



## RESEARCH BRIEF HUMAN NUTRITION

## BEEF RESEARCH

### Disentangling the Myths and Realities about Lean Beef

Over the years, the Western dietary pattern, characterized by excessive consumption of refined grains, sugar, fat, animal products (including red meat), has frequently been associated with diet-related chronic diseases, such as cancer, heart disease and diabetes. However, it should not be assumed that all dietary components of the Western dietary pattern are equally to blame. Therefore it is important to disentangle the independent effects of individual foods, such as red meat (including lean beef), on health outcomes. This article addresses some of the assumptions or myths regarding the role of lean beef in various healthful dietary patterns.

Lean beef is a naturally rich source of six essential nutrients (protein, selenium, zinc, niacin, vitamins B<sub>12</sub> and B<sub>6</sub>) and a good source of phosphorus, choline, iron, and riboflavin, which fit well in a healthy, active lifestyle. Because 96 percent of Americans report eating beef, dietary advice encouraging consumption of leaner cuts of beef as part of an overall healthy diet will help positive dietary change rather than advice to simply limit beef consumption.

**Source:** McNeill S, Lofgren P, Van Elswyk M. The Role of Lean Beef in Healthful Dietary Patterns: Myths Versus Reality. *Nutr Today* 2013;48(4):181-8.

[Abstract available](#)

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