

On Being a Farm Wife

(and other hazards)

Joyce Bupp



shoves to maintain the motion. "Faster" here is a relative term, since porch swing dynamics limit just how fast or how high one can go, parked comfortably on the wooden perch.

Besides, if the swing gets into motion to a point where it might bump the pusher, Grandma swiftly applies the foot brake.

Visibility from the swing extends in three directions around the farm, so we generally check out the scenery. Cats, guineas, even a stray heifer in the meadow may spur a discussion, as well as birds at the feeder, flowers in bloom, or more likely, what piece of farm machinery is doing what job, and where.

Porch-swinging is warm-weather entertainment, making it almost mandatory that refreshments be served, specifically those fruit-flavored, tube-enclosed freezer popsicles, which explains why one frequently slightly sticks to the porch floor when walking in the vicinity of the swing.

For higher excitement and slightly-bigger little folks, another classic swing hangs from a large limb of one of the old maples in the yard. Both the rubber tire and

the nylon rope date back well over two decades, when The Farmer originally hung the tire swing for our kids. It has swung there since, a staple of the backyard, swaying through midsummer thunderstorms and winter blizzards, gently shoved aside by the passing lawn mower, object of curiosity and head nudging by trespassing heifers.

Occasionally, someone even swings on it.

With a little weather protec-

tion and those periodic slatherings of gray and white paint, the old porch swing should hang around to comfort with gentle swaying yet another generation well into our future years. Maybe someday there will even be more time to enjoy the world from its shaded setting.

God willing, I look forward to becoming a swinging senior in my retirement years.

And sharing the porch swing with great-grandchildren.

Just call us the "Swing Set." That covers it.

"Grandma, let's swing!" a little voice will beckon, and off we go. The weightless motion of a swing offers universal appeal, it's a soothing rhythm satisfying to something deep inside ourselves. If we want to go Freud-ish and analyze that, perhaps the appeal is a connection to the time we rocked in the safe, weightless security of our mothers' wombs.

Whatever. The grandkids don't give a hoot for analysis.

They just want to swing.

So we stamped out through the kitchen door to the back porch, where a classic bench-style swing hangs on chains from hooks drilled long ago into the

ceiling of our shaded porch. The old wooden swing was a donation from my dad, purchased second, third, maybe fourth-hand at a sale and spiffed up with white and gray paint.

This swing has served four generations of our family thus far, spruced up occasionally with a fresh coat of wood-prolonging color. A lawn-lounge cushion softens the sitting on its wooden length, just the right size for one adult and a couple of little folks. We will no sooner plop down, together, until at least one of them slides back off to be the "pusher" keeping us swingers in motion.

"Faster, faster!" is the normal cheer encouraging the small person giving the old swing periodic

Campaign Aims To 'Beef Up' Smaller Fares

DENVER, Colo. — Cattle producers have extended an away-from-home campaign that demonstrates that even those eating less can still enjoy beef.

Funded through \$1-per-head checkoff program, the "BEEFflexible" campaign shows restaurant operators how they can serve flexible-sized portions that allow their patrons to enjoy the beef tastes they expect.

The campaign is being coordinated on behalf of the Cattlemen's Beef Board and state beef councils by the National Cattleman's Beef Association (NCBA).

"Some restaurant diners who want to eat a less-filling meal don't think of beef as an option but it should be," says Sid Sumner, a beef producer from Bartow, Fla., and chair of the checkoff-funded Joint Foodservice Committee. "Our campaign demonstrates that there are wonderful beef items that are perfect for those dining occasions that call for limited consumption."

The checkoff-funded "BEEFflexible" campaign features beef value cuts to showcase smaller fare. For example, in one campaign brochure cuts from the chuck and round are used to showcase contemporary recipes ideal "for small plates."

Recipe cards from all six dishes have been made available to operators responding to the ad. Preliminary results show that requests for materials have increased.

This year the campaign is being expanded with ads that feature the "Petite Tender" from the shoulder, joining ads for the Flat Iron and Ranch-Cut steaks in rotation throughout the year.

The ads and recipes are targeted at small independent restaurants, where many trends and innovations in the foodservice industry start. Among the audience are decision makers, R&D chefs, marketing and business executives, distributors, and sales representatives.

"The industry will never abandon steaks and burgers," says Sumner. "But beef does need to increase its visibility on restaurant menus, as well as take the price pressure off of high end steaks and other middle meats. This campaign helps us do that."

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