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## **It's Beef Month – Celebrate the Crave**

*If you've ever craved beef, here are some reasons why*

*The Wisconsin Beef Council shares the sensory science behind nutritious, delicious beef*

**Madison, WI (June 9, 2009)** – This July, celebrate Wisconsin Beef Month by enjoying the beef meal you crave most – and remember, there's a lot more going on inside that juicy steak or burger than meets the eye.

When you take a bite of beef, there's something like a scientific symphony going on inside your mouth. You're immediately aware of taste – as receptors signal the brain that the food is salty, sweet, sour or bitter. Next there's a sense of flavor, as taste merges with other sensations, such as texture, juiciness, aroma and color, which influence our perception of the food. With all that sensory action in play, it's no wonder beef lovers often feel they crave beef, and react to eating it with intense satisfaction.

Beef is also rich in three naturally occurring compounds that trigger a person's sensory receptors for the fifth taste, known umami (oo-MOM-ee). The term is derived from the Japanese word for "delicious," and in fact, umami is described as meaty, savory or delicious.

Tickling the umami receptors may instantly bring to mind a great steak, but aged cheeses, tomatoes, mushrooms, spinach and milk are among many foods that send an umami message to the brain. One amazing trait of umami is that a 50-50 mixture of two of its compounds can produce up to eight times the flavor as either of the compounds alone. That's why steak and mushrooms or beef paired with wine or tomato sauce create the enticing, complex flavors that many diners find irresistible.

To celebrate Beef Month, the Wisconsin Beef Council recommends you enjoy your favorite cut, while knowing just a little more about the science behind the succulence. And pair that dish with just a few of these natural sources of umami compounds:

- peas, corn, potatoes, carrots
- fermented foods, such as wine and soy sauce
- sardines, oysters, duck, mackerel
- aged cheeses, green tea, milk, soybeans

Don't forget the other good news: a 3-ounce serving of lean beef is low in calories and delivers nine essential nutrients, such as protein and zinc, which the body needs throughout life.

For more information and great beef ideas, contact the Wisconsin Beef Council at [www.beeftips.com](http://www.beeftips.com).

Enacted through the 1986 Beef Promotion and Research Act and Order, the Wisconsin Beef Council is a check-off funded, producer-directed organization dedicated to building demand for beef and veal through promotion, consumer education and research. For more information on the Wisconsin Beef Council or the beef check-off call the WBC office at 800-728-2333 or visit [www.beeftips.com](http://www.beeftips.com).