

## Lamb and Mutton on the Farm

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Although lamb and mutton have not been widely used in Missouri farm homes in the past, these meats are now taking on a new significance because of the widespread shift to pasture farming and the increased use of sheep as factors in soil conservation. Lambs and yearlings raised on the farm provide a needed variety of highly nutritive fresh meat.

A season particularly well adapted to the utilization of fresh lamb and mutton is late autumn, before the weather is cold enough for the slaughter of hogs. Even in the summer months, with modern household refrigeration, it is possible for a family to utilize a lamb entirely in the form of fresh meat.

Home produced lamb can thus be included in the family's annual food supply plans, furnishing another variety of choice meat when fried chicken and ham have lost some of their glamor and before the advent of fresh pork. Lamb takes less time to prepare than chicken and is especially desirable when cooking for a large group, as for threshers.

The nutritive value of lamb is about the same as that of beef. It is one of our best muscle building foods. It contains energy-producing fat—more than beef but less than pork. It is a rich source of iron, which is essential for good red blood. It is high in phosphorus and the important vitamins. It is easily and completely digested.

At the present time lamb and mutton are much more widely used in the cities than in rural sections; yet the farm family can well afford to enjoy these meats which can be produced largely with sod crops on the rougher parts of the farm. It is to aid the farm people of Missouri in taking advantage of this opportunity through correct methods of dressing, chilling, cutting, and cooking that this circular has been prepared.

### Factors Determining Quality

The desirability of lamb as a meat for home use or for market depends on the breeding of the animal, feeding, slaughtering, method of handling, and cooking the meat.

Lambs of the mutton breeds are more desirable for meat than those of breeds bred primarily for wool production. The former dress a higher proportion of carcass to live weight, thereby yielding meatier roasts and chops. At the time of slaughtering lambs should be well covered with fat over the legs, shoulders and back and gaining rapidly if the most tender meat is desired. All animals selected for slaughter should be healthy and thriving.

Two problems make it difficult to have desirable lamb or mutton during the summer and early fall season in Missouri. The first is to get lambs fat. An 80-pound lamb should produce a 40-pound carcass as a lamb should be fat enough to dress 50% or better if the best quality of meat is desired. Since the hot weather makes it difficult to fatten lambs it will be advisable to use yearlings, since a well finished yearling will produce a carcass with a more desirable flavor. However, if spring lambs are shorn in early July and fed in a cool shed during the day and turned to good pasture at night they will fatten, if internal parasites are controlled.

The second problem is that of refrigeration. Families living in communities adjacent to cold storage lockers can easily chill the carcass and store it in the locker until it is consumed.

A common opinion is that the fell or thin, paper-like membrane covering the lamb carcass causes the meat to have an undesirable flavor. This covering does not affect the flavor but serves to prevent the meat from drying out in storage and when being roasted. Even slow skinning of a lamb has no influence on the flavor, if the carcass is kept clean during the process of slaughtering. Even if dirt or grease from the wool touches the meat, prompt washing with hot water and a clean cloth will entirely remove it.

### **Slaughtering Equipment**

A sharp skinning knife and a steel are the tools needed to dress a lamb. There will be needed, also, six feet of clean quarter-inch rope with which to hang the lamb to a beam or tree limb about six feet from the ground, a bench, box or clean floor upon which to lay the lamb while starting the skinning, a tub for the offal, a pan for the heart, liver and tongue, a bucket of hot water and a few clean cloths.

### **Slaughtering and Dressing**

Animals selected for slaughter should be put in a clean stall the day before so that they can be caught without running or exciting them. They should have access to water but no feed for 24 hours before slaughtering.

### Bleeding

The animal should be held for sticking so that the blood will not drain into the fleece, making it difficult to do a clean job of skinning. A lamb may be laid down on a box or bench with the head hanging over the edge (Figure 1). Hold the lamb's nose in the left hand, being careful not to shut off its breath. Run the knife through the

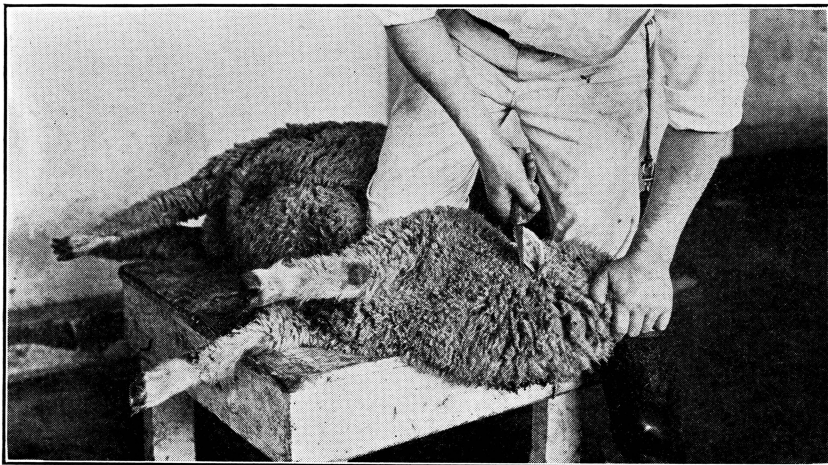


Fig. 1.—Sticking a lamb on a bench. Pressure from the operator's right knee holds the lamb in place. (The illustrations in this circular, and some of the subject matter, are taken from Farmer's Bulletin 1807 of the United States Department of Agriculture.)

neck close to the neck bone just behind the angle of the jaw and below the base of the ear. Cut out at right angles to the neck. If the knife was not close enough to the neck bone to pick up and sever the arteries, cut back to the bone.

### Skinning the Legs

The bled lamb is laid on a clean floor or platform for skinning. The pelt is opened by removing a narrow strip of skin from the front of the fore legs and from the back of the hind legs. The pelt is then pushed or "fisted" off the brisket, belly and flanks before the carcass is hung.

