

**MATCHING PRODUCTION  
TO THE  
MARKETS FOR MEAT**



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*Front cover centrepiece: Ancient Egyptian corkscrew-horned hair sheep. Beni Hassan, ca. 2000 BC  
(after Griffith, 1896)*

# MATCHING PRODUCTION TO THE MARKETS FOR MEAT

Proceedings of a symposium organized by  
THE BRITISH SOCIETY OF ANIMAL PRODUCTION  
and held in Oxford in October 1983

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edited by A. CUTHBERTSON and R. G. GUNN

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## FOREWORD

Increasing efforts are being made to improve food marketing in Britain and producers are being encouraged to become market orientated. Several initiatives in recent years, including the establishment of Food from Britain and the Charter Quality Bacon Scheme, are seeking to improve the marketing of food produced in Britain, so that it can compete more effectively at home and abroad with food from other countries.

A key element in improving food marketing is to identify the needs of the market and then alter production to meet these needs in terms of quality as well as quantity. There are many different markets for meat and their quality requirements have generally not been clearly identified. Farmers have not, therefore, had clear signals about what they should be producing and have not received appropriate financial incentives to respond. This has led to concern about poor matching of quality of supply from British farms with the various markets, leading to inefficiencies and customer dissatisfaction.

It was concern about the problems of matching supply with market needs, against a background of pressure to improve meat marketing, that prompted the BSAP to arrange a meeting to provide the opportunity for a wide-ranging technical discussion among producers, meat traders, researchers and advisors, of the production of cattle, sheep and pigs to meet the markets for meat.

The Organizing Committee was fortunate in obtaining a distinguished group of speakers. After an opening background session which considered factors influencing the markets for meat, speakers in subsequent sessions tried to define market targets, considered how market specifications could be met by breeding, nutrition and other management factors. In the final session, practicing farmers described their experiences of producing to specification and how it affected their profitability.

A feature of the meeting was the Poster Session which included practical examples of production to specification and aids to achieving targets.

The Organizing Committee would like to thank all those who contributed to a successful meeting, especially the speakers, poster presenters, chairmen and discussion openers. It hopes that this publication, which contains the papers contributed to the meeting, will help to stimulate further thought and action to ensure an efficient meat industry, able to cater for its customers' needs in an increasingly competitive world.

ALASTAIR CUTHBERTSON  
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