

RENDERING BEEF FAT

When beef fat comes back from the butcher, it has little bits of meat (gristle) still attached to the fat. Melting the fat allows us to skim off the gristle and purify the fat. The fat is then called “tallow.” The color and consistency of tallow can change a bit from batch to batch simply because each beef animal is unique! :)

Tallow can be used for a variety of products, from bird feed suet to cooking to personal care products. (You may need to repeat the purification steps for your tallow to remove the beef smell if you’re planning to make soaps or lotions.)

I found this website very helpful

<https://bumblebeeapothecary.com/render-tallow-easy-crockpot-method/>

as well as her instructions for purifying

<https://bumblebeeapothecary.com/how-to-render-and-purify-tallow-so-that-it-is-odorless-and-white/>

I tend to use the “wet / water & fat” method described on the Purification page from Bumblebee Apothecary. In this method, some salt water is poured into the fat while it is heating. This creates a difference in density where the fat rises and the water/gristle sinks. It also makes it easier to get the hardened fat out of my crockpot later. Just run a butter knife around the edge and flip the crockpot upside down over a cookie sheet in the sink!

Quick Ideas for Using Beef Tallow:

Bird Suet: I heat 5 lbs of ground fat in a large crockpot with some salt water. After everything melts, I let the crock cool on the counter & maybe also in the refrigerator. When the fat is hard, I pop the tallow out of the crockpot and discard the water/gristle. The fat can be sliced into bars that fit my suet birdfeeder. I freeze the extra bars until needed.

Cooking Oil: If I plan to cook with the oil, I purify the fat at least once (i.e. heat the fat two different times in the crockpot with fresh water for the second run.) The final fat will be a harder solid that can be scooped out of a container.

There are a number of internet recipes for frying homemade potato chips with the tallow! Yum!

Personal Care Items: The beef fat doesn’t smell “beefy” when fully purified and strained. If your cooled fat smells like meat, consider purifying/straining it again before using it to make body lotions and creams and soaps. :)