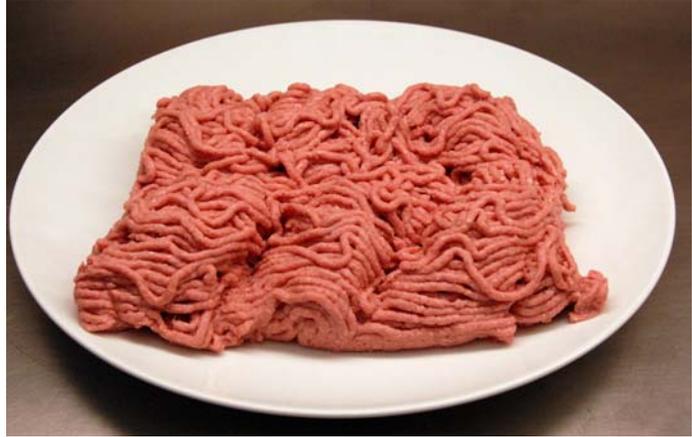


Lean Finely Textured Beef is NOT Pink Slime



Photos courtesy of Beef Products, Inc. -- used with permission

*Can you tell which one has LFTB in it? **

Lean Finely Textured Beef is Wholesome, Nutritious, and Safe

“Pink slime” is a misnomer for “lean finely textured beef” or “LFTB.” USDA recognizes LFTB as a safe and wholesome beef product. According to one estimate, 70 percent of the ground beef in the U.S. contains LFTB. LFTB is a product of normal beef processing. After a beef animal has been slaughtered and skinned, processors remove large pieces of fat from the carcass. A typical 700-pound carcass yields approximately 140 pounds of trimmed fat. These fat trimmings also contain 15-20 pounds of lean beef.

Food-grade ammonium hydroxide (ammonia + water) used in the production of LFTB has been declared safe by the Food and Drug Administration since 1974. It is utilized in a variety of other processed food products, such as baked goods, gelatins and puddings, and cheeses. A puff of ammonium hydroxide raises the pH of the beef product and destroys bacteria that could make someone ill if the raw product were not cooked thoroughly. The USDA, after consultation with FDA, has determined that this use of ammonium hydroxide is safe.

To make LFTB, the fat trimmings are warmed to about 100°F in equipment that looks like a large, high speed mixing bowl that spins these trimmings to separate meat from the fat that has been liquefied. This results in a very low fat (95+% lean) product, which many consumers desire. This process is very similar to the process used for separating cream from milk. LFTB is quite simply 100% beef, and is strictly regulated and inspected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Inspectors are present in plants every day where these products are made, to ensure that this product is produced in a safe and wholesome manner.

Because it is 100% beef, the US beef industry is proud to produce LFTB that maximizes as much lean meat as possible from the cattle we raise. It's the right thing to do and it ensures that our products remain as affordable as we can make them while helping to feed America and the world. According to American Meat Institute Foundation (AMI), if LFTB were not used in fresh ground beef products, approximately 1.5 million additional head of cattle would need to be harvested annually to make up the difference. This is not a good use of natural resources, or modern technology, in a world where red meat consumption is rising and available supply is declining.

– Anand Mohan, Ph.D., Food Science Extension Specialist

** Both contain LFTB!*

Contact Dr. Mohan at anandm@uga.edu or by phone (706) 542-2574.

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