

Sheep & Goat Market Demand Information

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Both lamb and goat meats are very popular among different ethnicities around the world. Due to the increase in ethnic population in North America the demand for lamb and goat meats have also increased. Lamb and goat prices are usually higher before the festive/ethnic holidays of different ethnicities. It is important for sheep and goat producers to plan accordingly when to market their animals. Following table provides the dates when lamb and goat meat usually are in high demand.

Holidays		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Islamic	Eid ul-Adha Sacrifice Day	10/4-7	09/23-26	09/11-14	09/1-4	08-22-25
	Ramadan	06/28-07/28	06/18-07/17	06/6-07/6	05/27-06/25	05/16-06/14
	Eid ul-Fitr	07/29-31	07/18-21	07/7-9	06/26-28	06/15-17
Jewish	Passover	04/ 15-22	04/4-11	04/23-30	04/11-18	03/31-04/7
	Rosh Hashanah	09/ 24-25	09/14-15	10/3-4	09/21-29	09/10-11
	Chanukah	12/ 17-24	12/7-14	12/25-Jan 1	12/13-20	12/3-10
Christians	Good Friday	04/18	04/3	03/25	04/14	03/30
	Easter	04/20	04/5	03/27	04/16	04/1
	Christmas	12/25	12/25	12/25	12/25	12/25
Sikhs	Baisakhi	04/14	04/14	04/14	04/14	04/14
Hindus	Diwali	10/23	09/11	10/30	10/19	11/7
Mexican	Cinco de Mayo	05/55	05/5	05/5	05/5	05/5
Interfaith	Thanksgiving Day	11/27 (US) 10/13 (CAD)	11/26 (US) 10/12 (CAD)	11/24 (US) 10/10 (CAD)	11/23 (US) 10/9 (CAD)	11/22 (US) 10/8 (CAD)

Below is the brief description of different ethnic holidays and the kind of meat in demand.

Easter

The traditional Italian market is for a suckling kids weighing 18-35 lbs live. However there is growing demand for larger suckling kids, market kids, and curry goats by other Christian families who also celebrate Easter.

Christmas and New Year

Christmas and New Year are the holidays when suckling kids are popular. To produce Christmas suckling kids the does must be bred when the days are long (outside the normal breeding season). The scarcity of young kids may result in excellent prices and more relaxed weight restrictions. The demand for “curry” goat/lamb and market kids also increases during this time of the year due to the winter holiday season.

Eid al-Adha (Sacrifice Day)

On this day all adult Muslims who do not have any financial constraints are obligated to sacrifice a goat or a lamb and distribute the meat to the needy. Sacrifice day lasts for three days and yearling goat kids and six month old lambs are in high demand before this holiday. However, large market kids/lambs and older goats/sheep are also used. The animals must be healthy, non pregnant and blemish free (no broken horns, no open wounds, intact ears and no lameness etc). Some consumers prefer intact male animals. Age of the animal is more important than the weight however younger and heavier animals are preferred. For this occasion Muslims also sacrifice cattle and camels.

Note: Muslims only consume animals slaughtered and processed Halal by a Muslim.

Ramadan and Eid al Fitr

Muslims observe full month of *Ramadan* by fasting from everyday from sunrise to sunset. Goat or lamb meat is usually part of the menu for the evening feast. *Eid al Fitr* is the last day of the month when Muslims celebrate the end of *Ramadan* which lasts for two days of festivities. During *Eid al Fitr* families meet and greet throughout the day and traditional foods are served to the guests. Lightly finished goat kids (70-90lbs) and lambs (75-100lbs) are usually in high demand.

Note: Muslims only consume animals slaughtered and processed Halal by a Muslim.

Passover/ Pesach

It is a Jewish holiday which lasts for eight days. Healthy and finished lambs are in demand for this holiday.

Note: Jews only consume animals which are slaughtered and processed according to Kosher laws.

Rosh Hashanah

It is the Jewish New Year and marked by solemnity as well as festivity. Lambs with nice finish are usually preferred.

Note: Jews only consume animals which are slaughtered and processed according to Kosher laws.

Chanukah

It is a Jewish festival of rededication also known as festival of lights. The celebrations of *Chanukah* last for eight days. *Chanukah* usually coincides with the Christmas and Healthy heavy lambs are usually in high demand before the start of these holidays.

Note: Jews only consume animals which are slaughtered and processed according to Kosher laws.

Caribbean holidays

Several independence days and “Crifests” occur in the fall. The traditional dish is “curried goat” from intact market kids or bucks accompanied by a goat soup using the rest of the goat carcass. Many people hold the opinion that the smell of the male goat improves the flavor and potency of the soup. However, some families prefer castrated market kids or even females.

Cinco de Mayo and other Hispanic holidays

Some Mexican families desire a small *cabrito* kid to celebrate Mexico’s independence from Spain. Others prefer a large market kid or yearling barbecued as a whole over a pit. *Seco de Chivo* or goat stew is a popular dish for other Latin American cultures as well. The Hispanic market for goats is for 20 to 35 lb live weight milk-fed kids for *cabrito*, and larger animals for *seco de chivo*.

The Chinese market (holidays for Chinese community) is another opportunity for goat producers which occur during six colder months. The preferred weight range is 60 to 80 pounds live goats.

The Filipino market

Goat meat is very popular among Filipino families. Goat meat is cooked in several ways like stew or roast. It is served during festivities including: Birthdays, Baptism, weddings, re-unions, and religious festivals such as Christmas or feast day of the community’s Patron Saint. It is also served as a regular dish in everyday meal or to entertain a guest. It is a favorite appetizer for the Filipino male population. Healthy looking >60 lbs goat is what Filipinos always look for.

Note: The may be slaughtered/processed in a certain way to satisfy the need of the occasion the meat is going to be consumed at.

It is important for the producers to make sure the animals are handled humanely and suffer minimum pain regardless of the method they are being slaughtered.

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