

Food Facts & Figures

Some Meat Myths May Have Little Basis In Fact

(NAPSA)—A recent poll by Harris Interactive revealed that some “meat myths” popularized in books and movies have taken hold among consumers. But these myths have little basis in fact. Can you separate the myths from the facts?

Myth: Eating too much red meat can increase heart disease risk because it contains saturated fat.

Fact: A 2010 study from the Harvard School of Public Health found “there is no significant evidence for concluding that dietary saturated fat is associated with an increased risk of heart disease.”

Myth: Americans today are eating too much meat.

Fact: Government data show that men on average eat 6.9 oz. per day and women eat 4.4 oz. The U.S. Dietary Guidelines recommend 5 to 7 ounces from the meat and beans category. On average, men consume the proper amount and women slightly underconsume.

Myth: Americans get the most sodium nitrite from cured meats like ham, hot dogs and bacon.

Fact: Less than 5 percent of human nitrite intake comes from cured meats. Ninety-three percent comes from vegetables such as lettuce, spinach, celery, cabbage and beets and from our own saliva.

Myth: Inspectors only visit meat and poultry plants occasionally.

Fact: Few other industries are regulated and inspected as comprehensively as the meat and poultry industry. The USDA employs 8,000 inspectors who are on-site every minute that a meat packing plant operates.



All cattle eat grass for most of their lives. Some cattle have their diets enhanced with corn, which is the seed of a grass.

Myth: A lack of federal oversight on U.S. meat and poultry plants makes livestock abuse common.

Fact: Under the Humane Slaughter Act, all livestock must be treated humanely according to strict rules. Federal veterinarians, on-site at all times where live animals are processed, monitor welfare continuously and may take a variety of actions for violations.

Myth: Feeding corn to cattle is “unnatural.”

Fact: Feeding corn to cattle is natural, nutritious and they prefer it. All cattle eat grass for most of their lives. Some cattle have their diets enhanced with corn and grain for the last few months of their lives. And don’t forget, corn is the seed of a grass!

For more information, visit www.MeatMythCrushers.com, or for a free brochure, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to American Meat Institute Public Affairs/Myths, 1150 Connecticut Ave., NW, 12th Floor, Washington, DC 20036.