

A NEW LOOK AT THE TOP ROUND

Several years ago the beef industry embarked down a road that brought important changes to beef product offerings so that consumers' needs were better met and added value was given to underutilized cuts. New cutting techniques that isolated individual muscles were applied to the Shoulder, Bottom Round and Knuckle, resulting in several new steaks and small roasts.

The Top Round is a subprimal that can also benefit from muscle separation to bring smaller portions, shorter cooking times, and a strong nutritional profile. Quality is enhanced, as is leanness, and less is sent to the grinder.



Medallions cut from the pectineus

WHAT IS THE TOP ROUND?

The 168 Beef Round Top (Inside)* is part of the full cut round muscle system (160 Beef Round, Shank Off, Partially Boneless)*. It is separated from the Bottom Round and the Knuckle through the natural seams. The Top Round is the inside portion of the round primal. All bones, cartilages and exposed lymph glands shall be removed. The purchasers may request this item to be further trimmed. The Top Round weighs approximately 20 to 23 pounds.

Today the Top Round is purchased and sold by retailers as Boneless Beef Top Round Steaks, lean large steaks that require a tenderizing marinade or sold pre-cooked in the deli department for roast beef. Foodservice operators purchase this item for a buffet carving roasts, hot and cold sandwiches and steaks.

VALUE ADDING THROUGH MUSCLE SEPARATION. Within the 168 Beef Top Round are five major muscles:

Gracilis (Cap)

The *gracilis* (Cap) is a large, flat, fibrous muscle that is moderately tender and juicy with a moderately intense flavor. With a texture similar to inside skirt steak, it can be used as an alternative for fajitas and stir fry applications.

It is located on the external surface of the Top Round and can be removed by following the natural seam. The denuded *gracilis* muscle should be sliced 90 degrees across the direction of the muscle fiber.

Average weights for this item:

Commodity	4.33 lbs.
Denuded	2.02 lbs.

Semimembranosus

The *semimembranosus* is the largest muscle in the Top Round, is slightly tender and juicy and has a slightly intense flavor. Because of its size, it has great potential as roasts of various sizes, London Broil, sandwich steaks, breakfast steaks and Milanese.

This item is that which shall remain after the *gracilis*, *pectineus*, *sartorius* and the *adductor* have been removed from the Top Round by following the natural seams. Separation frees the muscle so

that the direction of muscle fibers are easily located and should be sliced 90 degrees across the direction of the muscle fiber.

Average weights for this item:

Commodity	11.14 lbs.
Denuded	9.44 lbs.

Adductor

The *adductor* is a large, cone-shaped, versatile muscle that is slightly tender and juicy and has a slightly intense flavor. It has a favorable size and shape for multiple portions and applications, which will be improved through tenderization. Sandwich steak, breakfast steak, Milanese and convenient roasts are all viable options with this muscle.

This item is that which shall remain after the *gracilis*, *pectineus*, *sartorius* and the *semimembranosus* have been removed from the Top Round by following the natural seams. Separation frees the muscle so that the direction of muscle fibers are easily located and should be sliced 90 degrees across the direction of the muscle fiber.

Average weights for this item:

Commodity	3.80 lbs.
Denuded	3.44 lbs.

Pectineus

The *pectineus* is a small, cone-shaped, tender muscle that can be cut nicely into two "filet style" steaks or large medallions and also works well as a small grilling roast. This is one of the most tender muscles in the carcass.

As part of the soft side, it can easily be removed from the Top Round and separated from the *sartorius* following natural seams.

Average weights for this item:

Commodity	1.48 lbs.
Denuded	.94 lbs.

Sartorius

The *sartorius* is a small, elongated, tough muscle. It is best used in ground or stew applications.

Along with the *pectineus*, it makes up what is commonly referred to as the soft side. The soft side is easy to remove from the Top Round following natural seams, and the *sartorius* is easily separated from the *pectineus*.

Average weights for this item:

Commodity	.70 lbs.
Denuded	.50 lbs.

Top Round Cutting Schematic



Cap (*Gracilis*)



Commodity Top Round
*IMPS/NAMP 168**



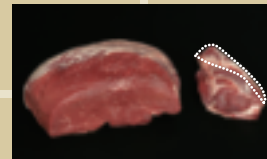
Top Round, no cap



Cap, denuded
*IMPS/NAMP 169B**



Top Round, denuded
*IMPS/NAMP 169A**



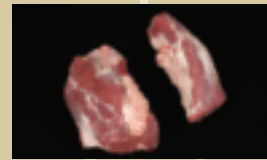
Top Round, Soft Side removed



Semimembranosus



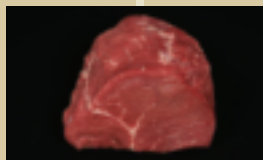
Adductor



Soft Side, split



Semimembranosus,
denuded



Adductor, denuded



Pectineus, denuded



Sartorius, denuded



Semimembranosus, steaks



Adductor, steaks



Pectineus, medallions



For more information about new cutting techniques for the Top Round, visit us at www.beefinnovationsgroup.com



*These numbers are from the Institutional Meat Purchasing Specifications (IMPS) published by the USDA and are also listed in the North American Meat Processors (NAMP) Meat Buyers Guide.