

## Prince Launches Industry-wide Club for Mutton

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His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales with Brian Turner and John Williams

A new group has been set up for everyone involved in producing and selling high quality mutton. The Mutton Renaissance Club was launched by the Academy's patron, His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales on Thursday 2 February 2007 at The Ritz London.

The Mutton Renaissance Club will be open to anyone in the supply chain who produces, processes, sells and serves high quality mutton or who is interested in being involved in this exciting growth market. No other industry-wide group like this exists within the meat trade.

The Club will unite sheep farmers, abattoirs, butchers, chefs and retailers. Its aim will be to bring together the supply chain to share information, ideas and expertise, to address the challenges facing this emerging market and to work together to develop opportunities. The Club will stage workshops across the UK that will help producers and processors meet the market's needs.

The Mutton Renaissance campaign was launched in 2004 by HRH the Prince of Wales to support British sheep farmers who were struggling to sell their older animals, and to get this delicious meat back on the nation's plates.

As a direct result, support for British mutton is growing. Around 200 family farms, restaurants, butchers and abattoirs across Britain are now rearing, selling and serving mutton. This year, mutton will appear on the menus of a number of top restaurants, including Le Gavroche, The Ritz, Ransome's Dock, Northcote Manor and Kensington Place in London as well as many dining pubs and restaurants across the UK. In December 2005, the Independent on Sunday named mutton as "ingredient of the year" and the meat was championed by a number of Academy chefs.

His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, who initiated the Mutton Renaissance Campaign and will be the patron of the new Club, said: "Since I launched the Mutton Renaissance Campaign last year, I have been overwhelmed by support from a galaxy of culinary stars who all share my belief in the quality of mutton as a dish...This is the next step of the project to bring together farmers, abattoirs, butchers and chefs."

John Thorley OBE, of the National Sheep Association added: "The new Mutton Renaissance

Club is about empowering those within the supply chain to shape this emerging market, to breakdown the barriers to trade and to work together to uphold the specification for Renaissance Mutton."

"Over the past year, mutton has gained a following in pockets across the country, however, there is much more to do. It's clear that some chefs are being asked to pay a relatively high price for mutton but few farmers are seeing an uplift in returns. Addressing this situation will be one of the first tasks for the Mutton Renaissance Club."

Brian Turner CBE, the Academy's President emphasised that "The campaign aims to re-build the supply chain for mutton and establish the meat as a niche ingredient for chefs and home cooks. As consumer confidence grows in mutton's taste and cooking credentials, the campaign hopes that restaurants across the country will experience an uplift in interest and sales.

Renaissance Mutton is from sheep over two years of age that have enjoyed a foraged-based diet such as grass and heather. The meat is matured for a minimum of two weeks to allow flavours to develop and it is best enjoyed in slow-cooked recipes such as casseroles, braised dishes and tagines.

The Mutton Renaissance Campaign, which is co-ordinated by the National Sheep Association and the Academy of Culinary Arts, it is supported by the English Beef & Lamb Executive and Hybu Cig Cymru-Meat Promotion Wales.

All interested Academicians who are promoting mutton are automatically members of the Mutton Renaissance Club. Those interested to find out more should contact Susannah Bentall at the Academy on 0208 673 6300 or the National Sheep Association on telephone number 01684 892661 or email [julie@nationalsheep.org.uk](mailto:julie@nationalsheep.org.uk). Further details can be found at [www.muttonrenaissance.org.uk](http://www.muttonrenaissance.org.uk).