higher in conjugated linoleic acid (CLA), a healthy fat and potential cancer fighter
higher in vaccenic acid (which can be transformed into CLA)
lower in the saturated fats

It also has a healthier ratio of omega-6 to omega-3 fatty acids (1.65 to 4.84).

Ghee and Butter Oil from Grass-Fed Cows

One pastured dairy product that is available to everyone at health food stores or by mail order is ghee made from the milk of grass-fed cows. Ghee is also known as Indian clarified butter, drawn butter, butter ghee or anhydrous milk fat. This traditional food is prepared by melting and simmering unsalted butter over a low temperature until the water evaporates and milk solids separate from the oil. The resulting oil has a semisolid consistency and is very stable. It can be stored without refrigeration for as long as three months, and up to a year in the fridge. Not all ghee comes from grass-fed cows, however, so look for the telltale golden yellow color and read the label carefully to make sure you are getting the most menaquinone bang for your butter buck.

Ghee made from the milk of grass-fed cows certainly fits the description of the activator X–rich golden butter oil that Dr. Price described in his work. Based on the green content of the cows’ fodder and the careful concentration of the fat (and therefore fat-soluble-vitamin–containing) portion of the butter, pastured ghee should be a plentiful source of vitamin K₂. Ghee can be used wherever you would use butter, and its high smoke point (485°F) makes it a great choice for frying and sautéing.
One company that produces an excellent pastured ghee is Pure Indian Foods. Its label states that “this ghee is made with milk obtained only during the spring and fall, when the cows are out to pasture eating rapidly growing green grass.” As a bonus for followers of ayurvedic medicine, a traditional system of medicine in India (“ayurvedic” is Sanskrit for “the complete knowledge for long life”), this product is made according to Vedic principles. The label also explains, “We make our ghee only during the full or waxing moon days,” which, apparently, is good news for Vedic followers.

I don’t know to what extent the waxing of the moon contributes to the quality of the end product, but I have to say, this stuff is absolutely delicious. I was blown away by the flavor of this grass-fed butter ghee, a taste that I can only describe as, well . . . buttery. If you have ever eaten artificial butter–flavored popcorn and wondered who decided that that flavor represented actual butter, you’ll have an “aha” moment when you taste grass-fed ghee. It captures all the best butter flavor without the phony odor (or questionable radiation) of microwave popcorn. To boot, it should be chock-full of K₂. Unfortunately, at about $1 per ounce—plus shipping, which may cost as much as the product itself depending on where you live—grass-fed ghee is a luxury item for most people.

Also in the category of grass-fed butter concentrates is butter oil. The most prominent brand is X-Factor Gold High Vitamin Butter Oil, produced by Green Pasture Products and sold by several online retailers. According to the label, it is, like grass-fed ghee, made from dairy oil extracted from cows that eat “100 percent rapidly growing grass.” The product label further explains that “the speed of grass growth, timing of the grazing, species of grass, climate and extraction method are all important” in producing the butter oil.
Although X-Factor butter oil is marketed as a dietary supplement, I would put it in the same “functional food” category as grass-fed ghee, because the nutrient content is not listed on the label. However, since the butter oil is *seven times* the price per ounce of grass-fed ghee, I did endeavor to determine exactly what distinguishes it. Except for the reference to an unstated species of grass on the butter oil label, the label descriptions of the two products seem the same. I interviewed the owner of Green Pasture Products and my specific questions were met with vague answers. If you can afford this product, you can afford grass-fed ghee, and, according to my research, you’ll be getting pretty much the same thing.

**Yet Another Reason to Avoid Trans Fat**

In addition to the gradual loss of foods from grass-fed sources, our K$_2$ status took another collective hit with the advent of trans fat. Simply put, *eating processed or fast food increases our risk of vitamin K$_2$ deficiency*. More than just displacing butter—which, grass-fed or not, at least stands a chance of containing some menaquinone—margarine and other hydrogenated oils deliver a sucker punch to our K$_2$ intake. These butter substitutes introduced a mutant form of vitamin K called dihydrophylloquinone (DHP) into our diets. DHP is formed when vitamin K$_1$–rich plant oils are synthetically hydrogenated. Commercially baked goods and fried foods are major dietary sources of DHP, and blood levels of this antinutrient are used in scientific studies as a marker for low-quality diets.

What does this have to do with K$_2$? Well, even when you adjust for other markers of diet quality such as calcium intake, and relevant lifestyle factors such as age, body weight, exercise and estrogen use,