



Meat Types and Cuts





Module Focus

- Most people buy their meat in the form of cuts, joints or mince. Meat is also bought ready prepared, e.g. sausages, ham, burgers, kebabs.
- Knowing where meat comes helps you know how to prepare, cook and serve it.
- This module is about the different cuts of beef, pork and lamb which are available





Introduction

Cuts of meat are prepared by butchers in shops or supermarkets to meet the different needs of consumers.

A wide range of different cuts are available, giving greater choice and variety.

Carcase meat is prepared into cuts, joints and mince to make it:

- Convenient to buy in smaller amounts;
- Convenient to buy in suitable portions sizes, e.g. chops, steaks;
- Easier to prepare and quicker to cook;
- Easier to store safely.





Meat Today

Today the consumer is looking for meat that:

- Can be used in different ways;
- Is convenient to prepare;
- Simple to store;
- Easy to cook;
- Is low in fat.





Where We Buy Meat

The way we buy meat is changing. Traditionally consumers would purchase meat from their local butchers. These days butchers make up less than 7% of meat sales, with the top five multiple retailers taking 67%, discounters 19%, convenience stores 6% and internet sales including meat box schemes taking 6% of retail market share for red meat.





Meat Today

- **Boneless cuts** (beef, pork and lamb) – economical and suitable for quick and easy methods of cooking, e.g. grilling.
- **Boned and rolled joints of meat** – smaller joints to reduce cooking time and making it easier to carve.
- **Lean and extra lean cuts** – trimmed cuts of meat which are lower in fat.





Meat Today

- **Cubes of meat** – sold cut into cubes, ready for making stews, kebabs and casseroles.
- **Lean minced meat** – meat is trimmed of fat and minced.
- **Thin strips** – meat is pre-cut into strips, suitable for quick cooking methods, e.g. stir-frying.





Identifying Cuts of Meat

A carcass of beef, pork or lamb is divided into different cuts – which may vary according to the carcass weight and quality. Therefore cuts of meat vary in energy and nutrients, composition, weight and fat level. Although there are these variations, retail cuts of meat are influenced by the structure and composition of the carcass, e.g. the position of bones and muscles.





Identifying Cuts of Meat

In general terms:

- The front half (forequarter) of a carcass has more muscles (per cut of meat) which have worked harder, contain more connective tissue and therefore give less tender meat;
- Cuts of meat from the neck and shoulder muscles, in particular, have long thick fibres and contain a lot of connective tissue.





Identifying Cuts of Meat

In general terms:

