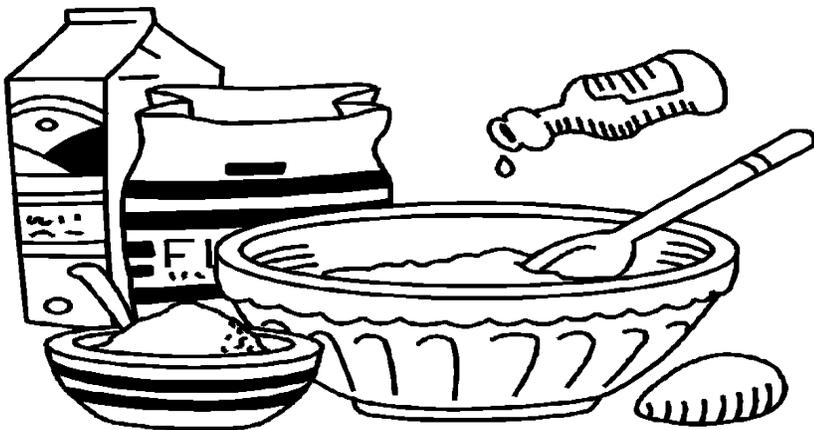


Common Sense Guide to Weight Loss for Farmers (and others who eat)



INTRODUCTION

Farmers Know Food

Farmers know about food. They know how to grow it, how to prepare it and how to eat it. They appreciate food all the more because they know how much work goes into getting each bite to the table.

Farmers know freshness because they have eaten corn they've just picked and put directly into a boiling pot or on the grill. They eat tomatoes just plucked from the vine. Many farmers remember eating fresh pork tenderloin for breakfast the morning after the neighborhood folks spent a long day together killing and processing fat hogs.

Farmers know quality because they study it and strive for it. Ask any farmer about the breed or strain or variety they prefer and you will get an answer - but be prepared because you may learn more than you expected. For example, countless generations of master breeders have selected cattle that produce meat that is more tender and flavorful than ever, but the science of animal breeding that has brought us to this wonderful place is complicated. And it's not simply genetics, but also health care and good nutrition. Luckily, people in the cattle business are willing to study as hard as it takes to put wholesome and nutritious beef on the table. The same goes for pork, lamb, goats and poultry and all the wonderful fruits and vegetable that farmers produce every day of the year.

Farmers know how great it feels to finally get the crop in after a long season of planning, buying seeds, fertilizing, plowing (not so much these days with minimum tillage techniques), sowing, spraying, irrigating and harvesting. They also know how scary it is to lose a crop or see profits vanish because of market conditions. Farming is a risky business with good times and bad and it takes a great

combination of training, intelligence and common sense to succeed as a farmer.

Farming has changed - Farmers don't work as hard, but they still eat well

These remarkable people that we call farmers love the land, love the food they produce and relish life. They work hard and get hungry. When they sit down to eat, they expect to have good food and lots of it. This was fine as long as they were burning a few thousand calories a day working in the fields or doing hands-on work every day with animals. The problem is that technology has come to the farm. When I was a kid, hauling hay meant picking up hundreds of bales and throwing them up to someone who was stacking them on the bed of a truck. When my dad was young, hay time meant even more labor because they didn't even have balers on wheels, so they used pitch forks to load hay onto wagons which were driven to stationary balers or loose-hay barns. It was all hot, hard work. Now machines do practically every step.

Field crops are even more mechanized. A single farmer can do all the labor needed to raise thousands of acres of corn or soybeans while sitting in the air-conditioned cab of powerful modern tractor, with computer access, GPS guidance and stereo surround sound. This is great, but doesn't burn calories.

There are hundreds of examples. Cattlemen are more likely to use four-wheelers or utility vehicles instead of horses to do their many husbandry chores. We still have a horse, and she's good for driving cattle, but it is simply too easy to jump into an SUV and toot around. Part of it is my short legs and older bones are harder to hoist into the saddle.

Commercial vegetable growers have mechanized every aspect from planting to harvesting. Modern dairies still mostly need people, but robot milkers are available and apparently work with surprising efficiency. This is quite a contrast to the hand-milking we did when I was a kid. Interestingly, it is not legal to sell milk

that has been squeezed out by hand. That's okay, because the milk yield of modern cows is so high that humans don't have either the stamina or the time to milk them. And, their teats have been genetically adapted for machine-milking, so are too small for human hands to squeeze over and over as is needed for efficient milking.

There is still hard, physical labor to be done on farms and farmers still work hard, but they don't work as hard as they used to, but we still like to eat just like we did when we worked hard all day. If you eat as much as ever and work less, guess what happens - you gain weight. Farmers, like many others, have gained weight.

Part-Time Farmers May be More at Risk

Another complicating factor is that many farmers, like me, are part-timers. I'm currently the director of the Ag School at Middle Tennessee State University, my brother is a Real Estate Appraiser and my Brother-in-Law is C.E.O. of the Tennessee Walking Horse National Celebration. In other words, we are busy people, but still make time to manage a 550 acre 75 head cow-calf operation. We do it by working hard when we work, but we only do that a day a week or so. The rest of the time we are in or around our offices, not burning calories.

Work less, eat great. This life-style made me gain weight as I got older. It is making many people gain weight, farmers and a lot of others. I don't have to list all the problems this causes - we get bombarded with this all the time.

I'll simply tell what I worried about. I don't think I'm unique. First, I didn't like how I felt. I was breathing hard from simply going up stairs. My cholesterol and triglycerides were high. We have diabetes in the family, so I was worried about that. My blood pressure was running a little high.

I decided to exercise more. I bought a bike and started riding practically

every day. I got in better shape. I wasn't as out of breath. But nothing else changed, because I refused to consider changing what I ate. I like to eat, I like every food. I used to not like sweet potatoes, but my wife's decades long strategy of casually insisting I try a little now and then eventually worked. So I like every kind of food but eating all I wanted of everything was killing me.

This was the situation in December of 2010. That was a good time because I went to Argentina with Dr. Tony Johnston to help him set up our study abroad program down there. We ate great food, drank great wines and I gained weight. I continued to eat all the way through Christmas and New Year's. In January, I weighed about 225. At 5' 10" the charts say I'm obese. I don't like the charts that most doctors use because they don't adjust for body type, but that doesn't matter - I was too fat.

