

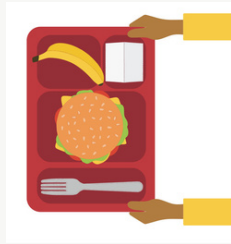
TOOLKIT

beef up school lunches



2024-2025

OUR MISSION



beef in bellies

Hello! Thank you for your interest in the **Mo Beef Kids program**. Your support makes a positive difference and helps carry out our mission of more beef, more often, on the school lunch tray. **Beef's ten essential nutrients** can support a healthy and active lifestyle and positively impact students through the power of protein!

We are passionate about getting **beef in bellies**, (not only does it provide key nutrition), but we hope to plant the seed with young people, so they understand the benefits of beef, and become lifelong beef consumers.

The program kicked off in 2017, as a partnership with the Missouri Department of Agriculture and the Missouri Beef Industry Council. It was their mission to source local beef and change the landscape of beef's role on the school lunch menu. Since, the program has taken shape in over 80 school districts and continues to grow. The passion and enthusiasm around beef in schools underscores the opportunity for all of us to be engaged and ensure beef is a common and frequent choice in schools for generations to come. The Missouri Beef Industry Council continues to be one of our main supporters and partners, and is represented by Missouri's cattle farmers and ranchers across the state.

How it Works:

Our program works with school foodservice and area processors to source local beef and incorporate it into the school lunch program. As a part of the effort, students can learn about beef's nutritional profile and **beef's journey from farm to plate**.

Some schools recruit local cow donations and others choose to fundraise and secure donations from local businesses to purchase local beef from producers in the area. Schools can participate either way, with the end goal of incorporating **more beef in schools**.

The following guide outlines program steps and provides details related to beginning the Mo Beef Kids program in your community. The program is primarily **fueled by passionate volunteers** that make this program possible in their school and community.



HOW IT WORKS

checklist

The following ingredients are needed to create the sauce (aka beef on the tray, yum)! However, the steps and how the recipe comes together can vary by school.

- Check with school administration and its foodservice to see if they would be receptive to serving local beef. Many schools visit with their school board and make the official decision during one of their monthly meetings.
- Ensure you have a farmer, rancher, and or local cattlemen's group or organization interested in donating cattle or making a cash donation to kickoff a school donation. You can visit with school foodservice to learn about how many students are served and the amount of beef needed to provide students with beef offerings.
- Once a donation is secured, work with local school administration and foodservice to facilitate donation. The foodservice department will want to ensure storage and work with processor on cut order. The school and processor will work closely to schedule kill date, complete proper vendor paperwork and processing information.
- Beef must be processed by a state or federally inspected processor, to ensure food safety and protocol mandatory for school foodservice.
- Once beef is scheduled to be served on the tray, many schools choose to celebrate through a kickoff type event. Some schools have reoccurring events to keep the beef story top of mind. Learn more on the CELEBRATE page.
- A school can highlight beef's journey from farm to plate, using our educational resources. Contact info@beef.school and learn more on the education and outreach page.

Role of Mo Beef Kids team

The majority of our Mo Beef Kids effort is supported by volunteers, and facilitated at the local level. Our team provides the following:

- ✱ **Provide initial information and resources** that highlight how the program works, answer questions and assist if needed
- ✱ **Works with local contact to facilitate school banner and poster needs.** School contact will be sent a link to complete poster and banner order form.
- ✱ **Highlight the effort on social media** with state partners. We can also **customize resources** needed at the local level (flyers, etc.)
- ✱ **Help provide resources for a kickoff event** facilitated by school. We will send a team member if one is available.
- ✱ **Help facilitate education and outreach.** We develop resources for the classroom and participating schools.

Poster sample



Poster and banner:

Posters and banners can be printed for participating schools. The poster resource highlights donors and makes the connection from farm to plate. Our team can assist in printing a school poster and banner.



COW DONATION GUIDELINES

Thank you for your support of the Mo Beef Kids program, and our mission of more beef in schools. Please keep in mind that donations enter the school lunch program and should be of standard that you would feel comfortable in eating or feeding to your loved ones.

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY: Product and processing regulations vary between local foodservice suppliers and school districts. Please check with your local processor and foodservice provider before securing cow donations.

Donation Guidelines

- Healthy animals that are medium flesh or better. Work with extension livestock specialists to look at body condition scores (recommended score of 3 or better). Processors have the right to refuse cattle that do not meet the requirements to yield beef for foodservice programs. Our program does not have the authority or oversight capabilities to monitor quality.
 - Encourage healthy animal donations (NOT cows that are unhealthy or chronically sick).
- Must meet state or federal inspection requirements for live animals (i.e. antibiotics, ambulatory, etc.).
- Not breed specific. Historically, most animals being donated are beef heifers and/or cows that are no longer productive on the farm.
- Cattle must be processed at a state or federal inspected processing plant, and must meet the guidelines and specifications outlined by the school's foodservice contractor.

