



Beef's a Smart Menu-uever

Step aside, chicken and fish. Beef remains America's most popular restaurant entree. In fact, nine out of ten restaurants sell beef, according to foodservice industry analysts at the Data Development Corporation.

Beef accounts for 53 percent of all main dishes ordered—significantly more than the next-most popular foods, chicken (25 percent of all entrees) and seafood (16 percent).

Beef means big business to restaurants. Its success hinges on popularity with modern diners, for whom beef has come to represent flavor, value, convenience and variety. From hamburgers to prime rib, Americans are finding beef suits their budgets and their tastes.

As busy Americans rely more frequently on restaurant dining and take-out food, the foodservice industry—which includes restaurants, cafeterias and all other eating establishments away from home—is expanding as a major force. Commercial restaurant sales amounted to more than \$196 billion in 1992; non-commercial sales totaled an additional \$73 billion. Nearly half of each consumer food dollar goes to foodservice (48 percent).

Beefing-up beef's foodservice stature, it's important to note beef's predominance among menu items offered by casual and quick-service restaurant chains. These chains tally nearly half of all commercial restaurant sales. Beef is the most popular main dish item among 67 percent of casual chain operators and 65 percent of quick-service chains.

Top 100 chain names include McDonald's, PepsiCo's Taco Bell and Hot 'N Now Hamburgers, and Grand Metropolitan's Burger King.

Trudi McGlasson, Kansas Beef Council coordinator of retail and foodservice programs, says restaurant operators in all segments of the industry realize that it's in their best financial interest to market beef in contemporary entrees.

"Developing attractive beef meals isn't an option for most restaurateurs, it's a necessity," McGlasson says. "Customers want beef in a variety of interesting, value-based and convenient menu selections."

Restaurants' concentration on adapting beef to current eating trends is evident in an impressive range of popular new beef entrees. Examples include ethnic-style beef dishes, steaks available in a wider variety of portion sizes, steaks served with jazzy salsas, relishes or chutneys and beef's use as an ingredient in flavorful pasta and salad meals.

Traditional beef dishes are also in demand. These can include steak, prime rib and roast beef classics as well as modern or "lighter" interpretations of dishes such as beef Wellington, meatloaf, beef Stroganoff and steak Diane.

"There's indication from some of the key players in the foodservice industry that a new beef versatility is catching on," McGlasson says. "Keep your eye out for some exciting new beef menu items when you go out to eat."

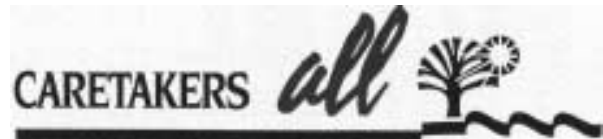
Education Programs Take Beef Beyond the Meat Case

Beef is more than a matter of good taste—beef production and beef by-products add to our national health, economy and list of domestic and exported goods. Many modern youngsters don't realize this, however, and see beef simply as a favorite meal.

The beef industry is working hard to expand young people's perceptions of the significance of beef, through a series of educational classroom materials that explore and prompt discussion

councils. It's offered free of charge to third and fourth grade teachers in return for submitting three written reasons why the program would be a useful classroom tool. To date, "Caretakers All" kits have been requested by more than 12,000 teachers nationwide,

"Caretakers All" was developed by the National Live Stock and Meat Board in conjunction with elementary educators, environmental preservation experts and the National Cattlemen's



about a wide range of beef-related topics. From economics to cookery to body image, the materials' common theme is the beef industry's positive influence on the quality of our lives.

An example of one elementary school program is "Caretakers All," which examines beef producers' contributions to animal welfare and the preservation of natural resources. The six-lesson program positions environmental stability as a shared responsibility and describes how students, too, can play a part in the earth's care. Each lesson can be tied to science, math, reading and other classroom curricula.

"Caretakers All" is distributed on an individual state basis by state beef

Association.

Barbara Hicks Selover, Meat Board director of education, says such programs serve the important function of teaching that the beef industry is a major contributor to American livelihood.

"These materials are carefully developed by education professionals to help children see beef in a wider context," Selover says. "Rather than thinking of beef as something from the meat case education programs position beef within a larger, important national industry."

There are multiple benefits to this effort, she explains.

"Kids gain a better understanding of where food comes from and how food production contributes to global health and economy,"

Selover says. "They also glean a sense that cattle producers are among the original environmentalists, who have a great deal of respect for animals and land."

Other education materials distributed by state beef councils cover topics such as nutrition, food science, history and cultural studies. Different programs are produced for the elementary, high school and college levels.

"Our educational efforts span an important array of subjects and touch on how each is related to beef," Selover says. "That's part of our interdependence theory, which states that no one industry stands alone."

