

AUSTRALIAN MeatNews

VOLUME 15 | NUMBER 1 | MARCH 2017

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Inside

Volume 15 • No. 1 • March 2017

NEWS

Gundagai expansion	5
Superior sausage casings	6
Meat wars are on	8

RETAIL

Pricing a burger – homemade or take-away	10
Old fashion service	12
Taking British sausages to the Big Bash	14
Getting it right as a retail team	16

INDUSTRY

World Meat Congress special report	
Global Trade	22
Consumer Trust	26
Animal Welfare Reform	29
Is DEXA the way forward?	32

NEW PRODUCTS

Broth for good health	35
Lock it up and collect later	36
New flavours for Aussie Lamb	37

ALSO

Book review and Giveaway	9
Find a Word	38
Classies	39

This issue:

Myrtleford's
traditional
butcher
p12



Team building at
The Butcher Club
p16

Broth for
good health
p35

Giveaways

Cover

Mick Ferrero of British Sausage Co took the plunge and went into TV advertising.

Win a copy of "The Rotten Food Cookbook" – revisited on pages 6 and 33, plus "Sausage, A Country by Country Photographic Guide with Recipes" AND "The Art of Vegetarian Sausages" page 9.

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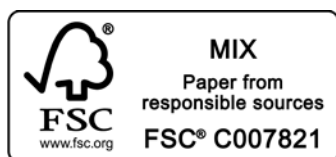
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Big Flavours and Big Events for 2017

By Deb Andrich

This year marks the return of foodpro 2017 to Sydney in the redeveloped International Convention Centre and promises to be the largest event to date. Aimed at food manufacturing, foodpro brings together equipment suppliers with buyers from all sectors of the industry – including meat.



One of the key features of foodpro this year will be the collaboration between foodpro and Food Innovation Australia Ltd (FIAT) to bring the Supply Chain Integrity Zone. This is an initiative to focus on solutions for small manufacturers – those that typically produce less than 10,000 units per week of pre-packaged goods for the consumer – to protect security in traceability and audit compliance.

“The Supply Chain Integrity Zone is a really important and exciting addition to foodpro,” says Peter Petherick, foodpro Event Director. “foodpro has supported Australia’s manufacturing needs for 50 years, and it’s important we continue to respond to the industry as it changes. It’s become clear that there is an increasing number of smaller manufacturers whose needs, although similar to the bigger companies, must be met in more specific ways. The new Zone showcases solutions and, more importantly, fosters discussion and engagement. With a focus on improving traceability and supporting audit compliance, the benefit to the industry will be incredible.”

The Australian Institute of Food Science and Technology (AIFST) Convention is celebrating its 50th anniversary in conjunction with Foodpro and will be running with the theme ‘The Future of Food’. Covering topics such as future consumer needs, export opportunities, insights into current scientific innovations and research plus key sessions on food safety, regulations, sensory and cook chill, makes it well worth attending while visiting foodpro.

AMN readers will find many familiar faces exhibiting including ingredient, equipment, testing and packaging manufacturers along with many that are new to the Australian market. AMN will be running a feature on foodpro in the May issue. The event will be held 16 – 19 July, 2017 at the ICC Sydney, Darling Harbour.

In terms of equipment, the trends for 2017 still seem to be an emphasis on smoking and combi-ovens to provide slow-cook foods. The flip side is sizzle with grills and burgers. It has been an interesting exercise to compare nutrition against dollars for a butcher-made burger compared to a fast food chain version.

In terms of flavours, seaweed appears to have replaced kale. Black is the new black – chargrilled vegetables, squid ink slider buns or weird black infused foods. Soups are the new juice and are great for winter. Cuisines gaining popularity include Spanish and Filipino.

One flavour trend that appears to be gaining ground for 2017 is congee – a savoury rice pudding from Asia that ticks all the comfort food boxes. It is made from slow cooked rice in broth or water, with a range of toppings including chicken, spicy pork, bacon, ginger and kimchi.

Kimchi – a Korean fermented vegetable dish – heads up the list of fermented products that are making a resurgence, particularly for consumers interested in gut health. Fermented vegetables like cabbage, pickles, beets and sourdough would all make a wonderful addition to the grocery items available from the retail butcher.

Chefs becoming more involved in the supply chain as well as consumers being more aware of their food continue to influence buyer behaviour.

All in all, it promises to be an exciting year for the meat industry! ■

GMP upgrade gives greater productivity

Gundagai Meat Processors (GMP) has begun a \$30 million expansion project to give a 40% increase in annual production capacity.

The project to be delivered by Wiley, will include the lairage, slaughter floor, offal areas, chillers, loadout, administration and amenities. The project will be conducted in staged processes and out of hours to ensure current production levels are not impacted.

From an operation initially processing around 100 lambs per week, GMP has gone on to secure major supply contracts, including a 35-year supplier relationship with Coles and processes more than 625,000 lambs annually, making GMP one of the largest employers in the region.

GMP CEO, Will Barton said "This



Gundagai Meat Processing is undergoing a transformation to increase productivity 40% through an upgrade with Wiley.

project marks another incredibly important milestone for our business, our family, and our hardworking employees and for the community of Gundagai. The investment will create 76 new jobs, boost local spending by an estimated \$3 million during the construction phase alone and generate ongoing stimulus to the local

economy, estimated to be in excess of \$150 million per year."

Wiley Managing Director, Tom Wiley, said that the upgrade will take the company well into the future with new technology for full traceability of lamb carcasses with RFID tags and the capacity to employ DEXA x-ray for yield assessment. ■

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We stuffed-up

In the November edition of *Australian Meat News* we reviewed *The Rotten Food Cookbook* by Shane van de Vorstenbosch. This book takes a serious but at times, tongue-in-cheek look at food safety practices.

The question readers were asked to enter the competition to win a copy was: What is Woolworths share of retail meat sales? Not an unreasonable question given we published two stories on competition in the food chain. Both referred to the potential for abuse of market power by major players in the food chain and clearly Woolworths share of retail meat sales was a relevant question. But alas, we didn't actually report that figure in any of the text.