Stand at the side of the animal, holding the front leg between the operator's knees with the carcass leaning away, thus stretching the leg tight (Figure 2). Raise a narrow strip of pelt from below the animal's knee to the hoof head. Extend the opening in the pelt from the point below the knee to a point well in front of the brisket. Care should be taken not to cut too deep or through the paper-thin, pro-

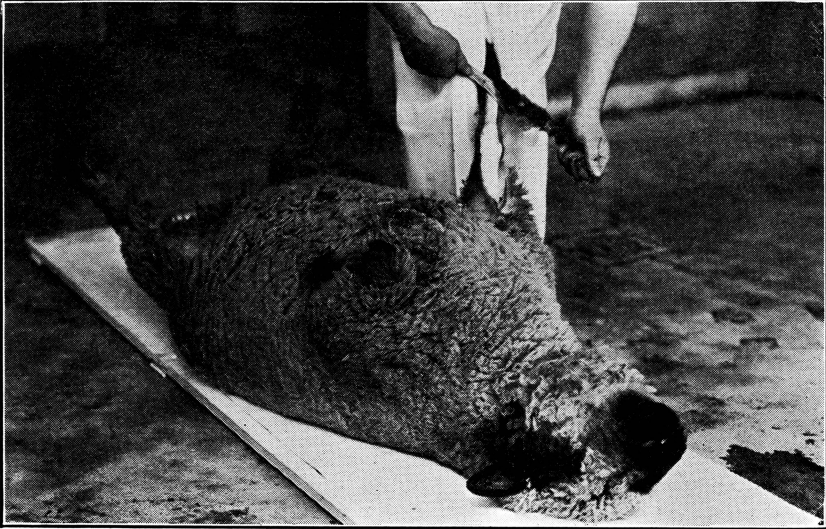


Fig. 2.—Opening the pelt over the front of the front leg. Keep the edge of the knife against the leg rather than up against the skin.

tective membrane, or fell, that envelopes the meat just under the skin. To avoid cutting through the fell and into the meat the beginner should “choke” the knife, hold it with the cutting edge up against the skin, rather than toward the meat, and cut with a short,

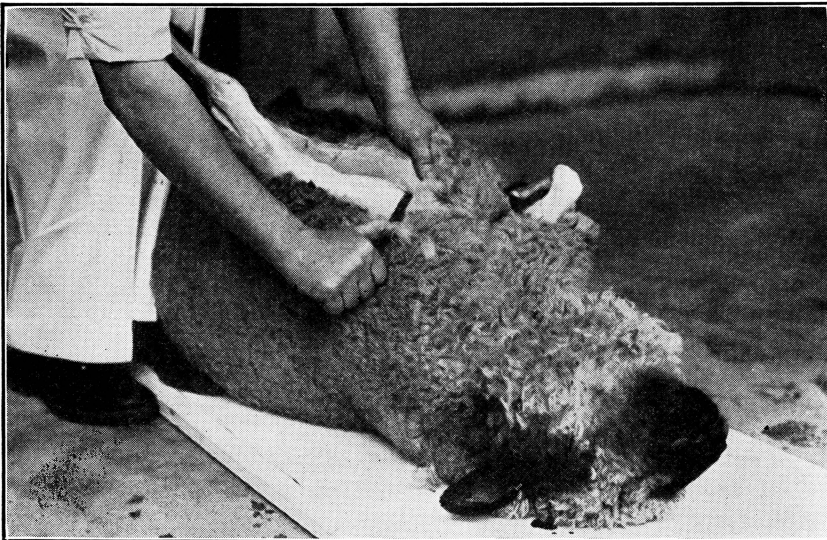


Fig. 3.—Opening the pelt in front of the brisket. Slow, short strokes up against the pelt will prevent cutting down into the meat.

curving wrist motion that swings only the point of the knife against the pelt (Figure 3). The left hand raises the pelt from the meat and holds it tight while the knife is turned against it.

The opening over the front of the left leg joins that made over the right leg in front of the brisket. The pelt is then opened down the neck to the opening made by sticking.

The v-shaped strip of pelt over the brisket that has been formed by opening the fleece over the front legs is grasped at the point or head end and pulled up and back over the brisket (Figure 4). If



Fig. 4.—Pulling the pelt over the brisket. Hold the pelt at the end and pull steadily.

the pelt sticks to the brisket and the fat and fell begin to tear, pulling should be stopped and fisting begun.

The hind leg is held between the knees, in the same manner as the front leg, and a strip of pelt raised from a point below the hock along the tendon and into the hoof head. The cut is extended to a point just in front of the anus, using the same careful, rotary, wrist motion to prevent the point of the knife cutting into the choice leg muscles. Still holding the leg between the operator's knees, skin out the hock and leg and then unjoint the foot at the lowest joint or the one next the hoof (Figure 5). If the foot has not been properly unjointed at the hoof head, as described, the tendons may pull out when the carcass is hung.

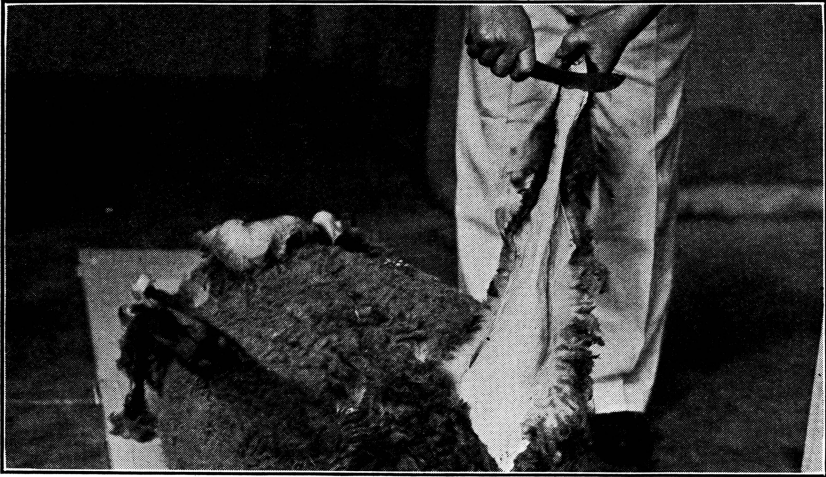


Fig. 5.—Unjointing the foot from the skinned hind leg.

Slip the knife between the leg bone and the tendons to make an opening for the string or gambrel used in hanging the carcass. There are two tendons and both should be raised as one may not be strong enough. Skin out the other hind leg and, grasping the pointed strip of pelt, pull it back over the cod or udder as far as it will go without tearing the flesh (Figure 6).

