

## **EXTENSION CONNECTION – Choosing Steaks**

By: Paulelda Gilbert, ISU Extension Nutrition & Health Specialist

**Q. We plan to grill steaks this weekend. There seems to be so many steaks on the market. How do I know what to choose?**

**A.** The traditional steaks, T-Bone, Porterhouse, Rib-eye and NY Strip steak are always available. However...the beef industry is fringing some new steaks to many supermarket meat counters. “New” steaks? How’s that possible? The fact is that the new steaks were there all along. It’s a question of cutting. Beef industry research has revealed several tender and flavorful muscles that have been “hiding” in the beef chuck shoulder area. They can be separated and turned into consistent, tender new steak cuts. Chuck steaks are lower priced than the traditional steaks from the loin section of the animal.

There are 35 different muscles in the chuck section – some are tenderer than others. Chuck steaks have great flavor when grilled. Look for these cuts at the beef case which are tender when grilled:

- Beef Chuck Eye Steak
- Beef Top Blade Steak – sometimes called “flat iron” steak
- Beef Shoulder Petite Tender Steak – sometimes called “petite tender” or “shoulder tender” steak
- Beef Shoulder Center Steak – sometimes called “ranch” steak

These Beef Chuck steaks need a tenderizing marinade which has a food acid ingredient like lemon juice, vinegar, etc. in liquid. These steaks include:

- Beef Shoulder Steak – sometimes called “charcoal” steak
- Beef Arm Steak
- Beef Blade Steak
- Beef Chuck Steak

Now more than 20 cuts of beef meet government guidelines for the definition of “LEAN.” And 12 of these cuts have on average, only one more gram of saturated fat than a skinless chicken breast (per 3-ounce cooked serving.)

**Q. What is LEAN?**

**A.** Government guidelines are: Less than 10 grams of total fat, 4.5 grams or less of saturated fat, and less than 95 milligrams of cholesterol per 3-ounce serving.

**Q. What is a SERVING of beef?**

**A.** 3 ounces of cooked lean beef, 4 ounces raw = 3 ounces cooked (a quarter-pounder is 3 ounces of cooked beef), about the size of a deck of cards (3-1/2" x 2-1/4" x 5/8" deep), or about the size of a wide-mouth mayonnaise jar lid – 3-1/2" in diameter.

For recipes and nutrition information visit the following web-sites: [www.iabeef.org](http://www.iabeef.org) or [walk.americanheart.org](http://walk.americanheart.org).