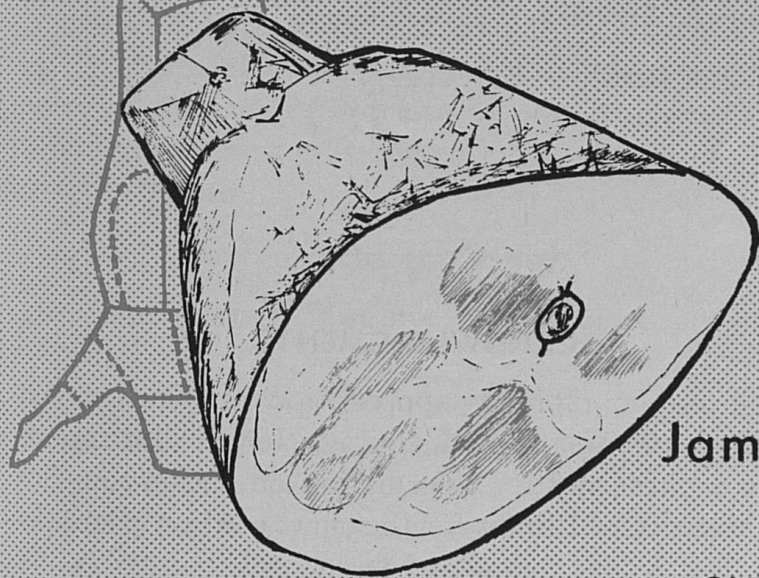


BUY PORK WISELY

USE IT WELL



by
James D. Kemp

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Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS, UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY
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FRANK J. WELCH, Director

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CONTENTS

	Page
Pork on the Hoof	3
Cuts of Pork	5
Lean Pork Cuts	5
Fat Pork Cuts	11
Other Cuts	12
Variety Meats	14
Choosing Pork Cuts	14
Correct Pork Cookery	15
Pork for the Freezer	17
The Use of Lard	17

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Buy Pork Wisely—Use It Well

By JAMES D. KEMP

Pork, the meat from hogs, is a commonplace food often taken for granted with little thought of its actual value. It has often been called "the poor man's food" because the lower income groups eat a higher proportion of pork than the higher income groups. It is often discriminated against in hot weather, yet it produces no more heat per unit of energy intake than other meats. It is excluded from many diets because of its supposedly lower digestibility, yet research shows that it is highly digestible. In fact, most discriminatory statements against pork are based upon fancy instead of fact.

Pork is the most versatile of the meats because of its use both as fresh and cured meat. In some respects it is more nutritious than other meats as it is generally higher in the water-soluble vitamins, especially thiamin, and is higher in the essential fatty acids. Lard, one of the better shortenings, is as digestible, has more shortening ability, and is cheaper than most vegetable shortenings.

A housewife should have a knowledge of the food value of pork, the different cuts, methods of cooking, and comparative economy of the cuts in order to be able to choose the different fresh and cured pork cuts and to know whether to buy pork or other types of meat.

On the Hoof

Hogs are divided into five classifications according to sex and age.

Barrows—Males that were castrated as pigs.

Gilts—Young females that have not borne young.

Sows—Females that have borne young.

Boars—Sexually mature males.

Stags—Males castrated after reaching sexual maturity.

Barrows and gilts produce pork of the highest quality. Most of the fresh pork and most of the cured pork other than heavy bacon, heavy hams, and Canadian bacon, is produced from these

classes. Sows are used primarily in the production of sausage, although heavy hams and bacon, Canadian bacon, large pork loins and other fresh cuts may come from sows. Boars may be condemned in federally inspected packing houses if they have sex odors. Often they are castrated several weeks prior to slaughter and sold as stags. Most pork from boars and stags goes into pork sausage and other meat products.

PORK CHART

Pork Cuts and How to Cook Them

Retail Cuts	Wholesale Cuts	Retail Cuts	
 2 Boneless Loin Roast Roast — ● — Roast, Braise, Panfry —	 1 Tenderloin Frenched and Whole — Roast, Braise, Panfry —	 3-5 Ham (Butt Half) Roast (Bake), Cook in Liquid	
 2 to 5 Canadian Style Bacon — Roast, Broil, Panbroil, Panfry —		 3 Loin Chop — Broil, Panbroil, Panfry —	 3-5 Ham (Shank Half) Roast (Bake), Cook in Liquid
 1 Rib Chop — Braise or Panfry —		 4 Frenched Rib Chop — Braise or Panfry —	 3-5 Ham Butt Slice — Broil, Panbroil, Panfry —
 2 to 5 Butterfly Chop — Braise or Panfry —			 3-5 Center Ham Slice — Broil, Panbroil, Panfry —
 1, 2 Sirloin Roast			 3-5 Fresh Ham Roast
 3, 4 Loin Roast Center Cut			 3-5 Rolled Fresh Ham Roast
 5 Blade Loin Roast Roast			 3-5 Bacon — Broil, Panbroil, Panfry, Cook in Liquid —
 3, 4 Crown Roast Roast			 3-5 Salt Pork — Broil, Panbroil, Panfry, Cook in Liquid —
 1 Fat Back — Lord — Salt Pork —			 3-5 Spare Ribs Roast (Bake), Braise, Cook in Liquid
 1 Lard — Shortening —			 3-5 Fresh Picnic Shoulder Roast — ● — Roast (Bake), Cook in Liquid
 3-5 Blade Steaks — Braise, Panfry — ● — Roast (Bake), Cook in Liquid, Broil, Panbroil, Panfry		 3-5 Smoked Picnic Shoulder Roast (Bake), Cook in Liquid	
 3-5 Smoked Shoulder Butt — Roast (Bake), Cook in Liquid, Broil, Panbroil, Panfry		 3-5 Cushion Picnic Shoulder	
 3-5 Boston Butt		 3-5 Rolled Fresh Picnic Shoulder	
 3-5 Rolled Boston Butt Roast		 3-5 Fresh Shoulder Hock — Braise, Cook in Liquid — ● — Braise, Panfry	
		 3-5 Arm Steak — Braise, Panfry	

