

Industry Plans Labels To Educate Consumers

CHICAGO, Ill. — According to National Live Stock and Meat Board Chairman Robert Rebholtz, an Idaho beef and lamb producer, it is now time for the meat and livestock industry to move on with efforts to help consumer understand new nutrition labels.

A resolution, passed last week, requires all food products to comply with the Nutrition Labeling and Education Act, which was passed by Congress in 1990.

"We know that consumers welcome any nutrition information that will help them make informed decisions," Rebholtz said. "The meat Board now looks forward to working with health organizations and other food industry groups to develop education programs to ensure that nutrition labels are used, as well as useful. It is imperative that the Meat Board work to help consumers understand these labels and how meats fits in the total diet."

"For years, the Meat Board has avidly supported full disclosure of nutrients on food labels — including total fat, saturated fat and calories from fat," said Eric Hentges, Ph.D., Meat Board director of nutrition research.

The Meat Board's support of nutrition disclosure began in 1985 when "Meat Nutri-Facts" was introduced into supermarkets across the country. The program, sponsored jointly by the Meat Board, American Meat Institute and the Food Marketing Institute, provides nutrition information at the fresh meat case.

The Meat Board was the recipient of the 1986 President's Circle Award for its role in developing "Meat Nutri-Facts" and its support of nutrition education. This is the highest honor awarded by the American Dietetic Association and Foundation.

The Meat Board will revise "Meat Nutri-Facts" and make it available to retailer in late 1993.



Have You Heard?

By Doris Thomas
Lancaster Extension
Home Economist

NEW PORK COOKERY RECOMMENDATIONS

Stop! Don't overcook that tender pork roast or chops on New Year's day. You can cook today's fresh pork in less time and to a lower internal temperature than ever before, the National Pork Producers Council (NPPC) has announced.

The new guidelines call for cooking today's pork to an internal temperature of 160 degrees Fahrenheit for medium doneness. This represents a 10 to 25 degree drop in previously recommended cooking temperatures. When

cooked to these temperatures, pork is tender, juicy and done to perfection. This reduced temperature also means quicker preparation for time conscious cooks.

The new recommendations are based on the results of a two-year research project between the NPPC and the National Livestock and Meat Board.

Years ago, when pork had an average of 50 percent more fat than it does today, it was possible to overcook the meat and still have a fairly tender product with good flavor. However, that's not true today.

The nation's pork industry has

gone to great lengths to ensure wholesomeness in the production of fresh pork, and the new recommendations are safe, while ensuring great taste. Between the producers' high standards in production practices and the USDA's inspection programs, you can be sure today's fresh pork is healthier, leaner and tastier than ever. Historically people have overcooked pork from a fear of trichinosis. But trichinae, which is a clinical rarity in hogs today, is destroyed at 137 degrees F.

When making a decision on which pork cut to pick up at the meat counter, remember to think about cost per serving rather than cost per pound.

For one serving you need to purchase a 1/4 to 1/2 pound of boneless meat; 1/2 to 3/4 pound of meat with little bone; and 3/4 to 1 pound of meat with a lot of bone. Color is important too. Pork should be pink to delicate rose.

As soon as you arrive home, place your pork purchases in the coldest part of your refrigerator. If you plan to keep fresh pork longer than two days before you cook it, wrap it in freezer paper and freeze it.

The lower recommended internal temperature for cooking pork also means a savings on your energy bill. How do you make sure it's 160 degrees F? Use a meat thermometer.

Pork roasts vary in shape, size, amount of bone, leanness and thickness. A meat thermometer should be inserted in the roast with the bulb of the thermometer inserted in the center of the thickest part of the roast, not touching the bone. As the roast cooks, the thermometer will measure the internal temperature of the meat.

If you are not a pork and sauerkraut fan, try the following recipe for making a delicious Cajun pork roast. Have a Happy New Year!

CAJUN PORK ROAST

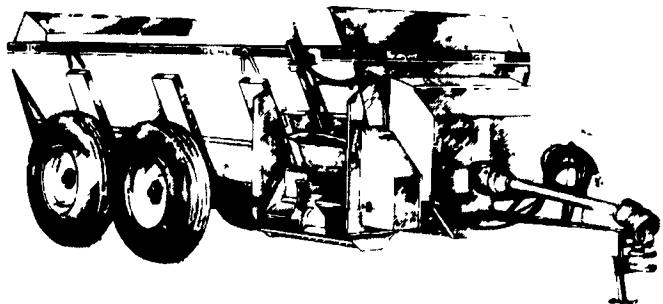
2-pound boneless single loin pork roast
3 tablespoons paprika
1/2 teaspoon red pepper (cayenne)
1 tablespoon garlic powder
2 teaspoons oregano
2 teaspoon thyme
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon white pepper
1/2 teaspoon cumin
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg

Combine all seasoning and rub well over all surfaces of the roast. Place roast in shallow pan and roast in 350 degrees oven for about one hour, until internal temperature is 155-160 degrees. Remove from oven, cover with foil and allow to rest 5-10 minutes before serving. Serves 6.

Nutrient information per three-ounce serving:
Calories: 178; Fat: 6 g;
Cholesterol: 66 mg;
Protein: 27g; Sodium: 239 mg.

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