# Are U.S. consumers willing to pay a premium for bee-friendly beef?

#### Elizabeth Chishimba-Musonda and Dr. Catherine Larochelle

Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics (AAEC) Virginia Tech Presentation Prepared for the 2023 CIG Virginia Working Landscapes Field Day

August 3, 2023



## Objectives

- 1) Document the establishment and persistence of wildflowers in grazing systems
- 2) Assess the benefits of wildflower-enhanced grazing systems for cattle and pollinators
- 3) Evaluate socio-economic aspects of wildflowerenhanced grazing systems
- 4) Create educational materials and provide outreach about wildflower-enhanced grazing systems

Consumers are willing to pay (WTP) a premium for products produced using environmentally friendly practices.

- For example, beef products with environmental attributes.
  - Conservation of wildlife habitats (Belcher et al., 2007),
  - "Wolf-friendly" beef hamburgers that support the protection of riparian areas and predators (Aquino Falk, 2001),
  - Sustainably produced beef (Burnier et al., 2021; Schulze et al., 2021)
  - Raised Carbon Friendly (RCF) certified beef products produced using grazing practices that mitigate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and increase carbon sequestration (Li et al., 2016).

## Objectives

- Study addresses these research questions:
  - Are consumers willing to pay (WTP) a premium for beefriendly beef?
  - If so, what is the average premium?
  - Is there heterogeneity in WTP among consumers?

#### **Experimental procedures**

 Nationwide online choice experiment survey of 2,162 U.S. beef consumers.

<u>Purchasing decision 1</u>: Imagine you are in the grocery store, and you wish to purchase one pound of 85% lean ground beef. Assume the ground beef products are the same and only differ with respect to the labels and price. Which of the following ground beef products would you pick?

Alternative A



Alternative **B** 

Locally Raised

(in-state)

BEE-FRIENDLY BEEF

\$5.99/lb

I would not buy either of these ground beef products

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### **Descriptive Results**

Figure: Beef products most frequently bought



#### Willingness to pay for attributes



# Heterogeneity in WTP among respondents with different characteristics



### Some results

- On average, U.S. beef consumers are willing to pay \$1.06 more per pound for bee-friendly ground beef.
- Individuals who are knowledgeable about pollinator decline are willing to pay an extra \$1.79/lb
- A market-based voluntary labelling program of BfB has <u>potential</u> to increase adoption of WF-enhanced pastureland
- Educating the public about pollinator decline is important!