

MEATS

The National Junior Swine Association Educational Materials and Resources

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- **Understand the factors that influence meat quality in pork**
- **Explain where meat products come from on the animal**
- **Identify wholesale cuts of pork**
- **Identify retail cuts of pork**

HOW DO WE EVALUATE MEAT QUALITY IN PORK?

- Meat comes from muscle.
- When we evaluate the muscle and leanness, there are three main factors that come into play when determining meat quality:
 - Color
 - Color can be referred to as pale (P), red (R), or dark (D). Most consumers prefer to purchase meat that is reddish pink.
 - Firmness or Wetness
 - Muscle firmness or wetness can be referred to as soft and exudative (SE) or firm and normal (FN) (or firm and dry (FD)). Firm and Normal or Firm and Dry meats are deemed acceptable for consumers.
 - Marbling
 - Marbling is also known as intramuscular fat, meaning the fat within the muscle. This helps give pork its flavor.

HOW DO WE EVALUATE MEAT QUALITY IN PORK?

- PSE is referred to as Pale, Soft, and Exudative.
 - This is a condition that describes very low quality pork, and the industry has made many strides to reduce instances of this type of pork.
- “Pale” is pork that ranges from light pink to almost light gray.
- Consumers will not value meat that looks pale at the retail level.
- Pale meat is often accompanied with a firmness and wetness that is described as “Soft and Exudative.”

WHAT IS PSE?

- **Soft and exudative means that it does not hold its shape nor does it hold water well.**
- **This meat will often be drier when cooked.**
- **Pigs who test positive OR who are carriers of the stress gene often produce PSE meat.**

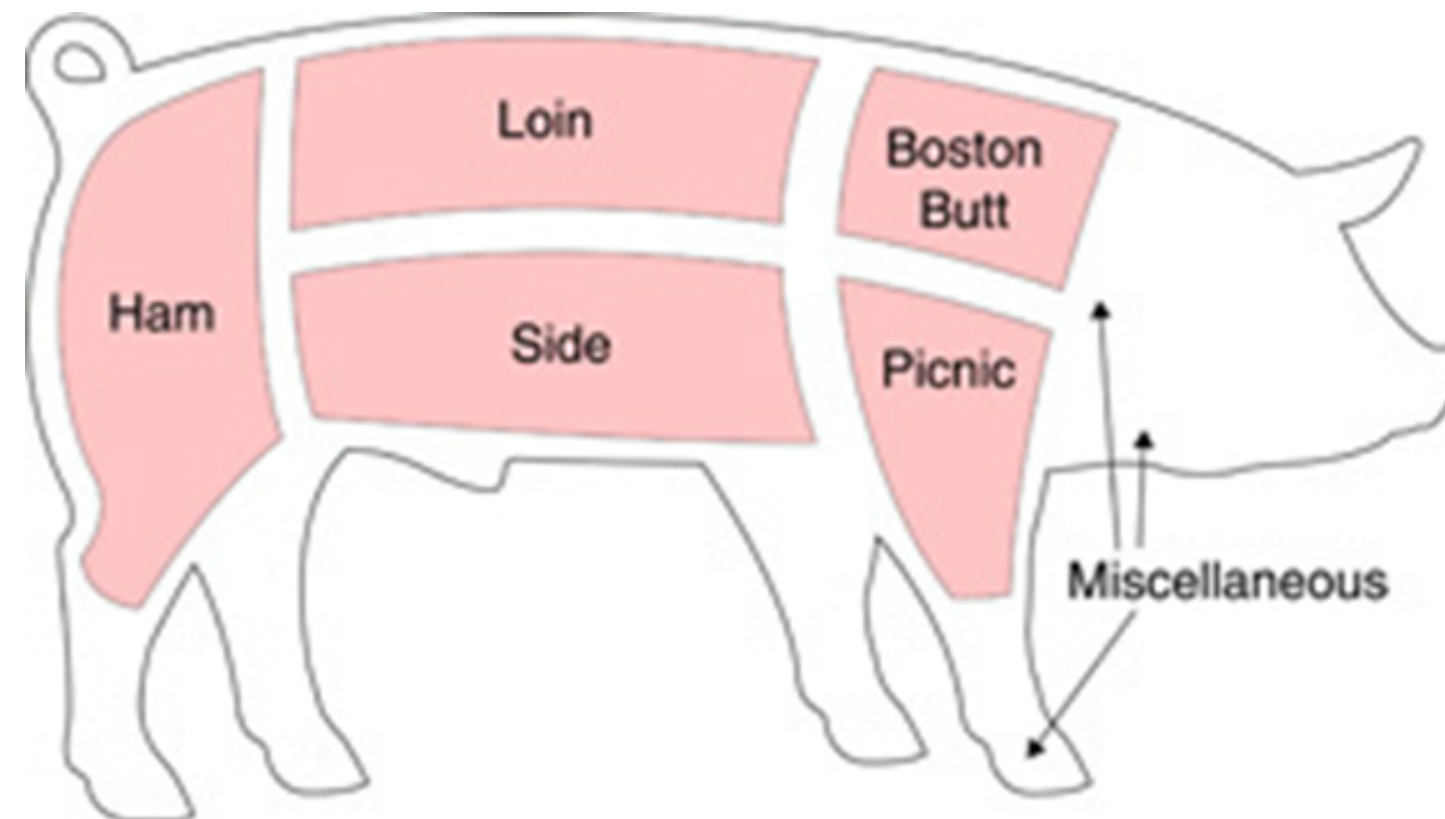
**This is an example of PSE pork.
Notice the pale color and moisture
on the surface.**



