

Bluestem Breezes
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Beef Month – Celebrate!

It is still May and that means it is still Beef Month! How have you celebrated this month? I am serious! Did you thank a producer? Try a new beef recipe? Take an in-county tour to view the pastures now adorned with cattle? There is indeed a lot to do to celebrate Beef Month!

One of the parts I love about our ag industry is the fact that the farms are family operations – 97% of them in fact. And, nearly one-third of the United States' cattle operations are centered right here in the Plains. That means, every morning I can wake up and spend time with my family helping to feed not just the United States, but the world. You see, today's farmer produces enough to feed 155 people. In fact, we're using 7% of the world's cattle to produce 20% of the world's beef.

I always enjoy seeing where Kansas ranks amidst the other states. Agriculture really is a big deal here in Kansas! Over 19% of U.S. beef originates from beef processing facilities here in Kansas. We are third in cattle and calves on grain feed. And, we are third in cattle and calves on farms. You may be interested to know that Wabaunsee County cattle and calves totaled over 38,000 in 2012. That means that there are approximately 5 head of cattle per person here.

These farms aren't just our business, they are our livelihood. We spend time working on our operations with our family and with our friends. Even our entertainment is often related to the beef industry in some facet or another (i.e. rodeo, ranch rodeo, horse shows, stock shows, crafts, cook outs after working, etc.).

Our favorite meals start with a healthy serving of beef at the center of our plate, whether dining at home or at a restaurant. I was out of the country earlier this spring and as I started to order my meal, a colleague jumped in to let the waiter know I'd be eating beef. The others in our group had quickly discovered my protein of choice!

My mouth is starting to water as I dream of making our next meal. Kabobs? Steaks? Roast? Fajitas? Steak salad? Enchiladas? Stir fry?

Sources: www.explorebeef.org, Kansas Agricultural Statistics, USDA National Agricultural Statistics

For additional information on the beef industry, visit the Extension Office (215 Kansas, Courthouse, Alma; kamayer@ksu.edu; 765-3821). For Bluestem Breezes archives, check out wabaunsee.ksu.edu.