



Princess Beef Newsletter

SUMMER 2007

★
"Always take a good look at what you're about to eat. It's not so important to know what it is, but it's sure crucial to know what it was."
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— Unknown Cowboy Quote

HOUSEWEART/ALLEN RANCHES

Since my last newsletter, we finished a very successful calving season. No cow needed assistance birthing and we had no death loss. In the middle of May we branded all the calves. Our bull Mr. Grassy, also has been reunited with the cows in preparation for next year's March 10th calving date.

As you know, it is the Allen Ranch that Princess Beef calls home. Steve Allen continues to be essential to my operation. He is moving the Princess Beef herds every few days to keep them on fresh, lush pastures and to protect the land from overgrazing. This ought to be one of the better grazing years because the water for irrigating on the Allen Ranch is to last until August. This hasn't happened in 10 years!



Cows and calves waiting to be sorted for branding.

I couldn't be happier with the way the cows and calves look. And I couldn't check on them so easily if it weren't for Rachel Allen, who entertains our little girls, when I am out in the pastures.

Steve's goat herd, after a winter of being rather high maintenance due to birthing in the cold, has become a big asset to the ranch. The goats have proven their weed-eating skills by eating a patch of leafy spurge that has troubled us for many years. Leafy Spurge is an undesirable plant that is difficult to eradicate. They actually selected it over the lush hay fields. Hopefully they keep eating it

Hello,

Last month I sent out brochures and order forms. It is time to order your beef if you haven't already! All the beef will be delivered the month of October. Please remember that Princess Beef is limited. It will be another full year before you can reserve again.

All of the animals look wonderfully fat and happy on their summer pastures. By the way, Princess Beef customers are welcome to arrange for a day visit to the ranch or to spend a night in our little guest apartment and see the herd and visit with us about our philosophies for raising beef. I want my customers to feel confident in choosing Princess Beef. We are raising a product that is not only healthy for ourselves, but for the land and the animal as well.

Finally, with perfect timing for summer: Shannon Hayes, the author of *The Grassfed Gourmet Cookbook*, has written a new book titled *The Farmer and the Grill: A guide to grilling, barbecuing and spit-roasting grassfed meat*. I will include a recipe from it in this newsletter, but it would be worth purchasing at www.grassfedcooking.com to have for your warm weather cooking.

Enjoy,
Cynthia Houseweart

and contain it from growing and spreading.

Here at the Houseweart Ranch we had our first hay cutting in mid-June. We had a busy but productive spring in more than just hay. In March we bought chicks for our girls to play with and then quickly fixed up a chicken house from an old coal storage building. Before we knew it, the chicks were full fledged chickens and now we are looking forward to when they start laying and we get to eat their fresh eggs!

We also built a small raised vegetable garden for Izzi, our three year old. We planted tomatoes, corn, pumpkins, pole beans, peas and radishes. She and I planted them from seeds and have been watching them grow and grow. Hopefully our girls will learn that food is not just purchased from the store!

Our big summer project is adding a small "master bedroom" and mudroom onto our house. If we still have the energy, I would like to build a calving shelter here on our place.



Moving the Princess Herd to the corral to brand.

It is hard to slow down, but what we really need to do is to take a "breather" from big projects and just enjoy our two little girls who are growing and changing so quickly.

GRASS-FED BEEF

One of the reasons feedlots "finish" cattle on corn and grain is to give the consumer a more consistent product than you get from pasture finishing.

As author Shannon Hayes explains in her book *The Farmer and the Grill*, consumers expect that their meat will be identical in taste, look and preparation. "They have been trained to expect this from our industrial food system, which specializes in factory-raised meat that, while not necessarily healthful or flavorful is, if nothing else, consistent."

By contrast, grassfed and pastured animals are sensitive to the conditions in which they are raised. Animals butchered in the spring taste different than those in the fall. The diversity of grasses and legumes the animals graze impacts the flavor of the meat. The various breeds have distinctive flavor and marbling qualities.

