



NICHOLAS MEAT INFORMATION BRIEF

Myth vs. Fact About Beef

FACT CHECK:

Busting Myths About Beef

From limiting beef because it's bad for your heart to beef being time-consuming to prepare, we've heard a few myths and we're sure you have too. We're here to debunk these myths and help you enjoy beef with confidence.



Myth: You must limit beef intake because it's bad for your heart and raises cholesterol.

Fact: According to studies published in The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, Journal of Human Hypertension and Obesity Science & Practice^{1, 2, 3} eating lean beef daily as part of a heart-healthy diet and lifestyle can reduce risk factors for heart disease. Trials show that participants who consumed lean beef, as part of a diet rich in fruits, vegetables and low-fat dairy and low in saturated fat, experienced a 10 percent decrease in LDL cholesterol and a moderate decrease in blood pressure, both markers of lower heart disease risk.

Another study published in the Journal of Clinical Lipidology⁴ showed that subjects following a healthy and higher-protein weight loss dietary pattern, combined with physical activity and consuming lean beef four or more times weekly, saw reductions in total cholesterol, LDL cholesterol, triglycerides, and systolic and diastolic blood pressure. Additionally, evidence has shown that beef similarly impacts total cholesterol, LDL cholesterol, HDL cholesterol and triglycerides, much like poultry or fish.

Myth: Americans eat too much red meat – especially beef.

Fact: Americans, on average, consume 1.7 ounces of beef daily, whereas the Dietary Guidelines recommend that one should consume 5.5 ounces of protein daily.^{5, 6} Beef is a great source of essential nutrients with relatively few calories, making it a great option for any meal.

Myth: Grass-finished beef is more nutritious than grain-finished beef.

Fact: All cattle, whether grass- or grain-finished, spend the majority of their lives eating grass on pastures, or hay when pastures are not available. What's important to remember is all beef is a natural source of more than 10 essential nutrients, like protein, iron and zinc. And while grass-finished beef tends to be a little leaner, one needs to factor in other variables like breed, age, grade and cut when considering the product.^{7, 8} Both options are available in the marketplace to meet your personal preference.

Myth: It is difficult to find lean cuts of beef in the grocery store.

Fact: Thanks to enhancements in cattle breeding and feeding, today's beef is leaner than ever as more than 65 percent of the whole muscle cuts sold through the supermarket meat case are lean when cooked with visible fat trimmed.⁹ And would you believe that the number of beef cuts that qualify as being lean has increased by six times from 1989 to 2013.¹⁰

Many cuts of beef now meet U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulations to qualify as lean or extra lean. Of these, the following are considered extra lean:¹¹

- Eye of round roast and steak
- Sirloin tip side steak
- Top round roast and steak
- Bottom round roast and steak
- Top sirloin steak

Myth: Beef produced with additional hormones is unsafe to consume.

Fact: The truth is that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulates the development and use of hormone implants and the Food Safety Inspection Services of the USDA routinely monitors residues of synthetic hormones in meat. Both agencies and numerous research studies concur that the final meat is safe for human consumption. Additionally, it is true that hormone-implanted cattle have increased estrogenic activity compared with non-implanted beef.

However, this must be put into context when looking at levels found in other products. For example, beef from a non-implanted steer contains 0.85 units of estrogenic activity per 3 oz. serving, while beef from an implanted steer contains 1.2 units of estrogenic activity in the same serving. This is a fraction of what is found in other common foods like 3 oz. of eggs at 94 units of estrogenic activity or 3 oz. of tofu which has 19,306,004 units. Other examples include peanuts which have 17,010 units and white bread with 51,029 units.¹²

Why are hormone implants utilized by some beef producers? Feed efficiency is the main reason. It allows for cattle to be finished earlier, thereby requiring less time on feed and fewer resources per pound of meat produced. It is also important to understand that there is no such thing as “hormone-free” beef. Hormones are naturally occurring and if they were eliminated completely from the body, the animal could not survive.¹³