We apologise to all our readers who read *AMN* cover-to-cover to find the answer. We hope the extra reading was informative and even inspiring, even though it may have been a little frustrating and ultimately disappointing in that you were unable to find the answer and enter the competition.

To make amends we will be running two books competitions in the March edition. See page 33.

Please enter both and Good Luck!



Richard Spira (left) and Benny Jacobs (right) from Superior Casings are bringing Nitta Bloom sausage casings to the Australian market.

Superior sausage casings for superior products

In a move that brings a complete offering to the sausage casing market, Superior Casings are introducing the Nitta Bloom Collagen Casing to complement their full range of casings available to retail butcher market.

Exclusive to Superior Casings, the visual appeal of the Nitta Bloom casing gives butchers the opportunity to stand out from the norm. The casing is tinted to give the 'bloom' and colour to the sausage and is suitable for auto filling and hand linking.

Managing Director and Founder of Superior Casings Richard Spira, says that the Nitta Bloom Collagen Casing is the culmination of years of hard work by his company and Nitta in the USA to bring the very best to Australian butchers.

"We want butchers to be able to create sausages that are a point of difference for customers, and create products that by appearance are not available in supermarkets, and the Nitta Bloom product can certainly do that."

The company which began in 1988, has evolved into a large group of entities to cover natural casings, cures, sausage meal, marinades, packaging and equipment, prides itself on being a one-stop shop, with its butcher supply branch trading as Total Butcher Supplies (TBS).

"With nearly 30 years in the industry, we are able to source and supply pretty well anything a butcher may need. We can assist with techniques for maximising tray weight production for high volume manufacturers; supply specific ingredients and meals to achieve flavour profiles; or teaching customers how to set up their auto filler and linker to produce sausages with natural or collagen casings at the most efficient and competitive price."

Superior Casings also has a strong and growing export market and is 100% Australian owned and operated, employing more than 50 employees. They carry an enormous inventory of many different specifications of fully selected Hog and Lamb Casings to suit every production situation, large or small. Added to that, with the new range of Nitta Bloom Collagen, you have the whole sausage casing market pretty much wrapped up. ■

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SUPERIOR CASINGS

Supermarkets start meat price war

Aggressive advertising of discount meat signals the start of a meat price war by major supermarket Coles and Woolworths.

The effect on the supermarkets themselves will be insignificant given meat represents only a small proportion of their total grocery sales. The price war will have a greater impact on retail butchers and supply chains, including smaller processors and primary producers, just as the milk, bread and poultry price wars did on their respective industries.

The table below lists recent prices from Coles and Woolworths internet catalogues. Most of the “meat specials” per kg meat prices, are written in the format \$7 or \$11 with no cent units, presumably to simplify the price message.

The heavily discounted cuts are the ones heavily promoted while the catalogues list “regular” version of similar cuts at higher prices.

Supermarket retail prices can be checked by visiting: www.coles.com.au and clicking on the Catalogues & Specials option or Shopline. Or www.woolworths.com.au and clicking on Products or Specials. ■

Coles & Woolworths Retail Meat Prices \$/kg*			
	Early February 2017	Coles Discount Price 2009 ³	Coles non-discount Prices 2009 ³
Beef			
T Bone steak	21 ¹	13.00-14.00	22.00
MSA Porterhouse	30 ²	18.00	25.00
MSA Rump	20 ²	10.00-14.00	21.00
Scotch Fillet	33 ¹	18.97	26.00
Mince	7 ¹	5.99-7.96	8.99
Mince	8 ²		
Heart Smart Beef Mince	15 ²	11.92- 12.93	15.00
5 Star Premium Mince		12.00	15.00
Pork			
Loin chops	16 ²		
Heart smart Pork Mince	14 ²		
Lamb			
Cutlets	28 ¹		
Loin Chops	20 ¹		
Shoulder	11 ¹		
Leg Roast	9.50 ¹		
Leg Roast	10 ²		
¹ Coles price ² Woolworths price ³ Coles Catalogue inner Melbourne. Advertised prices from Jan 09 to Dec 09.			

No lamb taint from drought pastures

What a lamb eats appears to have little impact on how a lamb tastes, according to new CSIRO research.

Australian scientists compared the flavour, tenderness and juiciness of lambs fed different forages pre-slaughter. Their results, published in CSIRO's latest *Animal Production Science journal*, found few effects on flavour, although different combinations of backgrounding and finishing feeds might affect tenderness.

“Forages such as lucerne and plantain can play an important role in sustainable lamb production; however, it is important to ensure that these feeds do not introduce undesirable flavours,” said CSIRO researcher, Dr Damian Frank. “Summer-active forages are increasingly used in lamb production.”

Rapid growth, drought tolerance and high crude protein in these forages offer distinct advantages to lamb producers and can play a role in more sustainable meat production.

“Despite the usefulness of these crops, it is not certain if they can affect the sensory properties and flavour of lamb.

Undesirable flavours might negatively impact consumer acceptability and confidence, especially in export markets,” he said.

In the trials, 168 lambs spent their last 76 days grazing either perennial ryegrass, (the most common southern pasture variety) lucerne or plantain. After slaughter, the striploin and topside muscles were grilled and tested by untrained consumers as well as a trained sensory panel.

The meats were also tested using gas chromatograph-mass spectrometry and gas chromatography-olfactometry. These analysed the volatiles in the headspace of freshly grilled macerated meat to check for feed-induced taints or off-flavours.

“Grilled meat from lambs finished on lucerne and plantain was equally or more acceptable than on ryegrass, with no negative impacts on flavour,” Dr Frank said. “However, there was evidence that the lamb finished on either plantain or lucerne may have been preferred, possibly due to higher tenderness scores in those samples.” ■

Sausages by country

Summer is the season for snags on the bbq and every butcher has a range to choose from. “*Sausage, A Country-by-Country Photographic Guide with Recipes*”, by Nichola Fletcher gives a pictorial guide to a vast array of sausages from around the world.