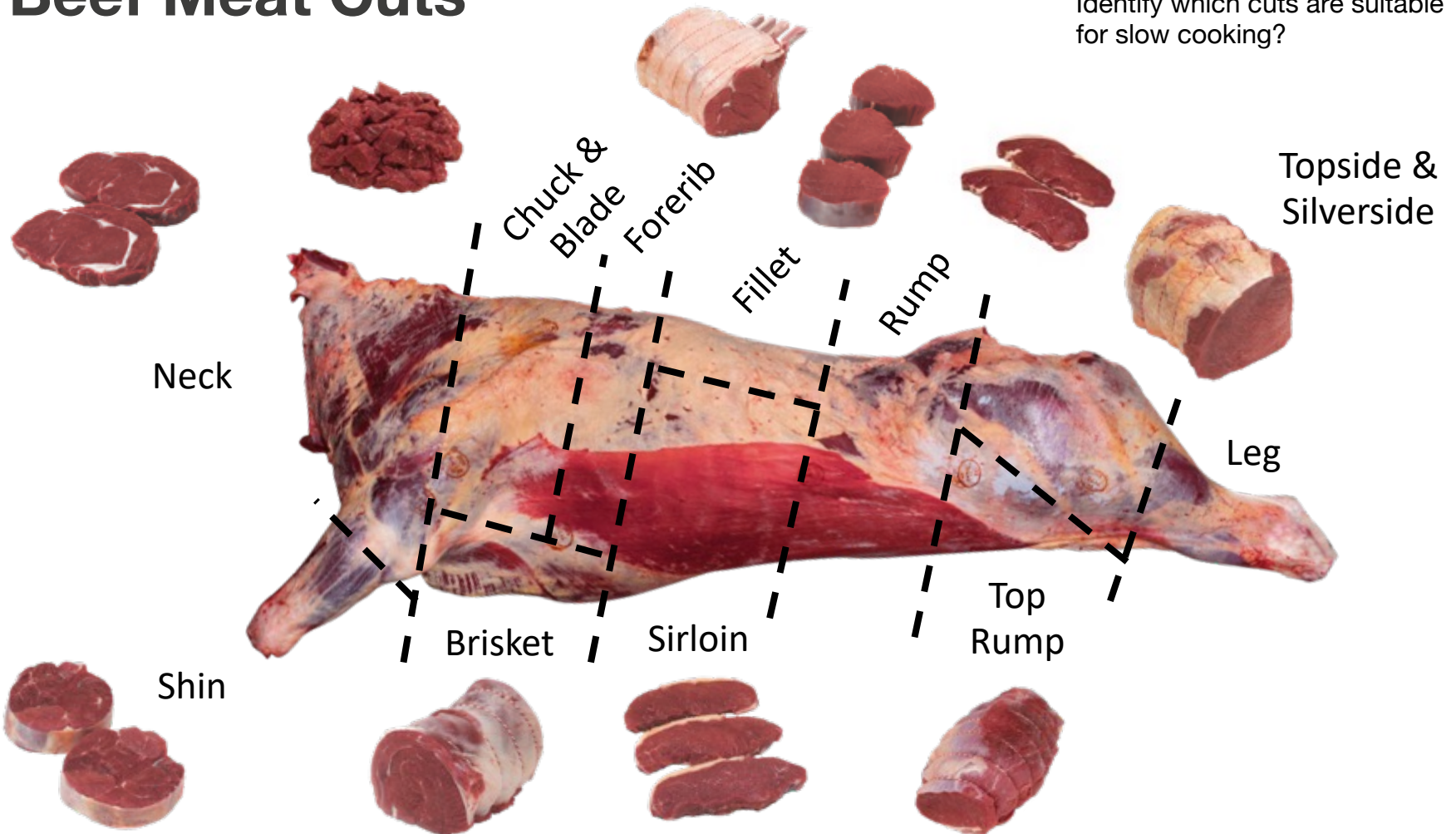
- The back half (hindquarters) of a carcass contains fewer muscles (per cut of meat), which have done less work, have less connective tissue, and therefore produce the most tender cuts of meat.
- Cuts of meat from the loin and rump muscles have done the least work and have shorter, finer muscle fibres with less connective tissue and are prime tender cuts.





