

## What does Naturally Raised and Harvested mean At the Snake River Farm

We mean our animals are raised in a low stress environment that is as close as possible to the way they live in nature. Below are some of the key principles we follow.

**No antibiotics are used.** Most commercial farm animals are fed a low level of antibiotics through much of their life to prevent them from becoming ill. They are particularly prone to illness because of the crowded and unsanitary conditions of feedlots. This results in accumulations of the antibiotics in the meat, and definitely contributes to viruses becoming resistant to the antibiotics, lessening their impact. Our animals do not receive antibiotics; even so, because of the healthy lifestyle they live at the Snake River Farm we very rarely have a sick animal.

**No feed lot environment.** Our beef and bison are raised on pastures all of their lives. Our hogs are always kept in large lots where they have plenty of room to eat green plants, to dig for roots and grubs, and to run and play. You may be surprised how much young growing pigs enjoy running and playing in the open. Commercially produced animals normally spend the last six months of their lives in a crowded concrete lot, eating a carefully formulated ration to force them to grow quickly. Feedlot environments are unsanitary and unhealthy, and are far from their natural environment. In contrast to this, our animals are grazing in the open meadows.

**No growth hormones.** We use no growth hormones. This practice is commonly used in commercial agriculture to achieve faster weight gains and growth. Meat you buy from the Snake River Farm contains no hormone, antibiotic or medical residues

**We feed no animal byproducts.** No animal byproducts of any sort are fed to our animals.

**No grain is fed to our beef and bison. Pigs get a natural mixed diet.** Instead of a heavy diet of grain which is normally used on commercial cattle, our beef and bison eat grass and pasture forbs (non grass prairie plants) their natural diet. In the winter months much of that grass is in the form of grasshay. Hogs are not ruminants (grazing animals are ruminants) hence they cannot thrive on a high grass diet. Hogs naturally require a mixed diet somewhat like humans. They receive grains but those grains are always limited and fed with access to green plants, garden products, soil grubs and other natural foods.

**We utilize rotational grazing.** Rotational grazing is a technique of managing our pastures so they are always growing rapidly. The livestock are moved to fresh pastures frequently. These pastures contain mixes grasses and forbs (non-grass plants) and are very high in nutritional value. Mixed pastures allow the animals to do a better job of selecting what they eat to achieve a nutritionally balanced and satisfying diet. Best of all, the animals are always looking forward to a new, fresh pasture, and eat it with enjoyment and vigor. In cow's eyes, the grass is definitely greener on the other side of the fence.

Our hogs are moved to fresh new pasture lots several times throughout the season.

**We keep all our animals in natural social groups.**

We and many others have learned that animals need an appropriate social group within which to interact. This is essential for reducing stress and achieving contentment. It may seem odd but in fact they need leaders, peers and followers. Recent scientific studies are showing that young animals often need adults to teach them what to eat, when to eat, when and where to go for water, how to react in a storm etc.

**We pasture harvest.** Penning animals, separating them from their herd mates, loading them into trucks hauling them to a slaughter yard and actual slaughter is very traumatic for animals. We will not do this to our animals. We pasture harvest our beef and bison which effectively means that our animals experience no trauma or anxiety at harvest time. Hogs are handled somewhat differently but with the

same goal. We take great care to give our animals a good life and when the time comes, a quick and easy death. Please contact me if you want a more complete explanation.  
Tom Barthel Snake River Farm, 763 263 2721, 18251 62<sup>nd</sup> Street, Becker MN, 55308.