

Lamb Yield Grades

Yield grades reflect the "quantity" (percentage) of retail cuts that can be expected from a lamb carcass. Yield Grades range from 1 to 5, with a Yield Grade of 1 having the highest expected yield and 5 the lowest. Yield Grade 2 or 3 is usually most desirable. Yield Grade is based solely off of the fat measurement recorded opposite the ribeye between the 12th and 13th rib. In addition the kidney and pelvic fat must be removed from the carcass, leaving no more than 1% in the carcass.

$$\text{YIELD GRADE} = 0.4 + (10 \times \text{FAT THICKNESS})$$

- A Yield Grade 1 carcass has only a thin layer of external fat over the back and loin. The maximum amount of back fat is 0.15 inches. Body wall thickness usually ranges from 0.75 to 0.85 inches.
- A Yield Grade 2 carcass has a slightly thin layer of fat over the back and loin and the muscles of the back are not visible. The maximum amount of back fat is 0.25 inches. Such a carcass would have a body wall thickness of 0.9 to 1.0 inches.
- A Yield Grade 3 carcass has a moderately thick covering of fat over the back. The maximum amount of back fat is 0.35 inches. Such a carcass would have a body wall thickness from 1.05 to 1.15 inches.
- A Yield Grade 4 carcass is completely covered with fat. The maximum amount of back fat is 0.45 inches. Such a carcass would have a body wall thickness between 1.2 and 1.3 inches.
- A Yield Grade 5 carcass has an adjusted fat thickness of more than 0.45 inch.

