4-H Retail Cut Identification – Pork

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Retail Cut Identification
Pork Cuts

- Pork
  - Jowl
  - Shoulder
  - Loin
  - Spareribs
  - Side (Belly)
  - Ham/Leg

- Blade Boston
- Picnic

Diagram showing the various cut locations on a pork carcass.
Ham/Leg

- Pork Fresh Ham Center Slice
- Pork Fresh Ham Rump Portion
- Pork Fresh Ham Shank Portion
- Smoked Ham, Bnls
- Smoked Ham, Center Slice
- Smoked Ham, Rump Portion
- Smoked Ham, Shank Portion
- Tip Roast, Bnls
- Top Roast, Bnls
Pork Fresh Ham Center Slice – P, E, 44, D/M

- Leg Cut appearance
  - Round bone
  - Top section
  - Bottom section
  - Eye section
  - Sirloin Tip section

- May have some external fat
Smoked Ham, Center Slice – P, E, 90, D

- Same as Fresh but has been cured and smoked
- Has cured pink color
- Brownish smoke color on external fat
Pork Fresh Ham Rump Portion – P, E, 25, D/M

- Large cut surface will resemble the Center Slice
- Pelvic bone (long, flat) will be on top of cut
- Will have some external fat
Smoked Ham, Rump Portion — P, E, 96, D

- Same as Fresh but has been cured and smoked
- Has cured pink color
- Brownish smoke color on external fat
Pork Fresh Ham Shank Portion – P, E, 27, D/M

- Large cut surface will resemble the Center Slice
- May contain a portion of the hind shank
- Will have some external fat
- May have skin on surface
Smoked Ham, Shank Portion – P, E, 97, D

- Same as Fresh but has been cured and smoked
- Has cured pink color
- Brownish smoke color on external fat
- Brownish smoke color on skin
Smoked Ham, Bnls – P, E, 91, D

- Has cured pink color
- Smoked lean color will be a mahogany brown color
- Brownish smoke color on external fat
- May be able to identify muscle structure
Tip Roast, Bnls – P, E, 35, D

- Comes sirloin tip section of ham
- About softball size, oblong cut
- Has sirloin tip muscle structure in cut surface
Top Roast, Bnls – P, E, 38, D

- Top section from the leg cut
- Muscle structure would resemble Beef Top Round roast
- Approximately 3 inches thick
- Rounded at bottom of cut
Loin

• From the Blade Section of the Pork Loin
  – Blade Roast
  – Blade Chops
  – Blade Chops, Bnls
  – Country Style Ribs
Blade Roast – P, F, 06, D/M

- Contains part of shoulder blade bone, rib bones and back bone
- Loin eye muscle present with other various muscles
Blade Chops – P, F, 66, D/M

- Contains part of shoulder blade bone, rib bones and back bone
- Loin eye muscle present with other various muscles
Blade Chops, Bnls – P, F, 67, D/M

- Cut from area closer to the Center Rib section
- Eye muscle and cap muscle removed from under the blade bone (eye tends to be smaller and the surrounding muscles larger compared to Rib Chop)
Country Style Ribs – P, F, 66, D/M

- The blade section is split into 2 or 3 pieces
  - Beneath the blade bone
  - Across rib (may contain eye muscle)
  - Backbone section
Loin

- From the Center Rib Section of the Pork Loin
  - Center Rib Roast
  - Rib Chops
  - Smoked Pork Loin Rib Chop
  - Butterflied Chops, Bnls
  - Back Ribs
Center Rib Roast – P, F, 12, D

- Has two cut surfaces
  - Blade end (top) is cut behind the shoulder blade bone
  - Loin end has large eye muscle
- Contains the backbone, ribs
- Contains the eye muscle which will get larger from the blade end to the loin end
Rib Chops – P, F, 71, D

- Cut from the Center Rib section
- Contains backbone, rib and large eye muscle
Smoked Pork Loin Rib Chops – P, F, 71, D

- Same as Rib Chop but cured and smoked
- Has cured pink color
- Brownish smoke color on external fat
Butterflied Chops, Bnls – P, F, 68, D

• Boneless chop that contains the large ribeye muscle
• Boneless chop is cut double and then split almost all the way through
Back Ribs – P, F, 05, D/M

- Ribs made from near the backbone; resulting from making boneless loin cuts
- Consist of rib bones and muscle in between ribs
- Tend to have more “curve”
Loin

• From the Center Loin Section of the Pork Loin
  – Center Loin Roast
  – Loin Chops
  – Smoked Pork Loin Chop
  – Tenderloin Whole
  – Top Loin Chops
  – Top Loin Chops, Bnls
  – Top Loin Roast, Bnls
Center Loin Roast – P, F, 11, D

- Has 2 cut surfaces
  - Rib end (top) backbone, ribs and large eye muscle
  - Loin end (bottom) has T-bone, Top Loin muscle and Tenderloin
- Covered by external fat
Loin Chops – P, F, 70, D

