

The S&S Homestead Foodbook

Chapter Four

Meat



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Beef

(We are indebted to Jo Robinson's excellent book, Why Grassfed is Best, for much of the following nutritional information.)

As I write this, I recall last night's visit to the cows. Henning had put out their evening ration of hay. All of the adults were munching thoughtfully. The calves were chasing each other, cutting capers, and periodically diving into the hay for experimental mouthfuls. Our cows are a mix of Simmental and Angus, and have natural immunities because of living in the same place all their lives. The cows have sleek coats, rounded bodies, and peaceful demeanors. They all have names. They will never be fed grain, never given hormones, antibiotics, or vermifuges. They will never suffer the stress of a trip to the feedlot, nor be exposed to diseases there. Because of careful breeding, their meat is tender and lean.

Every year, we slaughter 2-3 year old heifers and steers finished on high protein spring grass. Every year, the butcher who kills them in the field comments admiringly on the meat. It is lean, with a nice outside layer of healthy fat. There is little internal marbling, and that's a very good thing, indeed.

Fat

The meat of cows fed, or "finished", on grain, has four to six more times more total fat than the meat of cows fed exclusively on grass and hay. It has twice as much saturated fat, which is linked with cardiovascular disease and diabetes. A six-ounce steak from a grass fed cow has 100 fewer calories than the same steak from a grain fed cow. In fact, beef from a grass fed cow has the same amount of fat as a skinless chicken breast. Simply switching from feedlot beef to pastured beef will save you 17,733 calories a year: you could lose six pounds without changing anything else in your diet.

Omega-6, Omega-3

Linoleic acid (omega-6) and alpha-linoleic acid (omega-3) are two essential fatty acids. They cannot be produced by the body and must be acquired through diet. They are necessary for growth, for the health of blood vessels and nerves, and for the suppleness of skin and other tissues. Essential fatty acids can increase the solubility of cholesterol deposited in arterial walls, and support adrenal and thyroid gland activity. Deficiency of fatty acids has been linked to prostate enlargement, psoriasis, anorexia nervosa, hyperactivity, multiple sclerosis, acne, eczema, hair loss, and slow wound healing.

Every cell and system in the body relies on omega-3; the brain, which is mostly fat, can be adversely affected by a deficiency of this fatty acid, resulting in depression, ADD (attention deficit disorder) and dementia. An adequate supply of omega-3 has been linked to resistance to breast cancer, high blood pressure, and cardiac arrhythmia.

We need these fatty acids in a ratio of about 1 to 1, omega-6 to omega-3. Problems, such as inflammatory conditions, arise when we have too much omega-6 in our diet.

Omega-3 fatty acids form in the green leaves of plants, while omega-6 fatty acids form in the seeds. Grass-fed animals ingest, and pass on, a balance of fatty acids. Grain fed animals ingest, and pass on, almost twice as much omega 6 as omega 3.

Conjugated Linoleic Acid

CLA, another good fat, is found in the meat of grass fed beef and the milk of grass fed dairy cows. (More about milk in the Dairy Section.) It converts fat to muscle, which makes CLA a much-sought nutrient by body builders. More important, laboratory studies show it to be a cancer fighter, significantly reducing cancer risk and tumor growth in laboratory animals. Switching from grain-fed to grass-fed meat increases your intake of CLA three to five times.

E-Coli

E-coli is a group much-feared bacteria, and rightly so. In 1993, an outbreak of E-coli in the Northwest caused illness in 700 people, and killed four. The source was undercooked meat in a fast-food chain. It is important to understand the process by which one of the strains that is dangerous to humans, E-coli 0157:H7, makes its way into our meat.

