

Grass Run Farm: A Different Look at Beef

Beef. It's What's for Dinner. Even before the National Livestock and Meat Board introduced that famous slogan set to Aaron Copland's "Rodeo" suite in 1992, Americans have loved red meat.

Unfortunately, as the love of beef has grown, so have unscrupulous methods of raising and

processing cattle to keep up with demand. Nearly all of the beef available in conventional grocery stores today comes from animals raised in large facilities called confined animal feeding operations, more commonly referred to as CAFOs or "factory farms."

While these highly efficient feedlot farms provide a steady supply of food at a reasonable price, there is growing awareness that this type of production is leading to other less visible hazards including widespread environmental pollution, the inhumane treatment of animals, hazardous conditions for farm workers, and the unnecessary use of hormones such as antibiotics, which some doctors believe is contributing to the rise of

antibiotic resistant "super bugs" that pose an imminent threat to human health.

Fortunately, there are a growing number of farmers and family-owned companies passionate

grass run farms

about supplying beef to consumers in a way that neither is inhumane to the animals, destroys the land or puts human safety at risk. Oh, and their products taste great, too. Grass Run Farms is one of these. Located on the border of Minnesota and Iowa, this seven-year-old business owned by Kristine and Ryan Jepsen specializes in producing high-quality 100-percent-grass-fed beef raised through sustainable and humane farming practices.

After living in Idaho, the native Midwesterners decided to "come home" because they wanted their family life to be based on a farm. "Ryan and I are both former wilderness



Kristine, Eliza and Ryan Jepsen, with their dog Freckles of Grass Run Farms.

guides, which is how we got rooted in the ethics and philosophy of land stewardship," says Kristine Jepsen. "We've always enjoyed trying to figure out how various cultures and professions interact with their natural environment."

Sustainable. Humane. Transparent. For the Jepsens, these are more than just buzzwords. They're a way of life.

Grass Run Farms works with more than 30 producers in any given year from Midwest states including North and South Dakota, Iowa, and Nebraska. The processing starts at J.F. O'Neill Pack, a family-owned packing plant in Omaha that handles only a few hundred animals a day, all hand-cut. They work with Unger Meat Company in St. Paul to further process the meat and get it ready for distribution.

While their processing system may seem spread out to some, Jepsen explained that the decision to operate in Omaha actually helps their company cut down on "food miles." "As a business, we need to be connected to the center

of the American meat industry, which allows us to sell all the non-meat parts of the carcass in bulk either to conventional brokers or to other niche manufacturers who can economically ship to and from Omaha on established trucking routes. Taking advantage of established food infrastructure actually reduces the miles per pound of our meat and makes each animal more profitable, which allows us to continue to pay premiums to farmers for sustainable land and animal management," explained Jepsen.

For those who can't live without their beef but also have health issues ranging from high blood pressure to elevated cholesterol levels, grass-fed beef can be a good alternative. Compared with feedlot beef, grass-fed beef has less saturated fat, lower cholesterol, and is higher in vitamins C and E, beta carotene, and omega-3 fatty acids. Grass Run Farms products can be found in 30 grocery stores and restaurants around the upper

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mix
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Member Stores

BURNSVILLE

Valley Natural Foods
www.valleynaturalfoods.coop
13750 County Road 11
952-891-1212
Mon-Thurs 8:00-9:00;
Fri-Sat 8:00-8:00
Sun 10:00-8:00
Java Drive Mon-Sat 6:30-8:00; Sun 9:00-8:00

CAMBRIDGE

City Center Market
122 N. Buchanan St.
763-689-4640
Mon-Sat 8:00-9:00
Sun 10:00-5:00

CHANNASSEN

Lakewinds Natural Foods
www.lakewinds.coop
435 Pond Promenade
952-697-3366
Mon-Sat 8:00-9:00
Sun 9:00-8:00

LONG LAKE

Harvest Moon Natural Foods
www.harvestmoon.coop
2380 Weyata Blvd.
952-345-3300
Mon-Fri 7:00-9:00
Sat 8:00-9:00
Sun 9:00-8:00

MINNEAPOLIS

Eastside Food Co-op
www.eastsidefood.coop
2551 Central Ave.
612-788-0950
Daily 8:00-9:00

Linden Hills Co-op

www.lindenhills.coop
3815 Sunnyside Ave.
612-922-1159
Daily 8:00-9:00

Seward Co-op Grocery & Deli
www.seward.coop
2823 E. Franklin Ave.
612-338-2465
Daily 8:00-10:00

Wedge Co-op
www.wedge.coop
2105 Lyndale Ave. S.
612-871-3993
Mon-Fri 9:00-10:00;
Sat-Sun 9:00-9:00

MINNETONKA

Lakewinds Natural Foods
www.lakewinds.coop
17501 Minnetonka Blvd.
952-473-0292
Mon-Sat 8:00-9:00;
Sun 9:00-8:00

NORTHFIELD

Just Food Co-op
www.justfood.coop
516 S. Water St.
507-650-0106
Mon-Sat 8:00-7:00
Sun 10:00-7:00

ST. PAUL

Mississippi Market
www.msmarket.coop
622 Selby Ave.
651-310-9499
Daily 8:00-9:30

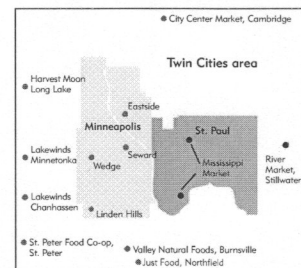
1500 W. 7th St.
651-690-0507
Daily 8:00-9:00

ST. PETER

St. Peter Food Co-op
www.stpeterfood.coop
228 Mulberry St.
507-934-4880
Daily 7:00-9:00

STILLWATER

River Market Community Co-op
221 N. Main St.
651-439-0366
Mon-Fri 8:00-9:00;
Sat 9:00-8:00
Sun 9:00-7:00



Map not to scale.