The Basis of the Idea

The foundation of our good change is the February, 2011 Reader's Digest article by Gary Taubes which had some very sound advice about switching to a Low-Carb Lifestyle. I liked some of what he said, but I didn't totally agree. I liked what he said about the relationship between eating large amounts of carbohydrates and driving up insulin levels. This resonated with me because my Ph.D. research was related to the hormones insulin and glucagon. I knew then that carbs stimulate insulin and insulin makes fat cells turn carbs into fat. Glucagon is less understood, but research shows that glucagon generally works in opposition to insulin. My research showed that glucagon favors protein formation, not fat formation - but this was in sheep. Most of the research suggests that diets that suppress insulin and stimulating glucagon may result in weight loss.

Bottom line - several years ago I had a good handle on the fact that carbs made animals fat and I even knew the hormonal basis. I also knew enough to be suspicious when the Dr. Atkins started pushing his extreme low-carb diet. My

problem with Atkins and the Gary Taubes article is that I suspect that evolution has driven us to crave carbohydrates. When you completely remove carbs, the suppression of insulin will make the pounds drift away, but if it happens too quickly, your body will rebel. The mechanisms that make us hungry will make us crave carbs and practically force you to eat.

My idea, and I'm not the only one, is that a modified, low-carb diet will work the best in the long term. Cut down on carbohydrate foods so insulin spikes are avoided, but allow reasonable exceptions.

Who Can Make This Weight Loss Plan Work

One day, my friend Keith Harrison was in my office and he mentioned that it looked like I'd lost weight. I told him I'd lost 30 pounds and was feeling great. When he asked what I did to lose the weight I told him the essentials of the preceding section and gave him a copy of the article. Then I followed it with more details (the stuff you will read in the following pages). A few weeks later I saw him at a meeting where there were a large number of farmers and he told me he'd lost 19 pounds. He looked great.

A couple of weeks after that we went to lunch. It was just before Christmas, so my family joined Keith and me. We did some brain storming over a low carb Mexican lunch (William did not worry about the carbs, but he is still young and trim). One of the things that we settled on was that our primary audience should be the agricultural community. That makes sense because we are both part-time farmers. I retired from Agricultural Extension after 25 years to become the head of an Ag School and Keith works for the Tennessee Farmer's Cooperative. We both attend many farmer meetings and know hundreds of people in the Ag Community.

I can safely say that many farmers, farm families and others in the agricultural community have issues with weight. Some of my students in the Ag School could lose a few pounds.

I don't know that the Ag sector is any more overweight than others. It is simply that these are the people I know and care about. It is also the group that I know how to get information to. I've been doing it in some form for over 30 years.

The ideas I'll present will work for anyone - certainly not just farmers. I would like to think that farmers would be more open to ideas for improving their health, because farmers are essentially smart people who love to do things the right way, but this is countered by the fact that they really enjoy their food.

Farmers are also not easily impressed by food fads. They know too much about food. Try going to a meeting of farmers and ask for a show of hands to this question: "How many of you would like to become vegetarians?" Have an exit plan.

Farmers may not buy into the latest food fads, but they have common sense. When something new develops that is based on sound logic and research, they'll be interested. The idea of developing farmer's markets is growing in many places around the country - possibly driven by increased interest by consumers in eating more locally grown food. Farmers may be skeptical about extremes in the "locavore" movement, but they are good with local farmers making more money.

We think we've taking a common sense approach in this weight loss program. We know that farmers are not going to completely stop eating bread. So eat some bread, but try to cut back, especially on white bread. An occasional bite of cake isn't going to kill anyone, just don't pig out. This is an important one: try cutting way down on soft drinks, but an occasional bourbon and coke may be allowed (try diet coke).

Farmers, like anyone who wants to improve their lives, have got to first decide that they want to change.

I've had several people tell me that this program is probably easier for men than for women. Greer has decided that Weight Watchers fits her needs better. That makes an excellent point: After you've decided to change your life style, find what works best for you.

I think any lifestyle change works best if you have help. I couldn't do this without my wife of 37 years, Lissa. We are in it together and both of us feel better and have more energy.

What to do to Lose Weight and Become Healthier

Here are the highlights of the Common Sense Weight Loss program for Farmers (and other people who like to eat):

- **Drop soft drinks (or cut down big-time).** These drinks are designed to be addictive and they are. They are loaded with sugar often from corn syrup. Diet drinks may not be as bad, but some research indicates that diet soft drinks may have elements that stimulate insulin, so best to drop soft drinks entirely (possible exception: an occasional bourbon and diet coke is pretty good). Un-sweet tea with sugar substitute is good. A little dry wine isn't bad. Water is super-important in this program. I used to think it silly to waste money on water in a bottle. I still prefer tap water, but the point is to drink water instead of soft drinks. After I broke the soft drink habit I have found I enjoy water much more. Some people say drink some certain amount - I don't know about that. Just drink plenty of water.
- **Eat meat.** Meat, by definition, does not have carbs, so meat fits the low-carb lifestyle, but don't get carried away. Sausage and bacon work very

well into a low -carb diet, but too much fat from these or other sources will still drive up triglycerides and cholesterol. Don't eat too much high-fat meat, but realize that some fat will be satisfying and may help you avoid craving carbs. There's some pretty good lean meat out there, like pork loin and flat-iron steaks.

- **Drop chips.** Most chips are a double barrel threat because they are carbs with fat. French fries are the worst. Pork skins are zero carb, but pure fat - so use for an occasional crunch but don't get carried away. If you need the crunch try celery - great with peanut butter or dips. Also carrot or radish slices.
- **Eat Dairy.** Again, reasonably low carbs. Some dairy products can have significant carbs (chocolate milk with sugar sweetener), but many are not high in either carbs or fat. There is quite a lot of research accumulating on the role of milk in healthy diets. One exciting area of research is focusing on the role of chocolate milk as an after work-out recovery drink in the diets of athletes.
Breyers has low-carb vanilla and chocolate - not great, but OK. We buy extra when it is on sale. We use real butter - just not so much at a time. Low-carb yogurt is available and is very good. The Greek-style yogurt is also low carb and evidently very good - according to Lissa.
- **Drop bread, or at least decrease.** You can get low-carb bread. Lissa has a high-fiber oat bran banana walnut recipe that is pretty good. We also use the sandwich-thins buns if we have to wrap something around a hamburger. If we go to Subway, we order the flat bread or wraps. We've included a recipe for high-fiber muffins - Lissa and Greer love 'em. We eat a lot of celery.

