

## 2024 Market Calendar - feasts / festivals that often feature lamb

Month	Holiday	Date	Consumption preferences	Market processor needs	Public auction market impact
January	Feast of the Epiphany (Christian)	January 6	Lamb is featured in many celebration meals.	Recently weaned and milk-fed lambs are preferred.	Lower market volumes generally.
	Orthodox Christmas	January 7	Lamb is featured in many celebration meals.	Recently weaned and milk-fed lambs are preferred.	
February	Chinese New Year	February 10	Both mutton and lamb are used in a variety of dishes and is a favorite ingredient in hot pots.		Lower market volumes.
March				Easter holiday inventory buildup.	Growth in supply following winter, with Easter demand increase.
	Ramadan (Islam) (daylight fasting)	March 10 to April 9	Some celebrations will occur prior to start of Ramadan.	Weaned market lambs (60 – 90 lbs live weight)	A moderate market factor for week leading into Ramadan.
	Western Easter	March 31	Roast lamb is a main dish in festival meals for Mediteranian (Italian, Portuguese, and Greek) heritages	Healthy young lambs. (under 60 pounds live weight; ideally milk-fed and fat). Number of lambs under 65 pounds begins to increase in the 3 weeks prior to Easter, and often peaks during the week before Easter. Number of 65-to-79-pound lambs will also increase during this time.	Higher market demand in the 2-to-3-week period preceding holiday. Check local auction schedules for "special" Easter sale dates. A peak sale period in the year.

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April	Eid al-Fitr (Islam) Festival of Fast-breaking	April 9-10	Celebrations occur during the fast break period which will feature lamb products.	Weaned market lambs 60 – 90 lbs liveweight. Lower demand for heavy lambs.	A moderate market factor for the week leading into Ramadan.
	Passover (Pesach) Jewish	April 22-30	Traditionally must be processed under Kosher laws.	Healthy finished lambs. (up to 64 lbs live weight; ideally milk fed and fat)	Steady market. A limited influence.
May			Start of barbeque season which more frequently featuring Ontario lamb.	Mod demand. Processors see an increase in BBQ lamb demand from May to August.	Commonly higher supply and slightly higher but still moderate demand.
	Orthodox Easter	May 5	Roast lamb is a main dish in festival meals for Mediteranian (Italian, Portuguese, and Greek) heritages	Healthy young lambs. (under 60 pounds live weight; ideally milk-fed and fat). Number of lambs under 65 pounds begins to increase in the 3 weeks prior to Easter, and often peaks during the week before Easter. Number of 65-to-79-pound lambs will also increase during this time.	Higher market demand in the 2-to-3-week period preceding holiday. Check local auction schedules for "special" Easter sale dates. A peak sale period in the year.

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June	The Hajj (Islam)	June 14-19			
	Eid al Adha (Festival of Sacrifice, Eid)	June 16-19	Eid, the festival of sacrifice, is one of the most important observances in the Islamic faith. (This may be referred to as Qurbani, though this refers to the actual act of animal processing.)	Lambs (70 – 110 lbs live weight) Desired weight differs across different communities. Lambs should be under a year of age and be unblemished. Some prefer lambs older than six months. Blemishes may include wounds, torn ears, or any physical unsoundness. Wethers and lambs with docked tails may not be acceptable to some buyers.	High market demand in period leading up to holiday. Peak demand is in week preceding holiday. Note: There is a high activity level of private holiday sales sought by families for this important celebration.
July	Muharram (Islamic New Year)	July 7	The Islamic New Year is the first day of the Muslim calendar. Mutton is often served as the main course for this holiday meal.	There is no preferred weight for this holiday, although animals should appear healthy.	Steady market. A limited influencer.
August					
September	Mawlid al-Nabi (Birthday of the Prophet Muhammad)	September 15			
October	Rosh Hashanah Jewish New Year	October 2-4	Lamb is a tradition or symbol of a new beginning.	Forequarters from weaned market lambs (60 – 109 lbs live weight)	Steady market. A limited influencer.
	Thanksgiving	October 14	Lamb is an alternative to turkey.	Steady demand with slow year over year consumer demand increase.	Steady market. A limited influencer.

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November			Stew/casserole are growing in seasonal popularity	Lower but steady demand during transition from Thanksgiving into Christmas period.	Lower market volumes.
December	Hanukkah (Festival of Rededication) Jewish	December 25, 2024 to January 2, 2025	Traditionally meats must be processed according to Kosher law.	Healthy heavy lambs. (up to 100 lbs live weight)	Usually occurs close to Christian Christmas which leads to high demand.
	Christmas Day to New Year (Christian)		Lamb is a feature at Christmas parties (lamb-pops, spiedini, roasts). Leg of lamb, stews and curries are food staples.	Lambs should be freshly weaned (milk fed), up to 80 lbs, and not older than 3 months of age. Out-of-season breeding is required to produce the favoured type of lamb for this market. Cull sheep are popular for stew and curry.	Higher market demand in 2 to 3-week period preceding holiday. A peak sale period of the year.