

Lamb



Description

Sheep is the oldest domesticated meat species. Sheep have been raised by humans beginning about 9,000 years ago in the Middle East. In many countries, lamb (a young sheep) is the major source of protein. Many Americans think of lamb as a springtime food, but it can be enjoyed all year round.

USDA-graded lamb sold at the retail level is Prime, Choice, and Good. Lower grades (Utility and Cull) are mainly ground or used in processed meat products. Most of the graded lamb sold in supermarkets is USDA Choice; 80% of the American lamb supply is USDA Prime or USDA Choice. The protein, vitamin, and mineral content of lamb are similar in all grades. Lamb is called a “red” meat because it contains more myoglobin than chicken or fish. Other “red” meats are beef, veal, and pork.

Uses

- Grilled Lamb and Asparagus
- Lamb Stew
- Lamb Meatballs
- Greek Lamb Souvlakia
- Grilled Lamb Kebabs
- Lamb Ragu
- Garlic Lamb Chops
- Braised Lamb Shanks

Best Cooking Procedures

For safety, the USDA recommends cooking lamb patties and ground lamb mixtures such as meat loaf to a safe minimum internal temperature of 160 °F as measured by a food thermometer. Cook all raw lamb steaks, chops, and roasts to a minimum internal temperature of 145 °F as measured with a food thermometer before removing meat from the heat source. For safety and quality, allow meat to rest for at least three minutes before carving or consuming. For reasons of personal preference, consumers may choose to cook meat to higher temperatures.

NEVER brown or partially cook lamb to refrigerate and finish cooking later because any bacteria present would not have been destroyed. It is safe to partially cook or microwave lamb immediately before transferring it to a hot grill or conventional oven to finish cooking.



Grilled Lamb Kebabs



Ingredients

Marinade

- 1 tablespoons marjoram
 - 1 tablespoon parsley
 - 2 tablespoons olive oil
 - 2 teaspoons lemon juice
 - 2 cloves garlic, chopped
 - 1/2 teaspoon salt
 - 1/4 teaspoons black pepper
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- 2 pounds top round lamb, cut into 1 1/2 inch cubes
 - salt and pepper to taste
 - 1 red bell pepper, cut into 1 inch pieces
 - 1 green bell pepper, cut into 1 inch pieces
 - 1 large red onion, cut into 1 inch chunks
 - lemon wedges

Directions

Combine the marinade ingredients in food processor or blender and pulse until smooth.

Pat the lamb cubes dry and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Put lamb in marinade in a glass dish or plastic bag. Toss evenly to coat the meat and refrigerate for a least 2 hours or up to 24 hours.

Soak skewers in water for 30 minutes. Preheat a grill or grill pan to medium high heat. Cut peppers and onion to 1 inch chunks. Place a cube of lamb on a skewer, followed by the peppers and onions. Repeat until the skewers are filled.

Oil the hot grill pan, then place the skewers on the grill. Cook the lamb to the desired doneness, turning the skewers every 1 to 2 minutes (7-8 minutes total for medium doneness). Squeeze lemon wedge on cooked kebabs to flavor.

(Recipe from *Create Better Health Utah SNAP-Ed*)

