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**Food Facts: Beef**

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Food Facts: Beef

South Dakota Beef Industry Council
South Dakota Cooperative Extension Service
South Dakota Department of Agriculture
Food Facts: Beef

Sharpen up your best knife, clean up a cutting surface, and buy some freezer wrap or foil. You're ready to save money on beef.

You can stretch beef dollars by buying large, economical cuts because retail meat markets usually sell larger and bone-in cuts at a lower price per pound.

Small family? Dividing large cuts is especially suited to you.

The meat can be frozen. Let it thaw just enough to be knifed. Another tip is to "bone" (remove the bones) roasts rather than buy boneless cuts; you can often save 20 to 90¢ per pound this way.

Don't throw away small lean trimmings and bones. The lean trimmings can be saved for ground beef grinding, and bones can make soup stock.

Consumers can stretch beef dollars by buying large economical cuts because retail meat markets usually sell larger cuts and bone-in cuts at a lower price per pound.

By learning simple cutting techniques, consumers can save money and supply two or three meals from a single large cut. All you need is a sharp knife, a clean cutting surface and suitable wrapping materials (i.e. freezer wrap, foil). Cutting large cuts is especially suited to small families. This guide illustrates cutting techniques that will allow you to better utilize large retail cuts and subprimal cuts.

Meat stored in a home freezer can also be used. Allow the meat to thaw just enough to be cut with a knife as meat in a semi-frozen condition will be easier to cut. Another tip is to "bone" (remove the bones) roasts rather than buy boneless cuts. Twenty to 90 cents per pound can often be saved. Do not throw away small lean trimmings and bones. Lean trimmings can be accumulated to grind for ground beef and bones can be saved to make soup stock.

Beef Retail Cuts

Beef Chuck Arm Roast—Select a roast that is 2-2 1/4 inches thick, weighing 4-6 pounds. Figure 1 shows how the Arm Roast can be cut to serve two meals for a family of four.

Beef Chuck Blade (or 7-Bone) Roast—Select a roast that is 2-2 1/4 inches thick and weighs 4-6 pounds. Blade roast may contain a portion of the ribeye muscle—a round, tender muscle near backbone and rib—which can be removed for steaks. Figure 2 illustrates cutting instructions.

Beef Rib Rib Roast, Large End—The rib roast, or standing rib roast, is a very high quality roast. Ribeye steaks are excellent for grilling. Lean section can be used for stewing or grinding and the ribs and backbones are excellent for barbecuing. Figure 3 shows how to cut.

Beef Loin Porterhouse Steak—Figure 4 shows how easily this steak can be divided into two steak meals by simply removing the backbone. The Top Loin Steak and Tenderloin Steak (Filet Mignon in restaurants) are two of the highest quality and most tender beef steaks. Be sure to select a Porterhouse with a tenderloin muscle large enough for a steak.

Beef Round Round Steak—A very easy retail cut to separate into three other cuts. Just follow the seams between the muscles (Figure 5) to make Top Round, Bottom Round and Eye of Round Steaks. Choose a Round Steak that is at least 1 inch thick.

Subprimal Cuts

Many supermarkets sell large cuts of beef, pork and lamb in plastic, skintight wrapping. These are called "subprimal" cuts and are usually boneless. Carcasses are cut into major divisions called "primal" cuts. Primal cuts are further divided, giving "subprimals" that range in weight from 5 to 30 pounds.

Vacuum-packaged subprimals will differ slightly from typical tray-overwrapped meat cuts. Vacuum-packaged meat has a purplish-red color rather than the expected bright red color. The bright red color comes from the meat's exposure to oxygen. Vacuum-packaged cuts will develop the bright red color when the wrapping is removed. A slight odor might be present when the vacuum package is first opened. The odor should disappear within an hour. Juice accumulation within the vacuum bag is normal.

Cutting instructions for several beef subprimals are illustrated in Figures 6 through 13. "Estimated yield" after cutting represents the percentage of the purchase weight after trimming that is available for cooking.
Figure 1. Beef Arm Pot-roast. 1. Cut through natural dividing seam a to b then through meat from b to c to separate meaty piece 1 from arm pot-roast.

2. Either leave 1 in one piece or split it into two thinner steaks by cutting from d to e.

3. Cut from f to g to remove rib section 3 from arm pot-roast. Then remove armbone.

4. The bones may be used for soup.

BONELESS POT-ROAST
Will make four easily carved servings.

Figure 2. 7-bone Pot-roast (2 to 2 1/4 inches thick, about 6 pounds)

1. Cut around blade bone and remove sections A and B. Section A is the top blade and the most tender part of this cut. Remove membrane separating section A into two pieces; cut each into slices one-half inch thick. Panfry to rare or medium. Two to three servings.

2. Divide remaining meat by cutting along natural seam between sections C and D. Remove bone from D. Cut meat from D and B into cubes, cook in liquid for stew or soup or grind. Four servings.

3. Braise section C as pot-roast. Or chill and cut into thin strips to stir-fry or into four thin steaks to marinate and broil. Four servings.

Figure 3. Beef Blade Rib Roast

1. Ask retailer to saw across the ribs about 2 inches from the chine bone.

2. At home, with ribs up and fat side on table, separate eye muscle I from balance of cut at natural dividing seam. Remove bones from this piece of meat, then cut it into 2, 3 or 4 steaks.

3. Run knife under rib bones 2, then under blade bone 3. The remaining piece of boneless meat 4 can now be rolled into an easily carved pot-roast.

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First Meal—Boneless Pot-roast. Enough for 4 or more generous servings.