- **Instead of crackers, put dips on veggie pieces.** I've gotten to like pimiento cheese on baby carrots. I eat peanut butter on celery every day - but I only use natural peanut butter - the kind you have to stir. At first I thought it wasn't sweet enough but now I think the regular peanut butter is too sweet.
- **Decrease potatoes.** Our primary strategy has been to bake sweet potatoes and use them when would have previously used white potatoes. We've also substituted various kinds of field / black-eyed or Crowder peas. Sometimes we use fall squashes, spaghetti squash or even green peas. If we have to eat potatoes, we eat smaller amounts. This applies when we go family gatherings and Teresa brings potatoes - we can't resist because they are so good, but we try to have a small portion and love them all the more.
- **Go nuts on nuts.** I used to think English walnuts were tasteless wonders, but we discovered that a 12 minute roast at 350 degrees brings out a wonderful flavor. We eat them every day. I like 'em on cereal, in salads and stir fry and just as they are. We also eat a lot of almonds and pistachios. Some peanuts are good in diet, but they are pretty high in fat. Cashews are good, but fairly expensive. Pecans are good, but make me think of pecan pie which is not good.
- **No Spaghetti.** This is tough because the sauce is so good. One idea is to put spaghetti sauce on eggplants. You might try it on spaghetti squash. Macaroni? No (except for a little at Mama Gill's because it is so good!). Lasagna? No. Get the idea? Pasta needs to be cut drastically, but a little won't hurt.

- **Tea and coffee can help.** Sometimes when I'm thinking of eating something, I'll drink green tea or coffee instead. Lissa buys good coffee, which helps. Good tasting coffee, with sugar substitute and $\frac{1}{2}$ & $\frac{1}{2}$ or no-fat creamer can help in losing weight. Coffee evidently has good effects on prostate health - which is good.

NOTE: After I'd been on this program for a few months and had lost about 15 pounds, I found out I have early-stage prostate cancer. I've since learned quite a lot about health and the prostate: bottom line is that everything that I've been doing to make myself healthier is also a good strategy for living longer with prostate cancer. My doctor told me he appreciates it when his patients lose weight - it makes surgery easier!

- **If you need dessert, try to use Splenda or other artificial sweetener.** We made some good pies with Splenda as sugar substitute and almond flour as partial substitute for wheat flour.
- **Eat fruits.** Those on a classic no or low carb diet would be amazed at this advice, but fruits form an important part of this family's diet. The main idea behind fruit being a good idea is that it cuts down on sugar cravings in a way that is healthy, low fat and low calorie. Yes, there are carbs, but these carbs are worth it, and it is highly doubtful that eating too many apples every day is going to lead to weight gain. Another aspect of fresh fruit is that it naturally has high water content. That means that you benefit from the intake of water as well as the healthy sugar fix and a fuller stomach. Avoid dried fruits... they can be enjoyed in moderation but unless you dry your own, it's hard to find dried fruit in the store without added sugar.

- **Exercise** - Exercise is important. Part of what has gotten farmers (and others) in trouble is lack of exercise coupled with eating too much. Exercise alone will usually not result in sustained weight loss. Exercise will make you feel better and may make you healthier, but you won't do it if you hate it or if it is too boring, Find something you enjoy. I like bicycling around the neighborhood. My sister, Gloria, and her husband, Doyle Meadows, like to walk several miles each day. Swimming is good for some, but I don't like it, so it would never work for me. I suppose some people may do Okay with the exercise machines. Horses are good for exercise - you burn energy as you groom them, while you are riding and especially when you muck stalls.

Implementing the Program

Understanding the details of the program is good, but there are still challenges in implementing the program. It starts with understanding that this is going to mean changing behavior.

- **Plan Behavior Changes.** In the previous section, we pointed out the foods that you are going to need to avoid and the foods that are good. You will be able to learn more about this in the recipe section and as you add and modify to build your own program. But, you still have to *make the changes!* It will probably take at least 2 or 3 weeks before the changes become ingrained. You probably have a certain time(s) of day when you have soft drinks and you may even have a certain place you associate with the experience or a specific soft drink machine. You are going to have to break the association. Consciously avoid the machine. Get water, but don't get it from the same machine. Figure the behavior you want to change, then figure the associated triggers and change your relationship with the triggers.

Following are some of the behaviors that need to be changed and suggestions:

- Eat chips every day - Eat crunchy vegetables or fruits, like celery or apples. Apples with natural peanut butter are very good. Celery is also good with peanut butter. Pork skins are not carb, and give great crunch, but they are pure fat so don't get too carried away. Cashews and other kinds of nuts also work very well.
- Have a starch with most meals - I used to think I had to have potatoes, rice or pasta with every meal, especially dinner. Now, we rarely have potatoes, but we often have sweet potatoes or summer squash. We never have rice, but we often have baked vegetables with olive oil and various spices. We also don't do pasta, but use vegetables like eggplants like we used to use pasta. I like spaghetti squash, but we tend to use it with butter and salt instead of as a basis for tomato sauce.
- **Think Portion Control** - Use various strategies to eat less. Use a smaller plate - seems too simple, but it may help. Pause for a few minutes before going back for seconds. *Sometimes you are through eating, but your appetite doesn't know it yet - giving yourself a break may let you decide that you don't need seconds.*
- **Drop or cut way back on midnight snacks.**
- **Don't lose control when you eat out!** Study the menu - many restaurants are offering low-carb options. Don't abandon all the other rules simply because you are eating out.

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BACK TO THE BEEF!

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Pork Recipes

Good Chinese Pork
Chinese Pork Barbecue
Pork and Cabbage

Fennel Celery Salad - one of the best parts of our new diet.

The only hard part of this is finding the fresh fennel. After I talked to the veggie-lady at Kroger, she's done a good job of keeping fennel in stock. It is still a challenge to explain at the check-out.