Tax Deduction Information

- Cow donations may qualify as a charitable tax-deductible contribution. Please visit with your tax preparer to discuss potential deduction. Producers will need to work with their school administration (as they are the recipient of the charitable gift) to receive a letter declaring the value of their gift.
- A letter can be issued that declares the value of the beef, and is determined by the pounds yielded multiplied by the current value per pound. Letters are not issued by the Mo Beef Kids Program or Missouri Beef Industry Council when live cattle are donated to the schools.
- Mo Beef Kids does help facilitate some cash donations to schools, to ensure recognition of tax deduction. If a school is receiving cash donations on behalf of the Foundation for Food and Farm Connections, we can provide a letter recognizing the cash donation. Please reach out to Emma@beef.school if you have questions about tax related information.



SOURCING DONATIONS

Schools can choose whichever path is sustainable for the school and community, to source local beef. Some schools choose to garner cash donations to purchase local beef. The following information supports schools and or foodservice staff who want to participate in the program, but may need some ideas on where to begin and how to recruit continued beef donations.

Cow Donations

How do we get started? Do you know a local farmer or rancher who would support the effort who is also engaged in the school and community? Brainstorm contacts to include school administration, school board members and educators, who may have a link to agriculture and the beef industry.

Schools can reach out to local Cattlemen's Associations, local University of Missouri Extension office, Farm Bureau, community clubs, organizations, 4-H and FFA chapters for ideas or potential donors.

We recommend that schools name a main point of contact, or program "champion" to lead facilitation efforts and donations. It is valuable to form a committee who shares passion in the effort and duties can be divided and reasonably managed.

Please refer to our Cow Donation Guidelines, to review expected donation quality and explore local foodservice and processing requirements.

Cash Donations

Some schools are moving toward cash donations, to **purchase local beef** and support the program mission.

Businesses who may support beef in bellies:

- Tractor and equipment dealerships
- Local COOP and MFA Agri-Supply
- Farm related businesses
- Local organizations who support missions around food insecurity

Banks: Banks support community efforts in coordination with the **Community Reinvestment Act**. Supporting Mo Beef Kids and school nutrition can help a bank meet community engagement guidelines and compliance for lending.

We have a one-page resource on the Community Reinvestment Act, to help schools fundraise and garner bank support. Let us know how we can help.

Accepting Cash Donations

Cow donations are a gift to the school, and the school is the recipient of the donation. The school will need to issue the value of the donation to the donor, for tax preparation.

Some schools choose to setup an account with a local affiliate to facilitate cash donations. The Mo Beef Kids program is a 501c3 nonprofit foundation and can help coordinate cash donations and issue letters acknowledging a business donation, if needed. Please reach out to Emma, at Emma@beef.school if you have questions around accepting cash donations.



CELEBRATE

Sharing the story in your school and community


Remember: this is optional and facilitated by local volunteers and school.


As schools begin to serve Missouri beef in their lunchroom, many choose to do a celebratory kickoff event or activity to raise awareness and thank community supporters. This type of event, dinner or luncheon is decided upon and facilitated by the school. It is also a great way to garner media attention and recruit future beef donations.


Suggestions are listed below to offer ideas but are not mandatory. We want schools to bring their own level of excitement and ideas. We are happy to brainstorm ideas, and share examples facilitated by participating schools.


OUTREACH IDEAS


The most common kickoff or outreach event around the program includes an evening meal and often times in conjunction with another meeting or school event (school board meeting or FFA event). The event typically includes comments from school leadership, recognition of donors and or sponsors, and a beef meal. Our team can provide sample agendas, and ideas around outreach events.

 **Beef meal:** you can choose to serve a beef meal to showcase the program. Some schools offer a beef meal from the school lunch menu. Taco bars are also popular and an economic way to share beef with guests. FFA chapters can assist in helping with table and meal service, if desired.




 **Beef educational resources** and or placemats can be distributed, and placed on the tables for guests at an event or dinner.

 Some schools choose to have postcards about the program with a local contact, to raise awareness and garner **support for future donations**.

 Schools can also highlight the program and beef during lunch time in the cafeteria, by sharing educational materials with students and teachers on a day beef is served

 You can also engage your Consumer Science class, and highlight beef in some way.

Other ideas that can incorporate the beef story throughout the year:

-  • National School Lunch Week (second week of October)
-  • March is Nutrition Month
-  • May is Beef Month



Suggested event invite list

FFA Advisor(s)
 4-H Youth Staff
 School board members
 School administration
 School educators
 MU Extension representatives
 Participating farm families and donors
 Any area businesses or sponsors
 Local and/or elected officials
 Local newspaper and/or media



THE BEEF STORY

Sharing the story in your school and community

Conversations around beef on the lunch tray is a powerful opportunity to share beef's production and nutrition story. We believe a classroom component can bring the eating experience full circle.

