

The following organisations can be contacted for further information on the Mutton Renaissance campaign and have provided valuable support on the production of this booklet.



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Supply Chain Contacts
Details of businesses that have registered with the Mutton Renaissance campaign and that are producing, processing or serving high quality mutton can be found at www.muttonrenaissance.org.uk



Production by Kabassa Marketing Communications



a taste for marketing mutton

A guide to
Renaissance Mutton
for producers,
abattoirs, butchers
and chefs





HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES
Patron, Mutton Renaissance



Foreword

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES

I could not be more pleased to write this message of support for the Mutton Renaissance campaign, which I launched in 2004. The idea to recreate a market for mutton arose from a visit I made to a remarkable organisation in County Durham, that provides invaluable support to local farmers.

A number of upland sheep farmers told me about the poor prices they were getting for the older ewes that had come to the end of their productive lives. That conversation started me thinking about mutton, which was one of my favourite dishes when I was a child, but that had all but disappeared over the last thirty or forty years. Wouldn't it be wonderful, I thought, if we could help boost the incomes of our hill farmers by encouraging a mutton renaissance?

I drew on the skills and enthusiasm of some eminent chefs from the Academy of Culinary Arts, of which I am the patron, as well as the knowledge and wisdom of the National Sheep Association. And with support from the English Beef and Lamb Executive and Hybu Cig Cymru - Meat Promotion Wales, the campaign was launched...

I believe that we have already made an impact with this campaign. The purpose, therefore, of this booklet, which has been so generously supported by DEFRA and produced with the guidance of MLC, is the next step in the project to help to bring together farmers, abattoirs, butchers and chefs.

It explains the new specification for Renaissance Mutton, gives advice on sourcing and also recommends some ways to cook it.

I have been overwhelmed by the support which I have received from a galaxy of culinary stars who share my belief in the quality of mutton as an ingredient. By stimulating new interest in quality mutton, I hope that we can make a difference to the incomes of the hill farmers who care for some of the most precious and fragile landscapes in this country and so help to keep them and future generations on their farms.

If we can do that, we will help to preserve that magical scenery which attracts so many visitors, and keep alive those villages and market towns which depend so crucially on a thriving agricultural economy.

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Main photography by www.agripix.co.uk

Introduction

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About this Guide

This information booklet has been written to help reconnect the supply chain for Renaissance Mutton; meat from ewes and wethers produced in line with the specifications set out in the following chapters.

It is split into clear sections so that farmers, abattoirs, butchers and chefs can work together to produce, process, cook and serve mutton of high quality and help to continue a renaissance in this traditional favourite.

Mutton has been an unfashionable, and indeed an unmarketable meat for over 50 years and because of this, supply chain expertise has inevitably declined. Little has been written about the production, processing and cooking of mutton over this time so it's unlikely that this booklet will have all of the answers. Instead it aims to guide those keen to play a part in mutton's revival and to call for fresh input and feedback from the supply chain.

The campaign to promote mutton - known as the Mutton Renaissance - was the brainchild of His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales and is co-ordinated on his behalf by the National Sheep Association and the Academy of Culinary Arts. The two organisations share the Prince's passion for good food and the environment and they work together to bring sheep farmers and chefs closer together in the name of taste.



PHIL CARELESS
Sheep Farmer



BOB KENNARD
Wholesale Butcher



JOHN WILLIAMS
Executive Chef



JASON STEPHENS AND HIS FELLOW SLAUGHTERMEN
Slaughtermen

1 Mutton's Agricultural and Culinary History

The British have a long history of farming sheep for wool, milk and meat and until the 1940s, older sheep meat prized for its texture and flavour would have been the population's meat of choice.

Wool Trade

Rearing sheep for wool was important up until the 1940s.



MUTTON was seen as a reliable, nutritious and affordable meat but at its best, it was celebrated as a delicacy. Mrs Beeton, writing in her Guide to Household Management in 1861, lauds praise upon its flavour and its performance in cooking.

In centuries past wool was the driving force behind sheep farming. Animals were traditionally reared for their fleeces and after several years, fattened for slaughter. The resulting meat was the mutton that the Victorians and their forefathers consumed with such passion.

Food lovers in the 19th century recorded that the finest mutton came from a five-year-old wether and that a favourite breed was Southdown. Cooking mutton has traditionally been slow and gentle and this reflected the typical method of meat cookery until the advent of improved gas and oil supplies for ovens and hobs.

But mutton's rich flavour, achieved through rearing, handling and hanging, is traditionally unlocked in stews and casseroles with added liquor replacing moisture lost through the maturation process.

Mutton's demise was most notable during the

aftermath of World War II, though the Great War probably also had an impact. Many sheep farmers were away at war and much of the expertise to produce the best mutton was absent from the countryside.

Since the 1880s mutton and lamb had been imported largely from New Zealand. These supplies continued at an increased rate after World War II and helped to maintain year-round supply.

The war years, with the constrained supply of fresh food, also served up the worst examples of mutton to entrenched communities during the blackouts. Many that lived through that

THE HOUSEKEEPER'S ORACLE, WILLIAM KITCHINER, 1817

period remember fatty mutton, poorly cooked and with little else to accompany it. This legacy helped to damage mutton's reputation.

Rationing and the post-war food shortages also put new pressure on the food chain. The population needed to be fed quickly and efficiently. Lamb that could be born, raised, finished and slaughtered in four to six months seemed a logical and more economically attractive solution when compared to mutton roaming the hillsides for two or more years.

“Fat mutton is the best and the finest comes from a five year old wether”



A Cut Above

The Victorians made the most of all the cuts of a mutton carcass.

But it was the decline of the British wool trade that really helped wave goodbye to mutton. The advent of modern textiles, greater international trade links and with these, new competition from overseas, farmers no longer saw value in keeping their sheep on the land for their fleeces.

New eating trends for lamb that could be purchased relatively cheaply and cooked quickly also helped to influence farming practices. Later EU

subsidies through the Common Agricultural Policy put further emphasis on efficient production of food.

Mutton is most definitely a 'slow food' and this has not matched the needs of the fast food generation nor the businesses that feed its hunger. However, as trends change and traditional foods find favour, mutton is indeed well placed for a renaissance.

Mutton Today

While mutton has all but disappeared from the mainstream diet of the UK, the meat has continued to be produced as a by-product of the vibrant lamb trade.

This meat, usually from unfinished 'cull ewes', can be lean and inexpensive. The UK's

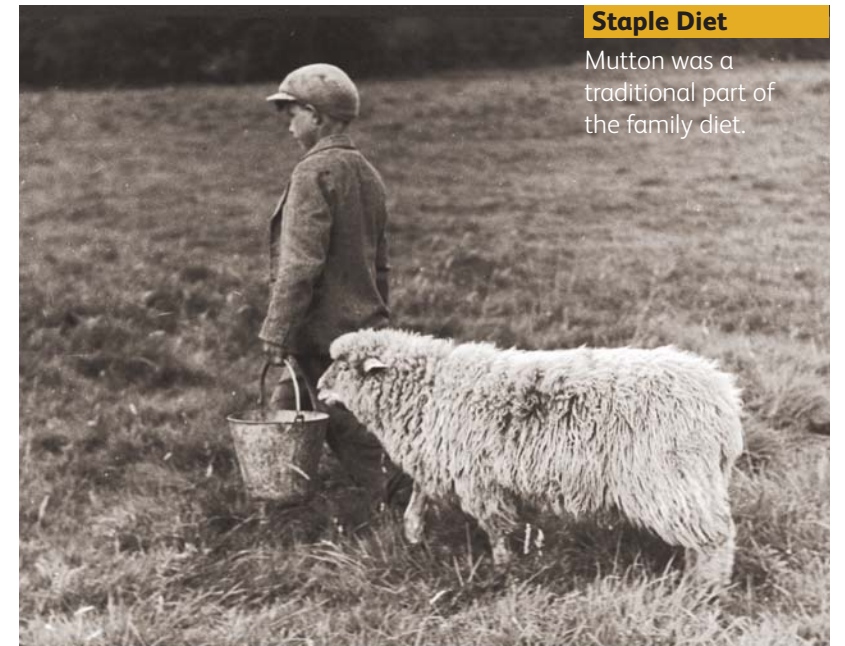
Herdwick

One of the breeds gaining a new following for mutton.



