

edible ORLANDO

— SUMMER 2017 —



BUZZAH!

BACKYARD HIVES THRIVE

SINGLE SPIRIT BARS

EDIBLE GETAWAYS

Danny Cowart COWART RANCH

THE DESIRE TO KNOW more about where our food comes from is a growing trend with food-service providers, and

Orlando Meats
728 Virginia Drive,
Orlando
orlandomeats.com

Florida Fresh Meat Company
floridafreshmeat.com

Cowart Ranch
cowart ranch.com

traceability has become more prevalent along with consumer demand for transparency. Beef from Cowart Ranch can be traced from the ranch in Sumterville in Central Sumter County

northwest of Orlando, to the processor in nearby Summerfield, and finally to retail markets in Orlando and beyond.

Danny Cowart, the 78-year-old patriarch of Cowart Ranch, is a fourth-generation cattle farmer who raises a cross breed of cattle using Wagyu bulls and Angus heifers that thrives in Florida's climate.

EO: What makes your beef ideal?

Cowart: The genetics of the breed produces perfect ribeye steaks with great marbling.

EO: What are your sustainable practices here on the ranch?

Cowart: Nothing goes to waste. We repurpose all materials. The wastes from the ranch create animal feed through a maggot farming system. [Flies are nature's house-

Jan Costa FLORIDA FRESH MEAT CO.

cleaners, feasting on organic waste, so the system is fly-driven bio-recycling.]

EO: What do you feed your cattle?

Cowart: We only vaccinate for blackleg (an infectious bacterial disease common in and fatal to livestock). Cows graze on natural grasses or fodder (grains that have sprouted into grasses), which gives the meat a "grass-fed" designation. This increases their protein intake, which helps them gain weight. We grow our cattle to 1,100 to 1,200 pounds.

Jan Costa, owner of Florida Fresh Meat Company, purchases cattle directly from Cowart and processes it to sell to high-end restaurants, butcher shops and farmer's markets.

EO: How do you ensure the animals you are receiving are wholesome and healthy?

Costa: I visit Cowart Ranch every few weeks to check on the animals and the care they are provided.

EO: How do you assure the quality of the meat?

Costa: We move the cattle a day before they are processed, which allows them to relax and reduces the amount of adrenaline they produce. After harvest, we hang the carcasses for 28 days which makes for a very tender, very flavorful cut of meat.

Edgar Massoni ORLANDO MEATS

EO: Where can consumers find Cowart Ranch Beef?

JC: Besides farmer's markets in Windermere and Kissimmee, also Kissimmee Green Place, Orlando Meats, South Marion Meats, the Pharmacy, B-Resort, The Walt Disney World Swan and Dolphin Resorts, plus some restaurants in Tampa and Clearwater.

Edgar Massoni is the owner of Orlando Meats, a retail butcher shop scheduled to open this summer. Massoni's mission is source pasture-raised animals from local farms like Cowart Ranch and provide whole-animal butchery for area residents.

EO: How will you promote traceability in your products?

Massoni: In our shop, the names of the farms we order from are prominently displayed so customers know exactly where the meat is coming from. I personally visit the farms and verify that the animals are being raised in a manner that ensures their well-being and yield a quality product. By being open about the relationships with our suppliers, we build trust with our customers.

—Jennifer Denlinger

