



How Beef Gets to the Grocery Store



1. Why does the dollar value of the beef increase with each additional step in the beef process?

Each step involves time, labor, and supplies. In order to pay for them, the price of the beef must increase.

2. Of all the calves that are born, 1/2 are raised for breeding and 1/2 are raised for beef. Why are some of the calves raised for breeding, and not all of them raised for beef?

Some calves need to be raised for breeding to replace the ones that can no longer breed due to health conditions, or old age.

3. About how much do the cows weigh when they are sent to the processing plant?

About 1,000 Pounds

4. What does the meat cutter do with the chunks of beef before the customers can purchase them?

They are cut into small pieces, such as steaks and roasts. It is also made into ground beef. Then the beef is sealed in plastic packages and displayed for customers.

5. About how long does the beef process take, until the beef is displayed in the grocery store?

1 1/2 to 2 Years

Summary of How Beef Gets to the Grocery Store

1. Half of the calves born are raised for breeding and half are raised for beef.
2. Cattle are fed a balanced mixture of feeds for growth and health. Their diet may include hay, grains, and even leftovers from food factories.
3. Beef cattle take about 12 - 18 months to reach market size, which is around 1,000 pounds.
4. Beef cattle are trucked to places where they are inspected and sold.
5. Cattle are trucked to a processing plant where the meat is usually cut into large chunks and boxed for shipping.
6. The meat is inspected for wholesomeness and is graded as either prime, choice, or select.
7. At the grocery store, the beef is cut into smaller pieces, such as steaks and roasts, or made into ground beef.
8. The beef is sealed in plastic packages and displayed for customers.