

Beef



Did You Know

Angus



Texas Longhorn



Charolais



Hereford



Highland



- 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.
- Beef is packed with protein and other nutrients. While the specific nutritional information depends on many factors as discussed below, beef is an excellent source of vitamin B₁₂ and protein, as well as iron and vitamin B₆. Protein helps build and repair body tissues including muscles.
- The first beef cattle arrived in the United States from Mexico in the 1500s, but more arrived in the early 1600s. In Virginia in 1620 about 500 cows roamed the fields, and less than a decade later the population increased to 30,000 bovines!

Buying Tips

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.

Cooking

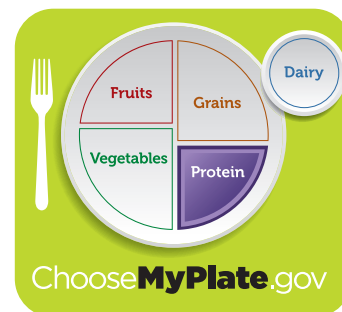
Generally, cooking time is dependent on type of cut, size of meat, and desired doneness. For a complete guide to cooking beef, see *Confident Cooking with Beef* (www.beefretail.org/CMDocs/BeefRetail/customerhandouts/ConfidentCookingwithBeef.pdf). To ensure food safety, cook steaks and roasts to 145°F and cook ground beef to 165°F. Mix it up and stir-fry thinly sliced beef and veggies for stir-fries and delicious fajitas. Heat pan to medium heat, add oil to coat bottom of pan, add beef. Cook in small batches to allow moisture to evaporate. Cook beef by continuously turning for even browning.

Conversation Starters

- Did you know that in Montana, there are more than twice as many cattle than people?
- What's a cow's favorite day?
Moo Years Day

Dig Deeper

For sources and photo credits along with more recipes, lessons, quick activities, resources, and guides, visit: mtharvestofthemonth.org.



Sloppy Joes

Servings

6

Ingredients



1 lb ground beef



1 small onion



2 Tbsp of tomato paste



2 Tbsp of ketchup



1 cup of water plus
2 Tbsp of water



1 Tbsp of vinegar, distilled



1/2 tsp pepper



1/2 tsp dry mustard powder



1 tsp brown sugar



1/2 cup lentils uncooked, no salt



1 2oz can of diced green chiles,
drained



2 medium to large cloves of garlic,
minced



6 whole wheat burger buns

Tools



Large
Pot



Knife



Large
Skillet



Blender



Cutting
Board



Spatula

Directions

1. Brown ground beef in a large skillet. Drain.
2. Cook lentils in a large pot with enough water to cover them. Simmer for about 30-40 minutes. Drain excess water. If using red lentils, reduce cook time to 10-15 minutes.
3. Puree lentils in a food processor.
4. Add onions and minced garlic to ground beef in the skillet. Cook for 5 minutes.
5. Stir in pureed lentils. Add tomato paste, catsup, water, vinegar, dry mustard, pepper, green chilies, and brown sugar. Mix well and simmer for 25-30 minutes.
6. Portion with scoop or large spoon (about 1/3 cup) onto bottom half of each roll. Cover with top half of roll.

Enjoy! Serve with vegetables like carrot sticks or salad to complete your meal.



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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

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