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EC71-919 Meat: Selection, Care, Cooking

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University of Nebraska - Lincoln

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meat

- Selection
- care
- cooking
Meat is outstanding for its food value. It is an excellent source of high quality protein, and is rich in thiamine, riboflavin and niacin. Meat also supplies generous amounts of phosphorus, iron and copper. The aroma and appearance of well-cooked, attractively served meat dishes stimulate the appetite and help make meals enjoyable. By knowing how to cook the various kinds, grades and cuts of meat properly, you can select and serve appetizing meals to suit any family budget.

The government grades of meat are your guides to the quality of the meat and the cooking method to use. A purple stamp, of harmless vegetable dye, indicates the U.S.D.A. grade. The stamp is shaped as a shield and appears on wholesale cuts of beef, veal and lamb. Packing houses sometimes use their own grade stamps which are not always equivalent to government grades.

Federal Beef Grades

Grades are important in the selection and cooking of beef. Six grades are available but retailers usually sell only those requested by their customers.

U.S.D.A. Prime is the top grade. It is juicy, tender and has excellent flavor. It is covered with a smooth, moderately thick layer of white fat and has liberal amounts of fat intermingled with the lean (marbling). The small proportion of beef sold as Prime grade goes to expensive hotels and restaurants.
U. S. D. A. Choice is the most popular grade. The fat covering is thinner, the marbling less extensive and the lean is cherry-red in color. Choice grade is tender and has a good flavor.

U. S. D. A. Good is a grade to please thrifty customers. This grade lacks marbling but is relatively tender and has a high proportion of lean to fat.

U. S. D. A. Standard has a very thin covering of fat, is mild in flavor and has almost no marbling. When properly prepared, such beef is relatively tender.

U. S. D. A. Commercial comes from older cattle and lacks the tenderness of the higher grades of beef. Most cuts require long slow cooking with moist heat to make them tender and to develop the flavor.

U. S. D. A. Utility has very little fat and lacks tenderness. It is an economical buy which requires long slow cooking with moist heat.

Other Grades, U. S. D. A. Cutter and Canner are the lowest grades of beef. These are used in making processed meat products and are rarely sold in retail stores.

Inspection Stamp

The round stamp which reads, "U. S. INS'P AND P'S'D", (U. S. Inspected and Passed), is your assurance that the meat was wholesome at the time it was inspected and that it was processed under sanitary conditions. The code number of the stamp identifies the packing house. Stamping is done on wholesale cuts with a harmless vegetable dye.
Meat Cuts and How to Cook Them

**BEEF CHART**

**Retail Cuts**
- Round Beef
  - Roast (Bake), Broil, Panbroil, Pantry, Braise
- Hind Shank
  - Cook in Liquid (Soup) or Braise
- Rolled Flank
  - Flank Meat
  - Braise or Cook in Liquid
- Flank Steak
  - Fillets
  - Braise
- Plate
  - "Boiling" Beef Plate
  - Ribs
  - Braise or Cook in Liquid
- Brisket
  - Corned Beef
  - Braise, Cook in Liquid
  - Cook in Liquid
- Shank
  - Knuckle
  - Cook in Liquid (Soup), Braise
- English Cut
  - Arm Pot-Roast
  - Arm Steak
  - Braise
- Rolled Neck
  - Boneless Neck
  - Braise or Cook in Liquid

**Wholesale Cuts**
- Round Steak
  - Top Round
  - Bottom Round
  - (Swiss Steak)
  - Braise
- Rolled Rump
  - Standing Rump
  - Braise or Roast
- Sirloin Steak
  - Pin Bone Sirloin Steak
  - Braise, Panbroil, Pantry
- Porterhouse Steak
  - T-Bone Steak
  - Club Steak
  - Braise, Panbroil, Pantry
- Standing Rib Roast
  - Rolled Rib Roast
  - Rib Steak
  - Roast
  - Braise, Panbroil, Pantry
- Blade Steak
  - Blade Pot-Roast
  - Pot-Roast
  - Pot-Roast
  - Shoulder Fillet
  - Braise

**Retail Cuts**
- Cross Cut
  - Chuck
  - Braise

Different grades and cuts of beef vary greatly in tenderness. This is why it is necessary to select beef cuts with the cooking method in mind, or adapt the cooking method to the cut selected. Beef is cooked rare, medium or well-done.
Veal is tender but has considerable connective tissue which means that it requires long, slow cooking. It is light in color and has a bland flavor.
Pork now has more protein, fewer calories and less fat than formerly. Large cuts may be roasted. Chops and steaks may be broiled until grey throughout. Other cuts are often braised. Cured meat may be broiled or fried.
The thin, paper-like covering over the outside of the lamb carcass is known as fell. Steaks and chops are more desirable if the fell is removed. A roast cooks in less time, keeps its shape better and is juicier when the fell is left on. Lamb should be served hot or cold, never lukewarm.
Care of Meat

Fresh meat should be unwrapped as soon as it comes from the market. It should be stored uncovered or loosely covered in the coldest part of the refrigerator. Cooked meat should be cooled quickly, then stored closely covered in the refrigerator. Cured meat, such as bacon and ham, should be refrigerated. Frozen meat should be stored at 0° or lower. Never refreeze meat.

Cooking of Meat

Always cook meat at low or moderate temperature. It will cook more evenly, be more tender and have less shrinkage. Use dry heat for tender cuts and use moist heat for the less tender cuts, for veal and some of the smaller cuts of fresh pork.


Moist heat methods are: 1. Braising, 2. Stewing or Cooking in Liquid.

