

Fact or Opinion?

A **fact** is information that is known or can be proven to be true. An **opinion** is something that is thought or felt by someone, but it cannot be proven true. Read each sentence below about beef farmers and their role in caring for their animals. If the sentence states something that is a fact, circle F. If the sentence states an opinion, circle O.

- F O Beef farmers raise beef cattle in order to provide nutritious meat products, known as beef.
- F O Farmers work with livestock nutritionists so their animals can be fed a balanced diet.
- F O Helping deliver calves is something farmers enjoy doing.
Usually, cows can deliver their calves on their own, but the farmer watches the cows closely during calving season.
- F O There is one breed of beef that is the best for farmers to raise for meat.
When a cow needs help delivering a calf, the farmer will help to make sure the cow and calf are both kept healthy. There are over 120 breeds of beef cattle. One breed isn't better than another, but each breed has certain characteristics. Each farmer decides which breed, or mix of breeds, will work best for them.
- F O Calves are given ear tags by the farmer to help identify them throughout their lifecycle.
- F O When a calf is born, the farmer checks it to make sure it is healthy.
- F O Cows like eating corn more than hay.
Cattle can't tell us their preference. They will eat whatever the farmer feeds them as part of their diet. This might be corn, hay, fresh grasses, silage, or even leftovers from food manufacturing companies, like potato skins.
- F O Barns give the animals shelter and protection from the weather.
- F O Pastures provide open space and grasses for the cattle to eat.
- F O Beef cattle grazing in a green pasture is a beautiful sight.
In the spring and summer, you will see cattle grazing on pastures. Farmers will rotate their cattle between pastures to keep them from killing the grass and to give them constant access to fresh grass.
- F O Farmers check their fences to make sure their cattle are safe.
- F O Cattle should only eat grasses their entire life.
All cattle eat grass the majority of their life. Cattle are ruminant animals. This allows them to be able to eat and digest grasses which humans and other animals can't. However, they can also get nutrients from grains, like corn.
- F O When fresh grasses are not available, farmers will feed their cattle dried grasses like hay.
- F O The farmer's kids like to help take care of the animals.
Kids who live on a farm often have chores that involve taking care of the animals. This might be feeding them, cleaning their pens, or checking their water supply. Sometimes they may like having the chores; sometimes they may not.
- F O Beef farmers check on their animals every day.
- F O When one of their animals is sick, the farmer calls a veterinarian.
- F O Watering systems are put in place by farmers so their cattle have enough water to drink.
- F O Beef cattle drink too much water.
Like all living things, beef cattle need water to survive. They can drink anywhere from 9-20 gallons of water a day. The amount they need depends on their weight, the temperature, and their individual needs.
- F O During the finishing stage, farmers choose to either feed their cattle hay or grains.
- F O To keep cattle healthy, manure in barns and pens are cleaned out by the farmer.