leaner, a number of other variables contribute to leanness, including breed, age, grade and cut.^{17,18}



BEEF TOP SIRLOIN & POTATO KABOBS

Use the microwave and the grill to expedite the cooking process for these tasty beef and potato kabobs.



**30
MIN**



**4
SERVINGS**

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound beef Top Sirloin Steak boneless, cut 1 inch thick
- 1 pound red-skinned potatoes
- 2 medium yellow or zucchini squash

Sauce:

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup steak sauce
- 2 teaspoons minced garlic

Nutrition information per serving: 301 Calories; 45 Calories from fat; 5g Total Fat (2 g Saturated Fat; 2 g Monounsaturated Fat); 49 mg Cholesterol; 763 mg Sodium; 32 g Total Carbohydrate; 2.6 g Dietary Fiber; 30 g Protein; 3 mg Iron; 9.1 mg Niacin; 1.2 mg Vitamin B₆; 1.5 mcg Vitamin B₁₂; 5.5 mg Zinc; 31.3 mcg Selenium.

This recipe is an excellent source of Protein, Niacin, Vitamin B₆, Vitamin B₁₂, Zinc, and Selenium; and a good source of Dietary Fiber and Iron.

COOKING:

1. Cut potatoes into 1½-inch pieces. Place in microwave-safe dish; cover with vented plastic wrap. Microwave on HIGH 6 to 8 minutes or until just tender, stirring once. Cool slightly.
2. Combine sauce ingredients in 1-cup glass measure. Microwave on HIGH 1½ minutes, stirring once.
3. Cut squash lengthwise in half. Cut beef Top Sirloin Steak and squash into 1¼-inch pieces. Combine beef, squash, potatoes and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sauce in large bowl; toss. Alternately thread beef and vegetables onto metal skewers.
4. Place kabobs on grid over medium, ash-covered coals. Grill, covered, 11 to 15 minutes (over medium heat on preheated gas grill, 13 to 16 minutes) for medium rare (145°F) to medium (160°F) doneness, turning once and brushing with remaining sauce during last 5 minutes.

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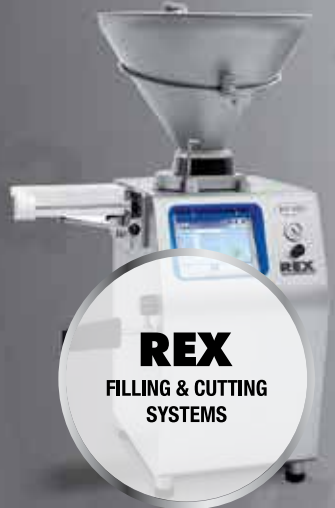
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Minnesota Paid Leave makes time for the moments that matter



Minnesotans take care of one another. Starting in January 2026, Paid Leave will ensure Minnesotans can take the time they need to be there for some of life’s most important moments—like welcoming a child, recovering from a serious illness, or caring for a loved one.

Paid Leave coverage

Paid Leave will provide payments and job protection for:

Medical Leave

1-12 weeks



Someone’s own serious health condition

Family Leave

1-12 weeks



Bonding with a new child



Caring for a loved one



Managing military leave



Certain personal safety issues

Maximum of 20 weeks combined in one year if someone qualifies for both medical and family leave.

Almost all employers and individuals that work in Minnesota will be covered by Paid Leave.

Paid Leave payments

Benefit payments will cover a portion of an individual’s usual pay during a qualified leave. Eligibility for payments will be based on earnings in the previous year.

Paid Leave job protection

Paid Leave will ensure that employees are able to return to their job after taking leave. If someone has worked at their job for at least 90 days, their job will be protected when they return from leave.

Paid Leave funding

Paid Leave is a social insurance program. Both employers and employees will contribute premiums to the fund.

Learn more about Paid Leave eligibility, coverage, premiums and more at info.paidleave.mn.gov



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With any questions regarding the Master Meat Crafter Program, please contact:

Heather Hunt
Outreach Specialist
hbhunt@wisc.edu

Ky Peters
Outreach Specialist
kpeters26@wisc.edu

2026-2027 Master Meat Crafter Program



What is it?

The Master Meat Crafter Program is a highly regarded meat industry training program offered by the University of Wisconsin Meat Science program. It provides participants with well-rounded, in-depth, and comprehensive knowledge of meat science, food safety, and processing principles. The 2-year program requires completion of four elements to successfully graduate and gain distinction as "Master Meat Crafter." Acceptance into this program is based upon the quality and content of the required program application. Applicants with at least 5 years of experience in ownership, operation, or employment in a meat processing facility will be viewed favorably. Class size is limited to 35 participants.

