

BEEF VALUE CUTS

Cutting Instructions For Top Blade
(Flat Iron) Steaks



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BEEF PRODUCERS

INTRODUCING BEEF VALUE CUTS

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), on behalf of the Cattlemen's Beef Board, is pleased to bring you these step-by-step cutting instructions for new Top Blade (Flat Iron) Steaks.

Results of the beef industry Muscle Profiling Study provided quantitative data showing that muscles of excellent quality are found in the chuck and round. Beef Value Cuts are now being manufactured throughout the U.S. and sold through retail and foodservice outlets.

Top Blade (Flat Iron) Steaks

Beef Shoulder Top Blade (Flat Iron) Steaks come from the second most tender beef muscle. They are removed from the Beef Chuck, Shoulder Clod, Top Blade Roast (IMPS/NAMP 114D) and separated into two halves by cutting lengthwise along the thick internal connective tissue. Each half resembles a small flank steak. These pieces are then cut into 2 to 3 individual steaks. Thickness varies naturally, so they are specified by weight instead. Individual steak weights can be portioned between 6 and 12 ounces.

Cut Characteristics

- Most tender, juicy and flavorful of the Beef Value Cuts.
 - Well-marbled, needs no marinating to tenderize.
 - Second only to beef tenderloin in tenderness, and much more affordable.
 - Cooking to medium rare or medium is recommended.
- Versatile.
 - Lends itself equally well to casual entertaining and to quick family meals.
 - Can be grilled, skillet cooked, broiled, cut into strips and stir-fried, or cut into pieces for kabobs.



www.rdranch.com

The beef industry created the R&D Ranch® in 1998 to serve as a catalyst for beef innovation. It does so by working with industry partners to identify and develop new beef products that will complement and grow their businesses. Recently, the Ranch has been particularly busy helping beef marketers transform the underutilized chuck and round into profitable, great-tasting products like the new Beef Value Cuts.

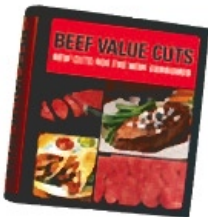
R&D Ranch resources, including cutting videos, product concept specifications and market research, are available at www.rdranch.com.

BEEF VALUE CUTS ARE IN DEMAND

- Beef is back. And the numbers confirm it. With demand creating \$8.8 billion in retail spending on almost 2.6 billion pounds of steak in 2001, it's clear what people want. Add Beef Value Cuts to the equation, and more options mean more opportunity.
- Many foodservice operators are already menuing Beef Value Cuts, with the Flat Iron Steak gaining the most popularity. For a list of operators currently serving the Flat Iron Steak, visit www.rdranch.com.
- Steakhouses, casual restaurants and family restaurants are finding that new Beef Value Cuts bring variety and creativity to their lunch and dinner menus.
- Several large retail chains have successfully introduced new Beef Value Cuts and enjoyed growth in overall meat department sales.



In addition to this cutting guide, the NCBA offers other useful tools to aid in your Beef Value Cuts program.



The Complete Guide to Beef Value Cuts (Item 24623)

This multi-tab three-ring binder provides detailed cutting videos on VHS and CD-Rom, plus marketing information for all Beef Value Cuts. It includes cooking instructions and consumer recipes, foodservice cut information, menu suggestions and recipes, costing and profit information, a list of packer raw material sources, and summaries of Checkoff-funded research.



Beef Value Cuts Manual (Item 24620)

This 36-page manual shows how to create Beef Value Cuts from the Shoulder Clod, Round Knuckle (Tip) and Bottom Round/Outside Round (Flat). Raw material specifications, cut characteristics, merchandising information, cooking instructions and general nutrition information are included.



Beef Value Cuts Brochure (Item 24621)

This tri-fold foodservice and retail sales tool is a condensed version of the manual. It includes a Beef Value Cuts overview, cutting schematics for each subprimal, cut characteristics and general nutrition information.

To order copies of printed materials, please contact the NCBA Customer Service Department at 1-800-368-3138.* Reference the item number when ordering.

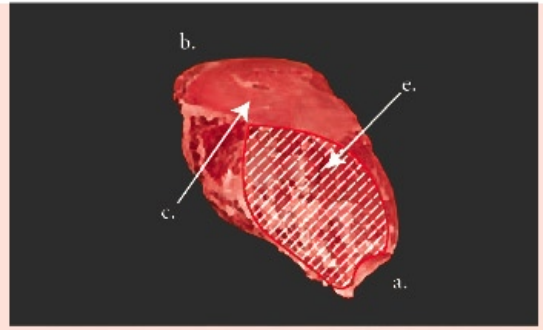
*Quantities are limited. Charges may apply. NCBA Customer Service will advise as to whether requested quantities are available and provide price information. You will be billed for your order if charges apply. Please allow 2 to 3 weeks for delivery after placing your order. Items may be shipped separately.

TOP BLADE STEAKS



1. BEEF CHUCK, SHOULDER CLOD IMPS/NAMP 114

The Top Blade (*infraspinatus*) can be cut from the Shoulder Clod. It is a long, rectangular muscle that is easy to identify. Note: Dotted line represents portion of Top Blade located beneath other muscles of Shoulder Clod.



2. BEEF CHUCK, SHOULDER CLOD, TOP BLADE, ROAST IMPS/NAMP 114D

The Top Blade can also be purchased as an individual muscle. The external side has surface fat and white connective tissue that should be removed. The internal side (c) has smooth connective tissue that should also be removed.



