



ARTICLES

BEEF IS HAVING ITS MOMENT

A recent New York Times article affirmed that Americans consumed \$45 billion of beef in 2025, up more than ten percent from the previous year.

By Charlyn Fargo-Warer

Ground beef is driving sales but steak sales are up as well, according to the article. U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services, Robert Kennedy Jr., thinks so much of beef he eats it twice a day – and has beef at the top of the Food Guide Pyramid. Beef’s health benefits are part of the reason – its role in maintaining energy and building muscles and strength along with its plethora of vitamins and minerals. Kennedy has said it even helps his mental clarity.

With the popularity of shows like Yellowstone, Marshals and 1923, meat eating has become a symbol of Old-West masculinity and patriotism. Remember when then-President George H.W. Bush ordered a rare T-bone steak and shunned broccoli? President Donald Trump is a meat eater as well, preferring his steak well done.

Beef has not always been held in such high regard. The debate can be traced back to the 1800s. History finds that during the Civil War, physicians prescribed minced beef for strength or elixirs derived from meat. At the same time, vegetarianism began to grow. When William and John Harvey Kellogg, both Seventh Day Adventists and vegetarian, invented Corn Flakes in the 1890s, it was intended to be a substitute for bacon, ham and sausage at breakfast. The Kellogg’s encouraged clean-living for their guests at their health spa and prohibited meat, tobacco and alcohol.

Since then, meat’s health benefits have been seen as contradictory. Meat eating has been associated with cardiovascular disease as well as certain cancers, however a high protein, low carbohydrate diet has also been shown to help with weight reduction and in the treatment of type 2 diabetes. As more Americans have turned to GLP-1s for weight loss, protein from meat has been seen as beneficial.

The bottom line is how healthy meat is for you -- depends on you. Are you sick or well, is there a predisposition to disease, what kind/cuts of meat do you eat and how much you exercise. Like many questions and answers in nutrition, there is no one answer that fits everyone.

If you’re looking to make sure that steak you’re grilling is going to be the best, here are a few tips to cooking it. Riko Rodriguez is the store manager at a newly opened Butcher Shop in LaBelle, Fla (where I’ve spent the winter). All of their meat is shipped in from the Midwest as Florida is more of a cow-calf state, shipping its calves to the Midwest to be finished.

He starts with a prime cut of steak, seasons it and lets it “dry” in the refrigerator for a couple of hours or overnight.

“Any kind of moisture on the surface – that’s what burns,” he says. “So, you want the meat to be dry before you grill it.”

Then he uses beef tallow on his grill, which has a higher smoke point compared to butter or oils. He heats the grill on high to “sear” the steak, then lets it cook to whatever temperature is desired.

Letting the steak “rest” is critical, ideally for the same amount of time as you cook it to seal in the juices. As it rests, it continues to cook another 5 degrees or so, says Rodriguez.

Should you spend the extra money for a prime steak?

“Honestly, I do,” says Rodriguez. “I would rather than steak less often and have higher quality vs having it more often and lower quality.”

Below is a modified recipe from Ina Garten’s “How Easy Is That” for Grilled Steak & Arugula. It blends the best of both worlds – great protein with a cold arugula salad.

Grilled Steak & Arugala

Ingredients:

2 (1-inch-thick) boneless rib-eye steaks

Salt and pepper

½ cup olive oil

¼ cup lemon juice

½ teaspoon Dijon mustard

8 ounces baby arugula

1 (4-ounce) chunk Parmesan cheese

Directions:

Prepare your grill to medium-high heat. Brush the steaks lightly with oil and sprinkle both sides with salt and pepper. Set aside for 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, whisk together the ½ cup olive oil, lemon juice, mustard, 1 teaspoon salt and ½ teaspoon pepper. Set aside.

Grill steaks for five minutes on each side and close the lid, make sure the vents are open slightly. Cook another 5-15 minutes for medium rare. Move to plate and cover with foil, rest for ten minutes then slice.

Toss the arugula in a large bowl with the dressing; then serve alongside the steak and shaved Parmesan to your guests for a delicious summer treat.