

Beef Across the Nation- Let's Learn About Florida, The Oldest Cattle Raising State

Florida is a very diverse state with a strong agricultural background. The water, land and natural resources of Florida are protected and managed by the owners of the land, many of whom are farmers that produce safe and abundant food for their families, our nation, and to export to many countries around the world.

Did you know this about Florida-

- Cattle were first introduced to North America through Florida in 1521 by Spanish explorer Juan Ponce de Leon.
- Florida has 42,500 commercial farms, using 10 million acres. The average farm size in Florida is 235 acres.
- Nearly one-half of all Florida Agricultural land is involved in cattle production. Florida has 4 million acres of pastureland and 1 million acres of grazed woodland.
- Much of "Natural Florida" remains in the working landscape of Florida's cattle industry. Wildlife and plant systems are well-balanced and thriving on Florida's ranchlands.
- Florida's number one agricultural cash crop is horticulture.
- Florida leads the nation in the production of oranges, fresh market tomatoes, snap beans, cucumbers, bell peppers, squash, watermelon and sugarcane, and the world in the production of phosphate.
- Florida's farmers produce enough sweet corn for all of Florida's 17-million citizens to have an ear every week- about 800 million ears annually.

Florida's farms are located from Pensacola to the Keys. Can you find farms near where you live on the map on the next page? What do those farms grow? Florida's farms sold \$6.8 billion of products in 2004, making more money for the Florida economy than any other industry- even tourism. Florida's annual beef cattle sales are over \$500 million. Florida's annual milk production from 180,000 dairy cows is \$400 million, most of which is consumed in Florida every year.

Florida is a cow-calf state. The primary beef cattle "crop" is calves which are shipped to other states to grow in feedyards and then be processed into beef. One Florida ranch owns the largest brood cow herd in the nation, and three more are in the top ten. Florida also ranks 12th in the nation in the number of beef cows.

Florida's cattle producers are "good stewards of the land," and several have been recognized as National Cattlemen's Environmental Stewardship Award winners. They were leaders in the formulation and adoption of agricultural industry Water Quality and Best Management Practices and other standards. Lands used for cattle production are important for wildlife and native plant habitat, aquifer recharge, and carbon recovery. Grass and forages used for cattle production are renewable resources occurring in a great variety of landscapes, including improved pastures, wetlands and marsh, woodlands and prairie. Biologists conclude that bird and wildlife populations thrive on lands used for cattle production.

Florida's cattle producers continue to work diligently to provide the public with safe, healthy products from a wholesome, natural environment. Beef Quality Assurance is a daily component of livestock management programs, Animal identification leads to

better health records, tracking, and monitoring for effective disease detection and eradication. Florida's ranchers are working cooperatively with the USDA, Animal Plant Health Inspection Service, and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to protect animal health and public safety.

Cattle contribute to a healthy diet for people through two of the six My Pyramid Food Groups as published by the USDA. Lean beef can be a nutrient rich selection for a part of the recommended 5 ½ ounces per day of the Meat and Beans Group. Beef is rich in B-Vitamins, Zinc, Iron and Protein. These nutrients boost the immune system, build and repair muscle, fuel activity, and assist with brain function and heart health. Three servings daily from the Milk, Cheese, Yogurt and other dairy products group can contribute nine essential nutrients. Calcium, Potassium, Vitamin D and Protein help build and maintain bone mass and reduce osteoporosis risk. Potassium also helps regulate the body's fluid balance and helps maintain a healthy blood pressure.

Try this great Beef recipe to reap some of the benefits of nutrient rich Beef.

Easy Baked Beef, Bean & Corn Quesadillas

35 to 40 minutes. Makes 4 servings.

Ingredients:

1 pound of Ground Beef (95% lean) ½ cup canned black beans, rinsed and drained

Salt and Pepper ½ cup frozen corn, defrosted, drained well

1 cup prepared salsa 8 small flour tortillas (6 to 7 inch diameter)

¾ cup shredded reduced fat Cheddar Cheese or Mexican Cheese blend

- 1. HEAT oven to 400 degrees F. Brown ground beef in large nonstick skillet over medium heat 8 to 10 minutes or until beef is not pink, breaking up into ¾-inch crumbles. Season with salt and pepper, if desired.*
- 2. STIR in salsa, beans, and corn; cook and stir 4 to 5 minutes or until thickened and heated through.*
- 3. SPRAY baking sheet with cooking spray. Arrange 4 tortillas on baking sheet, overlapping slightly, if necessary. Sprinkle ½ cheese evenly over tortillas. Spoon beef mixture evenly over cheese; top with remaining cheese and tortillas. Spray top tortilla with cooking spray.*
- 4. BAKE in 400 degree F oven for 11 to 13 minutes or until quesadillas are lightly browned and edges are crisp. Cut into wedges to serve.*

Nutrition information per serving:

452 calories, 13 g fat (5g saturated fat; 6g monounsaturated fat); 80 mg cholesterol; 1151 mg sodium; 46 g carbohydrate; 5.3 g fiber; 38 g protein; 8.9 mg niacin; 0.5 mg vitamin B6; 2.4 mcg vitamin B12; 5.8 mg iron; 36.0 mcg selenium; 7.1 mg zinc.

This recipe is an excellent source of fiber, protein, niacin, vitamin B6, vitamin B12, iron, selenium, and zinc.

