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## Paleo New Year

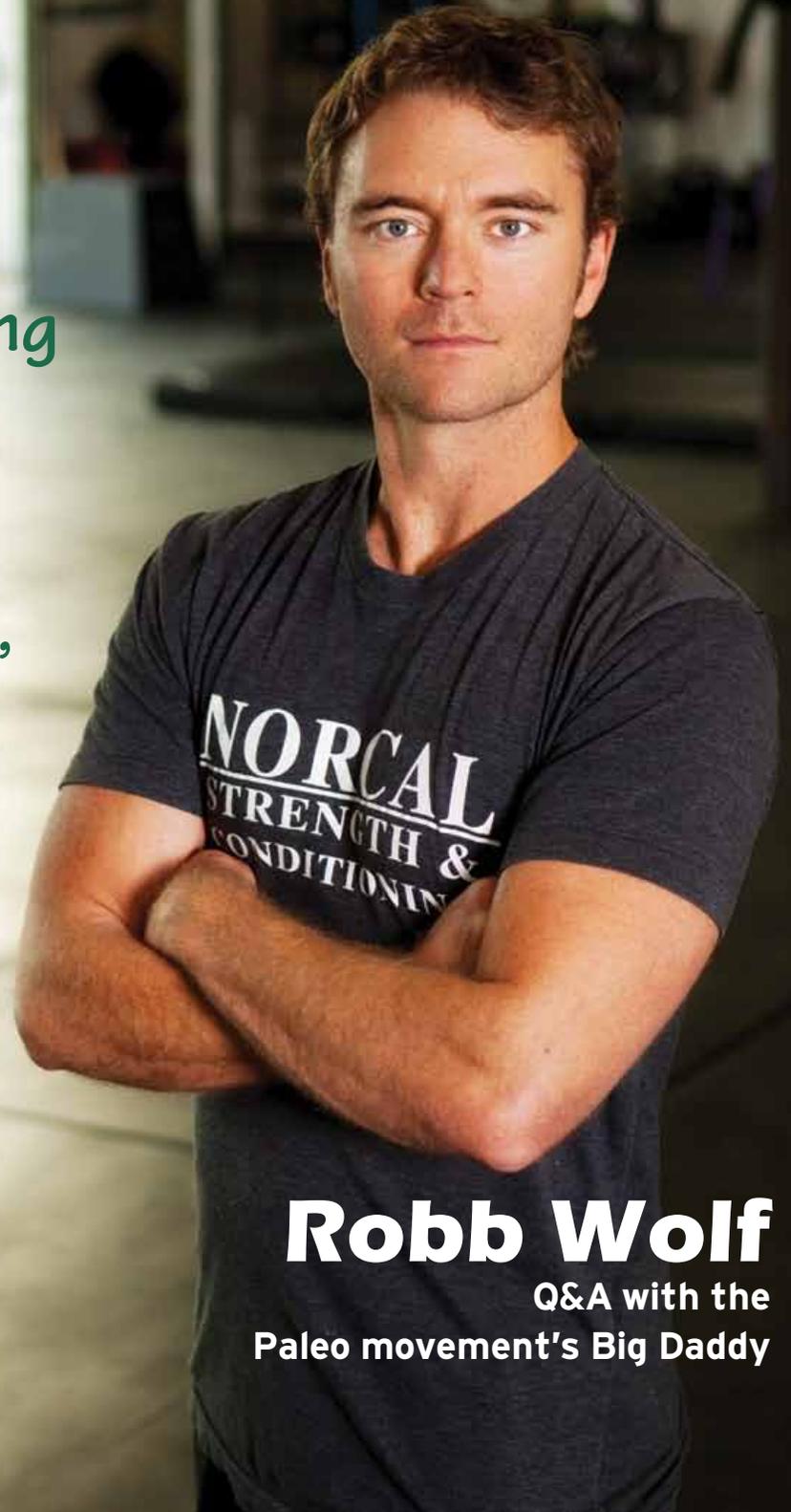
Start your year off right

## “Safe Starches”

Rice is nice?

## The Food

Curry Crab Dip  
Cantonese Wraps  
Pork Tenderloin  
Coconut Bark



## Robb Wolf

Q&A with the  
Paleo movement's Big Daddy

Feb/Mar 2012



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# CONTRIBUTORS



**David Csonka** is a blogger and natural health enthusiast living in Denver, Colorado. His blog, [NaturallyEngineered.com](http://NaturallyEngineered.com), covers topics ranging from evolutionary diets to barefoot running and natural movement. His interests include exercising outdoors, hiking and exploring.



**Jason Glaspey** is co-owner of [PaleoPlan.com](http://PaleoPlan.com), a site aimed at making Paleo a bit easier to follow. He's an avid cyclist, downhill mountain biker and snowboarder. When not in front of a computer, Jason is most likely planning his next trip to Whistler.



Credit: MollyMPeterson.com

**Mike Peterson** is a chef, who raises grass fed-to-finish beef and lamb, as well as pastured pork and soy-free eggs at a farm in Virginia. Being a consumer and having worked in restaurants and the farm, he has a unique understanding of the growing connection between direct marketing farms and consumers.



**Karen Phelps** finds inspiration in all the ways ancestral nutrition and movement inform her life, in both obvious and subtle ways. After watching her own health and wellbeing transform, she couldn't keep it to herself and started blogging about it at [www.PaleoPeriodical.com](http://www.PaleoPeriodical.com).



