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K-State food scientist suggests adding lamb to Spring meals

Lamb can be a major source of protein, says K-State's Blakeslee

By Maddy Rohr, K-State Research and Extension news service

MANHATTAN, Kan. – Adding lamb to the shopping list could liven up Spring meals, says Kansas State University food scientist Karen Blakeslee.

She notes that in many countries, lamb (a young sheep) is the major source of protein. In the United States, many think of lamb as a springtime food, but it can be enjoyed year-round.

Sheep are the oldest domesticated meat species, having been raised by humans beginning about 9,000 years ago in the Middle East.

“When shopping for lamb, look for meat that is fine textured and firm that has red coloring and white marbling,” Blakeslee said. Marbling is white flecks of intramuscular fat within the meat muscle.

The fat trim should be firm, white, and not too thick, she said. The [USDA quality grades](#) are reliable guides.

There are five basic major (primal) cuts into which the lamb carcass is separated: shoulder, rack, shank/breast, loin, and leg.

“Packages of fresh lamb purchased in the supermarket will be labeled with the primal cut as well as the product, such as shoulder roast or loin chop,” Blakeslee said.

For more information on different cuts of lamb and how to cook lamb meat safely, see [USDA Lamb from Farm to Table](#).

Blakeslee, who also is coordinator of [K-State's Rapid Response Center for Food Science](#), publishes a monthly newsletter called [You Asked It!](#) that provides numerous tips on food safety.

More information is also available from [local extension offices](#) in Kansas.

FOR PRINT PUBLICATIONS: Links used in this story
Rapid Response Center, <https://www.rrc.k-state.edu>

You Asked It! newsletter, <https://www.rrc.k-state.edu/newsletter>

USDA Quality Grades, <https://www.ams.usda.gov/grades-standards/lamb-grades-and-standards>

USDA Lamb from Farm to Table, <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/food-safety/safe-food-handling-and-preparation/meat/lamb-farm-table>

K-State Research and Extension local offices, <https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/about/statewide-locations.html>

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