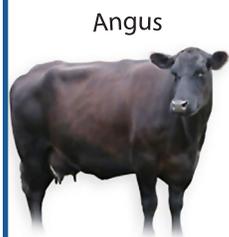


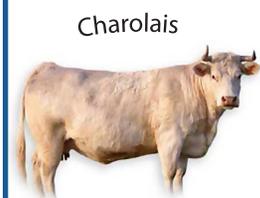
Beef



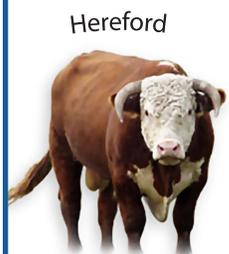
Angus



Texas Longhorn



Charolais



Hereford



Highland

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.
- 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.

Recipes

Sloppy Joe on a Roll

This recipe incorporates three of Montana’s top agriculture products—beef, wheat, and lentils!

Adapted from: Montana’s Healthy School Recipe Roundup, Montana Team Nutrition Program

Servings

6

Ingredients

- 1 lb ground beef
- 1/4 cup onions, raw, chopped
- 2 Tbsp tomato paste
- 2 Tbsp catsup
- 1 cup + 2 Tbsp water
- 1 Tbsp vinegar, distilled
- 1/2 tsp mustard powder
- 1/2 tsp pepper
- 1 tsp brown sugar
- 1/2 cup uncooked lentils
- 2 oz mild green chili peppers, canned, drained
- 2 tsp garlic, raw, minced
- 6 whole wheat buns

Directions

1. In a medium pot, add lentils and 1 cup water (do not add salt) in a medium pot. Bring to a

boil. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer for about 25-40 minutes (depending on variety). Add additional water if lentils begin to dry out while cooking. Lentils should be tender and cooked completely through. Drain excess water. Puree lentils in a food processor. If using red lentils, cook for less time, between 10-20 minutes. Red lentils do not need to be pureed. Set aside.

2. Brown ground beef, drain.
3. Add onions and minced garlic to cooked ground beef. Cook for 5 minutes.
4. Add pureed lentils to beef mixture. Add tomato paste, catsup, water, vinegar, mustard, pepper, green chilies, and brown sugar. Mix well and simmer for 25-30 minutes, making sure to heat to 165°F or higher.
5. Scoop beef mixture onto buns and serve immediately.

Beef and Broccoli Bowl

This recipe can be made with the help of young children. They can take turns measuring the ingredients and reading the steps and will be excited to share the finished product with family members!

Adapted from: Cooking Light
(www.myrecipes.com/recipe/beef-broccoli-bowl)

Servings

4

Ingredients

Rice, soba noodles, or rice noodles
 1/4 cup lower-sodium soy sauce
 1 Tbsp cornstarch
 1 Tbsp hoisin sauce, or substitute barbeque sauce
 1 (12 oz) boneless sirloin steak, cut into thin strips
 2 tsp canola oil
 2 cups broccoli florets
 1 cup vertically sliced red onion
 1 cup chopped carrot
 1/2 cup water
 2 tsp dark sesame oil
 1/3 cup sliced green onions

Directions

1. Cook rice or noodles according to the package directions.
2. Combine soy sauce, cornstarch, hoisin sauce, water, and dark sesame oil in a medium bowl to create a marinade. Add beef, toss to coat, and set aside.
3. Heat oil in a large skillet on high heat, swirl to coat.
4. Using a slotted spoon or tongs, move beef to pan, reserving marinade. Cook 2 minutes or until browned, stirring occasionally. Remove beef from pan.
5. Add broccoli, onion, and carrot to pan; cook 4 minutes or until broccoli is crisp-tender, stirring occasionally. Add reserved marinade and bring to a boil. Cook 1 minute.
6. Add beef and cook 1 minute, or until thoroughly heated.
7. Sprinkle with green onions. Serve over rice or noodles.

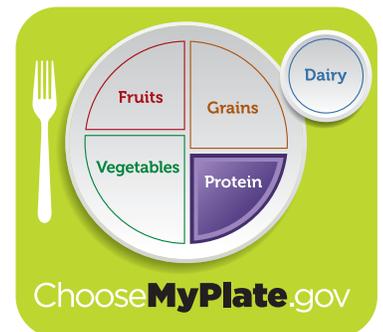
Book Nook

A Cow's Alfalfa-bet, by
Woody Jackson
Cows, by Lyn Stone



Dig Deeper

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



2 Montana Harvest of the Month: Beef



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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