



Princess Beef Newsletter

SUMMER 2008

HOUSEWEART/ALLEN RANCHES

The middle of March we began our calving season. We brought 7 cows down to our place to watch in case they needed assistance calving. These were our cows that had never calved before and a couple that had questionable udders. The rest of the herd we left at The Allen Ranch and they all calved on their own. We had one hundred percent live healthy calves and we only had to assist on one birth from a first year calver.

In June we tried something new. We artificially inseminated the animals that we didn't want bred to their sire. We were able to use semen from Johnny Be Good, a



Princess Grass-Fed Beef

Hello,

It is time to place your order for beef, if you haven't already! I am more excited than ever about our pasture finished beef this year. Our animals are genetically the closest we have had for grass-finishing. They are all sired by Mr. Grassy, our bull we bought exclusively for raising animals that fatten easily on pasture. The pastures this year have been fantastic. After a winter of record moisture the reservoir that provides irrigation water for the Allen Ranch has more water than ever. That means lusher, greener pastures for our animals to graze.

I encourage all of you to make arrangements to visit the Princess herd. Our cows couldn't be any healthier, foraging the way nature intended ALL year round. Healthy pastures equal healthy animals. Healthy animals equal healthy consumers. Producers can put all sorts of labels on their beef, but as Joel Salatin of Virginia's Polyface Farms says, "The only genuine accountability comes from a producer's relationship with his or her customers, and their freedom to come out to the farm, poke around, sniff around." In Michael Pollan's insightful book, *Omnivore's Dilemma*, he writes, "The organic label itself—like every other such label in the supermarket—is really just an imperfect substitution for direct observation of how a food is produced, a concession to the reality that most people in an industrial society haven't the time or the inclination to follow their food back to the farm."

If you have any questions or comments please let me know!

Enjoy,
Cynthia Housewart

bull out of Burlington, Colorado. He had all the statistics to produce excellent grass-finished

beef. It was rather labor intensive but with the expertise of my veterinarian father in-law and the



Izzi's two handed wave in the Crawford Pioneer Day Parade

childcare by our little girls' granny, we got it accomplished. We shall see what percentage took next March!

The cows, their calves and the beef yearlings have had an excellent summer of grazing. At this time Steve Allen is moving the herd everyday to fresh pastures using electric fence. This could not be more ideal, for both pasture and animals. The land is not overgrazed and the animals are getting the "cream of the crop" every day. A bonus is that when the animals move to fresh pasture they leave many of the pesky flies behind on their older manure. The Princess Herd would not be what it is without Steve and Rachel Allen's belief and commitment to intensive grazing management. Gigantic thanks to Steve for all his work moving the herd.

Here at the Houseweart Ranch we have been enjoying our animals and gardens. We purchased electric chicken fencing this spring and have been experimenting on

moving the chickens. It is nice to have them out eating grass and bugs. Their eggs now contain up to 10 times the omega-3 that supermarket eggs have. This spring we also added 5 Indian Runner ducks to our menagerie of birds. Besides being silly to watch, they ought to start laying eggs as well.

My main interest in gardening is flowers but we did enlarge our vegetable garden by adding a raised tomato bed and lettuce bed. We didn't get the vegetable garden as full of different kinds of vegetables as I would have liked. We do have a terrific looking crop of corn, pole beans and giant pumpkins. The girls planted them all and have been a help picking weeds and watering with their watering cans.

A happy event came this past June when little Izzi and Cece won first place in the kids division of the Crawford Pioneer Days parade. They dressed up in their pink cowgirl outfits and took

turns riding Misty, their miniature horse.

It seems like this spring we got bogged down in projects and now we are making a conscious effort to take some family time on the weekends. A few of our favorite activities have been camping, rafting and going out on "Uncle Cody's" motor boat.



GRASS-FED BEEF

Agriculture may contribute up to a third of the world's greenhouse-gas emissions. Industrial livestock production contributes 18 percent. Not only does conventional livestock production take fossil fuels in feed production and long distance transportation, but also animal waste is typically pooled into lagoons that emit great quantities of methane gas instead of being used to fertilize crop land.

