

E TUESDAY, JULY 5, 2005

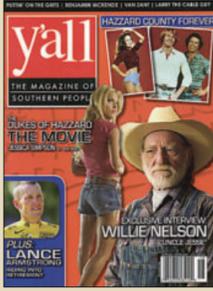
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Living

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INSIDE TODAY



Dukes redux

Y'all magazine revisits the original cast of the Southern-fried TV show while O magazine talks about living solo. **Newsstand.** **E7**

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New Music Releases

Your Tuesday guide to latest sounds



Innovative rapper whips up a bland mix in 'Cookbook'

HIP-HOP

► **Missy Elliott**
"The Cookbook." Atlantic/Goldmind. 16 tracks.
Grade: C-

As the mainstream hip-hop artist most consistently on the creative cutting-edge, Missy Elliott was bound to make a bad record one day. The safe bet would've been that she'd get tangled up in her wild ambition or snowed under by an avalanche of great ideas. As it turns out, "The Cookbook" mostly suffers from a shortage of fresh thinking.

The temptation is to attribute this to the reduced role that Timbaland, Elliott's longtime producer, plays on the new disc.

But it's Elliott's name on the cover — at the end of the day, she should be able to float on her own or give co-headlining credit to Timbaland as her musical life preserver.

In any case, the new record's best track is "Lose Control," which features a hook by the unstoppable Atlanta vocalist Ciara and a beat that is, as Gwen Stefani might say, b-a-n-a-n-a-s.

Unfortunately, too much of the album's remainder is weak R&B, or clumsy rap, with tracks rarely finding the sweet spot between the hard minimalism of Elliott's fabulous 2001 track "Get Ur Freak On" and the cluttered chaos of the new song "On & On." Elsewhere, Elliott delivers a song called "Can't Stop" that sounds an awful lot like Amerie's hit "1 Thing." Since when does Missy mimic anyone else?

For whatever it's worth, the album cover of "The Cookbook" is a beauty — a foggy black-and-white shot of Elliott in what looks like an old-timey juke joint. She's got suspenders on, and her hair is in her face, and it looks like she's steaming up the windows with brassy, bluesy music.

You almost imagine that Elliott has created a hip-hop concept album about a Prohibition-era entertainer. You can just hear the hot-blooded fusions of blues, jazz and hip-hop, delivered in an exaggerated drawl.

Now that would've been interesting, and more in keeping with this adventurous artist's track record. "The Cookbook," by contrast, is a recipe for disaster.

— Nick Marino

► **INSIDE:** Today's other releases, **E8**

Some Georgia farmers make a healthy pitch for locally produced grass-fed beef, but it's a tough sell



BILLY SMITH II / Staff

Grass, not grain, is on the menu today for No. 158, one of the placid bovines at Will Harris' Bluffton ranch. Grain-fed cattle, which put on weight quicker in crowded feedlots, have set the profitable standard for American beef for decades.

Against the grain

By ELIZABETH LEE
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Bluffton

The cattle are settled in the shade by the pond as the temperature edges toward the 90s, and they don't want to move.

From his open Jeep, rancher Will Harris calls them to a sunny pasture. "Come on, come on, hey," he shouts, as he slowly drives through grass that almost reaches the windows. The mothers and calves lumber toward him and pick a new spot. They bend their heads and begin tearing at the Bahia grass that fattens them up for market the old-fashioned way.

If only persuading Atlanta shoppers to buy his grass-fed beef were that easy. It's not for lack of trying. Harris has been rising at 4 a.m. lately for frequent trips to Atlanta supermarkets, a 200-mile drive from his southwest Georgia farm. He's hoping to change the beef industry, one meatball at a time.

He hands out samples and



FRANK NIEMEIR / Staff

Cattleman **Will Harris** explains the virtues of his White Oak Pastures grass-fed beef to **Dawn Jaeger** at Publix.

fliers that tout the virtues of White Oak Pastures beef: It's free of hormones and antibiotics, has a healthier fat profile than grain-fed beef and is raised in environmentally friendly conditions. And because there are no animal byproducts in the feed, it's less likely to carry mad cow disease, the brain-destroying ailment that's shown up in two animals in the United States in the past 18 months.

"I think all beef in this

country is safe. I think there are degrees of safety," Harris says. "I saw them born. We raised their mother and grandmother."

As shoppers push their carts through the meat department of a Publix near Marietta, many stop for a meatball and compliment its taste. At \$8.69 a pound, the packages of frozen ground beef are a tough sell. Conventional ground chuck is just \$2.79, and even natural

ground beef, also without hormones or antibiotics, costs \$4.99.

So Harris, an easygoing man who'd really rather be back at home on the farm his family has worked for more than a century, finds himself sweating out marketing strategies.

He apologizes for wearing his straw cowboy hat inside. The store gave him a choice of a cap or a hairnet, since he was handing out food. He went back to the pickup truck for his hat and some dignity. "What if somebody from home saw me in a hairnet?" he asks, chuckling. "I'd have to kill them."

Madeline Sable of east Cobb County stops for a sample. She has two daughters and worries about growth hormones fed to cattle. The beef seems expensive, she says later, but she wants to support a Georgia farmer who's shunning factory farming methods.

"I just think it's important to know what we're putting in our bodies," Sable says.

Grain-fed cattle, which eat

► Please see **BEEF, E3**

Healthy Living Your Tuesday guide to medicine and health

More evidence Alzheimer's, inflammation share link

By KEVIN W. MCCULLOUGH
Los Angeles Times

Missing teeth and gum disease at an early age may be linked to an increased risk of Alzheimer's disease, researchers have found, bolstering the increasingly strong connection

between early exposure to chronic inflammation and the degenerative brain disorder.

The study, among the findings presented recently at the first Alzheimer's Association International Conference on Prevention of Dementia, examined lifestyle factors of more than 100 pairs of identical twins. All the pairs

included one twin who had developed dementia and one who hadn't. Because identical twins are genetically indistinguishable, the study involved only risk factors that could be modified to help protect against dementia.

Twins who had severe periodontal disease before they were 35 years old had a fivefold increase in risk of developing Alzheimer's disease, the researchers found.

Lead author Margaret Gatz, a psychology professor at the University of Southern California, cautioned that the link between periodontal disease and Alzheimer's doesn't mean that extra flossing will reduce that risk.

"We're not saying, 'Brush your teeth: Prevent Alzheimer's disease,' at all. That would be an overly simplistic explanation," Gatz said.

Instead, periodontal disease may be a marker for chronic exposure to disease that provokes an inflammatory response. Chronic inflammation can damage tissue, including the brain, which may contribute to the development of the disease.

"I would think of the periodontal disease as a signpost, not a cause," Gatz said.

Periodontal disease is also linked to general health, she pointed out, and even the inflammatory link to Alzheimer's may involve several factors.

In contrast to other researchers' findings, Gatz and her colleagues did not find that more education or mentally challenging leisure activities reduced the risk of developing Alzheimer's. Many experts and the Alzheimer's Association have recommended regular mentally stimulating activities.



