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 Ad Size: 6 x 20.75"
 Ad Builder: Julie Beacham-Hoote
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Code: 001300000
 Revision No.: 6
 Sales Rep: Blank #1
 Rep Phone:
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 Date: Thu, Dec 18, 2008 - 11:42 AM

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 Wed, Dec 24, 2008 Local

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MANATEE COUNTY FEATURES A STUDENT AND A CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION TEACHER

Newspaper in
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SCHOOL
Biz

Hands-on Learning

Palmetto High School (PHS) Agriscience instructor Julie Tillett and her students are working hard to prepare for the Manatee County Fair in January. As the school's FFA advisor, Julie and her students are entering four heifers, a steer, eight swine, three goats, and an assortment of rabbits and chickens. Preparing for the event not only involves the care and feeding of all these animals, students also maintain charts that record the animals' weekly weights, calculate growth, and compare the cost of feed versus weight gain. The animals are housed on campus where there are three pastures, a barn with four working stalls, and a show ring. Students are responsible for all of the care and maintenance of the animals and the facility, which also includes a four-acre garden. Julie says, "Being flexible and willing to think on your feet are important qualities in the world of agriculture."

FFA is an essential part of the Agriculture curriculum. The club offers students the opportunity to develop leadership, communication, team building, character, and citizenship skills as they prepare for successful careers and a lifetime of making informed decisions.



Palmetto High School's expansive agriscience facilities offer an incredible opportunity for hands-on experiences for students.

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& Buzz

Meet the Go-To Guy

Caleb Martin, a senior at Palmetto High School (PHS), is the campus Agriscience "go-to guy." Caleb has been honing his skills in crisis management, leadership, critical thinking, and flexibility throughout his high school career. He participates in the PHS agriculture on-the-job training (OJT) program where he works for a salary at a local supply and feed store. At the store, he networks with the local agricultural community. He is the barn superintendent for the PHS ag facility, the president of the 4-H club, and a member of the PHS FFA chapter. Caleb has attended the FFA state convention, 4-H Congress at the state and national levels, and 4-H camp. He also competes at the Manatee County Fair (where he has won the Herdsman award) and the Florida State Fair.

Caleb would like a career in agribusiness. "My passion is with livestock," he said. "Working outside, maintaining other people's barns, raising cattle, and training dogs for the show ring are the best part of my day—keeping agriculture alive!"



InnoVators

Beefy Business

Unless you or your family is vegetarian, you're probably used to having beef products in your diet. We eat hamburgers, steak, ribs, pot roast, tacos, and spaghetti sauce, among other meals. Beef is a staple food in America. Have you ever wondered about the beef industry—who breeds those cows, and what do they feed them?

Although a lot of our beef comes from other countries, most of the beef producers in the U.S. are family-owned or individual businesses. A calf starts out at a farm or ranch and is later sold to a livestock market where it is auctioned off to a stocker. Some stockers and ranchers have their own feeding facilities, but many send the calf to a feedlot after about five months where it's fattened up with grain. The feedlots usually have an arrangement with meat packing plants, and the government has strict guidelines regarding quality and safety in these facilities. Not all cattle go to these feedlots, however; depending on the business, the cattle may be free to roam in pastures and only eat grass. There is much debate about the healthiness and quality of free-range, grass-fed beef vs. grain-fed cattle in feedlots.

Finally, foodservice companies market the meat to restaurants and supermarkets. Beef has grades, or measures of quality, and this depends on the fat marbled within the actual meat. There are eight grades, but the top three most consumers buy include prime

cuts, which have the most marbling, choice cuts with moderate marbling, and select cuts with the least amount of marbled fat. Because the fat within the meat makes it more tender and juicy, prime cuts are the most expensive.

The beef industry is not just the territory of family-owned businesses or big cattle ranches. Students in local high school agriscience classes and FFA clubs are raising heifers and steers to sell at the Manatee County Fair in January. They will sell to the highest bidder on a per-pound price, and those hand-raised animals will be butchered for meat. If you love beef and want to support local students in agriscience, come out to the fairgrounds and get ready to bid!

Explore
IT

What's for Dinner ? Beef!

Students, here's a way to surprise and please your mom—offer to cook dinner! This crock-pot beef recipe is the easiest recipe around—only two ingredients—and it's delicious.

Recipe: Easy Beef

Ingredients:
 1 beef chuck roast, any size to suit your family.
 1 can cream of mushroom soup
 Crock pot



Directions:

Pour soup into crock pot. Place beef on top of soup. Using a spoon or spatula, scoop some of the soup on top of the beef and spread it around to coat. Cover and cook in crock pot on low setting for 6 – 8 hours. The combination of the soup and the beef just creates a yummy gravy.

At dinner time, serve this beef with your choice of potatoes or egg noodles, serving the "gravy" on top. Add a side dish vegetable such as corn or green beans, and call the family to the table. You'll impress them with your cooking skills.

DISCOVER
the
Future

Regional Careers: Occupations involved in *measurement* and current wages in the Suncoast Workforce Region.

Occupational Title	Entry Level	Experienced
Farm and Home Management Advisors	\$8.64	\$24.75
Farm Equipment Mechanics	\$12.30	\$18.56
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	\$7.72	\$13.56
First-Line Managers of Farming, Fishing	\$13.80	\$21.81
Veterinarians	\$28.58	\$70.00+
Veterinary Technologists	\$9.17	\$12.93
Agricultural Inspectors	\$14.43	\$19.16

Source: <http://fred.labormarketinfo.com>
 FL Labor Market Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics & Wages Program

Career Pathway: Students desiring a career in agriscience can find related educational programs at these area schools*:

Palmetto High School
 Manatee Technical Institute
 Manatee Community College
 University of South Florida

*Other Manatee schools may offer similar programs. Listed schools are related to today's issue.

WEB
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Check out the following websites:

www.beefusa.org
www.manateecountyfair.com
www.ffa.org
www.flaffa.org