E-coli bacteria are present in all ruminant animals, as a necessary part of the digestive process. If meat is handled badly during butchering, bacteria from the digestive system can contaminate the meat. If the meat is properly cooked, the bacteria are destroyed. E-coli is much less a potential threat in the meat of grass-fed animals, and here's why:

Cows are grass eaters, and they process that grass through four stomachs. It's a long process – dinner can take up to eighteen days from mouth to manure. Every step of the way, the feed is drenched in digestive acids. Grasses are pulled, chewed, then taken into the rumen, where a peristaltic process (marked by a gentle burp) returns them to the mouth, where they are chewed again – the peaceful rumination of a cow – then moved on into the next part of the digestive system.

A recent study shows that animals fed on corn, silage, and animal by-products are more likely to carry E-coli 0157: H7 than grass-fed animals. Even if the grass-fed animals we eat are infected with the pathogenic strain, our chances of becoming ill are greatly reduced. This is because one of our main defenses against harmful bacteria is stomach acid. As long as bacteria are vulnerable to the acids of the human digestive system, they will be neutralized. Unfortunately, feeding large amounts of grain to a ruminant increases the acidity of its digestive system: grain is high in protein, not easily chewed by a cow, tends to slip past the rumen, and requires higher-than-normal levels of stomach acid to break it down into protein. As a result, more resistant and virulent strains of E-coli develop in the digestive systems of cattle fed on grain. E-coli bacteria that survive a cow's digestive acid bath more easily survive the acid in a human digestive system, and make us ill – or dead.

Grass Feeding and the Environment

Grassland that feeds livestock stops soil erosion and builds new soil. It also can decrease global-warming atmospheric carbon dioxide levels (Murphy). Animals deposit their wastes on pasture and micro- and macro-organisms immediately begin breaking them down. Carbon is thereby sequestered in the soil. Conventional feedlots, on the other hand, create a toxic environment because the cows stand on cement or compacted, liveless mud and there is nowhere for the wastes to get broken down. Factory-animal farming is a leading cause of high atmospheric carbon-dioxide levels, second only to car emissions.

What's in a Name?

Our cows have names. Each has a personality and unique behavior patterns. We know, and care for, each animal throughout its life. Our customers can observe them in the field and choose the one they want. We don't go as far as French farmers, who band each market animal with the farmer's name and address, but we don't have to. Our customers know us, and see how we raise our animals.

It is critical to know who raises your beef and how they do it. Labels on meat in the store can be misleading. In her article "What's in a Brand Name? Less Than Most Consumers Imagine", Jo Robinson points out that putting together a folksy label like *Farmer Marvin's Fresh n' Natural Iowa Prairie Beef* may reflect nothing but cagey marketing. She debunks all of the terms of the label, but the most egregious are "fresh" and "natural". She writes, "The UDSA allows you to add the words 'fresh' and 'natural' to any unfrozen animal product that has not been altered subsequent to slaughter. (Prior to slaughter, of course, your animals may have been stressed, implanted with hormones, fattened on stale pastry, and fed a steady diet of sub-therapeutic antibiotics.)" She urges farmers to educate consumers, and we urge customers to visit the farm before they buy meat. (One visit to a feedlot will make you a vegetarian, or a convert to locally raised, grass fed beef.)

What's in Beef?

Beef is a significant source of protein, vitamin b-12, iron, zinc, and selenium. It also has good amounts of potassium, magnesium, and vitamins B-1, B-2 and B-3. Because our beef is grass-fed, there are also significant levels of vitamin A and, of course, omega-3 fatty acids and CLA.

Organ Meats

Organ meats, especially liver, have highly concentrated vitamins and minerals. For a majority of conditions arising from nutritional deficiencies, anemia, for example, liver is a remedy. Because liver is the organ that filters toxins, it is extremely important to get liver from a clean source. *Never* eat liver from a conventional source. You will be

eating high levels of chemicals and toxins that were fed to that animal. Because our cows are never given these substances, the liver is clean, healthy, and delicious.

Liver and Onions

This is one of our favorite dishes. It is fragrant, delicious, and a real energizer.