Second Meal—Boneless meat removed from backbone, blade bone and ribs is delicious for stewing or grinding. Ribs can also be barbecued.

Third Meal—Ribeye Steaks. Either 2 thick steaks or 3 or 4 individual steaks for broiling.
Figure 4. Porterhouse Steak.

This steak is known by various names, including the following:

Sirloin Steak (hotel style)
Kansas City Steak
New York Steak
Top Loin Steak
Loin Strip Steak
Individual Loin Steak

Remove the 'T' shaped bone by separating the Tenderloin steak from the Top Loin steak.

Figure 5. Round Steak (1 1/4 to 1 1/2 inches thick, about 5 pounds)

1. Cut across bone end of steak following natural seams, removing bone and small pieces of meat (A) attached. Remove eye section (B). Eye of Round can be used for a marinated or tenderized steak, cutting into cubes for stew or for ground beef. Cut meat from (A) into small pieces and use for stew or soup (including bone if desired), or grind. Four servings. 2. Separate top round (C) from bottom round (D) by cutting along natural seams. The larger top round is the most tender part of the round steak. Score if desired, marinate and broil to rare or medium. Carve in thin slices across the grain. Four to six servings. 3. The bottom round (D) can be chilled and cut into thin strips for braising or marinating and stir-frying. Or it can be sliced into two thin steaks, pounded and braised as for Swiss steak. Four servings.

Figure 6. Boneless Beef Top Round.

Estimated yield, 89%. A versatile and economical cut, the Top Round can be divided into roasts and steaks suitable for preparation by a variety of cooking methods.

With the fat side up, use a sharp knife to first split the Top Round in half. Cut with the grain, from A to B. From either half, 2 or 3 steaks can be cut across the grain, 1 to 1 1/2 inches thick. The remaining portions can be used as roasts. If you would like cubes for braising, cut them from the tapered end of the roasts.

Figure 7. Boneless Beef Rib Eye (Delmonico). Estimated yield, 93%. The Rib Eye provides a fine selection of steaks and roasts. Since you're the meat cutter the Rib Eye can be cut to meet your own preference.

With a sharp knife the whole Rib Eye can be cut across the grain into steaks—1 to 1 1/2 inches thick for broiling; less than 1 inch for panbroiling or panfrying.

The entire subprimal can be used as one roast or it can be cut into 2 to 4 smaller roasts. Any combination of roasts and steaks will provide a variety of very special meals.

Figure 8. Boneless Beef Chuck Roll.

Estimated yield, 95%. If steaks for braising are a favorite, cut them with a sharp knife from the center portion. Since slicing thin steaks that hold together is difficult, for best results slice steaks about 1 inch thick. LEAVE THE NETTING OR STRINGS IN-TACT DURING CUTTING AND COOKING both roasts and steaks. For a roast section cut in half, tie strings to help hold shape during cooking.

Any part of the Chuck Roll is an excellent choice if you want cubes for braising or cooking in liquid or for ground beef.
Figure 9. Boneless Beef Top Loin (Strip).
Estimated yield, 87%. The Top Loin is one of
the prize beef cuts, known for flavor and
tenderness. Cut steaks across the grain of the
meat to the preferred thickness—1 to 1 1/2
inches for broiling; 1 inch or less for pan-
broiling or pan-frying. You may wish to use a
portion of the Top Loin as a roast.

Figure 10. Boneless Beef Brisket. Estimated
yield, 80%. The Brisket is perfect for tradi-
tional home-cooked dinners or barbecuing,
and the leftover meat makes excellent second-
day meals or sandwiches. With the fat side
down, separate the two muscle sections,
removing the flat cut (A) from the muscle
underneath the point (B). Begin cutting at the
tip of the flat cut staying as close to the
underside of A as you can. As the flat cut
starts to separate, maintain a steady pull on it
in order to aid separation. Once the flat cut
has been removed, cut it into two roasts for
ease of cooking. Trim the fat around the
point as desired. You’ll have economical
meals that are sure to please.

Figure 11. Boneless Beef Top Sirloin (Butt).
Estimated yield, 82%. A favorite of many,
the Top Sirloin can be cut in several combina-
tions of steaks and roasts. With the fat side
up use a sharp knife to slice steaks across the
grain—1 to 2 inches thick for broiling; 1 inch
or less for pan-broiling or pan-frying. You may
prefer to split the Top Sirloin (dotted line)
and use for roasts or cut across the grain for
smaller steaks.

Figure 12. Boneless Beef Tip (Cap Off).
Estimated yield, 96%. Lean roasts and steaks
can be cut from the Tip, Cap Off. With the
Round surface up, use a sharp knife to split
the Tip lengthwise with the grain. One half is
called the solid side (it holds together better).
It can be a roast or can be cut across the grain
into steaks—3/4 to 1 inch thick for braising;
1/2 inch for pan-frying. The other half (loose
side) is best used as a roast. Tie strings to help
hold its shape during cooking. The loose half
or the tapered end of the other half can also
be cut into cubes for braising.

Figure 13. Boneless Beef Tenderloin.
Estimated yield, 83%. The outside fat should
be trimmed first. Use your sharp knife spar-
ingly because most of the fat can be separated
by hand. Beginning at the large end, slice
steaks (filets) 1 to 2 inches thick for broiling;
1 inch or less for pan-broiling or pan-frying.
If a roast is your choice, cut it from the center
section of the Tenderloin. More steaks can be
cut if tapered end is butterflied by cutting
double thick slices, then cutting through the
center, leaving the steak hinged on one side.
The tapered end is also an excellent source of
tender beef cubes for fondue, kabobs, or
gourmet entrees.

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