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'TAYLOR HAM' OR 'PORK ROLL'? NEW JERSEYANS DIVIDED ON BELOVED MEAT

Rutgers-Eagleton Poll 45th Anniversary Series: Celebrating the Great Garden State

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. – As New Jerseyans, we may have a lot in common with one another, but there are some issues of utmost importance on which we do not see eye to eye. Perhaps one of the most divisive – or, dare we say, “*meatiest*” – is whether a certain pork-based meat product should be referred to as “pork roll” or “Taylor Ham.” You can often detect whether someone resides in North or South Jersey just by asking them this question (NJ.com has an [interactive map](#), documenting the divide, as well as a recent short history and the political future of the meat [here](#)). Even [the President of the United States knows better](#) than to get in the middle of this classic New Jersey debate.

But if one state legislator has his way, the question may soon be resolved. [According to a recent NJ.com story](#), Assemblyman Tim Eustace (D-Bergen) wants the Legislature to choose, introducing two different bills naming the state’s “official sandwich,” one for each moniker.

If a December 2015 Rutgers-Eagleton Poll is correct, Assemblyman Eustace is courting real trouble. Statewide, 35 percent of New Jersey residents say they call the beloved meat “Taylor Ham,” while 38 percent insist it is called “pork roll”; 13 percent don’t call the meat by either name, 2 percent use the terms interchangeably, and 12 percent are simply not sure what they normally call it. So as with many other things in this state, the public is evenly split, and the Legislature may want to tread carefully!

Why? Because regional differences are real: 59 percent of those who reside in North Jersey typically refer to it as Taylor Ham, while 65 percent of South Jerseyans side with calling it “pork roll.”

But what about those living in the perhaps mythical land of “Central Jersey” (which many insist does not exist)? When it comes to processed meat, it appears that Central Jerseyans look more like those in the south than those in the north. Twenty-five percent of self-identified Central Jerseyans call it “Taylor Ham”; 45 percent say “pork roll.”

The number of years one has been a resident of the great Garden State also affects views on the food item. The longer one has lived here, the more likely they are to take a side: almost half of relative newcomers waver on what to definitively call the meat, while about nine in 10 residents who have lived here their entire lives take a stand. “Pork roll” wins among those who have been here up to a decade or two, but the contest becomes much tighter among those who have lived in New Jersey a quarter of a century or more.

Other demographic disparities exist when it comes to what to call the meat, but in the end, whatever the label, we all know there is nothing better or more quintessentially New Jersey than a delicious pork roll – or is it Taylor Ham? – sandwich. And there is no better time to celebrate than this weekend with not [one](#), but [two](#) festivals honoring the state’s beloved food!

Results are from a statewide poll of 843 adults contacted by live callers on both landlines and cell phones from Nov. 30 to Dec. 6, 2015. The sample has a margin of error of +/-3.8 percentage points. Interviews were done in English and, when requested, Spanish. This release is part of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll’s yearlong celebration of over 200 public opinion polls and 45 years of public opinion polling in the Garden State.

***Note:** Results are from our celebratory 200th Rutgers-Eagleton Poll in December 2015 and are part of a series of questions that explored some classic Garden State debates. Initial analysis was performed by Carly Frank, Rutgers University Class of 2017. Carly is a political science major and labor studies minor in the School of Arts and Sciences, as well as an Undergraduate Associate of the Eagleton Institute of Politics. Carly is the social media specialist for the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling, as well as a research assistant.*

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QUESTIONS AND TABLES START ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE

Questions and Tables

The questions covered in the release of are listed below. Column percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding. Respondents are New Jersey adults; all percentages are of weighted results.

Q. Now for some more questions about New Jersey.

[Questions on other classic New Jersey “debates” came before and after the following.]

Do you call it “Taylor Ham” or “pork roll”?

