

Ethnic Holiday Calendar for Lamb & Goat Markets

Populations of different ethnic communities are growing in Manitoba as well as in rest of the Canada. Those people like to eat lamb/ goat meat so the demand for lamb, mutton and goat meat is also on the rise. The demand grows much higher during their particular holidays. It is useful for the producers to know about these holidays so they can keep up with the demand by managing their flocks timely. Following calendar can help all the stakeholders in sheep and goat industry in understanding these holidays.

| Holiday | | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 |
|-----------------------|--|--------------|-----------|-----------|----------------|-----------|
| Islamic Holidays | Eid ul-Adha Festival of Sacrifice | 11/17 | 11/07 | 10/25 | 10/15 | 10/4 |
| | Muharramn/ Islamic New Year | 12/8 | 11/27 | 11/15 | 11/4 | 10/25 |
| | Start of Ramadan | 08/11 | 08/01 | 07/20 | 07/9 | 06/28 |
| | Eid ul-Fitr (End of Ramadan) | 09/10 | 08/31 | 08/19 | 08/8 | 07/29 |
| Jewish Holidays | Passover/Pesach | 03/30 - 04/6 | 03/19-26 | 04/ 7-14 | 04/ 7- 14 | 04/ 15-22 |
| | Rosh Hashanah | 09/ 9-10 | 09/ 29-30 | 09/ 17-18 | 09/ 5-6 | 09/ 24-25 |
| | Chanukah | 12/ 2 - 9 | 12/ 21-28 | 12/ 9-16 | 11/28- 12/5 | 12/ 17-24 |
| Christian Holidays | Good Friday before Easter | 04/2 | 04/22 | 04/6 | 03/29 | 04/18 |
| | Christmas | 12/25 | 12/25 | 12/25 | 12/25 | 12/25 |
| Hindu Holidays | Diwali | 11/5 | 10/26 | 11/13 | 11/03 | 10/23 |
| Mexican Holidays | Cinco de Mayo | 05/5 | 05/5 | 05/5 | 05/5 | 05/05 |

Important to note: Muslim holidays are based on the lunar calendar which is 11 days shorter than the solar calendar. This means the dates for these holidays move forward about 10 to 11 days each year depending on when the moon is actually sighted. On the other hand Jewish holidays are celebrated on the same day of the Jewish calendar every year, but the Jewish year is not the same length as a solar year on the Gregorian calendar used by most of the western world, so the date shifts on the Gregorian calendar.

Description of the Holidays

Easter

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

Christmas and New Year

Christmas and New Year are the holidays when suckling kids are popular. However, does must be bred when the days are long (outside the normal breeding season which is Fall) to produce Christmas suckling. The scarcity of young kids may result in excellent prices and more relaxed weight restrictions. The demand for “curry” goats/lambs and market kids also increases during this time as a wide variety of families get time off together.

Eid ul-Adha or Festival of Sacrifice

The traditional lamb or goat for this Muslim holiday commemorating Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice his son Ishmael in obedience to Allah is a yearling or “one tooth” goat. “One tooth” refers to the fact that yearling goats have one set of adult teeth. However, large market kids/lambs and older goats/sheep are also used. The goat/lamb is larger than goats/lambs used at Ramadan because traditionally some of the meat is to be shared with the customer’s extended family and some is to be distributed to the needy. Because it symbolizes family’s religious commitment, the animal must be blemish free. For some Muslims this means it should be healthy with no broken horns, open wounds, or lameness. For others, it should not be castrated nor have even a torn ear. Some families consider an animal with a small sac that has been castrated with burdizzo, unblemished, and a “sac-less” animal with a band, blemished. Others have no concern about castration if the animal is fully healed. In addition, there are no particular weight requirements for this holiday as age is the main concern and ideally >60 lbs live weight is preferred. As a point for information, Muslims also sacrifice cattle and camels for this festive.

Muharram/Islamic New Year

This is the first month of the Muslim year and its first day is celebrated as New Year’s Day. Some Muslim families like to spend this day as a family day and mutton is one of the dishes for this festive. There is no restriction of age or weight for this day except the animal should be healthy and good looking.

Ramadan and Eid ul Fitr

Ramadan is ninth month of the year in Islamic calendar and *Eid ul Fitr* is the last day of the month when Muslims celebrate the end of fasting month. In Arabic “Eid” means “festival” or “festivity”.

Passover/ Pesach

It is the first month of Jewish calendar, beginning on the 14th of Nisan (corresponding to March-April) and traditionally continuing for eight days, commemorating the exodus of the Hebrews from Egypt.

Rosh Hashanah

It is the Jewish New Year. It is marked by solemnity as well as festivity.

Chanukkah

The Jewish festival of rededication also known as festival of lights. It is an eight day festival beginning on the 25th day of Jewish month of Kislev which is ninth month of the twelve month Jewish calendar. In the Jewish community the meat prepared by *Kosher* way of slaughtering is preferred.

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 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 whole over a pit. *Seco de Chivo* or goat stew is a popular dish for other Latin American cultures for holidays such as Christmas. 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 for goat according to Frank Pinkerton, PhD., is “limited to the six colder months. The preferred weight range is 60 to 80 pounds live, and goats in good health are required.”

The Filipino market

Filipinos are one of the largest community recently immigrated into Manitoba. Goat is one of the livestock animals that are very popular among Filipinos. Goat meat is cooked in several ways like stew or roasted. It is served during festivities including family gatherings. Examples of the occasions where it is usually served include: 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 a Filipino meal or to entertain a visitor. It is a favorite appetizer for the Filipino male population. Healthy looking >60 lbs goat is what Filipinos always look for.

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