One of the most important principles of grass farming is that it relies on energy from the sun instead of fossil fuels. As Allen Nation, editor of *The Grass Farmer* writes, "All agriculture is at its heart a business of capturing free solar energy in a food product that can then be turned into high-value human energy. There are only two efficient ways to do this. One is for you to walk out in your garden, pull a carrot and eat it. This is a direct transfer of solar energy to human energy. The second most efficient way is for you to send an animal out to gather this free solar food and then you eat the animal."

Similar to trees, pastures remove carbon from the atmosphere. They store most of it under-

ground, in the form of soil humus. In *Omnivore's Dilemma*, Pollan discovered that "if the sixteen million acres now being used to grow corn to feed cows in the United States became well-managed pasture, that would remove fourteen billion pounds of carbon from the atmosphere each year, the equivalent of taking four million cars off the road."

QUOTE

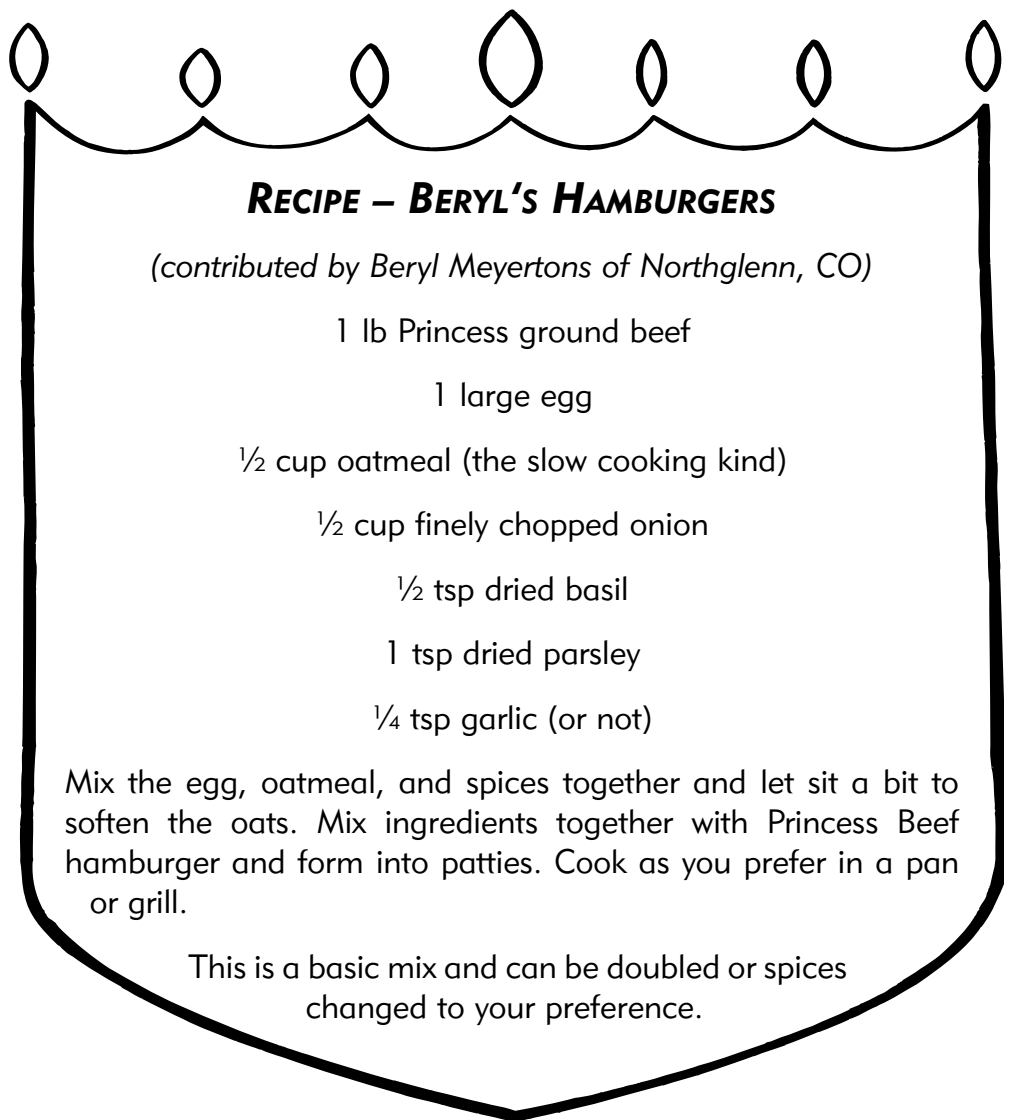
Math on the Range (World Ark May/June 2008)