$\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 stalk fennel - sliced thin

$\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 stalk celery - sliced thin

Salt and pepper to taste

Freshly grated parmesan, if available

Mix

Dress with lemon juice and olive oil.

Add some sliced radishes or thinly sliced green or red sweet peppers -

Optional

We have this at least every other day. We make a lot and eat a lot. It tastes great and is filling. Crunchiness is good.

Celery and Peanut Butter

Celery stalks - whole or chunks

Kroger natural Peanut Butter - or other brand without seasoning (check the label - some "natural" brands have sugar!)

Put peanut butter on celery - duh! Tastes great - fairly low carbs - filling.

Use as dessert?! We often do.

Banana-Nut Oat Bran Muffins

(Lissa and Greer both love these. Warren thinks they taste like they are good for you!)

Yield: 12 muffins

Cook Time: 12-15 minutes

Ingredients:

2-1/4 cups oat bran

1 tablespoon baking powder

1/4 cup brown sugar

2 bananas, mashed

2 egg whites

2 tablespoons agave nectar or honey

1/4 cup walnuts, chopped

Directions: 1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. Line a standard muffin tin with paper cups.

2. In a large bowl, whisk together the oat bran, baking powder and brown sugar. In a separate medium bowl, mix together the mashed bananas, egg whites and agave nectar.

3. Add the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients and whisk until combined. Fold in the walnuts. Divide the batter evenly between the 12 muffin cups. Bake until the muffins are lightly browned and a knife inserted in the center comes out clean, about 12 to 15 minutes.

4. Cool the muffins in the pan for 5 minutes, then remove to a wire rack to cool completely. Store in an airtight container at room temperature. Serve at room temperature or reheat in the microwave and top with your favorite jam, butter or even peanut butter.

Sweet Potatoes

Daddy didn't like sweet potatoes, so we didn't have them much growing up. I didn't like them for about 50 years, but I didn't give up trying to like them. After all, that was the only food I didn't like. It didn't make sense to not like 'em. Finally, after years of trying, I've learned to love sweet potatoes.

The timing is good. Sweet potatoes are lower in carbs than Irish potatoes. They are beautiful to grow and easy to prepare. I think one of the things that made me avoid sweet potatoes was overdone recipes with too much sugar and those silly marshmallows.

2 sweet potatoes - to serve 2 people
4 sweet potatoes - to serve 4 people
6 sweet potatoes - to serve get it?

Sometimes you get huge sweet potatoes. We grew some of those in 2011. In that case one sweet potato served two people.

Wash 'em. Poke 'em with a fork in a few places. Wrap 'em in foil. Cook 'em 45 to 75 minutes, depending on size, until they are tender. You can also cook 'em for a while, then zap them with the microwave until done.

Cut in two. Slop on a little butter. Eat - keeping it simple won me over.

BUT - you can make it into something special: do the butter, but also put some Splenda / Brown Sugar (not much because there is some real sugar in there). This is very good.

You may have leftovers. Sweet potatoes keep well as do-overs. Enjoy!

Low-Carb Modified recipe:

Fiesta Dip

1 cup	Guacamole (can make it or buy it - some good guacamole dips work)
8 oz.	Sour Cream
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	Mayonnaise
1 pkg	Taco seasoning
2 cans	Black bean dip (can sub refried black beans or seasoned refried beans)
1 bunch	Green onions
1 - 3	Tomatoes, chopped
1 can	Black olives, chopped
8 oz	Shredded cheddar or American cheese

In bowl, combine sour cream, mayonnaise and taco seasoning. In large casserole dish, spread black bean dip over bottom. Top with guacamole and then sour cream mix. Sprinkle tomatoes around rim, then a ring of onion, followed by a ring of olives and a ring of shredded cheese. Place a dollop of sour cream in middle. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Only Modification is what to use in place of chips to dip with: use with celery slices or carrot slices. Even pork skins - remember pork skins are zero carbs.

Goat Cheese Quiche

1. 1 pound spinach, large stems discarded, leaves rinsed but not dried
2. 1 garlic clove, minced
3. 1 cup milk
4. 1/2 cup heavy cream
5. 2 large eggs
6. 2 large egg yolks
7. 1 teaspoon kosher salt
8. 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
9. One 1/2-pound goat cheese log, cut into seven 1/3-inch rounds

Mix all ingredients and pour into pie crust. We usually buy a pre-formed crust, put in pie dish and pour in quiche mix. Of course, this crust is all carb, so don't eat it all. If a little crust gets into your mouth, chew and swallow. Let's don't get too crazy about this low-carb stuff!

Spinach and Artichoke Dip

$\frac{1}{2}$ of a 14-ounce can artichoke hearts, drained

$\frac{1}{2}$ of a package of frozen spinach, drained

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup of mayonnaise

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup of parmesan cheese

1/8 tsp. garlic powder

1/8 tsp. paprika for garnish

Mash artichokes well and mix in other ingredients. Pour into a baking dish and bake in a 350 degree oven for 20 minutes until bubbly.

Portabella Pork Happiness

1 lb Pork Medallions (Pork steak or loin cut into workable pieces)

1/3 cup Olive oil

1 Can Del Monte diced tomatoes - Basil, Garlic and Oregano

2 Portabello mushrooms, sliced

$\frac{1}{4}$ Onion, sliced

1 Clove Garlic, minced or crushed

1 small can Sliced black olives

1 Red bell pepper, sliced as attractively as you can

White Pepper and Salt to taste

Dredge pork medallions in flour. Sauté in olive oil. Sprinkle white pepper and salt to taste. Do not over-cook pork; lightly brown. Add sliced onions to skillet, sauté a few minutes. Add garlic. Add diced tomatoes and mushrooms. Stir to coat mushrooms. Top with olives and peppers. Cover and steam for a few.

Suggestion: Serve with steamed veggies and baby lima beans.

Gumbo

2 Slices Bacon
12 Roma Tomatoes
1 lb Okra, ends off
2 Small eggplants, cut into pieces, skin on
1 Yellow squash, cut into pieces
1 Onion, sliced
1 tsp. Cajun seasoning (we use Paul Prudhomme's)
Salt & Pepper to taste
Sausage to taste
Shrimp to taste
Red wine to taste.