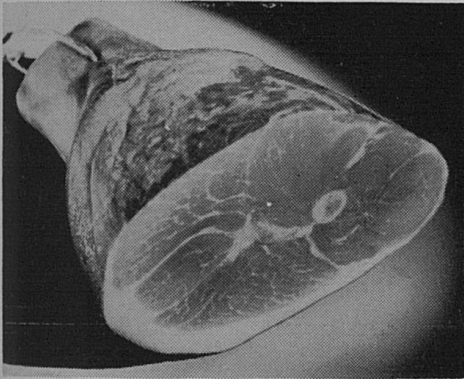
NATIONAL LIVE STOCK AND MEAT BOARD

Cuts of Pork

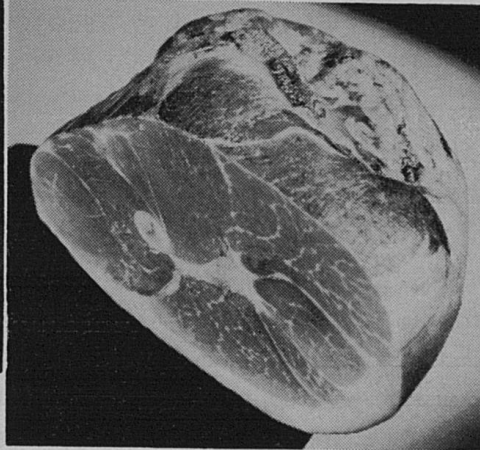
Pork cuts are easy to identify if one has a general knowledge of bone and muscle structure. Figure 1 shows a pork carcass and the cuts that are generally made. These cuts are available in most retail meat markets or can be made at home or by the locker operator.

Lean Pork Cuts

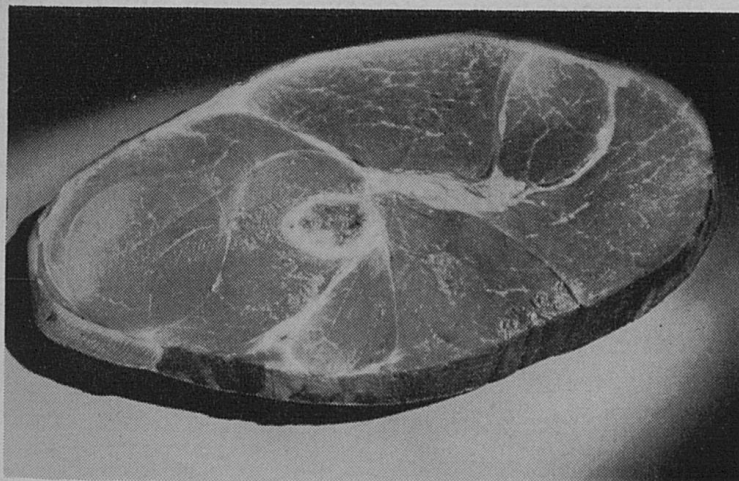
HAM is the largest and one of the most versatile pork cuts. In the fresh state it may be used whole or in parts as a roast. It may be sliced into ham steaks. In most cases, however, it is cured and smoked before being sold. There are several kinds of cured hams commonly sold in Kentucky.



Shank half of a ham



Butt end of a ham



A center ham slice

TENDERIZED HAM is the ordinary type of packer ham. It has been cured by pumping the curing ingredients (mostly salt, sugar, nitrate and nitrite) directly into the ham, usually into the arterial system. It is allowed to cure for a few days and is then smoked to an internal temperature of approximately 140°. This heating process serves a triple purpose. It causes the ham to be more tender, kills the trichinae, and helps set the color of the cured meat. The ham is *not* ready to eat, however, and must have further cooking.

READY-TO-EAT HAM is similar to tenderized hams except it has been heated to an internal temperature of 155°. It is safe to eat without further cooking but it is usually more satisfactory if further cooked. Ready-to-eat hams from U. S. government inspected packing plants are recommended.