The author’s foreword relates that everyone has a favourite sausage and the recipes are as varied as the consumer. From the German high meat content wurst through to the more exotic Mexican strawberry-flavoured chorizo.

The book outlines the basics of sausages – more useful to the home sausage maker than the butcher before allocating a chapter to different countries.

First cab of the rank is Germany, listing nearly 50 different types, followed by Austria, Switzerland, France, Italy, Spain and Portugal to fill out nearly half of the sausage descriptions. The East European and Mediterranean offerings then feature, along with North Africa, North and South America. Asia and Australia/NZ round out the list.

The descriptions are fairly simple – main meat component, its type (smoked, fresh, cured or cooked); typical size and regional origin.

The true worth of the book is in the back half, where full recipes are given for many of the different types of sausages as well as a guide on how to make them. The recipes include sausage and bean casseroles, the classic hot dog, Asian rice dishes with sausage and a Sicilian sausage and lentil salad.

Published by DK Publishing, “*Sausage, A Country-by-Country Photographic Guide with Recipes*” is available from Books for Cooks at RRP of \$35.00. ■



Sausages for vegetarians

At first glance, it appears that there probably isn’t much of interest for butchers in the book “*The Art of Making Vegetarian Sausages*”, by Stanley and Adam Marianski.

However, the old adage, “don’t judge a book by its cover” quickly comes to mind.

This book is not about making emulsified soy or tofu sausages commonly found in a supermarket but a true study on how to make vegetarian sausages that taste good, hold together and are suitable for vegans.

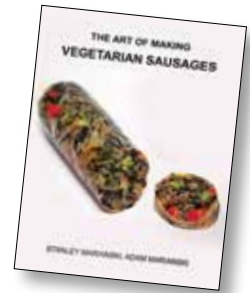
Each chapter explains to the butcher who is used to dealing with animal fats, salt, fillers and spices – what to use as an alternative to achieve the same quality in a vegetarian sausage.

Binders usually come from meat proteins. The book covers alternatives such as mixtures of gums, including xanthan and agar, that perform the same task. Alternatives to animal fats using vegetable oils are covered and alternative fillers can be derived from grains, beans and flours. The gluten aspect is also handled for those who are coeliac.

The recipes in the book are aimed more at the commercial butcher, rather than the home sausage maker and would make an appealing alternative to ‘veggie burgers’ in the shop display.

Everyone loves a good sausage; now the vego’s can too. Just don’t use a collagen casing!

A small soft cover book, it is well worth a read. Published by Bookmagic LLC, USA it retails at \$29.95 from Books for Cooks. ■



Winners of the November 2016 Find a Word Competition

Congratulations to the winners and thank you to BUNZL our sponsor.



Winner of the Steak Knife & Steel

Ms Sandra Inzitari, Nando’s Quality Meats,
Kemps Creek NSW

Winners Boning Knives

Pat Dorahy, Dorahy Meats, Unanderra NSW
Campbell Weeks, Nicholas Fish Market, Mossman NSW
Greg Bulman, Peters & Sons, Lavington NSW
Ashley Southwell, Wedderburn, Glenfield NSW
Yamen Mustapha, Yamen Halal Meats, Hoppers Crossing, Vic

WIN WIN

To enter our competition to win a copy of: “*Sausage, A Country-by-Country Photographic Guide with Recipes*” by Nichola Fletcher” and “*The Art of Making Vegetarian Sausages*” by Stanley and Adam Marianski

Send your answer and name and address & phone number to:

Australian Meat News Book Competition
OTHER BOOK

By post: PO Box 415 Richmond Vic 3121 or

Email: optimalnews@majestic.net.au

Question: How many sausages are MDH donating to Foodbank per year?

Entries close: April 7, 2017

Red meat – still great value-for-money protein

As retail meat prices increase sharply customers are questioning if meat is fair value-for-money.

Customer and ultimately consumer resistance to increased prices is real and poses a threat to the future of many in the meat chain.

But is the price of red meat unreasonably high?

In strict economic terms it isn't. In real terms (adjusted for inflation), livestock prices have not increased in the decade till early 2015 and retail prices had increased broadly in-line with inflation, causing little concern for consumers. The sharp increase in 2015 and 2016, in a sense, has been an economic "catch-up" for livestock and retail prices.

But the real world of family budgets and commercial price competition cares little about the long-term economics of livestock producers and the meat chain. Sharp price increases hurt consumers' pockets and minds.

Retail butchers are at the coalface, dealing with customer concerns on a daily basis.

So what can a butcher say to his customers to justify current meat prices? What can be said to encourage customers to keep red meat as a key component of the family diet?

In the end, the sales pitch must be tailored to meet each customer's concern. However, data shows that red meat is a viable value-for-money option at current prices and equally importantly, is a sensible and practical source of protein.

We get protein from a variety of foods, typically meats such as beef, lamb, pork and poultry but also from milk, cheese, eggs and protein rich pulses such as lentils and beans. Even rice, potato, bread and pasta contain some protein.

The 'average' human needs to eat about 55gm of protein a day. Protein concentrations in foods vary. Lean beef, lamb and pork are about 20% protein, lean chicken is about 29%, eggs 13%, lentils and beans about 25%, bread 9% and rice 7%.

So to get the equivalent of a day's protein you need to eat about 250gm of lean red meat or poultry, seven eggs, 600gm (or three quarters) of a loaf of bread a day.

The calculation gets a bit more complicated for pulses and rice. The percentage values above are raw weight but you can't eat lentils

dry. Cooking (and hydrating) lentils and rice increases their unit weight three-fold effectively reducing their protein concentration by a third in their cooked state and increasing the cooked weight required to eat 55gm of protein – three fold. You would need to eat between 600-700gm of lentils or beans per day to get a daily equivalent protein ration. To get a day's protein from rice or potatoes alone to you would need to eat 2.1kg or 2.8kg cooked weight respectively.

The next factor is cost. At a retail price of \$15/kg l for beef/lamb/pork, it costs \$3.75 to buy 250gm or the equivalent of a day's protein requirement. At \$30/kg it increases to \$7.50 per day and at \$40/kg it costs \$10.00 per day.

