



Facts About Metro's DRY AGED MEAT PROGRAM

What does "dry age" mean? Dry aging is a time-honored technique in which unwrapped cuts of beef are stored in a specially constructed room where all aspects of the environment are strictly regulated; temperature, humidity, air circulation and bacteria levels.

What happens during the dry age process? By carefully controlling the environment, natural enzymes "break down" the meat, without it spoiling. The cell structure in the meat starts to break down and the meat becomes naturally more tender. The flavor of the meat also matures, becoming richer and more intense. One of the keys to the dry age process is controlling the naturally occurring bacteria levels on the surface of the meat. At Metropolitan, we use an "ozone-ator" to produce ozone. The addition of ozone into the dry age room kills the surface bacteria on the meat. Another key to the process is the humidity level in the dry age room. The humidity must be maintained between 50% and 65%. This low level of humidity "dries" the outside of the meat and reduces level of moisture in the meat. A piece of meat can lose between 15%-20% of its original weight during the process.

How long is the meat product aged? Meat can be aged for as long as 42 days. To maximize flavor, shelf life and final product yields, all Metropolitan's meat products are aged for a minimum of 21 days.

Why is dry age meat products more expensive? Dry aged meat is more expensive because of the special storage requirements, the additional production requirements and the final products lower yields. The process requires a specially constructed room that must be monitored 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Boning and trimming each piece of meat is very time consuming and labor intensive. During the drying process, each piece of meat loses between 15%-20% of its original weight. Combining this loss with the additional yeild loss from bone in, fat covered primals, dramatically affects final product yields.

Are there any special handling requirements for dry age products? Dry aged product needs to be treated differently than other cuts of meat. The natural enzymes and bacteria present in the meat have become more active during the aging process. As soon as the meat is removed from the controlled environment of the dry age room, the "break down" of the meat accelerates and is less restrained. This affect can be noticed in 3 to 5 days when the surface of the meat may become "sticky". This is normal and should be expected. Trimming the outer layer off easily eliminates the problem. Ideally, the product should be stored as close to 32 degrees Fahrenheit as possible. Trimming should be done when cutting steaks. Minimize the time the meat is uncovered and always keep the meat wrapped in the paper that it comes in.

When can I order the product? Anytime! The product is cut to order each day for that day delivery.