

Beef Marketplace Update – Four Weeks Ending 9/6/2026

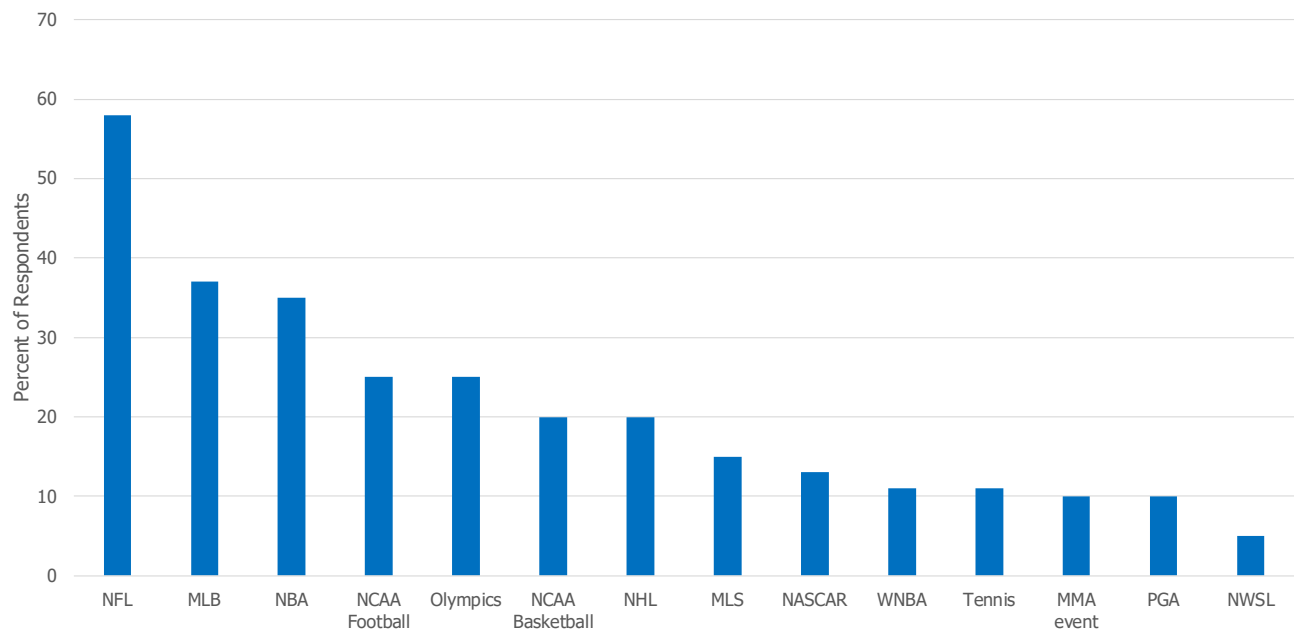
Retail snapshot ending September 6th, 2026 from the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association, a contractor to the Beef Checkoff.

Beef Eaters Rally Around the Big Games

Beef plays a strong role in the sporting-event experience because the largest share of beef consumers typically watch or attend the NFL (58%), followed by MLB (37%) and the NBA (35%). These high-reach sports provide the greatest opportunities to connect beef with game-day meals, tailgating, grilling, and social gatherings. NCAA football and the Olympics, both at about 25%, also offer additional occasions for beef-focused promotions.

Interest is lower across NCAA basketball and the NHL (20%) and niche sports such as MLS, NASCAR, the WNBA, tennis, MMA, the PGA, and the NWSL (5%–15%). These niche events may support targeted or regional campaigns, but the chart suggests that beef’s strongest relevance and marketing impact is tied to mainstream football, baseball, and basketball audiences. The findings suggest, top viewed/attended sporting events also coincide with the highest opportunity to reach beef consumers.

SPORTING EVENTS TYPICALLY WATCH/ATTEND



Source: Directions Research, Fielded December 2025, N=2014 Among Respondents 18-64 Who Consume Beef
Analysis: National Cattlemen’s Beef Association, a contractor to the Beef Checkoff

Marketplace Overview

Beef remains the retail powerhouse among major proteins, generating **\$47.4 billion in annual sales—more than twice chicken and over five times pork—while also posting the strongest dollar growth at 8.4%**. Consumers continue to support beef despite a higher average price of **\$7.46 per pound**, with annual volume still increasing 2.0% as chicken grew 2.3% and pork declined 0.3%. Ground beef is the key growth engine, with dollar sales up 12.1% and volume up 1.4%, although softer steak volume and short-term declines in some cuts show that shoppers are becoming more selective. Overall, beef’s scale, pricing power, and positive volume performance indicate resilient consumer demand and a strong competitive position among major proteins.

Resilient retail demand supports confidence in the category while creating a clear opportunity to connect high-performing products with sports-driven eating occasions. Because beef consumers most often watch or attend the NFL, MLB, and NBA, industry partners can work with retailers and foodservice operators on game-day promotions featuring ground beef for burgers, sliders, tacos, and chili, while brisket and roasts can anchor tailgating, barbecue, and watch-party messaging. Softer steak volume suggests using premium cuts selectively around major games and celebrations, supported by value-focused bundles, recipes, and portion guidance. College sports and smaller events can extend this strategy through regional partnerships and targeted campaigns, helping producers support demand across the carcass while aligning supply, quality, and promotion with the occasions most relevant to beef consumers.