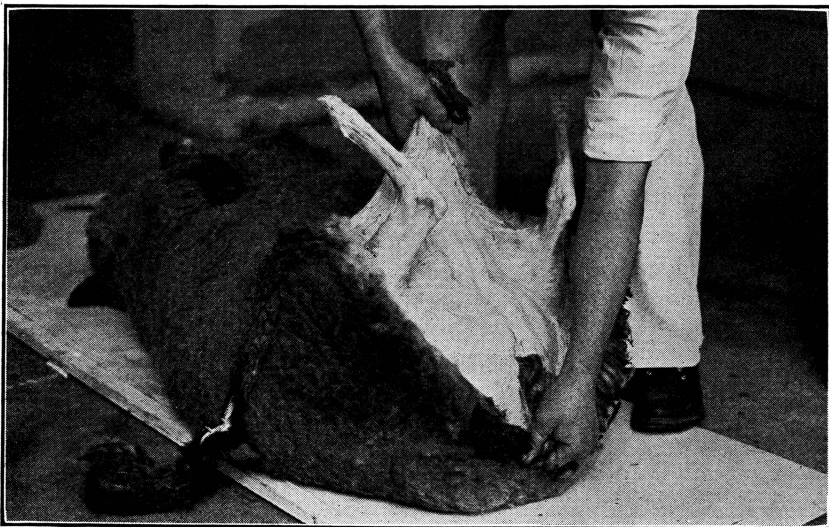


Fig. 6.—Pulling the pelt free up to the cod or udder.

### Fisting the Pelt off the Belly

Clean hands are necessary if a clean carcass is obtained. The bucket of hot water and cloths are to be used in keeping the operator's hands clean.

The clenched fist is used to wedge in between the pelt and the fell. The thumb lies on top of the first finger and is used to lead the fist in under the pelt. The motion and pressure of the fist are up against the skin, pushing and working it away from the meat, rather than pushing the meat away from the skin. The left hand follows along just above the right, grasping the wool and holding the skin taut as the fist pushes against it underneath.

Jamming through the fell and muscles of the carcass with the fist will result in an unattractive carcass.

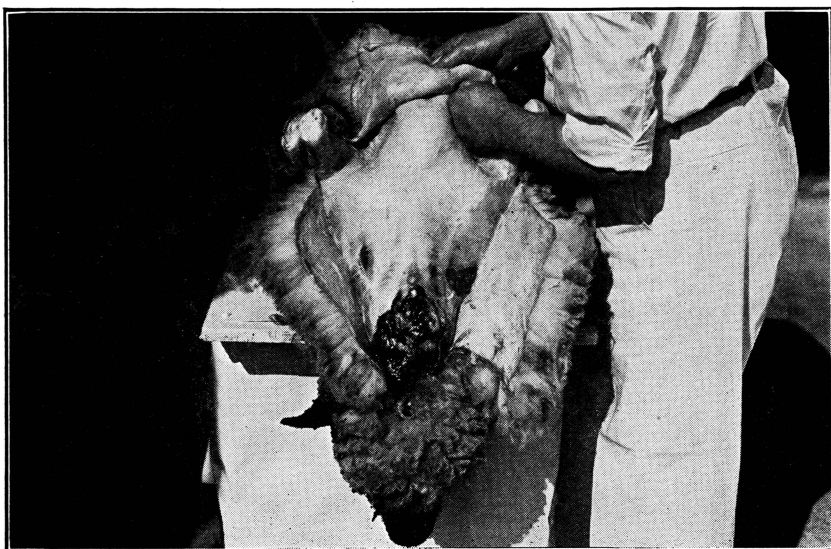


Fig. 7.—Fisting the pelt down the die of the brisket. Note the white, clean, unbroken fat and fell.

Fist in on one side of the brisket, loosening the pelt to the navel or as far down as can be reached conveniently (Figure 7). Work down behind the shoulder but do not try to loosen the pelt along the whole side. Fist in on the other side and repeat the operation. The pelt usually sticks to the brisket. Sometimes it can be worked off from behind. Often the thumb can work it loose from each side. Occasionally a knife is needed to cut the skin from the center of the brisket. Young and well fattened lambs skin more easily than older and thinner sheep.

To loosen the pelt at the rear, stand between the hind legs, grasp the pelt with the left hand, and work the right fist down the center or over the cod or udder to the navel. The hand and arm are then pushed sideways, freeing the pelt over the flank and inside of the

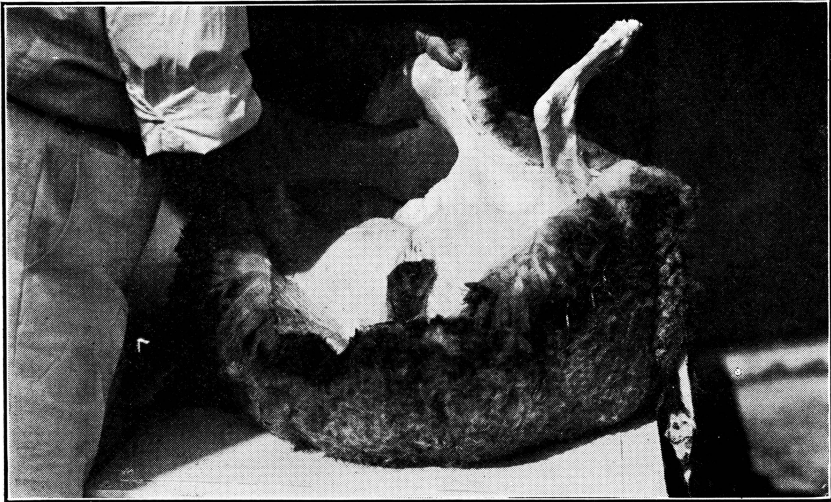


Fig. 8.—Holding the pelt tight and pushing the fist forward over the cod or udder.

hind leg. Note that fisting is begun down the middle instead of at the side as was done when skinning the brisket. This lessens the danger of getting beneath and tearing the flank muscles that show plainly in Figure 10.

### Removing the Pelt

When the legs are skinned and the pelt fisted off the belly, heavy clean cord or quarter-inch rope is run beneath the tendons of the hind legs, and tied around the legs, or a gambrel may be inserted, and the carcass suspended. A hook or support six to seven feet from the floor gives a good working height.

Cut the pelt down the middle of the belly, cutting loose the navel (Figure 9). Holding the pelt tight with the left hand, work the right fist around the stifle and then up the outside of the left leg (Figure 10). Change hands, or cross hands, and fist out the right hind leg. This rolls the fleece away from the clean carcass.

Fist down past the shoulder, pull the skin free from the foreleg, and fist out the side of the neck (Figure 11). Push the pelt free from the sides and fist off the rump. The pelt over the rump may stick, and it will be necessary to free it by working from both sides.



