



The Montana Harvest of the Month program showcases Montana grown foods in Montana schools and communities. This program is a collaboration between Montana Farm to School, Office of Public Instruction, Montana Team Nutrition Program, National Center for Appropriate Technology, Montana State University Extension, Gallatin Valley Farm to School, Montana Department of Agriculture, Montana Organic Association, and FoodCorps Montana. More information and resources are available at: [mtharvestofthemonth.org](http://mtharvestofthemonth.org)



Generally, cooking time is dependent on type of cut, size of meat, and desired doneness. For a complete guide to cooking beef, see *Confident Cooking with Beef* ([www.beefretail.org/CMDocs/BeefRetail/customerhandouts/ConfidentCookingwithBeef.pdf](http://www.beefretail.org/CMDocs/BeefRetail/customerhandouts/ConfidentCookingwithBeef.pdf)). To ensure food safety, cook steaks and roasts to 145°F and cook ground beef to 165°F.

## Cooking

The flavor, tenderness, nutrients, and fat content of beef depend on many factors including the breed, age of animal, feed, cut, and cooking techniques. A less expensive cut can be tender and delicious when cooked using proper techniques such as tenderizing, marinating, and cooking slowly for longer times. To reduce fat content, select lean varieties and cuts. Keep beef refrigerated below 40°F or frozen at or below 0°F. Ground beef can be refrigerated for one to two days or frozen for three to four months. Steaks and roasts can be refrigerated for three to five days or frozen for six to twelve months.

## Buying Tips

# Beef



# Harvest of the Month Beef

## Did You Know



- Cattle are ruminants, meaning their stomachs have four chambers, which allow them to digest grasses. Typically, cattle are raised in pastures until they are at least one year old. Then they are sold and transported for “finishing” which means they are usually fed a grain-based diet to increase weight and fat marbling. Some cattle are raised entirely on pasture or are “finished on grass and are called grassfed or grass-finished. This method usually produces leaner meat, which means less fat.
- Montana is home to more cattle than people and ranks 6th in the nation for the number of beef cattle.
- While only about half of each animal is used for beef, the entire animal is important to the cattle industry. The parts of the animal we do not use for beef are called by-products, which are used to make many products including soap, pharmaceuticals, leather, glue, and tires.

## Nutrition Information

Beef is a nutrient powerhouse. While the specific nutritional information depends on many factors, beef is an excellent source of vitamin B12 and protein. Protein helps build and repair body tissues including muscles. Beef is also a good source of vitamin B6 and iron. Iron helps deliver oxygen allowing all body parts to function, and helps improve our energy levels. Lean beef (10% fat or less) and grass-fed beef contain omega-3 fatty acids which may help lower heart rate, improve blood vessel function, and ease inflammation.

## Dig Deeper

For recipes, lessons, quick activities, resources, and guides, visit:

[mtharvestofthemonth.org](http://mtharvestofthemonth.org)