Fry Bacon, pour off $\frac{1}{2}$ of grease
Add veggies and seasoning; simmer about $\frac{3}{4}$ hour
Add sausage and cook another 15 - 20 minutes
Add shrimp during the last 3 minutes

This is low carb because we use eggplants instead of rice to thicken. A little corn starch may be needed for extra thickening and doesn't add too much carbohydrate. We often put a tablespoon of corn starch dissolved in a little red wine to thicken. Then a little more wine.

JARMAN WORD'S CLARKSDALE (HIWAY 61) CHEESECAKE

Low carb. but NOT low cal. - This is a "killer" recipe!

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

1 pound cream cheese

2/3 cup + 3 Tablespoons sugar substitute (or sugar if you are not going low Carb)

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon almond extract

1 cup sour cream

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Toasted slivered almonds

Beat cheese until fluffy. Beat in 2/3 cup sugar substitute + dash of salt.

Add eggs one at a time and beat until smooth.

Add almond extract and pour into 9" buttered pie pan.

Bake in moderate (350 degrees) oven for 20 minutes. Remove and let cool 20 minutes.

Beat sour cream, 3 tablespoons sugar sub., 1 teaspoon vanilla extract together. Pour over cake and bake 10 minutes. Let cool.

Sprinkle with toasted slivered almonds.

Easy Blackberry Cobbler

This recipe is a common-sense adaptation of a cobbler recipe from the Huntsville Heritage Cookbook (one of the best cookbooks ever printed!). When blackberries are coming in, folks got to have cobbler. So cut down on the carbs by using sugar substitute and replace part of the wheat flour with almond flour. But go ahead and enjoy a few extra carbs knowing you have done your best.

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup self-rising flour
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup almond flour
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ sugar substitute
Dash of salt
1 stick butter
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups milk
2 cups blackberries with juice

Heat fruit with $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar substitute.

Mix dry ingredients. Stir in milk to make batter.

Melt butter in dish in oven. Add batter.

Pour fruit / sugar subst. over batter-butter mixture.

Bake uncovered @ 350° for 25 minutes or until crusty and a little browned.

Serve with low carb ice cream or fat-free $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ creamer.

Good Apple Pie

Granny Collier recommended this one from the Huntsville Heritage cookbook, but she also recommended some adjustments.

1 egg

1 cup sugar substitute

$\frac{1}{2}$ stick butter, melted

2 cups grated tart apples

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon vanilla

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon almond extract (maybe a drop or two more)

1 pinch salt

1 tsp. cinnamon

9 inch unbaked pie shell

Mix ingredients in order listed. Pour into pie shell. Bake 1 hour at 350° F. Serve warm, maybe with a little low-carb ice cream. Don't eat too much of the pie shell - it is a carb.

Mary Gill Chicken
(Chicken Continental, William's favorite)

3 Lb.	Chicken Breasts
1/4 cup	flour
1	Onion, sliced
1/4 cup	sliced black olives
2 T	Salad oil
1 can	Mushrooms
1 can	Diced Tomatoes (large)
1/3 cup	Soy Sauce
1 clove	garlic

Dredge and brown chicken. Mix tomatoes with mushrooms + liquid, soy sauce and garlic. Add this and sliced onion to chicken. Cover and simmer for 45 minutes or until tender. Add olives and return to boil.

BACK TO THE BEEF!

In previous years, practically all the beef we use came from Papa Gill, so we prefer "Home Grown" but since we've taken over the herd, we are too busy and too short of money to eat our own beef. We've found out the hard way that these recipes work with store-bought beef. Actually, we've found some pretty good beef in the stores. Some things, like flank steak, we didn't even have before. We also buy an occasional steer from Buford Jennings.

We still believe our beef has a special flavor that comes from a secret blend of fescue pasture grown over limestone rocks. This is pure, natural beef, expanded by Ralgro, protected by antibiotics and kept parasite free with Ivomec.

Additional muscle is added by careful bull selection. We simply add better muscled bulls until genetics makes calves thicken.

The recipes come from many places, have almost all been changed and adapted to our tastes and cooking preferences, and none are very difficult (we don't usually have time for tricky recipes).

SUGGESTIONS

Don't overcook lean steaks. One advantage of choice steaks is that they are more "forgiving" of cooking times. In other words, choice steaks are good no matter how you cook them. Lean steaks, those which would grade "Select" are usually better if you cook them to about medium rare - certainly no more than medium.

Don't undercook roasts. They usually need some 45 minutes per pound, so a three pound roast needs over two hours at 350 degrees.

Better yet, use a meat thermometer and get temperature to about 150 degrees.

Bought hamburger served rare is a little risky. Medium (pink center) is probably "OK" as long as it is grown on Papa's farm.

Liver - I wish we still ate it. Too bad. I miss it.

Marinade - Practically everything works, as long a something acidic (like vinegar) is involved.

The Basic Hamburger

One of the basics, and one of our favorites, especially on the grill. Following are some of the ways we prefer our burgers:

We plan on getting about three and a half burgers per pound, so we usually make 7 burgers out of 2 pounds.

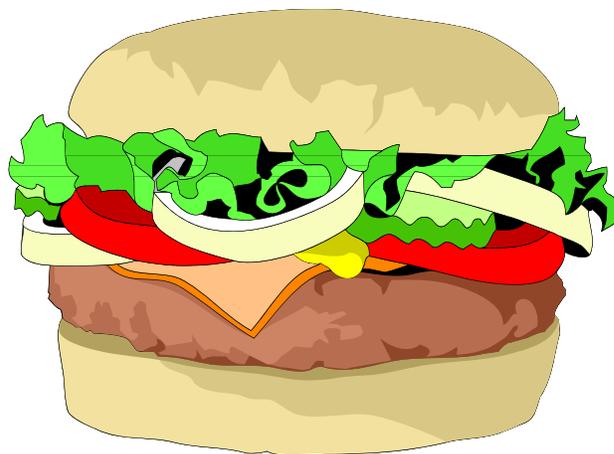
The best taste is cooked to medium (pink center) but the safest is to cook to medium well. We usually do a few of both and see who is willing to "go for it!"

We usually grill a few mushrooms, onions and peppers along with the burgers by slicing, wrapping them foil and putting on a little olive oil and soy sauce.