Staple Diet

Mutton was a traditional part of the family diet.



increasingly diverse ethnic communities eagerly buy this mutton as it is well suited to cuisines that use intense marinades, rich spices, slow cooking or a combination of all three. Consequently, the mutton is usually slaughtered in line with religious beliefs.

Reports from catering and retail butchers suggest that some communities from West Africa like mutton with a very strong flavour, others from North East Africa and Pakistan like very lean animals. Other communities need the meat to be as fresh as possible and will only buy meat from animals killed on the same day.

Renaissance Mutton comes from animals that have been carefully selected, finished and processed to achieve optimum flavour and an excellent eating experience for traditional British palates. It has a distinct season from October to March.

The campaign to promote high quality mutton is timed to coincide with the UK's renewed passion for good food and forgotten British flavours.

2 Information for Sheep Farmers

Mutton is now a by-product of the valuable lamb trade. All but a few UK flocks are principally geared towards rearing lambs for meat production and old ewes are sold at the end of their productive life for mutton.

Free to Forage

A forage-based diet is essential to the best mutton.



Most animals that cannot contribute to the production of lambs can be finished to produce Renaissance Mutton but careful handling and feeding is required to achieve the best carcase weights, conformation and flavour.

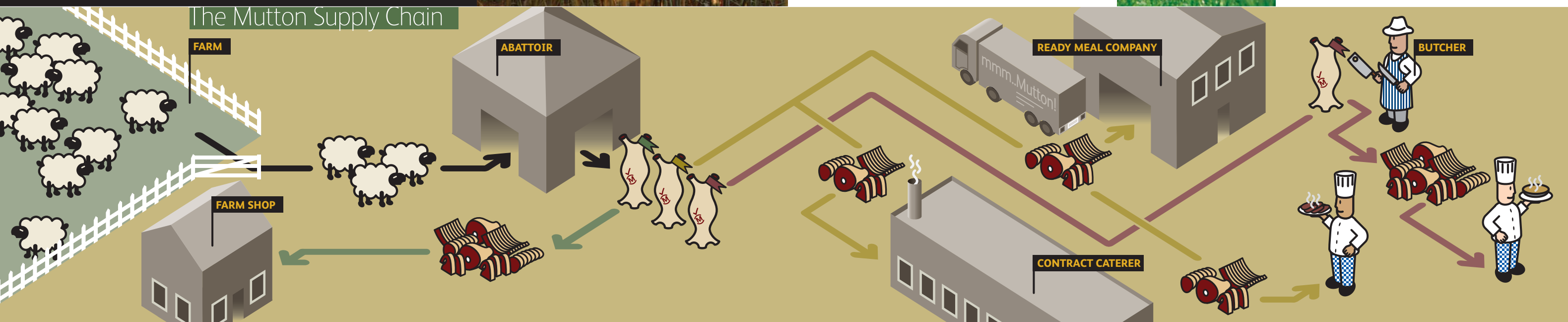
Animals for slaughter and sale in the autumn are likely to have been finished on summer grasses. Those animals intended for slaughter through the winter and into March will need to be considerably finished on alternative forage-based diets and this may impart a different flavour on the product. See the specification shown below.

Note: If diet and other local conditions are found to have a positive effect on taste, for example grazing on salt marshes, this may create special marketing opportunities as part of a scheme such as the EU's Protected Designation of Origin programme. Find out more from the Protected Food Names section of the Defra website (see back cover).



“A four-year old black-faced, heather-reared wether, properly hung, tastes just like the finest venison”

SUNDAY ROAST, JOHNNY SCOTT & CLARISSA DICKSON WRIGHT



The Market for Renaissance Mutton

- Top restaurant chefs across the UK are leading the drive to get mutton back on their menus.
- Well-finished 'Renaissance Mutton' should command a premium price.
- If market conditions are favourable, the price should be just below the price paid for quality lamb.
- Extra input is required by the farmer to ensure each animal reaches optimum weight in line with the Mutton Renaissance specification.
- Renaissance Mutton is distinct from unfinished cull ewes that currently are sold into the ethnic meat trade.
- The trade for Renaissance Mutton is small but potentially very profitable.
- The season for Renaissance Mutton is from October to March; a period in which the hearty dishes that make best use of mutton are most commonly enjoyed.

SOME FARMERS still rear speciality upland breeds that naturally lend themselves to slaughter at a later age and some of these also produce high quality wool. For them, mutton can be an important output of their flock. This group is a small minority but it is a body of farmers which has maintained and rejuvenated the production of mutton and retain valuable expertise.

Group 1: The Lamb-producing flock

A flock geared towards the production of lambs can also produce premium quality mutton by selecting and finishing both wethers and non-productive or older ewes that would normally be culled or sold on.

Knowing what the market wants is vital in making the selection as to which animals to finish as Renaissance Mutton. Chefs, and the wholesale butchers that supply them, are seeking carcasses that match the 2, 3L and 3H levels of fat cover and that fit the E, U, R and O conformation type.

Specification for Renaissance Mutton

On Farm

- Renaissance Mutton must be produced to a Farm Assured standard
- Eligible sheep must be over two years of age. To be confirmed by either documentation or dentition
- Eligible sheep to be either female or castrates. Entire males are not acceptable
- All eligible sheep must be traceable to the farm where they have been reared
- Sheep which are sourced through an auction must be of the required conformation and fat class (see abattoir specification right)
- There are no breed specifications
- Finishing diet to be forage-based - grass, hay, silage, turnips, swedes, etc. augmented by farm-produced straight cereals when necessary (barley, oats, etc.)

In Abattoir

- Carcase classifications of E,U,R or O for conformation, fat classes 2, 3L or 3H are required
- Carcase or cuts to be matured for at least two weeks (either on the bone or in a vacuum pack)



Renaissance Mutton from Wethers

The advent of more reliable weather forecasts means that few farmers now retain wethers (castrated males) in their flocks. However, they are still valued by some hill farmers that recognise their ability to guide the flock and steer them to safety when the snows blow in.

The majority of wethers are sold on as lamb or a little later as hoggets or shearlings. Some people still believe that wethers produce the best mutton but producers should identify customer requirements before taking the decision to retain them in the flock.

Those male lambs that are destined for the Renaissance Mutton market should be castrated at the appropriate time, then allowed to enjoy the late summer grazing with the rest of the flock. Over-winter with forage-based feed and lowland grazing depending on the normal system and continue to check market conditions and requirements.

These animals will stay with the lambing flock through the following spring and could be retained in the flock for several years. Producers need to plan accordingly if the market requires wether mutton of a certain age.

When the animal is of the relevant age, a schedule for slaughter should be formulated in the

Renaissance Mutton from Wethers and Ewes

checklist for producers



- ✓ Discuss requirements with your buyers well in advance
- ✓ Assess the flock after lambing and identify suitable ewes
- ✓ Castrate the males at the appropriate time
- ✓ Set a schedule for slaughter but remember that animals must be at least two years of age - there's no upper age limit
- ✓ Ask questions up through the supply chain to double check requirements
- ✓ Finish on grass, heather or a forage-based diet - be wary of over-fattening wethers
- ✓ Be sure that the animal's fat cover and conformation match the market need
- ✓ Co-ordinate sale and slaughter to maximise return

Inside the customer's head

IT IS USEFUL at this stage to have a good awareness of the post-farm processing and handling intentions of customers. Some knowledge of how the meat will eventually be cooked will help to connect producers with the end customer – the chef.

