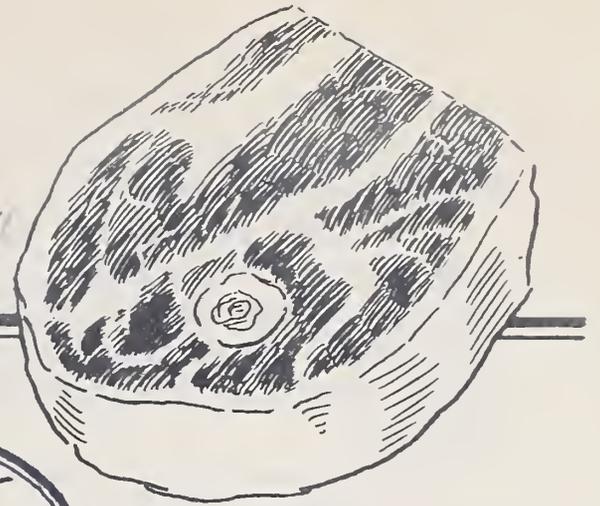


## **Historic, Archive Document**

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



# Facts about Beef



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,  
Office of Information  
Washington, D. C.



March <sup>5c</sup> 1953

Beef is plentiful. That's good news to millions of American housewives. It means they can afford to include beef on their menus more often nowadays.

Record numbers of cattle coming to market have brought beef prices in recent weeks to the lowest point they have been in many years. The large supply and lower prices caused the U. S. Department of Agriculture to put beef on its March and April monthly Plentiful Foods lists, for the first time in the 15-year history of this program.

The Department is cooperating with the livestock and meat industry in a program to tell housewives of the plentiful supply of beef available and how they can get the most for their meat dollar. The help of newspapers, magazines, radio and television stations, trade associations, and other groups is needed in getting this information to consumers. This fact sheet has been prepared for use by these groups who write copy for consumers.

## Cattle Numbers at Peak

The program will continue for several weeks. A concentrated effort is being made immediately to help steady beef cattle prices. (Market prices of beef cattle have dropped about 30 percent in the last year.) This drop has spurred consumption. But, with the largest number of cattle in history now on our farms, we are not likely to run short of beef in the next year or two, under normal conditions.

It takes from 2 to 3 years to raise and fatten a beef animal for market. Cattle that are put in the feedlots and given a concentrated ration are the ones that furnish our higher grade cuts of beef. They make up a large percentage of the numbers coming to market now. Grass-fed cattle provide most of the lower grade cuts. There is aplenty of all grades of beef on the market now.

Whether it be the lower-priced or the more expensive cuts that people want, they will be able to find them in retail markets today. And at prices considerably below what they would have paid a year ago. The greatest drop in prices has come in the lower-cost cuts, which makes them a particularly economical buy. These cuts are just as nutritious as the higher-priced roasts and steaks; the principal difference is that they usually are not as tender. That means the methods of cooking must be varied from the methods used for higher-priced meats.

## Beef Is Body Builder

Beef is popular with the whole family and contains nutrients needed by all ages. It provides good quality protein, important for body building and repair. Lean beef also is a valuable source of B vitamins and of phosphorus and iron. Even the least expensive cuts contain all of these food values. Liver also is excellent as a blood builder because of its iron and copper content.

Many families who have not been able to afford much beef in the last few years may need considerable advice in purchasing and preparing the various beef cuts. Information on how to select and prepare beef should be especially helpful to the younger homemakers.

They also should know of the USDA grades of beef and what the grades mean. Although compulsory grading of meat has been discontinued, many packers still have most of their beef federally graded. The Government grades are Prime, Choice, Good, Commercial, and Utility, with the bulk of the beef purchased by housewives coming in the three middle grades. Some of the larger chains of retail stores and many independent markets continue to offer only Government-graded beef.

With most of the retail markets now offering prepackaged meats, it is more essential than ever that the family shopper know as much as possible about how to select and prepare the various cuts and qualities of beef. On the next two pages are listed the characteristics and recommended methods for cooking the principal beef cuts.

Proper storage of beef in the home is important. Fresh beef should be stored, loosely covered, in the coldest part of the refrigerator and should be used within a few days. Variety meats such as liver are especially perishable and should be used within two days. Ground beef should be held only one day unless frozen. Families with home freezers may find this a good time to stock those freezers with beef.