4 large onions, diced
½ C olive oil
1 grated lemon peel
2 lbs beef or pork liver
Flour
Salt and pepper

While the liver is still partly frozen, remove the fat and fell (membrane) and cut into ½ inch slices. Place them on a cookie sheet that has been dusted with flour, and turn the slices so that they are completely coated.

Quarter onions and separate in layers. Place in a heavy frying pan and sauté until tender. Stir in lemon peel, then lift out with a slotted spoon and place in a bowl. Keep warm in the oven.

Place liver slices in the pan, and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Brown liver well on both sides in the oil, but do not overcook. You may need to add more oil to cook all of the meat. When all the liver slices are cooked, place them in the bowl with the onions and lemon and serve warm, over rice.

Omi's Konigsberger Klopse

Meatballs and broth:

1 lb. ground round
1 egg, beaten
¼ cup bread crumbs
¼ cup chopped onion
1 t. salt
1/8 t. pepper

3 ½ cups water
6 whole allspice berries
1 whole onion
1-2 bay leaves
6 whole peppercorns

Sauce:

3-4 T. butter

[Meat]

1/3 c. flour
Strained meatball poaching broth
2 T. capers
2 T. lemon juice
2 t. sugar (optional)

Combine meatball ingredients and form into 8-9 meatballs
Add spices to water and bring to a simmer
Add meatballs and simmer for 30 minutes
Remove meatballs from broth with a slotted spoon, strain the broth and set aside
heat butter in a saucepan
Stir in flour and cook to make a roux
Slowly stir in strained broth until smooth
Add meatballs and simmer 10 minutes

Corned Beef

This recipe comes from the 1975 edition of *The Joy of Cooking*.

This salted beef actually has nothing to do with corn but got its name name in Anglo Saxon times when a granular salt the size of a kernel of wheat – “corn” of course, to a Briton – was used to process it.

To corn, combine

4 quarts hot water
2 cups pickling or kosher salt
¼ C sugar
2 T pickling spice

When cool, pour over a 5 lb piece of beef – brisket or tongue or hanging tender, which has been placed in a deep enameled pot or ceramic crock.

Add the peeled cloves of a head of garlic

Put a plate on top of the meat to keep it submerged, and cover pot.

Cure in a cool place for 3 weeks, turning meat every five days.

To cook, cover the meat with boiling water and simmer, allowing about one hour per pound, or until a fork can penetrate to the center. Slice it very thinly across the grain. Serve on dark rye bread or with cabbage wedges simmered the last fifteen minutes with the meat.

Lamb



Our sheep, like our cows, live together in their flock. The only exception is that we isolate the ram and the ram lambs from the ewes and the ewe lambs when the weather turns cold in the fall, which is when the ewes come into season. We want them to breed so that the lambs are born with the first flush of spring grass.

Our sheep are a hardy hybrid, produced over years of selected ewes and changing rams every couple of generations in order to introduce new genetics into the flock. We began with pure Suffolk ewes and a ram, but discovered that the ewes often gave birth to lambs they ignored, or lambs with double eyelids, which Henning had to trim off with special scissors so that the lambs would not go blind. I wound up bottle-feeding neglected lambs (which, I confess, I took great pleasure in, and still do to give newborns a bit of a head start in the world). Now our ewes are long-lived, hardy, and very good mothers. Since we produce lambs mostly for our own consumption, we prize the ewes who have single lambs, rather than twins or triplets. The single lambs grow faster and are more sturdy than the twins. In the fall, we slaughter the larger singles, sometimes keeping a promising ewe lamb for the next year's breeding, and hold the smaller lambs over for a year so that they can put on muscle, fat, and size.

The term "lamb" is a bit misleading, since a sheep up to a year old have the tender flesh and mild taste desired by the cook.

Ground Lamb

Ground lamb can be added to ground pork and/or hamburger for meatballs and other casseroles. It is a misconception that lamb is fatty: the meat from grass-fed sheep is lean and flavorful. You can substitute it for hamburger in burgers or wraps.