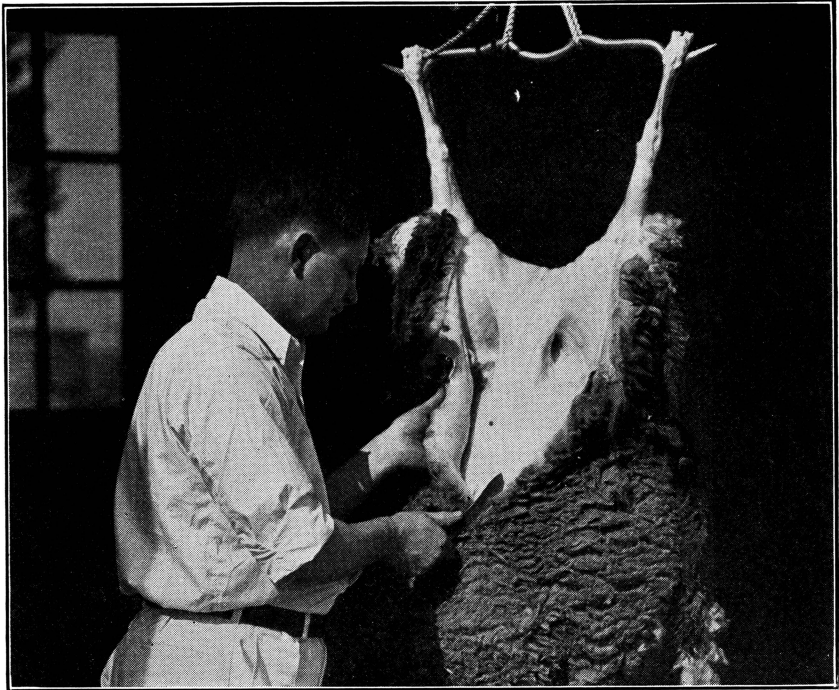


Fig. 9.—Opening the pelt down the middle.

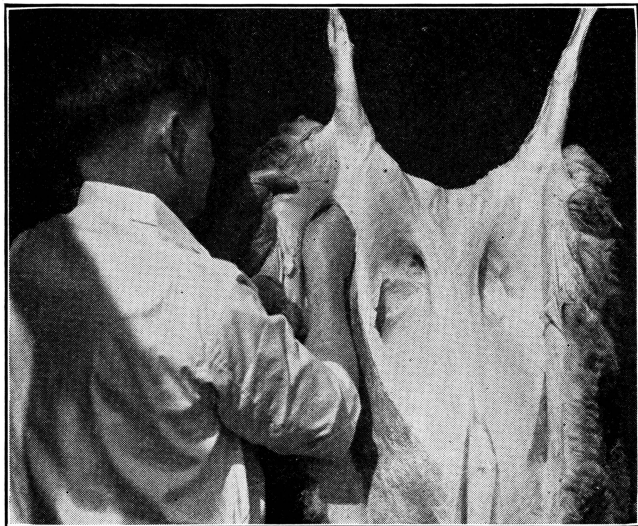


Fig. 10.—The fist wedges in and up along the leg.

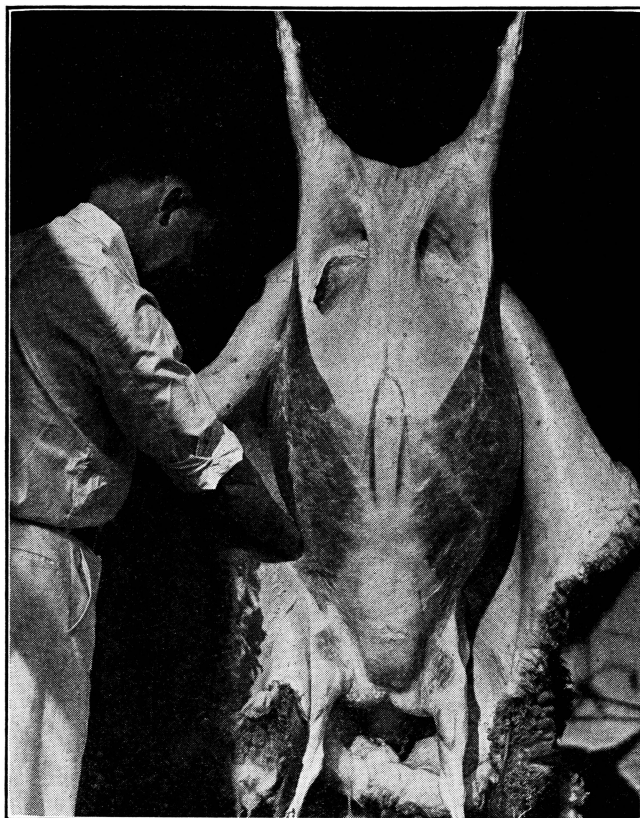


Fig. 11.—Pushing the pelt away from the foreflank and shoulder.

From underneath the dock push up until the pelt hangs only by the skin that is fastened to the tail (Figure 12).

There is a true joint at the lower end of the sheep's front leg bone which must be opened to cut off the pastern and foot of mature sheep. Just above the true joint is a cartilaginous suture in the bone that can be broken apart on lambs. This suture or "lamb joint" (Figure 14) is at the widest bulge in the end of the foreleg, or just above the true or "mutton joint." It is customary to cut off the forefeet of lambs at this suture, thus identifying the carcasses as those of lambs. Cut the membranes on the side of the leg just over this lamb joint. Break the joint open where it has been cut by pressing the foot sideways.

