



BEEF

What is It?

- Washington state is home to more than 9,000 cattle farms and ranches with an average of about 40 cattle per farm.
- 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," where they are usually fed a grain-based diet to increase their weight quickly. Some cattle are raised entirely on pasture, or are "finished" on grass, and are called grassfed or grass-finished. This method usually produces meat with less fat.
- The first beef cattle arrived in the United States via Mexico in the 1500s, but the quantity increased in the early 1600s. In Virginia in 1620, about 500 cows roamed the fields. Less than a decade later, the population increased to 30,000 cows!
- While only about half of each animal is used for beef, the entire animal is important to the cattle industry. The parts of the animal we do not use for beef are called by-products, which are used to make many products, including soap.



Cattle, credit: WSDA



Make It

Recipe: Beef and Broccoli Bowl
Yield: 4 servings

Ingredients	Directions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rice, soba noodles, or rice noodles• 1/4 cup lower-sodium soy sauce• 1 Tablespoon (Tbsp) cornstarch• 1 Tbsp hoisin sauce, or substitute barbeque sauce• 1 (12 oz) boneless sirloin steak, cut into thin strips• 2 teaspoons canola oil• 2 cups broccoli florets• 1 cup thinly sliced red onion• 1 cup chopped carrot	<ol style="list-style-type: none">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. Using a slotted spoon or tongs, move beef to pan, reserving marinade. Cook 2 minutes or until browned, stirring occasionally. Remove beef from pan.4. Add broccoli, onion, and carrot to pan; cook 4 minutes or until broccoli is crisp-tender, stirring occasionally.5. 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.

This recipe was adapted from adapted from Cooking Light, [Beef and Broccoli Bowl](#).



Make It

Recipe: Sloppy Joe on a Roll
Yield: 6 servings

Ingredients	Directions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 red lentils• 2 oz mild green chili peppers, canned, drained• 2 tsp garlic, raw, minced• 6 whole wheat buns	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. In a medium pot, add lentils and 1 cup water2. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 10-20 minutes or until lentils break down and appear pureed. Set aside.3. Brown ground beef, drain.4. Add onions and minced garlic to cooked ground beef. Cook for 5 minutes.5. 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.6. Scoop beef mixture onto buns and serve immediately.

This recipe was adapted from adapted from Montana’s Healthy School Recipe Roundup, Montana Team Nutrition Program.



Eat It

- Beef is a nutrient powerhouse. While the specific nutritional information depends on many factors, beef is an excellent source of vitamin B12 and protein, and a good source of iron and vitamin B6. Protein helps build and repair body tissues including muscles.

Read It

- A Cow's Alfalfa-bet, by Woody Jackson
- Cows, by Lyn Stone
- Levi's Lost Calf, written by Amanda Radke and illustrated by Michelle Weber

Find It

- Washington-raised beef can be found in some grocery stores. Check the product label or shelf tag to see where a product is raised. It can also be found in many farmers markets, farm stands, and other local markets across the state. Some beef farms and ranches sell directly to customers. More information on these types of farms can be found on the [Washington Beef Commission webpage](#).
- If freezer storage is available, beef can often be purchased directly from the farm in larger volumes for reduced cost. What can't be used immediately can be frozen for later use. Beef meat should always have a rich pink color, and bones should be bright white. Fresh ground beef is more perishable than roasts or steaks and should be eaten or frozen within two days of purchase.

This resource was adapted for Washington state from Montana Harvest of the Month Classroom Bites:
[Beef Classroom Bites](#)



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Washington Harvest of the Season: **Beef**