

CIT HAMPSHIRE COLLEGE FARM

HOW TO USE UNCONVENTIONAL MEATS: AN ARTICLE DESCRIBING HOW TO REDUCE FOOD WASTE BY USING EVERY PART OF FOOD ANIMALS



GROUND BEEF, A STAPLE OF THE COMMON AMERICAN HOUSEHOLD...

Everyone knows the familiar taste of ground beef. You can make many easy meals, including meat sauce, meatballs, lasagna, stew, and the list goes on. Steak is another universally loved meat which can be used in multiple recipes as well.

However, many families born in western society don't tend to stray too far from those options. What happens to the other parts of the animal?

Many cultures around the world use as many parts of an animal as possible to save time and money. You see many dishes including parts like chicken feet, liver, heart, tongue, bones, and other parts. We don't tend to gravitate towards these foods due to the industrialized society of the western world, where those parts can seem taboo. However, there are many benefits to eating organ meats and other parts of food animals, including price efficiency and tastiness!

A LOOK AT WHAT COW PARTS CAN BE USED FOR...

Our team of CITs interviewed April, a livestock and agricultural farmer at Hampshire farm regarding our questions about unconventional cow parts, what they are used for, and if any parts are wasted.

When a cow is ready to harvest, April makes a list of what parts she wants back, and the butcher shop keeps what she doesn't want.

April obviously asks for the beef back, but also requests for the liver, heart, tongue, and bones. Organ meat is mainly requested for special orders, as it doesn't sell as fast.

The meat that doesn't sell can be ground up for dog food and fertilizer. Bones can be used for stew or bone meal.

In the end, every part of the cow is used in some sort of way at the local farm, but not all of the parts are sold which can become a waste.

THE BENEFITS OF EATING UNCONVENTIONAL MEATS

Purchasing parts that are typically not consumed in your household can be both cheap and nutritious. Cow tongue for example is rich in nutrients and fatty acids, making it a great addition to your meals.

Cow liver is one of the most healthy meats on Earth, containing vital nutrients, such as vitamin b-12 and folate. When cooked right it's also delicious!

Adding new foods to your diet is always fun, and using such meats can help improve the environment and benefit the food system. Using the whole animal allows for less waste and decreases the need for conventional meats. It takes a lot of resources to raise cows, destroying the land, and the methane that they produce is a cause of climate change. Using as many parts as possible reduces the amount of cows needed to sustain society. These products are also inexpensive and very easy to cook; beef tongue for example is around three dollars less expensive per pound than ground beef!

Not sure where to start? Try these delicious recipes and make an impact on the food system today!

Beef Tacos de Lengua (Beef Tongue Tacos) Recipe

INGREDIENTS

1 3-4 lb beef tongue

2 large onions, peeled

The cloves from 1 head (yes an entire head) of garlic, peeled and crushed

6-7 bay leaves

1 Tbsp of peppercorns

2 Tbsp salt

Vegetable oil

Corn tortillas (2 to 3 per person)

Salsa verde*

Avocados

Cilantro

Chopped red onion

Thinly sliced radishes for garnish

* Bottled or canned salsa verde can be found in the Hispanic section of markets. To make homemade salsa verde, remove husks from 1 lb of tomatillos, place tomatillos in a pan, cover with water, simmer until cooked through, about 5 minutes. Place tomatillos, 1/3 cup chopped onion, 1/4 cup cilantro leaves, 2 teaspoons of lemon or lime juice, a jalapeño or serrano chile pepper, and about a teaspoon of salt in a blender. Blend until smooth, add more salt to taste.

METHOD

1 Simmer the tongue: Fill a large (12-quart if you have one) stock pot two-thirds full with water. Add the tongue, onions, crushed garlic cloves, bay leaves, peppercorns, and salt.

Bring to a boil, reduce to a simmer, cover, and cook for 3 hours, until the tongue is soft to the touch and tender.

2 Remove the skin-like covering (the white opaque covering): Remove tongue from water and let cool for a couple of minutes. Notice the rough patch of meat where the tongue would attach to the bottom of the mouth. It's perfectly edible, so keep it attached if you want. However, it is tough and not as tender as the rest of the tongue.