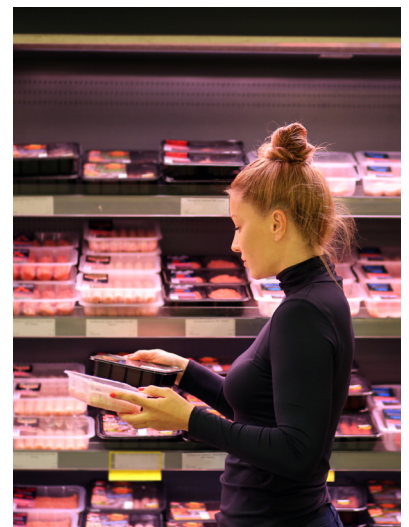
Myth: Beef is difficult and time-consuming to prepare.

Fact: Beef is a nutritious meat easily prepared using common ingredients when pairing the right cooking method to the right cut of beef. Planning ahead also helps you save time when using beef. Additionally, beef is versatile and can be paired with fruits, vegetables or whole grains. Looking for an easy-to-prepare and heart-healthy beef recipe? Check out any number of recipes at the Pennsylvania Beef Council at www.pabeef.org.

When looking to incorporate beef into your diet, check labels as the USDA regulates whether cuts of beef can be labeled as lean or extra lean based on their fat and cholesterol content. The USDA defines a lean cut of beef as a 3.5-ounce serving that contains less than: 10 grams total fat, 4.5 grams saturated fat and 95 milligrams of cholesterol.

According to the American Heart Association, a heart-healthy diet focuses on a variety of foods including vegetables, fruits, nuts, fish and, of course, lean animal protein. Now that some of these myths have been debunked, have fun incorporating lean beef into your balanced diet —

you'll be glad you did!



¹ Roussell MA, et al. Beef in an Optimal Lean Diet study: effects on lipids, lipoproteins, and apolipoproteins. Am J Clin Nutr 2012;95:9-16.

² Roussell MA, et al. Effects of a DASH-like diet containing lean beef on vascular health. J Hum Hypertens 2014;28:600-5.

³ Sayer RD, et al. Equivalent reductions in body weight during the Beef WISE Study: beef's role in weight improvement, satisfaction and energy. Obes Sci Pract 2017;3:298-310.

⁴ Maki KC, et al. A meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials that compare the lipid effects of beef versus poultry and/or fish consumption. J Clin Lipidol 2012;6:352-61.

⁵ U.S. Department of Agriculture / U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. 8th Edition, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, December 2015.

⁶ Zanovec M, et al. Lean beef contributes significant amounts of key nutrients to the diets of US adults: National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey 1999-2004. Nutr Res 2010;30:375-81.

⁷ Daley CA, et al. A review of fatty acid profiles and antioxidant content in grass-fed and grain-fed beef. Nutr J 2010;9:10.

⁸ Van Elswyk ME, McNeill SH. Impact of grass/forage feeding versus grain finishing on beef nutrients and sensory quality: the U.S. experience. Meat Sci 2014;96:535-40.

⁹ IRI/Freshlook, Total US MUO, 52 weeks ending 8/27/17; Categorized by VMMeat System.

¹⁰ National Cattlemen's Beef Association, a Contractor to the Beef Checkoff Program. Lean Matters: Chronicling Beef's Change from Gate to Plate. 2014. Available at http://www.beefresearch.org/CMDocs/BeefResearch/Nutrition/LeanMatters_Web.pdf

¹¹ <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/nutrition-and-healthy-eating/in-depth/cuts-of-beef/art-20043833>

¹² <https://extension.sdstate.edu/hormones-beef-myths-vs-facts>

¹³ <https://extension.sdstate.edu/hormones-beef-myths-vs-facts>

LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW NICHOLAS MEAT IS DEDICATED TO A SUSTAINABLE SUGAR VALLEY AT:

www.NicholasMeat.com

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