

## “Briskets go Bragh” – Brisket Marketing for St. Pat’s

The beef brisket is a cut of meat from the lower chest area that contains a significant amount of connective tissue and requires slower cooking methods. Briskets are commonly sold either whole or in pieces (commonly known as points and flats) and may be sold fresh or cured (aka corned). Fresh briskets are popularly slow-smoked over wood fires, a popular technique in the southern regions of the U.S., or are oven-cooked like a pot roast, a technique popular in traditional Jewish cooking as a holiday main course. Corned briskets have undergone a brine-cure process, traditionally using coarse rock salt known as “corns”. Corned briskets are associated with Irish cuisine and are typically boiled along with cabbage or root crops. Corned beef brisket is also a staple of Jewish cuisine where it is commonly eaten as a delicatessen meat in the form of corned beef or pastrami.

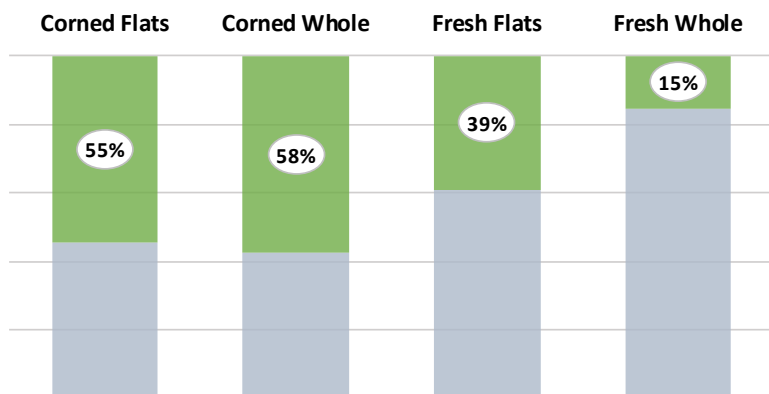
In 2017, the U.S. produced an estimated 7 billion pounds of trimmed, deckle-off briskets from steers and heifers (the deckle is the layer of fat between the sternum bones and the pectoral muscles). Of these, just over half (55 percent) were marketed in fresh form, 69 percent whole and 31 percent as flats/points. Corned briskets accounted for 45 percent of 2017 beef brisket marketings, 53 percent in whole form and 47 percent as flats/points.

While beef briskets, fresh and corned, are marketed throughout the year, St. Patrick’s Day marks the most significant marketing period for corned briskets, both whole and flats/points. In 2017, 56 percent of all annual marketings of corned beef briskets occurred during the two weeks leading up to St. Patrick’s Day (March 17). By type, 55 percent of corned flats/points and 58 percent of whole corned brisket annual marketings took place two weeks before the holiday.

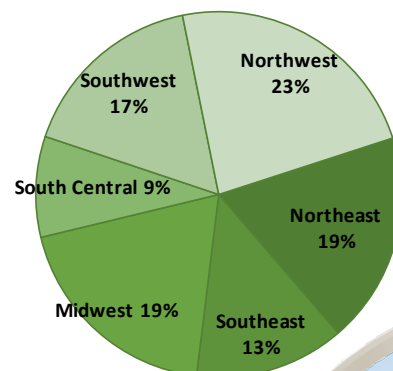
St Patrick’s Day is a much less significant marketing event for fresh whole briskets which are marketed actively in the South Central U.S. (38 percent of total fresh brisket marketings in 2017), particularly during the summer months for barbeque when over half (53 percent) of marketings occur. The St. Patrick’s Day holiday represented 39 percent of annual marketings of fresh flats/points in 2017. While marketing was distributed across all regions of the nation, the most activity occurred in the central core of the U.S., led by the Midwest and the South Central regions.

The Northwest led all regions in marketing penetration for corned beef briskets during St. Patrick’s 2017 with 23 percent of annual marketings of corned beef briskets in that region occurring two weeks before March 17. The Northeast and Midwest were next most active with 19 percent of their annual marketing penetration targeting St. Patrick’s Day. When it came to marketings of corned brisket flats/points, the Northeast and Northwest were virtually tied with 23 percent of the marketings of these cuts in 2017 targeting St. Pat’s. The Midwest was a close second with 22 percent.

Briskets - St Pat's Share of Annual Marketings



Regional Corned Brisket Marketing at St. Pat's



Information for this report was derived from data collected for the [Weekly Retail Beef Report](#) and from data published in the [NASS Livestock Slaughter](#) reports.