DRY-CURED HAM has been cured by a dry-salt or salt-sugar-saltpeter method and may or may not have been aged. It usually costs more per pound than the packer-cured ham because it contains considerably less water. If it has been aged for a year or more it usually sells for a premium. Because of the variations in the methods of curing and aging and the variation in the trimming methods, these hams are very variable in quality, taste and economy. Many are too salty and hard and must be soaked before cooking. Most are expensive because, in addition to the high cost per pound, the outside fat has become rancid and the outside lean has become hard. This waste must be trimmed. Some are excellent and are especially liked by people who have developed a taste for this type of meat. However, *do not* buy old ham as an economical source of protein for the family.

These cured hams are sold whole, as butt and shank halves, as butt and shank portions, and as sliced ham. When butt or shank halves are sold it implies that no center slices have been removed. When butt or shank portions are sold, however, some center slices have been removed. Usually the portions and center slices are cut from the larger hams. Whether a shank or butt portion is the better buy will depend upon how the portions were cut and the desires of the consumer. The butt portion of the skinned ham will have a higher percentage of lean, however, the shank portion will be easier to carve.

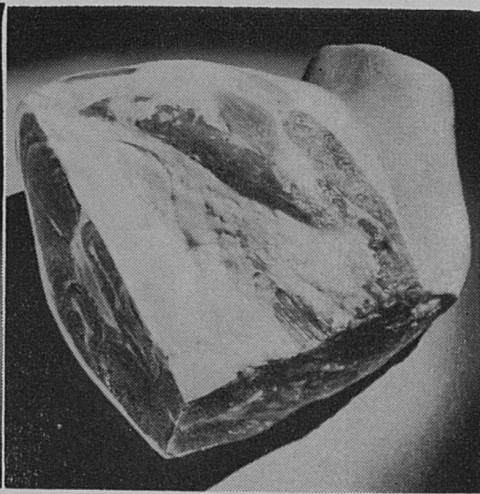
BONELESS HAM has the skin and bone removed. It costs more per pound because of the smaller amount of waste.

BAKED AND BOILED HAMS are usually boneless and may be bought whole in cans or various types of casings or they may be sliced. They cost more per pound but require no home preparation and have little waste.

PORK SHOULDER is sometimes cured and sold as such and is an economical source of lean meat. However, it is usually divided into the picnic, Boston butt, and clear plate. The clear plate is usually rendered into lard but may be cured for salt pork.

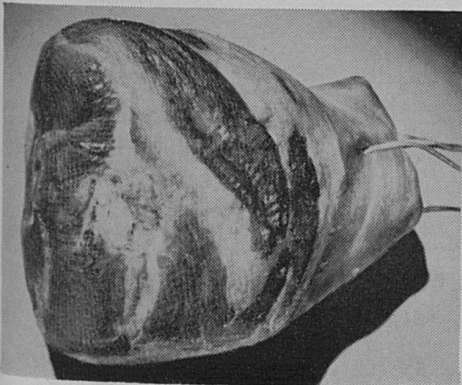


Arm shoulder roast

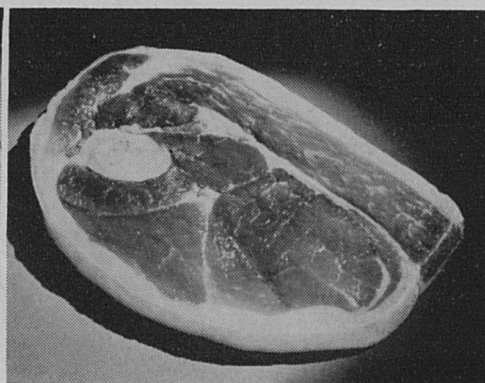


Fresh picnic shoulder

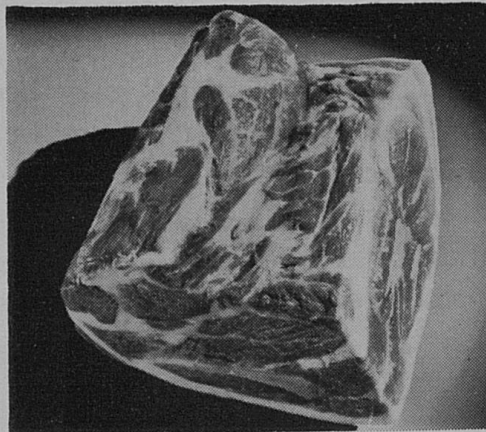
PICNIC is often misnamed picnic ham but is strictly from the lower part of the shoulder. It is sometimes called Cala or California ham. It is sold both fresh and cured. Fresh picnic is