While the pelt is still hanging to and stretching the dock, push the knife in beside and above the anus. Cut clear around it and

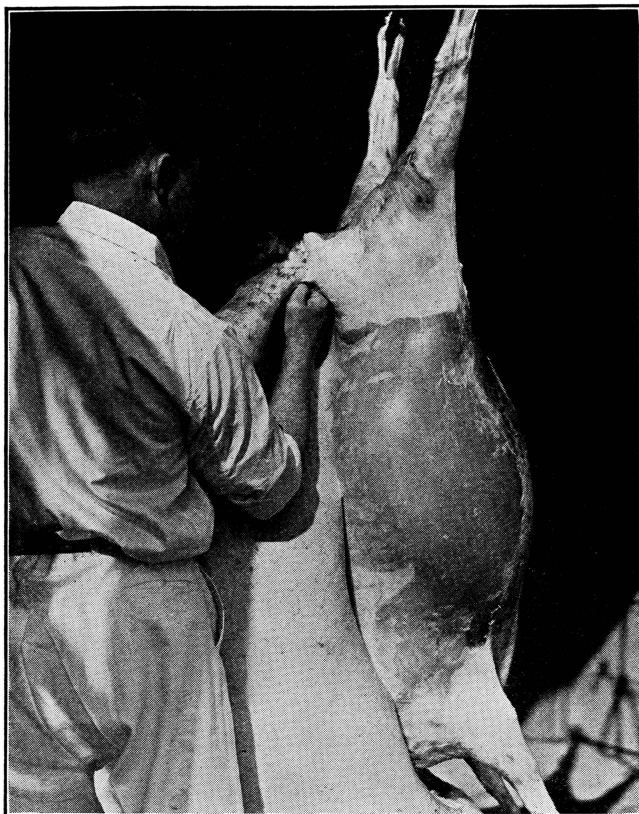


Fig. 12.—Fisting the pelt free from the back. The next step will be to cut the pelt free from the dock.

loosen the anus so that 10 or 12 inches of the colon can be pulled up and out of the body cavity. The colon should be emptied and tied before it is dropped back into the body cavity so that its contents will not foul the carcass. Cut and pull the skin free from the dock and pull and fist it free from the back. If the fell or muscles start to tear, start fisting below the break, working up and around it, thus avoiding further tearing.

Pull the pelt down the neck to the ears and cut off the head through the atlas joint. Wash the carcass with water as hot as the hand can stand, in order to clean and bleach it. Wipe dry with clean cloths wrung dry after being dipped in hot water. Then to keep dust from the carcass it is well to wrap the carcass in muslin.

### **Dressing the Carcass**

Open the carcass down the middle from just below the cod or udder to the cartilage of the brisket. Be careful not to cut into the paunch. Allow the paunch and intestines to roll out and hang. Unless the lamb is full of feed the paunch should not break loose. Reach in and find the already loosened colon and pull and work it down past the kidneys. Remove the bladder, taking care not to spill its contents on the meat.

The remainder of the operation is similar to that of dressing hogs. It is important to leave the kidney fat on the carcass and be careful not to spill any of the contents of the digestive system on the meat.

### **Care of the Internal Organs**

The liver is a choice product and after the liver is carefully removed to prevent tearing it, the gall bladder should be peeled out and thrown away.

The liver, heart and tongue should be thoroughly washed in cold water and hung up to chill. Split the head open and remove the brains.

The freshly dressed carcass should be protected from dust and sunlight and hung where it will chill promptly.

### **Chilling Lamb Carcasses**

Prompt chilling and storage at correct temperatures are necessary for the proper ripening of lamb and to prolong the period in which it is available for family use in the form of fresh meat.

The ideal temperature for chilling the freshly slaughtered carcass is 34° F. Below 40° and above 32°, if possible, is best for chilling and ripening.

If natural temperatures are low, an effort should be made to protect the meat from freezing so that the ripening process will not be delayed or stopped.

A clean carcass, protected by dry, unbroken fell or fat will keep for a longer time than thin meat or meat that has been contaminated in dressing or gashed so that the moist lean meat is exposed.

When lamb is to be kept longer than 2 or 3 weeks the chilled storage of a refrigerator will not be satisfactory. For best results it should be canned or frozen and stored in cold storage lockers after the cuts are properly wrapped in a good grade of parchment paper to exclude air and retard evaporation.

### Cutting the Carcass

With favorable weather conditions on the farm it will be advisable to remove the cuts as needed. If the carcass is to be stored in cold storage lockers, of course, the whole carcass will be cut at one time. The carcass may be split down the center of the backbone before cutting.

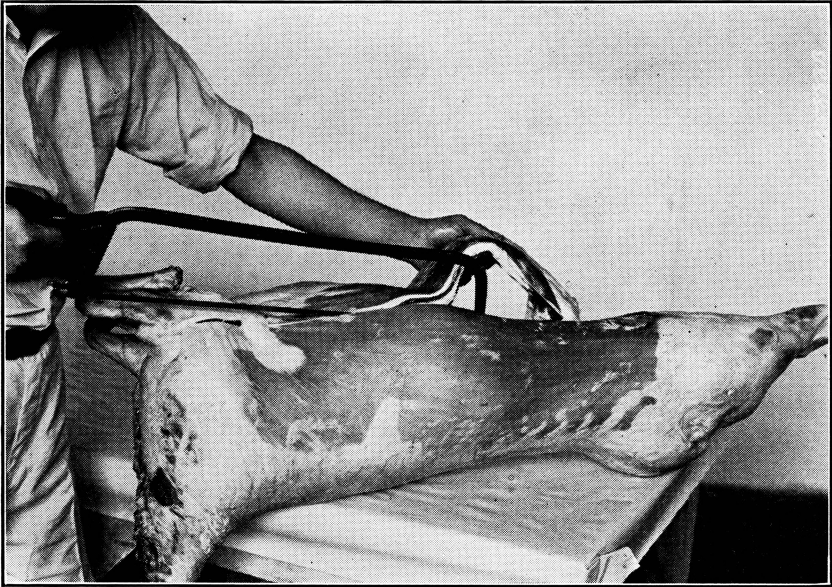


Fig. 13.—The first step in cutting a lamb carcass—removing the breast. This carcass has been cut for long chops. If the cut had been made along the dotted line there would have been a larger proportion of breast and shorter chops.

A safe rule in cutting meat is to cut thick meat from thin meat and fat meat from lean meat. With that principle as a guide remove the thin portions, such as the breast, flank, plate, brisket and foreleg, on a line beginning at the front part of the hind leg and running to a point where the foreleg and breast meet. Saw through the ribs and lower part of shoulder. These parts may be used for stews but the breast of a choice or prime lamb is often used as a pocket of lamb. Better still is to remove the bone from this first, cut, roll and tie it. It is so much more attractive on the table and can be carved so much more readily.

To slice the neck of lamb, insert the knife where the neck joins the shoulders, cutting it off on a line with the lamb back. Neat slices are then made by cutting the meat with a knife and sawing the bone.

