



“It is no measure of health to be well adjusted to a sick society.”

— Jiddu Krishnamurti



Health restored: 'it's priceless'

Ranch Foods Direct customer Kimberly Clark works as a content creator for two nonprofits: AllenHaus, which provides housing and related services to military veterans; and Discovery Bible, the world's leading authority in translating the original language of the scriptures for those who don't know Hebrew or Greek. She's found that eating meat from other stores upsets her stomach, and now shops Ranch Foods Direct almost exclusively. She's also on the carnivore diet, which is gradually helping to address some unexplained health issues she dealt with for years.

SO YOU'RE EATING CARNIVORE. HOW AND WHY DID THAT COME ABOUT? This is the second time I've done it. The first time was in 2021, and I was unsure about it. It seemed so out-of-the-box to me. I tried it for three weeks, but as soon as I went back off, my body went back to where it was. I've been battling some unknown health issues for the last ten years, even though I was always eating clean and eating paleo. A year ago, things finally started to change when I went to see Jeff Hunter at Upstream Functional Medicine in Colorado Springs. During our healing process, Jeff made the comment that it would help me if I could go even more keto-based. So, I said, how about if I go back to carnivore? That's even better, he told me. I could not recommend Upstream enough. I really owe them for getting my life back, in tandem with Ranch Foods Direct and the uncompromising standards on the meat.

WERE YOU A CUSTOMER BEFORE GOING TO SEE

JEFF? I don't remember who first mentioned Ranch Foods Direct to me, but I would come on Tuesday for the ground beef sale. I was so incredibly grateful for that. But it was sporadic. When Jeff mentioned it, he told me that's where I should be getting all my meat, so I shop there more often now.



FAVORITE PRODUCTS? I like to pick out a roast and ask the butchers to cut it into economy-sized steaks for me. I love the stew meat. We've found it to be very versatile for eating carnivore. I love the chicken, and I still buy a lot of ground beef. To know where everything is sourced is absolutely amazing.

WHAT'S YOUR BACKGROUND EXPERIENCE WITH FOOD AND AGRICULTURE? We lived on a ranch for ten years at Elizabeth, which I had to give up for health and family reasons. I was actually raised in the city — Scottsdale, Arizona — but I always loved organic gardening, and I wanted my children to have a strong connection to the land and to their food. So when they were still small, we bought the 40-acre ranch in Elizabeth, where we had a dairy cow, some chickens and a few alpacas. It was a beautiful, peaceful time for us. It's a lifestyle I'm so grateful to have given my three kids. My eldest son now owns a ranch in Peyton, and my middle son has a passion for Kenya. He'll be there for most of the summer working with orphans and widows. It's very comfortable for him to step into that environment and help them harvest the food they need to feed their community.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR YOU IN TERMS OF HEALTH GOALS? Having been virtually incapacitated for almost ten years, my goal now is to do the Incline in Manitou, hopefully by the end of the summer. I also have a German shepherd, and I want to start bikejoring — it's like dog sledding on a bike. Eventually I want to hike the Monro mountains of Scotland. I'm Scottish by descent, and it's the country of my heart. I can't wait to just get out and do life again.

Did you know?

It would take eating twice as much soybean curd to get the same protein in a steak, because meat protein is more easily absorbed than plant-based. Meanwhile, vegan meat alternatives often contain high levels of concentrated wheat gluten.

Sprouting an idea

Upon returning to his family's century-old farm in Western Kansas after working in telecommunications for more than a decade, Ranch Foods Direct lamb supplier Stephen Simon set out to try an innovative method for producing more feed with less water and less exposure to the harsh weather on the High Plains. His solution? Growing hydroponic barley sprouts indoors. The idea might sound a bit far-fetched, but even ranchers perk up after hearing it can bring savings as high as \$180 a ton. He calls his concept the Infinity Pasture. The technique involves layering barley seed 2-inches thick on a seal-coated floor, watering it for a few days with adjustable nozzles, then rolling up the mat of sprouts and feeding it into a tub grinder, along with dry hay, to make a 40-60 ration. In the past year alone, 1,000 visitors have been to the farm to see how the innovative system works. Fresh sprouts are highly palatable to the animals and richly saturated with vitamins like D and E, he says. In fact, the Omaha Zoo uses a similar feeding system because it keeps the animals healthier and happier. Ranch Foods Direct owner Mike Callicrate agrees that barley makes excellent high-quality, high-protein feed that results in tender, tasty meat.



IS IT DIFFICULT BEING IN THE SHEEP BUSINESS THESE DAYS? Sheep numbers in this country have been going down since the 1990s. In fact, we're now at the all-time low this country has ever seen. It's more of a specialty meat now. But there's a lot more demand for it in the last five or six years. And that demand keeps going up. The various sheep associations are pushing to get more people interested in lamb again.

Creative lamb producer solves need for feed with sprouted barley

TALK ABOUT SELLING YOUR LAMB THROUGH RANCH FOODS DIRECT. WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT GOING THROUGH A SMALL MEAT MARKET RATHER THAN A BIG CHAIN STORE? There aren't too many stores like it. In our case, most of our lambs are contracted to a commercial plant in Denver. But I like having a little more personal touch to it. The more direct I can be with my marketing the better. My goal is to be completely self-sufficient at some point and feed the sheep without any outside resources beyond what we raise on the farm. And beyond that, I want to get that final product directly to consumers, with the least amount of miles and extra costs that end up in the food by the time it actually reaches the consumer.