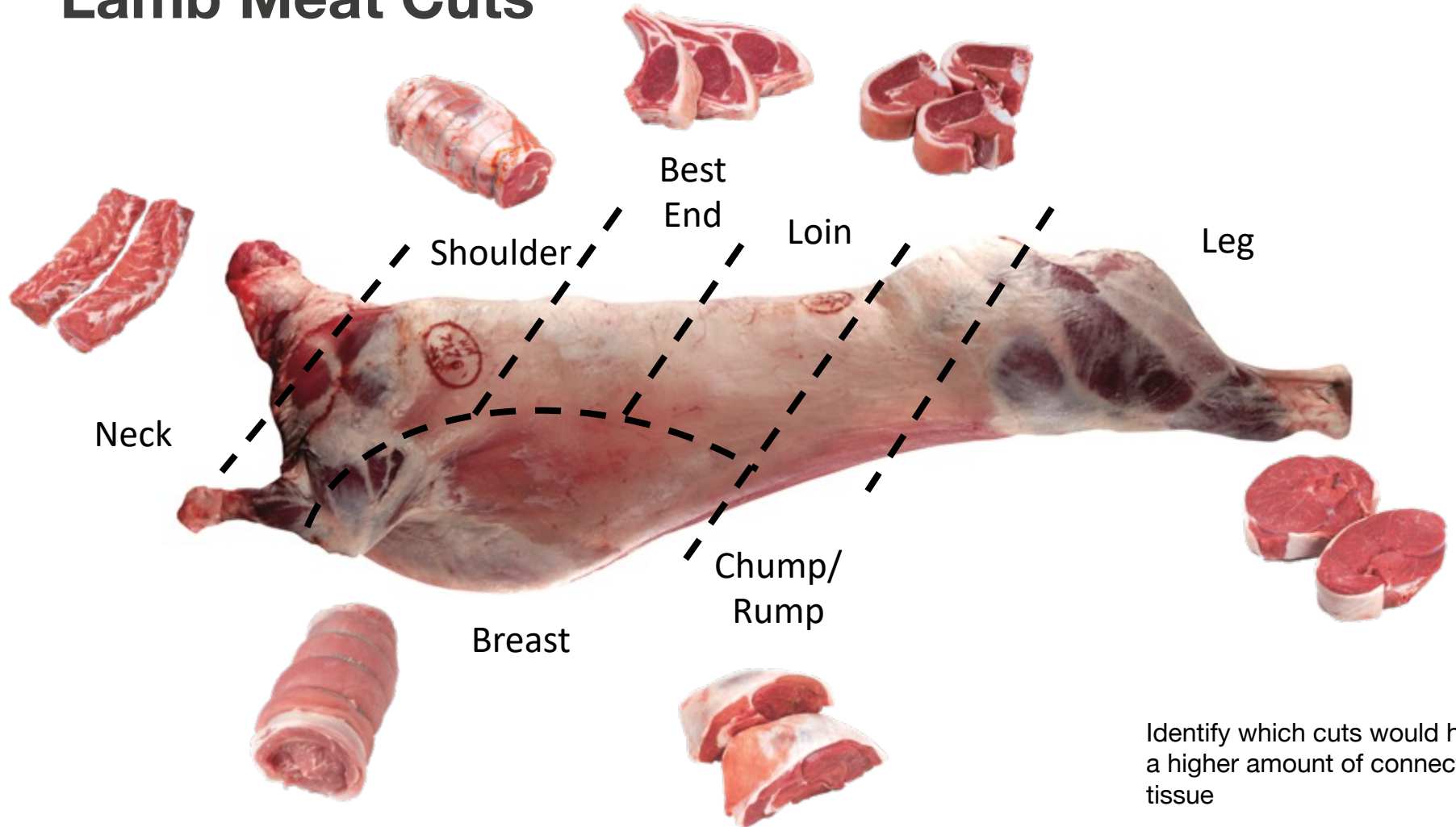
Beef Meat Cuts

Identify which cuts are suitable for slow cooking?





