The Beef Report

Ribeye laboratory panel · the 20 top-ranked home-delivery purveyors · Issue 1 · February 15, 2027

SAMPLE
ILLUSTRATIVE VALUES

#	Purveyor	Sold as	IMF %	Shear kg	Cook loss %	pH	Purge %	APC log	Pathogens	Residues	Omega 6:3	δ¹³C ‰	Net wt %	Arrival °F	Eating	Claims	Score
1	[redacted]	A5 Wagyu	38.2	2.1	14.8	5.52	0.6	2.3	ND	ND	11.8	−19.5	101.2	−4	84	4/4	
2	[redacted]	Prime, dry-aged	11.4	2.6	20.1	5.55	0.4	3.1	ND	ND	9.6	−14.2	100.8	−1	80	3/3	
3	[redacted]	American Wagyu	17.9	2.4	17.2	5.58	0.9	2.6	ND	ND	12.4	−13.6	102.0	2	79	4/4	
4	[redacted]	Prime	10.2	2.8	21.4	5.60	1.8	2.9	ND	ND	10.1	−14.9	100.4	−6	76	3/3	
5	[redacted]	Grass-finished	5.1	3.3	23.0	5.62	1.1	2.2	ND	ND	2.1	−24.8	103.5	−8	70	4/4	
6	[redacted]	Choice, dry-aged	7.6	3.0	21.9	5.57	0.7	3.4	ND	ND	8.8	−15.6	100.9	3	73	3/3	
7	[redacted]	Prime	9.6	2.9	22.4	5.63	1.5	3.0	ND	ND	11.2	−13.9	99.6	−2	74	3/3	
8	[redacted]	Choice, Angus	6.4	3.4	23.8	5.66	1.9	3.7	ND	ND	9.4	−14.6	99.1	5	66	3/3	
9	[redacted]	Grass-finished	4.2	3.9	25.1	5.68	1.6	2.8	ND	ND	2.8	−23.9	98.7	−3	61	3/3	
10	[redacted]	Organic, grass-finished	3.9	4.1	24.6	5.71	2.2	3.3	ND	ND	2.5	−25.6	100.2	9	59	4/4	
11	[redacted]	Choice	5.7	3.6	24.3	5.64	2.4	4.1	ND	ND	10.6	−14.1	98.4	12	63	3/3	
12	[redacted]	Wagyu cross	9.1	3.1	22.0	5.61	2.0	3.9	ND	ND	13.5	−13.2	99.0	1	68	2/3 ▲	
13	[redacted]	Prime	7.4 ▲	3.2	23.5	5.70	2.6	3.6	ND	ND	9.9	−14.4	99.5	6	67	2/3 ▲	
14	[redacted]	Choice, dry-aged	5.9	3.5	22.8	5.69	0.8	4.4	ND	ND	9.1	−15.0	101.4	15	64	3/3	
15	[redacted]	Grass-finished	4.6	4.3	26.2	5.74	2.9	4.0	ND	ND	7.9 ▲	−17.1 ▲	99.8	4	57	2/3 ▲	
16	[redacted]	Choice	4.4	4.6 ▲	27.5	5.79	3.6	4.8	ND	ND	11.9	−13.4	97.2 ▲	18	55	2/3 ▲	
17	[redacted]	Choice, no added hormones	5.2	4.0	25.9	5.72	2.8	4.3	ND	TBA 0.6 ppb ▲	10.8	−13.8	99.3	7	60	2/3 ▲	
18	[redacted]	Choice	3.4 ▲	4.8 ▲	28.4 ▲	5.81	3.1	4.6	ND	ND	12.2	−13.1	98.9	21	51	1/2 ▲	
19	[redacted]	Choice	5.0	4.4	26.8	6.04 ▲	3.8	5.2	ND	ND	10.3	−14.0	96.5 ▲	27	52	2/3 ▲	
20	[redacted]	Ungraded	3.8	5.1 ▲	29.6 ▲	5.93 ▲	4.6 ▲	6.3 ▲	ND	ND	12.8	−13.5	95.8 ▲	44 ▲	46	1/3 ▲	

Green top tier · **Yellow** second tier · **Red** bottom tier

▲ **outside our line** (methods and ranges on page 2). Each figure is the average of three ribeyes bought anonymously in separate orders. ND: not detected. TBA: trenbolone, a synthetic growth hormone. **This sample's values are illustrative**, typical of published ranges for retail ribeye. They are not results for any seller; names and scores are hidden.