		Years Lived in NJ				Entire Life	Part of NJ		
		1 to 12	13 to 25	26 to 40	41+		North	Central	South
Taylor Ham	35%	23%	22%	34%	35%	44%	59%	25%	14%
Pork roll	38%	30%	32%	32%	41%	45%	16%	45%	65%
Neither	13%	17%	21%	20%	15%	6%	13%	13%	11%
Both	2%	0%	2%	3%	0%	2%	1%	3%	1%
Don’t know	12%	29%	23%	10%	9%	3%	11%	15%	9%
Unwgt N=	839	97*	125	103	98*	412	309	333	189

** Small N, results should be interpreted with caution*

	Party ID			Gender		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+
Taylor Ham	42%	29%	40%	37%	34%	30%	35%	39%	36%
Pork roll	35%	38%	48%	38%	38%	45%	35%	37%	40%
Neither	11%	15%	7%	10%	15%	11%	13%	14%	11%
Both	0%	3%	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%
Don’t know	12%	15%	2%	12%	12%	12%	15%	8%	12%
Unwt N=	260	390	173	396	443	127	228	256	228

	Income				Education			Region					
	<50K	50K-100K	100K-150K	150K+	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work	Urban	Suburb	Exurban	Phil/South	Shore
Taylor Ham	34%	39%	40%	37%	30%	39%	34%	39%	50%	40%	46%	14%	23%
Pork roll	38%	43%	43%	25%	41%	48%	38%	25%	20%	31%	27%	63%	56%
Neither	9%	10%	10%	17%	11%	8%	14%	20%	15%	12%	12%	11%	14%
Both	1%	1%	2%	5%	2%	1%	2%	3%	1%	3%	1%	1%	2%
Don’t know	18%	7%	4%	16%	16%	5%	12%	13%	14%	14%	14%	11%	5%
Unwt N=	187	231	140	120	208	208	231	185	113	295	134	136	161

The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was conducted by telephone using live callers November 30 – December 6, 2015 with a scientifically selected random sample of 843 New Jersey adults, 18 or older. Respondents within a household are selected by asking randomly for the youngest adult male or female currently available. If the named gender is not available, the youngest adult of the other gender is interviewed. The poll was available in Spanish for respondents who requested it. This telephone

Rutgers-Eagleton Poll
Taylor Ham or pork roll? May 2016

poll included 505 landline and 338 cell phone adults, all acquired through random digit dialing using a sample obtained from Survey Sampling International. Distribution of household phone use in this sample is:

Cell Only:	17%
Dual Use, Reached on Cell:	23%
Dual Use, Reached on LL:	55%
Landline Only:	5%

Data were weighted to the demographics of adults in New Jersey. Weights account for the probability of being selected within the sample frame and the probability of being sampled within a household, based on the number of individuals living in the household and the phone composition (cell, landline) of the household. The samples were weighted using a raking algorithm to several demographic variables reflecting the adult population parameters of the state of New Jersey: gender, race, age, and Hispanic ethnicity. The final weight, which combined all of the parameters mentioned, was trimmed at the 5th and 95th percentile so as to not accord too much weight to any one case or subset of cases. All results are reported with these weighted data.

All surveys are subject to sampling error, which is the expected probable difference between interviewing everyone in a population versus a scientific sampling drawn from that population. Sampling error should be adjusted to recognize the effect of weighting the data to better match the population. In this poll, the simple sampling error for the 843 adults is +/-3.4 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence interval. The adult sample weighting design effect is 1.29, making the adjusted margin of error +/- 3.8 percentage points for the adult sample.

Thus if 50 percent of New Jersey adults in this sample favor a particular position, we would be 95 percent sure that the true figure is between 46.2 and 53.8 percent (50 +/-3.8) if all New Jersey adults had been interviewed, rather than just a sample.

Sampling error does not take into account other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as non-response, question wording, or context effects.

This Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was fielded in house by the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling. The questionnaire was developed and all data analyses were completed in house. The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll is paid for and sponsored by the Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, a non-partisan academic center for the study of politics and the political process. Full questionnaires are available on request, and can also be accessed at the Eagleton Poll archive at www.eagletonpoll.rutgers.edu. For more information, please contact eagleton.poll@rutgers.edu.

Weighted Sample Characteristics			
843 New Jersey Adults			
33% Democrat	48% Male	27% 18-34	60% White
49% Independent	52% Female	25% 35-49	12% Black
18% Republican		29% 50-64	17% Hispanic
		19% 65+	11% Asian/Other/Multi