LAMB CARCASS

1	Leg
2	Chump
3	Flank
4	Loin
5	Rib
6	Breast
7	Thick Rib
8	Shoulder
9	Neck
10	Shin/Shank
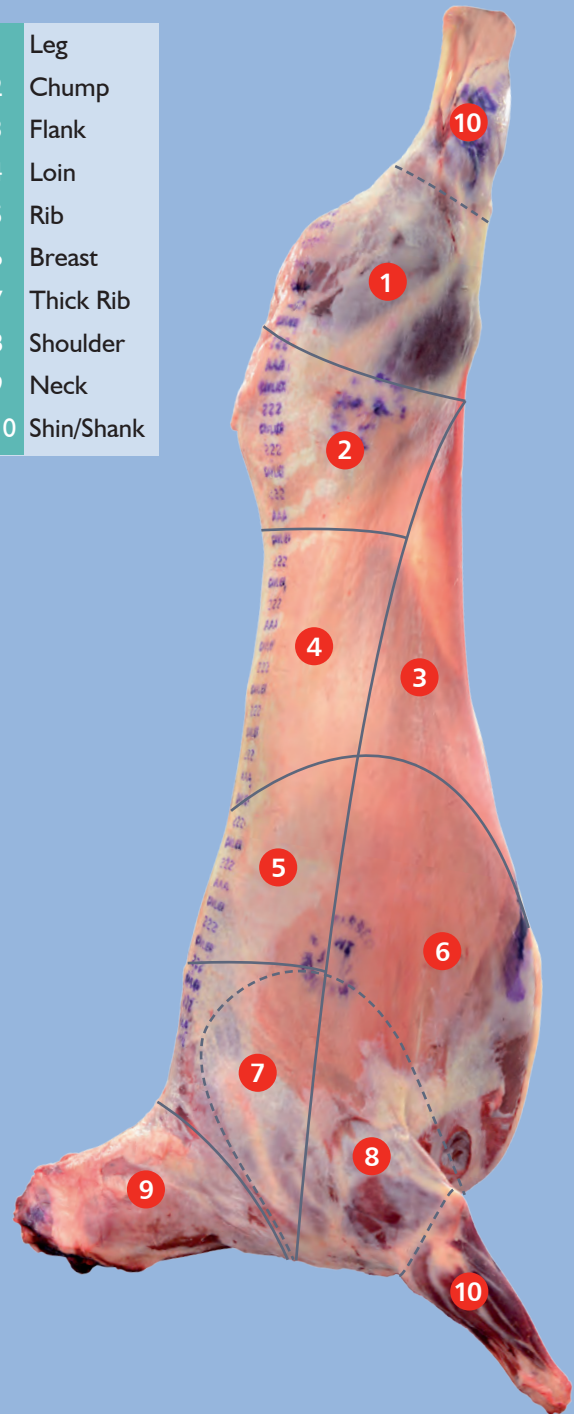
PRIMARY CUT USAGE FOR LAMB & MUTTON

1 LEG
The leg can be kept whole for pot-roasting with or without the bone. Debone the leg to butterfly or make a roll with stuffing (optional). Cubes (25 mm) can be cut for kebabs or other dishes. Make a Leipoldt-ham, which is a mock ham (follow a process similar to pork ham).

2 CHUMP
Chump chops can be grilled or roasted.

3 & 6 FLANK & BREAST
Once deboned and cut into a rectangular shape made into a roll. Rolls can be pot-roasted or cooked in aluminium foil. Salted ribs can be prepared from the rib portion, or cubes (25 mm) can be used for casseroles and stews. Deboned lamb breast, cut into wide strips (25 mm), is ideal for concertina kebabs.

4 LOIN
The loin can be oven roasted or chops can be cut for grilling. Alternatively, the loin can be deboned, rolled and secured with skewers. Cut through the meat between the skewers to make Saratoga chops for grilling, or remove the eye muscle, tie with a string at 25 mm intervals and cut through the string to make noisettes.