### Sources of Information

With this fact sheet is a page of recipes recommended by the U. S. Department of Agriculture for the more popular cuts of beef. Livestock and meat industry organizations have publications and photographs suitable for newspaper, magazine, and television use in showing the cuts and methods of cooking beef.

These two Department of Agriculture publications give helpful suggestions on preparing beef:

Family Fare, Home and Garden Bulletin No. 1, can be purchased from Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C., for 25 cents.

Meat for Thrifty Meals, Farmers' Bulletin 1908, available in limited quantities from U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.

## RETAIL BEEF CUTS: CHARACTERISTICS AND METHODS OF COOKING

| Retail Cut                | Characteristics of Retail Cut   | Usual Cooking Methods  |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| <u>STEAKS</u>             |   |  |
| Round (full cut)          | Oval shape with small, round bone. One large section, three smaller ones. Best steak is the one next to the loin end, called the "first cut." The poorest round steaks are at the lower end of the round. | } Broil or pan-fry<br>U. S. Prime grade.<br>Braise Choice, Good, Commercial, and Utility grades.     |
| Bottom round              | Part of the round toward the outside.   |  |
| Top round                 | Part of the round toward the inside.  |  |
| Round tip (knuckle)       | Tip end of round steak. Triangular.   |  |
| Sirloin (full cut)        | Large steak. Size and shape of bone varies according to location. Starting at round end, sirloins are identified as wedge-bone, round-bone, double-bone, and pin-bone sirloins.                           | } Broil or pan-fry<br>U. S. Prime, Choice, and Good grades.<br>Braise Commercial and Utility grades. |
| Bottom sirloin            | Less tender than top sirloin. Boneless.   |  |
| Top sirloin               | More tender than bottom. Boneless.  | } Broil or pan-fry.  |
| Tenderloin (filet mignon) | Tender. Boneless.   |  |
| Porterhouse               | Largest steak in short loin. Contains largest tenderloin muscle.  |  |
| T-bone                    | Smaller steak and smaller tenderloin than porterhouse.  |  |
| Club (Delmonico)          | Smallest steak in short loin. Little or no tenderloin. Triangular shape.  |  |
| Rib                       | Contains rib eye and may contain rib bone. Best steaks are from loin end of ribs.   |  |
| Arm                       | Has a round bone and cross sections of 3 to 5 ribs.   |  |
| Blade                     | Steaks may contain portions of blade and rib bones.   | } Pan-fry or braise<br>U. S. Prime grade.<br>Braise Choice, Good, Commercial, and Utility grades.    |
| Flank                     | Thin and oval in shape. Boneless. Muscles run lengthwise. Made more tender by scoring.  | Braise.  |

(more)

| Retail Cut                           | Characteristics of Retail Cut   | Usual Cooking Methods   |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>ROASTS, POT ROASTS</u>            |   |   |
| Rib                                  | High proportion of fat and bone. Standing roasts usually are 10-inch or 7-inch. The latter is called short-cut rib roast. Rolled rib roast is boned, rolled and tied. | Roast U. S. Prime, Choice, Good, and Commercial Grades. Braise or roast Utility grade.        |
| Rump                                 | Standing rump roast contains portions of rump bone and tail bone. Rolled rump roast has bones removed.  | } Roast or braise U. S. Prime and Choice grades. Braise Good, Commercial, and Utility grades. |
| Blade (chuck rib)                    | Contains portions of rib and blade bones.   |   |
| Arm (round bone or shoulder arm)     | Has round bone. Usually includes cross section of 3 to 5 ribs.  |   |
| English (Boston) cut or corner piece | A rectangular piece cut across 2 or 3 chuck ribs.   | } Braise.   |
| Boneless chuck                       | Portion of chuck with bones removed.  |   |
| Bottom round                         | Outside section of the round.   |   |
| Top round                            | Inside section of the round.  | } Roast U. S. Prime grade. Braise Choice, Good, Commercial, and Utility grades.               |
| Round or sirloin tip                 | Triangular shape. Boneless.   |   |
| Heel of round                        | Boneless, triangular cut from lower part of round. Mostly lean.   | Braise.   |

CUTS FOR BRAISING AND FOR STEWS

|            |   |                   |
|------------|---|-------------------|
| Short ribs | Cut from ends of ribs. Layers of lean and fat.  | } Braise or stew. |
| Plate      | Pieces are cut across plate parallel with ribs. Each piece contains part of rib bone and connecting cartilage. Layers of lean and fat. Boneless plate is rolled and tied. |                   |

Brisket, shank, and neck cuts should be stewed.