

Title: From Pasture to Plate

Grades: 2-3

Common Core Standards:

- RI.2.3 Describe the connection between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text.
- RI.2.10 By the end of year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, in the grades 2-3 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.
- SL.2.2 Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
- RI.3.3 Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.
- RI.3.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, at the high end of the grades 2-3 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Objectives: In this lesson, students will:

- Describe the process of raising beef cattle from the cow-calf operation through food service retail.
- Develop an understanding of the importance of farmers and ranchers and the role they play in providing food and other products to consumers.

Vocabulary: agriculture, beef, beef processing plant, brand, carcass, fabrication facility, marbling, stearic acid

Materials:

It's All About that Beef by Twins Rianna and Sheridan Chaney

Picture Cards

Question Cards (cut apart and put in small bag)

Sequencing Cards (cut apart and put in a small bag)

Poster Paper

Introduction:

1. Show students a picture of a hamburger or steak and ask if they know how that food gets to their plate.
2. Show students the cover of the book, It's All About that Beef, and explain that the meat in the picture is beef and it comes from beef cattle.
3. Ask students to predict how the cattle on the front cover can become food on their plate.
4. Explain that today they are going to read the book about a ranch and their purpose is to determine how farmers and ranchers work to provide us with beef that is safe to eat and other products.

Procedures:

1. Preview the book, It's All About that Beef with the students by showing them the front and back cover. Read the first page to students and the back cover with information about the series. Ask students to share some of the things they know about the authors from the preview.
2. As a class, do a picture walk and point out some of the things happening in the pictures. Ask students to create a list of questions they have based on their preview (questions could center around some of the equipment or processes in the photographs).
3. Before reading, show students the picture cards of meals with beef. Ask them to turn and talk to a neighbor about where their food comes from. Have groups share some of their ideas.
4. Read the book, It's All About that Beef, to students or if you have enough copies, have students read the book in small groups. During reading, encourage students to use the text features to help with their understanding.
5. Have students work in small groups to orally answer the questions on the question cards. Students may use the text for evidence and support for their answers.
6. Have students form groups of 2-3. Working in groups, have them take the sequence cards and put them in sequential order. Compare the sequence cards to their prediction about what happens from pasture to plate.

7. Students can design a poster that shows the life of a calf from pasture to plate. Their poster should summarize information learned from the text. Encourage them to include text features and information from the text.

Assessment/Closure:

Invite students to share their posters with the class or to use their posters to create a video that describes how beef moves from pasture to plate. The videos created could be shared with younger students in the school.

Extension Activities:

- Read the other books written by The Chaney's: [Little Star...Raising Our First Calf](#), [Mini Milk Maids on the Moove](#), [Star Becomes a Mother](#), [Cowgirl Up! Let's Go Ranching](#), [Our Star Goes West](#), and [Farm Life, We Live It, We Love It](#). Have students compare similar ideas and information found in the books using a graphic organizer. Have students use the information collected to write an informative paragraph or design a video about agriculture.
- Review the page in the back of the book that describes the All American Beef Battalion. Have students work in small and cooperative groups to research ways that the following groups of people support American Families (Farmers and Ranchers, Our Troops, Families of our Troops). After students have shared the information on each group, have them choose one of the groups and write a letter thanking them for what they do. Letters to farmers and ranchers can be delivered to your local Grange or Agricultural organization. Letters to troops and their families could be mailed.
- The Cattleman's Beef Board has some excellent interactive web resources students can use to gain more understanding about beef production. Have students try [Cow Chow: Exploring what Cattle Eat on the Ranch](#). This is an interactive website with information related to the topic in the book. Students can use the multimedia information and information in the book to take a short quiz.

Picture Cards of Meals (To Share with Students Before Reading)



Question Cards (to be used after reading in small groups)

Describe the process for filling water tanks when it is cold outside.

What is a windbreak? How and why do ranchers build them?

What is a controlled burn and why do ranchers use them?

Why do baby calves need colostrum when they are born?

What happens on branding day? Why is it important?

After they are weaned and branded, calves go to a backgrounder or stockerfeeder. What happens here and after that and why is it important?

What happens at a beef processing plant and why is it important?

Describe ways that you have used beef or beef products today.

Sequence Cards (To be used after reading. Refer to the text for evidence and support)

Calves are weaned from their mother when they are about six months old and ready to eat solid feed.

Cattle trucks deliver cattle to a beef processing plant.

Cattle are raised on grass until they are about 800 pounds.

Beef is cooked and served on your plate. There are many nutritious beef products.

Calves are born and nurse from their mother in order to get colostrum which is full of vitamins and nutrients.

Boxed meat leaves the beef processing plant and goes to a grocery store where it can be purchased.

Cattle go to a feed yard to gain weight and stay healthy until they are finished at about 1,200 to 1,300 pounds.

Meat is packaged and stored. The boxes at Cargill have emblems that show the meat is clean, cold, correct, and on time.

Beef cattle are processed and the beef gets a grade for its quality.

Meat inspectors and graders with the USDA evaluate and approve the carcass.

Calves get branded for identification and vaccinated to keep them healthy.

Beef moves to the fabrication floor where the carcasses are weighed and the product is broken into different cuts of meat.