5 RIB
The rib ends of a whole rib of lamb can be Frenched (i.e. remove all cartilage, fat and meat from the first 25 mm of the rib ends) and used for oven roasts such as a rack or crown roast. Rib chops can be cut for grilling.

7 THICK RIB
Thick rib lamb chops are mostly grilled, while thick rib mutton chops are braised. Mutton can also be cut into cubes for stews while lamb cubes can be used for kebabs.

8 SHOULDER
Deboned and rolled, the lamb shoulder can be oven-roasted while the mutton shoulder should be pot-roasted. Debone and butterfly this cut for oven-roasting or grilling over the coals. Cubed meat can be used for kebabs.

9 NECK
Use slices for potjiekos or a braised dish.
Serve a tender, whole neck as a special treat.

10 SHIN/SHANK
Cubes can be cut for kebabs and sliced shin is ideal for braises and stews.
Serve whole lamb shanks at special occasions.

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THE SOUTH AFRICAN
Red Meat Classification System

FOR LAMB, MUTTON, BEEF AND GOAT

R ed meat carcasses are since 1992 classified according to the South African Red Meat Classification System, indicated by the roller marks on the carcass. The coloured roller mark which is often visible on raw meat indicates the quality of the meat. Classification is based on characteristics of the particular carcass and is to ensure the consumer and the meat trade, that meat of their choice reaches them. This leaflet is being distributed to aid the consumer in understanding the Classification System in order to make an informed choice.

Why classify carcasses?

Customers prefer to select a meat product based on personal pre-ferences. Therefore the classification system enables a consumer to select meat based on tenderness, fatness and taste. Younger carcasses are more tender yet have less taste while older animals are less tender but have a richer taste. A consumer can select meat with confidence based on need and preference.

During meat classification each carcass is assessed, stamped and roller marked based on its unique characteristics. This means that carcasses are evaluated and marked by way of age, fatness, conformation, damage and gender as set out in the Meat Classification Regulations (see reference). The Classification System allows for allocation of an age code based on the age of the animal reflected by values A, AB, B or C, while a fatness code is indicated by numeric numbers where 0 indicates no visible fat and 6 excessively overfat.

Can the consumer trust the Classification System?

Classification is performed by independent, trained and qualified Meat Classifiers. Practical training of personnel regarding Red Meat Classification is done by independent service providers after which trainees get assessed by SAMIC (South African Meat Industry Company) Regional Managers and if successful, they become qualified Meat Classifiers. The Classification System is controlled by SAMIC on behalf of the National Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. SAMIC acts as an independent quality assurance company for the Red Meat Industry of SA, and ensures that the playing field regarding the quality of Red Meat is level. Therefore all role players can trust the system.

Why are some carcasses stamped and roller marked?

- 95 % of all red meat available in the retail is classified. The SA Meat Classification System is a voluntary system and some abattoirs or slaughter facilities are not classifying meat, most of these are in rural and remote locations.
- Classification stamps on a carcass are stamped within 24 hours of slaughter. It is used by the Meat Classifier at the abattoir to describe the quality of the carcass.
- The roller mark describes the quality of the carcass and includes an abattoir identification code enabling traceability of meat.
- The roller mark is applied lengthwise down a whole carcass, therefore once processed into secondary cuts only some cuts will display the roller mark.
- A roller mark indicates age of the animal, fat content of the carcass and a unique approved classification code of the abattoir.
- The coloured marks on the flesh are completely harmless. The ink is an edible vegetable dye which fades during cooking.

South African production systems

- More than 80% of sheep is raised on the veld and animals are marketed directly for slaughter.
- More than 60% of South African beef is produced on natural or cultivated pastures and most will then go for finishing in feedlots for 100 to 120 days.
- Finishing is used to achieve a marketable fat code – that is why con-centrated feed is given to animals.
- Most animals slaughtered fall in age code A, fat code 2 and are clas-sified as A2 carcasses.
- Fat code 2 per definition is a lean carcass and animals of this fat code are very marketable.
- The AB class specifically makes provision for cattle to be raised on veld until they reach the ideal level of fatness.

REFERENCE:

National Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Agricultural Product Standards Act, 1990 (Act No. 119 of 1990) Regulations No R 863, as amended on the 1st of September 2006, regarding the Classification and Marking of Meat.