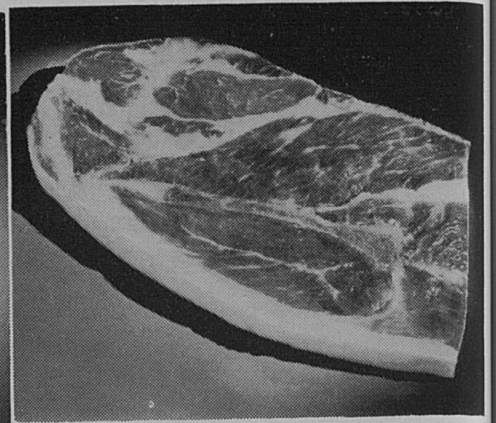
Smoked picnic shoulder



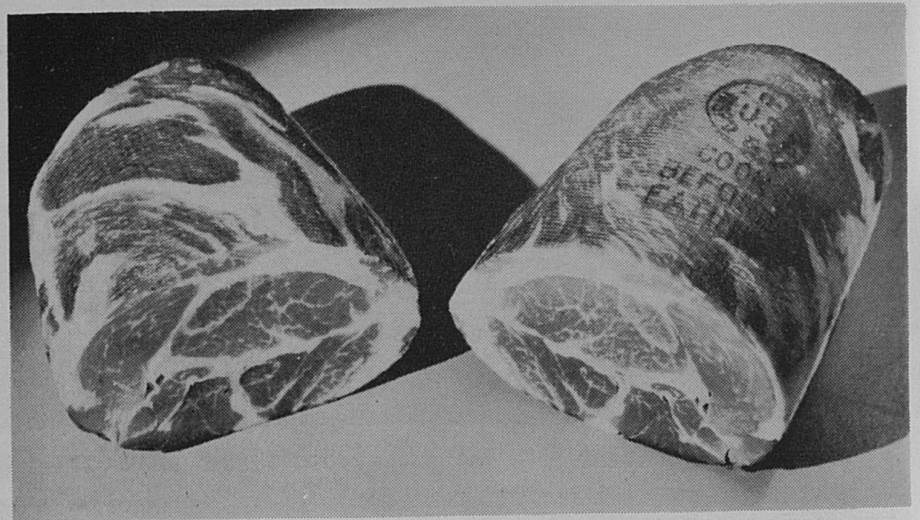
Arm steak (shoulder)



Boston butt



Blade steak (shoulder)



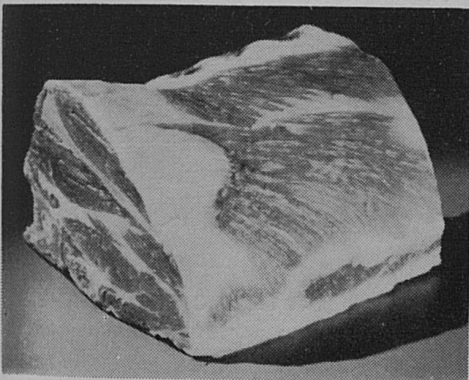
Smoked shoulder butt

usually sold as a roast although it may be sliced into arm or shoulder steaks for braising or panfrying. Cured picnic is usually roasted but may be sliced for frying or broiling. Picnic is harder to carve, has slightly less edible meat, and less attractive slices than ham. Generally speaking, if the price per pound of picnic is as much as 5 cents less than the price per pound of ham, it is more economical.

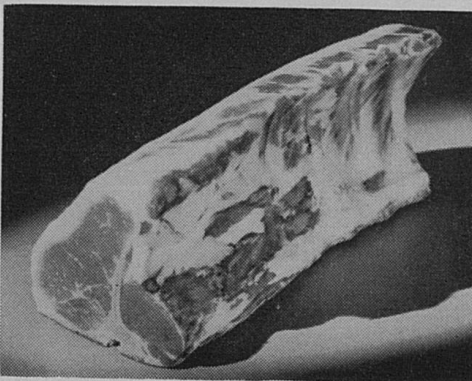
BOSTON BUTT comes from the lean top part of the pork shoulder. It is one of the leanest pork cuts and usually is reasonable in price. It contains little fat and only a small amount of bone. It makes a very economical roast or it may be sliced into blade or boneless steaks. Many boneless Boston butts are cured

and smoked. They are usually called smoked butts or smoked shoulder butts. Since they are boneless and have little fat they are usually an economical source of cured lean meat.

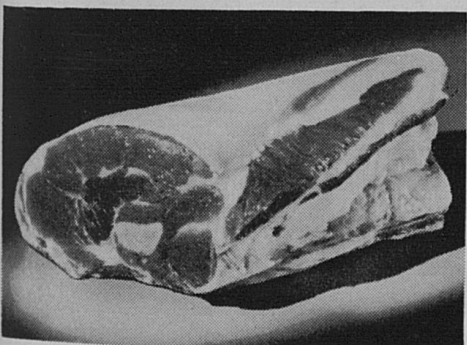
PORK LOIN, especially the center portion, is one of the most popular yet least economical cuts. It is sold as either roasts or chops. The roasts include the blade end, sometimes called the 7-rib cut, the center, and the sirloin roast. Sometimes sirloin roasts are boned and made into boneless sirloin roasts by tying two together. This makes an attractive easy to carve roast. The center cut is the most attractive but the least economical; the sirloin roast is the most difficult to carve but contains more lean than the blade end roast. It is intermediate in price. The blade end roast is usually the most economical. All can be oven roasted. The roasts are easier to carve if the back bones are sawed from the ribs but left on the roast until after cooking.



