



# Lamb yield guide

Animal to carcase, to primals to cuts

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# Introduction

The industry aim is to add value, use every part of the carcase and minimise wastage. This brochure has been produced to help people working with lamb to get a basic understanding about the yield figures from farm to plate. Traditionally, the carcase is divided into three primal cuts, the Forequarter, the Middle and the Leg. Each of these primal cuts is then cut into a range of individual cuts and muscles, from which weights have been taken, to calculate the overall yield.

**Dick van Leeuwen**

AHDB Business Development Manager and Master Butcher

# Processing the lamb carcase, from farm to plate

*Animal = 100%*



*Fifth quarter<sup>1</sup> = variety meats/offal/edible co-products/animal by-products = 52.56%*

Product	Figures below are from a lamb of 40.05kg liveweight, average fatness R3L		
	kg	% of fifth quarter	% of liveweight
<b>Fleece and pelt</b>			
Fleece and pelt	4.42	21.00	11.04
<b>Fat can be used directly with the meat<sup>2</sup></b>			
KKCF	0.65	3.09	1.62
Caul fat	0.70	3.33	1.75
Intestinal fat	0.54	2.57	1.35
<b>Red offal normally sold for human consumption on home market</b>			
Kidneys	0.10	0.48	0.25
Liver, gall bladder	0.69	3.28	1.72
Skirt	0.22	1.04	0.55
Heart	0.22	1.04	0.55
<b>Edible co-products<sup>3</sup></b>			
Stomachs	1.08	5.13	2.70
Intestines	1.29	6.13	3.22
Feet	0.78	3.71	1.95
<b>Variety meats fit for human consumption (tend to be exported)</b>			
Tail	0.11	0.52	0.27
Reproductive organs	0.14	0.67	0.35
Head <sup>4</sup> incl. tongue	1.63	7.74	4.08
Lungs, trachea, sweetbreads	0.86	4.09	2.15
<b>Tend to be despatched as Category 3<sup>5</sup></b>			
Blood	1.84	8.74	4.60
Pancreas	0.11	0.52	0.27
Trim	0.59	2.80	1.47
<b>Have to be despatched as Category 2<sup>5</sup></b>			
Gut contents	4.86	23.08	12.13
<b>Have to be despatched as Category 1<sup>5</sup></b>			
Illeum	0.11	0.52	0.27
Spleen	0.11	0.52	0.27
<b>Total</b>	<b>21.05</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>52.56</b>

1. Fifth Quarter is the parts of the animals that are not the carcase and removed in the abattoir.
2. KKCF kidney knob and channel fat or can go for as an edible co-product to be rendered for human consumption, eg baking or frying or for the manufacture of petfood, soap, pharmaceuticals or biofuel.
3. Products that require further processing before they are fit for human consumption.
4. The skull, including the brain, eyes, tonsils and spinal cord of sheep over 12 months (or permanent incisor erupted) becomes SRM and has to be disposed of as Category 1.
5. See Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 and [gov.uk/dealing-with-animal-by-products](http://gov.uk/dealing-with-animal-by-products).

