

Juliette Kellow's Red Meat Superfood Facts:

There might not be an official definition for the term superfood, but it's fair to say that when eaten as part of a balanced, varied diet, lean red meat is certainly up there on the list of superfoods. Lean red meat contains a variety of different nutrients, including protein, heart-healthy monounsaturates and omega-3 fats, plus a wide variety of vitamins and minerals. And better still, it has nothing added or taken away and is naturally low in salt and free from additives.

Because red meat contains a wide range of nutrients, it's often called a nutrient-dense food – in other words, it contains a lot of nutrients in a relatively small amount of the food. Indeed, a recent report from the British Nutrition Foundation (*Red Meat in the Diet*) highlights that red meat includes many nutrients that are important for good health, including protein, iron, zinc, selenium, vitamin B12 and vitamin D. This is important because many adults have low intakes of these nutrients in their diet and so are at risk of becoming deficient in that nutrient.

Here are some key points regarding the superfood benefits of lean red meat:

- Red meat is an important source of iron, needed for healthy blood and to prevent anaemia. Currently a quarter of females aged 19-64 in the UK have iron intakes below the minimum amount to stay healthy. Meanwhile, 40% of women under the age of 34 have seriously low intakes of iron and so are putting themselves at risk of anaemia. Teenage girls are also at risk of anaemia as they have higher iron requirements due to menstruation – around half of all 11–18 year old girls have iron intakes below the minimum amount recommended for good health.
- The type of iron in beef (haem iron) is more easily absorbed and used by the body than the iron in plant foods (non-haem iron). This makes beef a great choice for children. Numerous studies show even a mild deficiency of iron can affect a child's learning ability, while boosting intakes improves behaviour, concentration, mental sharpness and cognitive development.
- According to a study in the journal *Pediatrics* children and teenagers deficient in iron are more likely to be overweight due to overall poor eating habits. Furthermore, children with poor iron stores may feel constantly tired and therefore be less active, which can promote weight gain.

- The iron found in red meat is in a form that the body can use more easily than the iron found in plant foods such as pulses, nuts, seeds and leafy green veg.
- Red meat is a good source of vitamin B12. This vitamin only occurs naturally in animal foods. Studies show that vitamin B12 intakes are consistently lower in vegetarians and particularly vegans, indicating that meat makes an important contribution to intakes of this vitamin.
- Red meat contains selenium. This nutrient is an important antioxidant, which has been linked to reducing the risk of heart disease and certain cancers.
- Red meat contains protein, which helps to improve satiety and fills us up for longer. This makes protein-rich foods excellent for helping us to control our weight so that we don't become overweight or obese.
- Red meat contains small amounts of omega-3 fats, which help to keep the heart healthy. With the exception of oil-rich fish, few foods contain good amounts of omega-3s. This makes the small amounts in red meat an important source, especially for people who eat little or no oily fish.
- Red meat has become substantially lower in fat in recent years with the fat content having been reduced by more than 30 percent for pork, 15 percent for beef and 10 percent for lamb. Lean beef now contains just 5 percent fat, lamb 8 percent fat and pork just 4 percent fat.
- It's a myth that red meat is packed with saturates. At least half the fat in lean red meat is heart-healthy monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats. Choosing lean cuts of meat and trimming off any visible fat helps to reduce the saturated fat content further.

OTHER SUPERFOODS - that are naturally nutrient rich

Some examples:

Lean red meat – beef, pork, lamb & bacon

Berries

Blueberries, strawberries, apples, mangoes, pomegranates,

Dried Fruit

Raisins, figs, apricots

Fruit

Avocados, kiwi fruits, pumpkin seeds

Olive oil

Nuts

Almonds, walnuts, brazils

Oily fish

Salmon, mackerel, herrings, trout, anchovies, sardines, tuna

Garlic

Herbs/Spices

Turmeric, ginger, cinnamon, parsley

Vegetables

Tomatoes, beetroot, carrots, sweet potato

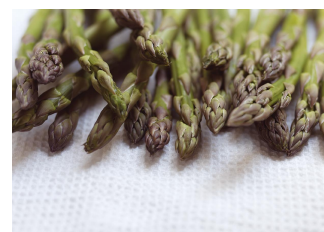
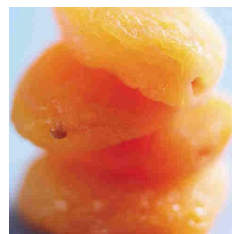
Green Vegetables

Broccoli, spinach, asparagus, green beans, courgettes

Yogurt

Honey

Chocolate



Superfood Fact Sheet – March 2007

Clare Greenstreet, MeatMatters.com Home Economics Manager explains...

How to boost our Superfood in-take...

- Fruity salsas served with lean griddled pork, beef or lamb steaks
 - A selection of berries in season combined with lime juice, sweet chilli sauce and a handful of chopped mint, basil, coriander or parsley
- Curries, risottos, paellas and pasta dishes can be finished off sprinkled with chopped almonds, walnuts or Brazil nuts and a handful of fresh spinach stirred through
- Beetroots are the perfect vegetable to add to any meaty casseroles (beware the juice will be quite pink tho') & roasted in their skins with some spicy sausages and sweet potatoes they are delicious (deliciously easy too)
- Yogurt makes a great marinade (as not only does it add flavour but helps to tenderise too)
 - Add some tandoori paste, lemon juice & fresh mint to cubes of lean pork, beef or lamb (marinade for about 30 minutes and then grill or bbq) and you have created a yummy but quite authentic Tandoori kebab – perfect partnered with a rice salad with pumpkin seeds, dried raisin and apricots and finished off with an extra dollop of yogurt mixed with cucumber & fresh mint
- Stir-fries are the ultimate way to eat lots of fresh vegetables plus a portion of lean pork, beef, lamb or bacon – a great partnership includes:
 - Beef rump steak, asparagus, courgettes, purple sprouting broccoli, peas, and pak choi flavoured with lime and fresh mint and dill
- Blueberries cooked with plums, onion, brown sugar and allspice make an excellent compote, which can be served warm with roast meats particularly good with pork or served cold with cold meats as a relish
- Oily fish isn't the most natural partner to red meat but anchovies compliment the flavour of roast lamb superbly – that lovely salty but intensely rich flavour mixed with olives, lemon and garlic pushed into deep inserts made into the lamb joint & roasted. Mmmm...