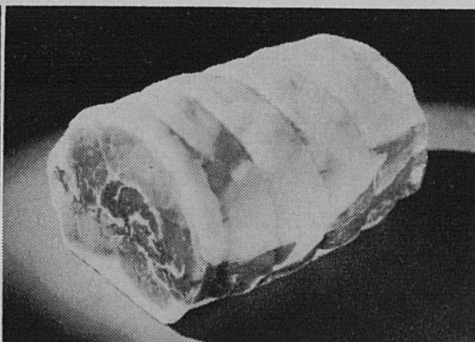
Blade loin roast



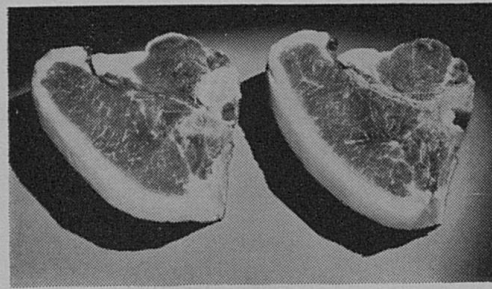
Loin roast center cut



Sirloin roast



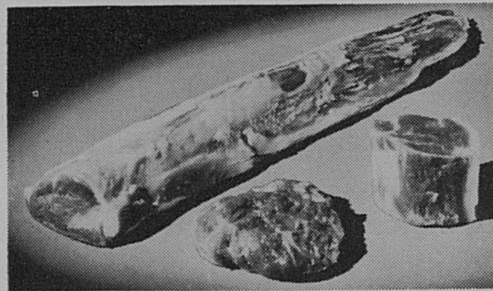
Boneless sirloin roast



Loin chops



Rib chops



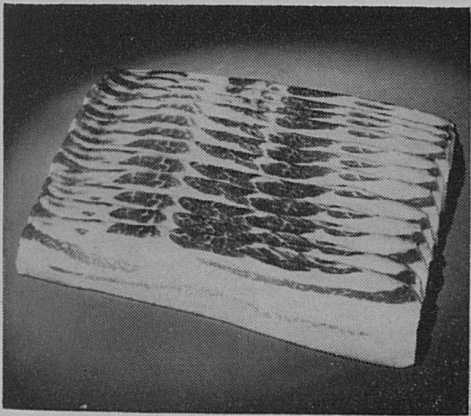
Tenderloin

The center-cut chops are of two types: rib chop or loin chops. The rib chops have a piece of backbone, all or part of a rib and the large loin eye muscle. Since most of the lean meat is in one muscle it makes an attractive cut. Loin chops contain a "T"-shaped bone, the large loin eye muscle, and a piece of tenderloin muscle. They usually contain less bone than rib chops and the tenderloin portion is more tender than the rib eye portion. Rib-end chops contain several muscles, some fat between the muscles, a portion of the backbone, a portion of the rib bone and possibly a portion of the blade bone. The sirloin chops contain a portion of the backbone and some of the pelvic bone. The shape of the bones will vary with the location within the loin. Although there is usually more bone in the sirloin end chops than in the rib end chops, there is less fat, which often makes them more desirable. Chops are usually braised, fried, breaded and fried, or barbecued.

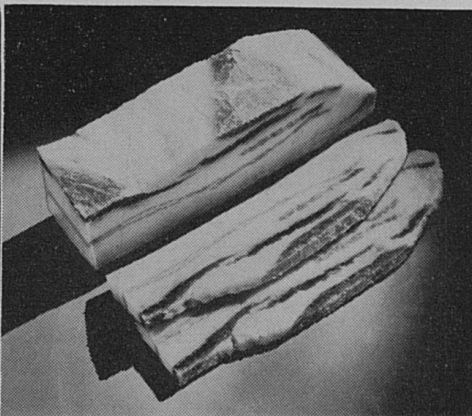
TENDERLOIN is a small muscle on the inside of the backbone at the sirloin end of the loin. It is usually removed from large loins which are being boned for curing into Canadian bacon. It is all meat, very tender, and usually high in price per pound. The loin strip or loin eye is sometimes removed and called tenderloin. Although it is not true tenderloin, it has little waste and can be cooked as tenderloin.

