

Buying, cooking and preparing red meat

As well as being enjoyable and offering huge variety for different meal occasions, lean red meat has a nutritious role to play in a balanced diet. To get the best out of red meat try following these tips.

Selecting and buying red meat

- Buy the leanest red meat you can afford (there's less waste)
- Where appropriate, choose trimmed, lean or extra lean varieties, e.g. lean mince.
- Fore-quarter cuts are more economic. They tend to be tougher and require longer cooking times but when cooked slowly with vegetables and stock will give delicious results e.g. shoulder of lamb, shin of beef and pork belly.
- Look out for easy-to-prepare options that are supplied with a sauce or are coated, rolled or stuffed.
- Boneless meat may seem expensive but you will require smaller portions per person and avoid paying for bone that has to be disposed of as plate waste.

Storage and preparation tips

- Check your fridge is operating at the correct temperature: between 0 and 4 degrees centigrade
- Cover and store raw and cooked foods separately in the fridge; uncooked foods lower in the refrigerator than cooked ones
- Ensure that hands, surface and equipment are scrupulously clean before and after handling food and between handling raw and cooked foods
- Keep a separate hard, durable chopping board for preparing raw meats
- When marinating meat, cover and store in the fridge
- Cut visible fat off meat before cooking

- Defrost frozen foods thoroughly (unless otherwise stated) and do not re-freeze once thawed

Cooking

- Grill or bake meat in preference to frying and avoid adding extra fat
- If you have to fry, dry fry meats and discard any remaining fat before further cooking
- Drain the fat from roast meats
- Skim gravies and sauces to remove any excess fat
- The addition of pulses, beans and lentils to meat dishes is an economic and healthy way to increase the number of portions a recipe provides
- Ensure burgers and sausages are thoroughly cooked until the juices run clear and piping hot before serving
- When roasting a stuffed joint remember to weigh the joint after stuffing, then calculate the cooking time
- Food thermometers can be used to ensure internal food temperatures are sufficiently hot
- When re-heating meat dishes ensure that the food is piping hot throughout
- For recipes and a comprehensive cooking time guide visit www.meatmatters.com

Please visit www.meatandhealth.com for more information.