*Carcase = 47.44%*



*Bone/fat/drip loss = 12.20%\**



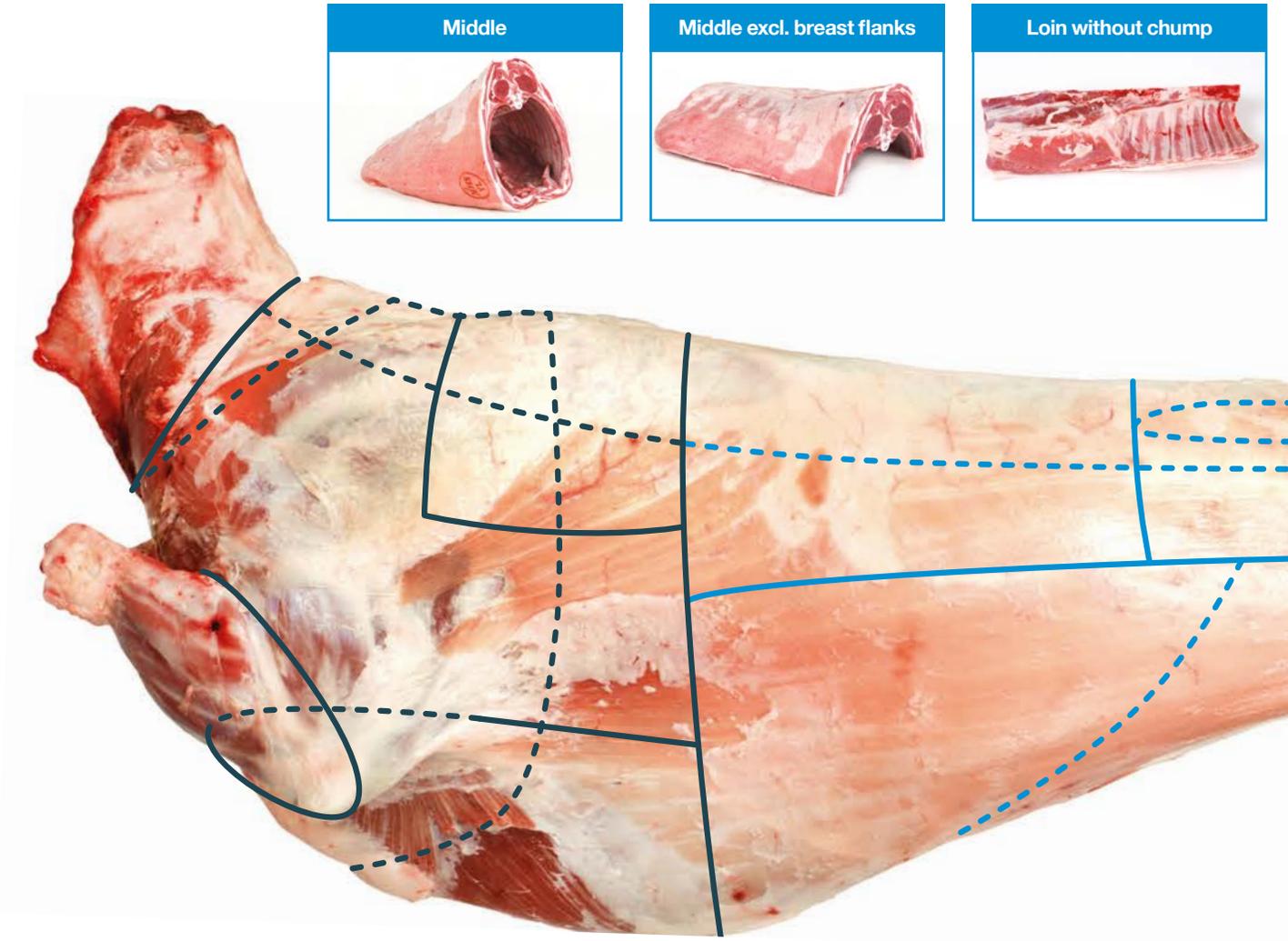
*Edible meat = 35.24%\**



\*Traditional lamb cuts. Average yield of prepared bone-in cuts and joints as a percentage of the lamb carcass. If more modern cuts are produced, yields may vary.

Source: AHDB

# Lamb primal cuts



Loin with chump



Best End of Neck – short and un-split



Short saddle



Legs with chump



Leg with Chump



Leg without Chump



Chump – bone-in



Chump – boneless



Chump – Centre Cut (boneless and fully trimmed)



Topside Roast



Cannon bone-in



'Premium' Lamb Sirloin



'Premium' Lamb Cannon



Loin – eye muscle fully trimmed



Thick Flank (untrimmed)



Silverside (trimmed)



Breast – with flank (boneless)



Breast – Square Cut



Breast – Square Cut (boneless)



