



# Cured and Smoked . . . . Lamb or Mutton



Verlin K. Johnson  
Assistant Animal Husbandman  
Agricultural Experiment Station

**L**OINS, RACK, SHOULDERS AND LEGS of lamb or mutton make suitable cuts for curing. The cured product is a rich-tasting specialty meat of a deep red color midway between that of ham and dried beef, and without the "mutton" odor some people find objectionable.

S  
544.3  
.N9  
A8  
no. 387

## NDSU LIBRARIES

EXTENSION SERVICE  
NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY  
OF AGRICULTURE AND APPLIED SCIENCE

## HOW TO PREPARE

### LEGS

Cut the leg from the forward portion of the carcass at a point just in front of the hip bones (see drawing), perpendicular to the line of the back. Remove the flank and other thin, loosely attached muscles. Divide the leg and shoulder portions in half with the saw. Trim off the fat, leaving only about 1/8 inch on the outside of the leg.

Remove all the flexible vertebrae of the tail, leaving only the sacral vertebrae on the leg. All the vertebrae can be removed but skill is needed in boning out the pelvic region. The shank may be cut at the joint just below the hock in the same place as the foot is removed when butchering a steer. If the hock is left in this manner, you can hang the leg from the achilles tendon.

### SHOULDERS

The shoulder can be separated from the center of the carcass between the 5th and 6th rib and parallel to these ribs. Cut the neck off as shown in the drawing. Remove the neck bones, leaving them as spare as possible. Trim the remaining shoulder so that the outside cover is approximately 1/8 inch thick.

### LOINS AND RACKS

Loins and racks probably are most easily handled by leaving them unsplit and as one piece. The rib ends may be cut off so the length from the inside center of the vertebrae column to the cut end of the rib is 4 to 5 inches. Reduce the outside fat and the kidney fat cover over the tenderloin to approximately 1/8 inch.

### BREAST

The remaining breast, neck and neck bones may be trimmed and used as stew or ground meat.

## CURING MIXTURE

A 6-3-3 mixture (6 pounds salt, 3 pounds sugar and 3 ounces salt-peter or sodium nitrate) is satisfactory for curing 4 to 10 pound pieces. If a higher percentage of salt is desired an 8-3-3 mix may be used. Weigh ingredients carefully and mix thoroughly. The 9 pounds and 3 ounces of curing mix is enough for 100 pounds of meat.

## TREATMENT

Rub the loins with this mix and put on a shelf in a cool place, preferably 33° to 38°F. Temperatures up to 45 to 50° aren't too harmful. The loins, usually 1 to 2 inches in thickness, require but one treatment. Leave only one light coating of cure on this cut.

Treat the legs and shoulders with about one-third of the mixture that remains. The first treatment should be a light coat of mix on all

sides of the cuts. A week later apply one-half of the remaining mixture to the legs and shoulders for the second application of cure. The third application, and the remainder of the mix, should be put on at the end of the second week.

#### EXAMPLE OF TIME SCHEDULE FOR CURING

	Cutting and Curing	2nd Application	3rd Application	Smoking
	Date	Date	Date	Date
Loins	January 1	*	----	January 15-20
Shoulders	January 1	January 8	January 15	January 20-30x
Legs	January 1	January 8	January 15	January 20-30x

\* No cure is required on the thin cut after the first application.

After 20 days these cuts will probably be cured sufficiently to be smoked. However, more flavor will be developed if allowed to cure for about 30 days. Curing time usually is calculated on the basis of 3 days per pound of cut or 7 days per inch of thickness through the thickest portion of the cut. Although curing will be almost completed for a 7 pound leg in 21 days, the flavor of the meat may be improved by an extra week or so of curing time.

### SMOKING

#### Freshening

Place the cuts to be smoked in luke warm water for about 2 hours. This freshening is necessary to remove the extreme saltiness on the outside edge of the cut. After freshening, the cuts may be placed in the smoke house. Hang them on string or hooks, or put them on grills.

#### Smoking

Preheat the apparatus or smoke house to approximately 150° before hanging the meat. The temperature will be reduced when you hang the meat, but preheating allows the smoke house shell to become warm. Best results are obtained at about 120° plus or minus 10°, depending on the individual equipment. Some equipment and weather conditions will not allow that temperature, and smoking will have to be done at a lower temperature. Lower temperatures require longer times. Higher temperatures usually require less time, but invariably will cause loss of fat and other meat moisture. If temperatures get high enough, the meat will be cooked.

The amount of time required depends on the operator's desires as to the amount of smoke on the cuts. Use more time if you like dark heavy smoking.

Hardwood or hardwood sawdust usually is recommended as a source of smoke. Pine sawdust usually is avoided because of the bitter taste left by the presence of so much "pitch" in the pine. Corncobs may be used, but do not produce good flavors.

## TABLE USES

Smoked lamb or mutton is a rather fancy food that has many uses.

It is doubtful if cured and smoked lamb or mutton will be available at all markets. It is a speciality product and will command a good price if demand grows. It should be a way of adding a little more variety to the family meat supply.

### LOINS

Some people bake the loin and treat it with a barbecue sauce, much as is done with pork spare ribs. In this method of preparation carving becomes a problem. The vertebrae usually are sawed before cooking and the remainder of the carving is done at the table after cooking.

Loin chops of smoked lamb or mutton are very good if cut 1 inch to 1-3/4 inches thick and broiled, either with charcoal or conventional broilers.

Homemakers will find many other recipes for delicious dishes with smoked lamb loins.

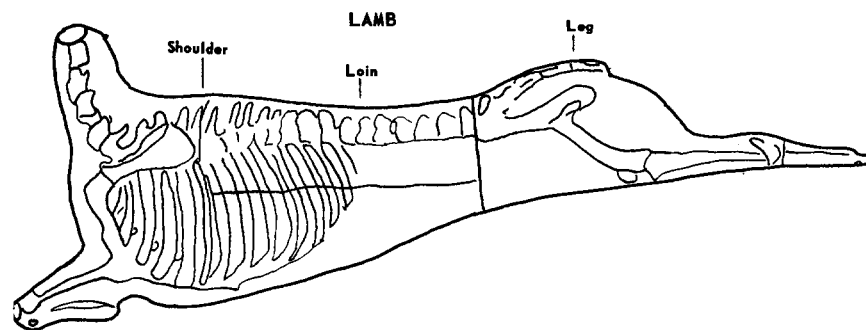
### LEGS

The leg makes a good oven roast. Garnishes make a roast very attractive.

The leg also is used as a source of dried lamb. A drying period is necessary for it to possess best flavor. Some people like to partially cook it in the smoking process when using it for dried lamb or mutton. It is sometimes served in small chunks, or sliced very thin.

### SHOULDERS

The shoulder may be used much the same as the leg. This cut has a little more seam fat than the leg, and it will be a little more difficult to carve. The shoulder serves very well as a roast. It also may be cut into steaks which are very satisfactory broiled or fried.



Extension Service, North Dakota State University of Agriculture and Applied Science, and U. S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. A. H. Schulz, Acting Director, Fargo, North Dakota. Distributed in furtherance of the Acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914.