



What's the Skinny of Grass-fed Beef?

The bottom line is that grass-fed beef is healthier for you and has fewer calories and less fat. By eating the same 6 ounce portion of grass-fed beef instead of the same amount of grain-fed beef you could save yourself about 100 calories. And if vanity isn't one of your issues, then just think about the value of grass-fed beef as the new health food.

For years we've been told to steer clear of beef because of its role in raising cholesterol. By eating grass-fed beef you can actually reduce the risk of a heart attack and provide your body with defenses against heart disease derived from the abundance of omega-3 fatty acids found in grass-fed animals. Animals raised on grass have two to four times the amount of Omega-3 fatty acids as animals that are fed grain. These Omega-3 fatty acids are the "good fats" that are found in seafood, nuts, and seeds. They also work to improve cognitive function and prevent cancer. If the advantages of increasing the amount of omega-3 fatty acids in your diet aren't enough, grass-fed beef also has 400% more vitamin A and E than grain-fed beef and significant amounts of beta carotene.

Today's rising star on the health food circuit is conjugated linoleic acid, another "good fat" found in meat and dairy products from animals raised on grass. CLA may be one of the body's most potent defenses against cancer. It takes five times the amount of grain-fed beef to equal the same amount of CLA found in a single serving of grass-fed beef.

The health benefits of grass-fed animals are numerous and can be explored in detail by visiting www.eatwild.com. But does it taste good? Fans of grass-fed beef say that it has a cleaner, lighter taste. Dissenters complain that it is gamey, liverish, and sour tasting. Amy Kenyon of Skate Creek Farm says that the problem with the unpleasant taste sometimes associated with grass-fed beef lies in the way that the animal is raised and aged. Keeping tabs on the nutrition of an animal raised on grass is extremely important so that it develops the proper amount of marbling for optimum flavor. You can't assume that by putting an animal on pasture that it is getting the proper mix of greens. Also, it must be raised to have a fat cover on the carcass so that it is protected during the dry aging process from the decay that might give the meat a strong flavor.

This summer, the Watershed Agricultural Council, in conjunction with the Cornell Cooperative Extension, will be exploring the values of grass-fed beef. We invite you to attend

the following seminars to learn more about raising animals on pasture and to taste the difference for yourself. Stores that carry grass-fed beef in the area include: Good Cheap Food in Delhi, Lucky Dog Farm Store in Hamden, Green Earth in Oneonta, The Market Basket in Arkville, and Fleisher's of Kingston.

Trade Shows and Workshops

Pasture Walk on Grazing – Friday, August 5, 2005

Cornell University Cooperative Extension and the Watershed Agricultural Council will be offering a pasture walk covering grazing management with Dr. Bill Bryan of West Virginia University on Friday, August 5th. All dairy producers interested in managing pasture for better milk production are welcome to attend. The workshop will run from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM at the Deysenroth's Farm in Bloomville. There is no charge for this workshop due to sponsorship from the Watershed Agricultural Council. Participants are requested to register to ensure an adequate number of materials and refreshments.

Grazing management concepts covered include pasture supplementation, stockpiling, extending the grazing season, and feeding rotations for appropriate milk production.

Please contact Kim Holden, Watershed Agricultural Council/Watershed Agricultural Program for registration information at 607-865-7090 or via email kmh19@cornell.edu.

Bi-Annual Beef Day 2005 – Saturday, August 6, 2005

Cornell University Cooperative Extension and the Watershed Agricultural Council are sponsoring a beef production workshop with Dr. Bill Bryan of West Virginia University and Dr. Mike Baker of Cornell University on Saturday, August 6th. All Beef producers interested are welcome to attend. The workshop will run from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Richard & Jenny Liddle's Farm in Halcottsville. There is a cost of \$10.00 per person for this workshop to assist with lunch and materials. Lunch will be catered by Barb Hanselmann of Bloomville. Participants are requested to register to ensure an adequate number of materials and refreshments.

The day will include a farm tour of the Liddle Farm grazing system with pasture identification, an update on CLA research, managerial pasture tips for increasing CLA content in meat, Beef Quality Assurance Shootside Training and an update on marketing programs available to grass-fed, natural, and

traditional beef producers. At lunch, there will be a taste test between grass-fed, grass-finished and grain-finished beef.

Please contact Kim Holden, Watershed Agricultural Council/Watershed Agricultural Program for registration information at 607-865-7090 or via email kmh19@cornell.edu.

