Australia

MARKET SNAPSHOT | BEEF & SHEEPMEAT

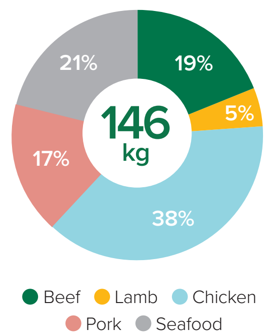
MEAT & LIVESTOCK AUSTRALIA

MARKET
Largest single market with strong year-round demand for Australian beef and lamb

CONSUMERS
Diverse consumers seeking value and versatility as tastes and expectations evolve

GROWTH
Trusted, everyday quality with growing opportunities in value and convenience

Meat consumption per capita[1]

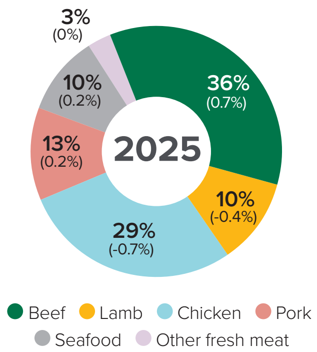


Annual restaurant and grocery spend[2]

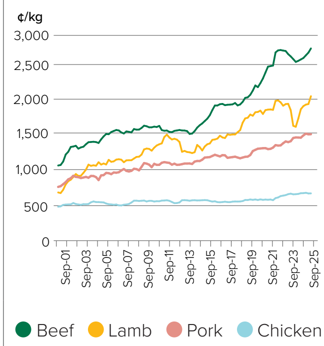
A$ 4,283 per person/year

A$ 4,949 per person/year

Retail fresh meat value share (share point % change)[3]

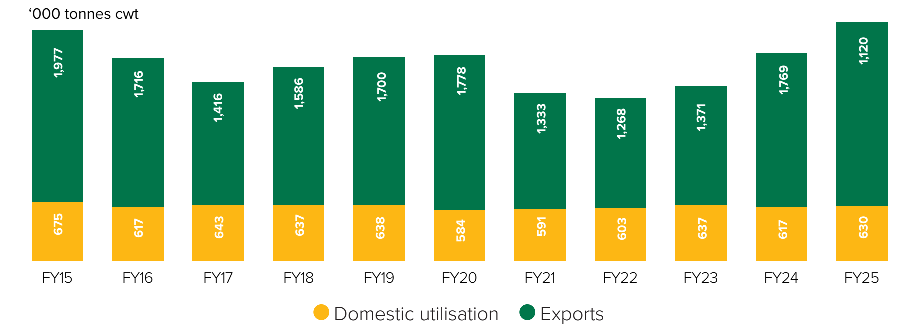


Australian retail meat price[4]

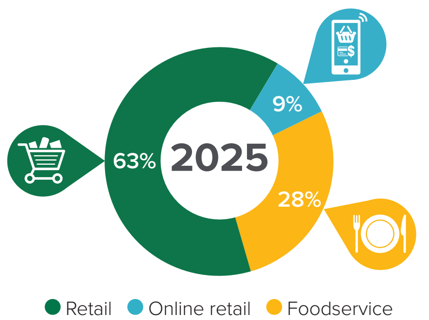


The Australian domestic market is the largest destination for Australian beef, consistently consuming on average almost 30% of total beef production volume.

Beef domestic utilisation[5] (share of produced volume)

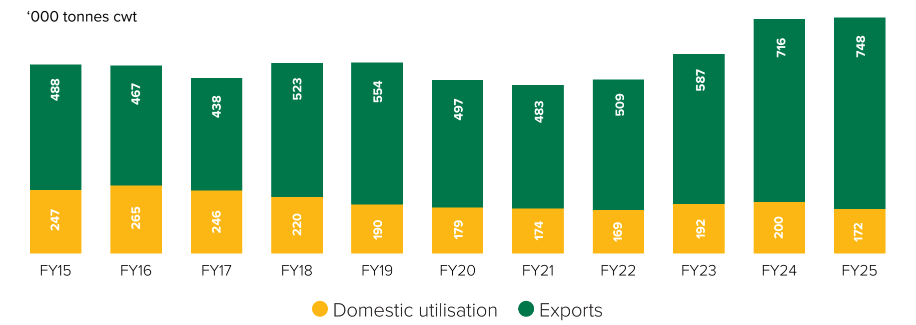


Beef channel utilisation[6] (share of volume)