Lentils and beans are cheap comparatively, costing less than \$2.00 per day to provide 55gm of protein. (But remember – you would need to eat about 650gm of cooked beans or lentils a day.) Similarly milk and eggs are relatively cheap but you need to drink 1.7L or eat seven eggs a day.

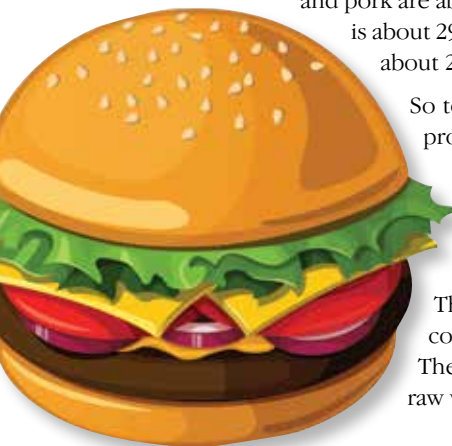
The bottom line is; humans need to eat a balanced diet that includes a range of foods and ideally includes a range of protein sources.

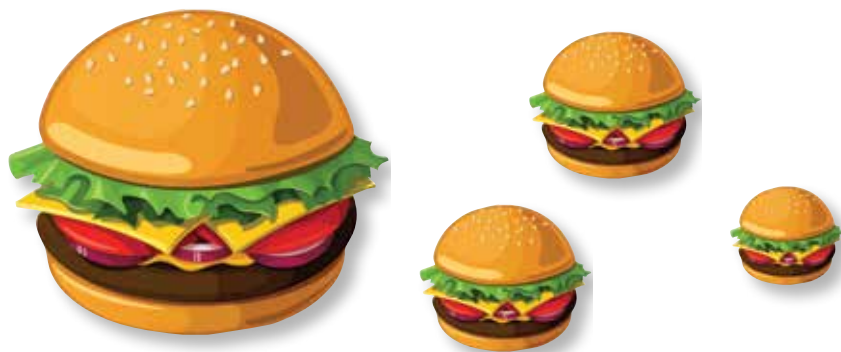
Meats are a high quality protein, are relatively easy to prepare and 100 to 200gm serves are not a challenge to consume. Eating a little too much meat does no dietary harm while eating too little red meat can put some people's health at risk.

If it's sensible to get about half your daily protein requirement from meats, (that is eat about 125gm/day of meat) meats priced at retail \$15/kg will cost about \$13 per week, \$30/kg meats about \$26 and \$40/kg meats about \$35 per week.

Put in a wider food context, to get about half your daily protein from a MacDonald's burger would cost about \$35 per week. A 125gm steak, from your local pub, at \$24 a pop (about half your daily requirement) each day would cost about \$170 per week. If you drink one cappuccino a day at \$4 a cup it's costing \$28 per week – a cappuccino has about 3gm of protein. (Ever thought about retraining as a barista?)

So what do you tell your customers? Record meat prices that the media are banging-on about are probably costing them about \$20 per adult family member per week more than they were paying three years ago. The savings in buying cheaper cuts are worth, at most, \$10-15 per week per adult family member. Take-away and pub meals, in a protein equivalent sense, cost as much or more than the most expensive cut in the display. And finally don't drink so much coffee! ■





FOOD TYPE	PROTEIN %**	RETAIL PRICE \$/KG	\$ PER 55gm PROTEIN*	Notes
LEAN: BEEF/LAMB/PORK	22	\$45.00	\$11.25	100gm Recommended serving size
LEAN: BEEF/LAMB/PORK	22	\$40.00	\$10.00	100gm Recommended serving size
LEAN: BEEF/LAMB/PORK	22	\$35.00	\$8.75	100gm Recommended serving size
LEAN: BEEF/LAMB/PORK	22	\$30.00	\$7.50	100gm Recommended serving size
LEAN: BEEF/LAMB/PORK	22	\$25.00	\$6.25	100gm Recommended serving size
LEAN: BEEF/LAMB/PORK	22	\$20.00	\$5.00	100gm Recommended serving size
LEAN: BEEF/LAMB/PORK	22	\$15.00	\$3.75	100gm Recommended serving size
POTATO	2	\$4.00	\$11.00	About 2.25kg/day boiled***
FISH	26	\$30.00	\$6.35	
CHEDDAR CHEESE	25	\$25.00	\$5.50	
CHICKEN	29	\$25.00	\$4.74	
FISH	26	\$20.00	\$4.23	
EGGS FREE RANGE	13	\$7.70	\$3.26	6 eggs per day***
PEANUT BUTTER	23	\$13.00	\$3.11	Peanut butter is about 50% fat
PET FOOD CHUM WITH BEEF	4.5	\$2.36	\$2.88	
CHICKEN	29	\$15.00	\$2.84	
MILK BRANDED	3.3	\$1.70	\$2.83	1.4L per day***
BREAD	9	\$3.00	\$1.83	About 3/4 of a loaf per day***
EGGS CAGED	13	\$4.10	\$1.73	6 eggs per day***
SPAGHETTI	13	\$4.00	\$1.69	About 750gm cooked***
BEANS WHITE	20	\$6.10	\$1.68	About 500gm cooked***
MILK \$/L	3.3	\$1.00	\$1.67	1.4L per day***
LENTILS	25	\$6.60	\$1.45	About 540gm cooked***
KIDNEY BEANS	24	\$5.00	\$1.15	About 500gm cooked***
FAST FOOD				
McDonalds Classic Angus	Need to eat 1.8 burgers to get 55gm protein		\$11.59	
McDonalds Quarter Pounder	Need to eat 1.6 burgers to get 55gm protein		\$9.62	
KFC Original Tenders	Need to eat 1.2 burgers to get 55gm protein		\$9.53	
* Approximate daily requirement for an "average" human ** Approximate protein % dry or uncooked or as typical form when purchased *** Amount required to consume 55gm of protein				

Fashionably old-fashioned

Traditional butcher shops are trendy. Foodies love seeing Steve and Damien Dale cut up beef at their Myrtleford butcher shop and learning about where each animal was farmed.