We do not typically add anything to the burgers. Beef is good enough by itself. Sometimes we put cheese slices on burgers, especially leftovers.

Sometimes we add a packet of Lipton Onion Soup mix to 2 lbs of hamburger 1/2 cup water (recipe on package). Makes 7 or 8 tasty burgers.

These days we eat the burgers without the bun, or with thin, low-carb buns.



Easy Hamburger Stroganoff

1 lb. Hamburger meat
1/2 cup Chopped onion
Garlic To taste
1 can Cream of Mushroom Soup
1/4 cup Water
1/2 cup Sour Cream (Lite is OK)
Dash Paprika
2 Beef Bouillon Cubes
Several Mushrooms
Salt & Pepper to taste
Noodles or Rice

Brown hamburger meat with onions and garlic. Pour off fat. Stir in soup, water, sour cream, paprika, beef bouillon cubes, salt and pepper. Cover and cook for 30 minutes on low heat, stirring occasionally. Add Mushrooms about 10 minutes before finishing. Serve over noodles or rice or simply eat "as is" in low-carb diet. .

Notes: You can use steak strips instead of hamburger; Thinly sliced flank steak that has been marinated in Worcestershire or Allegro works very well
We often use garlic powder, but fresh garlic has more flavor & power

Meat Loaf

1 lb.	Hamburger meat
1/4	Onion
1	Egg
1 cup	Tomato juice or V8
Dash	Garlic
3/4 cup	Oatmeal (less in low-carb version)
1/2 tsp	Salt
1/4 tsp	Pepper

Mix all ingredients and put in 8" x 4" pyrex. Bake an hour at 350. Let stand for five minutes, then drain.

Adapted from Quaker Oats box

Original recipe called for 1 1/2 lb hamburger and more onion.

Meat Loaf Topping

3/4 cup	Catsup
1/4 cup	Firmly packed brown sugar
2 T	Finely chopped onion
2 T	Finely chopped green pepper

Cook slowly until pepper and onions are tender.

!Topping is optional, but good

!Works on Meat Loaf, Hamburger Steak or Stuffed Vegetables

Source: Mama Gill

Four Steps to a Perfect Roast Beef

Heat oven to about 350 degrees. Place roast, straight from refrigerator, fat side up, on rack in shallow roasting pan. Insert meat thermometer - not touching bone or fat.

Season roast before roasting. With choice or prime beef do not add water or cover. With our beef, we usually add a little water and/or soy sauce and loosely cover with foil. Allegro is great for marinating roast beef.

Remove roast when thermometer reaches 135 - 140 degrees. Tent roast loosely with aluminum foil and let stand for 15 minutes.

Temperature will rise another 5 to 10 degrees and will be easier to carve. Carve across grain, if possible. -Adapted from Beef Industry Council Guidelines

Pot Roast

1	Roast beef (2-3 lbs)
2 T	Olive oil
2 cups	Water
1 pkg.	Onion Soup Mix
4 - 5	Potatoes, quartered (Cut down on potatoes for low-carb, substitute carrot, celery, onions and peppers)

Heat olive oil in Dutch oven and brown Roast. Add Onion soup mix to water and pour over Roast. Bring to Boil, then reduce heat. Simmer for 2 1/2 to 3 hours. Add potatoes or other veggies for the last hour.

Serve with something green.

(Adapted from Lipton Soup package recipe)

Roast Beef

- 2-3 lb Chuck Roast (or other beef roast)
- 2 T Soy sauce or Worcestershire
- 1 T Black pepper
- 2-4 Potatoes, sliced (less in low-carb version)
- 2-4 Carrots, sliced

Place Roast in heavy foil and coat with soy sauce or Worcestershire. Pepper liberally. Close foil around roast and place in pan. Bake in oven for at least two hours. Add potatoes (less in low-carb version) and carrots for the last hour.

Browning is not needed, but can be done if preferred
There is no such thing as too much pepper

The Best Beef Bar-b-que

Take left over roast from preceding recipe. Pull (Shred) the beef by hand. Warm in skillet with Kraft regular Bar-b-que sauce (you may need to add a little water).
Serve on Buns.

Goes well with pool room slaw and hamburger dills
Cokes (small sized, preferably) also fit the menu

Thin sliced Roast Beef

Take left over roast from preceding recipe. Slice cold roast into very thin slices.
Serve with ground horseradish or horseradish sauce.

Lane Suppa's Roast Beef

Start with Sirloin Tip Roast. Sprinkle dry onion soup over the roast. Mix a can of cream of chicken soup with 1/4 cup water and pour around roast. Cover and cook @ 425 degrees for 30 min. Then cook at 350 for 2 hours. Baste a few times.

Flat Iron Steak

This is a great deal. Get Flat Iron steak, especially when on sale. Sometimes, I'll buy 3 or 4 if they are cheap enough. They may be half the price of rib eyes and taste just as good, thanks to Beef Industry Council!

Marinate in Worcestershire or Allegro or whatever you like. Cook about 8 minutes on one side and 5-6 minutes on the other side. It will still be red on inside, which is good.

Slice thin and serve with horseradish or other sauce, or no sauce at all.

Tastes great as cold thin sliced steak the next day especially with horseradish (bought or home-grown - see following)

Home-grown Horseradish

Papa grew the best horseradish. Every other year or so, usually in late October, we raid his horseradish bed, which grows near the chimney of the smokehouse. We dig the roots, taking the largest and leaving the small ones for "seed." We carefully clean the roots and scrape the outer layer. Then we grind the roots in a food processor with a little added oil and vinegar. We usually make two or three "loads" in the food processor, and add peppers in the last one to make a red-hot batch (actually it is mostly a pretty color). We pack the horse radish in small jars we have saved and cleaned, such as pimento pepper jars.

WARNING: THIS PROCEDURE MAY INVOLVE TEARS!

Serve fresh or freeze. It lasts for years in the freezer.
It tastes great "as is" with roast beef, port or anything else you can imagine.
Some people prefer to mix it with mayonnaise or sour cream and color with something like paprika.

Meat-za Pie

This one has been a favorite for a long time!