Lamb Curry

This recipe is adapted from *The Joy of Cooking*.

A leg of lamb or a shoulder roast

Olive oil for braising

½ C minced onion

1 T curry powder (I prefer a sweeter curry powder, such as Zanzibar, to the curry that is simply hot)

1 C light stock – I use our homemade chicken stock

½ C diced celery

2 T chopped parsley

Salt and pepper to taste

Sour cream

Cooked rice

Remove fat and fell (the papery outer covering of a leg or shoulder roast of lamb) from the meat

Cut into bite-sized pieces, and brown with the onion and curry powder in olive oil

Add the stock, celery, and parsley. Stir, cover, and simmer until tender, about ½ hour. Add a little sour cream to thicken the gravy. Serve over rice.

Weeping Leg of Lamb

This was the first dish Henning ever made for me during our courtship. It definitely enhanced my desire to marry him. The recipe was given to him by a colleague, Lars Warne, in the Scandinavian Department at the University of Washington.

1 leg of lamb (6-7 lbs)

3 cloves of garlic, slivered

Fresh leaves of rosemary

Butter

3 cloves of garlic, minced

3 lbs potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced

1 tsp fresh thyme

Salt and pepper

Preheat the oven to 325. Brush the upper oven rack with olive oil.

Insert slivered garlic and rosemary into the leg of lamb, and rub the lamb with butter. Insert a meat thermometer through the fat side into the center of the lamb, avoiding the bone, and place the prepared leg of lamb on the oiled oven rack.

Butter a broad baking dish (wide enough to catch the drippings from the lamb) and put a layer of potatoes in the bottom. Dot with butter and sprinkle a little minced garlic, salt, pepper, rosemary and thyme over it. Repeat until all potatoes are used. Place the casserole on the rack under the lamb.

Place the sliced potatoes in a broad casserole dish on the rack below the lamb.

Bake lamb and potatoes for 1 ½ hours or until potatoes are done and thermometer registers 175. Slice the lamb and arrange the slices on top of the potatoes.

Lamb Shanks

This recipe is adapted from the one given in *Cuisine at Home*, Issue 38, April 2003.

Shanks are the shin bones of the lamb. The back shins have more meat, but the front shins can be used for this delicious dish, as well. Plan on one shank per person. Lamb shanks are flavorful, but tough, due to tissues that connect muscle to bone. Long, slow simmering is needed to melt the tissues and tenderize the meat. Before braising, trim off most of the fat, but do not remove the fell (the thin tissue that covers the muscles. It helps hold the meat together, but will melt during braising.

Use a large, heavy pot or roaster for cooking. Shanks are inflexible, and you will need to stack them. Avoid cast iron, since it may react with the acidic foods in this recipe, such as tomatoes and wine, and give an off flavor. Get the pan really hot for searing.

4 lamb shanks
5 T olive oil
2 C yellow onion, diced
3 T garlic, minced
1 jalapeno, seeded and minced
1 & 1/3 C crushed tomatoes
1 C beef broth
1 C dry red wine
½ C ketchup (homemade, if possible)
¼ C brown sugar
2 T. prepared mustard
2 T apple cider vinegar
2 T Worcestershire sauce
2 tsp minced fresh rosemary
1 tsp ground cumin
2 bay leaves
¼ C honey
1 C chili sauce
Juice and minced zest of one lime

Sear trimmed shanks in 3 T olive oil in the pot, over high heat. Sear them two at a time, so all sides can be browned. Transfer them to a platter.

Sauté onion, garlic, and jalapeno in 2 T olive oil. Add crushed tomatoes, broth, wine, ketchup, brown sugar, mustard, vinegar, Worcestershire sauce, rosemary, cumin, and bay leaves and bring to a simmer. Return the shanks to the pot (you will need to stack them), cover, and bring liquid to a boil. Reduce heat to simmer the shanks for an hour. Slow, steady simmering is the key to melting the fell and thoroughly cooking the shanks. Check the pot from time to time. After an hour, rearrange the shanks top to bottom, cover, and simmer for another hour.