WHAT IS A WHOLE SALE CUT?

- A wholesale cut is a larger cut of meat that is often distributed at the wholesale level to grocery stores or meat markets. With pork, we have five main wholesale cuts:

- Ham
- Belly (Side)
- Loin
- Boston Butt
- Picnic

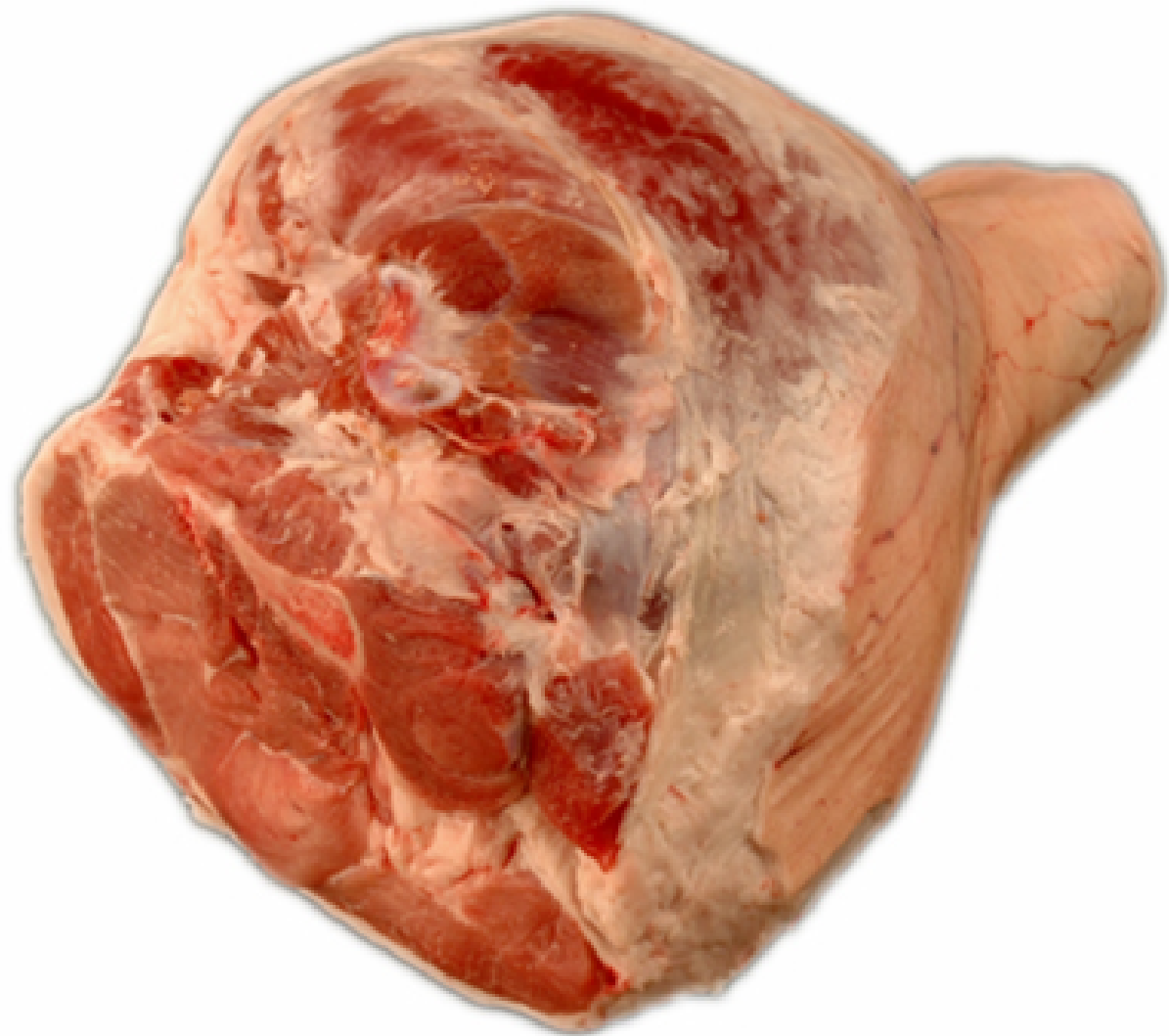


WHAT IS A RETAIL CUT?

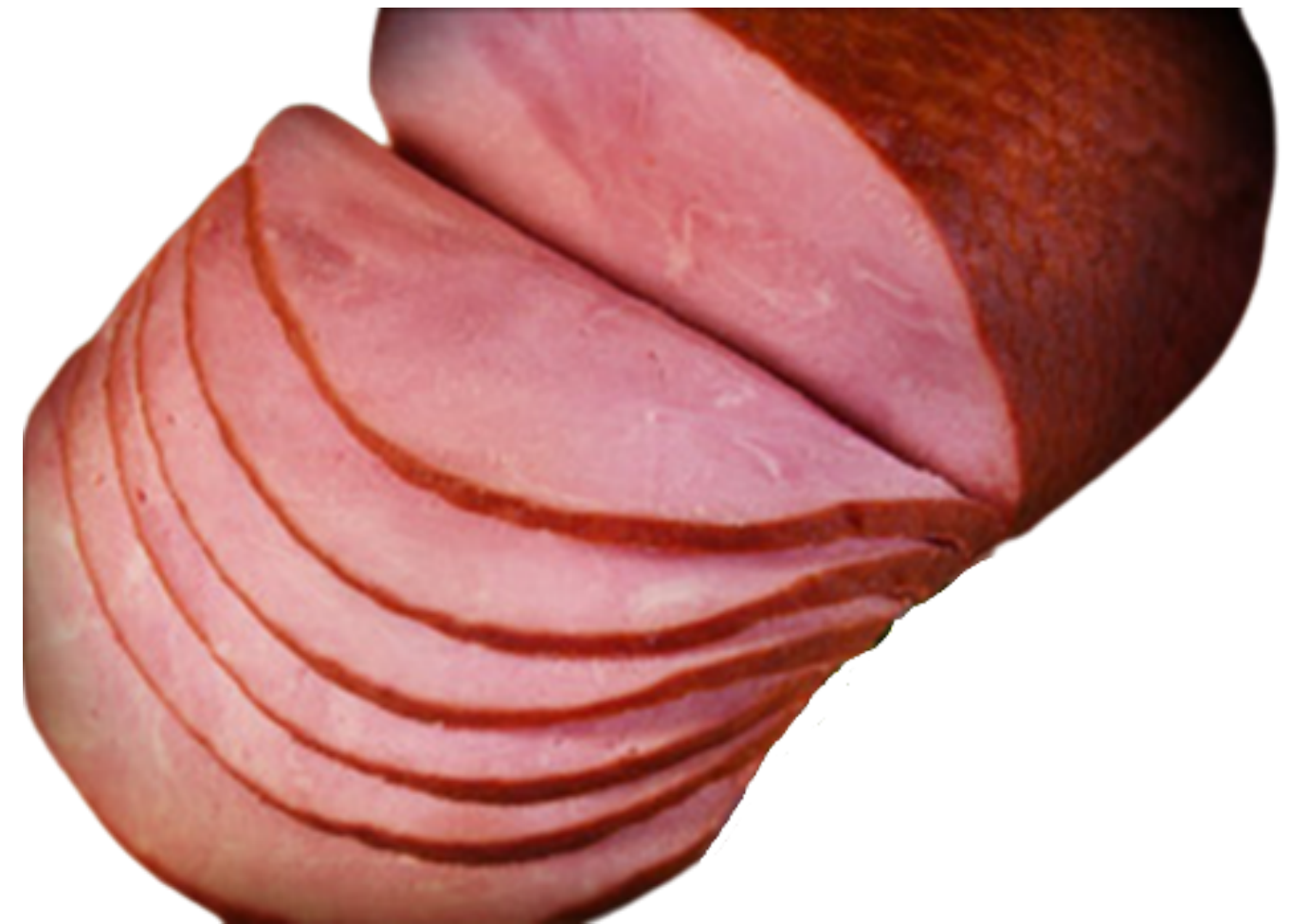
- **Within each wholesale cut are a variety of retail cuts that are more consumer-driven.**
- **These are sized more proportionately for direct consumer purchase.**
- **Many of the meat products you buy are likely retail cuts.**
- **We will go through each wholesale cut and identify the corresponding retail cuts.**

