



Local. Natural. Meaty.

Breaking Beef: An In Depth Tour of the Whole Steer

Ruminants: Animals with four-chambered stomachs that allow digestion of fibrous plant material.

- Cows – Adult female that has birthed a calf
- Steers – Castrated young males

Heifers – Unbred females, less than two years old.

What is Meat?

- Long strands of proteins myosin and actin bound together by collagen.

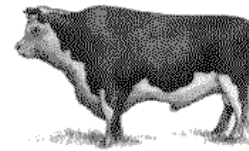
- The more locomotive support a muscle provides, the more collagen it contains. More collagen > less tender.
- The more active the muscle, the leaner it tends to be.

BEEF BREEDS

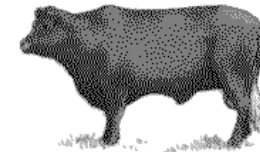
The Countryman



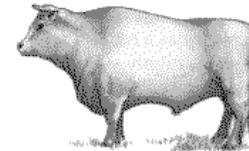
Lincoln Red Reddish brown



Hereford Tan with white face



South Devon Brown



Charolais Pale cream



Beef Shorthorn Brown



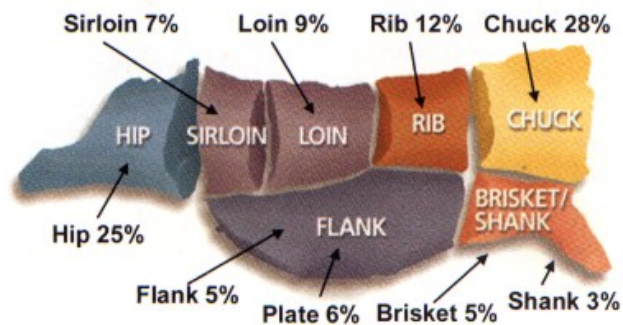
Aberdeen Angus Black



Welsh Black Black

Yield:

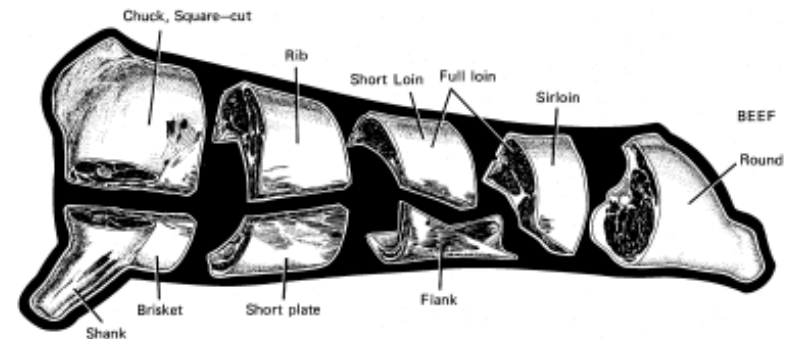
- Live Weight: The weight of the animal before it goes to slaughter
- Hanging Weight (50-60% of live weight): The weight of the carcass after evisceration, bleeding, skinning
- Trimmed steaks, roasts (50% of Hanging Weight)



Grading:

- Established to segregate animals, carcasses and products into uniform groups based on preferences of buyers and sellers
- USDA Meat Grading and Certification Branch established to normalize standards to make communication and expectations on par
- Use of USDA grades is voluntary. Some packers have private grades

- Meat inspection is mandatory (FSIS branch of USDA)



Breaking Down the Steer:

- **Primal Cuts:** Fore-Quarter, Rib Section, Hind Quarter
- **Sub Primal Cuts:** Chuck, rib, plate, short loin, sirloin, round, shank

Chuck: \$

- Supports up to 40% of the animals weight
- Contains lots of connective tissue and tendons used to support the animals head while grazing
- Ideal cooking methods: braising, slow-roasting, sous vide

Rib: \$\$\$

- Contains part of the longissimus dorsi muscle (aka backstrap)
- Ribeye: Ideal intersection of tenderness and flavor
- Cooking method: grill, broil, pan sear

Plate: \$

- Home to a variety of cuts ranging from tender to tough
 - Skirt
 - Flank
 - Short ribs

Short Loin: \$\$\$

- Second half of the longissimus dorsi
- Strip steaks, filet mignon, porterhouse, t-bone
- Cooking Method: Grill, Broil, Pan Sear

Flap: \$\$

- Wider grain muscles great for marinating
- Flank Steak, Vacio, Sirloin Tips
- Cooking method: grill, broil, pan sear

Sirloin: \$\$

- Leaner, beef portion on top of the hip
- Three component cuts: Top sirloin, sirloin filet, sirloin culotte

- Cooking method: grill, broil, pan sear, spit roast

Round: \$

- The leanest part of the steer
- Top round, bottom round, eye round, sirloin tip
- Cooking Method: hot roast, stir fry

Shank/Brisket: \$

- Leg and arm muscles that support much of the steers weight
- Very tough and sinewy
- Cooking Method: long braise

More Info:

- Dickson's Farmstand!
 - www.dicksonsfarmstand.com
- University of Nebraska Bovine Myology:
 - <http://bovine.unl.edu/>
- *River Cottage Meat Book* by Hugh Fearnley Whitingstall
- *The Meat Buyers Guide* by The North American Meat Processors Association