Combine honey, chilies, lime juice and zest, and set aside.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees with rack in the middle. After they have been braised for two hours, transfer shanks to a baking sheet lined with foil or parchment, brush with some of the glaze, and roast for 5 minutes. Turn, brush glaze on the other side, and roast another five minutes. Meanwhile, skim off and discard any fat floating on top of the braising liquid. Increase heat to high and bring sauce to a boil to reduce slightly.

Remove the meat from the bones, and serve with the sauce ladled over them with rice or potatoes.

Fenalar – Brined Leg of Lamb

This is a traditional recipe that Henning brought from Norway.

1 leg of lamb

Thick brine:

3 lbs pickling or kosher salt

1 heaping T sugar

½ C honey

1 C water

Mix ingredients together. It will be thick. Put the meat in a glass, stainless steel, or ceramic bowl and cover with the brine. Turn the meat and rub it several times a day for one week. As the meat juices come out, the brine will thin and redden – continue to rub it in.

Salt brine

9 qts water

6 lbs rock salt (if you use pickling or kosher salt, you will require a smaller amount, just enough salt to float a potato)

1 lb sugar

Mix ingredients together. Put the meat into the salt brine so that the flesh is completely covered (the bone may stick out). Let sit for one week (no need to rub any more)!

After a week, wrap the leg in layers of cheesecloth, tie securely, and hang to dry in a cool, well ventilated place for three to four months or more. In the old days, people hung the fenalar for up to two years to allow the meat to achieve a dense texture and full flavor. The cheesecloth keeps flies from laying eggs in the meat. When serving, cut the meat perpendicular to the bone. Sliced fenalar dries out quickly, so slice only what you will consume that day.

Pork



Pigs were first domesticated in China around 4900 B.C. Columbus brought eight pigs on his second voyage to America. Thirteen years later, they were so numerous that they were killing cattle and settlers began hunting them with dogs. Wild pigs are still hunted in some places – see Michael Pollan's *The Omnivore's Dilemma* for his description of a wild boar hunt during the hunting and gathering phase of his food experiments.

Pork contains thiamin, vitamin B6, niacin, zinc, riboflavin, potassium, and iron.

Pigs are omnivores, but the notion that you can feed them anything is a real misconception. Pigs are a bit picky: our pigs turn up their snouts at radishes and green beans and uncooked broccoli, for example. Remember that pigs' organs are so similar to ours that pig organs can be transplanted into human bodies. Don't feed them anything you wouldn't eat yourself.

Pork will taste of the food fed to the pigs. Some commercial feeds contain flax, which gives a rather bitter taste to the meat. Pigs raised in Europe may feast on acorns, which transfer their nutty taste to the meat. Corn-fed pigs produce flesh that tastes like corn. We feed our pigs organic barley, milk from our own cow, fresh fruits, and fresh or cooked vegetables. (They are especially fond of cooked potatoes mashed with milk.) As a result, the pork is succulent, with fantastic natural flavors.

Pork Chops

We ask the butcher to cut these to 3/4-inch thickness. I rub a bit of powdered sage, garlic granules, salt and pepper into both sides of the chop, then fry in olive oil until cooked through, but still tender. The resulting gravy can be spooned over rice or potatoes.

Pork Schnitzel

This is a wonderful dressed up variation of pork chops. The recipe comes from a German cookbook.

4 pork chops, $\frac{3}{4}$ inch thick
olive oil
salt, pepper, garlic
flour
1 egg, beaten
bread crumbs

Pound the chops until thin. Rub with salt, pepper, and garlic powder. Turn them in the flour, then in the egg, then in the bread crumbs. Fry on low heat until golden brown, turning as needed.