Lamb Meat Cuts

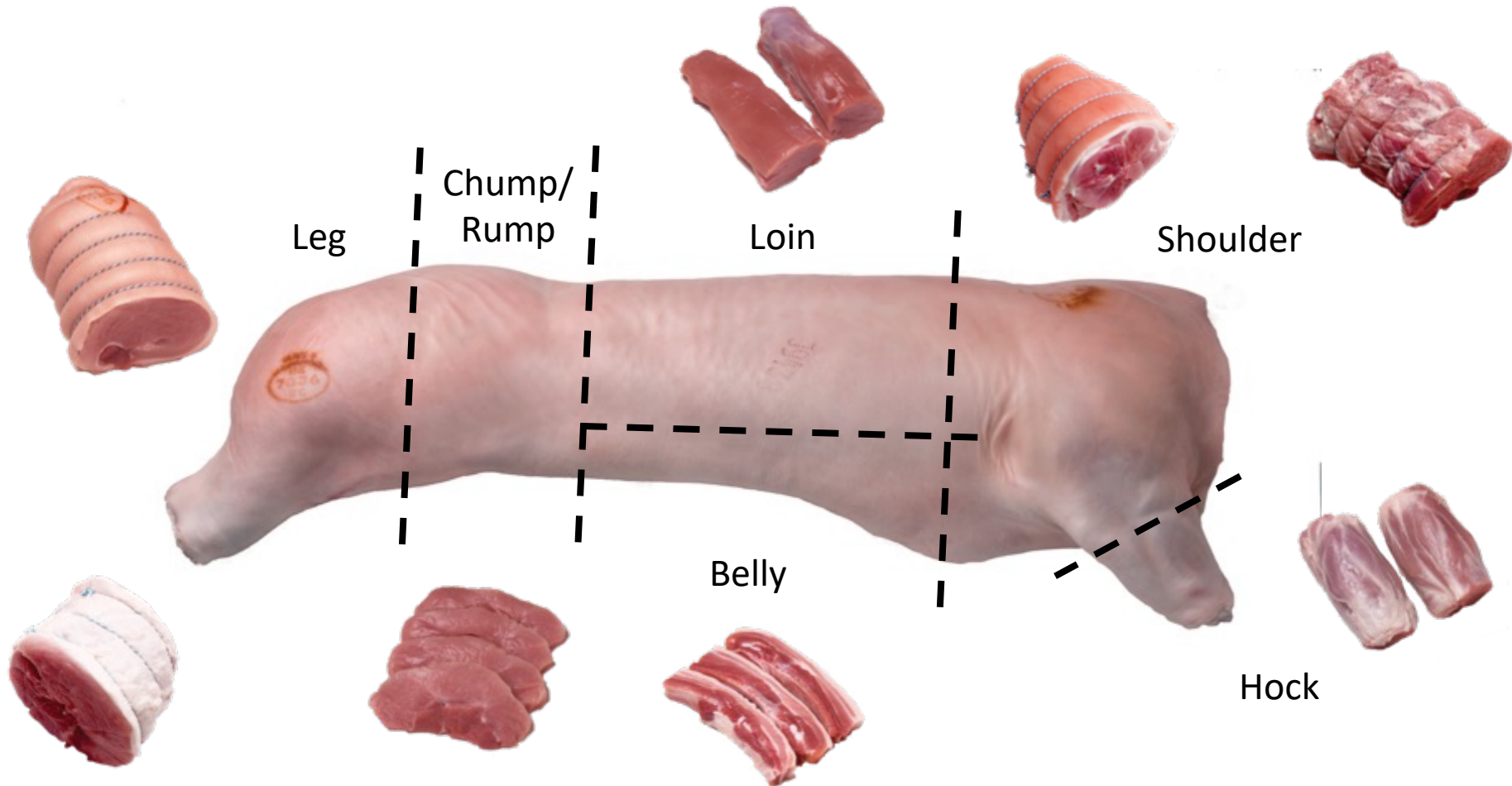


Identify which cuts would have a higher amount of connective tissue



Pork Meat Cuts

Identify which cuts are most likely to be more tender





Choice and Variety

To add extra choice and variety, pork can be cured and smoked.

Bacon

Bacon is produced by curing pork with salt or in a brine solution. After maturing it is sold as unsmoked bacon. It can also be smoked to give the bacon a darker colour and distinctive flavour.

Gammon

Gammon is the cured whole leg of pork. It is often cut into easy to cook slices and eaten hot as gammon steaks. It is also sold cooked and cold as ham. Some hams may be cured and cooked to a special recipe to give distinctive flavours, such as 'honey roast'.





Choice and Variety

Offal is not strictly a meat cut – it is the word used to describe those parts of cattle, pigs and sheep which are cut away (off-falls) from the carcass when it is being prepared for sale.

