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STORY EMI BERRY

Buying meat direct

You can eat well and save thousands of dollars a year

I REMEMBER AS A KID HAVING lamb cutlets on a regular basis. These days, at \$40 to \$45 a kilo from the major supermarkets, lamb cutlets could be considered a luxury for most households. So why pay so much at the checkout when you can buy cutlets for as little as \$20 a kilo at wholesale outlets that sell direct to the public?

And, of course, beef cuts aren't exempt from the price hikes. According to David Byard, chief executive officer of the Australian Beef Association, the retail price of beef at supermarkets has risen 60% in the past decade.

There are cheaper alternatives. Shop around and you could save up to 44% by buying your meat through wholesalers or beef processing plants that sell direct to the public. Buying meat direct from the farm can save you up to 25% compared with supermarket prices. And what better way to support your local farmers?

A major supermarket currently sells 100-day grain-fed Angus beef porterhouse at \$36 a kilo. Sydney beef processing plant Establishment 218, a retail outlet for the largest Australian-family owned beef abattoir, sells its certified Australian 100-day grain-fed Angus beef porterhouse for \$19.99 a kilo. That's a difference of \$16 a kilo, 44% cheaper than the supermarket!

Of course, each wholesaler's price list will differ from store to store, but more often than not you will find prices a lot more affordable than at the supermarket.

A spokesperson for Holco Fine Meat Suppliers in Darwin says: "Consumers should take notice of how much per kilo they are paying for meat in the supermarkets compared to wholesalers that sell to the public. There is that convenience of one-stop shopping at the supermarkets, but I shudder when I see people loading up their trolley with meat for barbecues pay \$90 for meat they could probably source for \$50.

"I tell our customers there's something wrong if I can't save them \$50 to \$60 a week buying meat for a family of four compared to what they would pay at the supermarkets. That's a saving of \$200 a month or \$2400 a year."

Ordering direct from the farm can save up to 25%. If freezer space is an issue, ask friends or family to buy in and distribute the order when it arrives.

Generally, it will be packaged similarly to supermarket-sized portions. Quite often you'll find delivery is very reasonable, if not included in the price of the order.

According to Highland Farm Meats, based near Braidwood in southern NSW, you can

save up to 25% on prime Angus beef and 14% on tender lamb over supermarket prices. Jan Andrews, from Londrigan Beef and Lamb, says that although consumers are watching their spending, they can still buy quality cuts of meat. It's just a matter of finding more affordable alternatives. **M**

WHERE TO FIND IT

Wholesalers

- **Sydney:** Establishment 218, 29-31 O'Riordan Street, Alexandria (02) 9690 0979, www.establishment218.com.au
- **Melbourne:** PJ Meats, 1-3 Halley Crescent, Campbellfield (03) 9308 7288, www.pjmeats.com.au
- **Brisbane:** Super Butcher. Several outlets throughout Brisbane 1300 002 493, www.superbutcher.com.au
- **Adelaide:** Baa Moo Oink Butchers, 378 Findon Road, Kidman Park (08) 8356 5933, www.baamoooink.com.au
- **Perth:** Mondo Bulk Meat, Unit 5/41 King Edward Road, Osborne Park (08) 9446 4778, www.mondo.net.au
- **Hobart:** Tasmanian Meat Wholesalers, 169 Campbell Street, Hobart (03) 6234 3511, www.tasmeats.com.au
- **Darwin:** Holco Fine Meat Suppliers, 19 Raphael Road, Winnellie (08) 8947 3550, www.holcofinemeatsuppliers.com.au
- **Canberra:** Jordo's Chop Shop, 6 Sangster Place, Wanniasa (02) 6231 8755, www.jordoschopshop.com

Direct from the farmer

- www.londriganbeefandlamb.com.au (Vic, NSW)
- www.farm-meat-online.com.au (ACT, NSW)
- www.sydneymeats.com.au (ACT, NSW)
- www.lambdirect.com.au (Vic)
- www.bethongabeef.com.au (Qld)
- www.pariscreekbeef.com.au (SA)
- www.farmhousemeats.com.au (Tas)