If the customer wants the whole carcass to be matured on the bone for a set length of time, this may have a negative impact on sale weight but is thought to improve the flavour and texture of the meat.

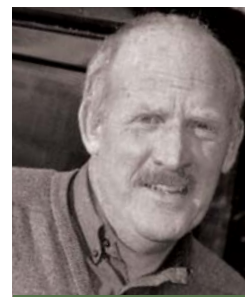
Maturation of Renaissance Mutton can be achieved by on-the-bone hanging or through vacuum packaging. Both techniques can help improve flavour and tenderness.

The longer the carcass matures on the bone, the more weight it will lose. Fatter animals hang better for longer as the covering of fat helps the meat retain more of its natural moisture. Some farmers deliberately over-finish their animals and thus they come to market with excessive fat cover. This allows for longer maturation but a balance needs to be struck to achieve levels so that the customers at the end of the supply chain get what they want.

Some abattoirs that have their own cutting rooms may be reluctant to mature whole carcasses but instead cut after slaughter and pack into vacpacs. The meat will continue to mature 'in the bag' but mutton will not lose weight when packed like this so there is no need to compensate when finishing the animal.



Case Study



STEVE RAMSHAW
Sheep Farmer, Northumberland

“WE RUN A FLOCK of Blackface and follow an organic farming system. We're a small operation on an expansive 700-acre farm and sell much of our meat direct to the public through mail-order as well as some into the upper end of the restaurant trade.

“The farm is located on an upland area known as Wether Hill and this suggests that sheep farming, and indeed mutton production, has been associated with the

region for a very long time.

“Although I'm relatively new to this part of Northumberland, some local people recall a poor man's bacon made from mutton. This 'Macon' was prepared by placing a tin bath in front of the fire, placing the mutton carcass inside then filling the bath with a brown sugar brine. I've never tried it, though.

“Mutton has become an important product for us and it now represents a significant part of our sales. Most of our mutton comes from two year old ewes that have enjoyed their first shearing. They are known as 'gimmers' up here and many sheep farmers are familiar with this term.

“By the time they reach nine months of age, the animal has begun to show characteristics of maturity; the meat and marrow darken and the bones harden.

“As an upland breed, Blackface do not tend to get too fat and we aim to finish the animals so they match the 3L fat classification. We have our own hanging cold room and cutting room on the farm so we get to manage the whole process before and after slaughter.

“Our restaurant customers either buy the mutton legs or sometimes the whole carcass depending on the chef's menu plans. We've built up a great rapport with the chef customers and the feedback is always useful for us to refine what we do.”

“Our restaurant customers either buy the mutton legs or sometimes the whole carcass depending on the chef's menu plan”

early summer. The Renaissance Mutton season runs from 1 October until the end of March so animals should ideally reach their optimum weight and conformity for slaughter and sale within this window. See page 7 to find out more about the market's requirements.

Renaissance Mutton from Ewes

Ewes are well suited to being finished to achieve the Mutton Renaissance standard. The market normally views cull ewes as animals that have little value but the Mutton Renaissance campaign urges producers to think again.

Nearly all cull ewes are sold into the ethnic meat trade where very lean animals are well suited to the cuisines of the Indian Sub-continent, the West Indies, North Africa and the Middle East. This is an important growing market but it is quite different from Renaissance Mutton where additional input is required to achieve a premium price.

Upland farmers may choose to sell older ewes as 'drafts' and these will be purchased by farms further down the stratification system

where they can breed for a few more years. However, ewes will eventually be taken out of the flock because of problems with breeding, their feet, teeth or udders.

Depending on their age and condition, some of these animals will be suitable to enter the Renaissance Mutton market. Each producer knows their animals best and suitability will depend on the breed, age and life history of the animal - and most importantly, the needs of the customer.

Once the animals have been identified, a schedule for finishing and slaughter must be set. Older ewes, particularly those that have been nursing lambs, may be thin. They will need to be put to summer grasses or other forage and finished.

These animals will put on 'new meat' if given access to sufficient grass, allowing them to achieve optimum weight and conformation for autumn slaughter. To maintain condition into the winter, animals should be fed in line with the chosen over-wintering system on a forage-based diet. This can be augmented with farm-produced straight cereals when necessary (barley, oats, etc.)



“Very fat mutton may be salted to great advantage, and also smoked, and may be kept thus a long while. Not the shoulders and legs, but the back of the sheep”

COTTAGE ECONOMY, WILLIAM COBBETT, 1821

10 Group 2: The Speciality Sheep Farmer
Farmers that rear speciality breeds may already be producing high quality mutton. Breeds such as Hebridean, Soay, Manx Loghtan, Jacob or similar breeds may be bred for their wool, for show or for conservation grazing. The resulting mutton may be first class as a consequence of environmental conditions, the size of the adult animals and their natural bone and muscle structure.

For producers rearing speciality breeds not principally for their meat, the Mutton Renaissance campaign may open new marketing opportunities.

Producers should read the previous sections and following chapters of this booklet to learn more about the needs of the supply chain. Further insights can be gained by contacting local abattoirs, catering butchers and restaurants to gauge their interest.

Those with little experience of supplying the restaurant trade could speak to other local catering suppliers or could contact a regional food group for more advice.

Breeds for Mutton

Most sheep can be finished to produce mutton. However some breeds are traditionally associated with this meat and experience suggests that these lend themselves well to longer living and therefore longer cooking.

Some chefs like to know more about sheep breeds and to understand why certain conditions create particular flavours. This helps them to paint a picture about the dish through menus and at the table. Producers can add further value by passing on as much information as possible.



Small is Beautiful

Native upland breeds are small but flavoursome.

Where to Sell High Quality Mutton

The Mutton Renaissance campaign is striving to raise fresh interest in mutton but it is sure to be a long road until the meat is re-established as a popular choice alongside other favourites.

The campaign's first priority is to work with leading restaurant chefs to put mutton on the menu and it is these chefs that should be borne in mind when planning ahead.

Some chefs are happy to be supplied direct if the facilities and expertise are available to do this. Others are more familiar with working in partnership with their catering butcher or they may be supplied direct from an abattoir. The remaining chapters in this book will help those interested to learn more about what the other links in the supply chain require and how to contact them.

Case Study



ANDREW SHARP

Producer Group Co-ordinator, Cumbria

“OUR MUTTON is now so popular that we've formed a producer group of 27 other Lakeland farms, all of whom rear Herdwicks. This breed is well-known for its grey wool and high quality mutton achieved through a life on the high fells.

“In contrast to most farms, our members tend to hang on to wethers for longer, using them for hefting, teasing and conservation grazing. This means we have a good mix of

ewes and wethers for our mutton.

“We use a small local abattoir then take the carcasses back to hang them in our own cold room. We do the cutting here too, allowing us to hang the legs for around three weeks and the loins for up to five weeks.

“We run a stall at London's Borough Market and the mutton is popular with the public as well as a number of leading London restaurants that we supply direct.

“We also air dry some of the mutton legs to make our own 'Mutton Ham'. The legs are dried for up to six months, creating a very special taste and texture that works well with salad leaves. This is a value added mutton product that commands a premium price.”

“The mutton is popular with the public as well as a number of leading London restaurants”



“Mutton is to lamb what beef is to veal”

HUGH FEARNLEY-WHITTINGSTALL, RIVER COTTAGE MEAT BOOK, 2004

3 Information for Abattoirs

Abattoirs are a vital link in the supply chain for Renaissance Mutton. Though the sector continues to consolidate, abattoirs that remain are highly skilled and have enviable supply chain clout.