Offal types

- Inside the carcass – these include liver, kidney, heart, tongue, sweetbreads and tripe. Blood is also a type of offal, and is used in the making of black pudding.
- External part of the carcass – these include pig trotters, ox cheeks and oxtail.





Meat Cuts and Cooking

The method of cooking selected for a cut of meat will depend on:

- The type of muscle fibre it is made up from;
- The amount of connective tissue it contains.

Cuts of meat which are from muscle areas which do a lot of work will need longer, slower cooking methods, e.g. stew, casserole.

Cuts of meat which are from muscles areas not so heavily used by the animal can be cooked much more quickly, e.g. grilling, stir-frying.

Offal such as oxtail and heart need longer, slower cooking such as braising or casseroles. Liver and kidney need shorter cooking methods. Liver can also be cooked and minced to make pâté.



Cooking Techniques

Barbequing

Cooking food (normally in an outdoor environment) on a pre-heated trivet or grill, over wood or charcoal embers or gas flame.

Frying

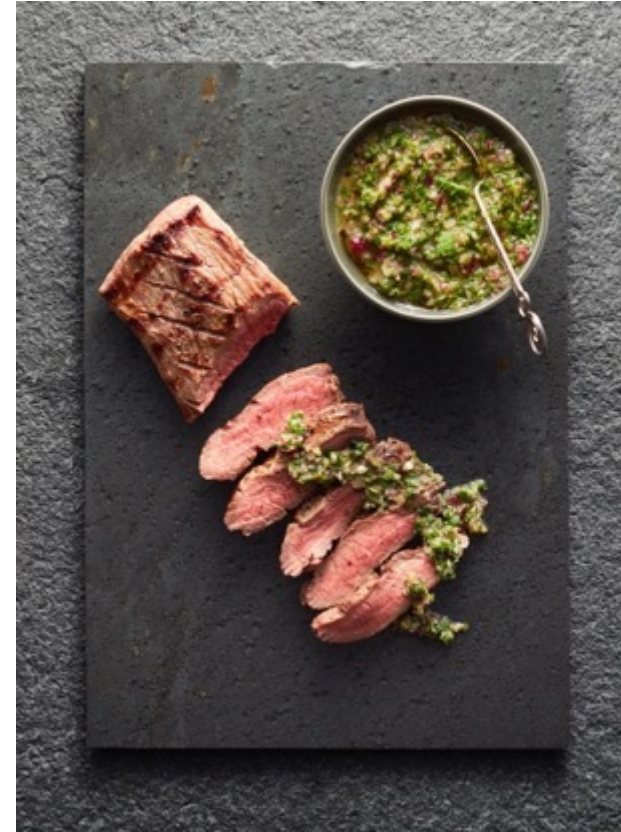
Shallow: cooking food, in a small amount of fat, in a shallow pan.

Stir: quickly cooking food, with or without fat, over a high heat.

Deep: cooking food in a large amount of pre-heated fat.

Grilling

Quickly cooking or browning food under the radiant heat of an electric element or a gas flame. This is only appropriate for tender cuts of meat, no more than 5cm thick.





Cooking Techniques

Roasting

Cooking food using dry, high temperatures in an oven. The dry heat caramelises the surface of the meat.

Casseroling/Braising/ Stewing

Slowly cooking tougher cuts of meat, in plenty of liquid with a tight fitting lid. Braised meat sits on a thick bed of vegetables with strong stock. The cut of meat used is normally cubed, diced or steaks.

Pot roasting

Cooking a joint of meat, which has first been browned, on top of vegetables, with very little liquid, in a pot with a tight fitting lid.