**Diana Rodgers, NTP** is the owner of Radiance Nutritional Therapy and lives with her husband and two children at Green Meadows Farm, a CSA north of Boston where they raise organic vegetables, pasture raised chickens, pigs and sheep. She's a crossfitter and author of "The Cultivator" the farm's CSA newsletter.



**Diane Sanfilippo** runs the popular site, [BalancedBites.com](http://BalancedBites.com) and is a Holistic Nutritionist specializing in Paleo nutrition, blood sugar regulation, food allergies/intolerances and digestive health. She believes that the only way to truly change someone's diet and lifestyle is to help them to create new habits.

# Grass-fed Beef

By: Mike Peterson

There is a great misconception among carnivores around the country: that grass-fed beef is tough and chewy. It can be, but the truth is not all grass-fed beef is created equally, and much depends on how you handle it. Trust me: I'm both a farmer and a chef.

First let's look at the facts. A 100% grass-fed animal is typically 20 to 30 months old and weighs 1,000-1,200 pounds at slaughter. That's about eight to 12 months older than a conventionally raised animal and hundreds of pounds lighter. Conventionally produced beef is closer in flavor, texture, and appearance



to mature veal than it is to actual beef. Age contributes to the flavor profile, fat content, and color of the meat. Fat -- which contributes to tenderness -- will begin to turn yellow as the animal has greater exposure to green forage which contains a very high amount of vitamin A and carotenoids. That means an older grass-fed animal begins to take on the terroir of where it is raised. Soil types all across the world produce forages with varying nutrient values. Therefore, grass-fed beef will taste, look, and feel different from one side of the world to the other.

Because a grass-fed animal can be a year and a half older than a grain-fed animal, it is important to understand the purpose of each muscle as they have been working for a longer amount of time. The chuck and round come from the most utilized muscles on the animal. Working muscles require low heat for a long period of time to tenderize them. Braising, roasting, smoking, or a slow cooker are all methods that will ensure a successful dinner with a grass-fed roast. A tenderloin, which is protected by the ribs, does virtually no work and is therefore more tender. It can handle higher heat for a short amount of time.

One advantage of grass-fed meat in a busy household is that it requires roughly 30% less cooking time than grain-fed. Steaks, roasts, and ground will all cook quicker. You can also reduce your oven temperature on recipes requiring slow cooking by 50 degrees.

If you are considering a marinade for your beef, keep in mind that acid is essential as it aids in breaking down the fibrous textures within lean (minimal intramuscular fat) cuts of beef like a NY Strip, Skirt Steak, Flank Steak, etc. An acid could include citrus juice, olive oil, wine, beer, vinegar, buttermilk, whey, or yogurt. Stay away from many of the pre-made marinades that are widely available and convenient. The majority of those are made for grain-fed beef that has little to no flavor on its own. A marinade for grass-fed beef should emphasize the strong flavor that it already has, not compete with it. The most common marinade that I use is simply olive oil, fresh rosemary, thyme, sage and a clove a smashed garlic. The garlic should be chopped or smashed as a whole clove will not impart any flavor on your meat.

## Kitchen Terms

**Braising** is generally used on tougher cuts of meat to help tenderize them. To braise, first sear the meat, then cover and simmer in stock or some of the cooking liquid. With braising, the moist heat will also help soften connective tissue, while keeping all flavor and nutrients "self-contained" in the "sauce".

**Roasting** is done in an uncovered, shallow pan in the dry heat of an oven. This can be a time-consuming cooking method, but, once the meat is in the oven, it generally requires little attention.

If you purchase beef that has been flash frozen, it should be defrosted one of two ways: in your refrigerator for 24 to 48 hours or in a cool water bath. Never microwave or use hot water to defrost your beef as that will toughen it. Before you begin to cook, you should allow the beef to come to room temperature. This will allow the cooking process to begin immediately once you apply heat to the meat. If you take it directly from the refrigerator to a skillet or grill, it takes time for the meat to begin to cook as it needs to warm up first. That can lead to meat that is cooked unevenly and inconsistently. To the same point, you should always preheat your skillet, grill, or oven.

After you remove the steak from heat, it should rest for 4-5 minutes to allow the moisture to re-distribute throughout the muscle. If you cut into it right away, you lose every ounce of juice to the platter. If you like a medium-rare steak, remove it from heat when it's just past rare. As the steak rests, it will continue to cook for the next several minutes. Grass-fed steaks and hamburgers should not be cooked above medium, as they begin to dry quickly at that point.

You should always feel comfortable asking your farmer for tips and ideas for cooking their particular breed of cattle as there is even variance from breed to breed. You should also ask to ensure that the beef you are purchasing is 100% grass fed and grass finished. All cattle at some point in their lives are grass fed, and some labels read "Grass Fed Beef", even though the farm or feedlot might finish their animals on grain. Labels are largely a marketing tool, and words like "organic", "natural" and "free-range" carry less meaning than they ever have before. Grass fed is now in that class as it is a new buzz word that draws people in.

An educated consumer is a powerful one: you have the right and option to source your own food and nourish your own body.

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### **Recommended by:**

**David Csonka, Naturally Engineered**  
**Diane Sanfilippo, Balanced Bites**  
**Jen Cereghino, Jen's Gone Paleo**  
**Peggy Emch, The Primal Parent**  
**Sarah Fragoso, Everyday Paleo**



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