At Myrtleford in North East Victoria, customers have a clear view through to the back of S & A Dale Butchery. The regulars are familiar with the sight of Steve Dale and his son Damien Dale breaking up beef, lamb and pork.

“We’re old fashioned,” Damien said. “We don’t buy boxed meat. We buy [beef] from the farm. We know the history of it. We break it down when we need it.

“If they want a T-bone and we haven’t got it we’ll break it down and get it and cut it for them.” And if they are asked, Steve and Dale can confidently name the exact farm which produced the beef.

All of their beef is purchased direct from local famers. The vealers are trucked to Gathercole’s Wangaratta Abattoir for slaughter. The carcasses hang in the butcher shop – usually for between 10 and 15 days – and are broken down as needed.

Watching the Dales cut up their steak is just a regular part of town life for the locals, but many out-of-towners are surprised they can look beyond the display cabinet to see bodies of beef, lamb and pork hanging in the back room.

These days traditional butcher shops are not just quaint – they feed into the whole foodie culture. “We get some people that come in here that really love their food and want to know every little detail about the meat they cook,” Damien said. “How to cook it; how long it’s been hanging; what sort of cow it was. Was it grass fed? We cater for that and really look after them and they keep coming back.”

Damien said some Melbourne residents read about the shop in a newspaper article a decade ago and now travel to Myrtleford annually to buy sausages.

In the summer the Dales sell about 3000 ‘normal Aussie’ sausages a week, as well as about 400 continental sausages.

Paddock to patty

At Myrtleford, steakettes have never gone out of fashion. “Not many butchers make steakettes but we do,” Steve said. “People come up on holidays and they take steakettes home with them.”



Damien and Steve Dale outside their busy Myrtleford butcher shop which has been operating for 37 years.

“We have a steakette machine that goes onto the mincer,” Damien explained. “We just feed the meat through the mincer and it comes out through the steakette [machine] in little squares. And of course we use good meat to make them.”

With beef prices so high, families appreciate the affordability of a steakette. “They work out at \$1.20. That’s better than \$8 sometimes for a steak,” Damien said.

Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) Lambassador, Sam Kekovic, grew up in Myrtleford before moving to Melbourne in 1968 to pursue his AFL career. The MLA’s lamb campaign seems to be working – the Dales sold plenty of lamb in the lead-up to Australia Day.

There are not many lamb producers around Myrtleford, so the Dales buy their lamb from Gathercole’s. The bodies hang at the shop for about a week before being broken down.

Damien said the high beef and lamb prices are impacting negatively on their profit margin because customers are buying fewer steaks and taking care not to over-cater for barbecues. And they choose cheaper options like small goods, sausages and kebabs.

Chicken, sourced from Dinnings at nearby Wangaratta, is another affordable option. “You can buy half a dozen chicken schnitzels for \$12 and that feeds a family for a night,” Damien said.

Pigs are purchased as carcasses from Gathercole’s. “We don’t sell a lot of pork but we make a lot of continental sausages out of the pork,” Damien said.

Salami season

The peak season for pork is winter – salami season. “Really from the Queen’s birthday weekend onwards people buy a lot of pigs and make up their salamis,” Damien said.

Myrtleford has a vibrant community of first, second and third generation Italians who buy pig bodies from the Dales to make salami at their own homes. Steve said in recent years many non-Italians have also begun making salami.

“If you can pick your good cattle out of the paddocks, you have good meat.”

Born and bred in Myrtleford, Steve was 14 when he began working in a local butcher shop in the 1960s. He and his wife Alison opened S & A Dale Butchery 37 years ago.

Alison continues to do the bookkeeping and also helps with sales during the busiest periods.

Damien spent much of his childhood at the shop. “I used to always be here to clean up when I was a kid,” he said. He began an apprenticeship there in 1988 when he was 16. Over the years he has worked in other butcher shops and in other industries, but the flexibility of working for a family business lured him back to D & A Dale.

He spent some time working in the meat department of a supermarket, but prefers the personalised service local butcher shops offer. “We can even open the door and shut the door and take the meat and put it in their car.”

Damien said it is hard to compete with the local supermarkets. “They buy different cattle than us and you’re not on a level playing field. But people come to us because they know that we’re masters of our trade. We know what we’re talking about. We can tell the story of where the meat came from and a lot of them like that.”

There is another traditional butcher shop in Myrtleford. It is operated by Damien’s cousin, Garry Waite, who completed his apprenticeship at D & A Dale. Steve considers him a colleague, not a rival.

Damien loves his home town, which has a population of about 3500 people. “It’s a nice, safe, small community. Everyone knows everyone. There’s beautiful fresh air. I walk to work and I see Mount Buffalo every morning. I’m hoping to be around for another 25 years, working here.” ■



Damien Dale with a tray of beef from a vealer which was hand-picked from a local farm.

Hand-picked quality

Veteran butcher Steve Dale said the secret to quality beef is selecting the best cattle.

Steve and his son Damien source vealers for their Myrtleford butcher shop direct from local farms. The cattle are usually aged around 10 months and in a good season like this they have a carcass weight of between 190kg and 220kg.

The Dales deal with six regular farmers and buy three or four vealers each week. “I look at them and then pick out the good ones,” said Steve. “We look at their brisket and sort of tell by that and the back of them. You think ‘that’s a beautiful behind’.

“If you can pick your good cattle out of the paddocks, you have good meat.”

Beef prices are high but Damien is happy to see farmers rewarded for their work. He said it has a flow-on effect for the town. “We don’t hassle the farmer or argue for price. We pay them what’s the market price.”

Bringing British Sausages to the Small Screen

BBQs and cricket are synonymous with an Australian summer. The British Sausage Co has taken advantage of these Aussie icons by launching a national TV ad campaign to promote its brand of sausages and bacon.

By Deborah Andrich

Cricket's KFC Big Bash League has proven to be a ratings winner of the summer period for Network 10, drawing audiences of around 800-900,000 viewers per game. At the peak of the season – with two or three games per week – this adds up to a lot of air time for advertisers.