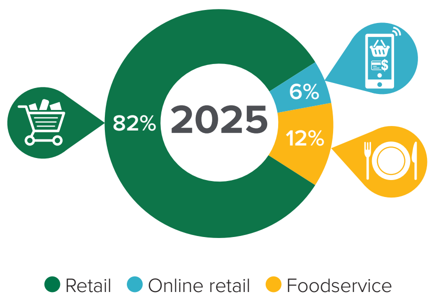


Australia is also the largest market for Australian sheepmeat, consuming on average one quarter of total production. Almost all the sheepmeat distributed within Australia is lamb while most of the mutton produced is exported.

Sheepmeat domestic utilisation[5] (share of produced volume)



Sheepmeat channel utilisation[6] (share of volume)



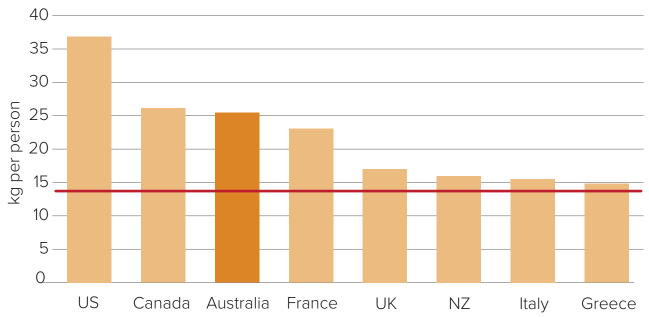
Data source for charts: [1]Fitch Solutions, GIRA 2026 forecast (f), [2]IGD 2026f (Grocery spend is the total annual grocery retail market turnover in given year, divided by the population for the same year and excludes VAT/sales tax, Fitch Solutions 2026f (Restaurant spend is amount of spending on restaurants and hotels divided by the population for the same year), [3]NielsenIQ Homescan, 52 weeks to 05/10/2025 (share point change versus year ago), [4]Australian Bureau of Agricultural Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES), calculated using Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data, [5]Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF), ABS, Trade Data Monitor, LLC (TDM), MLA calculations, Financial Year (FY), [6]MLA estimates 2025

Beef

CONSUMERS

- Australia remains one of the world's highest per-capita consumers of beef, well above the global average *(Source: Fitch Solutions 2026 forecast (f), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) 2026f)*. While long-term consumption has eased, beef continues to play an important role in weekly meals due to its trusted quality, versatility and taste.

Beef consumption per capita for selected markets



Source: Fitch Solutions 2026f, OECD 2026f

- Australian demand for beef continues to be shaped by demographic change, household finances and evolving attitudes to health and cooking.
- Beef remains the #1 top-of-mind protein, driven by strong associations with trusted quality, great taste and its suitability across both everyday and special meals *(Source: Kantar Brand Funnels Q3 2025)*.

Protein associations strengths

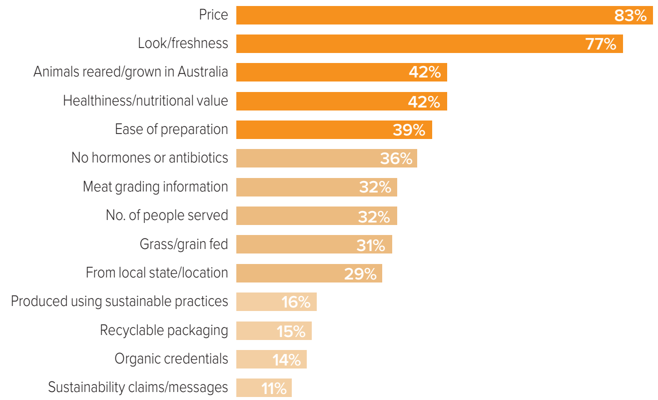
	Beef	Lamb	Chicken	Pork	Seafood
Easy everyday			✓		✓
Trusted quality	✓	✓			
A bit special	✓	✓			✓
Good for you			✓		✓

Source: MLA Domestic Consumer Tracker 2025, Tick = area of strength versus other proteins

- While beef is widely understood and valued, consumers still see it as less 'easy everyday' than chicken, particularly among younger and culturally diverse households with lower cooking confidence *(Source: MLA Domestic Consumer Tracker 2025)*.
- Cost-of-living pressures remain elevated, so value still plays a big role in motivating purchase, however consumers are willing to spend more when value meets quality, freshness and trusted provenance *(Source: MLA Packaging Research 2024)*.
- Health continues to be a strong driver for red meat consumption *(Source: MLA Community Sentiment Research 2025)*, with consumers seeking foods that support energy, strength and overall wellbeing. Highlighting beef's nutritional benefits such as protein and iron helps reinforce its relevance and encourages more frequent consumption.

