

## Certification of Grass-Fed Quality Characteristics of Beef Based on Small Molecule Markers

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**Categories:**

- Agriculture
- Food and Nutrition

**Keywords:**

- Agriculture
- Beef quality
- Grass-fed
- Lipids
- Mass Spectrometry
- Molecular markers

Researchers at Purdue University and the University of Sao Paulo have developed a method to determine the type of feed provided to the cattle. Grass-fed beef has been recognized as healthier than grain-fed beef. However, there has been no optimum way to independently validate the grass-fed claim. The Purdue and Sao Paulo researchers' method uses a lipid panel coupled with mass spectrometry to identify the metabolized products of grass and grain, allowing determination of whether the cows were fed grass or grain in finishing. This technology allows for a fast and accurate approach to determine the beef quality and meet certification requirements, reducing costs and risk of adulteration.

Technology Validation: 7 lipids were identified that correlated with luminosity, 43 with redness, and 132 with shear force. Luminosity, redness, and shear force each has a distinct characteristic for grass-fed and grain-fed beef.

**Advantages**

- fast (<2 minutes)
- on-site analysis
- avoids certification costs and adulteration
- increased consumer confidence

**Applications**

- validation of finishing feed composition for cattle

For additional information, please visit Dr. Ferreira's homepage: <https://www.purdue.edu/discoverypark/bioscience/directory/view.php?id=3037>

**People:**

- Ferreira, Christina R (Project leader)
- Antonelo, Daniel Silva
- Balieiro, Julio Cesar de Carvallho

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**Contact OTC:**

Purdue Office of Technology Commercialization  
The Convergence Center  
101 Foundry Drive, Suite 2500  
West Lafayette, IN 47906

Phone: (765) 588-3475

Fax: (765) 463-3486

Email: [otcip@prf.org](mailto:otcip@prf.org)