

How to Fabricate a Beef

How much meat is on a beef?

Hanging Weight– also known as **dressed weight** or **carcass weight** – is what you get when you remove the parts that are inedible like the hide, feet, head, some of the bones and most of the innards.

The dressing percentage for most beef is about 63%. An 800 lb. steer will have a hanging weight or dressed weight of approximately 504lbs.

Is that how much I take home?

No. You take home the finished cuts or “yield”. The percentage of the hanging weight that remains is the “yield” and is **generally between 55% - 70% of hanging weight**. This percentage varies based on several factors including:

- **Bone-in vs. boneless cuts** – This will dramatically affect yield; more boneless cuts lower the yield.
- **The amount of fat remaining on the meat cuts** – The yield will vary based on how much surface fat the cutter leaves on the cuts.
- The 800 lb. steer in the above example will have a hanging weight of approximately 504lbs. and a yield of approximately 352lbs.

How much freezer space will I need for my beef?

- Plan on approximately one cubic foot of freezer space for every 15-20 pounds of meat. The interior of a milk crate is slightly more than a cubic foot.

Typically, we send our steers and heifers to process between 18 and 26 months old; we wean at 5 months. We can send older cows and/or bulls; however, USDA requires special processing. Timing will depend on desires of the client, size, weight, etc.

REMEMBER...younger animals may be more tender but will weigh less than older animals. All beef is aged prior to pick up or delivery – aging may be 10 to 21 days.

There are four specific sections (two of each, one per side) of beef and a few miscellaneous items. Hamburger (ground beef) is always a given; how much is determined by how each section is cut. Steak Thickness is to your preference (average is 1”). Roasts size in pounds is to your preference as well (average is 3 to 4lbs), Hamburger package size can be 1lb & 2lb or larger.

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The sections of the beef are:

The Rib – There are seven ribs per side for this section. We can cut the Bone-In Rib Steak, the Boneless Delmonico/Ribeye Steak or Rib Roasts. The Rib Roasts can be done in one of two ways; by the Rib or by the pound. For example, a 3 Rib roast is heavier in weight than a 3lb roast. On a whole beef or half of a beef, we can do two of the three cutting options. However, if you are quartering the beef we can only do one of the options.

The Chuck – The chuck is the largest section on each side of any beef; there are two parts, the Arm and the Blade. We DO NOT differentiate between the two when cutting. For this section, we can cut Steaks (bone-in or boneless), Roasts (bone in or debone), cut for Stew Meat, or we can grind any portion of it. On a whole or half of a beef we can do two of the cutting options. However, if you are quartering a beef we can only cut one of the options.

The Loin – Each side of this section can be cut one of two ways for beef under 30 months of age.

The Standard Cut, which includes the Bone In steaks of T-Bones, Porterhouses and Sirloins.

The Optional Cut, which includes the Boneless, cuts of Filets, NY Strips and Sirloin Strip (top sirloin). If your beef is over 30 months of age, we recommend more ground beef, stew meat and roasts; USDA regulations state that all slaughter facilities must remove the spinal column. When this is removed, the boneless Optional Cuts are all that is available.

The Round – This section is broken down again into four smaller sections:

The Eye Round: this is the smallest section and can be done one of three ways. As a roast, the Eye Round is a long tube shape and it is typically cut into one or two per side depending on the roast size chosen. As steaks, the Eye Round will be a round medallion size cut. This section can also be ground up to add to the Hamburger.

The Top Round: This we can cut one of four ways: Roasts, Steaks, London Broil (approximately 2” thick and/or 2lbs a piece), or ground.

The Bottom Round: We would recommend this section cut one of three ways: Roasts, Cube Steak, or ground.

The Sirloin Tip: This section can be cut one of three ways: Roasts, Steaks, or ground.

Miscellaneous Items: These items can either be kept as they are specified in the descriptions below or ground. Keep in mind that by choosing any of these, you will not lose anything from any of the above sections.

Flank Steak: a thin steak from either side of the groin area.

Short Ribs: from the plate of the animal and are cut in 1” wide to 3” long.

Stew Meat (typically 1lb packs): this comes from the whole animal. They are nice meaty sized chunks that are too good to add in with the hamburger.

Brisket: this piece of meat comes from the chest area and is wonderful to put in a smokehouse for a nice long slow cook.

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Soup Bones: our version of soup bones is all four shanks starting at the top cutting about 1” thick slices down to the end. The upper portion slices have more meat compared to the lower portion. We can also remove all the meat and save the bones as “bones”. Please include specific requests in “special instructions”.

Special Instructions: Please specify anything they you are looking for not covered in the details above.

Plain Ground – in 1lb or 2lb packages.

Organs, Bones, Tongue – if desired please indicate; for dog food, stock, etc.

What to expect (steaks are 3/4’ thick; may change based on personal choices)

- 14 T-bone steaks
- 8 Sirloin steaks
- 2 Sirloin tip roasts
- 4 Arm roasts
- 8 Packages of stew meat
- 4 Packages of soup bones
- 8 Round steaks
- 6 Chuck roasts
- 2 Rump roasts
- 4 Packages of short ribs
- 100lbs. of ground beef
- Heart, liver, kidneys, tongue, tail, etc...

Doing the math

Price of your steer or heifer (agreed upon price based on size, age, weight; typically, \$1,300 to \$1,750) PLUS processing fee, \$60 or \$125 for USDA inspection, PLUS Cut and Wrap @ \$.70/lb. for paper, \$1.70/lb. for vacuum sealed PLUS delivery if desired.

I DO NOT mark up the price of process, cut and wrap... the price of taking the beef to the processor and picking it up and returning the finished meat to the ranch is included in the agreed upon price of the beef.

Estimate price per pound (ALL IN)

Example 850lb. steer – 532lbs. hanging weight (weight on the hoof x .625)

$[\$1,500 + \$60 + (532 * \$0.70)] / \sim 372.5\text{lbs.} = \$5.18/\text{lb.}$

Beef	fee	wrapped	% yield
		@ hanging weight	

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You pay the processor or send me as your agent; cost of processing \$432.40.

Total cost without delivery \$1,932. 40

Cost of transportation – I charge \$1.25 per loaded mile

Example – Leaning Cedar Ranch to Energy Corridor home Houston, distance 64 miles (128 round trip) $\$1.25 / \text{mile} \times 64 = \80 delivery charge. Your new cost per pound is \$5.40.

Total cost with delivery \$2,012.40

Cost Breakdown

\$1,500.00	Beef	Paid to rancher
\$432.40	Processing	Paid to Processor (self or through agent)
\$80.00	Delivery	Paid to rancher