Pork and Lamb Sausage

We make this sausage every year. What we don't eat right away we freeze for future festivities. The original recipe calls for 1 lb chicken breast in place of the lamb, but because our chickens run around all the time, their meat tends to be tough, and the sausage turned out a bit grainy and dry. Substituting ground lamb for the chicken produced a delicious, succulent, well-textured sausage. We typically double this recipe.

Sausage casings, 1 inch wide (available from a butcher)
 $\frac{1}{2}$ lb leaf lard (This is the fat from around the kidneys, delicate in flavor and texture. It is a traditional shortening for pie crust and other pastries.)
1 lb pork loin
1 lb ground lamb
4 tsps salt
2 tsps ground white pepper
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp each cloves, nutmeg, and ginger
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp cinnamon
4 C chopped onions
 $\frac{1}{2}$ C warm cream
1 C breadcrumbs (see note below)
6 beaten eggs

You will need a meat grinder to make this sausage. Meat grinders are a traditional tool, hand-operated, and can be purchased at a hardware store. They have many uses beyond sausage.

Mince the leaf lard, and cut the pork loin into small pieces. Using a meat grinder, grind the pork and the lamb with the finest blade, and then combine the ground meat with the minced fat. Add the salt, pepper, and spices. Re-grind the meat mixture with the onions.

Soak the breadcrumbs in the warm cream, and then add the eggs. Blend with the meat mixture.

Push the sausage casing onto the largest sausage attachment that comes with your meat grinder. Work as much as possible onto the attachment, and then cut and tie off the end with a bit of cotton string. Put the meat mixture through the grinder once more. The first time you make this sausage, you'll find it easier with two people: one to grind the meat, and another on the business end of the sausage attachment, to guide the meat into the casings. After a bit of practice, one person can do both operations.

Fill casings about $\frac{3}{4}$ full, twisting and tying with string about every six inches.

Leaving the string on, plunge the stuffed casings into boiling water. Reduce the heat to 190, and continue to cook at this temperature for about 20 minutes. If sausages rise to the top, prick casings with a knife to release air.

Cool. Remove string from the sausages you want to cook immediately. Brush with butter, and grill or fry until golden brown.

To make breadcrumbs for this sausage (because you want only the best!) make a loaf of French bread (*see bread section in this book*). When the bread is cooled and firm, cut half of the loaf into croutons, and bake in the oven until the croutons are crisp. Process in a food processor until you have crumbs. Freeze what you don't use for the sausage for future use.

Ham

Ham has replaced turkey as our main dish for holidays. We revere it because we have raised it, enjoy it because it is delicious, and (as a cook) I appreciate it because the preparation is effortless. A smoked ham from a well-fed pig needs none of the brown sugar, cloves, and pineapple my mother covered store-bought hams with to make them moist and palatable. This just goes in the oven as is, and it is incredibly good.

Preheat oven to 325. Place ham on a rack, uncovered, in a shallow pan. Insert a meat thermometer, being sure it does not touch the bone. For a 10-15 lb ham, bake 18-20 minutes per pound. (This amounts to five hours in the oven; Henning and I always have hams cut in half; they take about two and a half hours to bake.) For a 5-7 lb ham, bake 20 minutes per pound. For a shank or butt portion, 3-4 lbs, bake about 35 minutes per pound. In all cases, cook until internal temperature reaches 160 degrees.

Remove the ham from the oven when it is done, cover, and let it rest for about an hour before slicing.

Ham and Scalloped Potatoes

Someone once defined eternity as a ham and two people. When you have had all the ham sandwiches you want, use the leftovers in this lovely casserole.

8 C potatoes, pared and thinly sliced

4 T flour

6 T butter

$\frac{1}{2}$ C diced onions

Small chunks of ham

2 C whole milk or cream

1 & ½ tsps salt
½ tsp paprika
½ tsp dried mustard

Drop the potato slices into boiling water, and cook until they are barely tender. Drain. While they cool, grease a large baking dish. Place the potatoes, onion, and ham chunks in it in two layers, sprinkling each layer with flour and dotting with butter.