Prior to the national campaign for the 2016/17 summer season, The British Sausage Company – a Western Australian-based producer – had advertised locally in WA for a couple of years during the Big Bash competition with consumer uptake noticeably increasing compared to print media, cooking demonstrations and food events. This year's campaign has seen the company expand their brand recognition to a national scale through major supermarkets and retailers.

"The Big Bash is a really good media asset and hits our target market perfectly," says Mick Ferrero, managing director of The British Sausage Co. "Since advertising nationally on TV we have had hundreds of e-mails from consumers providing feedback on our products. This direct connection with the end consumer has also allowed us to fine-tune our products as well as develop new ones. We have had so many people say that our raw cured bacon is the best bacon they have ever eaten. It has given everyone involved in the business a real buzz."

The company produces more than 25 different types of sausages, burgers and bacon products. The company's main manufacturing is in WA and SA while a facility in NSW covers the eastern states. Supporting the Australian pork industry, the company uses Australian grown meat, including for bacon and belly; this fact is highlighted as a point of difference in their marketing strategy. The casings are a mix of natural sheep and hog and collagen.

"The decision to go nationally was based on the opportunity to take the British brand across the country – in for a penny, in for a pound," says Mick. "In order to do that we needed to do everything in our power to make it work. So far, we are very happy with the way things are going."

The campaign, broadcast during the Big Bash games, was also aired on Foxtel, SBS and via the 'Brand Power' advertising



The British Sausage Co products are found throughout Australia via major supermarkets.

strategy developed by the marketing agency, the Buchanan Group.

The company has been in operation for around 25 years, started by Brit Mick Ferrero who made up traditional British sausages in a friend's butcher shop for his mates. Using his own recipes, his reputation soon saw the company grow into a shop in its own right and then continued to expand into its current factory-sized facility in WA, producing more than 200 tonnes per week of sausages. The sausage range includes Breakfast and Irish pork sausages; Cumberland; Scottish and Boerewors, along with flavour combinations such as herb and garlic, beef and caramelised onion and pork and apple.

"The Big Bash is on at a time of year when a lot of people are on holidays and spending time with friends and family which is exactly what sausages, burgers and bacon is all about. What can be better than watching same fast-paced cricket with your friends and family and enjoying some British-style sausages on the BBQ?" ■



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Build the team the right way

In the lead up to Christmas, I had the opportunity to do a few shifts as a cashier for our local retail butcher shop. Working fifteen hours in a trial situation over a few shifts, I was taught the POS system, crumbing, burgers, shasliks, display upkeep and coolroom rotation, amongst others.

I learned very quickly that every staff member in the butcher shop works hard, long hours on their feet. It's been many years since I did any sort of retail and I had forgotten those details – the sore feet and legs, the grubby clothes and fatigue. I admire each and every one of you in the industry for the work you do.

What came as a surprise was the diversity of staff and their origins. Some were university students from nursing to engineering to computer animation; others were Mums working part time hours, while others had been in the industry for more than 20 years. Working together, the shop was efficient and welcoming to both new staff members and customers alike.

So what makes the perfect team? I asked Stuart, the store manager, and Peter Robinson, the business' owner, for their thoughts.

By Deborah Andrich

The best team is probably summed up most succinctly by Peter Robinson, owner of The Butcher Club – a group of nine retail outlets across Melbourne – when he said he looked for honesty, integrity, a willingness to work hard and reliability in all his team members, whether they are clean up kids or qualified butchers.

As with any butcher shop, the typical staff requirements are qualified butchers, clean up kids, drivers and cashiers. As Ferntree Gully store manager, Stuart, explained, everyone is expected to pitch in to help run the business.

“We have four qualified butchers – two full time and two part time to cover seven days a week, up to 12 hours a day. We have three permanent part timers who oversee the cashiers and train up our casual staff, plus two to do clean-up at the end of the day,” Stuart said.

“For counter staff, I look for bright, bubbly personalities that interact well with customers. They must also be productive with product preparation. You can be the best cashier in the world but if you fall behind in crumbing schnitzels, the whole business can fall behind.”

“Clean-up kids need to have the drive to do the job properly. It's not the most glamorous job in the world but it has to be done correctly. Good workers will always be given the opportunity to progress to cashier roles or higher if they are interested.”

“Our butchers are also the shift manager, so they need to be able to work with all our staff to ensure the business is running smoothly, the customers are happy and we are meeting the guidelines of The Butcher Club.”

“The key is to respect how other people operate. You need to be aware of people's limitations, strengths and weaknesses. Pushing people beyond their capabilities means they get frustrated. If you have a person who doesn't want to be there it creates a negative effect and you end up needing another staff member.”

Peter Robinson agrees, “Building a team that works well together is important; one person who upsets the whole team is no good for business. We make sure we have enough staff to cover the workload so that no one feels overwhelmed. You want them to come back the next day.”

The Butcher Club

Most Melbourne butchers would remember Peter Robinson from his days as co-owner of Elg and Robinson, Williamstown, established nearly ten years ago. It is a well respected butcher shop that provides red meat products, seafood, poultry and a range of value-add products such as pies and lasagnes.

Since his partner's retirement four years ago, Peter has gone on to establish The Butcher Club group of retail butchers –



Store manager, Stuart for the Ferntree Gully branch of The Butcher Club, needs his staff to have honesty, integrity and be hard working and reliable.

the Ferntree Gully store on the other side of the city was the first, purchased from the Linden group. Since then, his company has established another seven stores with another due to be opened later in the year.

“To manage staff across all the stores, we have a full time human resources manager who oversees the hiring of qualified butchers and managers, while part time and casual staff is handled by the individual store.”

“We are fortunate to have a network of stores that we can source staff from. If we know someone is better suited to the conditions at another store, we can look to move them. For our new store, we can take a few experienced ones across from a geographically local store to help establish and train new staff.”

Hiring and retaining a good, qualified butcher is difficult. Both Peter and Stuart keep an ear to the ground for word of mouth recommendations for qualified butchers. To find part time and casual staff, advertising in-store on the counter or via the local newspaper is the most efficient way to recruit.

