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## **Beef Options**

It seems to me there are two ploys of marketing going on right now, you either scare the consumer to death with half-truths, lies or fake science or you confuse them! We have the safest, most wholesome food supply in the world. There are those that seem to undermine this principle.

Within the beef sector there is much confusion about the choices now available. The USDA has approved these labels for beef based on specific criteria. A new release from the Beef Checkoff helps simplify the differences:

Grain-finished, these are cattle that spend the majority of their lives eating grass or forage, they spend 4-6 months at a feed yard eating a balanced diet of grains, local feed ingredients, like potato hulls or sugar beets or hay or forage. May or may not, be given US Food and Drug administration (FDA) approved antibiotics to treat, prevent or control disease and/or growth promoting hormones.

Grass-finished, these cattle spend their whole lives eating grass or forage. They can also eat in a feed yard, grass, forage, hay or silage. They may or may not be given antibiotics and/or growth promoting hormones.

Certified Organic-Never receive any antibiotics or growth promoting hormones. They may be either grain or grass-finished as long as the USDA's marketing service certifies the feed is 100% organically grown. These cattle may spend time in a feed yard.

Naturally raised cattle never receive any antibiotics or growth promoting hormones, may be either grain or grass finished and they may spend time in a feed yard.

Is Grass-finished more sustainable? Yes, and no! Grain-finished beef has a lower carbon footprint since the cattle reach production weight at a younger age. However, grass-finished cattle can contribute to sustainability by using forage from grasslands that sequester carbon. Compared to other cattle-producing countries, US beef has one of the lowest carbon footprints in the world, 10-50 times lower than some nations. Greenhouse gas emissions from cattle account for only 2% of US greenhouse emissions. US farmers and ranchers produce 18% of the world's beef with only 8% of the world's cattle.

David G. Hallauer  
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### ***2019 Agronomy Fall Field Day***

The 2019 Agronomy Fall Field Day will be in Manhattan this year on Friday, September 20<sup>th</sup>. Building Resiliency in Agronomy is this year's theme with a focus on understanding how agronomic practices and technologies can aid producers in building a more resilient production system. Presentations will include: resilient soils through conservation practices, discussions about wheat and sorghum genetics and technology, crop physiology and extreme temperatures, managing variability in the field, and Kansas Mesonet and climate data in Kansas.

The event is free to attend and will conclude with a sponsored lunch for all attendees. Register online at: <http://bit.ly/AgronFieldDay2019>.

### ***Overseeding a Lawn***

Right after we mow, everything is nice and green and uniform. Wait a few days, and it becomes much easier to recognize 'holes' in the stand. Maybe it's time for overseeding.

The first step in the overseeding process is to mow short. Reduce mower height to one to one and a half inches, removing the clippings during mowing to encourage good seed-soil contact, while increasing the amount of light that will reach young seedlings.

Look at thatch layers, too. A quarter inch of thatch or less is desired so that seed can easily reach the soil and germinate. If thatch layers are thicker than a quarter of an inch, use a power rake to reduce it to a quarter inch depth. Thatch layers greater than three quarters of inch mean you probably need to start over with the lawn.

Once thatch concerns are alleviated, prep small areas using a hand rake to roughen up the soil surface. If larger areas are to be overseeded, additional tillage may be necessary.

Apply seed using a verticut machine or slit seeder, or consider core aeration. Slit seeding will likely get you the best seed-soil contact. The advantage to core aeration is that it can also reduce the amount of watering needed to get the seed germinated and growing while increasing the water infiltration rate, decreasing compaction, and increasing the amount of oxygen in the soil. At this time, it's also good to apply fertilizer as per a soil test recommendation.

Cindy Williams  
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Food, Nutrition, Health, and Safety

## **September is National Rice Month!**

Looking for healthy, budget-friendly foods that are also delicious? Rice is a healthy, versatile, and economical dish. September is National Rice Month, and rice is the most popular grain globally, supplying energy, complex carbohydrates, fiber, and essential vitamins and minerals. Check out the following tips and information on the recommendations and nutritional value of rice as well to use rice in dishes.

