

HIL Quality Food

Typically when one thinks of quality, when it comes to food, words like tender, juicy, and flavorful are associated with meat. Smooth, rich, sweet, or creamy describe good milk. Do these words describe any of your products? Are you producing HIL quality food? Does the food you feed your family or sell to your neighbor promote their health, intelligence, and longevity? Have you ever looked at it that way? Our Creator designed our bodies to have this proper nutrition so that we could naturally function in the ways that are pleasing to Him.

The day I bought my first cow I was in the business of producing sustenance for my neighbor and myself. Oh sure, I was influenced by those taunting high production and needed to make money to support my family but I also soon realized the serious responsibilities I as a food producer was taking on. Our food is to not only to be pleasing to the taste buds and satisfy hunger but it must also enable us to function at our fullest potential – healthy bodies, intelligent thinking, and long life free from disease.

I believe intelligence was at its greatest in the American people when they grew all their own food and took much of their meat from the wild. The proof is in the men and women who developed this country and their code of ethics. Every piece of our Constitution, The Bill of Rights, and the standards for government operation came about from minds that functioned on unadulterated foods. Those home grown foods created a spirit in man that enabled him to love and care for his family, to be responsible and look out for his neighbor.

Think about it. There was little need for state and federal prisons. Like the town of Mayberry on the Andy Griffith Show, the only reason for a jail cell was to let the occasional drunkard sleep it off. Unlike today where we have literally hundreds of prisons that are overflowing and a jail in every town to house the criminals that are on the waiting list to enter the prisons.

What has happened? I blame it on the food that is produced and consumed today. We as a nation consider ourselves blessed with plenty to eat but our food has become empty. It holds little regenerative value for health, intelligence, and longevity. Sickness and disease has never been as prevalent as it is today for all age groups and it goes hand in hand with the processed foods that fill our grocery stores, our cupboards and refrigerators.

Intelligence is so critical to our survival. One has to have a level of natural intelligence in order to achieve wisdom. It all begins with proper nutrition. God gave Israel the land across the Jordan. It was the Promised Land, the Land of Milk and Honey. It was specifically intended to provide His flock with the proper nourishment to keep them healthy, give them intelligence to carry out His statutes and give them long life to populate His kingdom. It was land that produced HIL quality food.

Almost immediately after crossing the Jordan, Israel became greedy for money and power and even then became disobedient to the laws of producing quality food. Their greed sent them to Babylon for 70 years. God told them to allow the land to rest every seventh year so it could rebuild and replenish, but

they did not. When they were exiled to Babylon His remark was “My land will have its rest”.

Today not only do we refuse to let the land rest every seventh year, we have become unable to produce an animal without blemish because of our mongrelized herds. Over ninety percent of the cowherds are a composite of two or more breeds. I read articles in the popular cattle magazines that talk about incorporating the quality traits of two different breeds in order to create something that is suppose to be better than either of the two original breeds.

When cross breeding is practiced, only 50% the genetic material from each parent is passed onto the offspring. The genetic exchange and recombination that takes place does not work for our good. Hybrid animals seem to have their merit with the first generation but breed two crosses and the outcome is a roll of the dice. Crossbred animals cannot consistently produce fine quality meat. We must have more control over what we are selling to our customers.

Using a composite, crossbred or out-crossed, or impure bull of any mix is a major set back in breeding for quality in any livestock herd or flock. For the finest in quality of beef and milk the British breeds always have the highest potential to produce the best quality meat and milk.

When it comes to producing HIL quality milk, a huge priority must be the care and management of dairy calves. It amazes me how low calf management gets put on the dairy operation's to-do list when that initial treatment during the first year of their lives determines their future productivity and well-being.

There is no better food for a calf than her mother's milk. When a calf is denied this nourishment and its system is forced to adjust to something void of its mother's hormones, enzymes, cholesterol, antibodies, volatile fatty acids (energy), etc. i.e. powdered milk - is it no wonder it gets a pot belly, rough dull hair coat and runny stool? These are all signs of malnutrition. I call it functional starvation because God willing most calves make it through this phase but at what cost?

Any amount of hunger (starvation) inhibits proper development of all glands thereby limiting the quality of milk produced at maturity and these animals will function below optimum through out their entire life. It is impossible for their various systems (glandular, digestive, skeletal, muscular, nervous) to develop properly with the present typical methods of raising dairy replacements.

When the average dairy cow doesn't even make it to her third lactation before she succumbs to health issues and is discarded, that alone should awaken the producer and the consumer about the food coming from that system. Was she doomed from the start? Did she ever produce HIL quality milk? What are the consequences to those who consumed that milk? How many people do you know that have been told to avoid dairy products? Is the picture becoming any clearer?

