



Hardwick Beef Grass-Fed Protocol

1. Grown in the Northeast:

All cattle must be finished in the Northeast.

2. Identification:

All cattle in the program should be identified with an ID tag, no later than weaning age (preference is calves tagged at birth). Each animal (or group) must have an affidavit that includes breed, age, movement history, veterinary interventions, birth date. The affidavit must accompany the cattle at delivery to the processing plant.

3. Diet:

- Cattle must remain on their mother's milk for a minimum of 60 days (preference is for calves to stay on cow's milk for 10 months). Once cattle are weaned, their diet will be any combination of grass, legumes/forbs (including Swedes, mangels, etc.), herbs and/or stored feeds made from grass and legumes such as hay or haylage.
- Cattle may be finished on grass or stored feeds. PROHIBITED in this diet are grains, corn silage, distiller's grain/yeast byproducts, animal byproducts and fish byproducts.
- NOTE: Emergency rations of up to 10% of the animals' diet are permitted in case of a natural emergency. These emergency rations must be documented and can include grain and corn silage.

4. Veterinary:

All veterinary treatments or worming medications must be recorded in a record-keeping system, which must be available for inspection. Withdrawal periods for medications or wormers must be doubled. No antibiotics are permitted for cattle in this program. No hormones are allowed in food or as implants.

5. Treatment of Animals:

All cattle must be handled according to Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) humane handling standards. Humane handling procedures in loading, trucking, and restraint for harvest are required. Efforts must be made to keep cattle as calm as possible throughout the harvest process.

6. Ultrasound:

Cattle can be ultrasounded to determine the following data: Backfat Thickness, Ribeye Area, Percentage Intramuscular Fat, and Tenderness Score. An individual animal live weight should be recorded at the time of ultrasound (scale weight or heart girth tape weight accepted).

7. Cattle eligible for inclusion as Hardwick Beef:

- Heifers 16 – 26 months weighing 500 – 700 # HCW
- Steers 16 – 26 months weighing 550 – 750 # HCW
- Bulls 16 – 24 months weighing 550 – 800 # HCW
- Fat cover must be a minimum of 0.2 inches
- Actual Ribeye Area must be a minimum of 10.0 square inches
- Minimum Percent Intramuscular Fat must be 3.2%
- Tenderness Score of 2.5 or less.

8. Traceability:

Each fabricated carcass will be traced throughout processing and will be identifiable back to the individual animal's farm of origin.