The result is fewer resources are used to produce beef, with smaller impacts on the environment and your grocery bill. Hormone implants are small, slow release pellets placed under the skin in an animal’s ear to enhance production of natural hormones. Using hormone implants directs growth towards muscle and away from fat, which boosts growth rate and means less feed is needed for the animal to gain weight.1

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All plants and animals have hormones naturally in their systems. Your body produces hormones no matter what you eat.2

Many common foods have higher amounts of hormones than beef produced with the use of hormone implants2.3

Food/supplement | Estrogen* (1 ng = 1 billionth of a gram) | Servings of beef (75 g) ~
--- | --- | ---
75 g beef without hormone implants | 1.1 ng | 0.65
75 g beef with hormone implants | 1.9 ng | 1
75 g pork | 2.5 ng | 1.3
355 ml beer | 15 ng | 7.9
355 ml milk | 51 ng | 26.8
75 g cabbage | 2025 ng | 1,065.8
1 tbsp soybean oil | 28,370 ng | 14,931.6
Birth control pill | 20,000-50,000 ng* depending on brand |

Compare those amounts to the amount of estrogen produced by your body every day3

ADULT FEMALE | ESTROGEN = 480,000 ng

Would have to eat 95.3 cows’ worth of beef produced using hormone implants PER DAY ~222 kg each to match her own daily production of estrogen.

ADULT MALE | ESTROGEN = 136,000 ng

Would have to eat 27 cows’ worth of beef produced using hormone implants PER DAY ~222 kg each to match his own daily production of estrogen.

PRE-PUBERTAL GIRL | ESTROGEN = 54,000 ng

Would have to eat 10.7 cows’ worth of beef produced using hormone implants PER DAY ~222 kg each to match her own daily production of estrogen.

PRE-PUBERTAL BOY | ESTROGEN = 41,500 ng

Would have to eat 8.2 cows’ worth of beef produced using hormone implants PER DAY ~222 kg each to match his own daily production of estrogen.

Birth control pills are effective because they contain hormones that are specially treated to protect them from being broken down by the acids and enzymes in your digestive system. Naturally occurring or implant hormones are not protected from digestion, meaning that the extra amount you may consume from eating beef produced with the use of hormone implants is not absorbed by the body in any significant amounts.6

Many common foods have higher amounts of hormones than beef produced with the use of hormone implants2.3

Researchers believe that increased body fat levels in young children, not hormones in food, is one of the major causes of early onset puberty.7,8

This is a REALLY small number!

www.albertabeef.org
165, 6815 - 8th Street N.E., Calgary, AB T2E 7H7
Phone 403-275-4400
Email abpfeedback@albertabeef.org

Worried about hormones in cattle?
You don’t need to be
Health Canada, the World Health Organization and the United Nations all conclude the use of hormones is a safe practice that can be continued without harm to human health.9 10

Random sampling of final beef product is done by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency to ensure hormone levels are either within the normal range.12

The use of hormone implants means fewer resources are used to produce beef

11% MORE BEEF RESULTED FROM PRODUCTION PRACTICES LIKE THE USE OF HORMONE IMPLANTS BETWEEN 1977 AND 200714

Regardless of production system, beef is an important part of a healthy diet.

It's true that adding hormones make cattle grow faster, and more efficiently; this improves profitability for the producer.

A financially sound industry fosters competition that keeps beef affordable for all consumers and allows producers to invest in improvements for the future.

Beef without any added hormones is available. There are no adverse health effects if you choose to buy conventional.

For references, more information about the beef industry, and beef recipes, please visit the consumer section of www.albertabeef.org