Heat the milk or cream, and season with salt, paprika, and mustard. Pour the mixture over the potatoes. You may top with grated Parmesan if you like, or sprinkle with more paprika. Bake for 35 minutes.

Split Pea or Lentil Soup

When the ham is down to bone, with the last bits of meat clinging to it, it's time for soup! Bring plenty of water, and the ham bone to a boil, and then reduce to simmer. Minimum cooking time is two hours to get a good broth, but the more you cook the bone, the more healthful gelatin (containing vitamins and mineral) you will extract from the it, and I like to leave the bone on simmer all day. When the broth is done, extract the bone and remove any ham for later. (We add this to the soup just before serving.)

Add split peas or lentils, bring to a boil and then simmer until the peas or lentils have broken down. Add generous amounts of cut carrots, chopped onions, some celery, and minced fresh garlic or garlic granules. Cook gently until the vegetables are tender. Season with salt and pepper.

Spare Ribs

This category includes both pork spareribs and country ribs, the only difference being that the country ribs have more meat. They are both prepared as described below.

If spareribs are still connected to the bone, separate them. Drop ribs into boiling water for about 3 minutes, to remove fat and tenderize them.

Line a baking pan with foil, and bake ribs at 450 for 15 minutes. Reduce heat to 350, and pour barbecue sauce over the meat. Bake one hour longer.

You can buy commercial barbecue sauces, but they may taste of the preservatives that give them shelf life. I prefer to make my own, including the chili sauce (*see recipe in the Tomato section of this book*).

Barbecue sauce:

½ C chopped onion
1 T butter
½ C water
1 T Worcestershire sauce
¼ C lemon juice
2 t brown sugar

1 C chili sauce
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp paprika
¼ tsp pepper
1 tsp dried mustard

Pork Roast

Stuff the roast with rosemary and slivers of garlic, and dredge it in flour seasoned with salt, pepper, and paprika.

Preheat the oven to 450. Place the roast, fat side up, on a rack in a shallow greased roasting pan. Insert a meat thermometer, being careful to avoid the bone. Reduce the heat at once to 325. Cook, uncovered, 25-35 minutes to the pound. The internal temperature should be at 170 for a loin cut and 185 for a shoulder cut.

Let the roast rest for at least 15 minutes before carving. You can make pan gravy by whisking 2 T flour into the pan drippings and stirring until it thickens. Add stock, white wine, beer, or milk to thin the gravy slightly, and season with salt, pepper, and garlic granules, herbs, and/or lemon rind.

For the last 30 minutes of cooking, you can place roasting vegetables into the pan, such as chunks of potato, turnip, parsnip, beets, onion, and garlic. This makes a delicious, one-dish meal.

Ground Pork

In Europe, most ground meat is “hack” a 50-50 mixture of ground beef and ground pork, and that is how we use ground pork. Mixed with ground beef, it makes succulent meat loaf, chili, casseroles, and hamburgers – but the mixture will be soft, so be careful about grilling.

My favorite use of ground pork is in

Swedish Meatballs

These are easy to make, and freeze, uncooked, wonderfully. I like to double the recipe, serve some for a family meal, and then freeze the rest for a company meal.

1 slice of bread, 1 inch thick
1 lb hamburger
1 lb ground pork
2 eggs
2 T butter
½ C finely chopped onions
3 T chopped parsley
1 & ½ tsp salt
½ tsp paprika
1 tsp grated lemon rind
1 tsp fresh lemon juice

¼ tsp nutmeg
1/8 tsp allspice
2 C beef stock (*See beef section of this book*)
2 tsps dill weed

Soak the bread in enough stock, milk or water to cover it. Beat the eggs and add them to the meat. Sauté the onion in the butter, and add to the meat. Wring the liquid from the bread, discard the liquid, and roll the bread in your fingers until it is in small pieces. Add the bread to the meat along with the parsley, salt, paprika, lemon rind and juice, nutmeg and allspice.