HAM

Retail Cuts



Fresh Ham



Boneless Ham

HAM

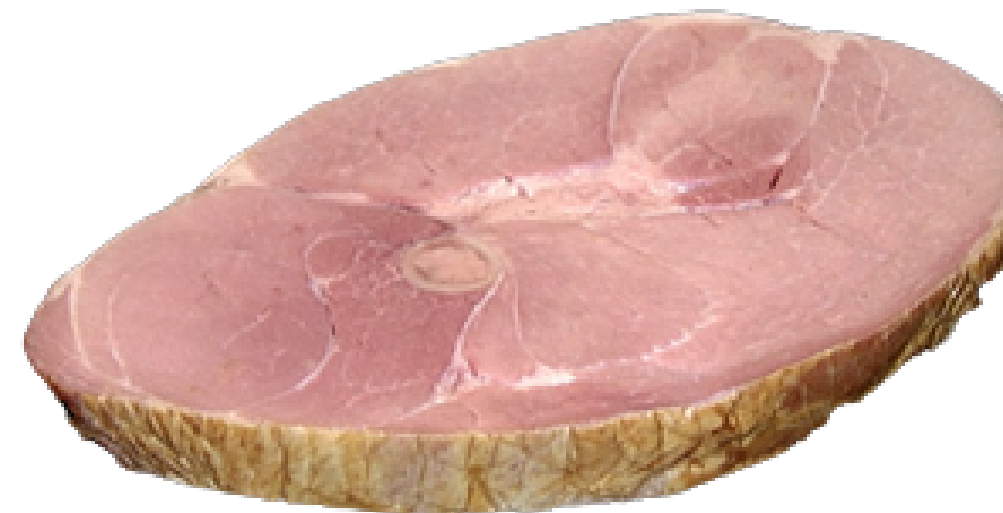
Retail Cuts

- **Center Ham Slice**

- **A fresh center ham slice is a slice directly from the fresh ham.**
- **A cured center ham slice is cured through soaking or injecting brines. This process is often followed by smoking**



