

Gourmet Grass-fed Beef

Let me start things off by posing some questions to get you thinking.

- a. Have you ever eaten a gourmet steak or hamburger?
- b. Do you eat the beef that you raise and how would you assess its quality?
- c. Do your customers rave about your meat, are repeat customers, and bring you new business?
- d. Would you pay more for a gourmet food product?
- e. Do you want to produce gourmet quality beef?

Consider the definition of gourmet: 1. a person who likes and is a judge of fine foods and drinks. 2. a connoisseur in eating and drinking who discriminately appreciates differences in flavor or quality. 3. characteristic of, or designed for gourmets. 4. of or involving fancy or exotic foods.

Typical 100% grass-fed beef by default has some very important nutritional benefits for the consumer.

1. Lower in total fat (actually lowers your "bad" LDL cholesterol levels) and calories.
2. The correct ratio of Omega 6 to Omega 3 essential fatty acids. Omega 3 EFAs are the good fats and the human body requires them for optimal brain, heart, hormone and other functions.
3. A rich source of CLA (conjugated linoleic acid), another good fat proven to be a potent defense against cancer.
4. High in vitamin E, beta-carotene, thiamin, riboflavin, calcium, magnesium and potassium.
5. A complete protein source low in saturated fats.

A big problem that gives the grass-fed beef industry a black mark and slows demand is the lack of consistency in the product. This lack a consistency can be blamed on a number of reasons; two major ones are the use of unstable and incorrect genetics and slaughtering animals before they are properly finished.

Gourmet beef is a sensory pleasure to the mouth and palate. Beef that is considered gourmet is fine textured, very tender with no connective tissue remaining after cooking, and flavorful. Very few people, including cattle producers, have only occasionally enjoyed a gourmet steak. It goes back to the consistency in genetics issue. For the past several decades the American cattle industry has focused on production. The cattlemen/women are compensated for pounds and have thus bred and managed their animals for the highest rates of

gain in the quickest amount of time. Unfortunately this has drastically reduced the quality of beef that reaches the table as well as the proliferation of genetics that thrive on grass.

So how does one get back to producing quality beef and take it step further to gourmet beef? The answer is quite simple – selecting, breeding and managing for the right genetics and BUTTERFAT. Yes your beef herd needs to have the genetic ability to produce milk with high levels of butterfat.

A cow that produces high butterfat rich milk will have the best uterine nutrition for that developing fetus. She will effectively and efficiently raise that calf and give it the right energy and nutrition that sets it up to be healthy and productive the rest of its life. She has the ability to maintain adequate intramuscular and back fat to keep body condition all year long. Butterfat is directly related to intramuscular fat. One good example is the Jersey cow. Jerseys are noted for producing high levels of butterfat and have the reputation for making excellent beef.

Remember that meat flavor and juiciness is predominately in the fat. The beneficial EFAs (essential fatty acids), CLA and certain vitamins are in the fat. Not all cholesterol is evil. In fact the body does not function without it.

The Rotokawa® bulls that are represented and discussed on this website produce calves that make fine textured, tender beef. Butterfat is a genetic characteristic that is to be in your bulls too. That trait is evidenced in the Rotokawa® bloodlines – the foundation for American Herbataurus cattle.

Gourmet beef is as easy to produce as the quality of beef that being produced in America's pasture today. It's a matter of knowing your genetics and managing them as outlined in my Fry Herd Management Program. And we need those animals finished before they go to slaughter.

Did you know that you can visually evaluate animals for gourmet beef?

I encourage you to start envisioning yourself as a gourmet beef producer. You and your customers both deserve to eat nutritious, gourmet food. They will come back for more and gladly pay you for it. Your animal genetic program will pay off too when you have cattle to sell to others who are looking to build their herd of gourmet genetic cattle.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Harold Fry". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.