WHILE HIGH QUALITY MUTTON has declined in popularity over the past 60 years, abattoirs have done much to develop and service the ethnic food trade with mutton from cull ewes over this time.

The Mutton Renaissance campaign recognises that this ethnic meat trade is valuable to abattoirs and farmers and in no way intends to damage it. Instead it aims to develop a highly profitable niche market focusing on the high quality mutton demanded by the restaurant trade.

Who wants Renaissance Mutton?

Leading restaurant chefs from across the country are again recognising the taste properties of mutton. A forgotten meat for many years, mutton is gaining a new following among the culinary elite.

Many restaurants having international reputations are already making a success of mutton with diners returning regularly for favourite dishes. The number of restaurants serving mutton is growing each year and details of how to contact some of them can be found at www.muttonrenaissance.org.uk.

As the campaign continues, it is hoped that the demand for mutton will increase and trickle down into the different layers of the foodservice and retail industries. Abattoirs should speak with existing catering customers about Renaissance Mutton and approach leading restaurants in their region to gauge interest.

Advice on Buying and Selling Renaissance Mutton

Abattoirs need to have a sound understanding of their market and their customer's specific requirements before sourcing animals. Dialogue with customers is therefore vital to ensure that demand for quality and quantity can be satisfied. It is important to remember that this is a specialised but growing market.

If an abattoir has a cutting room, it is well placed to supply the chefs direct. Contact with chefs or their appointed buyers is essential to ascertain their needs and ideally to understand how the meat will be cooked and served. The expertise of

Chef's Appetite

Leading chefs from the Academy of Culinary Arts are putting Renaissance Mutton on their menus.



HENRY HARRIS

Chef/Patron, London



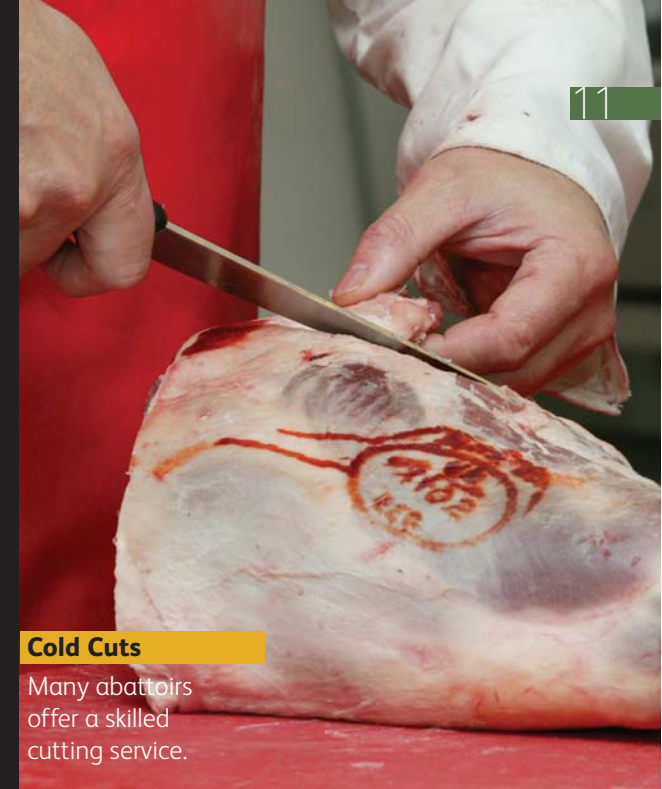
MARK HIX

Chef Director, London



BRIAN J TURNER CBE

Executive Chef, London



Cold Cuts

Many abattoirs offer a skilled cutting service.

“I have never made any fitch of sheep bacon but I will for there is nothing like having a store of meat in the house”

COTTAGE ECONOMY, WILLIAM COBBETT, 1821



Split Loyalty

An abattoir's knowledge of the carcass is of great value to the customers.

abattoir personnel will be valuable to chefs so abattoir staff should endeavour to share their knowledge to help restaurants get what they need.

Those already supplying catering butchers or larger foodservice businesses will still need to talk to their customers to find out more about the requirements of the restaurant kitchens they supply. The gathering of detailed information allows abattoirs to source the most appropriate animals that will deliver maximum return and minimum wastage.

Farmers can rear animals to an approximate specification but ideally, an abattoir's customers will tell them how much fat cover and what conformation they require as well as a guide to the total weight they are looking for. The table on page 7 sets out the standard for Renaissance Mutton. Conformation should be E, U, R or O, fat cover should be 2, 3L or 3H.

Adding Value through Maturation

Maturation of Renaissance Mutton can be achieved by on-the-bone hanging or through vacuum packaging. Both techniques help to improve flavour and tenderness.

An abattoir's knowledge of how meat changes after processing is vital to adding further value to Renaissance Mutton. As with any premium product, careful management of the slaughtering



Natural Selection

Identify animals that will maximise return and minimise wastage.



STEPHEN AIREY

Abattoir Owner, Cumbria

Case Study

“WE DO THE WHOLE LOT HERE; farming, slaughtering, butchering, wholesale, retail. This complete involvement in the supply chain is very satisfying, though rather rare these days. We

“The growth of interest in mutton fits very well with our business”

know that some butchers never actually see a sheep and this is sure to affect their ability to judge quality.

“Our role as an abattoir means that we can tell our customers the full story about the meat we sell. If you buy meat from a supermarket it just says ‘Lamb’ or ‘Beef’ on the ticket but we can say so much more and I know that some chefs see real value in this.

“Like all abattoirs, we have a kill line system that generates a bar-coded ticket carrying lots of information about the animal. This can be scanned at each stage of the supply chain to access the data.

“We’re carving ourselves a niche here. We’re one of only three abattoirs left in the Lake District yet there’s sheep everywhere. My grandfather started this business when there was a slaughterhouse on every corner – he’d be amazed at how things have changed. Now we concentrate on the smaller end of the market and handle lots of speciality and rare breed meat. The growth of interest in mutton fits very well with our business.”



checklist for Abattoirs

- ✓ Read the other chapters in this booklet to find out more about how mutton is produced by farmers and used by chefs
- ✓ Share expertise with chef customers
- ✓ Learn how the chefs intend to use the meat and source accordingly
- ✓ Ensure considerate slaughter and post-slaughter handling
- ✓ All mutton carcasses must be split and spinal material discarded
- ✓ Experiment with different levels of fat cover and hanging times
- ✓ Allow for some moisture and weight loss if maturing whole carcasses or prime cuts
- ✓ Work with chef customers to ascertain what tastes best
- ✓ Contact top restaurants to develop new sales

process and post-slaughter handling is essential to keep the meat in prime condition.

Minimising stress to animals prior to processing is vital. Ideally sheep should enter the slaughtering area swiftly after transportation and away from noisy animals such as pigs.

Renaissance Mutton must be at least 24 months of age or show four incisor teeth. Therefore all carcasses must be split and spinal material be discarded before further processing can commence.

If the facilities are available, cutting and packing the mutton adds some value but it is the maturation that has the ability to really make an impact to flavour and texture.

Few abattoirs have the capacity to mature a great number of carcasses on the bone but most can find the space if customers require this.

“Of all domesticated animals, the sheep is, without exception, the most useful to man as a food, and the most necessary to his health and comfort”

HOUSEHOLD MANAGEMENT, ISABELLA BEETON, 1857

Maturation allows naturally occurring enzymes to tenderise the meat and develop flavour.

Carcasses with a greater covering of fat often mature better for longer as the fat helps to retain moisture. Even with adequate fat cover, carcasses will steadily lose weight in line with their period of maturation and this should be kept in mind when planning delivery times and prices.

Research has shown that meat packed in vacuum packaging will continue to mature without the loss in moisture and weight. Many cutting plants now use vacpacs and while some fine dining chefs have reservations about this process, they increasingly accept its convenience.

