

# Beef in a sustainable food system

Every food has a footprint, so it's imperative to consider diets holistically, looking at all costs and benefits of a food source. Simply put, cattle are part of a sustainable food system in the U.S. and generate more protein for the human food supply than would exist without them.

A sustainable food system is comprised of three different, but intersecting, pillars: social responsibility, economic viability and environmental stewardship. True sustainability is a balance of these three aspects. Beef farmers and ranchers are dedicated to producing beef in a way that prioritizes the planet, people, animals and progress.



## Environmental

Encompasses biodiversity, carbon and water footprints, wildlife habitat, soil and rangeland health, and the ability of cattle to utilize human inedible feeds, among others.

- As a result of decades of research, innovation and improvement, the U.S. is the leader in sustainable beef production.
- The U.S. has had the lowest beef GHG emissions intensity in the world since 1996.
- Between 1961 and 2019, the U.S. beef industry has reduced emissions per pound of beef by more than 40% while also producing more than 60% more beef per animal.

## Social

Includes worker safety and well-being, animal welfare, food security and human health, antibiotic and technology use, recreational value, tourism and the culture and traditions of beef producers as farms and ranches are passed from one generation to the next.

- More than 90% of U.S. farms and ranches are family-owned.
- 78% of ranchers plan to invest in their community by passing their operation on to future generations.
- 89% of ranchers prioritize workplace health and safety

## Economic

Includes improving rural economies and livelihoods, affordability of beef to consumers, the value of ecosystem services) and profitability - allowing farmers and ranchers to continue producing high-quality beef.

- The U.S. produces 17% of the world's beef with just 6% of the world's cattle.

Learn more about how sustainable beef helps protect the planet and ensures a resilient food future at [ohiobeef.org](http://ohiobeef.org)

