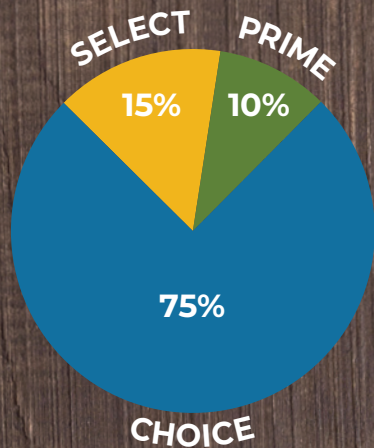


UNDERSTANDING MARBLING

WHAT IS MARBLING?

- Small flecks of fat within muscle (also known as intramuscular fat)
- The primary factor in determining the USDA quality grade
- Helps predict the tenderness, juiciness, and flavor of beef
- Improves the overall palatability of beef

% of BEEF SUPPLY*



FACTORS IN DETERMINING A QUALITY GRADE

- Amount and distribution of marbling within the Ribeye at the 12th/13th rib
- Age/maturity of the carcass
- Color, texture, and firmness of lean muscle

The most popular quality grades seen in retail and foodservice are **PRIME**, **CHOICE**, and **SELECT**.



PRIME BEEF is the highest quality grade with the most marbling, which improves juiciness and tenderness.



**Slightly
Abundant**
USDA
LOW PRIME



Moderately Abundant
USDA
AVERAGE PRIME



CHOICE BEEF is high quality and produced in the highest quality, but has less marbling than prime.



Small
USDA
LOW CHOICE



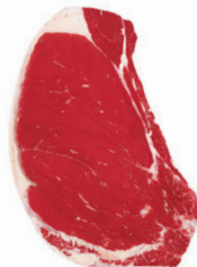
Modest
USDA
AVERAGE CHOICE



Moderate
USDA
HIGH CHOICE



SELECT BEEF is normally leaner than the higher grades. It is fairly tender, but, because it has less marbling, it may lack some of the juiciness of the higher grades.



Slight
USDA SELECT



SCAN TO LEARN MORE