To retain staff, both men work to ensure that there is a safe, happy workplace to encourage people to work together and want to come back. Procedures and policies such as recipe

cards, equipment safety procedures are provided to ensure quality products are made as well as safe operating procedures. Administration such as payroll for permanents, superannuation and work cover are handled by The Butcher Club, but each store handles overheads and casual wages.

The legalities of hiring, retaining and terminating staff

The Australian Meat Industry Council (AMIC) provides support to the meat industry in many areas including food safety, hygiene, human resources and industrial relations under the Meat Industry Award (MIA), 2010.

“For many retail butchers that are owner operated, it is often the spouse that handles the administration for the business – payroll, accounts and staff,” says Ken McKell, manager, Human Resources, AMIC. “We usually tend to hear from them when things go wrong. We recommend that retail butchers have policies and procedures in place to ensure that Workcover is appropriate; that staff are trained in all safety procedures, and that this is documented using a risk management approach.”

Ken concurs with Stuart and Peter in that different personalities and shops

operate in different ways and it is important to keep an open door policy to help staff be at their best or to talk through any problems they may have. A probation period, which might be between one and six months – is recommended so that the traits of honesty, integrity, work ethic and reliability can be assessed.

When hiring a new staff member, Ken says the typical initial paperwork would include a tax declaration form, superannuation application form and bank details. Other paperwork may include a document specifying the employee’s conditions of employment including pay rates, hours to be worked, leave entitlements (not casuals) and separately, company policies on appearance; work health and safety, and training. There may also be documents outlining the safe use of machinery for example, bandsaws or mincers.

Within the MIA, there are eight classification levels with corresponding wage rates. Level 1 is the introductory level for persons with no meat industry experience at all while Levels 7 and 8 are for a General butcher and butcher managing a retail shop. Persons employed under an Apprenticeship or Traineeship have a different pay/skill structure. The MIA sets the minimum

continued on page 18

continued from page 17

Table 1 – Adult rates and penalty calculations + tax and super Level (See notes)

	Weekly rate (Mon-Fri)	Tax 1/7/16 (no change)	Super	Ordinary Hourly rate	Time and one quarter (Ordinary rate for meat retail estab/ment on Saturday	Time and one half (Ordinary rate for meat retail estab/ment on Sunday	Casual Ordinary rate for week days (incl 25% loading)	Overtime Time and one half	Overtime Double time
\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
1	672.70	74.00	63.91	17.70	22.13	26.55	22.13	26.55	35.40
2	696.40	79.00	66.16	18.33	22.91	27.50	22.91	27.50	36.66
3	705.10	81.00	66.98	18.56	23.20	27.84	23.20	27.84	37.12
4	722.60	86.00	68.65	19.02	23.78	28.53	23.78	28.53	38.04
5	735.90	90.00	69.91	19.37	24.21	29.06	24.21	29.06	38.74
6	751.70	96.00	71.41	19.78	24.73	29.67	24.73	29.67	39.56
7	783.30	107.00	74.41	20.61	25.76	30.92	25.76	30.92	41.22
8	811.90	117.00	77.13	21.37	26.71	32.06	26.71	32.06	42.74

Adult rates and penalty calculations + tax and super. Source AMIC

rates of pay for full-time, part-time and casual employees. It is a requirement under the Fair Work Act that each employee is given a payslip for each pay cycle that clearly outlines who is the recipient, the hourly/weekly rate, hours worked, any deductions (e.g. tax) and any superannuation contributions.

“Under the MIA and Fair Work Act, employees are covered for the correct pay rates and entitlements as well as protection from unfair dismissal,” says Ken. “Employers must have their employees covered for workers compensation. There are severe penalties for not having a Workcover policy in place. You need to be sure it is appropriate for your workplace and that it covers everyone.”

Improvements in workplace health and safety practices have significantly reduced the number and range of injuries in the meat industry, which predominantly involved incorrect lifting, moving and shifting techniques and knife injuries which

have been reduced due to improved knife sharpening. Hazard analysis and critical control points (HACCP) is a risk management methodology that has also contributed to the safe work environment. One example is a ‘no jewellery’ policy as well as the use of hair nets or tying hair back to keep it out of food and machinery.

The disciplining and termination of an employee are the most common types of calls that AMIC receive. The Fair Work Act stipulates the rules regarding procedural fairness (i. e. counselling and warnings) that should be followed to avoid dismissing an employee unfairly (except for reasons that justify instant dismissal).

“We usually recommend that managers give at least two warnings (the second one is also the final warning) prior to dismissal,” says Ken. “AMIC strongly recommends that warnings be followed up in writing – otherwise it is your word against theirs. It is vital to keep a record of all disciplinary meetings with the employee including

written correspondence and any evidence such as video footage.”

“Depending on the occupation, be sure that the staff member had undertaken the training on how to do things correctly – operation of the till, safe knife handling, using the sausage filler,” Ken said. A bullying harassment policy needs to be put in place, including what is not acceptable conduct and the consequences of any breach.

Ultimately, building the right team is about honesty and integrity – to do the right thing by the business or employee; hard working and reliable – be there when you are needed and work to the best of your abilities. Open communication between manager and employee is vital to ensure that the staff member understands what is expected of them and what their duties, obligations, rights and entitlements are.

By being fair, everyone in the business benefits. ■

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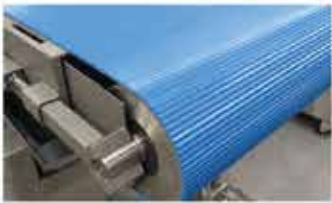
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The 21st World Meat Congress in Uruguay, South America last December attracted more than 700 delegates from 36 countries.

'Many Voices, One Melody' was the theme of the Congress which aimed to provide the international meat sector with wide ranging discussions on six issues of vital importance to the industry in an increasingly uncertain and changing world.

It also aimed to begin the challenging process of building consensus as a globally united industry.

