

Beta-agonists

- approved by FDA
- available and used since 2004
- fed for 28 days or less at the end of the feeding phase
- metabolized quickly (no residue)
- increase beef production per animal by 15-30 pounds



FDA
Approved



The US beef industry has done a remarkable job of maintaining beef production even though the beef cow inventory has been shrinking since the mid-70's. Beta-agonists have played a part.

So why the attention?

**The use of
beta-agonists
is
NOT
a food safety
issue.**

Beta-agonists have been available and included in some finishing rations for beef cattle for over nine years.

Recently, isolated instances of lameness and mobility issues of finished cattle after arrival at a packing plant were alleged to be associated with the feeding of zilpaterol [one of two FDA-approved beta-agonists].

Several other factors could be associated with these observations of immobility: heat, genetics and feed mixing to name a few.

For now, the manufacturer of zilpaterol has voluntarily suspended distribution while the company and

independent experts determine potential causes of lameness and other mobility issues that have been reported.

Beta-agonists are not growth hormones or antibiotics. When fed to beef cattle late in the finishing phase, they direct nutrients toward muscle at the expense of fat accumulation. Thus cattle can be efficiently fed 3-4 weeks longer and gain an additional 15-30 pounds of carcass weight, which translates into more retail beef yield.

U.S. beef remains a safe, wholesome heart-healthy source of protein, B vitamins, zinc and iron.