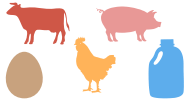
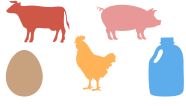
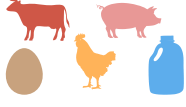
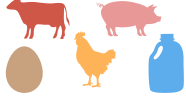

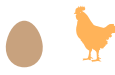

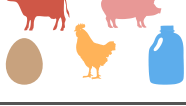





# Meat, Dairy and Egg Guide

There are many factors that affect how animal foods are produced, regulated, marketed, and perceived by consumers. The jumble of marketing terms further complicates food decisions. Understanding what these terms do (and do not) mean allows you to make educated choices when sourcing these foods.

TERM	PRODUCTS	DEFINITION	PROS	CONS
<b>CONVENTIONAL</b> (not indicated on label)		standard production, animals typically fed grain in CAFO/feedlots or barns	+ more time/cost-effective + grain-fed cows produce higher grade meat (younger & more marbling)	- some concerns about animal welfare, sustainability, environmental impacts, health impacts of pesticides
<b>ORGANIC</b>		animals fed organic grain (no pesticides or GMOs), raised without hormones or antibiotics	+ fewer toxins in final product + often more environmentally sustainable practices + slight nutrition benefits	- does not differentiate how/where animals raised - more expensive
<b>ALL-NATURAL</b>		loosely regulated term, does not mean much in regards to animal products	+ does not contain artificial or synthetic ingredients	- primarily a marketing term - can be misleading if used on processed foods
<b>ANTIBIOTIC-FREE</b>		no antibiotics in final food product (standard for all meat/eggs/dairy)	+ given for 2 reasons: 1) to promote growth 2) to treat infection	- misnomer term (because is standard for all food; ABs still often used early in life) - potential AB resistance
<b>HORMONE-FREE</b> rbST/rbGH-free		no hormone injections (standard in beef/dairy, not approved in pork/poultry)	+ increase growth & milk production + final hormone levels in beef meat are negligible	- rbST increases infection in dairy cows (=more AB use) - higher IGF-1 levels in milk may promote human cancer
<b>CAGE-FREE</b>		chickens not raised in cages, have ~1 sq ft indoors	+ standard for chicken meat + cage-free eggs from chickens with more space to move around (vs cage)	- no outdoor access
<b>FREE-RANGE</b>		chickens have an optional ~2 sq ft outdoors	+ allows some outdoor access	- may not go outdoors (where there may not be vegetation)
<b>PASTURE-RAISED</b>		chickens have 108+ sq ft outside, cows/pigs raised in pasture	+ most outdoor access + better nutritional content in eggs (more omega-3, vit D, vit E, beta-carotene)	- more expensive - beef & dairy: pasture-raised ≠ grass-fed (may be confusing on label)
<b>GRASS-FED</b>		beef/dairy cows fed some grass (does not apply to chickens/pigs, who need grain)	+ fed some grass, usually early in life	- may be finished on grain - cows may have been raised in feedlot (hay-based feed can be considered grass)
<b>GRASS-FINISHED/ 100% GRASS-FED</b>		beef/dairy cows fed only grass their whole life	+better nutritional content: less saturated fat, better omega 3:6 ratio, higher vit A & E, higher antioxidants	- more expensive - different milk taste & meat marbling (some consumers may not prefer)
<b>REGENERATIVE/ BIODYNAMIC</b>		focus on agricultural practices that promote soil health, biodiversity, water conservation, etc	+ promotes sustainability, health of plants and animals in context of ecosystem	- difficult to implement on large scale in current system (best on smaller, diversified farms)

*Ideally, these foods would be sourced from a trusted, local producer who is willing to share about their production process.*