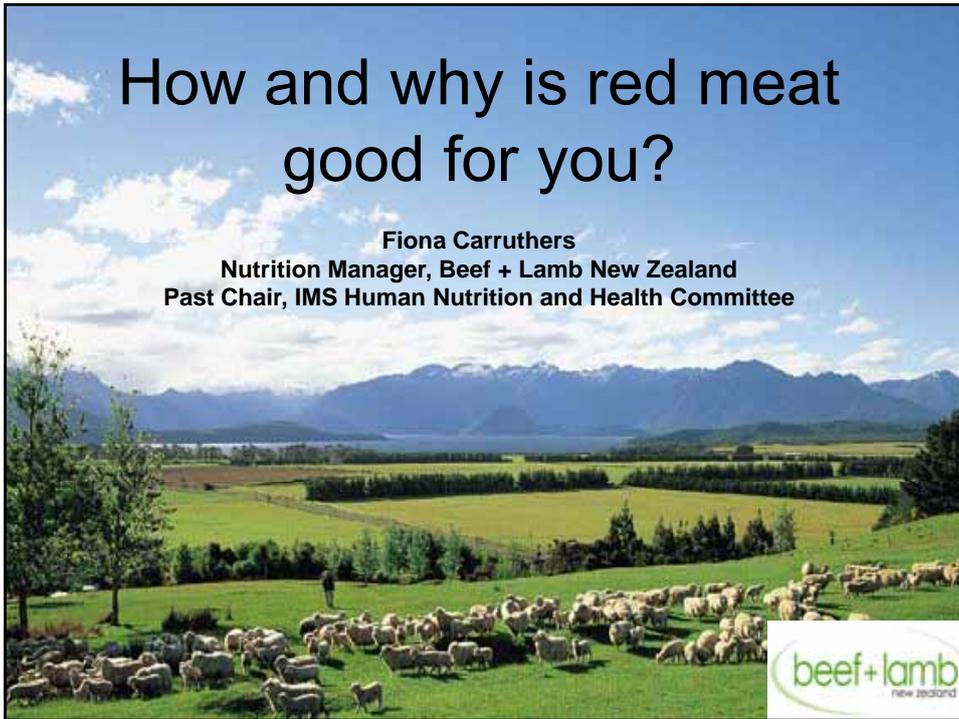


# How and why is red meat good for you?

**Fiona Carruthers**  
Nutrition Manager, Beef + Lamb New Zealand  
Past Chair, IMS Human Nutrition and Health Committee



Montevideo 1958

## Loading bulls at Liverpool, UK



## Cattle pens on deck



## British bull on board



## New Zealand vs Uruguay

- 80-90% beef is exported
- 80% land is pasture
- Livestock fed on grass
- 3-4 million people



## Outline

- What's good about red meat?
- What's the latest research showing?
- Issues management – what's been successful



## Major Source of IRON



## Nature's Power Pack



Exclusive VITAMIN B<sub>12</sub>

Quality PROTEIN

Meaty 'FISH OILS'

Healing ZINC

Not much FAT

Major source of IRON

Sunny VITAMIN D

## Not much FAT

- NZ beef & lamb contain 30% less fat than 10 years ago, and supply 60% less saturated fat to the NZ diet
- Only about half the fat in red meat is saturated
- Omega 3s higher in meat from animals raised on grass



Is nutrition important to consumers?