3 Slice and sauté the tongue: Slice the tongue in 1/4-inch slices. (If you are not preparing the whole tongue for tacos, you can return whatever tongue you do not slice to the cooking water to soak.) Heat a little oil in a frying pan on medium high and sauté the slices on both sides until they are lightly browned.

4 Dice: Remove from pan and slice first into strips, then crosswise again so that you end up with small cubes.

5 Assemble the tacos: Soften tortillas either by cooking on the stove-top until pockets of air appear in them, or in the microwave (about 10 seconds per tortilla).

Place a large spoonful of meat in the center of a tortilla. Add a spoonful of salsa verde and some chopped avocado, onion, and chopped fresh cilantro. Garnish with radish slices.

VENEZUELAN BEEF LIVER AND ONIONS

Tips for cooking liver!

Do not overcook.

To add more flavor season the liver with cumin and/or paprika. You can also add cayenne pepper if you like the heat.

If desired, use the pan drippings to make a gravy. Just add 1- 2 tablespoons of flour to the drippings. Cook the flour briefly for 1 -2 minutes, stirring constantly, then add 1 cup of beef stock for each tablespoon of flour. Cook and stir until thickened. Serve over liver and onions.

Ingredients

2 cups milk or buttermilk (optional)

3 tablespoons olive oil

3 garlic cloves, minced

1 ½ lb Rumba Meats Liver, sliced into strips

Salt and black pepper to taste

1 tablespoon butter

3 onions, thinly sliced

½ cup white wine

Fresh parsley, chopped

Instructions

To reduce the strong taste of the meat, place liver in a bowl, or a Ziploc bag, and cover with milk, or buttermilk, and refrigerate. Let it soak up to 2 hours. Then remove the liver from

liquid and pat dry. This step is optional but highly recommended if you are not used to the taste of the liver.

Heat a large cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat. Add 2 tablespoons of oil. Add garlic and sauté until fragrant, stirring constantly to avoid burning, about 1 - 2 minutes. Add the liver strips, working in batches if necessary, and fry until browned on both sides. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Remove liver from skillet with a slotted spoon. Set aside on a plate or bowl.

Add the remaining tablespoon of oil and the butter in the same skillet. Add onions and sauté until translucent and fragrant. Add the liver back to the skillet and add the wine. Let the wine reduce for 2 - 3 minutes.

Sprinkle with fresh parsley and serve hot with rice, mashed potatoes or veggies.

Marinated Pig Heart

Author: Yellow Birch Hobby Farm

Serves: 2 servings

An easy, delicious way to prepare this flavorful and tender organ.

Ingredients

1 pig heart, approx. $\frac{3}{4}$ pound

1 Tablespoons olive oil

2 cloves garlic, minced

1 sprig fresh thyme, chopped

1 sprig fresh parsley (small), chopped

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon onion powder

½ teaspoon garlic powder

½ teaspoon salt

¼ teaspoon black pepper

Instructions

Slice the heart lengthwise. Cut out any connective tissue and sinewy bits. Trim away fat and silver skin. Then dice into 1 inch cubes.

Place the chunks into a plastic bag (or other preferred marinating vessel). Add the remaining ingredients. Close up the bag and use your fingers to massage everything around until it seems to be blended nicely. Refrigerate for 24 hours.

To cook: Heat a cast iron pan (or other preferred skillet) over medium heat. Once the pan is hot, bring 1 Tablespoon of olive oil to smoking, then dump the diced heart and all of the marinated goodness into the pan. Add 3 Tablespoons of butter. Mix everything around real good. Cook for approx. 7-10 minutes, stirring frequently and scraping the bottom of the pan as you do. As soon as things look nicely browned, cut each chunk in half. The herbs will get crispy and delicious- be sure not to leave any of the marinade contents behind when you go to eat. Serve with a baked potato and a fresh salad.

Compiled by: Jenna Learned, Nora, Izzy, and Sam Geiger

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