

The original documents are located in Box 38, folder “Ford, Betty - Food - Beef Prices” of the Sheila Weidenfeld Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

Copyright Notice

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Gerald Ford donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Press Conf. in Sept.

* Boys eating less beef
we don't eat as much steak
as they and like to have or roast beef
or some of those things that the boys like
* Consumers' Council.

Shopping bargains -

Mail from everyone in
Mid-west - (Sally Quinn, etc)

What did Mrs. Ford

Say, (Reported on Network)

"We're buying less beef
and more fish & ^{whether it or not} casseroles,
~~are no stranger to the~~
~~with~~ "have been more
popular in the WH".



~~Harry~~ -

"It was real nice
of them to do it
but it's a shame
they didn't send it
to someone who
~~could~~ needs it."

sup/ 1st but not
allowed to receive
food from anyone.

"For security reasons -
no. of hands it goes thru
when transported

Calf

arrived 7:30 p.m. Friday, Nov. 8, 1974

packed in five cardboard boxes in dry ice

weighed 334 lbs.

(in boxed that were 23 1/2" x 16" wide and 10 1/2" deep)

sent air freight

cost them \$65.95 to send; \$18 to deliver; \$3 other charges.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON



Patti -

Here is a copy of the
offer of assistance from
the American Cattlemen's
Association for your
reference. The surveys have
been filed in our staff
room.

Mary

ANNE BANVILLE
1000 CONNECTICUT AVENUE, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20036
202-296-9190

October 25, 1974

Ms. Mary Owens
Mrs. Ford's Staff
Room 204, East Wing
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

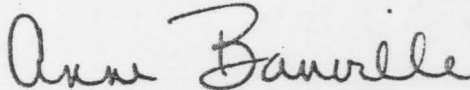
Dear Ms. Owens:

Per our conversation, I am happy to send along a set of the beef price surveys that ANCA has conducted over the past months.

The newspaper write-up you saw locally most likely referred to the latest survey which was taken on October 10 and released October 17. The survey of nineteen cities for that date showed that beef prices were lower across the nation -- but not in Washington, DC, which was why the local media reported the results of the survey so extensively.

Once you've looked over the surveys, if you or any member of Mrs. Ford's staff would like to discuss the surveys or the beef price situation in general, C.W. McMillan of the ANCA Washington office would be pleased to talk with you. Mr. McMillan can be reached at 347-0228.


Sincerely,



Anne Banville
Washington News Bureau Director
American National Cattlemen's Association

Encl: (1)

AB/pah



P.O. Box 1249
Seguin, Texas
November 5, 1974

Mrs. Gerald Ford
White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mrs. Ford:

A group of local ranchers has gotten together and have decided that we would like for you to have a sample of the good grass-fed Texas beef that we produce. We are sending you a calf that was purchased through one of our local auction rings, processed by a local packer, and packaged into cuts of beef ready to be prepared for the table. Since you are First Lady of the United States, we must assume also that you are the First Housewife, and we would like to begin by selling you on the fact that our beef is a real bargain.

For this reason we would like to tell you just exactly how little this meat cost us. This calf weighed 465 pounds and cost $27\frac{1}{2}$ cents per pound, for a total cost of \$126.71. The processing of this calf cost \$38.28 and the carcass weighed 261 pounds. Adding these expenses together, this meat cost 63.2 cents per pound after it had been packed and ready for your freezer. We realize that this is a great deal cheaper than offered in the super markets in this area and, we are sure, in your area as well.

The ranchers who grew this beef are rapidly going broke. They work long and hard hours, use tremendous amounts of capital and not only are they not making a profit, but they are losing money every day. These are the facts that we would like to convey to every housewife in the United States. Their families deserve good beef and we like to produce it for them, but if something is not done soon, we will be out of business.

This meat was packed under the supervision of a Federal



Mrs. Ford

Nov. 5, 1974

Meat Inspector so that your Secret Service people would feel confident in the security of this gift. We hope you enjoy this meat and if we can sell you on our product, then we may have a chance with the other housewives of the United States.

Yours very truly,

Paul H. Mahoney
Skippy Mathis
Jerry Dietz
John Caldwell

Jesse Dietz, Jr.
B. B. Belcher
W. H. Helgeson
Frank Schmitt

P.S. If for any reason you feel that you cannot accept this gift, would you please have this meat forwarded to an orphanage in your area. If you will let us know, we will be glad to pay any expenses incurred in this transfer.



MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Marta received
less than 200
pieces of mail

TO: SHEILA WEDIENFELD
FROM: PATTI MATSON
RE: RANCHERS SENDING CALF TO MRS. FORD

I think we have a couple of choices:

- a) to see if we can downplay the story. The advantage of this is to avoid the controversy between the ranchers and butcher/grocers regarding who really is to blame for the higher prices, and also might enable us not to have to say what is going to happen to the calf.
- b) to have a brief quote from Mrs. Ford to try to regain some of the ground we lost with the ranchers following our "eating more fish and casseroles" comment." Anything she says needs to show great sympathy for the ranchers plight and needs to endorse beef, or ~~we~~ we are better off not saying anything, as it will fan and rekindle the ranchers' just-under-surface ire.