Fat Pork Cuts

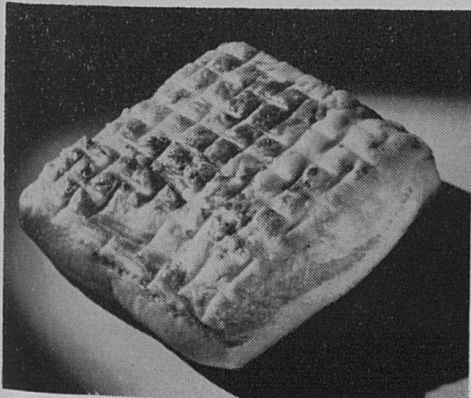
BACON is the cured pork side or belly. It can be purchased as slab or sliced bacon. Sliced bacon varies in thickness. Thin sliced bacon is better for rapid-cooked crisp bacon, whereas thicker sliced bacon is more juicy and should be cooked more slowly. Price per pound is a poor criterion for selecting bacon. The over-fat bacon will shrink considerably more when cooked than leaner bacon so that the price per pound of edible meat is often more than in leaner, higher priced bacon. If bacon is extra lean, however, more care will be required in cooking as it may brown unevenly. It also may be slightly less tender than that with a higher percentage of fat. If a large quantity of bacon is bought at once, it is more satisfactory to buy slab bacon if the consumer has facilities for slicing. It will stay fresher in the slab. Bacon ends often make unattractive slices but make excellent seasoning meat.



Sliced bacon



Pork salt side



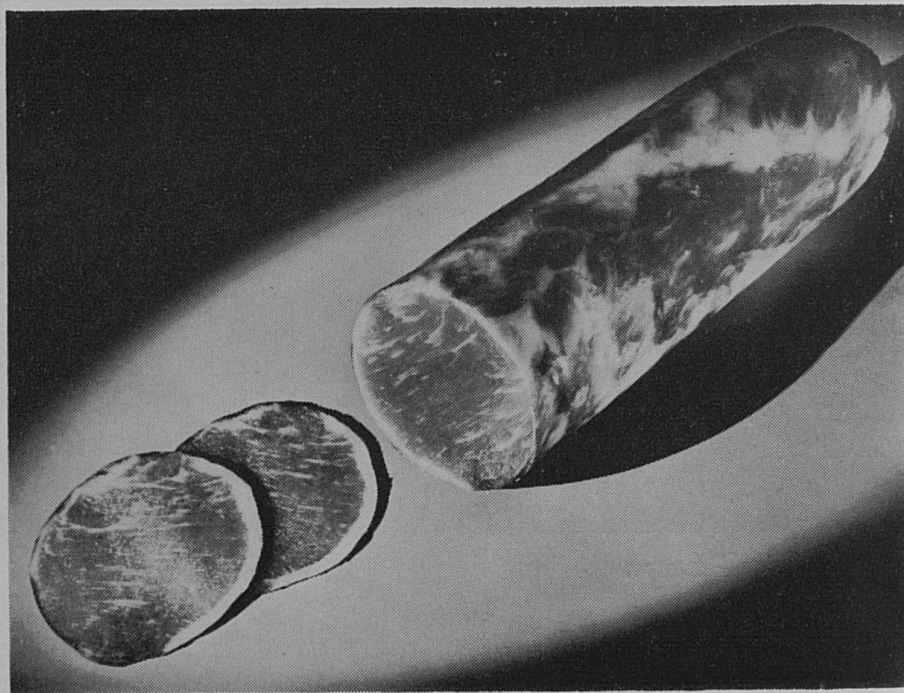
Jowl bacon square

SALT PORK usually comes from heavy bellies, fat backs, and clear plates. It is poor eating but makes a very economical seasoning meat.

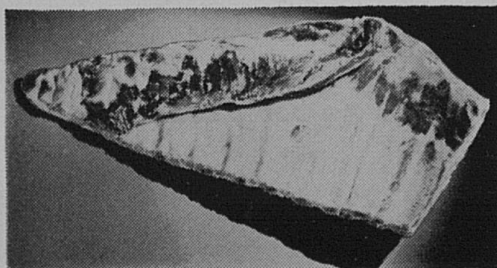
JOWLS are usually cured. They are sometimes called jowl butts, jowl bacon squares, or by different trade names. They are excellent for seasoning. Although they are not generally recommended for slicing, lean jowls make a fairly good economical substitute for bacon.

Other Cuts

CANADIAN BACON is the cured boneless pork loin. It is an excellent breakfast item. Although it usually costs more per pound than bacon it is much leaner and shrinks much less during cooking.



Canadian style bacon



Spareribs

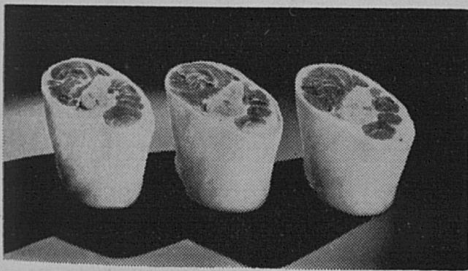
SPARERIBS are usually eaten fresh although a few are cured and smoked. Since spareribs are so popular and since there are only about 3 pounds of spareribs in a 200 pound hog the demand often exceeds the supply. They are approximately 40 percent bone; hence, they are usually not very economical. They may be baked, braised, simmered, or barbecued.

