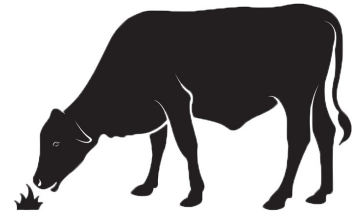




The Nutritional Benefits of Pasture-Raised Beef Cattle

Better feed, better meat

Beef cattle are designed to eat plants. And almost all do for the majority of their lives. However, most conventionally-raised cattle are eventually moved to a feedlot for the final four to eight months where they eat a diet high in grain. Cattle that remain on pasture instead of going to a feedlot continue to eat plants. This results in healthier animals ... and more nutritious food for people as well.



Studies show the nutritional value of beef from cattle that consume grass and forage for their entire lives is higher than beef from cattle that are fed grain.

Less saturated fat, more heart-healthy polyunsaturated fats

Better Fat Quality

- ▶ Replacing saturated fats with polyunsaturated fats is associated with reduced blood levels of total and LDL cholesterol.
- ▶ Studies suggest that replacement reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease, including heart attacks, strokes, and related deaths.

Lower ratio of omega-6 to omega-3 polyunsaturated fats

Increase in Nutrients

- ▶ Omega-6 fats are generally more inflammatory than omega-3 fats.
- ▶ Research suggests a lower ratio of omega-6 to omega-3 fats is more desirable and may improve cognitive function and reduce the risk of many chronic diseases, such as cardiovascular disease and cancer.
- ▶ Long-chain omega-3 fatty acids can improve neural health and result in lower total mortality.

Higher levels of antioxidants: vitamin E and β -carotene

- ▶ Vitamin E and β -carotene protect cells from damage due to free radicals.
- ▶ β -carotene is a precursor of vitamin A and is critical for vision health.

By the numbers...

Compared to grain-fed beef, beef from cattle raised 100% on pasture has up to:

5x more omega-3 fats

4x more long-chain omega-3s

90% lower omega-6: omega-3 ratio

3x higher poly-unsaturated: saturated fat ratio

6x more vitamin E

7x more β -carotene

Why feed matters

Beef quality is influenced by many factors, including an animal's genetics, age, breed, location, and **very significantly**, the animal's diet.

Cattle are a type of ruminant animal. Ruminants have a stomach with four compartments, the largest of which is called the rumen. The rumen is a fermentation chamber where fibrous grasses are digested by bacteria to produce high quality protein (i.e. meat).

Forages are the edible parts of plants other than grain and include pasture vegetation and grasses. They are good sources of beneficial omega-3 fats. In contrast, grains such as corn are dominated by more inflammatory omega-6 fats. Due to the way cattle digest their food, they are able to convert the beneficial fat and nutrients in plants into more nutritious meat for people to eat.



Shopping for beef

Grass-fed beef signifies that only grass was fed to the cattle. The USDA's "100% grass-fed" claim may be applied to meat from cattle that were fed only 100% grass (forage) without grain or grain by-products. The USDA's staff reviews supporting documentation supplied by the company making the claim, but third-party inspections are not completed and humane standards are not considered in the grass-fed claim.

Grass-finished beef implies that grass was fed in the final phase of production, thus the cattle were fed grass their entire lives. However, grass-finished cattle can also be fed grain, therefore the USDA states the claim "grain-fed, grass-finished" is the most accurate terminology.

Because these claims are not 100% reliable, look for third party verified labels, or farms that use humane practices but may not be certified due to the costs involved. Learn more at:

foodanimalconcernstrust.org/food-labels



The Bottom Line

Pasture-raised animals produce nutritionally superior food for people. In addition to the nutritional advantages, there are many animal welfare and environmental benefits associated with pasture-based animal agriculture. Please consider supporting your local family farmers who raise their animals humanely on grass and well-managed pasture.

FACT

Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT) is a national nonprofit organization that works to ensure that all food-producing animals are raised in a humane and healthy manner. FACT offers grants, scholarships, webinars and a mentorship program for livestock and poultry farmers and ranchers who wish to raise their animals on pasture.

www.FoodAnimalConcernsTrust.org

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