



Classification of Red Meat*

A key to more effective marketing



Classification provides a sound basis for:

- Meat traders to describe their specific requirements in simple terms when purchasing carcasses.
- Utilisation of variety in the market with a view to optimum consumer satisfaction.
- Utilisation of price differences.
- Determining selling prices.

CLASSIFICATION CHARACTERISTICS OF: Beef, Lamb, Sheep and Goat Meat

AGE	CLASS	CONFORMATION	CLASS
0 Teeth	A	Very flat	1
1-2 Teeth	AB	Flat	2
3-6 Teeth	B	Medium	3
More than 6 Teeth	C	Round	4
		Very round	5
FATNESS	CLASS	DAMAGE	CLASS
No fat	0	Slight	1
Very lean	1	Moderate	2
Lean	2	Severe	3
Medium	3		
Fat	4	SEX	
Slightly overfat	5	The carcass of a ram or a bull as well as of a hamel, a kapater or an ox showing signs of late castration of the AB, B or C age classes, are identified.	
Excessively overfat	6		

CLASSIFICATION CHARACTERISTICS OF: Pork

% MEAT*	mm**	CLASS	CONFORMATION	CLASS
≥70	≤12	P	Very flat	1
68-69	13-17	O	Flat	2
66-67	18-22	R	Medium	3
64-65	23-27	C	Round	4
62-63	28-32	U	Very round	5
≤61	>32	S	DAMAGE	CLASS
No specifications in respect of % meat apply in the case of Rough, Sucking pig (≤20kg) an Sausag pig (≥100.1kg).			Slight	1
** In case of Intrascopie.			Moderate	2
			Severe	3
FAT THICKNESS**			SEX	
%MEAT*			The carcass of a boar as well as of a barrow showing signs of late castration, are identified.	
Only in case of the Hennessy classification apparatus.				

MARKS FOR CLASSIFICATION CHARACTERISTICS ON: Beef, Lamb, Sheep and Goat Carcasses

TRAIT	MARK	WHERE ON THE CARCASS
Age (A, AB, B, C)		One mark on each quarter of beef carcass.
Fatness* (0 to 6)	Eg. Class 3 	Only one mark on the carcass for lamb, sheep and goat carcasses.
Conformation (1 to 5)	Eg. Class 3 	One mark on each side of beef carcasses. No mark for lamb, sheep and goat carcasses.
Damage** (1 to 3)	<1> <2> <3>	Taking into account the area of damage, one mark on each side for beef carcasses. Only one mark on the carcass for lamb, sheep and goat carcasses.
Sex		One mark on each side of beef carcasses. Only one mark on the carcass for lamb, sheep and goat carcasses.

- * In case of a sheep carcass with a fat tail, a double impression of the mark.
** Damage, if it occurs, is indicated on a scale of 1 to 3 for the areas concerned, viz B(buttock), L(loin) and F(forequarter).

EXAMPLES OF THE ROLLER-MARK COMPOSITIONS FOR: Beef, Lamb, Sheep and Goat Carcasses*

AAA ABAB BBB CCC	– Age class of the animal as an indication of tenderness.
000 000 000 000	
ZWZ ZWZ ZWZ ZWZ	The A age class is roller-marked in purple (most tender). AB carcasses are in green (tender). B in brown (less tender) and C in red (least tender).
AAA ABAB BBB CCC	
000 000 000 000	– Fatness class ** of the carcass.
ZWZ ZWZ ZWZ ZWZ	This symbol can be replaced in the roller-mark by 111, 222, 333, 444, 555 or 666.
AAA ABAB BBB CCC	
000 000 000 000	
ZWZ ZWZ ZWZ ZWZ	– Abattoir-identification code.

- * All goat carcasses are roller-marked in orange, taking into account the age of the animal (AAA, ABAB, BBB or CCC).
** The amount of visible fat can be evaluated by the consumer and selected according to preference.

* Measured between 2nd and 3rd last rib, 45mm from carcass midline.

MARKS FOR CLASSIFICATION CHARACTERISTICS ON: Pork Carcasses

TRAIT	MARK	WHERE ON THE CARCASS
Conformation (1 to 5)	Eg. Class 3 	One mark on each side.
Damage* (1 to 3)	<1> <2> <3>	Taking into account the area of damage, only one mark on the carcass.
Sex		One mark on each side.

* Damage, if it occurs, is indicated on a scale of 1 to 3 for the areas concerned, viz B(buttock), L(loin) and F(forequarter).

MARKS FOR CLASSES OF PORK:*

CLASS	MARK	WHERE ON THE CARCASS
Sucking pig	S	One mark on forehead.
P, O, R, C, U & S	P, O, R, C, U & S	One mark on each side.
Sausage pig	W	One mark on each buttock.
Rough	RU	One mark on each side.

* The class of a pig carcass is not roller-marked on it. Some pig carcasses may be roller-marked in purple ink with a specific abattoir-identification code/trademark.

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* Meat Classification Regulations No. R. 863 in Government Gazette of The Republic of South Africa, 1 September 2006.