



Vale Farms Winter Newsletter

Feb 2009

Wow – this winter has been full of snow, cold weather, and then more snow! All you could see of our sheep for a few weeks was the top of their ears as they walked along in the tractor tracks. We spent most of our time plowing snow, keeping water troughs working and sorting the hundreds of packages of meat that are safely stored away in our freezers now.

Now that things have warmed up outside, the next item on our list of chores is getting the barn ready for lambing (which isn't until April/May, but it creeps up on us fast every year) which includes fresh bedding, sealing up holes where lambs can escape or get stuck, and giving the pastures around the barn a rest before the ewes are put in for lambing.

Photo right: Charles and Don trying to stay warm.



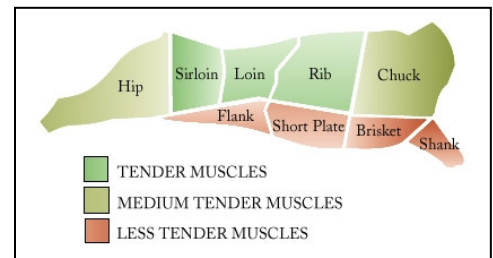
Feature Cut – Sirloin Tip Roast

They are a perfect winter meal that needs little prep, and are great as leftovers sliced thinly for sandwiches, cubed in soup, or sliced and topped with mustard for a quick snack.

Where it comes from: The hip, also known as the round. This area is the leanest part of the animal, and has more meat without tendons than any other part of the animal. The hip area also includes inside and eye of round steak, rouladen, and stir fry.

Cooking Method: For roasts, use dry heat, super slow roast (ie. in the oven or BBQ, at low temp). You may think to use moist heat cooking (ie. crock pot), which will tenderize cuts from the hip section but you may end up with dry meat because of the low fat content in the hip.

FYI: Fat content in a four legged animal is highest at the front (chuck section: cross-rib roasts, stew, flat iron steaks), and lowest at the rear (hip/round section). Also, thawing your meat in the fridge or on the counter (yes, I said counter – it hasn't killed me yet but make your own choice) NOT in the microwave gives your meat a chance to be the best it can be.



Super-Slow Roasted Beef Recipe

Ingredients: 1 sirloin tip roast

Herb rub (thyme, rosemary, oregano, fennel, garlic, salt and pepper)

1. Rub roast with herb rub, wrap loosely in plastic, and allow to sit at room temp for 2 hours. (Less time also ok if you're short for time).
2. Preheat oven to 250 F.
3. Remove plastic and place meat in small roasting pan, and cook for 30 min. Turn oven to 170 F and continue cooking. (If you have a meat thermometer, cook until it reads 120 to 125 F.) As a guide, figure 1 hr and 10 min per lb of meat. Roast is best if cooked to medium rare because of it being quite lean.
4. Remove roast from oven, tent loosely with foil and let rest for 5 min. Slice thinly to serve.

Recipe from "The Grassfed Gourmet Cookbook" by Shannon Hayes.

February Features & Events

We're at the Kelowna Farmers' Market on **FEBRUARY 7** and **MARCH 7** at the Parkinson Rec Centre, from 9-1pm. We'll have our Sirloin Tip Roasts with us so you can try out the recipe on the left!

PET FOOD – 5% OFF for the month of February, so if you're interested, now's a good time to give it a try!

Vernon customers are more than welcome to come to the farm, or contact us about our Vernon drop location.

All About Pet Food

Think about your own body – what if you ate the same, processed cereal every single day. The lack of variety and the highly processed food would probably leave you with some form of nutritional deficiency, or at least a lack of energy. The same goes for your pet. Whether you convert to an all raw food with raw meats and veggies, or simply add a little meat to your dogs' diet each day, the range of benefits will be worth it:

Allergy-free – our 100% beef pet food has no additives, chemicals, or fillers. Dogs' digestive tracts are different than humans and do not cope well with grain, the major ingredient in commercial dog food. This is one of the major causes of allergies in dogs.

Better breath – pets fed raw diets are often found to have better smelling breath and whiter teeth

Shiny Coat – fresh, raw food can help your pets coat become shiny and softer

More Energy – especially in older dogs, feeding them raw meat can give them more energy and pep, thanks to the large number of available nutrients and vitamins that they can absorb.

Better Weight Control – dogs that are over weight often will lose fat, and thin dogs often put on muscle, bringing them to a healthy, normal weight.

All of our farm dogs' diets include raw meat and bones, with more fat for the sheep dogs in the winter to help keep them warm. This keeps them energetic, healthy and on the job.

So what exactly is in our pet food? 100% beef from SPCA certified cows that retired from their lives at a certified organic dairy. For the past couple of years those cows were fed strictly a 100% grass-fed diet to ensure the highest nutritional quality for our pet food. There are beef organs added to select packages, but unfortunately those packages are not marked differently, so it'll just have to be a pleasant surprise if you get the bonus of a few pieces of liver or heart in your package. Organs are extremely nutritious for dogs as well, and add to the nutritional content of the pet food.



“Balu” – our latest addition to the farms' sheep defenses.

A note about bones: Feeding your dog marrow bones has numerous advantages.

Chewing at the bones scrapes and cleans their teeth, the chewing and pulling meat off the bone strengthens their neck and jaw muscles, and the marrow they chew out of the bone is extremely nutritious for them!

Lorna's 100-Mile Diet

I've been meaning to write an ending for our 100-mile diet for a while now, so here it is. Chris and I made it 9 months as 100-mile eaters, at which point the hot days of summer, keeping up with our garden, and the desire to be out enjoying the sunshine instead of preparing food brought our challenge to an end. We still do our best to stock up locally and support local farmers as much as we can. I can consistently make good bread now, thanks to the discovery of a little thing called patience (although leaving Chris in charge of the baking of it the other day did result in some dangerously hard, tooth breaking bread – he fell asleep while it was in the oven). I ventured into the realm of salsa making which has been one of my favorite things this winter, and in the spirit of growing our own food we got 2 pigs which we have raised and are planning to butcher ourselves sometime this month. Our adventures with those pigs deserve a whole newsletter to themselves!! Next on our food adventure is a handful of heritage laying hens, a couple of eating chickens, and to make sure we won't be bored this summer, we have a baby due in March!

So, now you know how it ended, or rather, how it continues. We may not be purists anymore, but we're definitely more conscious of what we buy and more adventurous when it comes to making and growing our own food.

House for Rent on Vale Farms

- Quiet country setting, spacious, wheelchair accessible
- Walk-out patio
- Newly renovated (incl. new floors & appliances)
- 3 bedrooms, 2 living rooms, 2 ½ bathrooms
- Adjacent horse pasture available to rent
- \$1500/mo + utilities, n/smoking, n/pets

Additional bright basement suite available (great as in-law suite):

- Newly renovated (incl. new appliances)
- 3 bedroom, 2 bathroom, living & rec room
- \$850/mo + utilities, n/smoking, n/pets

For inquiries, call 250 547-0282