EVENTUALLY YOU'D LIKE TO PROCESS YOUR LAMBS DIRECTLY ON THE FARM, RIGHT? Yes, I've talked to Mike Callicrate about it a few times, and I've been out and seen his processing plant. I'm hoping to work with him on getting a design put together. What I hope to do in the next five years or so is to put my own plant on the place and then all 3,000 lambs would be butchered on-site. It's a lot less stress on the animal, and you know exactly how it's handled all the way through because you're doing it all yourself. It's about cutting out all that shipping and not trucking food around so much, where temperatures can change from truck to truck. Having a more direct route to the consumer is definitely a positive for everyone.

IS AGRICULTURE IN GENERAL HEADED IN A MORE SUSTAINABLE DIRECTION? I'd like to think we are. I'm definitely headed in that direction. We're planning to install solar panels, and eventually I'd like to open a school at our farm where we'd be able to teach commercial sheep raising to other people.

In addition to running a large flock of sheep, Stephen Simon owns Black Sheep Barley, a seed business that supplies other farmers looking for non-irrigated crops to reduce water consumption on the High Plains.



Food research news

HONEY FRAUD ON THE RISE: The decision not to hold a honey competition at the World Beekeeping Awards in 2025 is a symptom of a global problem that's making life tough for beekeepers in the United States, according to a report by Mary Hightower for the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service. The problem? Honey adulterated with other sugars or altered in ways to avoid trade penalties is common on the world market.

In 2023, the European Commission found that 46 percent of sampled honeys were suspected to have been diluted with corn, beet or other sugar syrups. The U.S. imported 429 million pounds of honey in 2023, representing 73 percent of total U.S. honey supply, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Most of those imports — 79 percent — came from just four suppliers: India, Argentina, Brazil and Vietnam.

Honey adulteration to hide its origins — known as “honey laundering” — has dogged the industry for the past 10-15 years, according to Jon Zawislak, an apiary and urban entomology specialist.

Small amounts of pollen are generally present in honey and reflect the plants visited by honeybees. That pollen can be used to help identify where the honey originated, because certain plants only grow in certain countries.

Honey launderers have now started filtering the honey to remove all pollen and then mixing together barrels of honey that originate from different countries, Zawislak said.

Human tastebuds often fail to detect honey cut with high-fructose corn syrup or other sugars, even though sugar subtypes have important nutritional differences. Testing for adulteration is cost prohibitive and seldom conducted by commodity brands. **“Consumers looking for pure honey should buy local,”** Zawislak said.



SWEET HEAT: Try the Colorado KREAM kimchi and KREAM cuunch chili oil with chili flakes, Szechuan peppercorn, crispy garlic and shallots. Great in stir fry, ramen, pho and more!

EAT TO MAINTAIN A HEALTHY BRAIN: A research team from the University of Nebraska's Center for Brain, Biology, and Behavior is launching a first-of-its-kind study to explore potential links between beef consumption and brain health.

Utilizing brain imaging, blood biomarkers and surveys over a 12-week study, researchers will explore how beef consumption impacts brain health in young adults. Participants will complete a battery of cognitive, nutritional and brain health tests at pre- and post-intervention, along with dietary and health surveys throughout the trial.

The research builds on earlier work at the center, which identified key nutrients that support healthy brain aging.

In a novel study conducted in conjunction with the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 100 cognitively healthy participants, aged 65-75, were asked to complete a

questionnaire with demographic information, along with measures of body composition and physical fitness. Blood plasma was collected following a fasting period to analyze the nutrient biomarkers. Participants also underwent cognitive assessments and MRI scans. Analysis of this large set of measures revealed two types of brain aging among the participants: accelerated and slower-than-expected. Those with slower brain aging had a distinct nutrient profile. The beneficial nutrient blood biomarkers were a combination of fatty acids (vaccenic, gondoic, alpha linolenic, elcosapentaenoic, eicosadienoic and lignoceric acids); antioxidants and carotenoids (cis-lutein, trans-lutein and zeaxanthin); two forms of Vitamin E; and choline. Only recently discovered, choline is a vital nutrient, which is made by the body, but only in limited quantities. Levels can be boosted through rich dietary sources that include beef, pork, chicken and liver.

Researchers hope the ongoing findings will aid in developing therapies and interventions to promote improved brain health and longevity.

“I think healthy fat is the one thing most lacking in our American diet. Protein is important. But optimal human health requires high-quality fat, because so many of the nutrients reside in the fat. Healthy animal fat is a function of how the animals are raised and fed.”
— Ranch Foods Direct Owner Mike Callicrate



CARNITAS FILLING
created by Monse's Taste of El Salvador in Old Colorado City

- Callicrate Pork boneless shoulder, cut into small chunks (roughly 1 lb. makes 5-6 servings)
- 1 Tbsp Callicrate Beef tallow (or sub with sunflower oil)
- 3 roma tomatoes
- 1 small pepper of choice (hot or mild) salt and pepper to taste
- 1 medium chopped red or white onion
- 2 tsp garlic powder
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp dried ground oregano

Season the pork chunks with salt, pepper, oregano, garlic powder and cumin. Heat oil in a skillet to medium heat and add seasoned pork. Cook until browned. Add water to lightly cover. Cook until all liquid has evaporated and pork is crispy. Once cooked, place pork chunks in food processor with tomatoes, onions and peppers. Final consistency should be pasty, but not too watery. Use in pupusas, tacos or enchiladas.

Recipe Corner



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Monse's Taste of El Salvador serves Ranch Foods Direct meat!



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