## Globally Recognised Demand Drivers

Health & Nutrition

Quality

Food Safety

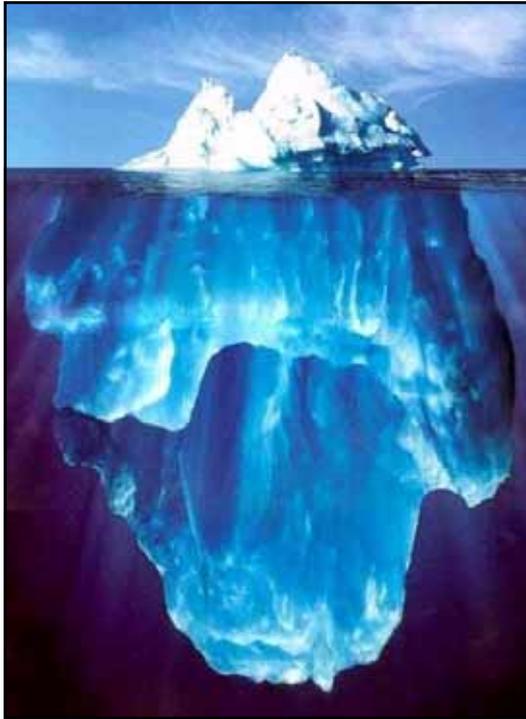
Convenience

Palatability, Taste & Enjoyment

So tell a good story.....



.....but it must be based on sound science



Scientific evidence –  
the **BASE** of the  
iceberg

Every nutrition message  
'above the waterline' is held  
up by the science  
underneath

**Crucial to our industry's  
credibility**



**“Red meat causes cancer”**

“Red meat dangerous again”

“Red meat link to DNA damage”

“Red meat danger”

“Study: Carnivores more  
likely to meet their maker  
early”

“Barbecue meat’s link  
with prostate cancer”

“Study puts bacon  
on bad-news list”

“Why red meat raises cancer risk”

**“Red meat raises risk of death”**

## Red meat attracts attention

....and suffers from the poor translation of science into media speak, with a lack of context



## Science: the hare and the tortoise

Good science



Slow and rarely gripping

Bad science



Sensational but inaccurate

## Most science is not a 'breakthrough'

- Single studies don't provide certainty
- Can't base recommendations on one study
- Dietary studies hard because we don't just eat one food
- Findings from animal studies cannot be translated directly to humans
- Epidemiological studies are used to find associations and may simply be coincidental. They do not show cause and effect

## Bottom line on cancer

- No single food causes cancer
  - No evidence to show red meat causes cancer
  - Obesity and lack of physical activity are the greatest risk factors for diet-related cancers
- Overall eating and lifestyle habits are more important than specific foods

## Bottom line on heart disease and obesity

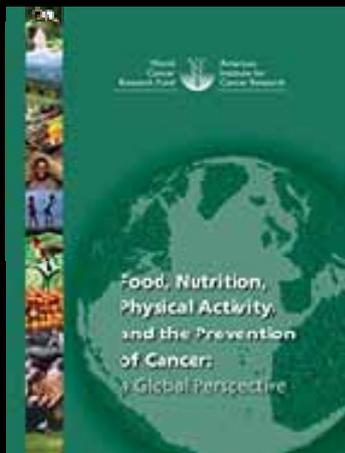
- Trimmed of visible fat, red meat is low in fat and does not raise blood cholesterol levels when part of a low fat diet
- Protein in red meat shown to play a positive role in weight control. Promotes a feeling of fullness – ‘satiety’

## International Meat Secretariat Committee on Human Nutrition and Health



Think global, act local

## Food, Nutrition, Physical Activity and the Prevention of Cancer: a Global Perspective



- Published in 2007; five years in the making
- Involved over 100 scientists in 30 countries
- Driven by a panel of 21 world renowned scientists

## Short term: Promoting the positives

- Maintaining consumer confidence in the nutritional value of red meat
- Reducing the focus on single foods



## Long term: Positioning red meat within a healthy balanced diet

- Maintaining red meat's position as an important part of a balanced diet in health and nutrition guidelines



## Long term: Applying the evidence

- Strengthening the base of the iceberg
- Maintaining scientific evidence as the basis of all campaigns
- Putting WCRF report into perspective



## The 5 key groups in nutrition issues management

1. Consumers – keep promoting the positives
2. Health professionals – gatekeepers to health information. Apply the science to their practice
3. Policy makers – build and maintain relationships
4. Scientists - use opinion leaders as third party spokesmen
5. Media – use their power to your advantage

## Take home messages

- Nutrition (and nutritionists!) is good for red meat
- Base all communications on sound science.
- Don't just concentrate on consumers, remember the policy makers, scientists, health professionals and the media

'The stone the builders rejected became the most important stone of all'

Psalms 118:22

