

# Inspired conversations

## Talking with Lynn Brakke

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**IN CHILDREN'S BOOKS**, farm animals wander around happy, green pastures where they have space to run and frolic. We all know that is not typically the case for livestock, but at Lynn Brakke's farm, that is exactly how his 60 cows live. I sat down with Brakke to talk about his passion for organic and grass-fed beef.



Photography by Jen Forness

**Q:** Why grass feed your cows?

**LB:** Cows are designed to eat grass, but at the end of the day, if you want good quality beef, you have to have healthy soil—without it you won't have nutrient-dense grasses, and you won't have nutrient-dense meat or tender meat. There's a myth that grass-fed beef is tough. It's only tough if you are feeding them dry, prairie hay that hasn't got a lot of energy and nutrients. Our animals are eating good grass, so they are getting all the nutrients they need.

**Q:** How do your cows live?

**LB:** We have a very different approach. Our cattle all live and graze together. Someone asked me when we wean the calves. We don't. We let the mother go until she is ready to wean. The herd health is better, and if you can get back as close to nature as possible, things seem to work best. We do rotational grazing. Every day, they have fresh grass. It's a lot more labor intensive, but it keeps them from getting sick. If an animal isn't handled

well, the quality isn't going to be there. We want them to be stress free, eat nutrient-dense grasses, and not be riled up. It's so simple and basic. It's not rocket science.

**Q:** Why should people buy your beef?

**LB:** You want to know who your producer is. Organic versus local is the wrong question. You want both. You want to know where it came from, and I feel it should be certified organic. \*

Visit [www.lborganicbeef.com](http://www.lborganicbeef.com) to find out more about Lynn's beef.

