

## Feeding and Watering Your Beef Cattle

One of the main things you can do to keep your beef cattle healthy and content is to properly take care of their dietary needs. Here are tips to help maintain a healthy digestive tract and improved performance:



**When adding or removing feeds from your animal's diet, gradually make the change over a week or so.**

An abrupt switch in feedstuffs can harm the helpful bacteria in the digestive tract and cause an unsafe change in a bovine's digestive juice pH.

**Be prepared for big appetites.**

Beef cattle can consume up to 3 percent of their body weight a day in dry feed.

**Provide your beef cattle with forage to keep their digestive systems functioning correctly.**

You can meet your animal's forage requirements by letting them graze pasture, feeding them dried harvested hay or ensiled forage such as corn silage.

**Balancing supplements that work on farm forages to meet nutrients requirements for health and performance.**

Concentrates like the grains of corn, oats, wheat bran, and rice bran are good sources of energy for your cattle. Soybean meal and black eye peas supply both energy and protein.

**Add *Reimers Feed Mill* minerals with vitamins to your beef cattle's diet to keep them healthy and productive.**

You can mix these nutrients with the other feed you provide your cattle, or you can serve it up in a free-choice feeder for animals on pasture.

**Always make sure your beef cattle have access to a clean, fresh, and plentiful supply of water.**

Beef cattle drink a lot. During a hot summer day, for example, a mother cow with a nursing calf can consume nearly 18 gallons of water.

**Keep water and mineral available at liberty.**

Another important part of caring for cattle, since water is the most important nutrient for any livestock. Mineral in the form of loose mineral with salt or a salt block is also important, since cattle have a high requirement of salt with the kind of feedstuffs they consume.

**Provide only wholesome feedstuffs.**

Don't feed your beef cattle any grain or hay that's musty, moldy, or soiled by animal feces.

## Keeping Your Beef Cattle Healthy

Sure, you can provide your beef cattle with medical care when it gets sick or hurt, but preventing disease and injury in the first place is even better. Practice the following measures to keep niggling beef cattle concerns from morphing into big problems:



**Provide a stress-free environment for your animals.**

Stress makes any living creature more susceptible to disease, and beef cattle are no exception. So take the time to always interact with your cattle in a calm and low-stress fashion.

**Monitor your animal's feed consumption.**

Decreased appetite is an early sign of sickness. Healthy cattle come up to the feed trough at every meal to eat. Healthy beef cattle on pasture have full and rounded stomachs.

**Keep an eye out for changes in vital signs.**

For mature cattle, the normal temperature range is 100.4-103.1 degrees Fahrenheit, the pulse is 40-80 beats per minute, and the respiration rate at rest is 10- 30 breaths per minute.