6. INITIATE SEPARATION OF LEAN AND INTERNAL CONNECTIVE TISSUE

Position knife just above internal connective tissue and cut lengthwise along it from end to end, leaving the connective tissue attached to the bottom lean portion.



7. CHECK PROGRESS

You may check your progress, but the common pull and cut method is not recommended because the muscle is very tender and can be scored easily.



12. MERCHANDISING SUGGESTION

Leave top and bottom lean portions whole and use as a Beef Shoulder Top Blade, London Broil Style.

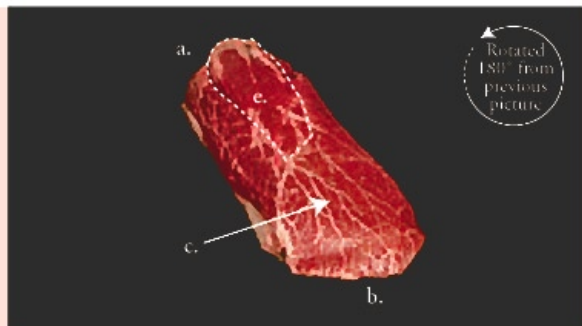


13. CUT STEAKS

Cut top and bottom lean portions into Beef Shoulder Top Blade (Flat Iron) Steaks.

Note the following reference points that will be used in these cutting instructions:

- a. The thick end.
- b. The thin end.
- c. The internal side (before removal from the carcass, this side lies against the blade bone, and is distinguished by a layer of smooth connective tissue).
- d. The external side (not visible in photos #2-9) is distinguished by a layer of fat.
- e. Area containing layers of connective tissue and lean material.



3. DENUDED TOP BLADE

After denuding both sides of the Top Blade, locate the small area of connective tissue and lean material.



8. TOP LEAN PORTION REMOVED (Left Piece In Photo)
Remove any thick connective tissue remaining on the top lean portion. The connective tissue attached to the bottom lean portion (Right Piece In Photo) will be removed in the next step.



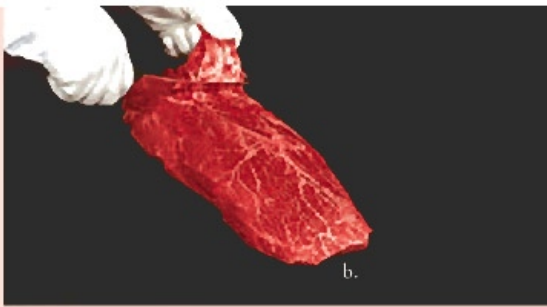
9. CONTINUE THE REMOVAL OF INTERNAL CONNECTIVE TISSUE

Make a two-inch cut between the connective tissue and bottom lean portion.



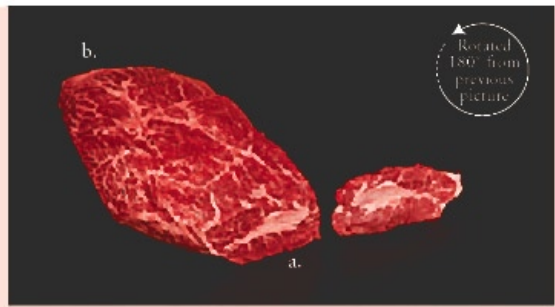
14. MERCHANDISING SUGGESTIONS

Beef Strips for Stir Fry, Beef Cubes for Premium Kabobs.



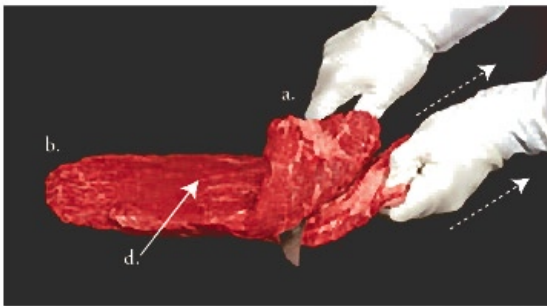
4. REMOVE AREA OF CONNECTIVE TISSUE AND LEAN MATERIAL

Follow the natural seam to remove this area. Rotate 180° for the next step.



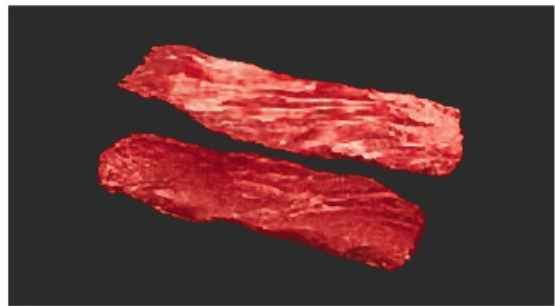
5. LOCATE THE INNER CONNECTIVE TISSUE

Locate the thick internal connective tissue by squaring off the thick end of the Top Blade. This connective tissue runs the entire length of the Top Blade.



10. FINAL STEP TO REMOVE INTERNAL CONNECTIVE TISSUE

Flip the bottom lean portion so that the connective tissue rests on the cutting surface. Place the knife into the two-inch cut. Then, pushing the knife against the connective tissue, grab the tissue and pull it toward you until the connective tissue is completely removed from the lean portion.



11. INTERNAL CONNECTIVE TISSUE REMOVED FROM THE BOTTOM LEAN PORTION

Remove any connective tissue remaining on the bottom lean portion.