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NEWS

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Unedited photos available at:

http://www.cabpartners.com/news/photos/2008_11_11_FQF_Taubes_speaking.jpg

http://www.cabpartners.com/news/photos/2008_11_11_FQF_Taubes_book_signing2.jpg

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Beef is “good calories”

Red meat is often blamed for heart disease, obesity and a host of other diet-induced conditions. But scientific journalist Gary Taubes says carbohydrates and low-fat diets may be the real culprit. He shared the results of a “12-year obsession with finding what’s real and what’s not” with cattlemen and industry representatives at last fall’s Feeding Quality Forums.

“Beef has gotten a bad rap the last 50 years. Just red meat in general is an integral part of a healthy diet,” he said.

His book, “Good Calories, Bad Calories,” flies in the face of conventional nutritional advice.

“I spent years studying how people picked the evidence they like and ignored the evidence they didn’t; what’s sort-of wishful thinking or bad science and what can really be supported by evidence,” he said.

Taubes now tours the country lecturing on the information he uncovered in his research.

“There is an alternative hypothesis out there and I’ve been doing everything I can to get the researchers to take these ideas seriously,” he said. “The medical schools and the obesity research centers, from their point of view I’m just a journalist – what do I know? I wrote the book so people could judge for themselves.”

His work outlines all of the studies relating to diet and heart disease, along with the evolution of the current dietary recommendations.

The beef industry became an unintended target in the diet-heart conflict, he said.

“We started out with this simplistic hypothesis: fat raises cholesterol raises heart disease. The experts locked themselves into a perspective from the 1970s,” he said.

The reality, Taubes said, is “the more carbs, the higher triglycerides and the more carbs, the lower HDL (high-density lipoprotein or the ‘good cholesterol’). Saturated fat doesn’t even fall into that equation.”

“As the science evolved, it meant the advice had to change, but if you change the advice you’re saying, ‘Look, we made a mistake when we told you to go on a low-fat diet 30 years ago.’”

The real danger is that in a quest for a low-fat diet, people have ditched proteins and elevated the amount of carbohydrates they consume.

“When you eat carbohydrates, your body basically dumps glucose into your bloodstream. Glucose is a sugar,” he explained. “Your pancreas responds by hyper-secreting the hormone insulin. Your muscles don’t like all this insulin, so they become resistant.”

One of the hormone’s functions is to signal your liver to convert carbohydrates to triglyceride fat. It also causes you to store more fat in fatty tissues, he said.

“Everything goes wrong as you elevate insulin. The healthiest possible diet is one that has the lowest insulin,” Taubes said. “The one nutrient that doesn’t stimulate insulin secretion is fat. If you want to keep insulin low, you eat what the Inuit, the Eskimos, ate 100 years ago, which is a diet that’s like 75% fat and 25% meat.”

He concluded with a statement that many in the health science community would embrace:

“What makes you fat makes you sick,” Taubes said. “Whatever makes you fat increases your risk of heart disease, diabetes, Alzheimer’s and most cancers.”

The trick is deciphering what types of food really make you fat.

The Feeding Quality Forums, held in North Platte, Neb., and Amarillo, Texas, were sponsored by Pfizer Animal Health, Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB), *Feedlot* magazine and Land O’ Lakes Purina Feed.

Presentations from the event can be found online at

www.cabpartners.com/events/past_events/index.php.

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