How to Roast

Roasting is cooking meat uncovered in an oven.

1. Season with salt and pepper.

2. Place meat fat side up on rack in open roasting pan.

3. Insert a meat thermometer to the center of the thickest part.

4. Do not add water. Do not cover. Do not baste.

5. Roast in slow oven (300° - 350°). Searing does not prevent loss of juices and requires more fuel.

6. Roast to desired degree of doneness.
Cuts to roast

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beef</th>
<th>Pork-fresh</th>
<th>Pork-smoked</th>
<th>Lamb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ribs, standing</td>
<td>loin</td>
<td>ham</td>
<td>leg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ribs, rolled</td>
<td>ham</td>
<td>picnic</td>
<td>shoulder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rump, high quality</td>
<td>Boston butt</td>
<td>Boston butt</td>
<td>loaf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loaf</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Roasting Time Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of Doneness</th>
<th>Meat Thermometer Reading</th>
<th>Approximate Minutes Per Pound</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beef-rare</td>
<td>140°</td>
<td>18 - 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>medium</td>
<td>160°</td>
<td>22 - 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>well done</td>
<td>170°</td>
<td>27 - 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veal</td>
<td>170°</td>
<td>25 - 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pork-loin</td>
<td>170°</td>
<td>30 - 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cured, regular</td>
<td>170°</td>
<td>25 - 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cured, tenderized</td>
<td>160°</td>
<td>15 - 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lamb</td>
<td>180°</td>
<td>30 - 35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Time for cooking a roast varies with size, shape, amount of bone and oven temperature. A small roast requires more minutes per pound. If the roast is boned and rolled, add about 10 minutes per pound. A thermometer, properly inserted, is the only reliable method to determine when meat is cooked.

How to Broil

Broiling is cooking by direct heat.

1. Set oven regulator to broil.

2. Place meat 2 or 3 inches from heat, depending upon thickness of meat and degree of doneness desired.

3. Broil on one side until brown.

4. Season the top with salt and pepper.

5. Turn and broil on the other side until brown.

6. Season and serve at once.
### Approximate Broiling Time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meats</th>
<th>Minutes on Each Side</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beef steaks -- 1 inch thick</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rare</td>
<td>7 - 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>medium</td>
<td>10 - 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>well-done</td>
<td>12 - 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beef steaks -- 1 1/2 inch thick</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rare</td>
<td>12 - 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>medium</td>
<td>14 - 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>well-done</td>
<td>16 - 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pork chops and steaks</strong></td>
<td>10 - 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ham slice -- 1/2 inch thick</strong></td>
<td>7 - 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lamb chops -- 3/4 inch thick</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Cuts for broiling or pan-broiling:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beef</th>
<th>Veal</th>
<th>Pork-smoked</th>
<th>Lamb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rib steaks</td>
<td>liver</td>
<td>ham slice</td>
<td>shoulder chops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>club steaks</td>
<td></td>
<td>Canadian style bacon</td>
<td>rib chops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-bone steaks</td>
<td></td>
<td>bacon</td>
<td>loin chops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>porterhouse steaks</td>
<td></td>
<td>chops and steaks</td>
<td>patties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sirloin steaks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>liver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>top round steaks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>kidney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>patties</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### How to Panbroil

Panbroiling is cooking in an open pan by dry heat.

1. Place meat in a heavy frying pan.
2. Do not add fat or water. Do not cover.
3. Cook slowly, turning occasionally.
4. Pour off fat as it accumulates.
5. Brown meat on both sides.
6. Season and serve at once.

### How to Fry

Panfrying is cooking thin tender cuts of meat in a small amount of fat which has been added or allowed to accumulate. Cuts made tender by pounding, scoring, cubing or grinding may also be panfried. Deep-fat frying is cooking in sufficient fat to cover the meat.
Beef
steaks, tender, thin-cut
patties
Pork-smoked
Canadian style bacon
bacon
Lamb
chops
cutlets

How to Braise

1. Brown meat on all sides in fat in heavy utensil.
2. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Add small amount of liquid, if necessary.
4. Cover tightly.
5. Cook at low temperature, on top of stove or in oven. Pork or veal chops approximately 3/4 inch thick require about 45 minutes to cook. A 4 or 5 pound pot roast requires about 3 hours.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cuts to braise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lower grades of beef and cuts with considerable connective tissue, veal and pork chops or steaks will be more tender and palatable if they are braised.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beef</th>
<th>Veal</th>
<th>Pork</th>
<th>Lamb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pot roast</td>
<td>breast</td>
<td>shoulder steaks</td>
<td>shoulder chops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swiss steaks</td>
<td>shoulder chops</td>
<td>chops</td>
<td>breast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>short ribs</td>
<td>rib chops</td>
<td>spare ribs</td>
<td>neck slices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>round steak</td>
<td>loin chops</td>
<td>tenderloin</td>
<td>shank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stuffed steak</td>
<td>steaks or cutlets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heart</td>
<td>heart</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kidney</td>
<td>kidney</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How to Cook Meat in Liquid

1. For stews, cut meat in one or two inch cubes. If desired leave meat in larger pieces.
2. Brown meat on all sides if desired.
3. Season with salt and pepper.
4. Cover with liquid, cover the kettle and simmer until done. Do not boil.
5. If vegetables are used, add them just long enough before serving so they will be cooked.
How to Cook Frozen Meat

The same cooking methods are used for meat whether it is fresh or frozen. Large roasts may be more uniformly done if partially thawed first. About 1/3 to 1/2 more cooking time will be required for frozen meat.