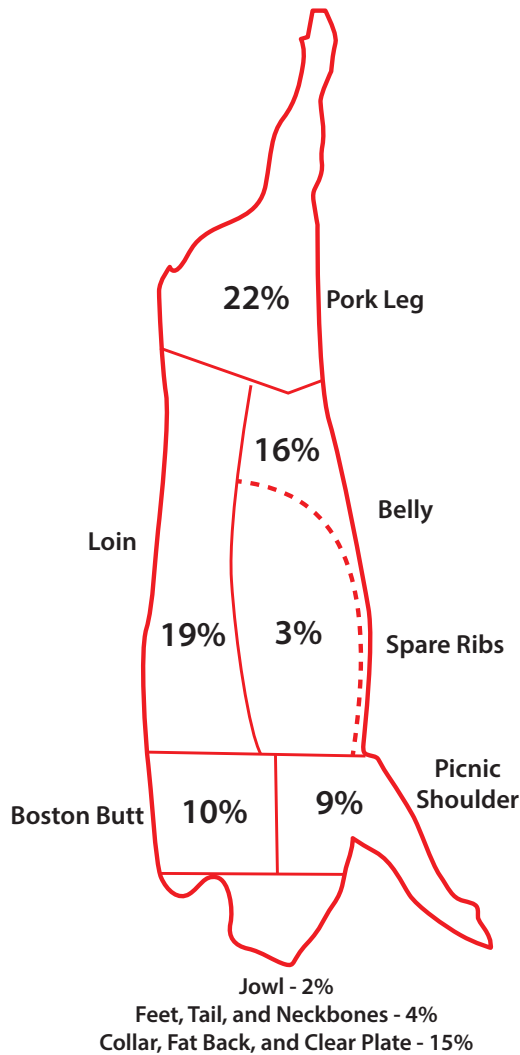




**K-STATE**  
Research and Extension



## Pork Processing Options for Consumers



The primal cuts of pork as a percentage of carcass weight.

This guide explains the choices available to consumers when they take a pig to be processed. It provides information on the approximate amount of meat that should be returned from each primal after the animal has been prepared to customer specifications.

**Picnic shoulder:** Generally, the picnic shoulder is cut into bone-in or boneless roasts. Some or all of the meat from the picnic shoulder could also be used to make ground pork or sausage.

**Boston butt:** The two options for Boston butt are boneless or bone-in blade steaks. Customers who would consume pulled pork may prefer to keep the Boston butt as whole or as partial roasts that can be made either bone-in or boneless.

**Loin:** The options for cuts made from the loin include bone-in loin chops or boneless top loin chops and a tenderloin roast. Another option is to have sirloin chops or a sirloin roast made from part of the loin. Additionally, country style ribs, blade chops, and back ribs made from the loin may be of interest to the customer.

**Pork leg:** The pork leg can be cut into bone-in or boneless hams. These hams can be cured and smoked, or kept fresh, depending on customer's preference. Some customers may prefer either fresh or cured ham steaks as an alternative.

**Belly/Spareribs:** Primarily, the belly will be cured, smoked and sliced into bacon of desired thickness. A set of spareribs will be returned from each half of the carcass.

**Ground pork:** Any of the carcass can be used to make ground product. The ground product can be made into fresh ground pork or sausage shaped into patties, linked, and/or cooked and smoked.

**Miscellaneous:** Each half of the carcass has a jowl and two hocks, as well as two pig's feet. If the customer desires, the hocks can be smoked. Smoked hocks and jowls can be used for soups.

## Pork Cutout Table

The numbers are based on a pork carcass with a 205-pound hot (unchilled) carcass weight with average muscling. A 3% shrink (cooler shrink and cutting loss) is assumed. The percentage of the hot carcass and the approximate weight in pounds for cuts from each primal are shown below.

Cut Options	% of Hot Carcass	Weight (lbs)
<b>Picnic Shoulder</b> Picnic shoulder roasts or steaks Often used for sausage or ground pork	8.0	16.4
<b>Boston Butt</b> Whole Boston butt roast Blade steaks	8.6	17.6
<b>Loin</b> Bone-in pork chops Boneless pork chops Back ribs Tenderloin roasts Country style ribs	14.6	30.0
<b>Ham</b> Cured ham (boneless or bone-in) Fresh ham steaks Fresh ham roasts	15.8	32.4
<b>Belly</b> Fresh side Cured bacon	12.6	25.9
<b>Spareribs</b> Spareribs St. Louis style ribs	2.9	6.0
<b>Trimmings</b> Ground pork and sausage	7.8	15.9
<b>Miscellaneous</b> Bone, skin, and fat Jowl	26.7	54.7
<b>Total meat</b>	<b>70.3</b>	<b>144.2</b>
<b>Total fat and bone</b>	<b>26.7</b>	<b>54.7</b>

## References

*A Guide to Pork Cuts – Pork Cuts*. 2017. National Pork Board. Des Moines, IA. Available from: <https://www.porkbeinspired.com/cuts/>

*Hog Carcass Breakdown*. 2010. National Pork Producers Council, Des Moines, IA. Available from: <http://cemodoc.ucanr.edu/files/48951.pdf>

*How Much Meat?*. 2011. Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry, Oklahoma City, OK. Available from: <http://www.oda.state.ok.us/food/fs-hogweight.pdf>

*How Much Meat to Expect from a Carcass*. 2010. Gregg Rentfrow. University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY. Available from: <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/asc/asc179/asc179.pdf>

*Processing Percentage Charts*. Lucy Severs. Washington State Department of Agriculture. Available from: <http://agr.wa.gov/foodanimal/custommeats/processingpercentage.aspx#HalfPork>

*USDA Estimated Composite Pork Carcass Cutout – An Overview*. 2013. United States Department of Agriculture, Washington DC. Available from: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/NationalDailyCarlotPorkOverviewPDF.pdf>

### Prepared by:

**Kassandra McKillip**, Graduate Research Assistant, Kansas State University

**Alaena Wilfong**, 4-H/Youth Development Extension Educator, University of Idaho

**Travis O’Quinn, Ph.D.**, Assistant Professor, Kansas State University

### Reviewed by:

**Kara Mayer**, Agriculture and Natural Resources Agent, K-State Research and Extension - Wabaunsee County; **Lexie Hayes**, Youth Livestock Coordinator, Kansas State University

Publications from Kansas State University are available at [www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu](http://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu).

Date shown is that of publication or last revision. Contents of this publication may be freely reproduced for educational purposes. All other rights reserved. In each case, credit Travis O’Quinn, et al., *Pork Processing Options for Consumers*, Kansas State University, February 2018.