1 lb	Hamburger
1 can	Evaporated milk
1/2 cup	Pepperidge Farm Stuffing Mix (cut amount in low-carb version)
1 can	Tomato sauce
1 can	Mushrooms (sliced)
1 cup	American Cheese (or equivalent in slices)
1 T	Oregano
2 T	Parmesan cheese

Mix first four ingredients and pat evenly in 8 inch square pyrex. Spread with tomato sauce and top with mushrooms. Cover with cheese and sprinkle with oregano and Parmesan. Bake 25 minutes at 350 until meat is done and cheese browned. Let stand 5 minutes and pour off grease.

Use fresh mushrooms if preferred.

Low-fat version requires browning meat, draining fat in colander followed by a warm water wash and adding an egg or two egg whites. Also, use fat-free evaporated milk and low-fat cheese.

Ketchup can be used instead of tomato sauce.

(Adapted from Huntsville Heritage Cookbook)

Round Steak

1 Round Steak
3 T Worcestershire
1 T Adolph's meat tenderizer
3 T Olive oil
1 Onion, sliced
8 Mushrooms, sliced
1 can Stewed tomatoes
1 T Mrs. Dash
1/2 cup Red wine

Flour with salt and pepper for dredging meat.

Cut steak into serving size and add Worcestershire and Adolph's. Poke with fork. Brown onion in olive oil and remove. Dredge steaks in flour (with salt and pepper to taste) and brown over medium heat. Add onion, mushrooms and stewed tomatoes. Add wine and Mrs. Dash. Simmer an hour or so.

!The meat tenderizer is a substitute for time. If meat can be simmered for at least 90 minutes, omit the Adolph's.

Round Steak with Allegro!

Thaw and cut round steak into pieces

Marinate in Allegro - overnight is best

Brown with onions

Top with stewed tomatoes (type with Garlic - Basil - Balsamic Vinegar is great)

Cover and simmer until tender (1.5 to 2 hours)

"Poor Man" Steak

1 round steak (2 in. thick)

MARINADE

1/2 C. light soy sauce
5 T. honey
1/4 C. cider vinegar
1 1/2 C. Italian dressing
2 green onions, chopped fine (tops included)
1 T. ground ginger
4 T. Rib Doctor Dry Seasoning

Blend all marinade ingredients and cover. Trim steak and marinate for 4 hours at room temperature, turning meat every hour.

Grill steak for 8 minutes over prepared coals, then turn and baste with marinade for 4 minutes. Repeat this process, turning and basting two more times for a total cooking time of 20 minutes, which will produce a perfect medium steak. Let meat stand for 10 minutes and then slice thinly as possible, diagonally across the grain. Serves 8.

Chili

1 - 1 1/2 lb Hamburger
1 can Rotel tomatoes
1 can Tomato puree
1/3 cup Catsup
1 can Red beans
1/2 Chopped Onion
1 Bay leaf
Garlic to taste

Brown Hamburger with onion and garlic. Pour off grease. Blend ingredients and bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer for an hour or so.

Serve with cornbread (omit or decrease with low-carb diet). A little sour cream on top is a nice touch.

Teriyaki Beef Bites

1	pound beef tenderloin or sirloin, cut into 1" cubes	1/4	cup sherry	
		2	teaspoons lemon juice	
	1/4	cup honey	1/4	cup soy sauce

Stir together liquid ingredients. Add meat and pour combined mixture into a plastic bag. Twist bag shut or otherwise secure. Place bag in bowl and marinate in refrigerator at least 1/2 hour (longer - up to overnight for sirloin). Drain meat pieces. Place cubes on a 12' x 8" x 2" baking pan. Bake at 475 degrees for 6 to 8 minutes. Serve with toothpicks.

Tangy Meatballs

1	pound lean ground beef	1	teaspoon salt
1	egg, slightly beaten	I	jar (10 ounces) grape jelly
I	cup soft bread crumbs	1/2	cup prepared mustard
1/4	cup milk		(more or less to taste)
1/4	cup onion, finely chopped		

In mixing bowl, combine first six ingredients; mix well. Shape into 24 meatballs. Place meatballs in baking pan and bake at 350° for 15 to 20 minutes. Combine jelly and mustard in medium size sauce pan. Heat slowly until jelly melts. Add meatballs and simmer gently 15 minutes. Serve in fondue pot or chafing dish. Recipe can easily be doubled.

(The recipes on this page adapted from Beef Industry Council recipes, which we have supported through the Dollar checkoff).

HEARTY BLACK BEAN / BEEF SOUP

1 pound coarsely ground chuck (chili grind)
1 (10 3/4-ounce) can Campbell's black bean soup
1 1/3 cup water
1 (15-ounce) can whole black beans with juice
1 cup chunky Salsa (medium)
1/4 cup chopped green onions
Grated cheddar cheese
Sour cream
Cilantro, optional

Brown chuck in large, heavy-duty saucepan, stirring constantly to keep from sticking or burning; drain to remove any excess grease. To meat add black bean soup, water, black beans and salsa.

Simmer uncovered for 30-45 minutes. Add green onions during last 10 minutes. Serve piping hot. Garnish with cheddar cheese, sour cream, chopped green onions and cilantro if desired. Serve with corn muffins. Yield: 4 servings.

****Note:** May reduce fat in recipe by substituting low-fat cheese and low-fat or nonfat sour cream.

Vegetables



We tend to prefer simple preparation for our vegetables. Steaming is good. So is boiling and baking - even broiling. We love fried okra and fried squash (or both together) but we don't do the frying thing any more.

Artichoke

Cut stem flush with bottom. Trim sharp tips with scissors. Steam for 1 hour. Mix sour cream with lemon. Dip leaves in sour cream lemon mixture and scrape meat off on teeth. When artichoke gets down to inedible "fluff", scrape down to heart which can be divided into edible pieces, dipped into lemon / sour cream and eaten.

Asparagus

Wash and break off hard, lower stem. Steam. Season with salt and butter, maybe lemon.

Baked Beans

Open a can and serve. Lots of good kinds. Don't worry about it. Good cold or hot. Great stuff.

Brussels Sprouts

Steam and eat. Use vinegar or pepper vinegar as condiment.

Cabbage

Steam with onions or just by itself. Maybe add pinch of salt and /or sugar. Add butter, if desired. Serve over toast or just eat.

