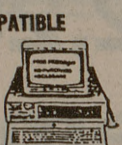


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Professor says people have false ideas about red meat

By Sandra Voelkel
Reporter

Many people have misconceptions about the amount and detrimental effects of fat, calories and cholesterol in red meat because of the warnings given by many health professionals, said Dr. Russell Cross, a Texas A&M professor of animal science.

"In the past," Cross said, "dietary fat has come under scrutiny with respect to its role in causing coronary heart disease and other health-related problems."

"The health profession first reacted by recommending that patients at risk for coronary heart disease eat less red meat because of its perceived high fat content and cholesterol level, but more recent recommendations allow consumption of moderate amounts of meat."

One fact the medical profession is confused about is the relationship

between cholesterol and fat content, he said.

"Many doctors believe the higher the fat content of the meat, the more cholesterol there is in the meat," Cross said.

This is not true because there is a very low relationship between the fat and cholesterol contents in meat, he said, and cholesterol is relatively constant with different levels of fat.

Ground beef with 30 percent fat and ground beef with two percent, for example, both will have 60 milligrams of cholesterol, primarily because cholesterol is in the cell wall of the muscle fiber, he said.

Most health-care professionals and dieticians would prefer red meat that has no fat, he said, but there are problems with consumer acceptance when fat is absent from meat because such meat is usually tough, dry and undesirable in flavor.

Some fat is necessary to ensure the meat is enjoyed when eaten,

Cross said, but the level should be low enough that meat may be included in the diet.

Cholesterol is necessary for life, Cross said, but since the human body can produce about 1,500 milligrams of cholesterol each day, significant consumption of cholesterol in the diet is not necessary.

"However, if a person eats an abundance of cholesterol, the body is capable of excreting the excess," he added.

Meat is leaner these days because of better breeding and feeding methods, Cross said.

When cooked, lean beef and skinless chicken have almost identical cholesterol levels.

The meat industry has helped the consumer by identifying leaner cuts of beef, pork and lamb, and by promoting low-fat, low-calorie methods of cooking red meat, he said.

Texas prisons release 120 inmates; officials say overcrowding remains

HUNTSVILLE (AP) — More than 100 inmates were released from Texas prisons Thursday, but officials said the number would not be enough to allow the nation's second-largest corrections system to reopen its doors to new convicts.

For the second time in a month, the state's 26 units were closed Wednesday to inmate admissions when the population reached 38,472, or 95.21 percent of capacity. The tally was 86 inmates over a 95 percent cap set by the Legislature to control prison overcrowding.

The closing came after another 200 inmates were admitted while only about 68 were released, pushing the population even higher over the limit. The midnight Wednesday count, announced Thursday, was 95.34 percent, or 38,523 inmates — 135 over the limit.

About 120 were being freed Thursday, officials said.

"We'll have to have a few more days like that," he said, referring to the releases. "Actually, it would be good if we had a week like that."

Although interim prison director James Lynaugh sent a teletype message to all Texas sheriffs informing them the system was closed, Hunt County deputies showed up at the prison system's Diagnostic Center in Huntsville Thursday with four in-

mates. They were turned away by a guard posted at the gate.

"The TDC said they would take ours this week because we hold some of their inmates here from time to time," Hunt County Sheriff's Department Lt. Neil Dent said.

"I'm full here," he said, referring to his county jail. "Our jail holds 81 and we had 79 this morning, not counting the four we sent to TDC."

Other sheriff's departments around the state, however, said the prison closing was causing no immediate problems.

"We anticipate this present shutdown will be for only a short time," Mark Keller, director of the detention bureau for Harris County, the state's most populous. "I think the impact for the near future will be minimal."

Harris County, which has a 4,400-inmate jail, had scheduled 35 prisoners for delivery on Thursday.

"We are holding our deliveries," Keller said. "We certainly can accommodate 35 more inmates."

Two other high-population counties — Dallas and Tarrant — were assigning county jail inmates mattresses on the floor rather than

bunks, but officials anticipated no serious problems unless the state prison closing was prolonged.

The prison system closed its doors early last month after topping the 95 percent mark set by the Legislature in 1983 as a result of a federal judge's order to ease crowding.

Treasurer says tax increase needed to pay Texas' bills

AUSTIN (AP) — State Treasurer Ann Richards told the Senate Finance Committee on Thursday the Legislature must pass a tax increase to begin Sept. 1 or the state will be unable to pay its bills this fall.

"Seven months from now we are facing the same kind of serious jeopardy we had been facing before," Richards said.

"And the tools we had been given to deal with it are going to be inadequate, unless we have enough cash arrive in the treasury early in September to offset the outflow of money by Sept. 23 to the foundation school fund," she said.

The state will pay off in August the \$600 million it borrowed last

Sheriff warns ranchers of attacks

RIO GRANDE CITY (AP) — Starr County Sheriff Gene Falcon on Thursday warned ranchers not to venture on their land following an attack on a man with baling twine and left to legal aliens in less than a month on ranchers in this county across the Rio Grande from Mexico.

"The bulk of this stuff is border banditry," says Al Helgeson, acting chief of the McAllen area of the Border Patrol.

Reports of burglaries and vandalism at ranch houses and Starr County have increased dramatically within the past months, Falcon said.

Helgeson said the culprits, probably illegal aliens across the Rio Grande in search of elry, money or guns.

Starr County, a known border for drug smugglers, is an area where a lot of aliens are actively involved in heavy crime, namely narcotics," he said.

Chief Sheriff's Deputy "Temo" Gomez, said that in a most recent case, Mario Garcia, 19, was working in a field of the Hidalgo-Starr county when he was accosted about p.m. Tuesday by two aliens.

Garcia was able to make self and drive to Sullivan about two miles away.

Falcon blamed Mexico's economy as a reason for the attacks.

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