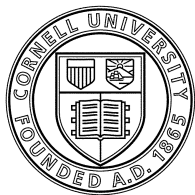


Learn More About Local Meats



**Cooperative
Extension**
Tompkins County



Commonly Used Claims and Definitions

Natural– The USDA’s definition is only “minimally processed”. The term is commonly used on products raised without antibiotics in the feed or hormone implants.

Organic– Certified organic meats require certified organic feed, certain humane treatment of the animals, and the processing must be done at a certified facility. Antibiotics and artificial growth hormones are not allowed .

Grass-fed/pasture raised– Use of these terms varies widely and there is no “official” definition. The term implies a grass diet, however, uses of the term include animals which are fed both grass and grain. In an effort to differentiate from grain-fed products, the term is sometimes prefaced by 100% or “strictly”.

Humane/Free range– The definition also varies widely. Some programs offer their own definition as “certified”. Generally, these terms imply that the animals have access to the outdoors and are less confined than conventional commercial production.

Certified- Subject to specific protocols and third party inspections. For example, “certified organic” or “certified humane”.

Dry aged– Beef which is stored in a temperature and humidity controlled environment for 20 or more days. The ageing enhances the flavor and tenderness of the beef.

Definitions of types of feeds:

Hay– Dried grasses and legumes stored for feed.

Haylage- Hay which is stored “wet” and fermented. Usually seen as long white tubes under white plastic. Ensiled hay.

Bailage- Large wrapped bales of hay stored “wet” and fermented. Ensiled hay.

Silage, corn silage- the entire corn plant chopped and stored “wet”, fermented. Ensiled corn plants.

Shelled corn- dry whole kernel corn.

Cracked corn- dry, whole kernel corn which is ground into smaller pieces.

Common beef and dairy breeds of cattle

Beef

Angus (Red & Black)
Hereford
Limousine
Charolais
Simmental
Highland
Galloway (Belted & Solid)
Shorthorn

Dairy

Holstein
Jersey
Ayrshire
Brown Swiss
Guernsey

USDA & NYS Regulations for meat sales:

- USDA Inspected facility– Processed livestock (beef, pork, sheep, goat) meat can be sold to the public.
- NYS 5A Slaughterhouse: Can kill & process livestock (not to be sold). So, if you buy a live animal from a farmer, it can be processed for your consumption. Also can process farm-raised game (bison, venison) and poultry for legal resale.
- Exempt Grower: Can slaughter and sell poultry, fowl, and rabbits they raise (Limited to 1,000 birds/year). (Whole bird only, no cuts).

Weights & Pricing

Live weight, hot carcass weight (HCW) (also called hanging weight), and final weight (take home weight).

Live weight- the weight of the entire, living animal.

HCW- the weight taken immediately after slaughter, but before final trim.

Final weight– the “take home” weight after trim and cutting into useable portions.

- HCW \approx 60% of live weight
- Final weight (retail cuts) \approx 65% of HCW.

For example: Live weight = 1100 lbs.
then HCW \approx 660 lbs.
and Final weight \approx 430 lbs. of meat

Some farms base their pricing on HCW, which confuses some consumers.

For example: If the price is \$2.50/lb. HCW
and the HCW = 660 lbs.
then the price/lb. is \$3.85/lb. for the 430 lbs. you take home.
(assuming 650 HCW at 65% yield).

Explanation and Generalization of Beef Cut Yields & Recommended Cooking Methods

Note: It is difficult to generalize or easily present the recommended cooking methods for each cut on one handy guide. This chart generalizes the characteristics of meats from each of the major primal sections of a beef carcass and how those cuts should be cooked. The main concern with certain cuts is that cooking them quickly or at high temperatures produces a tough, dry meal.