Keeping Fit with Wholesome Nutrients

Here's a summary of the major dietary benefits provided by a 3-ounce cooked, trimmed serving of lean beef;

Protein — One serving of beef contributes half of a 25- to 50-year-old woman's recommended dietary allowance (RDA) for protein, and 40 percent of a man's.

Vitamin B-12 — One serving of beef provides 112 percent of both a man and woman's RDA for vitamin B-12. B-vitamins help humans utilize protein and B-12 helps prevent anemia. Animal foods are the primary sources of B-12 in the diet.

Iron — An essential mineral element, it's one of the nutrients most frequently lacking in American diets — particularly those of adult women and young children. Iron plays a critical role in helping bodies fight infection, bind cells, release energy and move oxygen and carbon dioxide to and from all tissues. Beef is a superior iron source because it contains heme iron — the most usable form, which actually helps the body utilize nonheme iron found in many plant foods. One serving

of beef contributes 17 percent of a woman's RDA for iron.

Zinc — One serving of beef contains nearly half a woman's RDA for zinc, 39 percent of a man's. Zinc is critical to the composition or function of more than 70 enzymes which aid the body's healing processes and affect reproduction, growth and appetite (sense of taste and smell).

Riboflavin and Niacin — A serving of beef contains roughly 20 percent of a man and woman's RDA for each of these nutrients. Riboflavin helps bodies release energy from foods, and niacin maintains healthy nerves.

Beef is known as a "nutrient dense" food because it contains a high degree of nutrients in exchange for calories, says Dianna Elias.

"No dietary supplement or health trend is going to match the benefits of beef's nutrients," she says. "It's an excellent source of vitamins and minerals. Combined with daily diets that contain moderate amounts of foods from all food groups, beef contributes to solid, healthy eating patterns."

Beef Trivia

Grilling began well over 100,000 years ago, when man discovered he could roast meat over hot embers on long sticks. Over the centuries, man developed more sophisticated ways of cooking using clay ovens, hearths and stoves.

The grilling we know today, often called charcoaling or barbecuing, was brought to America from a tiny island called Hispaniola in the Caribbean. During the 17th century, Hispaniola was a place of refuge for hundreds of shipwrecked sailors, runaway servants and freebooters. They learned the native Carib Indians' method of smoke drying meat over hot coals on woven green wood grates. The Spanish were particularly fascinated with a cooking tool, which they called a barbacoa. They carried the barbacoa into Mexico and the American southwest, where it quickly caught on.

By the 1880s, cattle ranchers on the range were using the metal cooking tool, "barbecue", which spread to town folk. Grilling as we know it today became popular during the '40s and '50s. During this time there was a dramatic change in the American lifestyle. The country prospered and people began moving to the suburbs. Homes had backyards, the perfect place to host a barbecue and show off their home and yard.

The first scaled-down grill appeared in 1946 and the newest American summer pastime, the patio party, cookout or backyard picnic was launched. Today there are many types of grills available, from open to hooded, from gas to electric.

Charcoal briquets were invented back in 1923 by Henry Ford, but not for grilling! He discovered that by pulverizing lump charcoal (which was a by-product of the production of wood alcohol, the fuel he used in auto manufacturing) and binding it together in even little bricks, he had created an efficient industrial fuel. Ford's charcoal business faltered and in the 1950s, the Kingsford Company took his invention and marketed it as the "barbecue briquet" to meet the emerging outdoor grilling trend. The charcoal briquet is now made from wood scraps that are smoldered into carbon. These are often mixed with some type of filler, then bound with starch and pressed into briquet shape. Many contain a chemical additive to promote faster lighting.

The world's wisest person was the restaurateur who made the first hamburger. The hamburger allows modern man one small, compact, delicious, never-ordinary package that provides the daily nutrients we all — from youngsters to active-lifestyle adults — need to keep our systems running. There is the ground beef that provides valuable protein, B-vitamins, iron, zinc and trace minerals. There is the tomato, lettuce and onions that provide vitamins A and C and minerals.

There is the bun that meets some of the grain and cereal requirements for protein, iron and several B-vitamins. Add a slice of cheese and calcium, riboflavin, and other nutrient requirements are partially met too. Four food groups in one easy-to-handle meal.

Historians tell us that a potter named Fletcher Davis was responsible for the first hamburger. Davis, known as Uncle Fletch to his neighbors, supplemented his income from his pottery business by serving a sandwich from a cafe. Its popularity grew astronomically when a group of businessmen sent Uncle Fletch to the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis where, from a booth on the Midway, he peddled burgers to the crowd.

The sensibility of this meal in one package impressed those who feasted on those first burgers, and the tide of enthusiasm hasn't stopped growing yet.

Editor's note: Information obtained from: "Grill Book," by Kelly McCunr and Dairy Council's "Fit Facts."