I will interject here and say that health and nutrition does start with the soil. Those of us who practice pasture-based management are first and foremost in the grass business. If you let your animals manage your grass instead of managing your grass with your animals then you probably won't reach your goals.

Having said that, we as grass farmers must have animals that literally have the guts to get the most from our grass. Calves do not have a fully functioning rumen and the ability to efficiently utilize our grass until about 10 months of age. During that first 10 months, it is mother's milk (in addition to good pasture/hay) that enables that to happen along with all the other development that must occur. Dairy animals require HIL quality food before they can ever produce HIL quality milk for human consumption.

Beef calves are not treated the same as dairy replacement calves. Typically a beef calf stays with its mother six months, seven months tops. After weaning it gets to eat grass and/or grain until 10-11 months of age. All backgrounders know that around the 10-11 month mark calves can go from a pound of gain a day to 2-2.5 pounds/day on good grass. This is indicative of good gut development. Keep in mind though that the increase in weight gain does not always mean the gut has developed to its full capability. It will not develop properly without a proper amount of butterfat from its mother's milk. So calves that are shortchanged this butterfat may go through life without every having a fully functioning rumen and the ability to completely utilize any food consumed.

How does that affect the milk and meat that comes from those animals? Is that food lacking in proper nutrition thus setting up the consumer to have a sick body as he/she enters into their senior years? Not a pretty picture for those of us who produce food for our-selves and for our neighbors.

The bottom line is that if malnutrition occurs during an animal's development (embryo – fetus – puberty - maturity) there will be deleterious affects to that animal's ability to function. These affects range in severity and will manifest in one of many ways. Physical mutations such as hoof cracks, long toes, failure to shed; poor immune function that results in susceptibility to pink eye, foot rot, etc. and inefficient digestion that compromises overall performance are all manifestations of a lack of proper nutrition that occurred sometime during that animal's development.

If a baby calf is in effect experiencing starvation such as described earlier what is that doing to the resulting meat or milk coming from that animal? I believe that that meat and milk are in part responsible for the health issues that plague all age groups of people today.

Meat and milk coming from animals that are fed grain and industry by-products are no better and actually worse. Pasteurization and homogenization are another issue and in my eyes criminal as it enables ignorant and unscrupulous managers to be in business.

The human body is truly remarkable but it too responds unfavorably to malnourishment/starvation just like the calf. How has poor quality food been manifested in your life – allergies, acid reflux, poor bowel function, diabetes, arteriosclerosis, cancer? It's bad enough that senior citizens have to deal with the onslaught of health problems, but when these conditions start affecting younger and younger people, well – that tells me our food production system is seriously flawed.

My wife Margie and I have raised about 75% of the food we've consumed during our 48 years of marriage. We believed we were eating healthy. We ran a commercial dairy for 10 years and drank our own milk produced from grain fed cows. We raised our own grain fed beef. Turns out that my homegrown meat and milk wasn't any different than store bought as I was growing it just like the progressive, high-production operations were. I was letting myself be influenced and educated by those who lost the sight of working with nature and obeying our Creator's commandments.

Little did I realize at that point I was part of a system that was on a downward spiral away from food quality. I was feeding my family food that would prove to have negative ramifications. The manifestations had not been revealed yet.

This past December at age 64 Margie was diagnosed with ovarian cancer. This has been very traumatic, both physically and spiritually as well as costly. Cancer is a sickness until death and if we do not get it into remission she will live under its threat the remainder of her days. She is changed forever and will never be considered normal again.

What ravages might the food you are eating be having on your body – on your family's bodies? I can't believe how many people aren't seeing this or aren't willing to change. They only have regrets when the consequences start happening. I don't want that for my children, my grandchildren or now my great grandchildren.

People are what they eat. Garbage in is garbage out. Children are resilient but what does the future hold for them if they aren't eating HIL quality food now? The Bible talks about the sins of the father following into the next 3 generations. The consequences of poor nutrition, if not corrected, also follow into the next 3 generations. Francis Pottenger proved this with the research work he did with cats.

So do we take charge of our lives by eating and producing only foods that promote a healthy body, sound intelligent thinking and a long productive life? How we care for our soils and how we manage and breed our animals determine the level of HIL quality food we can produce.

Wisdom comes with age and experiencing life. By this time life is about truth and reality. Those who live a long and healthy life are the ones that must teach and mentor the next generation. You ask what is truth? I tell you - turn to the aged and accomplished, by this time they have nothing to hide or take to the grave. God gave them what they know through His Wisdom of reality

May you allow Him to impart that same Wisdom into your life!