



YOUR MILL CREEK RANCH BEEF GUIDE

From Our Pasture to your freezer



MILL CREEK RANCH • NOEL, MISSOURI

Veteran-Owned & Operated

WELCOME TO MILL CREEK RANCH

Buying beef directly from a ranch is different from picking up a package at the grocery store — and we believe that is a good thing.

You know where your beef comes from, you have a direct connection to the people raising it, and you can stock your freezer with beef purchased in a way that fits your family.

This guide was created to make the process simple. Keep it handy from the day you reserve your beef through processing and pickup.

What you'll find inside

- How the ordering and processing process works
- Quarter, half and whole beef explained
- Hanging weight vs. packaged take-home weight
- How to estimate your beef cost
- How much freezer space to plan for
- How to approach your processor cut sheet
- What our 21-day dry-aging standard means
- Pickup, storage and frequently asked questions

Thank you for choosing to buy directly from Mill Creek Ranch.



FROM RESERVATION TO FREEZER

1. Reserve your beef

Your order begins when you reserve a quarter, half or whole beef with Mill Creek Ranch.

2. Processing is scheduled

We coordinate the animal's processing date and keep you informed about the timing.

3. You complete your cut instructions

The processor will need to know how you want your portion cut and packaged. Don't worry if you have never completed a cut sheet before — page 9 gives you a simple starting point.

4. Beef is dry-aged

Mill Creek Ranch's standard is 21 days of dry aging before final cutting and packaging.

5. Final weights and charges are determined

The ranch beef price is based on hanging weight. **Processing charges are paid separately by the customer to the processor at pickup.**

6. Pick up and stock your freezer

The processor packages your beef for the freezer. Bring enough coolers, boxes or insulated containers for transport.

QUARTER, HALF OR WHOLE?

The right amount depends on how much beef your household eats, your available freezer space and how often you want to purchase.

Order	Share of Beef	Best For	Planning
Quarter	1/4	Smaller households or first-time bulk buyers	Moderate freezer space
Half	1/2	Families that eat beef regularly	Larger dedicated freezer
Whole	Entire Beef	Large families, shared- family purchases or heavy beef use	Substantial freezer capacity

Exact pounds vary because cattle are not manufactured to a standard weight. Your final purchase is based on the actual hanging weight of the animal. Image is example only.

UNDERSTANDING BEEF WEIGHT

Live weight

The weight of the animal before processing.

Hanging weight

The weight of the carcass after initial processing and before aging, cutting and trimming. This is the weight Mill Creek Ranch uses to price your beef.

Packaged / take-home weight

The beef that actually goes into your freezer after aging, trimming, deboning where applicable, and cutting.

Hanging weight and take-home weight are NOT the same number. Bones, excess fat, moisture loss during aging and the cuts you choose all affect the final packaged weight.

A useful planning estimate

A common planning **estimate is roughly 60%** of hanging weight returned as packaged beef, but your actual yield can be higher or lower depending on the animal and your cut choices.



WHAT WILL MY BEEF COST?

Mill Creek Ranch beef price: \$6.85 per pound of hanging weight. Invoices will be supplied prior to pick up- Cash payment due at pickup, MCR rep will be there to ensure everything goes smoothly and payment must be finalized before the processor will release the meat.

Processing is separate and is paid by the customer directly to the processor at pickup.

Simple ranch-cost estimate

Your portion's hanging weight $\times$ \$6.85 = estimated amount paid to Mill Creek Ranch.

Example

If a half-beef portion has a 450 lb hanging weight:

$450 \text{ lb} \times \$6.85 = \$3,082.50$ paid to Mill Creek Ranch.

The processor's cutting/packaging charges would be added separately according to that processor's current rates and your processing choices.

Your estimate

Estimated hanging weight	LBS
Mill Creek Ranch price	\$6.85 / lb
Estimated ranch beef total	\$
Estimated processing	\$
Estimated total investment:	\$

PLAN YOUR FREEZER SPACE

Freezer capacity varies by freezer design and how tightly packages are arranged, so use freezer-space numbers as planning estimates rather than guarantees.

Before pickup

Clean and organize your freezer.

Remove old or unnecessary items.

Make sure the freezer is holding a safe freezing temperature.

Leave enough usable space for your entire order.

If you are unsure whether it will fit, arrange backup freezer space before pickup day.

Practical rule

It is much better to have extra freezer space than to discover at pickup that your order will not fit.