What we test, and what real-world ribeyes measure

TEST	METHOD	UNIT	TYPICAL REAL-WORLD RANGE	OUR LINE
Marbling (intramuscular fat) How much fat runs through the lean. It checks the grade on the label.	Chemical fat extraction, AOAC 991.36	% of lean	Select 3–4%, Choice 4–8%, Prime 8–13%, American Wagyu 12–25%, Japanese A5 25–50%	Within the range for the grade it's sold as
Tenderness (Warner-Bratzler shear force) The force to cut a cooked core of the steak. Lower is more tender.	AMSA Research Guidelines (2016); ASTM F2925	kg force, cooked to 160 °F	Ribeyes 2.0–5.0 kg; ASTM "very tender" 3.9 kg or less, "tender" 4.4 kg or less	4.4 kg or less
Cooking loss How much weight the steak loses in the pan, mostly water. Lower is juicier.	AMSA Research Guidelines (2016)	% of raw weight	15–30%	28% or less
Ultimate pH Stress before slaughter leaves a high pH: dark, dry, firm "dark cutter" beef that keeps less well.	Probe pH of the lean, AOAC 981.12	pH	Normal 5.4–5.8; 6.0 or more is a dark cutter	Below 5.9
Purge (liquid in the package) Red liquid that left the meat: freezing, thawing and refreezing make more.	Package drip weight	% of package weight	0.5–3% for vacuum-packed steaks	4% or less
Bacteria count (aerobic plate count) How many bacteria are on the meat. It reflects handling and freshness. Lower is cleaner.	FDA BAM ch. 3; AOAC 990.12	log CFU per gram	Retail steaks 2–5; spoilage begins near 7	5.5 or less
Pathogens: Salmonella and E. coli O157:H7 and the other big-six STEC Whether disease-causing bacteria are present.	USDA FSIS MLG 4 and MLG 5C	in a 25 g sample	Not detected in almost all intact steaks	Not detected
Drug and hormone residues Antibiotics, and synthetic growth hormones (trenbolone, zeranol, melengestrol). It checks "no antibiotics" and "no added hormones".	LC-MS/MS multi-residue screen, USDA FSIS Chemistry Laboratory Guidebook	parts per billion	Not detected in beef raised without them; trace trenbolone in implanted cattle	Not detected where the label says none
Omega-6 to omega-3 ratio Grass makes omega-3 fats; grain makes omega-6. It checks "grass-fed" and "grass-finished".	Fatty acid profile by gas chromatography, AOAC 996.06	ratio	Grass-finished 1.5–3; grain-finished 6–20	3 or less where sold as grass-finished
Diet signature (carbon isotopes) Corn leaves a carbon-13 signature in the meat that grass doesn't. A second check on grass-finished claims.	Stable isotope ratio mass spectrometry (EA-IRMS)	‰ vs VPDB	Grass-finished −28 to −22; corn-finished −18 to −11	−21 or lower where sold as grass-finished
Net weight against the label Whether you got the weight you paid for.	NIST Handbook 133 (checking packaged contents)	% of labeled weight	97–104%	98% or more
Temperature on arrival The steak's internal temperature when the box arrives by the seller's chosen shipping.	Calibrated probe on delivery	°F	Frozen −10 to 15; fresh 30–40	40 °F or colder
Eating quality (taste panel) Untrained consumers score tenderness, juiciness, flavor and overall liking, blind.	Meat Standards Australia consumer protocol (MQ4 score)	0–100	Below 46 unsatisfactory; 46–63 good; 64–76 better; 77 or more premium	46 or more
Label claims confirmed Of the seller's claims we can test (grade, grass-fed, no hormones, no antibiotics, breed, weight), how many the lab confirmed.	The tests above, plus a DNA breed panel where a breed (Wagyu, Angus) is claimed	confirmed of tested	—	All confirmed

How the steaks are bought and tested

1. Three ribeyes from each of the 20 top-ranked purveyors on our board, from three separate orders, bought anonymously at the price anyone pays, delivered by the seller's own shipping.
2. Each box goes unopened to an independent third-party food-testing laboratory. The lab works from coded samples and never knows whose steaks they are.
3. Results are the average of the three steaks. A pathogen or residue found in any one of them is reported.
4. Each purveyor gets one score from the results, and a tier: green for the top, yellow for the second tier, red for the bottom.

Paper only

The Beef Report is printed and mailed to newsletter subscribers who register a mailing address. There is no digital edition: no PDF, no web page, no email copy of the results. It comes twice a year, the first on February 15, 2027.

Sample. The layout of the printed report with illustrative values typical of the ranges above. Not results for any purveyor: names are placeholders and hidden; scores are hidden.