Collards, mustard greens or turnip greens

Cook up what we can grow or find, or open a can of Glory brand greens and heat 'em up. Somehow, we've never been able to top the way Glory seasons their greens. Serve with pepper sauce (see below).

Eggplant Pizza

Mix some garlic salt in some olive oil. Slice but don't peel eggplants and brush garlic oil onto both sides of eggplant slices. Layer swiss cheese, Hunt's Diced basil/garlic/balsamic vinegar tomatoes and top with fresh grated Parmesan. Bake for 30 - 45 minutes at 350 degrees.

Okra

The greatest vegetable of them all. Can be prepared in 10,000 ways, but mostly comes down to fried, steamed, boiled, mixed with other foods, or pickled.

- Fried is not difficult; simply dip in egg or water (eggs stick better), dredge corn meal and / or flour / or both onto Okra and/or other veggies to be fried, then fry 'em. Salt helps. Does not fit low-carb.
- Boiled is even easier; cut off stems and boil until slimy. Salt is recommended.
- Steamed is our current favorite. Simply cut off stems and steam until soft enough to eat.
- Stir-frying is a good change. Stir fry with squash, onions, a little garlic if you like and anything else you can find to throw in. Works well with chunks of pork or polish sausage. Season with teriyaki or soy sauce.
- Pickled is easiest of all. Pick okra and get Mama Gill to pickle it.
- Baked or broiled with other vegetables and spices is very good.

Pepper Sauce

Grow some hot, attractive peppers. Pick them when they are different colors. Sort by colors, cut stem end off near end. Put in clear bottles (we clean and save soy sauce and Worcestershire sauce bottles). Pour cheap clear vinegar until it is near top. Zap in microwave or boil in water bath until vinegar boils a little. Put in fridge until it gets in the way or until use.

Squash Casserole (Easy short cut)

4 - 6 Squash, sliced
1 Box Stove Top Stuffing - Cornbread version
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup Velveeta or American Cheese (grated or cut into small chunks)

Steam squash until tender. Prepare Stove Top Stuffing Mix as directed on the package, except add squash to the mix. Put stuffing with squash in buttered casserole dish. Mix $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the cheese into the stuffing / squash and top with remaining cheese. Bake at 350° F for 25 minutes.

Baked Vegetables

Cut up any combination of:

Red peppers

Green peppers

Chili peppers

Yellow squash

Zucchini squash

Onions

Okra

Eggplant

Sweet potatoes

Asparagus

Stir in combination with olive oil and any spices you can find. Garlic is good. Gotta have salt. The many and varied commercial spice blends are great - don't hesitate to use a steak or other blend on veggies.

After mixing, cook at 350 degrees for around a half hour, or broil for 10-12 minutes. Try any number of combinations.

Stuffed Vegetables

6 - 8	Vegetables, hollowed out (peppers, tomatoes, squash, onions)
2 lbs	Ground beef
1 tsp	Salt
1 tsp	Pepper
1/2 cup	Onion, chopped
1/2 cup	Flour
2	Eggs
1 can	Tomato paste (small size)
1 cup	Water

Brown ground beef and drain. Mix beef, salt, pepper, flour, eggs and tomato paste. Stuff into vegetables. Place stuffed veggies in roasting pan and cover bottom with water. Bake 60 minutes at 350 degrees.

If needed, slice the vegetables bottoms so they have a flat surface

Poking a hole in the bottom of the veggies lets the fat drain out

Consider using the topping from the preceding page

This is a good recipe in the summer when you need to find different ways to use fresh garden vegetables.

Birthday Soup

1-2 lbs	Soup meat (Bite-sized hunks)
2 T	Olive oil
1/2	Onion, sliced
1 T	Worcestershire
1 tsp	Black pepper
2 cup	Tomato juice or V8
1 cup	Water (will probably need more)
1	Bay leaf
2-3	Parsley sprigs
1 cup	Macaroni or other similar pasta (less in low carb version)
2-4	Carrots, sliced large

Slowly brown meat in olive oil. Add Worcestershire, pepper and onion toward end of browning. Add tomato juice, water and spices. Cook for 1 1/2 to 3 hours. Add carrots 45 minutes and macaroni 20 minutes before soup is to be served.

1/2 cup of red wine adds an interesting flavor to the combination

Substitute sliced potatoes in place of macaroni, but allow 45 to 60 minutes of cooking time.

Optional: some garlic salt added during browning makes the kitchen smell better and a dash of paprika always livens things up

This is almost as much a birthday, but also a great

stew as a soup. Good for winter soup.



PORK RECIPES

Pork is best for stir fry. (I know I said beef is best in the beef section, but Chinese folks use more pork). We use almost any pork that's on sale. Pork steaks are good, but are a little harder to cut up. We often use boneless ribs because the flavor is great and we can cut them up in a second.

Good Chinese Pork

3 - 4 Pork steaks, cut into strips (discard gristle and fat)
1/2 Onion (quartered and cut into chunks; red onion is nice because it adds color)

Marinade:

1 tbsp Soy sauce
1 tbsp Honey
1 tsp Brown Sugar
1 tbsp Black Beans (mashed into slurry); may substitute prepared sauce
1 tsp Salt (optional)
1/2 tsp Hot Mustard
1 Clove Garlic (adjust to personal taste)
1 tsp Horseradish
2 tbsp Oil
1 tbsp Cornflour
2 tbsp water
1 sm. can Pineapples (drained)
1 sm. can Bamboo shoots (optional)

Marinate pork about an hour. Stir-fry pork for about 7 - 8 minutes or until cooked through. Add bamboo shoots and onion and stir-fry until onion is heated, but still crisp. Add pineapple and heat through.

Chinese Pork Barbecue

10 - 12 Boneless Pork ribs, or country ribs (with lots of meat)

Marinade:

4 tbsp Soy sauce

2 tbsp Honey

2 tsp Brown Sugar

1 tbsp Black Beans (mashed into slurry); may substitute prepared sauce)

2 tbsp Oil

1/2 clove Garlic (or substitute dried or powdered garlic equivalent)

Marinate pork about an hour. Cook on grill. Brush reserved marinade over pork as you turn. Turn often because honey and brown sugar add glaze, but burn easily.

Grill to taste, but try not to over-cook.