



NEWS

Cattle bred for more zinc, iron

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Cattle can be bred to have more zinc and iron in the beef they produce, enhancing health benefits for consumers, says University of Florida geneticist Raluca Mateescu.

Citing data generated by the Beef Healthfulness Project, a multiple-university study of cattle in Iowa, Oklahoma and California, Mateescu said iron and zinc, two of the most important minerals that make up beef's nutritional profile, are heritable.

She made the comments while speaking at the 2014 Beef Improvement Federation Research & Annual Meeting.

A 3.5-ounce portion of beef contributes eight to 18 percent of a person's daily iron needs; the range depends on gender and age of the person.

The amount of iron in beef has is a highly heritable trait -54 per cent.

Zinc content in 3.5 ounces of beef is enough to meet 26 percent of the daily needs and that content has a heritability of 10 per cent.

Aiming for genetic increases in iron content also increases zinc.

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