



Alberta Beef



The purpose of Alberta's *Animal Health Act* is to enhance public health, animal health, and food safety in Alberta and increase market access through effective animal-disease control measures.

The Act focuses on the rapid and effective response to an animal disease occurrence by authorizing control measures, animal disease surveillance, traceability and carcass disposal provisions. It also authorizes livestock market inspection and licensing, and control over the sale of production animal medicines by retail outlets.

Food Safety

Alberta beef is processed in highly regulated, government inspected facilities that are constantly monitored for safety, hygiene and quality and inspected by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), a world recognized national independent agency that delivers inspection services related to food and animal health.

All of the Alberta plants that export beef are Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) recognized under the CFIA's Food Safety Enhancement Program ensuring that the highest standards in food safety are observed throughout processing.

Traceability System

In 2001, Canada became one of the first countries to set up a comprehensive national cattle identification system. Alberta introduced provincial traceability regulations under the *Animal Health Act* in 2009 and is working with industry toward the development of a national traceability framework. This framework has three major

components: Animal Identification, Premises Identification, and Animal Movement Tracking.

Canada, Alberta and the cattle industry's commitment to traceability contributes to an industry that is able to meet and exceed domestic and international requirements for animal health and food safety.

Choose Alberta Beef

Over three-quarters of Canadian beef processing occurs in Western Canada (2.3 million head), with the vast majority concentrated in Alberta. The largest beef slaughter plants in Canada are located in Alberta.

Alberta is a reliable and trustworthy provider of high-quality agriculture and food products. We are an experienced beef exporter with processors exporting beef and veal around the world. Our goal is to provide our beef customers with safe, consistent, high-quality products. Alberta processors are also able to supply beef products based on customer specifications, such as organic, halal or free from added hormones.

Alberta's open business environment and natural advantages contribute to our strength as a major exporter of primary commodities and manufactured products. Alberta's export industry is served by a comprehensive network of highways, waterways, airways and railroads that allow for timely and efficient shipments of beef products to countries around the world.

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2018

Alberta's dedicated cattle producers have made Alberta the largest cattle-producing province in Canada, with nearly 5 million head of cattle and calves, accounting for approximately 40 per cent of Canada's total herd.





Alberta has a long and proud history of ranching. The first cattle were brought into the province in 1874 and many of Alberta's first ranches were established in the foothills of the Canadian Rocky Mountains.

Alberta's cattle producers are part of a proud and long tradition. Their dedication to quality is the cornerstone of Alberta's beef industry.



Great Tasting Alberta Beef

Alberta has a reputation for producing great tasting beef. Beef from Alberta's grain-fed cattle is delicious and packed with essential nutrients like iron, zinc, protein and B vitamins.

Canadian beef is graded based on national regulations. The regulations provide greater consistency and predictability in the quality of specific grades of beef. The minimum marbling standards applied to Canadian beef are used to segregate the beef cuts into Canada Prime (slightly abundant), Canada AAA (small) and Canada AA (slight). Canada A beef has some traces, but less than slight marbling and comes from young animals.

Our clean environment, excellent water quality, favourable climate and relatively young animals used for meat production equate to high-quality, tender, juicy and great tasting beef that is a trademark of Alberta.

Alberta's Cattle

Most beef cattle in Alberta are the product of careful breeding of selected European breeds chosen for their outstanding characteristics and superior quality. Alberta's major breed combinations include Black Angus, Hereford, Red Angus, Simmental, Charolais and Limousin, which provide optimum marbling and high-yielding carcasses.

Beef cattle breeds are recognized under the federal *Animal Pedigree Act*. All breed associations are mandated to provide registry services and genetic improvement programs for their members.

Researchers at academic and government institutions across Canada conduct research into cattle genetics to improve traits valued by consumers and producers.

Quality Feed

Grass and forage are the foundation of our cow-calf industry, but feed for finishing cattle in Alberta is grain-based (barley, wheat and corn) with the ration typically containing a high percentage of barley grain, augmented by barley silage. These grain-based rations provide superior quality products with exceptional flavour and texture.

Grass and forage not only form the bulk (80%) of feed consumed throughout their lives, but are also an important contributor to the quality of our environment in Alberta. Grass lands are very good for soil, water and air quality, and cattle production on this grass is a great way to the convert plants that we can't eat into the beef we love to eat.

Alberta has an abundance of rich farmland and the province is Canada's largest feed grain producer. Most of the province's beef

cattle spend 60-200 days on feed. Alberta's high-quality barley makes up the largest component of the feed rations used for cattle raised in the province. Alberta's grain-fed beef is known for its tenderness and flavour while the fat is a desirable white colour.

Melting snow from the nearby Rocky Mountains is often used to irrigate crops, enabling farmers to provide high-quality water and optimum moisture for the growth of healthy feed grain. Alberta's cold winters naturally control many insects and diseases that are common in other feed growing areas. The abundant supply of healthy feed and clean fresh water makes Alberta's grain-fed beef the safest and most delicious in the world.

Canadian Beef Centre of Excellence

Alberta is home to the Canada Beef Centre of Excellence. This state-of-the-art facility was created to help the industry test market new products and receive feedback from consumers and others in the value-chain.

The centre educates attendees on the unique product attributes that differentiate Canadian beef as a world-class product.

The centre is a catalyst for clients to achieve ongoing success with Canadian beef. Services and programming can be customized to the needs of clients both domestically and internationally and can include; training, beef product research and development, communication and outreach and business development.

Animal Health

Canada's reputation for superior animal health is built upon the practices of bio-security and monitoring at all levels. Monitoring takes place from farms to high technology laboratories through veterinarians and government inspectors. Producers receive on-farm food safety training and both producers and processors comply with government regulations.