- Consumers are also looking for support with smarter planning and cooking, wanting simple guidance on cuts, recipes and preparation techniques to boost confidence and reduce mealtime stress. This remains an opportunity, especially among younger households and newer migrants who under-index in red meat familiarity *(Source: MLA Usage and Attitude Research 2025)*.

Top things shoppers look for when buying fresh beef or lamb



Source: : MLA Packaging Research 2024, % ranked top 5 responses, Q: Which of these are important to you when buying packaged fresh beef or lamb? (prompted)

Australia's increasingly diverse population

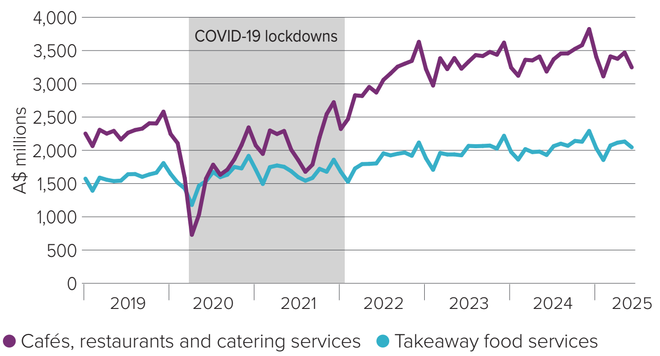
Population growth continues to be driven by migration, with over half of Australians born overseas or having a parent born overseas *(Source: ABS)*. East and South Asian* households under-index in red meat consumption, presenting opportunities to tailor cuts, cuisines and formats to support increased relevance and uptake.

**East Asia (e.g. China, Japan, Korea), South Asia (e.g. India, Pakistan)*

FOODSERVICE

- Eating out is an important part of Australians' lifestyles, with almost 50% of Australians' monthly food budget allocated to eating out *(Source: Lightspeed Australian Dining Habits 2025)*. While Australia's per capita restaurant spend remains below the United States (US) (A$6.971) and the United Kingdom (UK) (A$6,201), Australia (A$4,283) continues to sit at the higher end globally *(Source: Fitch Solutions, 2025f)*.
- The Australian foodservice sector is large, highly competitive and fragmented with independently operated restaurants accounting for most of its A$65 billion value *(Source: Euromonitor International)* and over 80,000 foodservice businesses *(Source: ABS)*. The foodservice sector continues to navigate higher operating costs, labour shortages and cautious consumer spending. Non commercial channels represent a small share of beef consumption but offer longer-term potential as Australia's population ages *(Source: GlobalData)*.
- Inflationary pressure has influenced dining behaviour, with consumers increasingly trading down to fast and convenient options or selectively treating themselves at premium venues reflected in the 4.1% growth in average cheque and 0.8% decline in traffic *(Source: Circana 12 months to March 2025)*. Across foodservice, beef remains the largest fresh meat protein by value but faces pressure from lower-cost proteins, highlighting opportunities to demonstrate value and versatility *(Source: GlobalData)*.

