

## **AN 'IDIOTS' GUIDE TO SALTING A SKIN. TANNERY NUMBER 17/076/8000**

(NOT JUST WHAT TO DO BUT WHY)

N.B. BUY YOUR SALT FIRST. Feed merchants keep it in 25kg bags, use fine salt, not granular.

Given that raw skins have the keeping life of offal, it is vital that skins are salted as soon as possible after slaughter, essentially within hours, or the fleece or hair will slip and the skin rot. DO NOT LEAVE IT TO THE ABATTOIR, IT IS NOT THEIR JOB.

1. Open up a paper feed sack per skin, lay each skin fleece side down on brown paper side up, somewhere under cover. The skin (not fleece) should be white. Any discolouration, orange, pink, yellow, purple or red means its "off" do not bother. Anything with "wriggles" or smells putrid is past its use by date.
2. With a sharp knife or Stanley blade cut off any long frilly bits, the small area at the neck end if saturated in blood, and ears and feet, if left on. If skinned in 'sleeves; cut open, not off.
3. Liberally cover each skin in salt, you cannot over salt a skin, watch the edges, they can be turned over. Rule of thumb-so that you cannot see any skin through the salt. put a layer of paper on top of the salt to preserve them from rain or sun. Do NOT put skins on anything metal. Rust stains turn black in tannin..
4. The skin its self is 60% water. Leave 2-3 days shake off the salt and resalt. Please do not hang them up to dry, salt falls off a vertical surface, or put them in the sun, salt will not penetrate a dry surface, and the skins will disintegrate when washed. Skins MUST have salt on at all times, including when transported..
5. A well cured (salted) skin will feel firm, but totally flexible. Like dry cured bacon. NOT bone dry please.
6. Once the skin is cured, with dry salt on it, fold the skin sides to middle, like an empty animal lying on it's back and roll tight from the head end down. Well-cured skins will keep for months.
7. If there will be more skins later, then putting each rolled skin into a paper feed sack can put already cured skins on hold, saves transport costs.
8. To send them off put each tightly rolled skin in as many layers of plastic as necessary and pack as many as possible into a stout cardboard box. PUT YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER, AND E.MAIL and details of skins, including breed and age if possible. (The more information we have about the skins, the better the job we can do) IN A PLASTIC BAG INSIDE THE PARCEL.
9. DO NOT PANIC. Sent too soon wet skins will leak all over the sorting office and my postman gets soggy and "complains" or they turn up in a rescue bag or not at all.
10. When the skins are ready we send the invoice, you send the cheque, we send the skins
11. Skins from an organically registered flock or herd can be stamped as organic, but we need to know.

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