Renaissance Mutton should ideally be matured in-carcase form or matured in the bag for two weeks but abattoirs should ask their customers for how long they want the carcass to be matured and be willing to experiment to see what tastes the best. Those that take note of how the meat changes colour over time and that work with a chef or in a domestic kitchen to see how flavours and textures develop, can share such knowledge with their customers.

Quality Control

The specification for Renaissance Mutton (shown on page 7) sets out the standards by which everyone in the supply chain should measure quality. The success of the campaign and the use of this specification will be carefully monitored and additional controls on quality may be introduced in the future.

This approach relies on product knowledge at each element of the supply chain. It's vital that abattoirs, their suppliers and their customers know the visual characteristics, such as conformation and fat class, that sets Renaissance Mutton apart.



ROBERT ENSOR

Abattoir Owner, Gloucestershire

Case Study

“WE HAVE A small number of restaurant customers that buy whole mutton carcasses from us for use in their restaurants in London and Bristol. This works well as it doesn't fall to us to utilise the whole carcass.

“I doubt that the farm groups that we work with know much about the Renaissance

Mutton specification at the moment. Instead the chefs rely on our experience to select the animals that match their needs. As demand rises for high quality mutton, so the whole supply chain must observe the standard to collectively police quality.”

“Chefs rely on our experience to select the animals that match their needs”



Make the Grade

Skilled meat graders can quickly identify those carcasses that meet the Mutton Renaissance specification.

4 Information for Butchers

The Mutton Renaissance is focused on supplying mutton of excellent quality to reputable restaurants. Catering butchers are chefs' most valued suppliers, trusted to explain the merits of the different cuts, breeds and places of origin. Mutton of high quality is also being sold by some retail butchers as food lovers rediscover the taste.

Mutton Man

Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall has helped to spark new interest in mutton with his River Cottage television series.



Show Some Leg

Legs remain popular but utilising the carcass is essential.

LIKE OTHER LINKS in the supply chain, butchers have had limited experience of mutton in recent years. However, a good butcher's sound understanding of how beef, game, lamb and venison behaves after slaughter is highly relevant to mutton. A few experiments and discussions will quickly establish a butcher's reputation as a purveyor of excellent Renaissance Mutton.

Why Mutton? Why Now?

Britain continues to develop as a gastronomic nation and it could be argued that a food revolution has been underway since the mid-90s. Ever more people are dining out and chefs are seeking out old and new flavours to tempt them.

As stated in the history section on page 4, mutton has been a popular meat in this country for hundreds of years. It only fell from favour half way through the 20th century but prior to this it was prized as the best beef is today. This comparison with beef is a good one and TV foodie Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall states that "Mutton is to lamb as beef is to veal" (River Cottage Meat Book).

With so much culinary history and a reputation for real flavour, it's no wonder that mutton meets the needs of chefs on a quest for taste.

Complementing the Lamb Market

Fifty years or more have passed since mutton was last a familiar sight on restaurant menus so it is inevitable that people compare it with lamb.

However, the Mutton Renaissance campaign aims to make a clear distinction between lamb and mutton and to build a separate and sustainable market for meat from older sheep. Renaissance Mutton is a meat with a clear definition, available through a specified season. Although mutton can actually be available throughout the year, the Renaissance Mutton season – October to March – is specifically designed to keep clear of the traditional season for lamb.

Another reason for choosing this period is that it allows ewes to enjoy the best summer grazing after lambing and thus add new high quality meat prior to slaughter in the autumn or winter.

Arguably, Renaissance Mutton could be seen as a complement to the British game offering rather than rivaling new season lamb.

Sourcing the Best

As chefs become more familiar with mutton and how it performs, so they will pass on feedback to their butcher about levels of fat cover, hanging times and the weight of carcass required.

The Mutton Renaissance campaign has already done some preliminary research into what performs and tastes best and this has formed part of the specification shown on page 7. It is designed to give the optimum balance of conformation and fat cover. As with beef, the level of fat is key to how the meat will perform in the kitchen. However, few chefs are willing to pay for very fat meat so a balance must be struck.

The Renaissance Mutton specification aims to find this balance but butchers should consider how relevant it is to the intended use of the meat.

Some butchers may have difficulty in securing mutton from their normal suppliers and in this case, direct contact with farmers is recommended. Many smaller farmer/retailers have been producing high quality mutton for some years and have lots of expertise to pass on. For further information visit www.muttonrenaissance.org.uk.

Most breeds can be reared to produce high quality mutton but some have traditionally been associated with the meat. Butchers can find out more by discussing different breeds with suppliers and experimenting to identify varieties that consistently deliver taste.

Maturing Mutton for Flavour

Mutton greatly benefits from hanging or resting in vacpacs and Renaissance Mutton should be matured for at least two weeks to maximise tenderness and flavour. Breed, fat cover and age of the animal can all affect how the carcass or cut will mature so butchers should work in partnership with their abattoir and catering customers to establish what works best. The case studies throughout this booklet give examples of how some businesses mature their mutton.

Prime Cuts

Legs are without doubt the most popular primal on a mutton carcass but there's no reason why this can't change as chefs become more familiar with the meat and its properties.

Loins and necks are also of great value as are shoulders. Butchers can identify new opportunities by speaking with restaurant customers to find out more about how they use different cuts.

Utilising the Carcass

Some chefs will happily take a whole carcass from their suppliers but many will initially play it safe and buy legs. Successful carcass utilisation is key to profitability in the Renaissance Mutton supply chain.

Breast, flank, chump and scrag end are all of use in a variety of added-value products. Some butchers have outlets open to the public and mutton sausages, pies and ready meals sell well.

Case Study



WILL OWEN

Wholesale and Retail Butcher, Caernarfon

"I GUESS WE'RE TYPICAL of the remaining butchers in Wales that successfully combine retailing with wholesaling to caterers.

The family shop opened in Caernarfon back in 1939 and this represents around 30 per cent of our turnover with supply to restaurants, hotels and care homes making up the core business.

"The Prince of Wales was invested in the town in 1969 so his support of the Mutton Renaissance campaign caught my eye when it

was launched. It's been years since I was asked for mutton but a talented local chef made contact recently requesting a whole carcass.

"By speaking with my local abattoir I have now arranged to source good quality mutton for the customer. As the demand is small, the abattoir will select an animal from a farm within Snowdonia and effectively slaughter to order. This allows our business to gauge interest in the meat and guarantees quality for the chef."

"By speaking with my local abattoir I have now arranged to source good quality mutton for the customer"



Did you know?

There are over 60 pubs in the UK called The Shoulder of Mutton. Not only was mutton traditionally a popular dish for inns and taverns, it is thought that the name implied that the innkeepers were also butchers.



Excess Baggage

Good fat cover can help maturation but chefs may reject carcasses that are too fat.

Larger food processors, the ethnic meat trades and contract caterers may be interested in the remaining cuts.

Adding Value through Traceability

Consumers are increasingly interested in the 'story' behind the food that they eat. Some chefs are keen to incorporate this information into their menus or for their service staff to pass it on at the table.

Catering butchers can add value to Renaissance Mutton that they supply by passing on the salient facts about the animal. Modern kill ticketing systems make key information available throughout the supply chain but suppliers should be able to clarify all the details if asked. Those that can't should be avoided.

Details of the breed and age of the animal at time of slaughter, brief details of the region or place where the animal was reared, the period of maturation and any other pertinent information is of real interest to chefs.

End On

This chump end shows the fat cover typical of a 3H carcass.



Case Study

DUDLEY CARRUTHERS
Wholesale Butcher, Cumbria

"THIS IS A family business that started in 1905 with a great uncle selling direct from a shopping trolley. We ran butchers shops for a while before moving into wholesaling to the restaurant trade.