Spending in cafés and takeaway



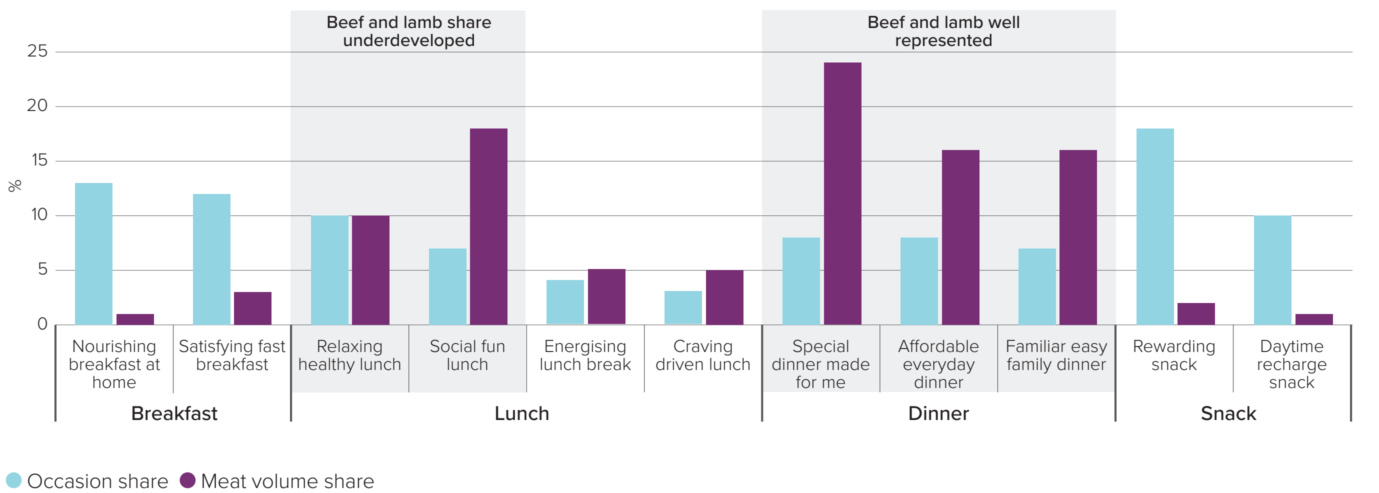
Source: ABS Retail Trade Turnover (Original), Data to June 2025

- Online food delivery and pick up remains a large and stable part of Australia's foodservice landscape. While consumers have shifted toward pick up to avoid delivery fees, pick up from apps and restaurant sites have surged, offering value seekers convenience and flexibility *(Source: Circana)*. Younger, digitally connected consumers (Gen Z) account for an increasing share of foodservice demand, driving growth through spend on convenience-oriented and trending meals *(Source: Circana)*. For beef, these represent growing opportunities, espeically if operators offer value driven, easy to prepare formats (e.g. beef bowls, stir-fry, kebabs) and convenience formats.

Key drivers of eating out for consumers are higher quality, better tasting offerings and socialising

- Higher quality, better taste and social connection are the key motivators for choosing to dine out, while home meals serve more functional and value-focused needs *(Source: GlobalData Global Consumer Survey Q4 2022)*. Indulgence, cravings and difference fuels foodservice occasions and red meat elevates the experience for consumers. While foodservice meals already feature a higher incidence of meat compared to home cooked meals, the lunch occasion under indexes in red meat. This presents an opportunity to meet consumers' needs for this occasion *(Source: MLA Consumer Protein Landscape 2022, MLA Usage and Attitudes Research 2025)*.

Occasion share and meat volume share across meal occasions

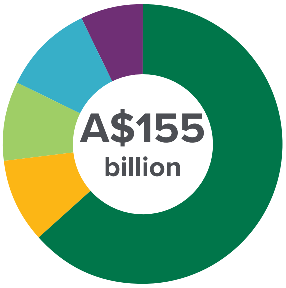


Source: MLA Consumer Protein Landscape 2022 (base n=50,116)

RETAIL

- Fresh meat is the largest supermarket category by value (excluding liquor and tobacco) and plays a key role in driving store traffic and store loyalty *(Source: NielsenIQ (NIQ) Consumer Outlook December 2025)*.
- Beef represents the highest share of fresh meat dollar sales at 36.4% and is the top performing protein in absolute retail dollar sales this year compared to year prior. Chicken maintains the top spot in volume share at 41% *(Source: NIQ Homescan to 05/10/2025)*. Beef's growth contribution underscores its importance to the category.