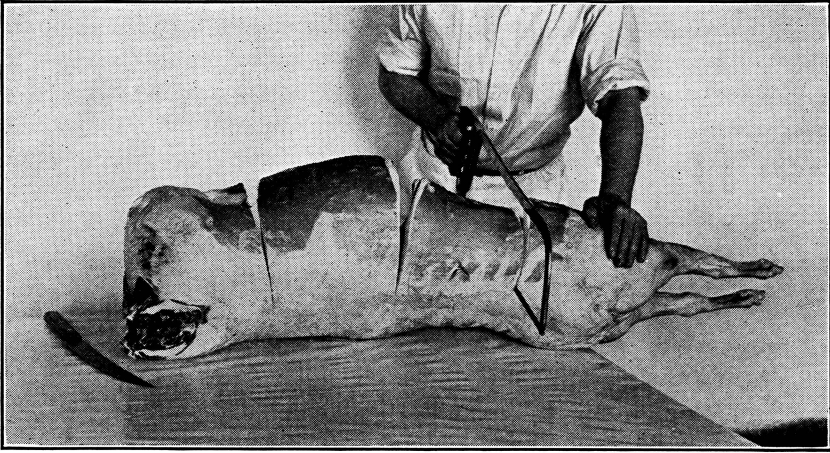


Fig. 14.—Making a five-rib shoulder, a regular rib cut, loin, and a long-cut leg. Note that the breast and neck have been removed.

The completed neck slices are used for braising, stewing, or en casserole.

A full-size shoulder roast is cut off between the fifth and sixth ribs. Then separate the back from the legs by cutting just forward of the hip bones. The loin and rib cuts need not be separated from each other until cut into chops.

The loin cuts are made into chops by first splitting the backbone down the center and slicing the chops cross-wise of the bone. The chops are cut one inch thick.

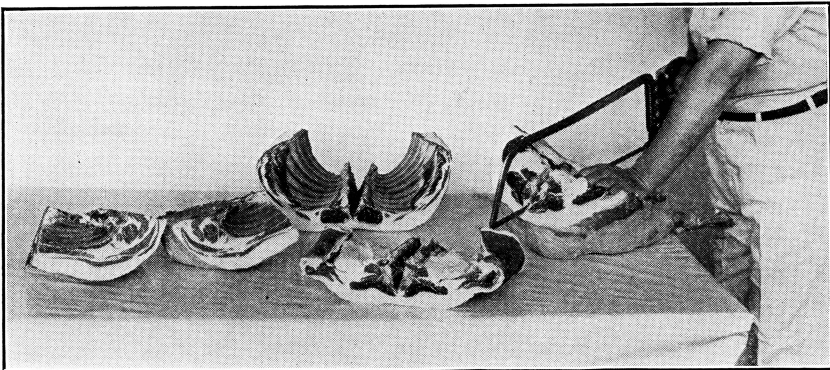


Fig. 15.—Splitting the cuts down the center of the backbone. The cuts shown are, (A) shoulders, (B) ribs, (C) loins, and (D) legs.

The fell is removed from each rib or loin chop by starting at the lower end. The fell is more easily removed when the chop is dry

and cold than when it is moist and warm. If the fell is left on chops it becomes disagreeably hard in frying. However, the fell is left on the shoulder and leg roasts as it prevents the evaporation of some of the meat juices, thus causing the roast to cook more rapidly.

### **Utilizing Lamb in the Family Diet**

Home produced lamb not only adds interest, variety and palatability to the family meals, but supplies many of the essential nutrients. The nutritive value of lamb is about the same as that of beef or any other good meat. It might well be included in the family meals for any one of the following reasons:

1. It is one of our best protein or muscle building foods. Every cell in the body has to have a bit of protein at its center. Two-thirds of the protein in the diet should be of animal origin.
2. Lamb contains a goodly portion of fat—more than beef but less than pork. Fat is our highest energy food yielding the most calories per pound. The actual amount of fat eaten with lamb depends on the method of cooking and the preference of the person eating it. If a high temperature is used in cooking much of the fat will be drained out and some people cut away all the visible fat.
3. It is a rich source of iron, which is essential for good red blood and it contains copper. Liver contains more iron than any other food. Kidneys are high in iron and all lean meat contains a goodly portion.
4. It is high in phosphorus. Phosphorus is essential to the building of straight bones and sound teeth and to other growth processes in the body.
5. Lamb may furnish some of the important vitamins. Liver is one of the best sources of vitamin A—while all lean meat and especially the glandular organs, are rich in Vitamin B and G.
6. It is easily and completely digested. Since all cuts are tender it can be cooked by the most desirable methods of cooking meat for all persons, especially children, that is, by broiling and roasting.
7. Lamb is probably freer from disease than any other meat animal. Reports from meat inspectors show that fewer lambs carcasses are discarded than any other kind.
8. It adds richness and flavor to meals, and all the good is enjoyed more.
9. It has staying qualities and gives a sense of well being. Because lamb is a combination of protein and fat and because of its ex-

tractives, which stimulates the flow of digestive juices, it does "stick to the ribs" and gives a feeling of satisfaction.

### LAMB COOKERY

In cooking a piece of meat one should keep in mind that a well cooked piece of meat is juicy and tender, that it has a delicious aroma and that the fat and the lean have good flavor. Like other meats, lamb should not be washed but wiped or scraped clean. There are two general methods for cooking meat; (1) use dry heat, (2) use moist heat. When dry heat is used the meat is roasted, broiled or pan broiled. If moist heat is used the meat is braised, stewed or simmered. With moist heat the pan is covered but with dry heat, as in roasting or broiling, the pan is never covered. A covered roaster is a misnomer. When the lid is on, the product is cooked by steam or moist heat, as shown by the moisture which collects on the lid. When a piece of meat is cooked in a roaster with the lid on it is a pot-roast and really is a braised and not a roasted piece of meat. The cooking losses of similar cuts of meat are between 10 and 20% greater when cooked in moist heat than when they are cooked by roasting. Less time is required for cooking when the pan is covered but with tender cuts of meat the superior flavor and texture of the meat more than makes up for this extra time.

Connective tissues which form the walls of the muscle fibers, the tendons and the ligaments, are of two kinds—the yellow—made of the protein elastin and the white-collagen. The yellow is not made tender by cooking but the white protein, collagen, is softened and made tender by cooking, especially with moist heat. The amount and the character of the connective tissue in a cut of meat are related to the tenderness of the meat and determine to a great extent the method of cooking. The amount of connective tissue in a cut varies with the exercise which the muscles have received and the age of the animal. Exercise and age increase the amounts. Lamb has little connective tissue, except in the neck, breast and shanks. Being mostly tender meat it can be cooked with dry heat.