"We specialise in Cumbrian sheep breeds such as Herdwick and Swaledale and have worked closely with regional farmers to develop the 'Fellbred' brand that is backed by full traceability.

"Interest in mutton is getting stronger and this is supported by a growing demand for carcass case histories. All of the animals we handle are ear tagged, allowing us to convey the sheep's age, breed and where it was bred to our restaurant customers.

"All of our mutton is a minimum of two years of age and is well finished to achieve the optimum level of fat cover for our customers.

"Legs continue to be the most popular cut but we're successfully utilising the whole carcass by selling diced mutton to a processor as well as developing our own added-value products such as a Mutton & Ale Pie."

"Legs continue to be the most popular cut but we're successfully utilising the whole carcass"

checklist for catering butchers



- ☒ Read the other chapters in this booklet to find out more about how mutton is produced and used
- ☒ Speak with your restaurant customers to gauge their interest in Renaissance Mutton
- ☒ Learn how the chefs intend to use the meat and source accordingly
- ☒ Work closely with suppliers to secure the best breeds and carcasses for taste
- ☒ Stay informed about the Renaissance Mutton specification and know how to recognise the meat that matches the standard
- ☒ Experiment with maturation periods by hanging or vacpacking carcasses or prime cuts
- ☒ Utilise the whole carcass by developing added value products
- ☒ Add further value to Renaissance Mutton by communicating the traceability details

5 Information for Chefs

The distinctive flavour and texture of mutton has been a part of Britain's culinary history for hundreds of years but in the last half of the 20th century, it fell spectacularly from popularity.

What's All the Fuss?

The dining public's current appetite for new tastes and food experiences means that now is a great time for this classic meat to make a come back.

Leading the drive for mutton is HRH the Prince of Wales who has demonstrated over the years his passion for good food and his understanding of sound farming practices. The Prince's enthusiasm for mutton links both of these themes and aims to encourage food lovers to reappraise mutton's special taste as well as supporting Britain's beleaguered sheep farmers.

The restaurant trade has its own special relationship with farmers, though a chain of suppliers often blurs this friendship. The Mutton Renaissance campaign is a way in which chefs and farmers can work closely together to put great food on the menu.



A Princely Plan

The Prince aims to bring farmers and chefs closer together through this campaign.

Commanding a price for Mutton

"MUTTON HAS MADE few appearances on restaurant menus in recent years so it's likely that chefs and restaurant managers will scratch their heads when attempting to price up dishes.

"Diners may initially be surprised to see it on offer and will be equally confused as to what to expect to pay for a mutton dish. This lack of familiarity may lead to them to ask questions before making their choice so service staff need to be well briefed.

"The real cost of the ingredients will form a basis for the price of any dish but as a guide, I think that Renaissance Mutton should command a price close to that of lamb though just below it.

"Knowing the meat's provenance can help chefs add value by telling the 'story' behind the dish. My own favourite is a sheep in its third summer that's been well cared for, carefully slaughtered and hung for about two weeks.

"I still love the mutton casseroles, stews and braised dishes that I recall from my childhood where the meat falls off the bone and is eaten with root vegetables like parsnips, turnips, carrots, onions and potatoes. These would have been added slowly as the meat started to cook so that all would be ready together. And the bones? Well, they got the same treatment - made in to broths both thick and thin with big chunks of bread and butter.

"I suppose my favourite dishes now are mutton pies made with shoulder or leg or even puddings in a hot water suet pastry. Delicious."

The Season for Renaissance Mutton

October to March is the season for Renaissance Mutton. This period has been chosen to ensure that the best animals are brought to market after enjoying the grazing on summer and early autumn grasses. Nutritious forage-based diets such as turnips, hay and swedes will maintain the



MARK HIX
Chef Director, London

Case Study

"WE'VE SUCCESSFULLY married the taste of mutton with another old British ingredient, the turnip. Our Mutton & Turnip Pie has been a real hit during the autumn and winter

months and it fits well with our classical approach to modern British cuisine.

"My recent experiences with mutton has led me to question the need for extensive maturation of the meat. The slow and steady cooking process does the job of tenderising the meat

and other ingredients add flavour. We're working closely with our supplier in Gloucestershire to cook different carcasses and conduct taste tests, then intend to develop new recipes from there."

"We're working closely with our supplier to cook different carcasses and conduct taste tests"



BRIAN J TURNER CBE
Executive Chef, London

animal's condition through the winter months.

This period also fits well with the traditional slow cooking of mutton. The meat certainly seems to perform best in slow cooked, moist recipes and this approach is associated with hearty dishes that bring warmth and comfort to diners during the calendar's colder days.

“THE FLAVOUR OF MUTTON is much stronger than lamb. It is almost gamey but I prefer it. The meat asks for strong, fragrant spices such as cumin, curry, garlic, chilli or cardamom, all of which work well.

“Despite its rich flavour, mutton does need gentle nurturing. No matter which part of the carcase one uses, it is better cooked slowly such as a braise although occasionally some parts may be successfully roasted. It is very important that the cooking procedures of braising and boiling are well understood to produce the right texture and taste and I encourage chefs to experiment before putting mutton on the menu.

“Because of the style of cooking, I favour cuts such as the middle neck, shoulder, ribs, chump and scrag-end. These lend themselves to most of our British speciality dishes such as Lancashire Hotpot, Scotch Broth and Irish Stew with Dumplings. Once the stew is made, the dumplings can be placed on top and baked in the oven to get a crisp top and soak up the sauce on the bottom.

“Recently, I spiced up a fricassee with cumin, caraway and coriander, scented with a touch orange zest and finished with dates. The result was similar to the tagine dishes that feature heavily in Moroccan cookery for which they would always use mutton.

“Mutton slow-cooked in a liquor can dry out rapidly once sliced into portions. My tip would be for chefs to keep a mutton joint in its cooking liquid until an order comes in, cut the required portions, then return the joint to the pot. Dress each portion with a sauce or jus to prevent the meat drying out on the plate.

“Once the traditional recipes have been mastered, the possibilities for creating new, modern dishes using mutton present an exciting challenge to restaurant chefs.”



JOHN WILLIAMS
Executive Chef, London



Big Flavour

Mutton's richness ensures it works well with intense flavours.



Back Down the Line

Chefs can learn about mutton by asking questions back down the supply chain.

Although mutton is available throughout the year, the autumn and winter seasons also plug the gap between the times when the best lamb is traditionally served.

Cooking Styles that Deliver the Taste

By digging around in the books of Mrs Beeton and other historical recipe writers, chefs will see that mutton was frequently poached, braised and stewed during the 18th and 19th centuries. There are many other historical references to the slow cooking of mutton in the British style and there are increasingly some modern interpretations of these old recipes too.

But the cuisines of other countries have been using mutton in their recipes for even longer and to great effect. Tagines from North Africa, chilli-laden curries from the Caribbean and a wide variety of dishes from the Middle East all have mutton at their heart and chefs can learn much from their expertise.

Many of today's food lovers may have reservations about mutton principally through a lack of experience. Yet mutton that has been traditionally slow cooked in a liquor and mixed with spices and herbs and served with flavoursome accompaniments delivers a succulent and memorable meal.

Mutton will inevitably be compared with the succulence of lamb but the difference in age and treatment in the kitchen mean that they are quite different. Slow cook some quality mutton that's been hanging for at least two weeks and it will yield deliciously tender mouthfuls. Mutton's intense flavour is bold enough to cope with the long cooking time and this richness can be tempered by using flavours such as herbs, dried fruit and spices that deliver a balance of tastes to the diner.

Sourcing Renaissance Mutton

Chefs should speak to their butcher about sourcing mutton that's reached the Renaissance standard. However, most butchers haven't been asked for mutton for a generation so some initial reservations or supply problems are to be anticipated.