For more information on these topics, please visit the following resources.

www.mypyramid.gov

www.beefnutrition.org

www.nationaldairycouncil.org

Florida Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences (850)410-0900

www.doacs.state.fl.us/ai

Florida Cattlemen's Association (407)846-6221 www.floridacattlemen.org

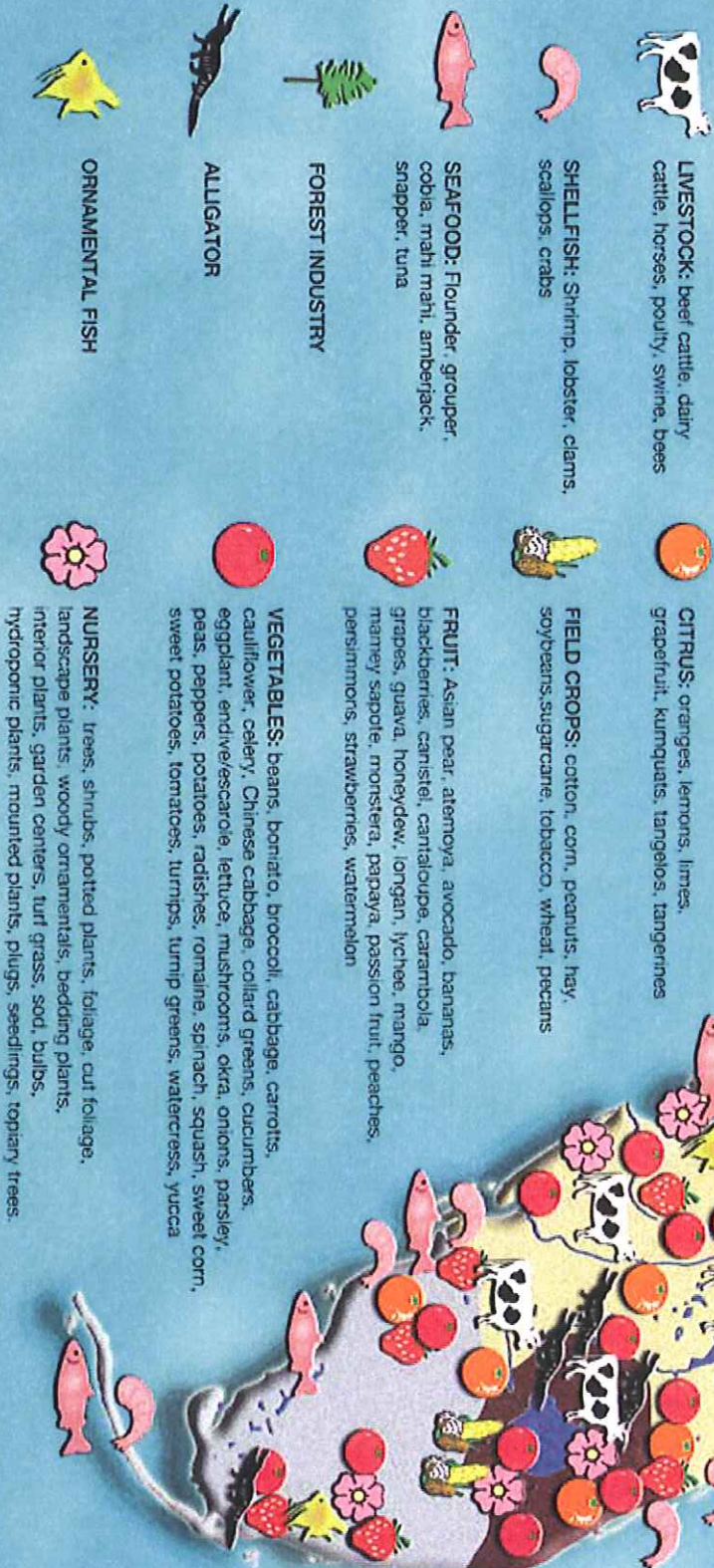


Fresh From Florida

SOIL	
CLAY	
SAND	
MUCK	
CORAL	

FLORIDA'S COMMODITIES

at a glance



LIVESTOCK: beef cattle, dairy cattle, horses, poultry, swine, bees

SHELLFISH: Shrimp, lobster, clams, scallops, crabs

SEAFOOD: Flounder, grouper, cobia, mahi mahi, amberjack, snapper, tuna

FOREST INDUSTRY

ALLIGATOR

ORNAMENTAL FISH

CITRUS: oranges, lemons, limes, grapefruit, kumquats, tangelos, tangermes

FIELD CROPS: cotton, corn, peanuts, hay, soybeans, sugarcane, tobacco, wheat, pecans

FRUIT: Asian pear, atemoya, avocado, bananas, blackberries, canistel, cantaloupe, carambola, grapes, guava, honeydew, longan, lychee, mango, manney sapote, monstera, papaya, passion fruit, peaches, persimmons, strawberries, watermelon

VEGETABLES: beans, boniato, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, Chinese cabbage, collard greens, cucumbers, eggplant, endive/escarole, lettuce, mushrooms, okra, onions, parsley, peas, peppers, potatoes, radishes, romaine, spinach, squash, sweet corn, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, turnips, turnip greens, watercress, yucca

NURSERY: trees, shrubs, potted plants, foliage, cut foliage, landscape plants, woody ornamentals, bedding plants, interior plants, garden centers, turf grass, sod, bulbs, hydroponic plants, mounted plants, plugs, seedlings, topiary trees

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services • Charles H. Bronson, Commissioner