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN BUYING BEEF FROM MILL CREEK RANCH

	QUARTER (1/4) 	HALF (1/2) 	WHOLE (WHOLE BEEF) 
POUNDS OF BEEF	160-200	320-400	640-800
FREEZER SPACE (based on a 24 cu. ft. freezer)  <td></td> <td></td>			
MEALS (for family of 4-5) <td>105-135</td> <td>210-270</td> <td>420-540</td>	105-135	210-270	420-540
WEEKS SUPPLY (eating beef an average 3 times a week) <td>35-45</td> <td>70-90</td> <td>140-180</td>	35-45	70-90	140-180

KNOW YOUR BEEF CUTS

A whole beef contains a combination of steaks, roasts, ground beef and other cuts. Your choices on the cut sheet determine how much of each type you receive.

Common steak choices

- Ribeye
- T-bone / Porterhouse or New York strip + tenderloin choices
- Sirloin
- Round steak, depending on processing preference

Common roast choices

- Chuck roast
- Arm roast
- Rump / round roast
- Brisket

Other popular choices

- Ground beef
- Short ribs
- Stew meat
- Soup bones
- Liver, heart or other requested organ meats when available

Choosing boneless cuts, keeping more bones, grinding certain cuts, steak thickness and roast size all change what your final boxes look like.

BEFORE YOU COMPLETE THE CUT SHEET

There is no single 'correct' cut sheet. The best choices are the ones your household will actually cook and eat.

Think about these before the processor calls

- How thick do you like your steaks?
- How many steaks do you want per package?
- What size roasts work best for your household?
- Do you want more cuts kept as steaks/roasts or turned into ground beef?
- Do you want brisket?
- Do you use short ribs or stew meat?
- Do you want soup bones?
- Do you want organ meats if available?
- How large do you prefer ground-beef packages?

If you are new to buying bulk beef, tell the processor. They can explain the options available through their facility.

WHY 21 DAYS OF DRY AGING?

Mill Creek Ranch uses a standard 21-day dry-aging period before the beef is cut and packaged.

During dry aging, beef is held under controlled refrigeration. Natural processes occur in the muscle during

this period, which can contribute to tenderness and flavor development.

Dry aging also involves moisture loss, which is one reason hanging weight should never be treated as the

amount of packaged beef you will take home.

What this means for you

Your beef is not processed and immediately placed into retail packages. Aging is part of the timeline, so allow for this period when planning your pickup.

PICKUP DAY CHECKLIST

- Confirm pickup timing with Mill Creek Ranch Debbie Lindsay 479-224-1566.
- Bring adequate coolers, insulated bags or sturdy boxes.
- J & K Meats places your meat in thick large bags.
- Allow enough vehicle space for the entire order.
- Pay the processor applicable processing charges. **Check or cash. Debit will have a processing fee.**
- Check that you have all boxes before leaving.
- Transport the beef directly home and place it into the freezer promptly.

When you get home

Organize packages so you can easily see what you have. Consider grouping steaks, roasts, ground beef and specialty cuts in separate freezer areas or baskets.

MY FREEZER BEEF INVENTORY

Use this page after pickup so you know what is in the freezer before planning meals.

Cut	Packages	Qty/packages used	Total

Restock note

When your inventory starts getting low, contact Mill Creek Ranch early about future beef availability.

CARING FOR YOUR BEEF

Keep it frozen

Move your packaged beef into a properly operating freezer as soon as possible after pickup.

Rotate your inventory

Place newer packages behind older packages so the beef already in your freezer gets used first.

Labeling

Processor labels make inventory much easier. Keep packages organized by cut so you can quickly plan meals.

Thaw safely

Use safe food-handling practices when thawing and preparing beef. Refrigerator thawing is a simple option for planning meals ahead.

For official food-safety guidance, follow current USDA food-safety recommendations.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why don't I take home the same number of pounds as the hanging weight?

Hanging weight is measured before aging, trimming and final cutting. Moisture, bone, fat and your cut selections affect packaged yield.

Why can two quarters or halves be different weights?

Cattle naturally vary in size. Final pricing reflects the actual hanging weight associated with your purchase.

Who do I pay for processing?

The customer pays processing charges directly to the processor at pickup.

Can you guarantee exactly how many steaks or pounds of hamburger I will receive?

No. Yield and individual cuts vary by animal and by the customer's cut instructions.

How long is the beef aged?

Mill Creek Ranch's standard dry-aging period is 21 days.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING A LOCAL RANCH

When you purchase beef directly from Mill Creek Ranch, you are doing more than filling your freezer. You are supporting a working family ranch and a veteran-owned agricultural business.

We appreciate the opportunity to raise beef for your family.

MILL CREEK RANCH

Noel, Missouri • Veteran-Owned & Operated

www.millcreekranch.org