Many small farmers have been producing mutton for sale at farmers' markets for some years and these are worth investigating as they often have speciality breeds and lots of information behind the meat to help add value to the menu.

Some Renaissance Mutton may have come from upland breeds of sheep and these are often 15-20 per cent smaller than larger breeds reared on lowland pastures. Chefs should plan their portions and specify accordingly.

Tell the Story Behind the Food

A good supplier should be able to inform the kitchen about the breed, where the animal was farmed, its age and period of maturation. Those that can't supply this



Scotch Broth

A hearty soup made with chunks of Renaissance Mutton.

checklist for chefs

- ✓ The season for Renaissance Mutton is October to March, a period in which the hearty dishes that make best use of mutton are most commonly enjoyed
- ✓ Research traditional recipes and dishes from other cuisines that celebrate mutton
- ✓ Remember that many of today's lamb dishes would have used mutton in days gone by
- ✓ Read the previous chapters in this book to find out how mutton is reared and prepared
- ✓ Work with suppliers to source Renaissance Mutton and be prepared to look further afield than normal while supply chains re-establish
- ✓ Know how to recognise the visual characteristics of Renaissance Mutton
- ✓ Experiment with different breeds, animals of different ages and maturation times to find the optimum taste
- ✓ Tell the story behind the mutton through the menu or through service staff
- ✓ Develop new ways of using mutton and add new twists to old recipes

detail should be avoided.

Restaurants can add further value to dishes by communicating supply chain facts to the diners through menus or through their service staff.

Bring Back Hanging!

Maturation of Renaissance Mutton can be achieved by on-the-bone hanging or through vacuum packaging. Both techniques can help improve flavour and tenderness.

Renaissance Mutton should be matured for at least two weeks. Chefs should work closely with their suppliers to experiment with different maturation periods to see what works best for them.

Maturing carcasses complete helps add flavour and tenderness to mutton as it does beef. The amount of fat on a carcase affects how well it will hang with more fat allowing longer hanging periods. Some suppliers will also hang individual cuts for different periods.

Many suppliers are now delivering meat in vacpacs rather than hanging carcasses or joints. Research by Bristol University shows that meat continues to mature in vacpacs; this delivers the benefits of hanging coupled with convenience.

“Put on the joint!” And the waiters set a leg of mutton before Alice, “You look a little shy; let me introduce you to that leg of mutton,” said the Red Queen. “Alice, Mutton; Mutton, Alice.” The leg of mutton got up in the dish and gave a little bow to Alice

THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS, LEWIS CARROLL, 1871



TERRY LAYBOURNE MBE
Head Chef/Patron, Newcastle

Case Study

“WE WORK IN PARTNERSHIP with a sheep farmer in Northumberland to source some truly excellent organic mutton for our restaurants. He supplies us with the legs of Blackface sheep and he dices the rest and sells it on through other channels.

“The intense flavour of mutton gives us lots of ways to use it but balancing the flavours is key to creating a successful dish.

“It's useful to remember that classic accompaniments to lamb such as rosemary, garlic and redcurrant jelly were not devised to enhance the subtle taste of lamb but instead to counterbalance the powerful taste of mutton.

“We keep this in mind when using mutton in our restaurants and use flavours such as thyme, orange and juniper berries to keep diners coming back for more.”

“Balancing the flavours is key to creating a successful dish”

6Recipes

Overlooked by a generation of food lovers, the unique taste found in mutton recipes is now regaining popularity as enthusiastic cooks seek out speciality and seasonal ingredients.

SERVES 10

- Ingredients**
- 2500g neck fillet of mutton, cut into rough 2cm pieces
 - 1200g large onion fine dice
 - 75g vegetable oil for frying
 - 2g rosemary sprig
 - 3750g chicken or lamb stock
 - 1125g turnips, peeled and roughly diced
 - 750g puff pastry, rolled to about 1/2 cm thick
 - 112.5g egg beaten
 - freshly ground black pepper
 - plain flour for dusting

METHOD **1** Season the pieces of mutton and dust with the flour. **2** Heat the vegetable oil in a heavy bottomed saucepan and fry the pieces of mutton and onions, without colouring them too much for 3-4 minutes. **3** Add the rosemary and stock, bring to the boil and simmer gently for about 1-2 hours until the mutton is soft and tender. **4** Add the turnips, cover with a lid and add a little more stock if necessary and simmer for about 15 minutes until the turnips are cooked. **5** Remove from the heat and leave to cool. **6** Meanwhile, cut the pastry a little larger than the pie dish/ dishes you are using. **7** When the mutton mixture is cool, transfer it to your pie dish/dishes. **8** Brush the edges of the pastry with some egg and lay the pastry on the dish, pressing the edges onto the rim. **9** Cut a slit about 2-3cm in the centre to let the steam out, or for a larger pie use a funnel. **10** Bake the pies in a pre-heated oven at 200°C for 40 - 45 minutes until golden brown. **11** Serve with buttered cabbage, boiled potatoes or some mashed swede.

Mutton and Turnip Pie



MARK HIX
Chef Director, London



Confit of Mutton



TERRY LAYBOURNE MBE
Head Chef/Patron, Newcastle

METHOD **1** Lay out the mutton and sprinkle evenly with coarse salt, peppercorns, garlic and herbs. **2** Massage gently into both sides of the meat, cover with cling film and refrigerate overnight. **3** Next day, rinse the meat briefly under a cold tap then pat dry. **4** Roll up the meat into a neat cylinder and tie with kitchen string. **5** Heat the fat to 90°C in a deep roasting tray and place in the mutton. **6** Cover with a lid and transfer to an preheated oven 125°C. **7** Cook for 3 hours ensuring that the fat does not boil at any time. **8** Remove from the oven and transfer to a cold place. **9** Leave the mutton to cool in the fat for around 4-5 hours (it should be quite cold but the fat should not be set). **10** Lift the mutton from the fat and remove the string without allowing the meat to unroll. **11** Lay the mutton confit onto a layer of collagen film or caul fat and roll up tightly. **12** Chill well overnight. **13** Next day cut the mutton into 30mm thick slices. **14** Pan fry these in a dry, non-stick frying pan (leaving the collagen / caul fat in place) until crispy. **15** Transfer to hot plates and then remove cling film. **16** Serve with either creamed, braised haricot beans and mint pesto or alternatively with a salad of curly endive, a fairly sharp mustard vinaigrette and some sauté potatoes.

SERVES 10

- Ingredients**
- 1 shoulder and neck of mutton, boned and trimmed of excess fat (around 2.5 kg)
 - 2g black peppercorns (crushed)
 - 2g rosemary needles (chopped)
 - 1g thyme leaves (chopped)
 - 36g garlic cloves (peeled and sliced)
 - 20g juniper berries (crushed)
 - 1g grated orange zest
 - 2kg rendered lamb fat or duck fat
 - 1 sheet of collagen film or caul fat

Mountain Mutton Stew



JOHN WILLIAMS
Executive Chef, London

METHOD **1** Heat the oil and butter in a sautepan and place the mutton pieces in the pan. Seal the meat briskly until it is well browned. **2** Take the meat from the pan then remove some of the fat. **3** Add the mirepoix vegetables and sweat for a few minutes, then add the tomato puree and the flour, cook for a few minutes. **4** Add the stock a little at a time, mixing thoroughly to prevent lumps, then add the tomato concasse, bring to the boil and skim. **5** Return the meat to the pan with the bouquet and cook in the oven for approx 1 hour. **6** Wash and peel all vegetables for the garnish, then glaze in a mixture of water, butter, sugar and salt. Cook the potatoes separately. **7** Decant the meat pieces and pass the braising liquor through a chinois on to them. **8** Finally take the glazed vegetables and potatoes and add to the stew. **9** Season to taste and finish with chopped parsley and chives.

