



# Defending Beef

Second Edition

The Ecological and Nutritional Case for Meat



Nicolette Hahn Niman

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**“Nicolette Hahn Niman sets out to debunk just about everything you think you know [about beef] . . . She’s not trying to change your mind; she’s trying to save your world.” —*LA Times***

**As the meat industry responds to COVID-19, the climate threat, and the rise of plant-based “meats”, *Defending Beef* delivers a passionate argument for sustainable meat production and consumption—in this updated and expanded new edition.**

We’ve all heard the narrative that red meat (and beef in particular) is killing the environment. The public has been led to believe that cattle erode soils, pollute, damage wetland ecosystems, and decimate wildlife populations.

Yet, in *Defending Beef*, environmental lawyer turned rancher Nicolette Hahn Niman argues that it’s not so simple. With new studies and strong scientific evidence, she shows:

- How ruminants are beneficial to biodiversity and restoring the environment
- How regenerative agriculture can reduce greenhouse gas emissions and replenish soils
- Why animal fats and proteins are nutritious, providing vital nutrients for optimal health
- How farmers and ranchers can lead the effort to healing ecosystems and human health

This book is at once a defense of cattle and an indictment of industrial agriculture, substandard animal welfare and poor diets. Done with care, cattle husbandry enriches our human experience and enhances the natural world. We must move beyond simplistic solutions like banishing cattle from our landscapes and replacing beef with lab-grown (highly refined) meat. It’s time to focus on improving how we raise cattle and turn them into beneficial, nutrient-rich food. **Only then can we tap into the full ecological and nourishment potential these remarkable creatures provide.**

Praise for *Defending Beef*

“[A] deeply compelling and delicious vision for the future of food.” —Dan Barber

“Elegant, strongly argued” — The Atlantic

“Shows clearly that beef cattle are an important part of sustainable agriculture.” —Temple Grandin

## About the Author



Nicolette Hahn Niman served as senior attorney for Waterkeeper Alliance, running their campaign to reform the concentrated production of livestock and poultry. In recent years, she has gained a national reputation as an advocate for sustainable food production and improved farm-animal welfare. She is the author of *Righteous Porkchop* and *Defending Beef*, and has written for numerous publications, including the *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *HuffPost*, and *The Atlantic* online. She lives on a ranch in Northern California with her husband, Bill Niman, and their two sons.