

Oneota Slopes

Our family moved to the farm near Decorah in 1974, and began a dairy and Christmas tree operation. Eventually we moved out of dairying but have maintained the Christmas tree operation, a small flock of sheep, and a small herd of beef cows. A large vegetable garden, small maple syrup operation, never-full-enough woodshed, wealth of wildlife, way too many farm buildings and way too little time round out the picture. We are now three generations on the farm, and our most important crop has always been kids.



Wedding prairie, Christmas trees, and pasture

Oneota Slopes is ...

Emily and Andy Johnson (2nd generation),
Helen, Leila, and Elsa
(3rd generation!)

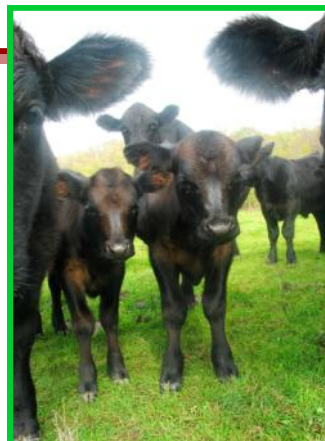
Pat and Paul Johnson (1st generation)

Questions? Contact Andy at 563.382.0537
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Grass-Fed is Good for You

- ◆ Grass-fed meats are much lower in total fat, saturated fat, calories, and cholesterol than grain-fed meats (a 6-ounce steak can have 100 fewer calories).
- ◆ Grass-fed meats are many times higher in vitamin E, beta-carotene, and vitamin C, among other nutritional qualities.
- ◆ Grass-fed meats are higher (again, often 2-5 times higher) in the health-promoting fatty acids omega-3 and conjugated linoleic acid, or CLA. Just as there is "good cholesterol", these are "good fats", and have been shown to be heart and brain friendly (lower risk of heart attack, depression, ADD, Alzheimer's) and possibly cancer-fighting as well.
- ◆ Finally, our pastured animals are fed no growth-promoting hormones or antibiotics, as are many grain-fed animals. In fact, feedlot animals are often fed low doses of the same antibiotics humans use, which is not a good situation.



Buy Local or Regional and Support your Farmers

- ◆ Did you know that only 3.5 cents of each dollar of food you buy in the grocery store goes to the farmer? If you buy direct from the farmer ... you get the picture.
- ◆ Did you know that the typical American supper contains food from at least 5 countries outside the US, and the food that came from *within* the US traveled an average 1,500 miles?
- ◆ Do you know where the last steak you ate (or hamburger, or lamb) came from? Do you have any idea how it was raised, or where (or when) it was processed? Do you know the farmer's name, or in what country s/he lives?
- ◆ True, local, fresh foods can cost more than what you might pay in the grocery store, and our meats are no exception. But consider this—you're buying not just healthy food, but healthier animals, healthier farms, and healthier rural communities.

Healthy Animals and Healthy Farms

It is unhealthy for both animals and the land for livestock to be fed diets of predominantly grain. Cattle under these conditions often are struck with acidosis, rumenitis, or many other diseases, and then are pumped full of antibiotics and other drugs. Grain farming can result in high levels of soil erosion and water pollution, and is powered largely by fossil fuel.

To raise animals on pasture, however, we become grass farmers. The animals are under much less stress (that would make anyone happy, right?) and need no therapeutic drugs. Soil is often built (rather



than eroded) under pastures, we use no pesticides, and the animals do their own harvesting. The primary power behind grass-fed animals, you could say, is simply

sunlight and hoof power. But the goodness goes beyond the pastures. Private lands cover three-quarters of the continental US, and we believe all landowners have a responsibility to provide a home place for all our wild friends and neighbors. In this spirit our farm in-

cludes over 50 acres of high-quality habitat woods, several patches of prairie, a great diversity of fields and land uses, and wildness scattered throughout.



In fact, we placed a conservation easement on most of the farm in 2002. When pooled with more easements from like-minded landowners and donated to the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation (and eventually the Iowa DNR), these actions prevented much of the land seen in the distance above from becoming an intense subdivision—on thin soils over bedrock right next to the Upper Iowa River. Which saved us a nice view, but more importantly, saved the home place of so much other life, and kept our river cleaner.

Cooking tips for Grass-fed

Be careful with your grass-fed meats! They are much leaner than grain-fed animals, and so not as resilient to over-cooking. Grass-fed meats typically take less cooking time. They will not have the marbled taste or texture, but should be quite flavorful in their own right, and when cooked appropriately, should be moderately tender as well. Sloooooowwwww is what most folks recommend for grass-fed, though we've found with our steak on the grill that hot and fast can work well also—just don't overdo it! Even the roasts grill well.

Oneota Slopes Farm MEATS



- ♦ GRASS-FED
- ♦ LOCAL/REGIONAL
- ♦ SUSTAINABLY GROWN

from Decorah, Iowa