

STILLWATER â€” Great steaks come from a beef loin. You know their names by heart. Sirloin. Filet mignon. Rib-eye. T-Bone. Porterhouse. You can add another, one from the shoulder, thanks to researchers working at Oklahoma State Universityâ€™s Robert M. Kerr Food & Agricultural Products Center. The Vegas Strip Steak, patented and trademarked, will be arriving soon at butcher shops and restaurants. â€œIâ€™ve worked with universities all across the country,â€ said Tony Mata, a world-class meat researcher from Dallas nicknamed the â€œMeat Geek.â€ â€œThere is none better than the folks right here at OSU.â€ Mata has been working with OSU researchers for more than 20 years, and the latest discovery is the Vegas Strip Steak. Mata was working with OSUâ€™s Jake Nelson to try new ideas in the production of meat products. They were literally looking for new ways to cut up beef. Mata is generally credited with discovering the flat iron steak and petite tender. â€œWe were working to find new cuts to add value for our producers and processors,â€ said Mata. â€œWe found what we thought was a possibility, a muscle near the shoulder. At first, it was not what we wanted. But, through testing, we found the proper process.â€ Mata and Nelson found what they believed was a possible new cut of beef in the area that normally produces chuck roasts and hamburger. There are two on every animal and, depending on portion size, can produce up to four to six steaks. It took a lot of work and testing, including by chef Rick Gresh of Primehouse in Chicago, to come up with a finished product. â€œWhen I first cooked it up at home it wasnâ€™t very good,â€ said Nelson. â€œBut when we worked on the process to produce it, we produced a much better product. â€œThe next time I cooked it the steak was great. When it comes to tenderness, flavor and juiciness, it holds its own with just about any other steak.â€ Oklahoma State received notice this summer that a patent on the process to produce the steak has been approved. The Vegas Strip Steak name has been trademarked. â€œYou canâ€™t patent the work of God, so the steak is

not patented," said Nelson. "All we did was patent the process to produce it.

The patent office believed we had some worthy intellectual property." The Vegas Strip Steak

is an approximately 14-ounce steak that is similar to a strip steak in both

tenderness and flavor. "I feel pretty confident we have identified the last real beef

steak," said Nelson. So far, the steak has a limited availability. Creekstone Farms in

Arkansas City, Kansas, is licensed to produce the steak for the food service industry

(restaurants). In Stillwater the Vegas Strip Steak is available at two restaurants: The Rancher's

Club and Mojo's. It is also available at the Iron Star in Oklahoma City.

"It is a new product that we believe will become very popular," said Nelson.

"The versatility of this steak is very popular with high-end chefs." The Vegas Strip

Steak has some advantages over the standard steaks that come from the loin (T-bone,

rib-eye, porterhouse). While aging is often important in steaks, the Vegas Strip Steak needs

no aging. "So, instead of aging in a cooler for weeks, you get the

Vegas Strip Steak and it is already tender and ready to be cooked," said

Nelson. "That saves you money." As the Vegas Strip Steak starts to spread in

popularity, it could add \$2 to \$5 per animal for producers. "That doesn't sound

like much until you realize we produce 25 million animals in this country each

year," said Mata. "When you look at it industrywide, you realize just how much

of a game-changer it could be for meat producers." Finding additional ways to produce

revenue is important in any business. "That added value is an important factor," said

Mata. "You can have a cut of beef that costs more to produce but

doesn't add any value. In this case, the Vegas Strip adds value." In fact,

that was an important part of the Vegas Strip development. When Mata and Nelson

started working on it, it took too much time to produce, upward of 20

to 25 minutes. However, they developed a process to cut that time dramatically. Now,

one female processor is producing a finished Vegas Strip Steak in less than 30

seconds. “The steak had to be good,” said Nelson. “Once we had the product, then we had to name it, too. You’d be surprised but that was very important. In fact, the first thing we did after coming up with a name was to trademark it.” How do you cook it? One chef that has worked with it said pan sear each side for two minutes and serve. How soon until you start seeing it on restaurant menus or at your local butcher shop?

“That is up to the marketplace, but we believe it is a terrific addition to the beef options for consumers,” said Nelson. “We think as more people taste it, and as more chefs work with it, it will become very popular.” John Klein 918-581-8368 [john.klein@tulsaworld.com](mailto:john.klein@tulsaworld.com) Twitter: @JohnKleinTW