Something like this might work: "The ranchers seem to have a legitimate gripe. My friends in the Midwest tell me the ranchers are getting a bum rap on beef prices, and the figures tend to back that up. I don't know who's to blame for the higher cost, but I do know there's nothing my family looks forward to like a good steak."

(FYI: Justice and the FTC are investigating food prices, and maybe their study will yield some answers.)

re: Receiving Food

Answer: On background, food can't
go to 1st family for security reasons



12:30 pm
THURS, NOV 7.

Sheila (alias Shelia) ...

Bob Pierpoint called.

There is a group of cattlemen in Guadalupe County, Texas who have gotten together and slaughtered, dressed and frozen a fatted calf and sent it to Mrs. Ford.

This is in semi-protest to her statements about beef prices being so high that she and her family are eating less beef and more fish and casseroles, ~~and fish~~ etc.

The cattlemen say that the cost to them to raise, feed, slaughter, dress and freeze this animal is 62.3¢. Their point is that it's the middleman who is making all the profit --not them.

Bob's question: when and where is this thing arriving and what will Mrs. Ford do with it.

Jatti

Answer: On Background
food can't go to 1st
family for security
reasons.



11/7/74

Calf for Mrs. Ford

Seguin, Tex. (UPI) -- First Lady Betty Ford is going to receive a fattened calf from Texas ranchers who want her to know that beef is a bargain when middlemen costs are eliminated.

"Since you are First Lady of the United States, we must assume also that you are the First Housewife," a letter accompanying the processed meat said.

"For this reason, we would like to tell you just exactly how little this meat cost us. This calf weighed 465 pounds and cost 27-1/4 cents per pound for a total of \$126.71.

"The processing of this calf cost \$38.28 and the carcass weighed 261 pounds. Adding these expenses together, this meat cost 63.2 cents per pound after it had been packed and ready for your freezer.

"We realize that this is a great deal cheaper than offered in the super markets in this area, and we are sure in your area as well," the ranchers told Mrs. Ford to emphasize how much profit middlemen make from ranch to market counter.

UP-655

(Calf for Mrs. Ford)

SEGUIN, TEX. (UPI) -- FIRST LADY BETTY FORD IS GOING TO RECEIVE A FATIGUED CALF FROM TEXAS RANCHERS WHO WANT HER TO KNOW THAT BEEF IS A BARGAIN WHEN MIDDLEMEN COSTS ARE ELIMINATED.

"SINCE YOU ARE FIRST LADY OF THE UNITED STATES, WE MUST ASSUME ALSO THAT YOU ARE THE FIRST HOUSEWIFE," A LITTER ACCOMPANYING THE PROCESSED MEAT SAID.

"FOR THIS REASON, WE WOULD LIKE TO TELL YOU JUST EXACTLY HOW LITTLE THIS MEAT COST US. THIS CALF WEIGHED 465 POUNDS AND COST 27 1/4 CENTS PER POUND FOR A TOTAL OF \$126.71.

"THE PROCESSING OF THIS CALF COST \$38.28 AND THE CARCASS WEIGHED 261 POUNDS. ADDING THESE EXPENSES TOGETHER, THIS MEAT COST 63.2 CENTS PER POUND AFTER IT HAD BEEN PACKED AND READY FOR YOUR FREEZER.

"WE REALIZE THAT THIS IS A GREAT DEAL CHEAPER THAN OFFERED IN THE SUPER MARKETS IN THIS AREA, AND WE ARE SURE IN YOUR AREA AS WELL," THE RANCHERS TOLD MRS. FORD TO EMPHASIZE HOW MUCH PROFIT MIDDLEMEN MAKE FROM RANCH TO MARKET COUNTER.

"THE RANCHERS WHO GROW THIS BEEF ARE RAPIDLY GOING BROKE. THEY WORK LONG AND HARD HOURS, USE TREMENDOUS AMOUNTS OF CAPITAL AND NOT ONLY ARE THEY NOT MAKING A PROFIT, BUT THEY ARE LOSING MONEY EVERY DAY," THE LITTER SAID.

"THESE ARE THE FACTS THAT WE WOULD LIKE TO CONVEY TO EVERY HOUSEWIFE IN THE U. S. THEIR FAMILIES DESERVE GOOD BEEF, AND WE LIKE TO PRODUCE IT FOR THEM, BUT IF SOMETHING IS NOT DONE SOON, WE WILL BE OUT OF BUSINESS."

UPI 11-07 11:28 AES

UP-656

