

New Forest Pork, Beef and Venison

Sustainable Development Goal 15: protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, halt and reverse land degradation and diversity loss.



If you drive around the New Forest, pigs, ponies, donkey and cattle can be seen wandering free. There are not wild but careful managed under an ancient scheme which awards common grazing rights to those living in the forest (commoners). This is the real free range.

These animals play a very important role in maintaining the variety of habitats found in the New Forest area, from ancient woodland, to heathland. They graze on grasses herbs, shrubs and tree giving the meat depth of flavour.

The pigs A mix of traditional breeds. In the Autumn when their main diet become beech mast and acorns from oak they play an important role as acorns are poisonous to ponies. At this point usually mid October to early December, the meat is known as pannage pork.... Same as the Portuguese and Spanish Iberico pork. In general, the meat is slightly darker and leaner with a more 'porky' flavour.



The cows Also not pure breeds but mixes of tradition breeds in the forest. They are hardy and are out all year but usually get supplementary grass feeds to keep them from wandering too far from the farm. The highly varied natural vegetation diet gives the meat a deep flavour and it is usually hung for 38 days.



For pork and beef we work with an on-farm butcher who has numerous awards and provides meat to individual specifications.

Donkeys and ponies... *we don't eat those, but they provide a real draw for tourists.*



Fungi.... *The New Forest has several very important stands of ancient woodlands where a very wide range of wild fungi can be found. Unfortunately, a voluntary code of practice to limit amounts foraged has been consistently ignored by commercial pickers for years and **a total ban on picking New Forest fungi** has been in place now for several years to protect wild stocks. We have never sold wild fungi and are very happy to see a full ban.*

The deer.... *The forest was claimed and named as a royal hunting ground by William the Conqueror in 1079. Red and roe deer have wandered there since pre-historic times... until they were cleared in 1851 to maximise timber production to build ships for the Royal Navy.*

They gradually found their way back and Fallow deer and Sika deer became common. More recently the small Muntjac deer have become common too.



The population of deer needs to be kept at around 2000 to avoid overgrazing and damage to young trees. Their natural predators ...wolves and wild cat species have long been exterminated so around 25% of adults need to be shot each year. Culling mature females is most effective and it must be carried out safely, legally and humanely. It is carried out by the New Forest Keepers employed by the Forestry Commission, who are trained marksmen using only high velocity rifles who know their individual beats well. This is for a purpose, not sport. It takes place throughout the year depending on the species and sex of the animals. Once killed the venison is sold to licenced game dealers with whom we work directly.

Only the very best quality is accepted which in practice means clean kill so that the animal does not suffer and is not stressed so that the meat is as tender as can be. They are hung for 2-3 weeks and butchered onsite in a highly professional, facility in the New Forest. As you may expect, the butchery operation is closely monitored by government inspectors. All meat is fresh and fully traceable.

Contact us for information on prices and availability of New Forest free range pork, beef and venison.

Tel : 01264 811170 Email mycomarketing@btconnect.com