

PRODUCT SPECIFICATION

This document sets out the product specification.

“Welsh Lamb”

PDO () PGI (✓)

1 RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT IN THE MEMBER STATE

Name: United Kingdom
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Address: Area 8e Millbank
c/o Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London
SW1P 3JR

Tel.: 0207 238 6075

Fax: 0208 238 6553

e-mail: protectedfoodnames@defra.gsi.gov.uk

2 GROUP

Name: Hybu Cig Cymru - Meat Promotion Wales (HCC)

Address: Tŷ Rheidol, Parc Merlin, Aberystwyth, SY23 3FF, Wales

Tel.: 01970 625050

Fax: 01970 615148

e-mail: info@hybucig.cymru

Composition: Producers/processors (15,000) Other (0)

3 TYPE OF PRODUCT

Fresh meat and offal - Class 1.1

4 SPECIFICATION

(summary of requirements under Article 4(2) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

4.1 Name:

“Welsh Lamb”

4.2 Description:

Welsh lamb is defined as meat taken from lambs, which are born and reared in Wales. Producers of Welsh lamb aim to meet a target carcass classification of R conformation or better and 3H fat content or leaner. See the table below.

Target Carcass EUROP Classification Grid for Welsh lamb

		FAT CLASS						
		1	2	3L	3H	4L	4H	5
Conformation	E		x	x	x			
	U		x	x	x			
	R		x	x	x			
	O							
	P							

x indicates the target carcass classifications for Welsh lamb

Welsh lamb is derived from the sheep breeds of Wales, predominately the Welsh Mountain, Welsh Mules, Welsh Halfbreds, Beulah, Welsh Hill Speckled Face, Lleyen Sheep, Llanwennog, and Radnor. These breeds may be crossed with Texel, or Suffolk rams, or any other terminal sire breed for prime lamb production i.e. lambs that have not bred.

Lambs are slaughtered and processed in HCC verification scheme approved abattoirs/ processors to ensure the PGI Welsh lamb brand and integrity is protected.

Lamb Carcass is defined as: whole body excluding all inedible offal's, skin, head, feet and all edible offal's, except the kidney.

Cuts of Lamb are defined as: division of the carcass into a number of cuts, typically including, leg, shoulder, loin, saddle, cutlets. The cuts may be presented boneless or bone in.

Welsh lamb is firm and white, with good colour and is considered to have a sweet succulent flavour.

4.3 Geographical area:

The whole of Wales.

4.4 Proof of origin:

HCC is the industry-led organisation responsible for the development, promotion and marketing of Welsh red meat.

The HCC verification scheme ensures that the lamb branded as “Welsh Lamb” meets the specifications. All abattoirs and processors that wish to use the Welsh lamb designation must demonstrate to HCC’s appointed inspection body on an annual basis that the lamb meets the PGI specifications and that the plant is operating to best practice guidelines. This approval will be represented by a Certificate, which must be displayed prominently in the premises. HCC also undertake random spot checks to verify abattoir/ processor approval and licence use of the PGI Welsh lamb brand. HCC verification scheme criteria will be continually developed.

At all stages of the production process records are kept to ensure traceability of the product.

Minimum requirements with regard to the traceability of the product are:

- Sheep raised extensively on grassland;
- Veterinary records according to Government requirements;
- Traceability compliant to recognised farm assurance scheme standards or equivalent;
- Transport and slaughter identification according to Government regulations.

4.5 Method of production:

Each producer controls his own flock of sheep. Lambs suckle the ewe and graze extensively outdoors on the abundant natural grass pastures of the farm.

Welsh lambs are selected for slaughter when they are judged to be ready by the farmer, at under 1-year-old. They are sold either dead weight to abattoirs or at livestock markets.

The lambs are slaughtered and processed in HCC verification scheme approved abattoirs/ processors to ensure the PGI Welsh lamb brand and integrity is protected.

Abattoirs and processors eligible for the HCC verification scheme approval are not restricted to the defined geographical area - Wales.

The lambs are slaughtered and dressed at the abattoir in accordance with recognised industry specifications or to meet legislative or customer requirements.

After dressing, the carcasses are kept in cold stores at around 3°C before despatch to customers or transfer to a cutting area for breaking down into cuts and joints.

If the carcasses are to be divided into cuts, the cuts will be prepared and packaged in accordance with customer requirements. The cuts will be held in a temperature-controlled environment before despatch to the customers. All cuts must be identified as Welsh lamb through appropriate labelling (see section 4.8). They must be transported in refrigerated vehicles where they are kept at a temperature of around 4°C.

4.6 Link:

Extensive lamb production plays an important role in the Welsh rural economy. There are numerous historical references to sheep production in Wales. For example, the Hafod manuscripts (No. 16 P.12) refer to sheepmeat production in the 14th Century, the literature of Guto'r Glyn in the 15th Century refers to Welsh lamb being taken to the Midlands and the letters of Morisaid Mon (2nd Volume P.73) in 1758, extol the virtues of Welsh lamb. In the late 19th Century the Royal Chef, Tschumi wrote that Queen Victoria considered Welsh lamb to be the tenderest and would have no other lamb served in the Royal household.

Even in the middle ages, Welsh sheep would be reared outside, which led to the development of hardy breeds, particularly the Welsh mountain sheep which have continued to make a contribution to the overall characteristics of the Welsh flock and hence the product.

Welsh lamb is a product of the traditional extensive farming practices utilising the expertise built up over generations of producers. Welsh lamb is derived entirely from lambs born and reared in Wales and slaughtered/ processed in HCC verification scheme approved abattoirs/ processors. The unique character of the product arises from the influence of the traditional hardy Welsh breeds that dominate the Welsh flock and also by the lambs feeding on the abundant natural grassland in Wales, which flourishes as a result of the wet and mild Welsh climate and topography.

The unique reputation and qualities enjoyed by Welsh lamb come from traditional feeding on abundant grazing in Wales. Welsh grassland is characterised by heavier rainfall, higher land and poorer quality soils than England.

The efficient production and use of grass is central to the well-being of Welsh lamb production. The grassland management skills of the Welsh farmer are noted worldwide with Welsh farmers regularly winning awards for their grassland management. The grass leys in many of the regions of Wales are interspersed with heathers and indigenous fragrant wild herbs, all of which contribute to the distinctiveness of Welsh lamb.

Welsh lamb now enjoys a unique worldwide reputation. Farms are often family owned and over the generations a great deal of expertise in producing Welsh lamb has accumulated.

4.7 Inspection body:

Name: NSF Certification

Address: Hanborough Business Park, Long Hanborough, Oxford, OX29
8SJ, England

Tel.: (0)1993 885600

e-mail: agriculture@nsf.org

4.8 Labelling:

The geographical indication “Welsh Lamb” must appear on carcasses, parts of carcasses or cuts in combination with the HCC registered trademark for Welsh lamb and the PGI symbol.

Detailed guidance on labelling will be provided by HCC. Labelling regimes will form part of the HCC verification scheme inspection.