Total Value - Fresh Meat

Legacy Sub-Category	52-Week Dollar Sales		13-Week Dollar Sales		4-Week Dollar Sales	
	Current	% Change vs YA	Current	% Change vs YA	Current	% Change vs YA
AISLE-FRESH MEAT	\$82,283,208,275	6.0%	\$20,477,115,683	2.1%	\$6,252,438,958	0.6%
BEEF	\$47,355,365,657	8.4%	\$11,899,165,078	4.2%	\$3,594,496,886	1.8%
BEEF STEAKS	\$16,060,644,338	2.6%	\$4,414,378,804	0.3%	\$1,294,029,953	-2.1%
BEEF FRESH GROUND	\$17,661,781,943	12.1%	\$4,531,981,932	7.0%	\$1,385,140,547	4.2%
BEEF ROAST	\$4,851,602,282	7.7%	\$877,298,827	3.2%	\$284,443,575	-0.1%
BEEF VALUE ADD	\$4,363,483,777	7.1%	\$991,007,177	-0.5%	\$304,039,123	-2.3%
BEEF BRISKET	\$709,781,863	12.6%	\$190,585,897	4.9%	\$53,765,468	4.7%
CHICKEN	\$21,002,134,486	3.3%	\$5,280,474,388	-0.9%	\$1,645,842,902	-1.2%
TURKEY	\$3,478,539,085	5.5%	\$662,063,203	7.7%	\$209,624,097	6.4%
PORK	\$8,746,003,790	1.2%	\$2,226,285,786	-2.7%	\$673,367,510	-4.0%
MEAT ALTERNATIVES	\$240,054,440	-8.2%	\$61,465,320	-9.4%	\$18,276,140	-7.8%

Source: Circana Multi-Market retail performance, period ending 9/6/2026

Analysis: National Cattlemen’s Beef Association, a contractor to the Beef Checkoff.

Total Volume - Fresh Meat

Legacy Sub-Category	52-Week Volume Sales		13-Week Volume Sales		4-Week Volume Sales	
	Current	% Change vs YA	Current	% Change vs YA	Current	% Change vs YA
AISLE-FRESH MEAT	17,306,096,749	1.5%	4,150,379,900	0.0%	1,281,920,863	0.2%
BEEF	6,350,593,686	2.0%	1,553,821,243	0.7%	474,602,916	0.6%
BEEF STEAKS	1,419,908,536	-2.5%	387,840,265	-1.2%	113,686,322	-3.1%
BEEF FRESH GROUND	2,917,046,886	1.4%	733,534,051	-0.1%	225,521,926	0.7%
BEEF ROAST	712,338,835	3.6%	134,914,220	4.2%	44,352,111	2.4%
BEEF VALUE ADD	653,455,007	4.6%	138,126,812	-2.1%	43,038,937	-2.7%
BEEF BRISKET	143,023,450	3.2%	36,742,179	-6.0%	10,073,564	-3.4%
CHICKEN	6,788,832,240	2.3%	1,719,066,519	0.1%	538,777,925	0.4%
TURKEY	1,239,942,684	-1.1%	137,030,038	0.5%	43,243,771	-1.3%
PORK	2,702,702,611	-0.3%	687,358,576	-1.9%	208,437,092	-1.3%
MEAT ALTERNATIVES	26,812,288	-9.1%	6,869,820	-11.9%	2,032,097	-8.6%

Source: Circana Multi-Market retail performance, period ending 9/6/2026

Analysis: National Cattlemen's Beef Association, a contractor to the Beef Checkoff.

Average Price Per Pound - Fresh Meat

Legacy Sub-Category	52-Week Price per Volume		13-Week Price per Volume		4-Week Price per Volume	
	Current	% Change vs YA	Current	% Change vs YA	Current	% Change vs YA
AISLE-FRESH MEAT	\$4.75	4.5%	\$4.93	2.1%	\$4.88	0.4%
BEEF	\$7.46	6.3%	\$7.66	3.5%	\$7.57	1.2%
BEEF STEAKS	\$11.31	5.2%	\$11.38	1.6%	\$11.38	1.1%
BEEF FRESH GROUND	\$6.05	10.6%	\$6.18	7.1%	\$6.14	3.4%
BEEF ROAST	\$6.81	4.0%	\$6.50	-0.9%	\$6.41	-2.4%
BEEF VALUE ADD	\$6.68	2.4%	\$7.17	1.7%	\$7.06	0.4%
BEEF BRISKET	\$4.96	9.1%	\$5.19	11.6%	\$5.34	8.4%
CHICKEN	\$3.09	1.0%	\$3.07	-1.0%	\$3.05	-1.5%
TURKEY	\$2.81	6.7%	\$4.83	7.2%	\$4.85	7.8%
PORK	\$3.24	1.5%	\$3.24	-0.9%	\$3.23	-2.7%
MEAT ALTERNATIVES	\$8.95	1.0%	\$8.95	2.8%	\$8.99	1.0%

Source: Circana Multi-Market retail performance, period ending 9/6/2026

Analysis: National Cattlemen's Beef Association, a contractor to the Beef Checkoff.