SERVES 10

- Ingredients**
- 3750g middle neck mutton cut into equal size pieces
 - 150g oil
 - 150g butter
 - 125g flour
 - 1750g brown chicken stock
 - 875g tomato concasse
 - 875g mirepoix (onions, garlic, leek, celery, carrot, fennel)
 - 200g tomato puree
 - 2 bouquets of herbs (parsley, thyme, bay leaf, crushed black pepper, 1 clove)
 - 5g bunch chopped chives and parsley
 - Garnish
 - 962.5g small new potatoes
 - 750g (of each) baby carrots, baby turnips & button onions
 - 100g (of each) trimmed broad beans & French beans

Poached Leg of Mutton with a Caper Cream Sauce



HENRY HARRIS
Chef/Patron, London



SERVES 10

- Ingredients**
- 4000g leg of mutton, bone-in
 - 1920g Spanish onions, peeled and sliced
 - 2g bay leaves
 - 8g whole black peppercorns
 - 2g stick cinnamon
 - 2g orange zest
 - 4000g light chicken stock
 - 1500g dry white wine
 - 700g unsalted butter
 - 16g finely chopped shallots
 - 16g capers
 - 1200g double cream

METHOD **1** Place the mutton into a saucepan and cover it in the sliced onions, add the salt. **2** Tie the bay leaves, peppercorns, cinnamon and orange zest in a piece of muslin and add this to the pan with half of the wine. **3** Cover with the chicken stock and bring to a gentle simmer. Skim off the crust that forms on the surface. **4** Gently simmer for approximately 2 hours or until tender. **5** After 1 hour, take a saucepan and melt 150g of the butter, add the shallots and capers and cook gently until softened and then turn up the heat to lightly colour the shallots. **6** Add the rest of the wine to the shallots and cook briskly until the liquid reduces by half. Draw off approximately 1 litre of the poaching liquor from the mutton pan and add it to the capers and shallots. Bring this to the boil and reduce by half. Add the double cream and bring back to the boil. Reduce the mixture further until you achieve a creamy sauce. Adjust seasoning and keep warm. **7** When the mutton is ready, transfer to a serving dish, cover and keep warm. **8** Strain the poaching liquid from the onions but retain. **9** Heat a large frying pan and melt the remaining butter until foaming. Add the drained onions and fry briskly until they turn golden and have begun to caramelize. **10** Place some of the caramelised golden onions on to a plate and slice the mutton finely on top of it, then nappe with the caper cream sauce.

“To stewe stekes of mutton, take a legge of mutton and a cot it in small slices, and put it in a chafer, and put therto a pottell of ale, and scome it clean then putte therto seven or eyghte onions thyn slyced, and after they have boyled one hour, putte therto a dyshe of swete butter, and so lette them boyle tyll they be tender, and then put therto a lyttel peper and salte”

A PROPER NEWE BOOK OF COKERYE, 1572



Mutton, Fennel and Mushroom Casserole

SERVES 10

Ingredients

1125g lean mutton braising cubes (shoulder or leg)

625g onion, rough dice

30g cloves garlic, crushed

375g wild or button mushrooms

375g fennel, cut into wedges

37.5g redcurrant jelly

375g red wine

1125g lamb stock

425g ready-made fresh garlic bread loaf, cut into marked slices

RECIPE:
British Meat

METHOD **1** In a large casserole dish place all the ingredients except the garlic bread. **2** Mix well, cover and place in a preheated oven for approximately 2 hours or until the meat is tender. **3** To thicken sauce if necessary, mix 50g. softened butter with 2 rounded tablespoons plain wholemeal flour, stir into the sauce and keep stirring over a low heat. **4** Remove casserole lid and arrange garlic bread slices on top. Return to the oven for a further 15 minutes. **5** Serve with steamed cabbage and mash potato.

SERVES 10

Ingredients

1000g diced leg of mutton

60g celery stalks, halved

400g carrots peeled and cut in half

330g swede cut into 12 chunks

140g shallots peeled

290g small turnips scrubbed but not peeled

1/2g whole black peppercorns

1g sprig of rosemary

1g sprig of thyme

1 litre lamb stock

For the Cobbler top:

350g self raising flour

100g butter, diced

50g capers chopped

1g sprig of parsley chopped

25g spring onions finely chopped

30ml plain natural yoghurt

70ml cold water

45g egg, beaten



Braised Mutton and Caper Cobbler



METHOD **1** Place the mutton in a large casserole or pan. **2** Pour on the stock and bring to the boil and simmer gently for 45 minutes. **3** Add the vegetables, put lid on casserole and cook in oven 200c for 1 hour. **4** To make the cobbler, rub the fat and the flour together. **5** Stir in the capers, parsley, onion and pepper. **6** Mix the water and yoghurt together and add enough of this to the flour mixture to make a soft, pliable dough. **7** Roll dough to 2.5cm thick and cut into 12 rounds or wedges. **8** Place on top of the mutton and wash with beaten egg. **9** Bake at 200°C for 20-25 minutes or until the cobbler is golden brown.



BRIAN J TURNER CBE
Executive Chef, London



Braised Mutton Chops with Cider and Root Vegetables



MARTIN LAM
Chef/Partner, London

METHOD **1** Gently cook the leeks in a little butter until soft and slightly coloured. **2** Place leeks in a deep metal or earthenware casserole dish (must have a tight fitting lid). **3** Now cook the button onions in a frying pan until golden brown, followed by the turnips also cooked to the same colour. Then take off heat and cool them. **4** Dust the cutlets with plain flour. **5** Gently seal the cutlets in the frying pan, until well coloured. Do not burn the flour. **6** Place the cutlets on top of the leeks in the casserole dish. **7** Deglaze the frying pan with some of the cider, add the tomato puree to this liquid, then add the sugar to balance the acidity of the cider. Pour this liquid over the mutton. **8** Add more cider to just cover the cutlets. **9** Cover and cook for a further 30-40 minutes until tender. **10** Remove cutlets and keep hot. **11** Skim any fat off the remaining liquid, check the vegetables are cooked sufficiently, and add parsley. Serve with a celeriac and potato puree.

Slow Pot Roast Loin of Mutton with Herbs and Garlic



JOHN WILLIAMS
Executive Chef, London

METHOD **1** In a hot roast tray, seal the boned and rolled loin of mutton until it is golden all round. **2** Then take from the roasting tray and add the chopped bones and trimmings, cooking until they are caramelised **3** Add the vegetables, garlic and the bouquet garnis. **4** Then pour the white wine on top. **5** Reduce by half then add the stock, bring to the boil and place rolled loin on top of the bones so it is 3/4 submerged in the braising liquor. **6** Cover with foil then place in the oven at approx 140°C. **7** Braise for approx 1/2 hour then remove the foil. Switch the oven down to as low as possible and baste the meat with the braising liquor for approx 30mins/45mins until it is glazed. **8** Once glazed and the meat is tender, remove from the braising liquor. Pass the liquor through a chinois making sure that the garlic cloves are pushed through to act as a liaison and flavouring for the sauce. **9** Whisk in a little butter to thicken. **10** Finish with finely cut tarragon, parsley and a touch of mint. **11** Slice the meat then pour the sauce over the mutton. **12** Garnish with roast mixed vegetables such as carrots, parsnips and beetroot with creamed potatoes finished with gruyere cheese and chive.

SERVES 6

Ingredients

6 large loin or best end chops, trimmed of most of the fat

250g leeks sliced into 1cm rounds

450g (of each) baby turnips, baby carrots & button onions

1g teaspoon fresh picked thyme

500ml dry cider such as Kingston Black

5g Demerara sugar

5g tomato puree

1g shredded flat leaf parsley

20g plain flour for dusting