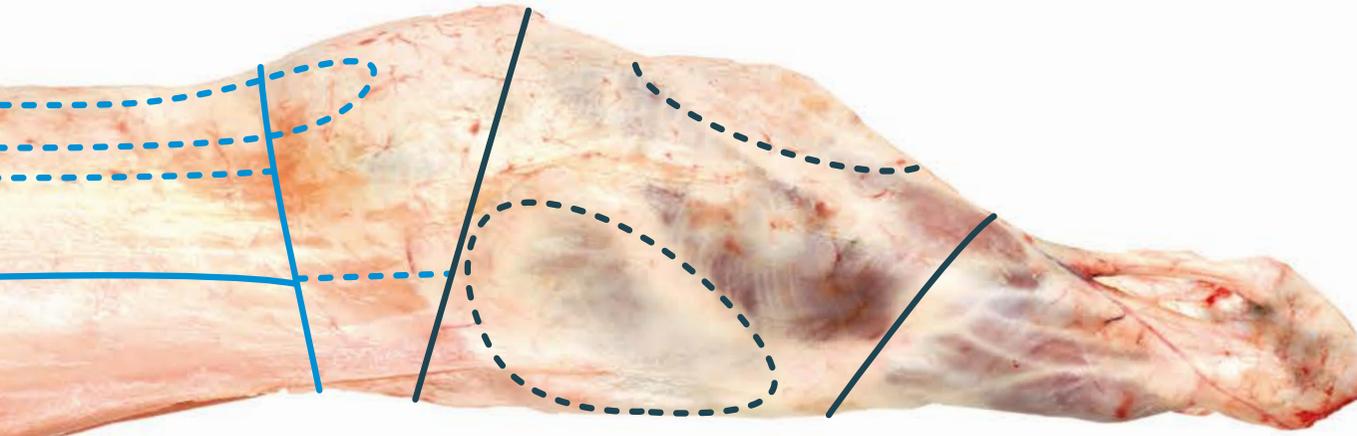
Lamb Spare Rib



Lamb Chateaubriand



Shank



# Carcase classification

Carcase assessment addresses conformation and fat. Conformation is assessed from E to P, with E being the best conformed and P being the poorest. Fat cover is assessed as described on a scale of 1-5 with class 1 being extremely lean and class 5 being extremely fat. Classes 3 and 4 are divided into low (L) and high (H).

		FAT CLASS							
		Increasing fatness							
		Fat is determined by visual assessment of external fat cover. There are five main classes. Classes 4 and 5 are subdivided into L (leaner) and H (fatter)							
		1	2	3L	3H	4L	4H	5	
CONFORMATION CLASS	E								
	U		The Quality Standard Mark Scheme stipulates specific carcass classifications for lamb. Fat Class 2-3H, Conformation E-O, the optimum classification for better meat yield (see note on right).						
	R								
	O								
	P								

Carcases within the following parameters can carry the Quality Standard Mark.

- Females must have no permanent incisors and neither have been used for breeding or pregnant, ie nulliparous and not pregnant.
- Castrated and entire males must have no permanent incisors.
- Carcasses must have a fat class of between 2-3H and have a conformation of between E-O. An equivalent to classification is acceptable for plants not grading lamb.
- Carcasses of any acceptable animal slaughtered during the period from 1 January through to 30 April of any year and born before 1 October of the previous year must be subjected to a minimum of 7 days maturation (and ideally 10 days) from slaughter to the final consumer. Alternatively, one of the post-slaughter processes to enhance tenderness as outlined in 'AHDB Beef & Lamb Guidance to Meat Quality' can be used, ie Aitch bone suspension or electrical stimulation.



# Lamb carcass to primal cuts – yield information



Short Fore	
<b>Code: Forequarter L001</b>	
	
Weight	8.50kg
Percentage of carcass	42.25%

Middle	
<b>Code: Loin L001</b>	
	
Weight	4.68kg
Percentage of carcass	23.26%

Legs with Chumps	
<b>Code: Leg L029</b>	
	
Weight	6.92kg
Percentage of carcass	34.39%

The information in this brochure is based on a 20.12kg carcass. Classification R3L (after 7 days maturation).

As soon as the carcass is cut into, cutting and drip loss will be experienced.

The weights/percentages of cuts are intended to act as a guide only, as butchery techniques, carcass weights and types may vary from one business to another.