NECKBONES contain a higher percentage of bone than spareribs. They are not very attractive but usually sell at a low price per pound, making them economical. They are usually simmered.

PIGS FEET are considered a delicacy by some people. Usually, however, they do not sell too well. They require a tremendous amount of preparation but can be very tasty. Pigs feet may be simmered until tender or pickled. They should be split for faster cooking.

BACKBONES are seldom seen in retail stores as most of them are included as part of the pork chops. Many people who slaughter their own hogs often cut them "farmer" style and remove the backbone and the lean loin strip. Backbones are usually simmered.

HOCKS come from the lower part of the front leg when short-shanked picnics are prepared. They are sometimes cured but are often sold fresh. They may be cooked by braising or simmering and are usually very economical.



Hocks

PORK SAUSAGE, or seasoned ground pork, is very popular, especially for breakfast although it is used extensively at other meals. It is usually available in links, cloth or cellulose casings, and in bulk. The seasoning ingredients vary a great deal, therefore, there is a pork sausage to fit almost any taste. The amount of fat in sausage varies considerably. The optimum amount is 25 to 35 percent. Federal regulations allow up to 50 percent in federally inspected plants. In non-inspected plants it could even be

higher. This high-fat sausage is usually low in price but will shrink a great deal during cooking. The leaner sausage will cost more per pound but it is usually a more satisfactory product.

Variety Meats

PORK LIVER is usually the most economical of all liver. Some people object to it because of its distinctive flavor. However, if properly prepared it can be very good. It is very nutritious, being especially high in the B vitamins.

HEARTS may be baked, simmered, or fried. They are baked or simmered whole but can be sliced and fried similar to liver. Slices may be tenderized by running them through a cube steak machine.

KIDNEYS are very economical. They are usually used in stews.

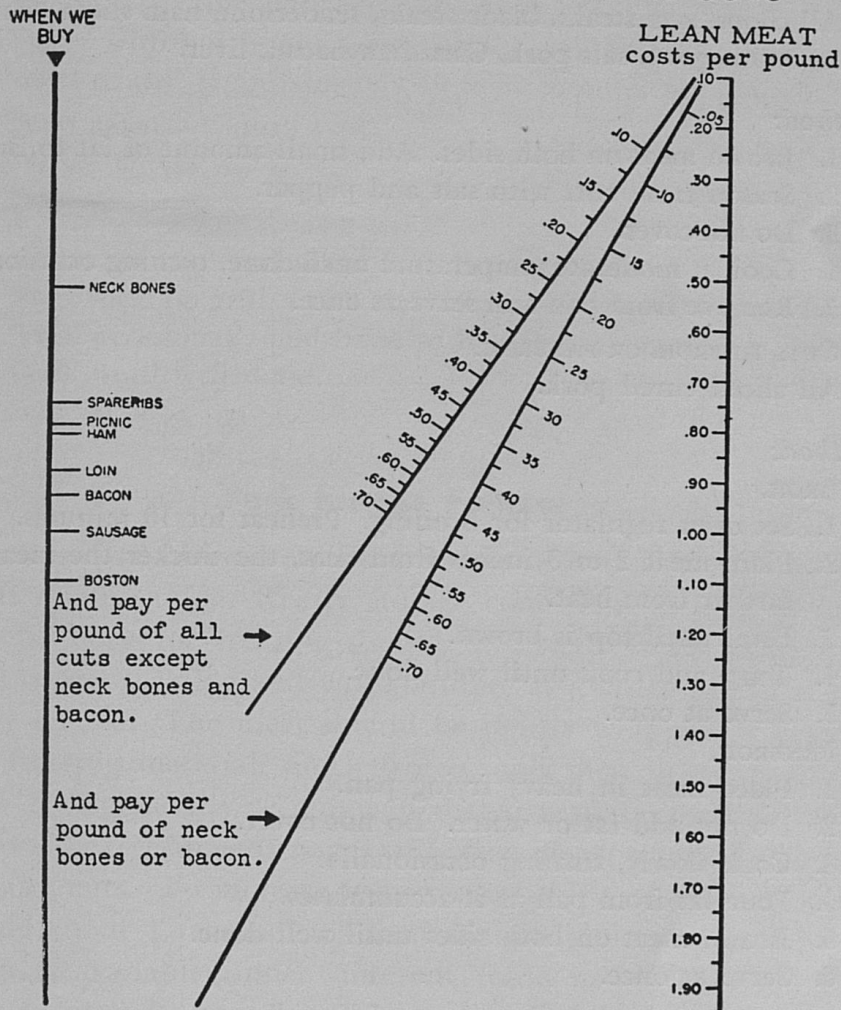
BRAINS are very economical. If fried with eggs they make a very delicious dish.

TONGUES are usually simmered and served either hot or cold. They contain little waste, therefore are usually very economical.