Fresh Center Ham Slice



Cured Center Ham Slice

SIDE/BELLY

Retail Cuts



Fresh Side



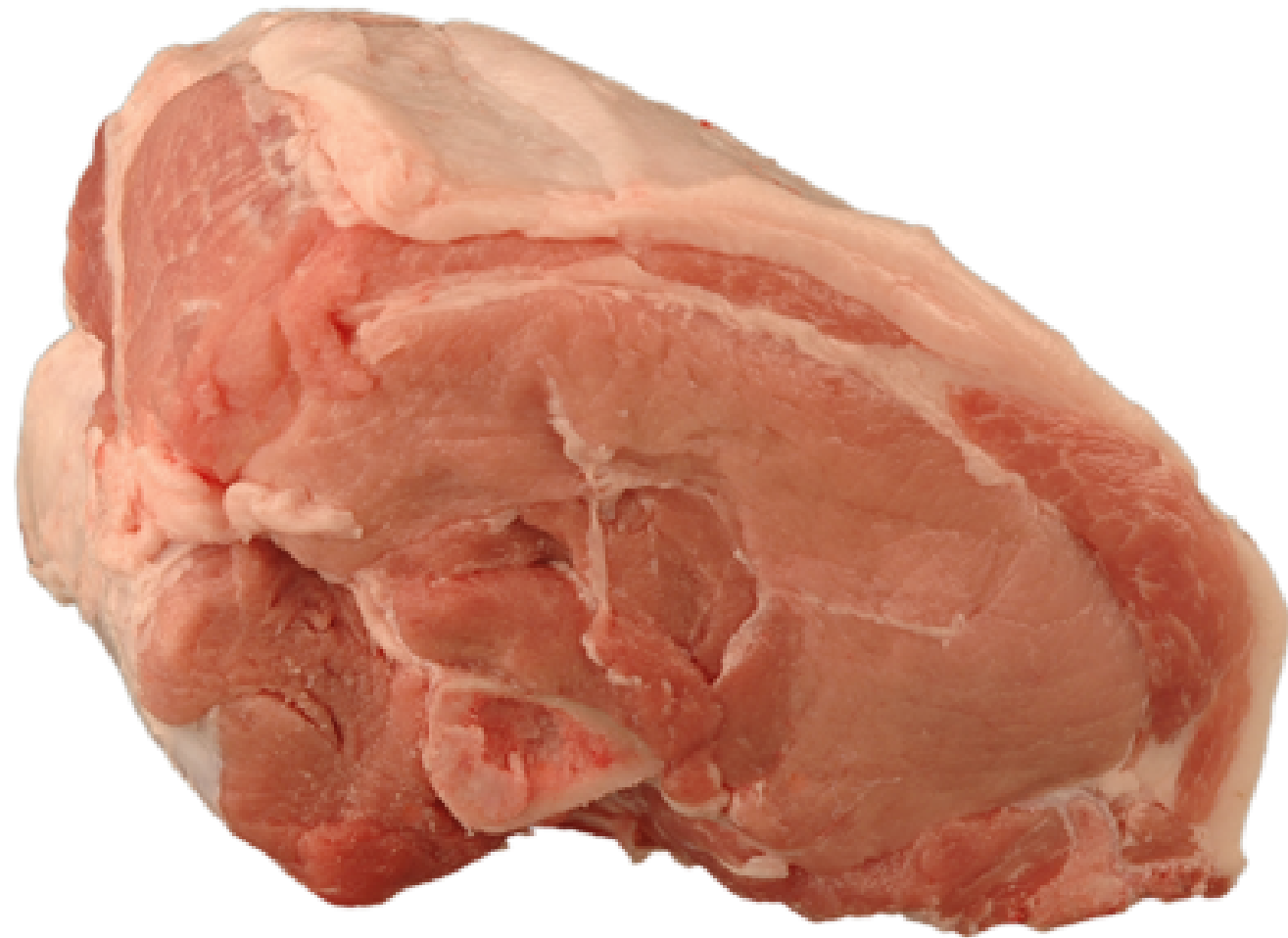
Bacon



Spareribs

LOIN

Retail Cuts



Sirloin Bone-In Roast

*Can be boneless



Sirloin Bone-In Chop

*Can be boneless

LOIN

Retail Cuts



Porterhouse Chop



Boneless Loin Roast



Boneless New York Chop

LOIN

Retail Cuts



Tenderloin



Backribs

BOSTON BUTT

Retail Cuts



Fresh Shoulder Roast



Shoulder Blade Steaks



Neck Bones

PICNIC

Retail Cuts



Fresh Picnic Shoulder



Arm Pork Steak

MEATS QUIZ

See what you've learned!

