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Quality Over Cost

Despite rising prices, Taquerias Arandas opts for high-quality beef.



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It's safe to say many Taquerias Arandas customers have no beef with the Mexican chain's decision to stick with higher-quality, more expensive beef, even while many brands look to alternative proteins and LTOs as shelter from soaring beef prices.

Judy Camarena, president of Arandas Franchises, says the company's focus has always been on providing premium ingredients at an affordable price. "Some restaurants are opting for cheaper meat to cut costs, but we feel our consistent commitment to quality is part of what sets us apart," she says.

"The rising price of beef is an opportunity for us to further showcase our commitment to quality over cost," Camarena adds.

Still, a decision like Taquerias Arandas's can be expensive, says DeWayne Dove, vice president of purchasing for chain restaurant purchasing cooperative SpenDifference.

Dove says Mexican chains use either a flat meat or peeled skirt steak, which Taquerias Arandas is using in items like its fajitas. In today's market, flat meat runs more than \$5 a pound, while the cost of skirt stands at about \$7.50 a pound. "It's a huge investment in quality," Dove says.

However, there are ways costs can be mitigated from the packer to the plate, such as by working with labor, cost, and overhead, he says.

Camarena says the company's beef strategy aligns with its greater brand message. "We're committed to the quality, authenticity, and flavor of our food," she says. "We decided to pay more for higher-quality beef because our customers expect and deserve the best fajitas we can serve."

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