Choosing Pork Cuts

The cut of pork to buy will depend upon the occasion, the budget, the cooking facilities available, and of course the likes and dislikes of the family. Usually picnics, Boston butts, neckbones, first-cut chops, blade-end loin roasts and the variety meats are less demanded and, hence, more economical. For more attractive but less economical dishes ham center slices, loin end or center cut roasts, center chops, and spareribs are desirable. Other cuts such as bacon, sausage, Canadian bacon, and smoked butts are usually used at breakfast and may or may not be economical depending upon the current price and the amount of fat. Regardless of the price of hogs some pork cuts are usually economical. The accompanying nomographic chart, "Cost Per Pound of Lean in Pork Cuts," shows how to estimate the cost per pound of lean of the different cuts.

COST PER POUND OF LEAN IN PORK CUTS



To use this chart lay a straight edge at the desired cut on the left scale, cross the price per lb on the center scale, and read the price per lb of lean from the right scale.

Correct Pork Cookery

1. CUTS TO ROAST

All loin roasts, ham (fresh and cured), Boston butt, picnic (fresh and cured), cured shoulder butt, Canadian bacon, spareribs, tenderloin, heart, liver.

Method:

1. Season pork with salt and pepper. None is needed for cured pork.
2. Place meat, fat side up on rack in roasting pan.
3. Insert meat thermometer if practical.
4. Do not add water. Do not cover. Do not baste.
5. Cook until well done (180° for fresh pork—170° for cured pork).

2. CUTS TO PANFRY

All chops, arm steaks, blade steaks, tenderloin, ham slices, shoulder slices, bacon, jowl, salt pork, Canadian bacon, liver.

Method:

1. Brown meat on both sides. Add small amount of fat to liver.
2. Season fresh cuts with salt and pepper.
3. Do not cover.
4. Cook at moderate temperature until done, turning occasionally.
5. Remove from pan and serve at once.

3. CUTS TO BROIL OR PANBROIL

All sliced cured pork.

Method:

BROIL

1. Set oven regulator for broiling. Preheat for 10 minutes.
2. Place meat 2 to 3 inches from heat, the thicker the meat, the farther from heat.
3. Broil until top is brown.
4. Turn and cook until well done.
5. Serve at once.

PANBROIL

1. Place meat in heavy frying pan.
2. Do not add fat or water. Do not cover.
3. Cook slowly, turning occasionally.
4. Pour fat from pan as it accumulates.
5. Brown meat on both sides until well done.
6. Serve at once.

4. CUTS TO BRAISE (small amount of liquid)

All chops, arm steaks, blade steaks, fresh ham slices, hocks, spare-ribs, neckbones.

Method:

1. Brown meat on all sides in heavy utensil. (Add a small amount of fat if necessary.)
2. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 cup hot water, replacing as needed.
4. Cover tightly.
5. Cook at low temperature until tender.

5. CUTS TO COOK IN LIQUID

Ham (especially aged dry-cured hams), smoked picnic, jowl, salt pork, spareribs, neckbones.

Method:

1. Season fresh cuts with salt and pepper.
 2. Cover with hot liquid, cover kettle, cook below boiling point until tender (approximately 40 to 50 minutes per pound).
6. CUTS TO BARBECUE (grill type)
Spareribs, chops.

Method:

1. Ignite charcoal and allow it to become coals.
2. Place meat on grill, 4 to 8 inches from fire (depending on heat).
3. Turn occasionally and baste with barbecue sauce.
4. Cook until well done.
5. Serve at once.

Pork for the Freezer

Pork is used extensively for freezing, although it will not retain its quality under freezer storage conditions as long as beef or lamb. Pork for freezing should be strictly fresh. Rancidity begins before freezing and will continue at a faster rate if it has already started. The meat should be tightly wrapped in a good grade freezing material, quick frozen, and then stored at 0° or below. It is generally recommended that pork be used within 6 months after freezing. Sausages will often develop rancidity faster than pork cuts. To increase freezer storage life of seasoned sausage, add about 1 teaspoon of monosodium glutamate, (M.S.G.) (which is available under different trade names at most groceries) to each 10 pounds of meat. Wrap and freeze as soon as possible. Generally speaking cured meats should not be frozen as salt enhances rancidity development. However, slab bacon or cured hams or shoulders will keep longer frozen than under normal conditions. Hams will not become "aged" hams while frozen, however. There are seasonal variations in the price of pork. Plan to fill the freezer at the times of abundant supply.

The Use of Lard

Lard has been the standard shortening for centuries, yet recently it has lost favor with many homemakers. Probably the greatest disadvantage of lard has been its lack of uniformity. Most of the commercial lard today is very uniform, however, as it is

stabilized with antioxidants and hardened by hydrogenation so that it requires little refrigeration. Some advantages of lard are

1. It is "shorter," that is it takes less lard to do a certain amount of shortening than most vegetable shortenings.
2. It is as digestible or more digestible than most other shortenings.
3. It costs less than most shortenings.
4. It contains vitamin activity in the form of certain unsaturated fatty acids.
5. It has a wide plastic range; that is, it can be handled under various temperatures.
6. Its flavor is preferred for many products.

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