



NEWS RELEASE

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PathProven® From Performance Food Group Providing First-Ever DNA Trace Back System from Farm to Plate in North America

RICHMOND, Va. — Nearly 93 percent of all consumers are more likely to be loyal to a brand when it commits to full transparency, according to a 2017 Label Insights study from the Food Marketing Institute¹. The survey also revealed 74 percent of consumers would switch from the brands they usually buy to ones that provide more in-depth product information beyond the physical packaging. In Europe, the fresh meat industry has been moving toward this goal for twenty years. In the U.S., Performance Food Group, Inc. (PFG) has been working with European technology innovator, IdentiGEN, for 10 years to align supply chains, building the first complete DNA Trace Back System to the farm. PFG has connected the information loop to provide greater accountability, improve sustainability, ensure quality, and prevent fraud.

“Working with our partners at IdentiGEN, and throughout the supply chain has allowed us to build the largest Beef Program in the U.S. that can link the steak on a plate to the specific animal and source,” said Steve Sands, Vice President of Protein at PFG. “When we first began implementing this technology we were focused on where the animal came from and specific traits to ensure optimal eating quality. Now we are using this data to provide feedback to our ranchers and other stakeholders to improve animal welfare and efficiencies.”

Braveheart® Black Angus Beef, a premium Midwest-raised beef that is traceable back to its origins with DNA technology, has been added to the menus of 18,000 U.S. restaurants in 900 U.S. cities since its debut. Braveheart Black Angus Beef is the fastest-growing brand for PFG, also known as PERFORMANCE Foodservice, one of the leading foodservice distributors in the U.S.

Protein is booming in the U.S., with per capita consumption of beef setting a record at more than 220 pounds consumed per person in 2018, according to USDA estimates. PFG has more than doubled its protein sales over the past decade. The fastest growing part of PFG’s protein program is fresh meat produced under PFG’s proprietary PathProven program.

PathProven is PFG’s assurance that the product is traceable, auditable, and meets a specific set of farming and processing standards established and controlled by PFG. It is focused on quality at every stage of production by optimizing feeding, animal health, humane treatment, environmental impact and the processing of the animal. Using

¹ The Transparency Imperative report from FMI in partnership with Label Insights was based on an online survey of 2,022 US grocery shoppers 18 years of age and older.

DNA Traceback technology, PFG can verify the origin and handling throughout the supply chain ensuring consistent premium quality protein.

As major retail and foodservice operators demand greater traceability and assurance from their suppliers, PathProven is ahead of the industry in delivering a live audit system, bringing accountability to the audit process. PFG is in the process of instituting PathProven supply chains across the protein spectrum.

In its own research², PFG has also seen this growing consumer interest in transparency. While 75 percent of consumers surveyed by PFG said traceability was at least somewhat important, 45 percent said it was very important. Meat was one of the most important categories. Nearly twice as many consumers said information on traceability was more important than the brand or retailer. Animal welfare, particularly with beef, was also notable, with 76 percent of respondents claiming they would be at least somewhat more likely to buy it if they knew about the animal's living conditions.

“With the PathProven system, and PFG sharing information back with the farm, we are moving toward a more accessible information system for all consumers to know what they are buying,” said Sands.

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About Performance Food Group Company

Built on the many proud histories of our family of companies, Performance Food Group is a customer-centric foodservice distribution leader headquartered in Richmond, Virginia. Grounded by roots that date back to a grocery peddler in 1885, PFG today has a nationwide network of approximately 75 distribution centers, 15,000-plus talented associates and more than 5,000 valued suppliers across the country. With the goal of helping our customers thrive, we market and deliver quality food and related products to over 150,000 locations including independent and chain restaurants, schools, business and industry locations, healthcare facilities, vending distributors, office coffee service distributors, big box retailers and theaters. Building strong relationships is core to PFG's success – from connecting associates with great career opportunities to connecting valued suppliers and quality products with PFG's broad and diverse customer base. To learn more about PFG and our divisions, Foodservice and Vistar, visit pfgc.com.

² The survey was conducted among a sample of 2,001 general consumers in the U.S., weighted to census. This survey was live on March 28 – April 1st, 2019. All statistical tests were performed at a 5% risk level.