

Nutritional facts about Grassfed Beef

Higher content of Vitamin A: beta-carotene

- Vitamin A is a critical fat-soluble vitamin that is important for normal vision, bone growth, reproduction, cell division, and cell differentiation
- The current recommended intake of vitamin A is 3,000-5,000 IU (International Units) for men and 2,300-4,000 IU for women which is equivalent to 900 - 1500 micrograms (mg).
- Beef fed through conventional feedlots contains approximately 41 mg of beta-carotene/100 grams (g) of ground beef and approximately 36 mg in a typical ribeye steak. Cattle fattened predominately on ryegrass effectively doubles the beta-carotene content in both steak (64 mg) and ground beef (87 mg)
- Although beef is not a major source of beta-carotene, grassfed beef supplies two times the beta-carotene of conventional beef. A typical 3 ounce (oz.) serving would provide 10% of the recommended dietary allowance (RDA) for beta-carotene for women as compared to 5 % supplied by conventional beef (National Institute of Health Clinical Center, 2002).

Resource: <http://www.csuchico.edu/agr/grsfdbef/health-benefits/ben-vita-a.html>

Triple the amount of Vitamin E

Vitamin E is also a fat-soluble vitamin that exists in eight different forms with powerful antioxidant activity

The current recommended intake of vitamin E is 22 IU (natural source) or 33 IU (synthetic source) for men and women (National Institute of Health Clinical Center, 2002) is necessary for biological activity

The amount of natural alpha-tocopherol (vitamin E) found in beef raised on a concentrate-based diet is 3.7 µg/gram of tissue, where as the amount of vitamin E in beef raised on a grass-based diet is 9.3 µg/gram, there is a approximately a three fold increase over conventional beef. A 100 gram serving (approximately 3.5 oz.) would yield 930 µg of vitamin E, about 7% of the daily dietary requirement for this nutrient.

Resource: <http://www.csuchico.edu/agr/grsfdbef/health-benefits/ben-vita-e.html>

Increased levels of Omega-3 & Better Omega-6:Omega-3 ratio

Omega-3 fatty acids are considered essential fatty acids (EFA), which means that they are essential to human health but cannot be manufactured by the body. For this reason, omega-3 fatty acids must be obtained from food. Essential fatty acids are polyunsaturated and grouped into two families, the omega-6 EFAs and the omega-3 EFAs.

While the metabolic products of omega-6 acids promote inflammation, blood clotting, and tumor growth, the omega-3 acids act entirely opposite. It is important to maintain a balance of omega-3 and omega-6 in the diet as these two substances work together to promote health.

According to the University of Maryland, an inappropriate balance of these essential fatty acids (high omega-6/omega-3 ratio) contributes to the development of disease while a proper balance helps maintain and even improves health.

When lipid content is standard, a serving of grassfed beef would provide 88.5 mg of omega-3, roughly 13% of the RDI for EPA/DHA, while the conventional product would supply an estimated 54.6 mg or 8% of RDI for omega-3. More important is the ratio of omega-3 to omega-6. Both conventional and grassfed beef provide acceptable 6:3 ratios, however grassfed beef is closer to the ideal of a 1:1 ratio.

Resource: <http://www.csuchico.edu/agr/grsfdbef/health-benefits/ben-o3-o6.html>

Increased levels of Conjugated Linoleic Acid (CLA)

The term conjugated linoleic acid and its acronym CLA is a group of polyunsaturated fatty acids found in beef, lamb, and dairy products

Over the past two decades numerous health benefits have been attributed to CLA in experimental animal models including actions to reduce carcinogenesis, atherosclerosis, onset of diabetes, and body fat mass.

To achieve biological effects, the average human would need to consume approximately 5 grams CLA/day. On average, a single 3.5 oz. serving of grassfed beef provides 1.23 grams of CLA, 25% of the daily requirement for a biological effect. Conversely, conventional beef provides 0.48 grams in a 3.5 oz. serving, providing 9.6% of the CLA needed for positive physiological effects.

Resource: <http://www.csuchico.edu/agr/grsfdbef/health-benefits/ben-cla.html>