QUESTION 1

Which of the following comes from the loin?



QUESTION 1

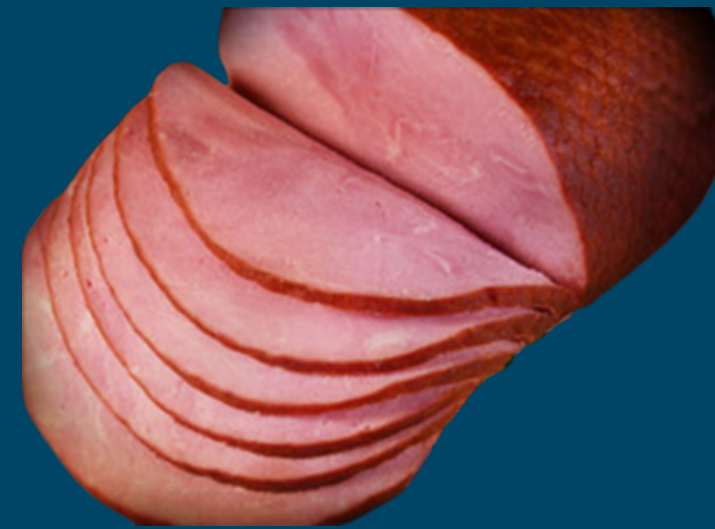
**PSE stands for Pale, Soft, and Exudative
and is considered low quality pork.**

True

False

QUESTION 3

Which meat cut is the tenderloin?



QUESTION 4

The fresh shoulder roast comes from which wholesale cut of pork?

Picnic

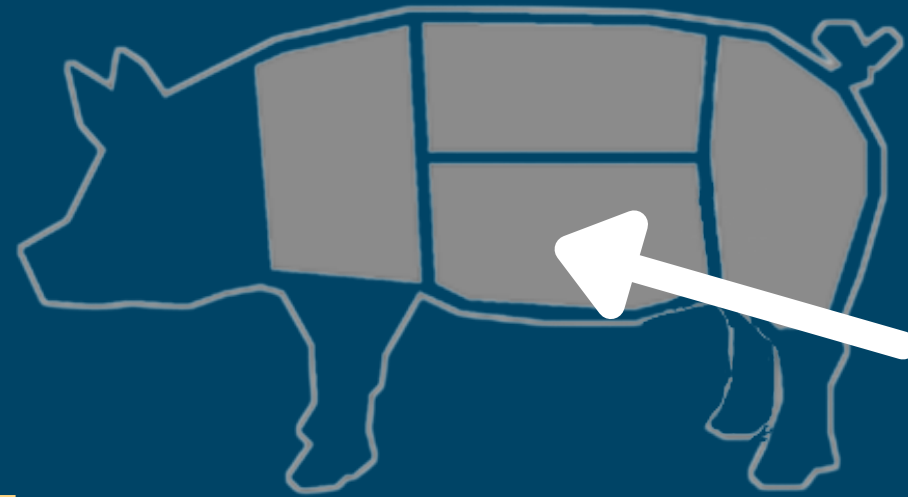
Loin

Ham

Boston Butt

QUESTION 5

Which wholesale cut is being pointed to on this diagram?



Loin

Ham

Side/Belly

Picnic

ANSWERS

1. Which of the following comes from the loin?



2. PSE stands for Pale, Soft, and Exudative and is considered low quality pork. **TRUE**

3. Which meat cut is the tenderloin?



4. The fresh shoulder roast comes from which wholesale cut of pork? **BOSTON BUTT**

5. Which wholesale cut is being pointed to on this diagram? **SIDE/BELLY**

Congratulations!

**You've completed the "Meat"
resource! Great Work!**

**Keep going through the resources to
learn more about swine!**