

Wisconsin Grass-fed Beef Producers Cooperative

Grass-Fed Beef Production Protocol and Application Form

6/18/08

Our Cooperative focuses our production, processing, and marketing on:

- ❖ Quality, taste and tenderness
- ❖ Product consistency
- ❖ Source Verification
- ❖ Food safety: protocols for hormone and anti-biotic use, high processing standards
- ❖ Environmental Stewardship
- ❖ Health benefits (CLA, Omega 3, leanness, etc.)

Production Protocol:

- ❖ Source identified/record keeping
 - Market animals will be from Wisconsin—born and raised
 - Individual animal ID from birth (tagged and records), or an affidavit affirming age.
 - Name of farm or producer.
 - Breed (this information is for internal cooperative use—to gain a handle on which breeds, herds perform the best for us)
 - Members will be subject to third party certification.

- ❖ Diet: Market animals will be raised and finished on pasture and forages with no grain.
 - Calves must not be weaned prior to 120 days of age. Producers are encouraged to wean later, up to 10 months of age. Access to mother's milk during winter contributes to higher weight gains of market animals and does not harm the dam.
 - Pastures and forages will be produced with no artificial herbicides or pesticides.
 - Pasture forages can include perennial grasses (cool or warm season grasses), legumes (alfalfa, clovers, etc.), and broadleaf forages (chicory, naturally occurring 'weeds' in pastures).
 - Grazed forages may include summer and winter annuals such as turnips, brassicas, vegetative small grains, sorghum, and grazing corn.
 - Seed must not be developed when grazed.
 - Non-GMOs must be planted.
 - Annuals must be grown without herbicides or pesticides.
 - Any of the above perennial or annual forages may be feed as stored hay, haylage, or silage.
 - Supplements. Animals may be fed the following supplements:
 - Non-grain based mineral and vitamin blocks or granular products.
 - Kelp
 - Salt
 - Molasses
 - Flax seed or flax seed meal, grown without pesticides or herbicides.
 - Prohibited from the diet:
 - Grains and oilseeds (with the exception of flax).
 - Corn silage

- Corn field harvest aftermath grazing (too much grain remains in the field).
 - Any genetically modified organism.
 - Animal and fish by-products.
 - Anti-biotics for growth promotion.
 - Implants, hormones for growth promotion.
- ❖ Pasture management and intake goals.
- Access to/intake of fresh pasture requirement: minimum of 120 days; minimum of 30% of total annual dry matter intake.
 - Grazing will be managed to optimize the health and productivity of the land and the animals. Management intensive rotational grazing is strongly encouraged.
 - No synthetic herbicides or pesticides are allowed on perennial or annual forages and pastures.
- ❖ Animal Health
- No anti-biotic or growth hormone use is allowed for slaughter animals sold through the Cooperative's Grass-Fed Beef program.
 - Appropriate, common sense veterinary treatment, including anti-biotics, is required to ensure humane treatment of all animals. The Cooperative will make efforts to find distribution channels for animals that have been treated with prohibited substances.
 - Organic and natural veterinary treatments are encouraged.
 - All veterinary treatments must be documented for each animal and records must be available for inspection by the Cooperative.
- ❖ Genetics
- Small to moderate framed animals are highly recommended (Frame scores 3-5, steers finishing at 1000 to 1200 pounds).
 - Smaller framed animals finish on pasture more easily and will provide consistent sized cuts for our customers.
 - Possible breeds include British breeds such as Devon, Murray Gray, Galloway, and British White Park and may include smaller framed strains of Angus and Hereford.
- ❖ Animal Handling
- Humane handling procedures will be used throughout the life of the animal.
 - Both the producer and the processor will use humane handling procedures that foster calmness during loading, trucking, and slaughter.
 - Producers are encouraged to educate themselves and practice good stockmanship through Bud Williams, Steve Coty, Temple Grandin or others.
- ❖ Animal performance
- Members are encouraged to monitor weight gain and achieve a goal of at least 1.25 pounds per day throughout the slaughter animal's lifetime.
 - Each animal should have an average daily gain of 1.5 pounds per day in the finishing period (the last 3 to 4 months).

- Slaughter animals are subject to visual inspection for finish by a Coop member or employee. The Cooperative reserves the right to refuse entry of an animal into the grass-fed marketing program if it is not appropriately finished.
 - If ultrasound inspection is conducted, finished animals should have at least 0.2 inches of back fat and an ultrasound tenderness score of 2.5 or less.
- ❖ Member quality statement
 - Members will certify with a written affidavit that they have followed the protocols above.
 - The Cooperative will engage in a peer inspection program through which members will monitor each other for compliance with our standards.
- ❖ Member payment
 - Payment will be based on carcass weight determined by the processor.
 - A sliding per-pound scale based on carcass grade will be followed.
 - Payment will be made within 15 days of delivery to the processor.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Applicant's Statement. I hereby apply for membership in and agree to abide by the articles of incorporation and bylaws of the Wisconsin Grass-fed Beef Cooperative, now and hereafter in effect, copies of which have been presented to me for inspection. I certify that I am a producer of grass-fed beef, have tendered \$200 for one share of common voting stock, have signed a marketing agreement, and met such other qualifications for membership as have been explained to me.

After my membership shall have been in effect for one year from the date of its acceptance by the Wisconsin Grass-fed Beef Cooperative, either party may terminate it by notifying the other party in writing of this intention of any year. If neither of the parties to this agreement so notifies the other, it is mutually agreed that this shall constitute conclusive evidence that the parties have renewed this agreement for another year.

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone number _____

Applicant's signature _____

Acceptance. This certifies that _____ is a member of and is entitled to all of the rights, benefits, and privileges of membership in the association.

Date _____

President: _____

Secretary: _____