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AUSTRALIA'S LOVE AFFAIR WITH LAMB HEATS UP AS COLES SERVES UP NEW "GRAZE" RANGE ***Tasmanian producers to supply first-ever grass-fed lamb range nationally***

The traditional Australian lamb roast just got better with Coles launching its first-ever "GRAZE" grass-fed lamb range that's so good you'd give up dinner with Tom Cruise*.

Coles will be the first Australian supermarket to offer a range which comes entirely from lamb that graze freely on lush green Tasmanian grass for a leaner, natural-tasting and premium quality product.

Just like Naomi Watts in the iconic '80s television commercial*, Coles hopes the new delicious lamb range is enticing enough for Aussie lamb lovers to turn down a date with a Hollywood movie star.

Available in over 800 supermarkets, the new GRAZE Tasmanian grass-fed lamb range is 100% Australian and includes lamb chops, roast, cutlets and mince.

The launch follows Coles' research revealing around 80% of customers want meat that comes from animals raised and fed naturally.

Coles General Manager for Meat Charlotte Gilbert said customer demand for high quality, grass-fed meat has resulted in expanding its GRAZE program beyond beef to reinvigorate Coles' lamb offer and inspire customers.

"We sell over 20 million kilograms of lamb each year, so we know our customers already love lamb, but it's time to shake up the category and offer something new and different for those who are looking at putting something special on their plate," she said.

"Grass-fed meat is sought after by chefs for its trusted premium quality, natural taste and high Omega 3 content, and we're delighted to be the first retailer to offer grass-fed lamb for our customers to enjoy at home. We're only able to achieve this great quality product thanks to fantastic Tasmanian producers like Scott Colvin and Rebecca and Richard Johnston.

"We're seeing the innovation of pasture management and productivity systems in lamb production at the forefront in Tasmania. We're committed to Tassie for this range and want to win together with our suppliers through building long-term, sustainable partnerships.

"This product connects us to the land, it connects us to our farmers, and it helps us tell our customers where their food has come from."

The new grass-fed lamb range is sourced from Tasmanian lamb producers with pristine growing conditions and high animal welfare standards.



* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fH_Ar2h6Q-U

The introduction of GRAZE lamb has created a new market for Tasmanian producers, with Coles expecting to purchase approximately 100,000 lambs in the first year, with the aim to increase supply based on sales.

Second-generation farmer Scott Colvin, who has been supplying Coles for four years, said Tasmania is the perfect place to produce quality grass-fed lamb.

"Our lamb is born and raised on clover. We're fortunate to have irrigation and an abundance of water. We're in perfect climatic conditions to grow great feed for our lambs, and we think that flows right through to the flavour," Scott said.

"As a producer, I get a great deal of satisfaction seeing my animals healthy and happy and I know consumers will appreciate it too.

"Our livestock numbers have expanded in recent years, with the new GRAZE range it's an opportunity to guarantee supply to Coles – so it was a win-win for both parties. GRAZE also provides a platform for Tasmania to be recognized by consumers across Australia as a source of great quality lamb."

Coles purchases around \$400 million worth of food from Tasmanian farmers and producers every year, including:

- \$70 million of fresh fruit and vegetables are purchased from local growers each year
- More than \$180 million in locally grown meat and seafood annually
- \$6.5 million on cheese produced in Burnie and at King Island Dairy
- \$74 million of frozen vegetables from Simplot, which supplies all Coles Brand frozen vegetables
- \$25 million of liquor purchased annually from local suppliers including Boag's Brewery, Cascade Brewery and wineries.

Background on the Coles GRAZE program:

- The Coles GRAZE program was developed in 2014 in consultation with the Cattle Council and is based on the principles contained in Pasturefed Cattle Assurance System (PCAS).
- Under the Coles GRAZE program, farmers are required to meet high standards in animal husbandry and pasture management standards which are independently assessed by industry auditor AUS-MEAT.
- Unique to the industry, the GRAZE program also specifies cattle and lamb are never fed grain to supplement their diet even in challenging weather conditions. Note, farmers can feed grain to animals if grass is unavailable, however it will then be sold as conventionally farmed.
- Under the Coles Tasmanian Graze Lamb Production and Claim Requirements;
 - Animas are born in Tasmania and are traceable back to birth.
 - Have had access to graze open pasture their entire lives.
 - Have been fed as per the eligible and banned feeds lists.
 - Have not been confined for the purpose of intensive feeding for production.
 - Have not been treated at any time with antibiotics.

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