Scientific Abstract:
The objective of this study was to quantify pork quality attributes in the retail meat case nationwide. 133 retail supermarkets, representing 29 cities were visited. Center-cut loin chops (CCLC) (n=3795) were analyzed in-store for subjective color and marbling (2.85 and 2.30, respectively). Means for enhanced (EN) and non-enhanced (NON) CCLC were: L* (54.46 vs. 55.99; P < 0.0001), pH (6.00 vs. 5.74; P < 0.0001), and Warner-Bratzler Shear Force (WBSF) (20.43 vs. 25.99 N; P < 0.0001). Mean EN and NON sirloin chop values were: L* (53.74 vs. 52.51; P = 0.20), pH (6.00 vs. 5.89; P = 0.04), and WBSF (16.18 vs. 22.92 N; P < 0.0001). Mean EN and NON blade steak values were L* (45.81 vs. 45.96; P = 0.82), pH (6.42 vs. 6.28; P = 0.04), WBSF (15.74 vs. 19.42 N; P = 0.0005). Results indicate a large amount of variation exists in the pork meat case.