Presented in collaboration with:
-UW-Meat Science & Animal Biologics Discovery
-Department of Animal & Dairy Science
-College of Agricultural & Life Sciences
-Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection



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Coordinated by:

Jeff Sindelar, Ph.D., UW-Madison
Jeff Swenson, WI DATCP



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Program Elements

1. Six 3-day Workshops

- 1) Animal Harvest & Product Utilization School (January 20-22, 2026)
 - 2) Fresh Meats School (May 12-14, 2026)
 - 3) Food Safety & Meat Microbiology School (August 11-13, 2026)
 - 4) Meat Curing School (January 2027)
 - 5) Cooked & Emulsified Sausage School (May 2027)
 - 6) Fermented & Dry Cured Meat Product School (September 2027)
- HACCP Training for Meat and Poultry Processors – Required if not previously taken

2. Homework Assignments

At least six homework assignments will be administered throughout the program to expand on specific learning objectives.

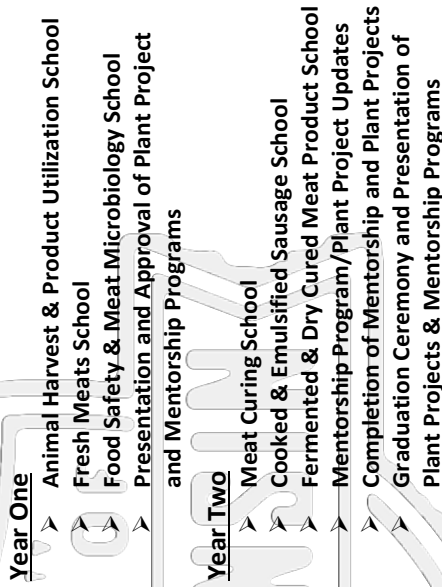
3. Mentorship Program

Each participant will be expected to mentor an employee or other individual on various meat science and meat processing topics based upon the knowledge and principles learned from Master Meat Crafter Training Program. Participants must develop their own mentoring program (approved by training program personnel) prior to the beginning of mentoring.

4. Plant Project

Participants are required to conduct an in-plant research project. Projects are chosen by the MMC candidate and approved by the training program personnel. A participant will carry out a small in-plant study and write a report about the project. Scheduled progress reports for your project will occur as needed. A final written report will be required to graduate. Participants will present their plant project at the graduation program ceremony.

Program Timeline



Program Fee

Program costs are \$12,500. Fees can be paid in full up front or broken into 8 quarterly installments. Fees include registration for all schools and graduation, participant materials and handouts, business meals/banquets and transportation to events in Madison and are due by September 30, 2027. Enrollment is limited to 35 people.

Distinction as Master Meat Crafter

After successfully completing the four program elements, candidates will receive the distinction of “Master Meat Crafter” at a formal graduation ceremony in December 2027, to signify the completion of the program.