Cooking Techniques: Beef

Barbequing



Sirloin Steak

Frying



Rump Steak

Grilling



Ribeye Steak



Cooking Techniques: Beef

Roasting



Topside, Silverside, Rib Joint

Casserole/Braising/Stewing



Short Ribs

Pot Roasting



Silverside, Brisket Joint



Cooking Techniques: Lamb

Barbequing



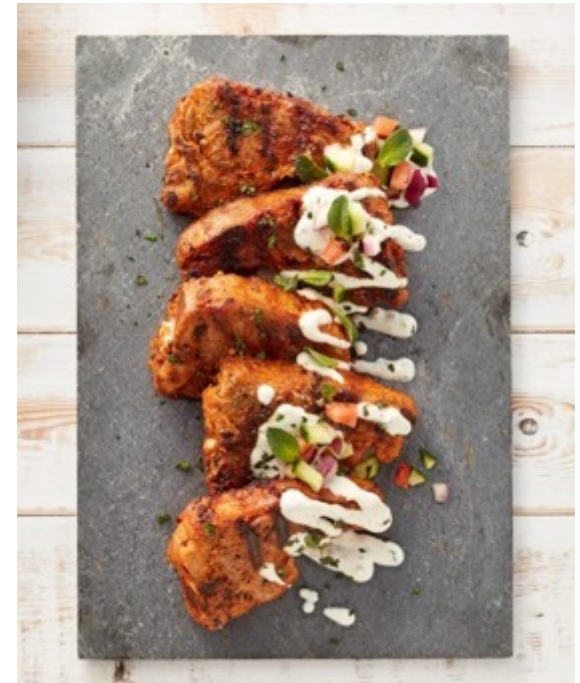
Boneless Leg Steaks

Frying



Stir Fry Strips

Grilling



Chops, Loin, Chump, Cutlets



Cooking Techniques: Lamb

Roasting



Leg

Casserole/Braising/Stewing



Chops, Cutlets

Pot Roasting



Shoulder



Cooking Techniques: Pork

Barbequing



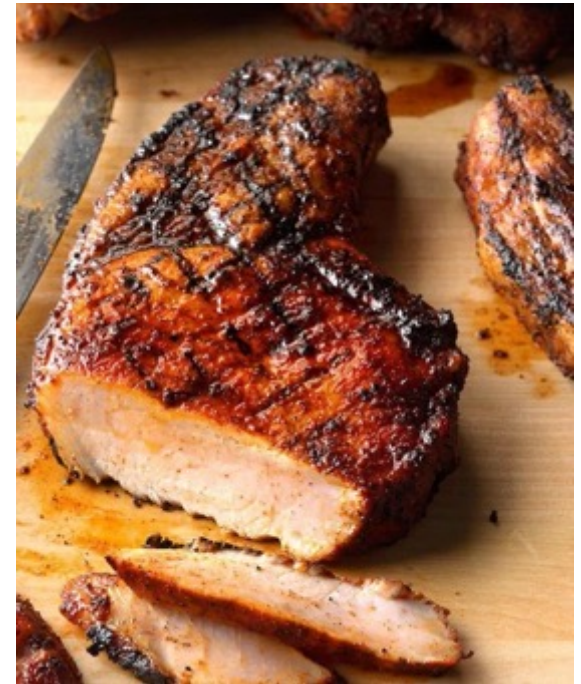
Loin Steak

Frying



Tenderloin, Fillet Strips

Grilling



Chops



Cooking Techniques: Pork

Roasting



Belly

Casserole/Braising/Stewing



Shoulder

Pot Roasting



Chops



Summary

- Meat is available to buy in the form of cuts, joints or mince. It is also available ready prepared, e.g. sausages, ham, burgers.
- These types of cuts make it easy for the consumer – they provide choice, and are convenient to prepare, simple to store and easy to cook.
- Different cuts of meat have different characteristics, e.g. energy and nutrients, composition, weight, size and appearance.
- Because of where the cut of meat comes from on the animal, different cuts require different cooking methods, e.g. slow (casserole), quicker (stir-fry).
- To add choice and variety, pork is cured. Offal is also available to be used in a range of popular dishes, e.g. liver and bacon.



For further
information and
support, go to:

www.hybucig.cymru

www.eatwelshlambandwelshbeef.com

www.porcblasus.cymru

www.hcctrade.co.uk

