

Frequently Asked Questions

How do we raise our cattle?

- Our cattle are grazed on natural aspen and spruce bush pasture in the Elkton, Fallen Timber and Bergen areas of Alberta. Bred cows come home to Bergen to calve out in the spring. Here, we can watch them more closely in case help is needed. Once the cows and calves are stable and healthy they head out to pasture again.

What breed of cattle do we raise?

- The majority of our herd is commercial **Angus**, meaning that they are Angus crossed with something else. Most commercial beef is of this type.
- We are working with a group of cattle which are of the **Luing** breed, developed in Scotland. These cattle are very hardy, and can forage longer, reducing our costs and extending our grass fed season.
- The Luing was developed by crossing **Highland cattle** with **English Shorthorns**. The result is a smaller animal than most Angus with a furrier coat. They are a maternal breed, meaning that calf sizes are smaller, calving is easier and the mothers provide lots of milk for the calves.

Do we use Antibiotics or Hormones?

- We do use antibiotics when animals are sick or have an infection, (occasional foot rot or respiratory infections). This is correct humane treatment for sick animals. A withdrawal period is defined for each drug and cattle are not shipped until the drug is completely out of the animal's system.
- We **DO NOT routinely administer antibiotics** as an illness preventative or growth enhancer, as is common in some feedlots.
- For larger orders, we can easily select an animal that has not been sick and never exposed to drugs.
- We **DO NOT use hormones**. Many cattle raised commercially receive a pellet in their ear at branding time. This pellet slowly releases testosterone to help them grow more muscle, more quickly. At Tall Timber Cattle Co. we allow the calves to grow naturally on the nutritious lush grass pasture without any hormones.

What is our Feeding Strategy?

- Cattle are wintered at pasture but fed hay or straw along with a mill run product or brewers' grain. This innovative feeding strategy allows us to maintain good nutrition for the animals while keeping costs lower. Mill run and brewers' grain are waste products from flour mills and breweries respectively.
- When spring arrives, the cattle are happy to move to new, fresh grass. In our area, sometimes called the Little Alberta Rain Forest, lush, clean grass is plentiful. The

cattle are grazed through the summer and fall, and therefore head to market extremely lean and **'Grass Finished'**.

- We are not technically "**organic**" as we feed a commercial grain byproduct with forage in the winter. Depending on the makeup of the mill run, it could contain minor amounts of soy which is generally a genetically modified product. "Organic" is a defined term in Canada and has high standards and costs for use.
- Our beef is not totally **Grass Fed & Finished** since we must feed both forage and grain through the winter. In our climate it is not practical to graze through the winter. Once the hard frosts arrive, the grass is killed until the following spring. The cattle will continue to eat the dead grass until it is buried deeply in snow, but it has less and less nutritional value over time. Similarly, the straw and hay that we feed as winter forage are quite low in protein content by the time they are fed and therefore require supplementation to provide adequate nutrients.

Is it all LEAN ground beef?

- At the regular grocery store you can choose between regular, lean and extra lean ground beef. Since our beef is grass finished, it is very lean. We do not have any higher fat product to offer.

How big are the steaks and roasts?

- Our standard cutting list includes 8 oz. steaks and 5 lb. roasts. We may have some alternate sizes available in the store at times.
- If you order a quarter or side, you can select the roast size yourself from 1 lb to 10 lb.

Where do we collect our beef? When will it be ready?

- We have four steers booked at the abattoir on October 31st. After the meat is butchered, it will hang for approximately two weeks. The beef will then be cut, vacuum packed and quick frozen.
- In mid November, we will go and collect the beef and bring it to the ranch store freezers. We will notify our customers that the beef has arrived and arrange for pick up at the ranch within a week or so.
- The drive to the ranch is lovely, with the view of the mountains to the west as you head north along Highway 22.
- We may be able to provide delivery for larger orders if you prefer. Give us a call if you can't make it out and we'll try to drop it to you in Calgary.

Can we custom cut a side?

- If you are ordering a quarter or side of beef, we are happy to have it **cut to order**. This will allow you to choose any particular favourites (maybe T bone

steaks rather than our standard New York and Rib Eyes). You will also be able to specify the size of roasts and the number of steaks in a package. There is a 20 lb minimum for processed products such as sausages.

- The web page provides an idea of some of the choices you will have when you custom cut your beef. Check <https://www.tall-timber-cattle-company.com/whats-in-a-side>
- The sausages, pepperoni, smokies and jerky are all processed products. This means that ingredients other than beef are included. The abattoir prepares these items for us and provides an ingredient list and common allergen chart. Check <https://www.tall-timber-cattle-company.com/allergy-concerns> if you have any particular concerns.
- Beef patties, either 4 or 5 oz, are 100% beef unless specified otherwise.