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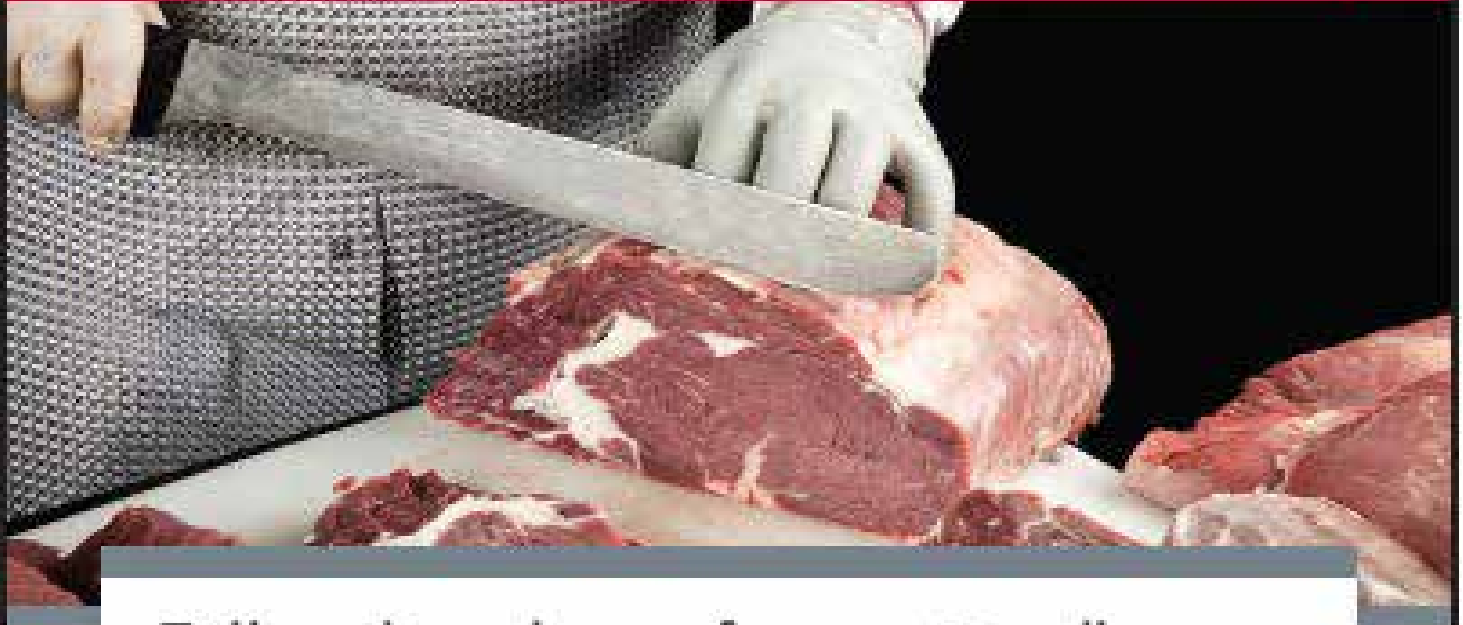
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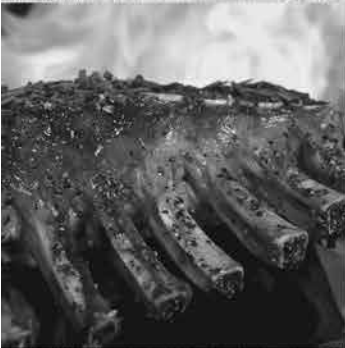
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Paid Leave and small employers

Starting January 1, 2026, Minnesota Paid Leave will provide payments and job protections to Minnesotans who need time off during life’s most important moments, like bonding with a new child, healing from a serious illness, or responding to domestic violence.

Are small employers covered by Paid Leave?

Yes, small employers are covered by Paid Leave. Most Minnesota employment is covered, including small and seasonal employers and part-time work. People who are self-employed or independent contractors are not covered, but can opt in to Paid Leave.

Premiums for Paid Leave

Paid Leave is funded by premiums paid by employers and employees. The standard premium rate for 2026 is 0.88% of employee wages. What employers pay depends on size of their workforce:

Employer type	Total premium	Employer pays	Employee pays
Large employer	0.88%	At least 0.44%	Up to 0.44%
Small employer	0.66%	At least 0.22%	Up to 0.44%

How much will my organization owe?

There’s a calculator on our website to estimate premiums, by employee count and wages.

Small Employer Assistance Grants

If you qualify as a small employer under Paid Leave, you may apply for a grant to help cover costs when an employee takes leave. These grants help manage the cost of hiring temporary workers, or increasing hours, wages, or training for staff while an employee is on Paid Leave. Grants will be up to \$3,000 per leave or \$6,000 per employer. Funding is for costs already incurred, and is not guaranteed.

What do I need to do prepare for Paid Leave?

- **Set up your accounts:** Register for an Employer Account at uimn.org (if you don’t already have one). Designate a Paid Leave Administrator in your Employer Account. Then, create a Paid Leave Administrator Account at paidleave.mn.gov
- **Notify employees:** By December 1, 2025, you must hang a poster and notify employees.
- **Prepare your workforce:** Check out the employer toolkit on our website.

What employment protections does Paid Leave cover?

- **Job protections:** Generally, workers must be restored to their job or an equivalent position when returning from leave. Job protections take effect 90 days following the date of hire.
- **Health insurance continuation:** Employers must continue to fund their portion of healthcare insurance premiums.
- **No retaliation:** Employers can't retaliate against workers for applying or using Paid Leave.

Can my organization opt out of Paid Leave?

No, you cannot opt out of Paid Leave.