Experimental work shows that in the cooking of any kind of meat, lamb included, the meat has more juice and the flavor and tenderness are always better with a low than with a high temperature. If high temperature is used, whether it is with broiling, roasting, stewing, or braising, there will be a greater loss of juices, the meat will be less tender and will shrink more, fewer servings can be cut,



the flavor will be less desirable and the fat may be charred and burned.

A well cooked piece of lamb will be plump and juicy with the outside crisp and golden brown. The meat will be tender and when cut the interior will be a grayish brown and the juice, which will run from the meat, will be a faintly pink or a light brown color.

Most people prefer lamb cooked to the well-done stage but if it is over-cooked there is excessive loss of juice and the meat is drier and has less flavor than if cooked only until done. By keeping the source of heat at the right temperature and using a meat thermometer, even an inexperienced person should be able to cook a leg of lamb, a chop or any piece of meat, "to a turn."

### Roasting Lamb

Originally roasting meant to cook before a hot fire—the meat being on a spit and turned frequently. Now to roast has come to mean cooking meat with dry heat in the oven, really to bake, though one says bake in meat cookery only when referring to ham. The temperature of the oven is a most important factor in roasting any kind of meat. A moderately low temperature (300°-350° F.) throughout the cooking time, is most desirable. Searing the lamb roast at the beginning is more work and nothing is gained as searing does not hold in the juices and the roast will be nicely browned when cooked to the well done stage. If the fat is not brown enough to make a rich brown gravy, the flour and fat may be browned before adding the liquid. Place the roast on a rack in a pan, fat side up, place it in the oven and go about doing other things. Dipping the drippings over a roast every 10 minutes is a waste of time and effort. If the meat is placed fat side up then as the fat melts it will run over and into the meat. If the meat is lacking in fat a piece of tallow, bacon, or other fat may be placed on the top. A teaspoon of salt per pound of meat is ordinarily used for all meat.

It is difficult to estimate with any degree of accuracy the number of minutes per pound required to roast meat. A boned roast takes more time than one with bone. A short chunky roast takes more time than a long rangy one. A small roast takes more minutes per pound than a larger one. Meat that is well finished, that has a good coat of fat and fat between the muscle fibers takes less time to cook than meat with little fat. Time tables for cooking meat suggest 30 to 35 minutes per pound for roasts with bone, and 40 to 45 minutes per pound for roasts that are boned and stuffed or rolled.

Since all lamb cuts are tender, except the neck and breast, all thick cuts of lamb may be roasted. The preferable roasts are: the leg, loin, shoulder (preferably boned), the ribs, and the crown roast. In cooking a lamb roast, note these points:

1. Wipe meat and place fat side up on a rack in an open pan. Do not remove the fell if it is the leg as it helps retain the shape and it will cook in less time. Do not flour.
2. Have oven temperature 300° F. and keep this temperature throughout the roasting time.
3. Do not add water or put a lid on.
4. Do not open oven frequently—basting is a waste of time.
5. Do not stick frequently with a fork. If a meat thermometer is available insert it and do not stick the roast at all.
6. Cook until medium or well done (175°-180° F.). This takes from 30 to 35 minutes per pound for meat roasts with bone—40 to 45 minutes for rolled roasts.
7. Serve piping hot or very cold.

#### **Broiling Lamb Chops and Lamb Patties**

To broil means to cook by direct heat or to grill. With this method as with other methods of cooking meat, a low moderate temperature should be used—350° F. at the top of the meat during all the cooking period. The chop or steak may be seared and the temperature immediately lowered if a very brown crisp outside is desired but unless the meat is cut thin the high temperature takes more watching and results in more smoke and undesirable odors in the house and the flavor and texture is no more desirable. Since lamb is young and therefore tender, practically any piece from  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 2 inches thick may be broiled. Rib, loin and shoulder chops, ground meat patties, and steaks from the leg of lamb are frequently broiled. If the chop or lamb steak is cut less than  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch thick there will be so much cut surface that the meat will be dry and too flavorless. Chops that are cut  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches thick will require about 18 minutes to broil; if 2 inches thick 22 minutes. Ground lamb patties will require about 18 minutes. If a meat thermometer is used it should read 170° F. when the chops are done. The fell should be removed from chops because it does not become tender in the length of time the chops are cooked.

To broil lamb preheat the broiler for about 10 minutes at a temperature of 350° F. The top of the meat should be about 3 inches from the source of heat. After 9 or 11 minutes, when the upper side is nicely brown, turn the meat by inserting the fork in the fat part. Continue broiling for 9 to 11 minutes. Salt, place on a hot plate or

platter, butter, garnish with lemon or mint jelly, and serve immediately.

If there are a number of things to do just before serving the meal, the chops might be seared and the cooking finished in the oven. To do this preheat the broiler to about 500° F., place meat on rack, and put the rack 2 to 3 inches from the source of heat. Brown both sides, about 5 minutes to each side, and then put in the oven where the temperature is 250° F. and cook until well done.

**Pan Broiling.**—If a broiler is not available—the thinner cuts of meat may be pan broiled. To pan broil lamb, heat a heavy frying pan until sizzling hot, rub lightly with some of the fat from the lamb. Place the meat in the hot pan, brown on one side and then the other, slip a rack under the meat in the pan and place in the oven, 250° F., and complete the cooking or reduce the heat and continue the cooking over the fire until the meat is done. To test for doneness, cut a small gash close to the bone and near the center and note the color of the cut meat.

### Cuts of Lamb Cooked by Braising

With this method of cooking the meat is browned in a small amount of fat and then cooked in a covered utensil. The meat may be floured or not and liquid may or may not be added. A braised piece of meat is richly brown, has a well developed flavor and aroma, and is tender and juicy.

Browning the meat develops its flavor and aroma and care should be taken to brown the meat on all sides before adding liquid or putting on the lid. If a liquid is added it should be added in very small amounts. There should never be more liquid than just enough to cover the meat as the color and flavor of the meat and the gravy is much better if the liquid is kept to a minimum. After the meat is browned the temperature should be kept so low that the liquid will not boil. The connective tissue is softened by slow cooking in moist heat and the meat becomes tender. A high temperature will drain the juice from the meat and if continued dissolve the connective tissue to a point where it will not hold the muscle fibers together and the meat will be stringy. The gravy or sauce contains a good portion of the flavor of the meat and is an important part of the braised meat dish. The breast, neck slices, and shank of lamb are excellent braised. The liver, kidney, heart and shoulder chops may be braised for variety. It will take about 1 hour to braise neck slices cut  $\frac{3}{4}$  inches thick. A two to three pound stuffed breast or a  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 pound

rolled breast or  $\frac{1}{2}$  pound shanks will require approximately  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours for cooking.

