

6 Grass-Fed Beef Nutrition Benefits that May Surprise You

According to a study at California State University's College of Agriculture, grass-fed beef nutrition includes significantly more omega-3 fatty acids and more conjugated linoleic acid (CLA) than grain-fed beef. Grass-fed beef, one of the best protein foods around, is also higher in precursors for vitamin A and E and cancer-fighting antioxidants compared to grain-fed beef.

If you haven't heard of CLA yet, it's a powerful polyunsaturated fatty acid we must obtain from our diets that's been shown to help fight cancer, discourage weight gain and build muscle, and high-quality grass-fed beef and butter from healthy, grass-fed cows or other animals are the top sources of CLA.

Maybe up until now you haven't thought too much about what the animals you eat today were fed yesterday. That's pretty common for most folks. You may have heard the terms "grass-fed" or "open range" and "grain-fed" not knowing the real difference between these terms.

Once you understand the vital differences between grass-fed beef and grain-fed beef, you'll look at that burger a bit differently. Today, most of the beef you find on the grocery store shelves has been fed a grain diet. In general, these cows are fed corn and soy, but often there's more on their menu than strictly grains.

It's been reported that some grain-fed cows are actually fed many foods other than grains to keep down costs and promote weight gain. From gummy worms to milk chocolate bars to stale candy still in the wrappers, these poor cattle are fed whatever is the cheapest source that will fatten them up the most, and apparently, it has been going on for decades.

On Oct. 15, 2007, the USDA established a standard definition for the "grass-fed" claim that requires continuous access to pasture and prevents animals from being fed grain or grain-based products. Let's look at exactly how grass-fed beef nutrition can really benefit your health and is an overall better choice for yourself, your loved ones and the environment.

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1. Potential Cancer Fighter – The CLA has proved its ability to fight cancer in multiple animal studies and shows promise for doing the same in humans.
2. Reduces Heart Disease Risk – The main reasons why grass-fed beef can benefit heart health include less overall fat and unhealthy fat, lower levels of cholesterol, higher levels of omega-3, more CLA and more heart disease fighting vitamins.
3. Improves Blood Sugar – Getting enough healthy fat in your diet is extremely helpful to keeping your blood sugar at a healthy level.
4. More Likely to Be Free of Hormones & Antibiotics – Antibiotic and hormone use in beef is significantly less likely with grass-fed versus grain-fed.
5. Safer Beef Option – Recent research conducted by Consumer Reports is the biggest study to date demonstrating that choosing grass-fed meat over conventional meat decreases your risk of food poisoning and results in fewer antibiotic-resistant bacteria.
6. Getter for the Environment – Research now shows that traditional grass-based beef production actually benefits the environment by decreasing greenhouse gas emissions, increasing biodiversity of pasture ecosystems and improving quality of run-off water from well-managed pastures.