Carcass attributes considered in the carcass classification system

- Age of the animal (from young to old).
- Fat content of the carcass (from no visible fat to excessively overfat).
- Carcass conformation as determined by the shape of the carcass, from very flat to medium to very round.
- Damage to the carcass could be slight, moderate or severe if applicable.
- Muscularity is determined by the sex or gender of the animal. This is only considered in classes AB, B and C since gender has no effect on muscularity in younger A class animals.
- A calf is a young animal with a carcass mass of 100 kg of which either a single molar or no molar has appeared in the upper jaw. This meat is known as veal and the carcass is marked with a brown roller mark. Veal is seldom found in retail and is a small percentage of the market.
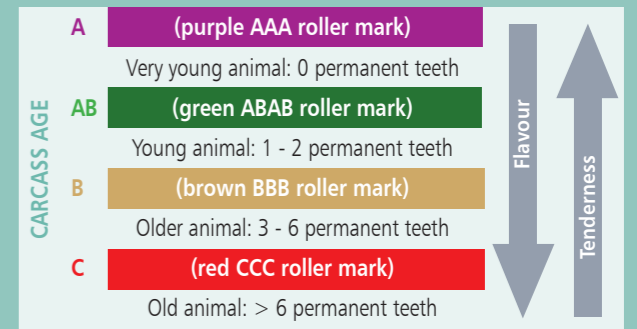
National Carcass Competition

SAMIC is to demonstrate the requirements and demands of the red meat trade and consumers, to producers. This has led to a high quality of red meat in South Africa, in line with ever improving worldwide standards. The quality of entrants in this national competition is of a high standard and the highest since its inception 28 years ago.

Age of the animal

Age determination is an important factor in the classification. The major indicator here is the number of permanent teeth of the animal, therefore the head of the animal must be present to determine the age of the animal. A young animal has no permanent teeth and is classified as A age and marked with a purple roller mark. The presence of 1 or 2 permanent incisors will lead to a classification of AB. An animal of 3 to 6 permanent incisors are classified as age class B. Animals with more than 6 permanent incisors are classified and roller marked in red as C class.
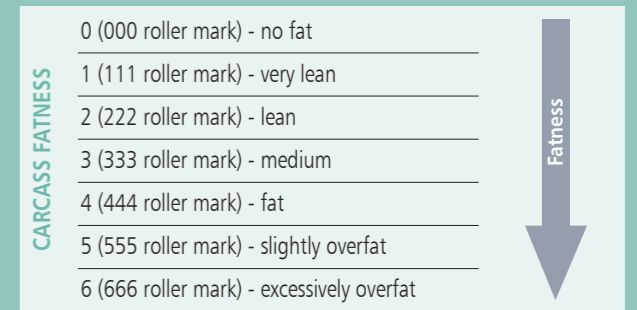
THE SA RED MEAT CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM FOR LAMB, MUTTON, BEEF AND GOAT

CARCASS AGE		
A	(purple AAA roller mark)	
	Very young animal: 0 permanent teeth	Flavour
AB	(green ABAB roller mark)	
	Young animal: 1 - 2 permanent teeth	
B	(brown BBB roller mark)	
	Older animal: 3 - 6 permanent teeth	Tenderness
C	(red CCC roller mark)	
	Old animal: > 6 permanent teeth	

All goat carcasses are roller-marked in orange according to the age of the animal.

Fatness code

The Meat Classifier does an assessment and measurement of the sub-cutaneous fat. Subcutaneous fat percentage is all the fat of a carcass that can be removed, expressed as a percentage of the chilled carcass mass. One of 7 fat classes is allocated where 0 indicates no visible fat up to 6 which indicates excessively overfat.

CARCASS FATNESS	
0 (000 roller mark) - no fat	
1 (111 roller mark) - very lean	
2 (222 roller mark) - lean	
3 (333 roller mark) - medium	Fatness
4 (444 roller mark) - fat	
5 (555 roller mark) - slightly overfat	
6 (666 roller mark) - excessively overfat	

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