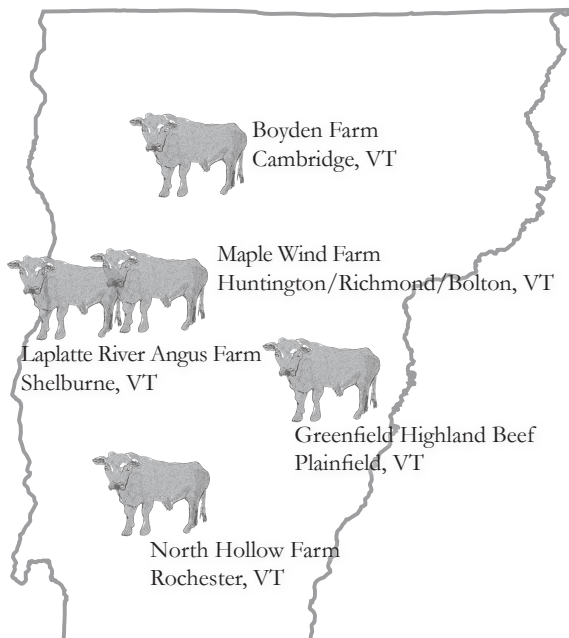


Our Local Beef Farms



Why is local and grass-fed beef more expensive?

Our local beef farmers are small-scale producers, especially when compared with the large “factory farms” that raise the majority of the beef sold in the United States. Our local farmers can’t achieve the economies of scale for labor and infrastructure that allows conventional meat to be so cheap. Also, while factory farms maximize profits by keeping their production costs low, our local farmers often use farming methods that are more costly but are also more environmentally responsible, provide more humane conditions for the cows, and provide workers with both a fairer wage and safer working conditions.



Resources

This brochure summarizes several important and complicated topics. Given the limited space in this brochure, we recommend checking out the following resources if you’re interested in learning more.

Antibiotics: <http://s.coop/antimicrobialsinmeat>

GMOs: <http://s.coop/risksofsgmo>

Feedlot Management: <http://s.coop/pollanfeedlots>

Global Warming and Beef Production:

<http://s.coop/globalwarmingbeef>

Nutritional Benefits of Grass-Fed Beef:

<http://s.coop/grassfedbenefits>

Cooking Tips for Grass-Fed Beef:

<http://s.coop/beefcookingtips>

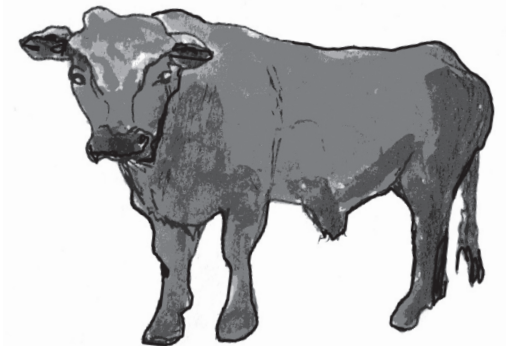
About City Market, Onion River Co-op

City Market, Onion River Co-op is a consumer cooperative, with over 11,500 Members, selling wholesome food and other products while building a vibrant, empowered community and a healthier world, all in a sustainable manner. Located in downtown Burlington, Vermont, City Market provides a large selection of organic and conventional foods, and thousands of local and Vermont-made products. Visit City Market, Onion River Co-op online at www.CityMarket.coop or call 802-861-9700.



Your Community-Owned Grocery Store
82 South Winooski Avenue
Downtown Burlington, VT 05401
(802) 861-9700 • www.CityMarket.coop

City Market's Beef



We know that choosing meat can be challenging – especially when considering animal welfare, the environment, and food safety.

This brochure and accompanying shelf signs will help guide you through some of the important considerations when choosing beef. As always, our Meat & Seafood staff is happy to answer any questions you have.

There are two basic methods of raising beef in the US – conventional feedlot production (raising animals in confined areas as cheaply and quickly as possible), and grass-fed production, relying on producing high-quality beef by providing cows with nutritious pasture grasses to graze. There are environmental, health, and nutritional benefits to grass-fed beef, but it is generally more expensive.

Conventional Beef

Living Conditions

The majority of the conventional beef in the United States comes from large feedlots, areas where thousands of cattle live outdoors in dirt pens, confining animals (and their manure) in tight living quarters.

-- Many environmental groups note that feedlot manure is a major source of water and air pollution.