Our program has a variety of resources and educational materials to help share the message of beef in the classroom and community. We have shared resources as print-ready files on mobeefkids.com. We can also share our resource link with you. Please email info@mobeefkids.com. We are continuously working to develop more school resources.

Our fifth grade **Pasture to Plate** curriculum is a three-part series that takes students on a journey from farm to plate. Students learn about a cow's life cycle, food safety, beef cuts and beef's ten essential nutrients. We will also be offering a comprehensive lesson plan, beginning this summer.

Our Pasture to Plate Overview and additional details around the curriculum can be shared upon request.

MESSAGING

- **Beef's 10 essential nutrients:** one serving of beef provides ten essential nutrients, which aide in cognitive and physical development. We know beef in bellies can help students feel fuller longer, and focus!
- **Beef, big nutrition in a small package:** for a small percentage of one's daily caloric intake, a lean serving of beef can provide around half of a person's daily protein need.
- **Today's farmers and ranchers are doing more with less.** For beef's sustainability story and how passionate farm families raise beef, and more: visit beefitswhatsfordinner.com.
- **Cows have superpowers?** We think so. Cows can turn grass (where many crops cannot grow) into a nutrient dense protein source. We know 1 in 3 children are food insecure. Options like beef, provide crucial nutrients needed for overall health.



YOUTH ACADEMY

Our **Mo Beef Youth Academy** consists of High School students, who have participated in a selection process to represent the Mo Beef Kids program and beef industry. Academy members are responsible for sharing the mission of beef in bellies within their community, while also learning leadership and life skills. Applications are available each April, and selected members are announced in May.

Academy members can visit schools and fulfill educational requests, schedule permitting. Reach out to our team to request a member.



MENU COMPARISON

MENU BEFORE MO BEEF KIDS



	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
ENTREES	Roast Beef Melt	Spaghetti and Meatballs with Italian Bread	Chicken Patty	Jumbo Cheese Ravioli with Italian Bread	Super Nachos
	Philly Cheesesteak Pizza	BBQ Chicken Pizza	Tony's Pizza	Bacon Chicken Ranch Pizza	Tony's Pizza
	Turkey Club Sub	Corn Dog	Cheeseburger	Ham and Cheese Sub	Chicken Patty on Bun
	Cheeseburger	Chicken Nuggets with Italian Bread	Spicy Chicken Sandwich	Popcorn Chicken with Italian Bread	Spicy Chicken Sandwich
ENTREE SALAD	Salad Bar with Cornbread	Salad Bar with Italian Bread	Salad Bar with Hot Roll	Salad Bar with Italian Bread	Salad Bar with Italian Bread
SPECIALTY BAR	BBQ Bar	Chicken Salad Sandwich	Bacon Turkey Avocado Club	Crispy Chicken Wrap	Chicken PO' Boy
		Greek Wrap	Fried Chicken Salad Sandwich	Thai Chili Noodle Salad	Buffalo Chicken Wrap
	BBQ Bar Condiments	Turkey Chef Salad with Italian Bread	Greek Salad with Focaccia Bread	Roast Beef on Garlic Bread	Cottage Cheese with Fruit and Muffin

MENU AFTER MO BEEF KIDS



	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
ENTREES	Smothered Burrito	BBQ Rib on Bun	Roast Beef Melt	Lasagna Rollup with Italian Bread	Philly Cheesesteak Pizza
	Crunchy Gordita	Meatball Sub			
ENTREE SALAD	Taco Salad	Cobb Salad	Bacon Pickle Grilled Cheese	Hamburger Mac and Cheese with Italian Bread	BBQ Bacon Cheeseburger Nachos
	Combread	Blueberry Muffin	Mandarin Orange Chicken Salad	Strawberry Chicken Salad	Chicken Bacon Ranch Salad
SPECIALTY BAR	Burger Bar	BBQ Bar	Breakfast Bar	Pizza/Calzone Bar	Nacho/Taco Bar
	Baked Chips		Tater Tots with Ketchup		Spanish Rice

This menu is a sample menu provided by Opaal, a food service contractor who partners with MoBKF program to beef up school lunches. Schools work with their food service directors to create menus and ways to incorporate additional beef into the menu. For beef menu inspirations in the school lunch program, visit www.mobeefkids.com.



Mo Beef Kids is a program of the Foundation for Food and Farm Connections and is supported through the Missouri Beef Checkoff and by more than 40,000 Missouri farmers and ranchers.

mobeefkids.com