There are some choices organizations can make about Paid Leave, including setting internal leave policies and exploring equivalent plans, which allow you to offer a same-or-better Paid Leave plan to your employees. Equivalent plans can be purchased from an insurance carrier or you can self-insure.

Minnesota Paid Leave is often the least expensive, easiest option for employers. For small employers, Paid Leave will make this benefit affordable when it might not otherwise be.

What about seasonal hospitality workers?

Under the Minnesota Paid Leave law, if someone is designated as a seasonal hospitality employee they will not be able to take Paid Leave from that job, and there are no premiums on wages for those employees. To designate a seasonal hospitality employee, employers must apply, and:

1. The work must be in the hospitality industry, as defined in state law.
2. Your business must be seasonal as defined in law, demonstrated through receipts.
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For more information, visit paidleave.mn.gov



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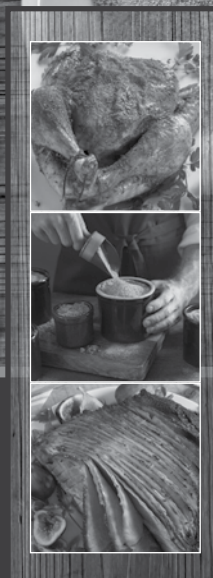
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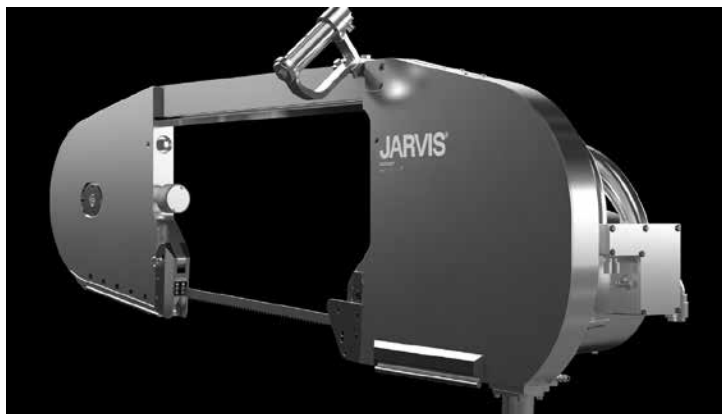
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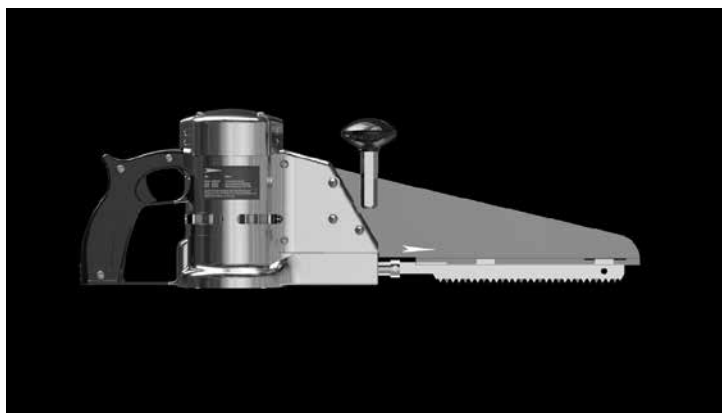
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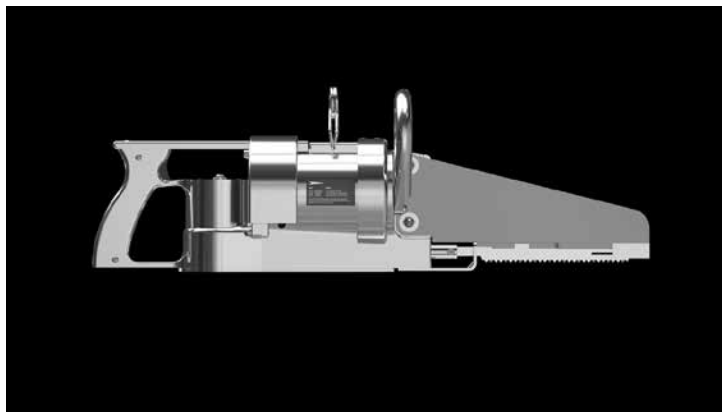
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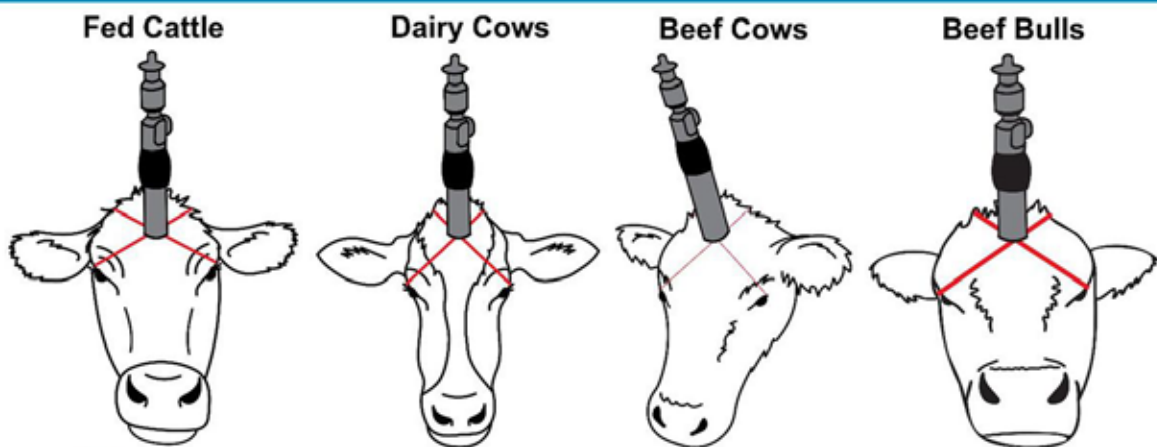
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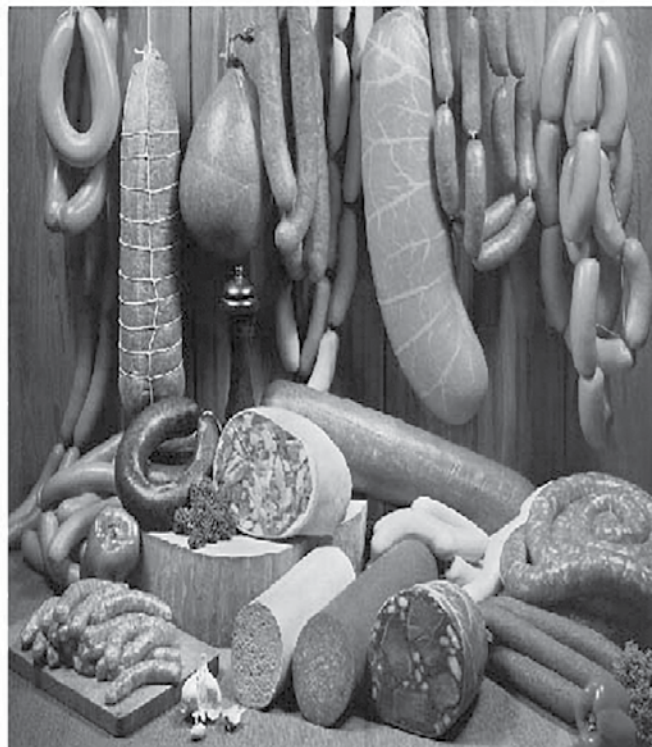
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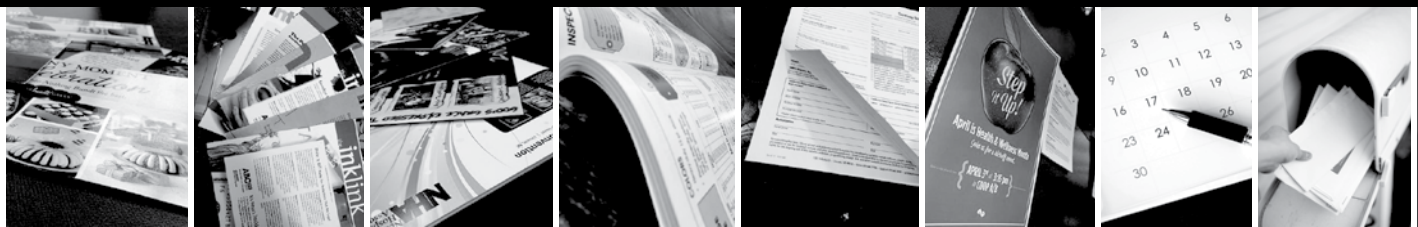
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MAMP BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, January 7, 2026 at 11am
Location TBD

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March 19th, 2026 | UMN Meat Lab, St. Paul, MN

2026 MAMP CONVENTION

March 19-21, 2026 | St. Cloud, MN

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