KIDS connection

Beyond the Beef Barn

Grades 3rd - 5th

A-MOO-zing Animals!

Cattle are mammals that have been domesticated for meat (beef cattle) or milk (dairy cattle). They are called bovines and are classified as either *Bos taurus* (cattle adapted to temperate climates) or *Bos indicus* (cattle that are more heat tolerant with floppy ears and looser skin.) Most of the cattle found in Kansas would be classified as *Bos taurus* while *Bos indicus* cattle are typically found in hotter tropical climates. Cattle are ruminants, animals that have a multi-compartment stomach, and they have cloven (split) hooves. Beef cattle play an important role in our lives! So A-MOO-zing! Read on to find out more.

Bos taurus

Bos indicus

Fun Fact

Nearly 25% of all cattle fed for meat production in the United States are fed in Kansas.

Match the Word with the Definition!

1. Bovine
2. Cow
3. Bull
4. Heifer
5. Steer
6. Calf

a. a neutered male

b. a mature male capable of reproduction

c. a young male or female less than one year of age

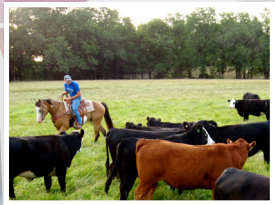
d. a mature female that has had at least one calf

e. an animal of the cattle (or bison) species

f. a young female that has not had a calf

Key:
1. e.
2. d.
3. b.
4. f.
5. a.
6. c.

From Pasture to Plate



- **Cow-calf:** Beef cows produce calves that are born and raised on cow-calf farms and ranches. These cattle spend time grazing on grass pastures.
- **Weaning:** Calves are separated from their mothers between 6 and 8 months of age.
- **Livestock Auction Markets:** After weaning, many calves leave the farm or ranch where they were born to be sold at livestock auction markets at 6 and 12 months of age.
- **Stockers and Backgrounders:** Between 6 and 12 months of age, cattle spend time grazing pastures. Here, they gain weight and convert forage and grass into lean protein.
- **Feedyard:** Cattle spend 4 to 6 months at a feedyard being fed a balanced diet of grain and roughage (hay). Cowboys, veterinarians and nutritionists watch them with a careful eye.
- **Processing Plant:** Cattle are sent to a packer/processing facility to be harvested and processed.
- **Grocery Store:** The store displays and offers packages of meat to consumers.
- **Plate:** Consumers prepare and enjoy eating meat as part of a healthy diet!

Activity

Color in the feed bucket for a 1,000 lb. steer. Use yellow for corn, green for hay and brown for soybean meal!

What's at the Feed Bunk?

A calf drinks the cow's milk until it is old enough to begin eating grass or hay. Cattle eat grasses, hay, silage, plant stalks and other roughages that are high in fiber.

In the feedyard, cattle eat a diet of grain and roughages. Kansas crops are important for feeding cattle. Corn is the most widely used grain in feeding cattle. More than 80% of the grain sorghum, or milo, produced in Kansas is fed to livestock! Soybean meal is also used to supply protein to their diets!

Ruminants - Cattle are known as ruminants. They have a four-compartment stomach that allows them to digest plants that humans cannot.

Beyond the Ranch

In addition to being a beef cattle farmer, there are countless job opportunities in the beef cattle industry! Many veterinarians, meat processors and food scientists also share a passion for cattle and their wellbeing. Food scientists develop food for restaurants, meat processors supply the best cuts of meat to grocery stores and restaurants and some veterinarians only work on large animals, like cattle!

When I grow up I want to be a _____ .

Activity

Look around your classroom (or room at home) and make a list of all the items you can find that are made from beef coproducts. Share your findings with your classmates.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10.

11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20.

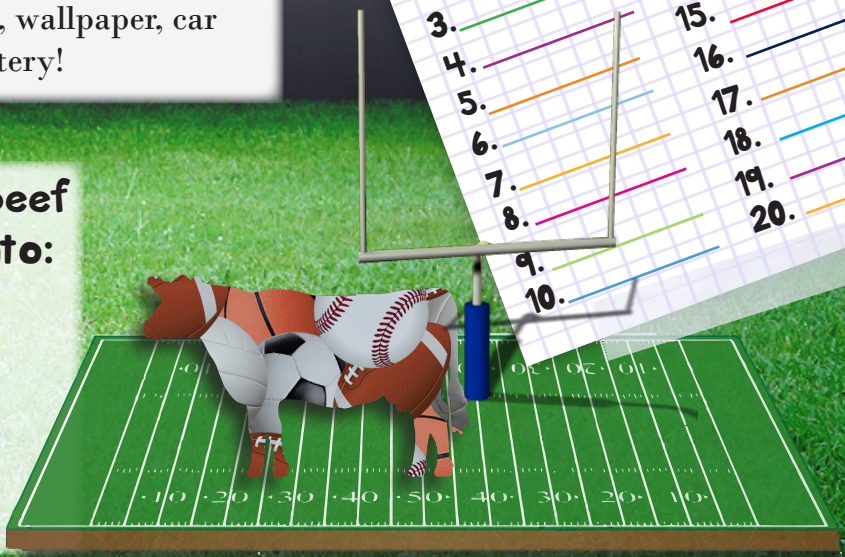
Everything but the Moo!

Beef coproducts allow 99% of every beef animal to be used! Some examples are: candles, crayons, makeup, detergent, insulation, plastics, soaps, pet foods, piano keys, luggage, wallpaper, car polishes and textiles for car upholstery!

The hide from one beef animal can be made into:

- 18 volleyballs
- 144 baseballs
- 12 basketballs
- 20 footballs
- 18 soccer balls

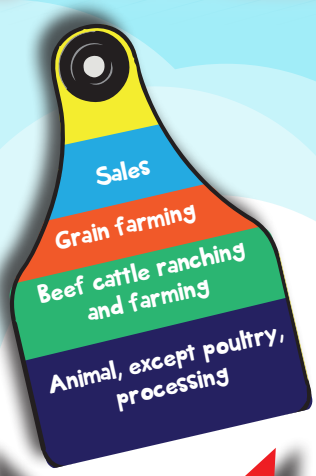
Fun Fact!
It takes 3,000 cowhides to supply enough footballs to the NFL for one year!



Kansas Economy

A STEAK in Kansas Jobs

Kansas beef provides as many as **21,123** people in our state with jobs!



The BEEF of Kansas Agriculture

Beef cattle and the processing of beef make up a majority of the total economic output of Kansas agriculture. Together, both sectors produced **$1,691,857,050** in 2015.

Caretakers of the Planet

Kansas has **46 million acres** of farmland, but not all of this land can be used to grow crops. Cattle have the ability to graze this land and turn grasses that humans cannot digest into a nutrient rich protein source. There are **15.5 million** acres of pastureland in Kansas that only ruminants, primarily cattle, are able to use!

Fun Fact!

The U.S. supplies 25% of the world's beef with only 10% of the world's cattle!

BEEF HAS ZIP

Beef has ZIP - Zinc, Iron and Protein - all nutrients important for you to grow! Cattle provide us with highly nutritious beef products including hamburger, steaks and pot roast. Beef also provides a lot of vitamins and minerals, including B-vitamins that help your skin stay healthy and are good for digestion and metabolism. One 3-ounce serving of beef provides 50% of our daily protein needs!

Kansas Foundation for AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM
KFAC

Learn more about Kansas agriculture at www.ksagclassroom.org or contact the Kansas Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom at (785) 320-4350.

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