Grocery retail sales and growth by channel



- Supermarkets – **A$98.5bn (1.6%)**
- Discount – **A$15.4bn (4%)**
- Traditional – **A$14.1bn (2%)**
- Online/grocery retail – **A$16.4bn (9.8%)**
- Convenience – **A$11.1bn (2.9%)**

Source: IGD 2026f, Liquor specialists excluded, % figure in brackets = compound annual growth rate (CAGR) 2026e to 2029f, Traditional refers to includes smaller scale, independent food stores

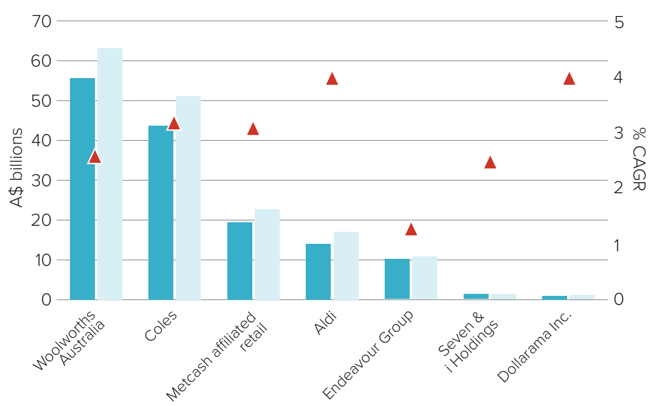
- Cost-of-living pressures persist, with most shoppers monitoring spend and seeking value. However, opportunities exist in health, convenience, online and affordable premium solutions, particularly for at-home dining occasions as consumers look for alternatives to eating out *(Source: NIQ Consumer Outlook 2025)*.
- Supermarkets account for around 84% of fresh meat sales, with Aldi and Costco gaining share this year *(Source: NIQ Homescan to 05/10/2025)* from new shoppers seeking lower everyday prices. Butchers maintain higher average spend per trip through premium cuts such as steaks. Penetration remains steady, with one third of Australian shoppers buying fresh meat from butchers at least once this year *(Source: NIQ Homescan to 05/10/2025)*.

Fresh meat place of purchase, share and spend

	Value share	A$ per trip
Total Australia	100%	24.78
Total Aust. supermarkets	83.9%	22.90
Aust. non supermarkets*	16.1%	43.29

*Source: NIQ Homescan to 05/10/2025, *Non supermarkets includes butchers*

Top grocery retailer sales and growth



2025f 2030f % CAGR 2025e to 2030f

Source: IGD, sales is total grocery retail sales

Packaging matters

- **Visibility and provenance:** Consumers want to see the meat and trust '100% Australian' claims
- **Health and transparency:** Protein and fat content clarity drive confidence
- **Inspiration:** Simple cooking guidance and meal ideas influence purchase decisions

Source: MLA Packaging Research 2024

- Online continues to offer strong potential for red meat, supported by convenience and larger basket spend per trip *(Source: NIQ Homescan to 05/10/2025)*. Partnerships with major retailers and initiatives to build confidence in cuts and recipes can accelerate adoption. Clear, easy-to-digest cooking guidance and recipe inspiration on pack can help shoppers feel confident and encourage purchase, especially online *(Source: MLA Packaging Research 2024)*.

Prioritisation of packaging elements – critical vs differentiating

The critical packaging elements Must haves	The differentiating packaging elements Nice to haves
Meat visibility	Sustainability claims
Provenance claims	Recipe and cooking information
Health indicators	Guidance on occasions
Information on fat content	Colour cues

Source: MLA Packaging Research 2024

- Shopping across bricks and mortar (B&M) and online is increasingly the norm with 63% of Australians cross-shopping in both channels. Although fresh meat underperforms in online sales with a 9.1% share versus 10.8% in total grocery, the gap is narrowing thanks to increased purchase frequency and a growing shopper base *(Source: NIQ Homescan to 05/10/2025)*.
- Beef mince remains the leading cut across all channels, premium steaks outperform in butchers, while pre-prepared and diced/stir-fry cuts over-index online, reflecting demand for convenience and versatility in digital shopping *(Source: NIQ Homescan to 05/10/2025)*.
- Meal kits (e.g. Hello Fresh, Marley Spoon) remain a niche but important channel for inspiration and confidence-building, supported by portion control and easy recipes. Despite penetration sitting at 19% of households, spend per household is significantly higher than other convenience categories, reinforcing the role of guided cooking and ready-to-use ingredients for younger and time-poor households *(Source: NIQ Homescan to 05/10/2025)*.

