



Your Daily Green Bit

Green grilling, part 2: food, wine, carbon



Just in case we really are what we eat, we'd rather eat a chicken that had a fowl, not foul, life. So our mixed grill will serve humanely raised poultry and meat, and pesticide-free veggies, this 4th of July. And while we grill, we'll chill with superb organic wines from [Natural Merchants](#), available at Whole Foods. Their golden, fruity pino grigio restores honor to the name; it's made by the Pizzolato family in Treviso. Their Spanish whites from the Bodegas Iranzo vineyards, founded in 1335, are light and sparkly, just the

ticket for watching fireworks. And check at your farmers' market or look [here](#) for organic wines made in your own region. For green grilling foods, read on.

Choose cutlets from a fowl who's led a natural, unconfined, beaks-on life, and meat from cattle who not only knew what grass is, but spent most of their lives on pasture. We don't want any products from animals who've been dosed with antibiotics, overuse of which is leading to the rise of [antibiotic-resistant bacteria](#). And we do want the freshest in-season vegetables, free of pesticide residues, grown by local or regional farmers. Here's how to find 'em:

* Type in your zip code to find local, sustainable, organic meat, dairy and produce from nearby farmers' markets, butchers, farmers, stores, and restaurants, at the wonderful [Eat Well Guide](#) site of Sustainable Table, which also produces the award-winning [Meatrix](#) film series.

* Look for the following labels on poultry and meat. None permit antibiotics or growth hormones, or feeding of animal parts to animals.

* [American Grassfed Association](#): Cows, sheep, goats eat grass, period, and standards require they spend most of their lives outside in the pasture. Will soon be third-party-certified by the Food Alliance (see below).

* [Animal Welfare Approved](#): This label, which is exclusive to family farms, guarantess outdoor living to cows and chickens alike and recently received top ratings from the [World Society for Protection of Animals](#).

[Certified Humane](#): Oddly for a humane label, pasture time is not specified, although comfortable shelter and gentler handling are.

* [Food Alliance Certified](#): Sets clear ecologically responsible standards for vegetables, fruits and animal raising. Pasturage and humane slaughtering are required .

* [USDA Organic](#): Better for you, but not necessarily for the animals. They eat only 100% certified organic grass, corn or grain, but, while they're required to have "access" to pasture, this is not clearly defined the way it is with the labels above.

Now for that other food issue! In the annals of barbecue, "carbon" could mean either torched meat or charcoal (charbons de bois, per the French, who will be grilling like mad, too, on July 14th, their own Independence Day). Nowadays, it also signifies the carbon footprint of our barbecue [fuel](#) and food. According to Bon Appetit Management's cool food calculator, which assigns points to the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions caused by foods, 4,500 points a day is a "high carbon" diet. BAM suggests we try for more like 2500 a day, or at least reduce our current tally by 25%. Now to the 'cue.

Choose a 4 oz. grilled beef tenderloin and you blow out the top of the BAM thermometer at 7,500 points. Top round, on the other hand, is 4,000 points. But grilled chicken only runs you 579 points and grilled seasonal vegetables, only 95 points. Try it yourself by clicking [here](#).

For a quick foodie read, see Tracey Ryder's "A Free-Range, Local Chicken in Every Pot," in the summer issue of Cliff Feigenbaum's [Green Money Journal](#). She's the publisher of [Edible Communities](#), a series of 50 regional eating guides with recipes based on local foods.

And Happy 4th of July weekend. Cluck-cluck!

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