"County Fare at the Quarter Moon Café": The Pure Catskills Dinner Series Continues

The *Pure Catskills* Dinner Series moves to the county seat during fair week where the Quarter Moon Café at 53 Main Street in Delhi will be hosting our next event titled, "County Fare at the Quarter Moon Café". Come and meet the farmers on Wednesday, August 17 at 5:00 p.m. and sit down for a repast of locally grown and raised foods at 6:00 p.m. Thanks to all who helped make the *Pure Catskills* Dinner Series a success at the Peekamoose Restaurant and Tap Room in June! For reservations, please call the Quarter Moon Café at (607) 746-8886.

Real Good for Free

It's Chanterelle Season in the Catskill Mountains!

There's gold in them there hills. Golden chanterelles that is. Chanterelles are one of the most prized mushrooms in the world and can be found growing wild in this area throughout the month of July.

Chanterelle fruitings are triggered by very hot and humid weather following a pretty good rainfall anytime from late June to late July. They tend to reappear in the exact same places at about the same time each year. Look for them under hemlocks, spruce, or in a mixed hardwood forest with at least some evergreens present. In a good season the same patch may produce several crops over a month long period. When they are abundant they are often sold at farmers markets for about \$10.00 per pound. It is this time of year that they appear on the menus of many fine restaurants and often chefs will buy them directly from foragers. Like all mushrooms, they need to be picked very soon after they appear or they will become infested with insect larvae.

Mushroom identification is tricky in many cases but chanterelles are among the easiest to identify. They are vase shaped, usually only a few inches tall, orange colored with thick, forked gills that run partway down the stalk. They grow on the ground, not out of wood or stumps. Although they may appear to grow in clusters because they grow very close to each other, they are always single. Fresh chanterelles also smell like apricots. Patches can range from only about 25 feet square or can cover almost an acre of forest floor. About the only orange colored poisonous species they might be confused with are Jack O'Lanterns. Jack O'Lanterns are also bright orange, but they have crowded, thin gills that run down the stalk and they grow in clusters that are fused at their base, from wood at the base of trees or maybe buried wood. They also grow much larger than chanterelles, with caps up to four inches or wider. Before you eat any unknown mushrooms, have them positively identified by a knowledgeable person and even then eat only a small portion at first.

Chanterelles are wonderful when sautéed with onions, shallots, garlic or leeks until all the water in the pan evaporates. Add a splash of wine, cognac or port and reduce. Finish with a touch of cream, salt and pepper and serve on grilled bread or toast. For upcoming events and more information regarding local wild mushrooms, visit www.mushroomthejournal.com/mhma.

This article was written with the help of Bob Beyfuss of the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Greene County.

The Guides Are Out! Take One!

The new *Pure Catskills* 2005-2006 Guide to Farm Fresh Products is presently being distributed at local farm markets, businesses and tourist offices. It is chock full of information about where to find local farm products. The guide lists local stores and farm stands, farmers' markets, farms to visit, restaurants, driving tours, and farm related events and activities. Look for it now to make the most of living in this wonderful farming community. The *Pure Catskills* Guide was published with the generous support of the Catskill Mountain Foundation, the NYC Department of Environmental Protection, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and the Watershed Agricultural Council.

Don't keep it a secret

It's nice to be wanted, and they want what we've got. Several area distributors are asking for locally grown vegetables and are requesting a product availability list. Now that the season is in full swing, please call me with details on what you are presently harvesting and how much you want for it. We'll put it on a master list for distributors and connect you with the people who can sell your product either locally or in the city. So, don't keep it secret. Call the Farm to Market Manager at the Watershed Agricultural Council at (607) 865-7790 ext. 125.

Call for Cauliflower

Got Cauliflower? Let us know because the Cauliflower Festival is sooner than you think! On Saturday, October 1, The Watershed Agricultural Festival is filling a tent with produce and all products that are representative of farming within our region. Cauliflower takes center stage at this event because of the historical importance it has in our agrarian economy. Anyone who is growing cauliflower and would like to set up a booth, please let us know. Also, we welcome unusual sizes and colors of cauliflower. Orange, purple and green cauliflower or Romanesco are value added crops that will add variety to the display and that will also put a few extra dollars in your pockets. Baby cauliflower is prized among the white tablecloth crowd. Call us at (607) 865-7790 ext. 125 for more information.

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