

Highwood Valley Ranch Beef would like to clarify our pricing system in regards to our half or whole beef sales. The reason we believe we need to clarify is that we perceive a misunderstanding of what an animal weighs on the hoof (alive), what its hanging (hot) weight is and what its packaged (cut and wrap) weight is. An animal's live weight is generally 1000lbs to 1200lbs when we send it in to be slaughtered. That animal is then killed, having the hide, head and intestinal organs removed. It is hung by halves and weighed. This weight is called the **HOT** weight. Obviously this **HOT** weight is less than the **LIVE** weight. This is the weight that we charge you for, as it is an independent weight of that singular animal and is given to us by the slaughter facility the day the animal is taken in. This weight does not coincide with the weight of beef that you will place in your freezer due to a process called **DRY HANGING** as well as the fact that when the half is cut and wrapped a significant amount of bones and trim are removed. Highwood Valley Ranch Beef Would like to take the time to explain this **DRY HANGING** process in order to clarify why the weights are different and why this is a good thing for you our valued customer.

### The **DRY HANGING** process

After the **HOT** weight is taken the two halves are then **DRY HUNG** in a large cooler for **21 days**. This is a very important process and a major selling feature for us at Highwood Valley Ranch Beef as it is a method that separates us from wholesale beef companies. During the **DRY HANGING PROCESS** a crust forms on the outside of the half, very similar to the texture of beef jerky. The half begins to loose moisture and what remains is absorbed into the meat which **enhances the flavor and tenderness of the meat**. At the end of the **21 day DRY HANGING PROCESS** the crust is then trimmed away. The dry aging process takes special care as it is very time consuming and expensive, requiring extra effort, storage and high-quality beef. It is important to note that there is a significant amount of weight loss (as much as 20%) on the half during this process due to loss of water weight. After the 21 days the beef is then **CUT AND WRAPPED**. This process requires butchers to de-bone the half and portion it to your specifications. This process accounts for more weight loss as unnecessary fat and bones are removed.

In the end when you come to pick up your packaged beef there is a significant difference in weight due to the various methods we have explained above. We hope we have sufficiently clarified our process and explained to you why we believe that we are providing the best possible beef. We take immense pride in providing you beef that comes straight from our farm to your table.

### Dry Hanging Vs. Wet aging.

How does the **DRY HANGING** process differ from what happens in larger processing facilities? Large facilities in Alberta slaughter as many as 4000 animals daily, this makes it impossible to **DRY HANG** the beef for any amount of time let alone 21 days (you can imagine 8000 halves times 21 days!). Instead of the **DRY HANGING** process they use a method called **WET AGING**. This method is done by cutting halves into primal cuts or smaller pieces, such as loins and large roasts. These smaller cuts are then vacuum packed and placed into coolers. The advantage of this process is that they could "wet age" the beef in the bag and not lose any of the water weight in the beef. Wet aging is much more cost effective for the large scale processors as this method still tenderizes the meat. The disadvantage of **WET AGING** is that it fails to **enhance the flavor** as there is no loss of moisture. Now you might think that because the beef has been **WET AGED** it will be more juicy and tender compared with **DRY AGING**. This is not true. The tenderizing process happens during both methods so you could argue that the tenderness is equal, however the flavor of **DRY AGED** beef is more concentrated than **WET AGED** as it is not diluted by unnecessary water.