



Ontario Corn Fed Beef Questions & Answers

Question—What Are “Ontario Corn Fed Beef” Cattle Fed?

Answer:

Cattle are fed diets that are 80% corn and corn products that are grown or produced in Ontario.

The other 20% of the diet will normally consist of hay, corn silage, and grain and oilseed crops, such as barley, oats, wheat and soybeans.

Feeds that could affect the color, quality and flavour of beef are not allowed to be fed under the OCFB program.

In addition, cattle fed for the OCFB program are fed diets that are balanced for all nutrients to assure the well being of the cattle and to provide high levels of nutrients in the beef produced.

To enhance the nutritional status of the cattle even further and to improve the nutritional value of the beef, 500 International Units of vitamin E is provided to each animal daily.

Question-Shouldn't Cows Eat Grass?

Answer:

None of the cattle in the OCFB program are cows. Cattle fed to be harvested as beef are neutered males called steers and females called heifers.

Cows are cattle that have given birth to a calf, usually at about two years of age, which is the age when cattle reach maturity.

Cows do eat grass on most farms and spend the spring, summer, and fall grazing.

A significant percentage of young steers and heifers spend a second summer grazing on pastures as well.

Cattle being fed for harvest are fed diets higher in energy than grass so that they can enjoy good health and excellent nutritional status resulting in high quality beef that results in a product that is tender, juicy and flavorful

Question—What is the difference between Grain Fed and Ontario Corn Fed?

Answer:

Grain fed can refer to animals that have received a range of grains including barley, wheat, oats and corn. Corn, however, provides the highest level of energy resulting in a superior beef because of its juiciness, tenderness and flavor.

Key Messages

- OCFB cattle are fed and processed in Ontario
- cattle are fed 80% corn
- farmers producing OCFB have received food safety training
- farmers producing OCFB are required to keep detailed feeding and animal health records that are audited
- cattle receive an extra 500 IU of Vitamin E
- farmers are required to complete an Environmental Farm Plan