

BLOGS & STORIES

MARK MAYNARD

5 Things You Need to Know About Grass-Fed Beef

by Mark Maynard



The organic movement has taken the world by storm. But what's truly healthy and what's just hype? The manager of a grass-fed beef farm breaks it down.

With skeptical, beef-centric films like *Food, Inc.* and *Fast Food Nation* encouraging the American consumer to question the source of their meat, how do you know what to ask? Mark Maynard, farm manager of the Greyledge grass-fed beef farm, offers five basic queries that will help clear up a lot.



Why is grass-fed beef better?

Beef cattle that are pasture-raised and grass-fed are a healthier and safer source of meat because they are eating a diet naturally suited to their anatomy. As a result, the herd is content, healthy, and the beef is high in Vitamin E, Omega-3s, and conjugated linoleic acid, which some studies have shown has cancer-fighting properties and could lower cholesterol. What's more, pasture-raised beef is usually free of hormones and antibiotics.

Is it important for grass-fed beef to be certified organic?

No. Often, small, local farmers do not have the capacity to undergo organic certification. My recommendation is to find a farmer you can trust, try the beef, and make it your go-to for healthy, farm-fresh meats.

Where is the beef coming from?

Did your beef come from 3,000 miles away or even another country like Argentina? There is no way to ensure that the beef you and your family consume is healthy and humanely raised without being able to verify its place of origin. Again, it's best to find a farmer you know and trust. The best farms and purveyors employ a source verification process, in which the record keeping of livestock includes health records, feed records, and genetic history.

Why is beef sometimes flash frozen and does that affect the taste?

Flash freezing is a process when products are rapidly frozen and then vacuum sealed in air-tight packages. This process enriches all the flavors, juices, vitamins, and minerals and allows the beef to keep perfectly for long periods. The beef remains in this condition until it is thawed, ensuring the freshness and quality from when it was originally frozen.

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What is the difference between dry-aged and wet-aged beef?

These are the two techniques used for aging beef and they yield very different flavors and textures. Dry-aged beef tends to be richer, more aromatic, and pungent in flavor, and is generally regarded as a superior-tasting beef. Odds are that you have tasted wet-aged beef, as it dominates the commercial market. It also tends to be less expensive, but is no match to the taste of dry-aged beef.

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Mark Maynard is a principal and the manager of [Greyledge Farm](#). He began supervising the operations at Greyledge Farm four years ago. During this time, he also oversaw his own farm, Ox Hollow Farm in Roxbury, Connecticut. The two farms combined in early 2009 allowing the Maynard and Fitzgerald families to substantially increase the financial and professional resources dedicated to providing their families, friends and the community with the highest quality all-natural, pasture-raised Black Angus beef.