Feed

Feedlot cows are fed a special diet to maximize weight gain to get them up to slaughter weight as quickly as possible. All feedlot beef are fed conventionally grown corn and other grains, the vast majority of which are now genetically modified (80% of the corn grown in the United States is now GMO).

-- If you're looking to avoid genetically modified foods, choose 100% grass-fed or organic beef.

Antibiotics

Feedlot cattle are fed antibiotics on a daily basis to help them gain weight as quickly as possible. The Union of

Concerned Scientists now estimates that 70% of all the antibiotics used in the United States are fed to cattle, chickens, and hogs.

-- These antibiotics are the same ones we humans rely on when we get sick, leading to concerns that antibiotics are losing effectiveness due to their overuse. In addition, scientific studies are finding antibiotic-resistant bacteria contaminating meat in grocery stores (<http://s.coop/contaminatedmeat>).

Hormones

Artificial hormones are another method feedlots use to get their cattle up to slaughter weight more quickly. Each cow is implanted with a slow-release hormone pellet that releases an estrogenic compound into the cow's body, ensuring the animal gains weight more quickly.

-- These added hormones build up in the environment and measurable residues are found on the meat from these animals. Scientists are concerned they may have consequences for human health.

100% Grass-Fed Beef

Living Conditions

Grass-fed cows live on grassy pasture during the summer, allowing the animals ample space to roam. Each farm sets up a grazing system tailored to their land and the season – some farms move the cows to fresh grass every day while others move their cows every few days or weekly. During the winter months, cows are moved to open-sided barns or covered barnyards where they are fed hay and can be sheltered from storms.

-- Good grazing practices have environmental benefits – well managed pastures ensure the cow manure fertilizes the land, rather than running off into our lakes and streams. In addition, well managed pastures could help fight global warming – well managed pastures can actually store carbon in the soil and build topsoil.

Feed

As the term implies, 100% grass-fed cows eat pasture plants and grasses during the summer and hay during the winter months.

-- Grass-fed beef has nutritional benefits. Grass-fed beef is leaner than grain-fed beef, and has higher levels of omega-3 fatty acids.

Antibiotics

None of our local beef producers use antibiotics on a daily basis to maintain animal health. Some of our local producers do use antibiotics occasionally in cases of illness.

-- Grass-fed beef is unlikely to be contaminated with antibiotic-resistant bacteria so it's a good choice if you're concerned about food safety.

Hormones

None of our local beef producers use artificial hormones.

Grass-Fed/Grain-Finished

Two of our local farms – LaPlatte River Angus Farm and Boyden Farm – “finish” their cows on grain. The cows spend the first part of their lives as grass-fed animals, grazing on pasture. Then, for the last 3-4 months, cows are kept in open-air barns and fed grains.

-- This process of grain finishing gets the animals up to slaughter weight more quickly but studies find that the nutritional benefits of 100% grass-fed beef are not present in grass-fed/grain-finished meat.

-- Grass-fed/grain-finished cows may be fed GMO grains. If you're looking to avoid genetically modified foods, choose 100% grass-fed or organic beef. Boyden Farm ensures they are feeding non-GMO grains by only feeding their cows barley grains (which is not genetically modified).

	Certified Organic?	Herd Size	Grass-Fed?	GMO-Free Feed?	Antibiotics?	Hormones?
Boyden Farm, Cambridge, VT	no	350-400	Grass-Fed/Grain-Finished	yes	occasionally*	none
Greenfield Highland Beef, Plainfield, VT	no	170	100% Grass-Fed	n/a	none	none
Hardwick Beef**, Eastern NY and Vermont	no	varies	100% Grass-Fed	n/a	none	none
Laplatte River Angus Farm, Shelburne, VT	no	400-500	Grass-Fed/Grain-Finished	no	occasionally*	none
Maple Wind Farm, Huntington/Richmond/Bolton, VT	no	100	100% Grass-Fed	n/a	none	none
North Hollow Farm, Rochester, VT	no	175	100% Grass-Fed	n/a	none	none
Conventional feedlot beef*** Location Unknown	no	unknown	Grain-Fed	no	fed on a daily basis	yes

* Occasionally given antibiotics if an animal is ill

** Buys cows from multiple farms

*** While we can ask all the local farms about their management practices, there is no traceability or transparency in the conventional feedlot beef industry. This line contains our best guess at where this meat is coming from, based on typical management practices.