As Hayes states in her new cookbook, "Grassfed meats are the culmination of the grass, clover and forbs species that flourished in a given year, the animal's genetic ancestry, the region where it was grown, the spirit of the farmer as he or

she stewards the herds and land, and the unique attributes of the animal itself. When we consider fine wines, brewery beers or cheeses, such "inconsistencies" are not only accepted, but prized attributes, and so it should be with grassfed and pastured meats. As we explore and celebrate this regional variation, what the French call the *terroir*, we need only to learn the principles of cooking – using lower flames, monitoring internal temperatures, and understanding which cuts are most suitable for which methods. By using the principles of cooking grassfed meat, rather than adhering to a regimen of timetables and uniform instruction, we enable ourselves to successfully work with the inevitable—and wonderful—diversity inherent in sustainably raised meat."

I prize the west central Colorado region where Princess Beef is raised because I believe it positively affects both the quality and the flavor of the beef. The Allen Ranch is at an elevation of 6,700 feet and is quite remote and secluded. This ensures even greater serenity for the Princess Beef herd. Also, no chemicals are used on the ranch which contributes to the health of the herd and your health, too.

WILDLIFE

I should talk about the deer we have in our field that has grown so high we can only see the tops of their heads, or the red fox that hunts mice in the windrows after the hay has been cut, but instead, the animal of interest at our house right now is the Robin. "Look Mom, a Robin! A Robin has a red tummy!" We love that our girls are learning about the birds around our house. We have a bird feeder by our kitchen window that is feeding lots of Robins, Ring-Necked Doves and the American Goldfinch. Izzi and CeCe have reminded Ira and me that wildlife is just outside the window!

OF SPECIAL NOTE

Last year I arranged for a single delivery spot in Denver and it worked well. I'll do that again this year for my delivery to Denver and also for Colorado Springs, Grand Junction and Montrose. I'll let you know date, time and place well in advance so we can rendezvous or you can arrange for a friend to pick up

RECIPE – GRILLED STEAKS IN A CILANTRO-OLIVE PASTE

(Shannon Hayes, *The Farmer and the Grill*)

1/2 cup fresh cilantro	3 ounces pitted black olives
1 teaspoon coarse salt	1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
2 tablespoons olive oil	1 clove garlic

Either 1 sirloin, top round, rib eye, t-bone, NY strip, or tenderloin.
(The steak you choose should be about 1 1/2 inches thick.)

Add the first six ingredients to a food processor and puree, making a paste. Generously coat the steaks and allow them to come to room temperature.

Start the grill and warm it until it is medium-hot. If you are using a gas grill, turn off all but one of the burners once it has come up to temperature. If you are using charcoal, be sure all the coals have been raked to one side. Using the hand test, the grate will be hot enough when you can hold your palm five inches above it for no more than three seconds.

Sear the steaks for 3 minutes on each side directly over the flame, with the lid down. Then, move steaks to the part of the grill that is not lit. Set the lid in place and allow the steaks to cook, with out flipping them, until they reach 120-140 degrees F, about 15-25 minutes, depending on the size of the steak. Remove the steaks to a platter and tent loosely with foil, allowing steaks to rest five minutes before serving (the temperature will come up a few more degrees during this time.)

your beef for you if you cannot make it. Again, deliveries will be in October.

In 2006 my beef averaged 511 pounds hanging weight per animal. At \$2.75 hanging weight, this came to around \$351.00 for a split quarter, double that for a half. The price per pound will not change for 2007.

"Pastured-based meat and poultry bursts with flavor, expresses muscle tone, and handles with integrity. And that's just what you can sense. Beyond that are the myriad nutritional values; and beyond that are a host of ecological, emotional, and economic factors screaming 'This is the right way!' to pastured livestock. We applaud differences."

— Joel Salatin

WEBSITES

Princessbeef.com

Eatwild.com

Grassfedcooking.com

Coloradoagriculture.com (2007 Farm Fresh directory, listing Farmers Markets)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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