

the

SUSSEX
peasant

LAMB

or more Correctly Hogget for Spring or Easter

By Jayne Duveen

The 'lamb' now sold in the shop is correctly named hogget because they were born almost a year ago. This means that you are enjoying pasture fed animals that have been born and reared outdoors only.

It is still tender but the extra time on the fields allows it to develop a flavour that is rich and full.

Traditionally all 'lamb' was eaten as hogget. It is only recently that we have started to eat younger animals known as 'Spring' lamb. Prior to the creation of today's modern breeds few lambs of traditional breeds would have gained enough weight in the first year to be ready for eating. Many modern farmers have brought lambing forward as early as mid December in order to make the most of consumers wanting Easter Spring Lamb. These lambs are born and reared for some of their lives indoors and are fed concentrates.

When finished slowly on rich pasture, hogget or mutton are highly nutritious providing high levels of omega 3 fatty acids as well as many other essential vitamins and minerals including selenium, zinc, B12 and iron.

Leaner with lower saturated fats than indoor reared lambs, this high quality protein source also delivers all nine of the essential amino acids that our body needs.

Personally, my favourite time to eat 'lamb' is when it has become mutton which means that it is over 2 years old.

HOW TO COOK HOGGET

If you are proposing a celebration a slow roasted hogget leg or shoulder can be an impressive choice. Leave the joint out an hour before cooking to bring to room temperature. Rub over with salt and olive oil.

Cut small incisions into the fat and insert rosemary and garlic. Cover with foil and slow roast at 160C for 50 minutes per 500g.