Shape the meat into firm 1 & ½ inch balls. In a large frying pan, brown the meatballs in butter. Pour the stock into the pan, cover, and simmer until the meatballs are done, about 15 minutes.

Remove the meatballs from the pan and keep them warm. Make pan gravy by removing the liquid from the pan, melting some butter, and then whisking in 2 T flour until the gravy is thick. Then, one ladle at a time, add the stock, whisking constantly. Season with dill weed, salt and pepper to taste, and a little sherry if you like.

Reheat the meatballs in the gravy, and serve with noodles.

Pork Fat

We always request that the butcher give us the pork fat as well as the leaf lard. In order to use this with confidence, you need to re-think America's notion that animal fats are bad for you. Here I quote from Sally Fallon's excellent book, *Nourishing Traditions*.

Fats from animal and vegetable sources provide a concentrated source of energy in the diet; they also provide the building blocks for cell membranes and a variety of hormones and hormone-like substances. Fats as part of a meal slow down nutrient absorption so that we can go longer without feeling hungry. In addition, they act as carriers for important fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E, and K. Dietary fats are needed for the conversion of carotene to vitamin A, for mineral absorption and for a host of other processes.

Unfortunately, Americans have been told that fats will cause people to be fat, and contribute to a host of illnesses, particularly heart disease. However, Americans have *gained* weight since the anti-fat crusade, and suffer more illnesses than they did when they still ate natural fats, such as butter. (Before 1920, coronary heart disease was rare in America.) The fats to avoid are those that the industry has created in processed foods, such as trans fats (Now outlawed in New York City restaurants!)

That said, let me introduce you to

Schmalz

Schmalz is a soft-textured, flavorful fat rendered from lard. (Henning's grandmother used fat from the Christmas goose for this purpose.) It is easily made: just mince the pork fat, put it in a pot or frying pan, and turn the heat on low. You can also do this in the oven. The lard will melt into liquid and clarify, with bits of hard fat that do not

melt. Strain the fat through a sieve, put the liquid into a glass jar, return the solids to the pan, and continue cooking them until they are crispy brown. What you have is, essentially, unsmoked and unsalted bacon bits.

Henning likes the *schmalz* that contains the “cracklings” flavored with a little salt, and spread on bread. I use the clarified *schmalz* for frying. I have a friend who fries everything (including pancakes) in *schmalz* – he makes up a huge batch in a kettle, puts it in jars and puts the jars in the freezer, to be pulled out at need. I make smaller batches as I need them, and keep one jar at a time in the refrigerator.

Bacon

We certainly like bacon and eggs, but I find I use most of our bacon in

German Potato Salad

8 medium potatoes
¾ C white vinegar
¼ C water
¾ C sugar
½ tsp salt
2 rounded T flour
8 slices bacon, diced
¾ C diced onion
Dill pickles, diced

Peel potatoes, cut them into generous bite-sized chunks, and cook them until just tender (do not overcook – you want the potatoes to be firm). Drain, and put them in a serving bowl.

Combine vinegar, water, sugar, and salt, and bring to a boil in a small saucepan.

Mix flour with ¼ C water in a small bowl. Stir this into the vinegar mixture and simmer, stirring, until the sauce is clear and thickened.

Begin to fry the diced bacon gently so that it cooks through. When it is nearly done, stir in the onions and continue frying until the onions are tender. Add, including the bacon fat, to the vinegar mixture. Mix. Strain out the bacon and onions, and add to the potatoes. Then add just enough remaining sauce that the potatoes are coated, but not overwhelmed. Pour judiciously over the potatoes while they are still warm. Add the diced pickles – again, enough to flavor but not overwhelm the potatoes, and fold gently.

Let stand at room temperature about two hours, stirring every half hour or so. Serve, or refrigerate and serve later, but salad should be at room temperature.