# Lamb forequarter cuts – yield information

**Short Fore**

**Code: Forequarter L001**



**Description:** A 6-rib short fore.

Weight	8.50kg
Percentage of carcass	42.25%

**Short Fore – single (rib cage removed)**

**Code: Forequarter L039**



**Description:** A single forequarter with rib, back and neck bones removed.

Weight	3.04kg
Percentage of primal	35.76%
Percentage of carcass	15.11%

**Shoulder – traditional bone-in**

**Code: Forequarter L002**



**Description:** A square cut shoulder with part of the knuckle removed.

Weight	2.50kg
Percentage of primal	29.41%
Percentage of carcass	12.43%

**Shoulder**

**Code: Forequarter L023**



**Description:** Round untrimmed shoulder. The blade bone cartilage remains attached to the shoulder.

Weight	2.47kg
Percentage of primal	29.06%
Percentage of carcass	12.28%

**Rack – 6-rib (shoulder)**

**Code: Forequarter L011**



**Description:** This rack is cut from the rib section of the forequarter.

Weight	0.34kg
Percentage of primal	4.00%
Percentage of carcass	1.69%

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# Lamb forequarter cuts – yield information

**Neck Fillet**

**Code: Forequarter L016**



**Description:** A fully trimmed neck fillet with the yellow gristle removed and end squared.

Weight	0.29kg
Percentage of primal	3.41%
Percentage of carcase	1.44%

**Scrag Joint**

**Code: Forequarter L004**



**Description:** Cut from a section of the neck.

Weight	0.57kg
Percentage of primal	6.71%
Percentage of carcase	2.83%

**Breast Tip**

**Code: Breast L004**



**Description:** Tip of the breast from the forequarter.

Weight	0.56kg
Percentage of primal	6.59%
Percentage of carcase	2.78%

**Knuckle Standard Shoulder**

**Code: Forequarter L019**



**Description:** Knuckle with one end square cut.

Weight	0.34kg
Percentage of primal	4.00%
Percentage of carcase	1.69%

**Knuckle**

**Code: Forequarter L017**



**Description:** This is the meaty knuckle version, which contains extra shoulder meat and is French trimmed.

Weight	0.44kg
Percentage of primal	5.18%
Percentage of carcase	2.19%

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# Lamb middle cuts – yield information

**Middle**

**Code: Loin L001**



**Description:** The fore end and the legs and chumps are removed.

Weight	4.68kg
Percentage of carcass	23.26%

**Middle excl. breast flanks**

**Code: Loin L002**



**Description:** The breast flanks are removed at a distance equal to 1½ times the length of the eye muscle.

Weight	3.41kg
Percentage of primal	72.86%
Percentage of carcass	16.95%

**Loin with Chump**

**Code: Loin L008**



**Description:** The length of the breast flanks is a maximum of 1½ times the length of the eye muscle.

Weight	2.49kg
Percentage of carcass	12.38%

**Loin without Chump**

**Code: Loin L009**



**Description:** The length of the breast flanks is a maximum of 1½ times the length of the eye muscle.

Weight	1.70kg
Percentage of primal	36.32%
Percentage of carcass	8.45%

**Best End of Neck – short and un-split**

**Code: Loin L006**



**Description:** The length of the breast flanks is a maximum of 1½ times the length of the eye muscle.

Weight	1.62kg
Percentage of primal	35.26%
Percentage of carcass	8.05%

**Best End of Neck – short and split**

**Code: Loin L007**



**Description:** The length of the breast flanks is a maximum of 1½ times the length of the eye muscle.

Weight	0.81kg
Percentage of primal	17.31%
Percentage of carcass	4.03%

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# Lamb middle cuts – yield information