- Cut from the loin region behind the ribs
- Has T-bone, Top Loin muscle and Tenderloin
Smoked Pork Loin Chops – P, F, 93, D

• Same Pork Loin Chop except it has been cured and smoked
• Has cured pink color
• Brownish smoke color on external fat
Top Loin Chops – P, F, 74, D

- Looks like Loin Chop with Tenderloin muscle removed
- May contain portions of the T-bone
Top Loin Roast, Bnls – P, F, 37, D

- Results from removing Tenderloin and backbones from the center pork loin
- Has large eye muscle and variable lengths of tail
- Sometimes sold as a “double” (cut & folded back like butterfly)
- Usually has a small amount of external fat
Top Loin Chops, Bnls – P, F, 75, D

- Boneless cut that contains mostly the eye or Top Loin muscles
- May have a short tail section
Tenderloin, Whole – P, F, 34, D

- Removed from loin when boneless Top Loin Roast and Chops are made
- Long cut that tapers on one end
- About 2 inches in thickness on large end
Loin

- From the Sirloin Section of the Pork Loin
  - Sirloin Roast
  - Sirloin Chops
  - Sirloin Cutlets
Sirloin Roast – P, F, 30, D

• Has 2 cut surfaces
• Loin end (bottom) could have a loin chop appearance
• Sirloin end has top sirloin muscle group and a hip bone
Sirloin Chops – P, F, 73, D

- Chops made from sirloin section
- Contains hip bone
  - Hip bone can have different shapes from round, flat or wedge
- Major muscles are
  - Top Sirloin group
  - Tenderloin
Sirloin Cutlets – P, F, 53, D

- Top Sirloin muscle group
- Boneless by removing hip and back bones
- May have some external fat
Shoulder

• Boston Butt, Shoulder Butt or Blade Boston
  – Blade Boston Roast
  – Blade Steak

• Arm Picnic or Shoulder Picnic
  – Arm Picnic Whole
  – Arm Roast
  – Arm Steak
  – Smoked Picnic, Whole
Blade Boston Roast – P, J, 07, D/M

- From the upper portion of the shoulder
- Has 2 cut surfaces
  - Blade side has the shoulder blade bone
  - Arm side has a round to wedge bone shape
- Neck bones and ribs are removed
Blade Steak – P, J, 42, D/M

- Cut from Blade Boston
- Contains shoulder blade bone
- No back bones or ribs
- May have some fat seams
Arm Picnic, Whole – P, J, 02, D/M

- From the lower portion of the shoulder
- Has three cut surfaces and a portion of the front shank
- Contains skin on surface
Arm Roast – P, J, 03, D/M

- Made from Arm Picnic by removing Shank and skin
Arm Steak – P, J, 41, D/M

- Cut from the Arm Picnic
- Has round arm bone
- Round muscle beside round bone
Smoked Picnic, Whole – P, J, 94, D/M

- Same Arm Picnic except it has been cured and smoked
- Has cured pink color
- Brownish smoke color on external fat
- Smoked lean color will be a mahogany brown color
- Brownish smoke color on skin
Side/Belly

- Slab Bacon
- Sliced Bacon
- Fresh side
Fresh Side – P, K, 17, M

- Uncured side/belly
- Layers of fat and lean
- On top, may see where spareribs have been removed
- Can be variable in size
Slab Bacon – P, K, 98, D

- Same as Fresh Side but cured and smoked
- Has cured pink color
- Brownish smoke color on external fat
- Smoked lean color will be a mahogany brown color
- Can be variable in size
Sliced Bacon – P, K, 99, D

- Same as Slab Bacon except slab has been sliced into strips
Spareribs

- Spareribs
Pork Spareribs – P, L, 32D/M

- Ribs from side of body
- Cross section of ribs
- May see rib cartilages near rear of cut
- Breast bone may be present or may be removed
- Diaphragm muscle is on top of ribs
Various

- Ground Pork
- Hock
- Pork Cubed Steak
- Pork Sausage Links
- Sausage
- Smoked Pork Hock
Hock – P, N, 86, M

- Removed from shank portion of ham or shoulder
- About 3 inches in diameter
- Cross section that shows lean and bone
- May have skin
Smoked Pork Hock – P, N, 92, M

- Same as Fresh Hock except it has been cured and smoked
- Has cured pink color
- Brownish smoke color on skin
Pork Cubed Steak – P, N, 83, D/M

- Thin, rectangular shaped
- Marks on surface due to a mechanical tenderizer
Ground Pork – P,N, 85, D

- Identified by typical reddish-pink pork color
- No identifiable muscle pieces
Sausage – P,N, 87, D

- Similar to Ground Pork but seasonings have been added
- Look for seasoning particles like black and red pepper
Pork Sausage Links – P,N, 87, D

- Pork Sausage stuffed into a casing
- Size is variable but about ½ -3/4 inch in diameter and about 3-4 inches long
Acknowledgement

• Several photographs are from Texas A & M University at:
  http://aggiemeat.tamu.edu/judging/meatjudging.html