

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the health benefits of eating buffalo meat?

Grass-fed buffalo is a naturally leaner meat which translates into fewer calories. There is little fat marbling the meat, which means the inter-muscular fat can be trimmed off. It has also been found to be lower in “bad” saturated fat and higher in “good fat” or omega-3 fatty acids. It is also higher in selenium, which may reduce the risk for cancer.

Species	Fat Grams	Calories KCAL	Cholesterol MG
Bison ¹	2.42	143	82
Beef	9.28	211	86
Pork	9.66	212	86
Chicken	190	89	

USDA Handbook 8-5-8-10:8-13:8-17

¹ Grass fed bison will be even better

² Skinless

What's so special about the animals that Tall Grass Bison butcher?

Our animals graze on very fertile soil, much of which has never been plowed. This means more nutrients from the soil available to them which goes into their meat and is then available to you. They don't have the problems associated with meat from grass fed butcher animals that range all over the countryside trying to sustain themselves on depleted, nutrient starved soils. Healthy living means they have never needed nor been given a shot or antibiotics in their life. Also, we choose mature butcher animals that are at least 4 years old.

Why choose mature animals to butcher?

Waiting to butcher mature animals means more overhead for us as we support an animal that does not gain proportionately more weight after its third year. So why do this? Because it results in more nutrients for us to eat. The animal has had more time to concentrate nutrients into its existing muscle rather than using it to form new tissue. This is not revolutionary; indigenous peoples, culinary experts and even the early Greeks preferred a mature animal. The misperception of young animals being “prime” has been going on since early explorers saw Indians coveting the meat from two year old cows, thus thinking this is what they preferred. They did not realize this first meat brought back to camp was necessary for the very young and very old, folks who didn't have good teeth.

Today's meat industry perpetuates the slaughter of immature animals for different reasons. One reason is that it is necessary for business competitiveness. Another is based on the oft repeated business mantra, “uniform and consistent”. All animals meeting this production criteria will be equally tender, but also equally tasteless (unless, of course, one is addicted to the flavor of fat). Marketing with many points of distribution make this faulty concept imperative. There can not be variations when dealing with so many different end use customers. Middlemen would waste valuable time if they had to explain the uniqueness of each animal. To us at TGB we see industry's management style as an “Exercise in Compromise”, with a product suited only for the masses. Agribusiness, as seen today, does not allow for an animal to reach its full nutritional and flavor potential.

Won't a mature animal be less tender?

Mature animals from herds raised today could very well be tough. This is because other producers do not allow their animals to have the family social order which has evolved in all ungulates over the eons. Herds without intact families mean stress endemic to all individuals in these herds. Stress over a long period of time leads to tight muscles (no different than the tight neck and back muscles in harried business people) which translates into tough meat on the plate. This means producers without this herd infrastructure have to butcher immature animals if they

want assurances of tender meat. The clock is ticking for every producer with dysfunctional animals. There are no adjectives such as “fine wine aging” in their vocabulary.

However, if the animal leads a low stress life, the meat itself will be just as tender or more so at 2 years of age as it would at 10 years. At TGB, our animals have had 30 years to build herd infrastructure with family social order. They will have the connective tissue typical of mature animals, with firm not mushy meat, but without the toughness associated with older animals from other producers. At TGB, we give you flavor, nutrition, and tenderness.

How is the animal handled before it reaches our plate?

We perform a respectful field slaughter after giving a prayer to the animal. Then our state inspected locker hangs the carcass for 21 days before cutting and packaging. Dry aging concentrates the flavor and increases tenderness. Very few producers go through the process we do because they want the customer to think they are getting more meat when they are actually paying for water. Most beef produced today has no dry hanging time. Nor will most small lockers, inspected or not, hang carcasses for more than 7-10 days. Longer than that, they risk getting mold which can run through the entire plant. To have a facility such as ours that has no trouble hanging meat for three weeks speaks volumes of their cleanliness.

Why is Tall Grass Bison's meat safer to eat?

For several reasons, food safety wise, you should be many times safer with our buffalo. One reason is the way we raise the buffalo. Without the feedlots, E. coli does not build up in our free-range herd. Two, our herds are closed. This means we do not bring in outside animals and therefore diseases such as Mad cow. Three, our state inspected locker is small and cuts up one animal at a time, so there is no cross contamination on the cutting floor with other animals. Four, there is no blending with meat from other animals. The big boys will grind 100,000 pound batches. Any bacteria present from one animal can spread through the whole batch. Contamination from these practices comes from either grinding or injecting meat. That is why the USDA now says all ground meat should be cooked well done. They recently chose this route instead of making packers clean up their plants. We eat raw burger, something we would never consider with store bought burger.

How do I decide between a front and hind quarter?

Deciding between front and hind quarters depends on which cuts you prefer. Overall, front quarters yield more ground and roasts, while hind quarters gives more steaks. Native American Indians, with no multivitamins available, chose the more nutritious front quarter where the majority of the roasts come from. The Indians boiled or slow cooked a lot of meat and extracted all the nutrients from the connective tissues and bones contained within. However, your tastes may be more modern and run more to the grilling steaks typical of the hind quarter.

What is the difference between hanging weight and package weight?

Percentage from hanging weight to packaged weight will depend on how you request the meat be processed. If you want the locker to remove more bones and connective tissue, your percentage from hanging to package weight will go down. However, in general, our buffalo will run 10-15% higher than beef. Shrink from package to plate will be 20-40% less than for beef or 15-20% less than grain fed or young animals. Lack of marbled fat also means better yield compared to beef. Our quarters will range from 65- 85% depending on how much trimming is done or types of cuts the customer wants. The locker puts the ground meat in 1 pound packages. Roasts usually are 2 - 3 pounds each. Steaks are $\frac{3}{4}$ " thick, usually two per package.