Sheepmeat

CONSUMERS

- Lamb continues to play a distinctive role in Australian diets, with Australians remaining among the highest per-capita consumers globally *(Source: OECD)*.
- About 70% of Australian households purchase lamb, on average eight times per year, though frequency has softened among older, traditionally heavy buyers *(Source: NIQ Homescan to 05/10/2025)*. This creates opportunities to attract younger consumers and families by showcasing lamb's versatility, ease and relevance across more everyday meals.
- While lamb features in many cultural cuisines, it under-indexes among Northern Asians (including Chinese, Japanese, Korean) and South-East Asians (including Indonesian, Thai, Vietnamese, Filipino, Singaporean, Malaysian, etc.). As Australia's population becomes increasingly diverse, tailoring cut guidance, recipe inspiration and flavour profiles to these groups remains an important opportunity. Growth in the Halal-eating population also supports increased lamb usage, with higher penetration and volume among these households *(Source: Consumer Protein Landscape 2022)*.
- Consumers see lamb as 'special', 'flavourful' and 'worth paying more for', often associating it with special occasions. Making lamb easier and boosting cooking confidence through simple recipes, guided formats and quicker-to-cook cuts, will support more frequent usage across different occasions *(Source: MLA Domestic Consumer Tracker 2025)*.

'Easter recipes' ranked as Australia's fourth most Googled recipes in 2025, highlighting seasonal appeal of lamb – pictured are lemongrass lamb cutlets

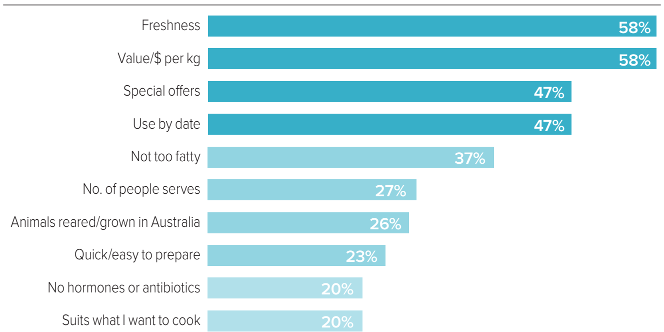
FOODSERVICE

- While lamb's foodservice footprint has shrunk from menu streamlining and pressure from operator costs, lamb offers a unique value proposition as a premium, 'special occasion' protein that can elevate dining experiences and differentiate menus. It aligns well with occasions where diners seek higher quality, indulgence or something different from home cooking, creating opportunities for operators to deliver distinctive and memorable experiences.
- Lamb is most commonly featured on Italian and Indian menus, but there is scope to expand its presence into cuisines with lower penetration, such as Turkish, Mexican and Asian, by leveraging its versatility *(Source: GlobalData)*. These cuisines already rank among Australia's favourites with Italian, Chinese, Australian, Thai, Indian and Mexican sitting in the top six, reflecting Australians' openness to diverse food experiences and creating opportunities for lamb to add variety and elevate dining occasions *(Source: NewsCorp 2025)*.

RETAIL

- Lamb accounts for around 10% share of fresh meat value sales. While lamb growth lagged fresh meat sales at 3.2% this year compared to last year, lamb shoppers remain highly valuable to retailers, with baskets averaging A$137 when lamb is included, compared to A$62 without lamb in basket *(Source: NIQ Homescan to 05/10/2025)*. This underscores lamb's ability to elevate overall spend and its potential as a driver of premium shopping trips.
- Younger households and culturally diverse consumers, particularly North and South-East Asian households, under-index in lamb purchases despite strong engagement with fresh meat overall *(Source: NIQ Homescan to 05/10/2025)*. Showcasing 'easy-to-cook' cuts such as strips, diced and marinated formats will attract these groups by reducing complexity and meal-time effort *(Source: MLA Usage and Attitude Research 2025)*. Packaging that highlights quick-cook formats and occasion-based cues (e.g., everyday versus special meals) can attract younger and culturally diverse shoppers *(Source: MLA Packaging Research 2024)*.
- Legs and chops remain popular, representing 54% of volume share, but growth opportunities lie in convenience-led formats such as pre-prepared lamb, sausages and stir-fry strips, which resonate with time-poor consumers and younger demographics *(Source: NIQ Homescan to 05/10/2025)*. Highlighting these options can help position lamb as both premium and practical.

Top things consumers look for when buying lamb



Source: MLA Organic Meat Research 2024, Q: What are the 5 key things that you seek when purchasing lamb?

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