### **Lamb Stew and Scotch Broth**

A larger quantity of water is used in both stewing and simmering than in any other type of meat cooking. Like braising these methods are used for cooking less tender cut of meat or, for variety, with tender cuts as in lamb stews. As in other methods of cooking meat, a low temperature should be used. A stew should be simmered and never allowed to boil. Boiling meat until it is tender would dissolve the connective tissues, drain out the juice, and leave the meat stringy, dry and tasteless, and it would be impossible to serve in nice slices.

Lamb is a favorite meat for stews because it combines so well with practically any vegetable. A large variety of lamb stews can be made. The kettle for cooking the stew should be fairly heavy, to prevent scorching, and it should have a well fitted lid. The lamb should be cut in small uniform pieces. If the stew is a brown one the meat is first browned in a small amount of fat. It may or may not be floured. The liquid is added after browning. In light stews the meat is not browned. The water that is added may be hot or cold as plunging the meat in hot water has no more effect on retaining the juices than does searing. The stew should be tightly covered and kept at a simmer. It will require from  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 hours to cook the small pieces of meat well done. If vegetables are to be added to the stew, they should be cut in uniform pieces and added just long enough before serving to insure them being done. Some thought should be given to the color, shape, texture and flavor of vegetables to go in a stew so the stew can be served attractively. A variety of herbs and spices, as well as vegetables may be used with lamb stew, to have a variety of flavors—bay leaf, celery seed, parsley, thyme, marjoram, or curry powder are frequently used with lamb. The stew may be cooked in a baking dish and topped with pastry or biscuits or the meat and vegetable may be arranged on a platter and the liquid thickened and served in a separate bowl as gravy. The breast, shoulder, neck, flesh and kidney of lamb are used for stews.

Bits of lean meat and bones of lamb are often simmered to make broth. The fat should be carefully removed. Scotch broth is made by cutting the lamb in small pieces, simmering and then adding barley and a few finely cut mild-flavored vegetables. It is a hearty soup and quite thick.

### **Fricassee of Lamb with Dumplings**

Lamb breast, shoulder, neck, flank, and shank meat are all good for a fricassee. Cut from 1 to 2 pounds of meat into fairly small pieces, sprinkle with salt, pepper, and flour. Brown in fat and add a sliced onion. Add water to cover, put on a lid, and cook slowly for 1 to 1½ hours. Then add turnips and carrots, and chopped green peppers, if desired, and cook until the meat and vegetables are tender. The stew should have plenty of gravy, very slightly thickened. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

For dumplings, sift 1 pint of flour with three-fourths teaspoon of salt and 3 to 4 teaspoons of baking powder, work in 2 to 3 tablespoons of fat, and add 1 cup of liquid (water or milk). Drop the dumpling batter by spoonfuls over the stew, cover tightly to hold in the steam, and cook for 15 to 20 minutes, or until the dumplings are done.

### **Roast Stuffed Shoulder of Lamb**

Select a plump shoulder of lamb weighing from 3 to 5 pounds, remove all the bones and the fell. To make the stuffing, chop an onion and 2 or 3 stalks of celery and cook in 2 to 3 tablespoons of fat; add 1 pint of bread crumbs, stir all together, and season to taste with salt, pepper and add fresh mint leaves to the stuffing for a lamb shoulder.

Spread the hot stuffing inside the boned shoulder. Roll the shoulder compactly, sew or tie in place, sprinkle with salt, pepper, and flour. Lay the stuffed shoulder fat side up on a rack in a roasting pan. Do not add water and do not cover. Use a moderate oven temperature (300°-350° F.) from start to finish. Cook until the meat is tender. This will probably require 2½ to 3 hours. Make gravy of the pan drippings.

### **Curry of Lamb**

For a curry use about 1 pint of chopped, canned, or left-over cooked lamb. Slice an onion and cook it in 2 or 3 tablespoons of meat drippings or other fat. Add 1 quart of sliced tart apples or green tomatoes. Cover and cook until tender. Add the meat and heat thoroughly. If the mixture is too thick, thin it slightly with meat broth, gravy, or water. Season to taste with curry powder and salt. Serve with flaky boiled rice.

### **Ground Lamb**

The lean part of the breast, neck, slices, or shoulder of the lamb may be ground and used for patties or a loaf. A little pork or veal

may be added for flavor and to help bind it together. The loaf should be cooked in a rack in a pan without a lid—325° F. The patties are frequently wrapped with a piece of bacon and then broiled or pan broiled.

### **Serving Lamb**

The flavor of lamb is less pronounced if served when it is well done. People who have seldom eaten lamb usually prefer it well done. The fat of lamb has a high melting point hence if it is served luke warm it has a pasty consistency and a rather disagreeable flavor. If the lamb is very hot or very cold, the fat too, is quite palatable.

Lamb combines well with many different fruits and vegetables. Broiled pears, stewed dried apricots, pickled peaches, baked apples, pineapples or other tart fruits may be served with lamb if salad material is not available. Peas and lamb are a tradition but many other vegetables may be served with lamb equally well.

Left over lamb may be used in making a variety of one dish oven meals as shephard's pie or curry of lamb. Cold roast lamb is excellent as cold sliced meat and it is excellent in sandwiches.

Fresh or cooked lamb may be kept 2 or 3 days if the temperature is held between 40-45° F. To hold lamb put it in the coldest part of the refrigerator. The uncooked meat should be placed on a dry plate or shallow dish and left uncovered or only partly covered as the drying will retard the growth of spoilage organism. The cooked meat should be covered as its surface has been dried by the cookery.



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STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE COOPERATING

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Distributed in furtherance of the Acts of Congress of May 8, and June 30, 1914



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Local identifier C408-1939

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Content type Text /Text with images  
Source ID Gift copy not added to collection  
Notes

Capture information

Date captured November 2019  
Scanner manufacturer Fujitsu  
Scanner model fi-7460  
Scanning system software ScandAll Pro v. 2.1.5 Premium  
Optical resolution 600 dpi  
Color settings 8 bit grayscale  
File types tiff

Derivatives - Access copy

Compression Tiff: LZW compression  
Editing software Adobe Photoshop CC  
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Canvas size: 6 x 9