

## Lamb and Mutton South Africa – translating current science into consumer friendly messages

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The Red Meat Industry of South Africa has a long-term and sustainable strategy to maintain and improve the image of red meat as part of healthy, South African diet. Such a strategy needs to build trust and respect between the consumer and the industry, from production to consumption.

The consumer education project of Lamb and Mutton South Africa, under management of the RPO, aims to build a long term, trusting relationship with South Africans by being a science and knowledge centre, and communicating effective and science-based messages on the role of red meat in the diet through various channels.

Primarily focus is placed on communicating messages to opinion leaders, including health professionals (e.g. doctors and dieticians), the media, academia and industry partners. Consumers are also directly targeted. Messages are developed based on current food trends and pressing industry issues, and the science and knowledge centre is continually expanded.

The top four international trends consumers currently focus on when making food choices, include health, convenience, pleasure and environmental sustainability. Locally produced lamb and mutton have a unique advantage, as recent studies have shown that these products have the ability to be positively positioned within each of the four trend categories.

Since November 2010, the team at Lamb and Mutton South Africa have built an extensive science and knowledge databank, including 10 scientific peer-reviewed articles published in scientific journals, 23 posters and 6 presentations at 11 national and international scientific conferences, 2 research booklets, and 1 concise reference book containing 10 chapters on the most relevant issues concerning red meat and human health. The book was distributed to 18,000 doctors and 3,000 dieticians throughout South Africa. A leaflet aimed at health professionals condensing some of the issues recorded in the book were published recently and distributed to 2,200 dieticians. Furthermore, health professionals were targeted through numerous advertorials (educational adverts) in their medical journals.

Materials have been developed as part of a school programme and include information sheets and work sheets to be used by teachers and scholars covering 4 themes (The national food-

based dietary guidelines, Nutrients, The red meat industry and Environmental sustainability). These sheets are freely available for download by South African teachers and scholars from our website, and available in four languages representing 91% of the South African population. In addition to the available sheets, a video of renowned international chef Peter Hallmans dissecting a whole lamb carcass for culinary purposes was recorded in collaboration with the University of Pretoria. This video is available for use by culinary educational institutions, and clips are available for download from YouTube.

During 2013, Lamb and Mutton South Africa focussed on offal as a trendy alternative to the weekly menu, and 6 information sheets (in 4 languages) as well as 18 video clips on the preparation and cooking of offal was developed. The sheets are available for download from our website, and the videos on YouTube.

We've supplied numerous butcheries throughout the country with developed material related to the carcass classification system (leaflets and posters), and the basics related to preparation, cooking and storage of South African lamb and mutton (leaflet). Butchers were prompted to submit orders for material through their industry media (The Butcher magazine and website). The order form is still available on our website.

Consumers were directly reached by means of advertorials in the You Pulse / Huisgenoot Pops, Heita, AgriEco newspaper, Weg Kuerkos, Sarie Kos and others. Fourth year students at the Department of Consumer Science at the University of Pretoria assisted in the development of 21 trendy lamb and mutton recipes, and a unique recipe book focussed on Moroccan cuisine has been published. Consumer-friendly information made more easily relatable to consumers on our second interlinked website, [www.lambandmutton.co.za](http://www.lambandmutton.co.za) / [www.skaapvleis.co.za](http://www.skaapvleis.co.za). This website will be available in more than one language in the near future.

In addition to consumer education, we consider stakeholder support as a high priority, and have developed and distributed roll-up banners, posters and leaflets for use and distribution at regional level. Stakeholders are also reached through industry publications, i.e. Red Meat / Rooivleis, RPO Bulletin, Eat Meat Press release, radio talks, etc.

In summary, since November 2010 Lamb and Mutton South Africa has published 122 advertorials, 20 editorials, 18 radio interviews, 5 books or booklets, 5 leaflets, 5 posters, 6 information sheets, 32 banners, 18 YouTube videos, two websites as well as a growing Facebook and Twitter following. It is estimated that we've reached nearly 55 million contact points per year, and increasing.

For more information on the consumer education campaign of Lamb and Mutton South Africa, to sign up for our Eat Meat newsletter, or for health and nutrition tips and recipes, visit [www.healthymeat.co.za](http://www.healthymeat.co.za), like us on Facebook (Healthy Meat), or follow us on twitter (HealthymeatZA).

