

## — Beef cuts made easy —

Millions of people enjoy meals centered around beef. There are several different cuts of beef and having so many different offerings available at the meat market can make it confusing to the average consumer. It's difficult to know which cuts have stronger flavors, which take longer to cook and which offer more texture.

Knowing which cuts come from which area of the cow can help you determine cooking methods and which piece of meat is best suited for a particular recipe. Cuts of meat also may determine the price of the meal, important for those shopping on a budget.

When a cow is butchered, it is cut into quarters and then into primals. The following are the different cuts available from the various parts of the cow.

### - Chuck -

The front chest and shoulder area of the cow produces chuck cuts. These cuts vary in their quality and tend to be some of the less expensive cuts you can buy. Because the chuck area of the cow is used extensively, chuck cuts will not be as tender as other types of meats. That is why these are better in stews and slow cooked to break down the fibers of the meat. Examples of chuck cuts include shoulder top blade, chuck pot roast, shoulder steak and



boneless short ribs.

### - Shank -

The shank area of the cow is located by the front legs. It is extremely tough and full of connective tissue. Therefore, you will have to take this into consideration when cooking. Shank cuts are improved by slow cooking. Shank cross cut and brisket are the common cuts from the shank area.

### - Rib -

Rib cuts of beef are some of the best and most flavorful. That is due to the fat distribution and marbling that makes the meat tender and juicy. These types of cuts are best cooked over a dry heat. Some of the popular cuts from the rib include rib roast, rib steak, ribeye steak, back ribs, and ribeye roast.

### - Loin -

Lean and flavorful, cuts from the loin section of the cow are often some of the most coveted. The tenderloin and the porterhouse come from the short loin area and are among the most expensive cuts available. Top loin and T-bone steaks are other cuts from this area.

### - Sirloin -

Directly behind the loin is the sirloin. It produces some of the leanest cuts. Tri-tip, tri-tip roast and top sirloin are cuts from this region. These cuts are versatile, but keep in mind that without a bone, these cuts can dry out quickly.

### - Round -

The round comes from the rump section of the cow. This is a lean area with little fat, which

makes it a bit tougher than the best cuts. It's a popular cut but can be difficult to cook, and cuts are often best when braised. Choose among top round, bottom round, eye round, sirloin tip side steak, and round tip steaks.

### - Plate and Flank -

These parts of the cow are located under the belly of the animal. Cuts from this area tend to be fatty and tough. Marinating or braising can tenderize these cuts of meat. Skirt steak and flank steak are the usual cuts taken from this area.

Beef can make delicious meals if you know which cuts to choose.

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