**MyPlate and rice.** The amount of grains you need to eat depends on your age, gender, and level of physical activity. A chart of recommended daily amounts can be found at [www.choosemyplate.gov/grains](http://www.choosemyplate.gov/grains). Most Americans consume enough grains, but few are whole grains. At least half of all the grains eaten should be whole grains.

**Whole grain goodness.** Whole-grain rice can be brown, black, red or wild. The whole grain is the entire seed of a plant which includes the bran, germ and endosperm. Together, these provide vitamins, minerals, fiber, protein and other important nutrients. Enhance your next meal with the whole-grain goodness of brown, red, black or wild rice to add flavor, color and crunch to your dish.

**Allergy-friendly food.** Rice is sodium- and cholesterol-free, as well as gluten-free and the least allergenic of all grains.

**Rice economics.** At approximately 10 cents per half-cup serving, rice is economical, easy to prepare and pairs well with other healthy foods such as vegetables, meat, seafood and soy foods. Store cooked rice in the refrigerator for up to four days or freeze for two to three months. So you can prepare batches of rice ahead of time to use with meals throughout the week.

**Reheating rice.** Add 2 tablespoons of liquid per cup of rice. For reheating on range top, cover and heat about 5 minutes until heated throughout. Use low heat for best results. The amount of time may vary slightly depending on how much you're reheating. Fluff with a fork. For microwave reheating, cover and cook on high about 1 minute per cup. Cook frozen rice 2 minutes on high for each cup. Fluff with a fork.

**Adding rice to meals.** Try combining white and brown rice in one dish or add brown rice in soups, stews, salads, casseroles or stir-fries. Mix up rice in the stuffing for baked green peppers or tomatoes. Create a whole-grain pilaf with a mixture of barley, wild rice, brown rice, broth and spices. For a special touch, stir in toasted nuts or chopped dried fruit.

Nancy C. Nelson  
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Family Life

## Preventing Falls

One of the most important reasons that falls among older adults are so dangerous is the high risk of serious injury. The [National Council on Aging](#) has declared September 23 “Falls Prevention Awareness Day,” which aims to raise awareness about how to avoid these injuries.

A lot of these injuries can occur to the brain, so there is a high incidence level of traumatic brain injury. Also, a large proportion of older adults who fall experience injuries to their bones—hip fractures, wrist fractures, fractures to elbows and knees.

Research has shown that a majority of the people who fall have a continued fear of falling. Here are four main items to consider:

**Identify vision problems.** See your eye doctor at least once a year to make sure prescriptions are up to date, and to monitor for eye diseases or other problems. If your glasses are not the correct prescription, your vision is going to be off. You’re not going to see as well as you normally would, which can lead to falls.

**Make your home safer.** Installing devices such as grab bars, is a great safety precaution to prevent falls. These could be installed anywhere—along the walls of hallways, in the bathroom or next to the bed. When older adults start to lose their balance and grow wary of falling, they tend to lean toward the wall and walk along the wall. If they would fall, they could try their best to grab onto that bar and pull themselves back up to get to a telephone or to safety. The bars can also be a source of stability.

**Assess your medications.** As people age their doctors could place them on multiple medications. Just being aware of what medicines you’re on and the side effects can prevent a lot of issues, including fall prevention. If a medication side effect is dizziness or disorientation, perhaps there’s a different drug you can take that has the same benefits but has less side effects.

**Exercise to improve your strength, balance and mobility.** Exercise is a huge component of fall prevention as inactivity leads to weakness and an increased risk of falling. Through exercise that improves strength, balance and flexibility, we can increase the likelihood that our bodies are physically able to withstand a fall, help us recover from a fall, and more importantly, prevent falling. Also, with exercise often comes confidence and less fear of falling.

The Meadowlark Extension District offers an 8-week *Stay Strong, Stay Healthy* program. If you would like more information about this course, please contact your local Extension Office.