



Reminder that Mediterranean-Style Diet with Beef Supports Heart Health

Research released last summer by Purdue University found that following a Mediterranean-style eating pattern that includes lean red meats like lean beef is just as effective in supporting a healthy heart as a Mediterranean-style diet that limits red meats.¹ This research adds to the growing body of scientific evidence demonstrating lean beef can be part of healthy eating patterns to support heart health and increase flexibility for healthy eating.

Specific findings from the research, published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, include:

- Following a Mediterranean-style eating pattern including 7 to 18 ounces of lean, fresh red meat per week was shown to improve cardiometabolic disease risk factor profiles. Fresh meats were defined in the study as requiring no further preservation or processing beyond refrigeration or freezing; they are not cured, salted or smoked or include chemical preservatives.
- Including 18 ounces of lean, fresh red meat per week as part of a Mediterranean-style dietary pattern was found to be more effective in lowering LDL cholesterol than a similar eating pattern that only included 7 ounces of lean, fresh red meat. The average American consumes 18 ounces of red meat per week.
- Study participants following a Mediterranean-style dietary pattern including up to 18 ounces of lean, fresh red meat per week saw reductions in total cholesterol, LDL-cholesterol, and blood pressure.

“The most important takeaway from this study is that Americans trying to eat healthier can enjoy lean beef as part of a Mediterranean-style eating pattern and improve cholesterol and blood pressure,” said Sarah Agena, MS, RDN, Director of Nutrition for the Wisconsin Beef Council. “While this study focused on unprocessed lean red meat, research on processed meats in healthy diets is being planned because there are now many prepared meats, like lean deli roast beef, that are lower in fat and sodium.”

Taking place over a 16-week period, the study followed 41 overweight or obese adults who consumed differing amounts of lean red meat in Mediterranean-style diet interventions. The study was funded in part by the National Institute of Health’s Ingestive Behavior Research Center at Purdue University, the National Institute of Health’s Indiana Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute, the Beef Checkoff and

¹ O’Connor LE, et al. A Mediterranean-style eating pattern with lean, unprocessed red meat has cardiometabolic benefits for adults who are overweight or obese in a randomized, crossover, controlled feeding trial. Am J Clin Nutr 2018, nqy075. <https://academic.oup.com/ajcn/advance-article/doi/10.1093/ajcn/nqy075/5036105>

the National Pork Board. These organizations had no role in conducting the study, collection, analysis or interpretation of the data or writing of the manuscript.

It's that time of year where consumers are looking to improve their nutritional habits and CNN has just named the Mediterranean Diet the best diet for 2019. According to Avena, consuming a Mediterranean-style eating pattern is consistently associated with reduced risk of developing cardiovascular disease. It is often characterized by relatively high consumption of fruits, vegetables, whole-grains, nuts/seeds and olive oil.

“This research helps me continue to educate other health professionals like Registered Dietitians, Consumer Science teachers, Physicians, Cardiologist and Public Health professionals on the most recent beef research linked to healthy dietary patterns,” said Avena.

The following *Beef. It's What's For Dinner* recipes developed in the National Cattlemen's Beef Association's Culinary Center are tasty options for incorporating lean beef into Mediterranean-inspired meals.

[Mediterranean Beef Pinwheels](#)

[Beef Skewers with Garlicky White Bean Dip](#)

[Mediterranean Eye of Round Steaks](#)

More [recipes](#) and information on all things beef, from cuts, to cookery, to nutrition and even how beef is raised, can be found at www.beefitswhatsfordinner.com.

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About the Beef Checkoff

The Beef Checkoff Program was established as part of the 1985 Farm Bill. The checkoff assesses \$1 per head on the sale of live domestic and imported cattle, in addition to a comparable assessment on imported beef and beef products. States may retain up to 50 cents on the dollar and forward the other 50 cents per head to the Cattlemen's Beef Promotion and Research Board, which administers the national checkoff program, subject to USDA approval.

About the Wisconsin Beef Council

The Wisconsin Beef Council is a producer-directed not-for-profit organization funded by the \$1.00 per head assessment on all cattle sold in the state of Wisconsin per the Federal Beef Promotion and Research Act & Order. Half of one dollar remains in Wisconsin for local beef promotion, while the other half is forwarded to the Cattlemen's Beef Board. The purpose of the Council is to fund beef promotion, research and consumer education activities supporting Wisconsin's \$2.1 billion beef industry. The WBC operates under the guidance of its Board of Directors. The Board is comprised of representatives from cattle related organizations from around the state.

About NCBA, a Contractor to the Beef Checkoff

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) is a contractor to the Beef Checkoff Program. The Beef

Checkoff Program is administered by the Cattlemen's Beef Board, with oversight provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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