**Rack – 7-rib**

**Code: Loin L010**



**Description:** The rib section of the loin is used.

Weight	0.52kg
Percentage of primal	11.11%
Percentage of carcase	2.58%

**Short Saddle**

**Code: Loin L003**



**Description:** The length of the breast flanks is a maximum of 1½ times the length of the eye muscle.

Weight	1.82kg
Percentage of primal	38.89%
Percentage of carcase	9.05%

**Cannon – bone-in**

**Code: Loin L014**



**Description:** A bone-in cannon of lamb with the fat left on but the bark removed.

Weight	0.46kg
Percentage of primal	9.83%
Percentage of carcase	2.29%

**'Premium' Lamb Sirloin**

**Code: Loin L015**



**Description:** Highly trimmed loin of lamb with the fat left on but the bark removed.

Weight	0.34kg
Percentage of primal	7.26%
Percentage of carcase	1.69%

**'Premium' Lamb Cannon**

**Code: Loin L016**



**Description:** Just a fully trimmed eye muscle is used for this premium cannon.

Weight	0.27kg
Percentage of primal	5.77%
Percentage of carcase	1.34%

**Loin – eye muscle fully trimmed**

**Code: Loin L042**



**Description:** Fully trimmed eye muscle, fat and connective tissue removed.

Weight	0.54kg
Percentage of primal	11.54%
Percentage of carcase	2.68%

**Fillets**

**Code: Loin L026**



**Description:** Fully trimmed fillets of lamb.

Weight	0.11kg
Percentage of primal	2.35%
Percentage of carcase	0.55%

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# Lamb middle cuts – yield information

**Breast – with flank**

**Code: Breast L003**



**Description:** Breast without the breast tip but thin flank part remains.

Weight	0.84kg
Percentage of carcass	4.17%

**Breast – with flank (boneless)**

**Code: Breast L016**



**Description:** Boneless breast with flank.

Weight	0.70kg
Percentage of carcass	3.48%

**Breast – Square Cut**

**Code: Breast L002**



**Description:** Breast without the breast tip and thin flank part.

Weight	0.58kg
Percentage of primal	12.39%
Percentage of carcass	2.88%

**Breast – Square Cut (boneless)**

**Code: Breast L015**



**Description:** Boneless square-cut breast.

Weight	0.54kg
Percentage of primal	11.54%
Percentage of carcass	2.68%

**Lamb Spare Rib**

**Code: Breast L012**



**Description:** The flank is removed from the rib section of the breast, excess fat is removed and the outer is scored. Ideal for slow or sous vide cooking.

Weight	0.48kg
Percentage of primal	10.26%
Percentage of carcass	2.39%

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# Lamb leg cuts – yield information

**Legs with chump**

**Code: Leg L029**



**Description:** Pair of legs and chump.

Weight	6.92kg
Percentage of carcass	34.39%

**Leg with chump**

**Code: Leg L001**



**Description:** Whole leg and chump.

Weight	3.46kg
Percentage of primal	50.00%
Percentage of carcass	17.19%

**Leg without chump**

**Code: Leg L002**



**Description:** Leg where the chump is removed, part of the tail still attached.

Weight	2.57kg
Percentage of primal	37.14%
Percentage of carcass	12.77%

**Chump – bone-in**

**Code: Leg L008**



**Description:** The chump is removed from the leg.

Weight	0.89kg
Percentage of primal	12.86%
Percentage of carcass	4.42%

**Chump – boneless**

**Code: Leg L009**



**Description:** The chump is removed from the leg and deboned. A very versatile cut. It can be used as a small joint, cut into pavés, steaks or dice.

Weight	0.50kg
Percentage of primal	7.23%
Percentage of carcass	2.48%

**Chump – Centre Cut (boneless and fully trimmed)**

**Code: Leg L028**



**Description:** The chump centre cut is removed from the leg without the remainder of the silverside. All fat and connective tissue is removed.

Weight	0.25kg
Percentage of primal	3.61%
Percentage of carcass	1.24%

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# Lamb leg cuts – yield information

**Topside Roast**

**Code: Leg L010**



**Description:** Whole topside with maximum fat thickness of 5mm.

Weight	0.54kg
Percentage of primal	7.80%
Percentage of carcase	2.68%

**Thick Flank (untrimmed)**

**Code: Leg L044**



**Description:** Untrimmed thick flank muscle.

Weight	0.40kg
Percentage of primal	5.78%
Percentage of carcase	1.99%

**Silverside (trimmed)**

**Code: Leg L045**



**Description:** Silverside muscle with heel (trimmed).

Weight	0.51kg
Percentage of primal	7.37%
Percentage of carcase	2.53%

**Lamb Chateaubriand**

**Code: Leg L038**



**Description:** As the head of the fillet of lamb is very small, the small tender flank muscle is left attached to this Chateaubriand.

Weight	0.10kg
Percentage of primal	1.45%
Percentage of carcase	0.50%

**Shank**

**Code: Leg L022**



**Description:** Cut from the leg with some of the heel muscle attached to create a meaty shank.

Weight	0.46kg
Percentage of primal	6.65%
Percentage of carcase	2.28%

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