Bruce Gellerman, host of the radio program "Living on Earth," recently spoke with animal science professor David Tisch to crunch the numbers on grass-fed versus grain-fed beef.

Gellerman: And what's the relationship between grain and CO2 emissions?

Tisch: Well, grasses are perennials. And that means that they grow back year after year and there's not a lot of fuel used to produce the grasses. Grains, however-when you feed animals grain you really mean you're feeding them corn and corn is an annual. And that means every year you have to plow, plant, fertilize, spray, harvest it, dry it and grind it. There's a lot of input when you're producing grain for grain-fed beef. But, the reality is that it's cheaper now to produce grain-fed animals than grass-fed.

Gellerman: So, let's do a hypothetical. Say you've got in stall number one, animal 'A.' This animal was grain-fed and it was eaten in let's say in Fort Collins, Colorado, where it was raised.



RECIPE – BERYL'S HAMBURGERS

(contributed by Beryl Meyertons of Northglenn, CO)

1 lb Princess ground beef

1 large egg

½ cup oatmeal (the slow cooking kind)

½ cup finely chopped onion

½ tsp dried basil

1 tsp dried parsley

¼ tsp garlic (or not)

Mix the egg, oatmeal, and spices together and let sit a bit to soften the oats. Mix ingredients together with Princess Beef hamburger and form into patties. Cook as you prefer in a pan or grill.

This is a basic mix and can be doubled or spices changed to your preference.

What's the CO2 footprint of that animal?

Tisch: The grain-fed animal with no transportation would result in about 1.6 pounds of CO2 emissions per 12-ounce steak.

Gellerman: So more CO2 is produced than the steak itself?

Tisch: That's right. More CO2 is produced during the production when it's grain-fed than it would be actually for transportation if you didn't use grain.

Gellerman: Okay, then. Behind stall number two we've got animal 'B.' And this one was not grain-fed but it was shipped from say Fort Collins, Colorado, to me, here in Boston. What's the CO2

footprint of that one?

Tisch: That one's CO2 is about 0.3 pounds of carbon dioxide.

Gellerman: Whoa! Big difference.

Tisch: There really is a big difference.

FOR THE CHILDREN

Gary Synder (from his collection *Turtle Island*)

The rising hills, the slopes,
of statistics
lie before us.
The steep climb
of everything, going up,
up, as we all
go down.

In the next century
or the one beyond that,
they say,
are valleys, pastures,
we can meet there in peace
if we make it.

To climb these coming crests
one word to you, to
you and your children:

stay together
learn the flowers
go light.

nating to watch. We view them as a mark of pasture health. Darting in and out of the tiny holes they had made, we could tell the "pie" would be broken down in no time. As Charles Walters, executive editor of Acres magazine, explains, "Dung beetles are one of nature's greatest recyclers and in a way they were the first organic farmers." Calling them "casualties of industrial farming" he explains that one of the benefits of grass-based livestock production is the reestablishment of the dung beetle.

which is for the finest steaks as well as the finest hamburger.

WEBSITES

Princessbeef.com
Eatwild.com
Grassfedcooking.com

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OF SPECIAL NOTE

The price of beef is \$3.00 a pound hanging weight. A split quarter will average \$409.00. This makes the actual price of meat about \$5.50 per pound

WILDLIFE

While moving the Princess herd with Steve Allen this summer, the girls and I had a long look at cow pies from the previous pasture. Perhaps the dung beetle is a strange "wildlife viewing" to comment on, but to us it was fasci-



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