Four of the keynote speakers covering three of the major sessions – Global Trends, Consumer Trust and Animal Care and Health – spoke with *Australian Meat News* following the Congress to bring this analysis to Australia's protein industries.

The remaining sessions covered Trade Policies, Sustainability and Human Health and Nutrition.

Global trade flow disruptions expected

By Stephanie Flynn

Significant trade flow disruptions may be ahead for global protein exporters as newly elected US President, Donald Trump, re-balances US trade with China and Mexico and negotiations commence for the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union according to Rabobank's Global Strategist in Animal Proteins, Mr Justin Sherrard.

China's increasing demand for protein imports, growing consumer interest in production systems, the drive towards value-adding as well as the possibility of global over-production are also among the five key opportunities and challenges for the protein industries identified by Mr Sherrard.

At the consumer end of the equation, Mr Sherrard believes there are three important global trends that will provide a future direction for protein industries to increase market share and profitability.

Mr Sherrard, who was one of the key note speakers for the headline session 'Global Trends' at the recent World Meat Congress, spoke with *Australian Meat News* following the Congress.

The Global Trading Environment

In one of his first official trade policy changes since taking office in January, President Trump withdrew the United States from the Trans-Pacific Partnership free-trade agreement to which Australia, New Zealand and nine other Pacific region nations were also a party.

While it may yet be too early to conclude that any further proposed changes in U.S. trade policy will mark the commencement of a new era of 'protectionism' in the global trading environment, Mr Sherrard does believe that a possible outcome of US policy changes with China and Mexico may be an over-supply of US beef on global markets providing both opportunities and increased competition for other international beef exporters in their major markets.

"Trade has long been important in the animal protein sector, especially to efficient producers like Australia," Mr Sherrard said.

"China and Mexico are the two most important export destinations for US meat exports and, if there are changes in US trade policy, a significant volume of US meat could end up looking for alternative markets.

"Equally, however, such an outcome would also leave a significant gap for other exporting nations in both Mexico and China," he said.

As 2017 marks the commencement of negotiations for the United Kingdom's exit from the EU, Mr Sherrard believes that future changes to trade access could open up both opportunities and risks for new and current trade flows, particularly as Britain is a major importer of beef, pork and poultry.

And while there is no signal from Russian authorities that the nation will re-open its market to meat exports that currently lack access, Mr Sherrard



*Mr Justin Sherrard,
Rabobank's Global
Strategist in Animal
Proteins.*

Based in Rabobank's Head Office in the Netherlands in Europe, Mr Sherrard is the company's specialist global strategist in the animal protein sector.

An Australian, Mr Sherrard has worked for more than 20 years as an adviser to blue chip companies around the world applying his specialist knowledge of food and agribusiness, as well as in issues relating to sustainability and climate change.

He holds a Masters of Applied Science as well as a Bachelor of Science from the University of New South Wales.

says that China will remain the most important demand driver in global animal protein markets.

Mr Sherrard said that China's import requirements for beef, sheep meat, pork and poultry will remain the largest single market opportunity for protein exporters.

"Over the next three to four years, it is Rabobank's view that total imports to mainland China will grow from around four million to six million tonnes, with pork remaining the largest contributor to the total import volume and beef imports growing more than the other species," Mr Sherrard said.

"Leading exporters now need to focus on the question of how to build a sustainable supply chain into China to capitalise on this demand opportunity," he said.

Opportunities and the Threat of Over-supply

One of the key opportunities for meat production is the global interest among consumers, the food service and retail sectors in production systems according to Mr Sherrard.

He says that technologies such as the use of 'Blockchain' technology, as well as traditional tracking and tracings systems, allow consumers greater insight into where and how meat is produced.

Developed to drive the on-line 'bit coin', Blockchain technology is an encryption system which provides products with a unique digital identification.

Whereas barcodes are physically applied to a product by tags, Blockchain technology operates in a similar manner but in a digital form.

Blockchain technology allows tracing, via the digital identification, right along the supply chain and has the benefit of allowing consumers accessibility to tracking whereas barcode tags generally do not.

Blockchain technology is already successfully being implemented by the seafood industry to allow verification that products have been sourced legally and within allowed quotas.

According to Mr Sherrard, there is also an important shift in the way some consumers define quality.

Mr Sherrard believes that that consumers' idea of 'quality' is no longer simply about taste and texture, but is increasingly expanding to encompass values such as sustainability and animal welfare, a trend he sees as continuing to fuel interest in protein production systems.

But despite the positives that these opportunities present, Mr Sherrard says that globally there is a looming threat of over-supply which is likely to result in downward pressure on protein prices.

"While Australia's beef industry is in a counter-cyclical phase right now, with reduced production as herd rebuilding occurs, most other regions have been expanding production," Mr Sherrard said.

"In 2015 the U.S., for example, saw the largest annual increment in protein production for 40 years.

"The question for all in the industry is whether consumers will continue to eat more meat so that demand and supply remain in balance.

"As markets in places like Europe become saturated, it is important to keep asking ourselves if we are in danger of following short-term signals into a phase of global over-production with the implication being declining prices," he said.

Global Trends

Keeping abreast of growing consumer trends in food demand and consumption is a key factor in corporate success and longevity.

Rabobank has identified three key trends ahead, some in their infancy, which are likely to provide opportunities for protein industry operators.

The first of these is consumers' willingness to support branded meat products.

continued on page 24

continued from page 23

Mr Sherrard said that the trend applies equally to both fresh meat as well as meat products, citing meat snacks such as beef jerky as an example of a category where brands are increasing in importance.

New Channels to market is a second trend such as new and rapidly growing home delivery services for prepared meals and takeaway food as well as the delivery of meal kits.

“In Rabobank’s view the online food phenomenon is going to keep growing, offering opportunities to animal protein companies to shorten supply chains, to deal directly with consumers and to trial new products and concepts,” Mr Sherrard said.

The millennial generation, those born in the 25 years from 1980 to 2005, is now the biggest generation and a key

market defining and driving new trends.

These include what Rabobank terms ‘meat with adjectives’ a trend which encompasses the interest in where food comes from and how it is produced and the higher prices such values command.

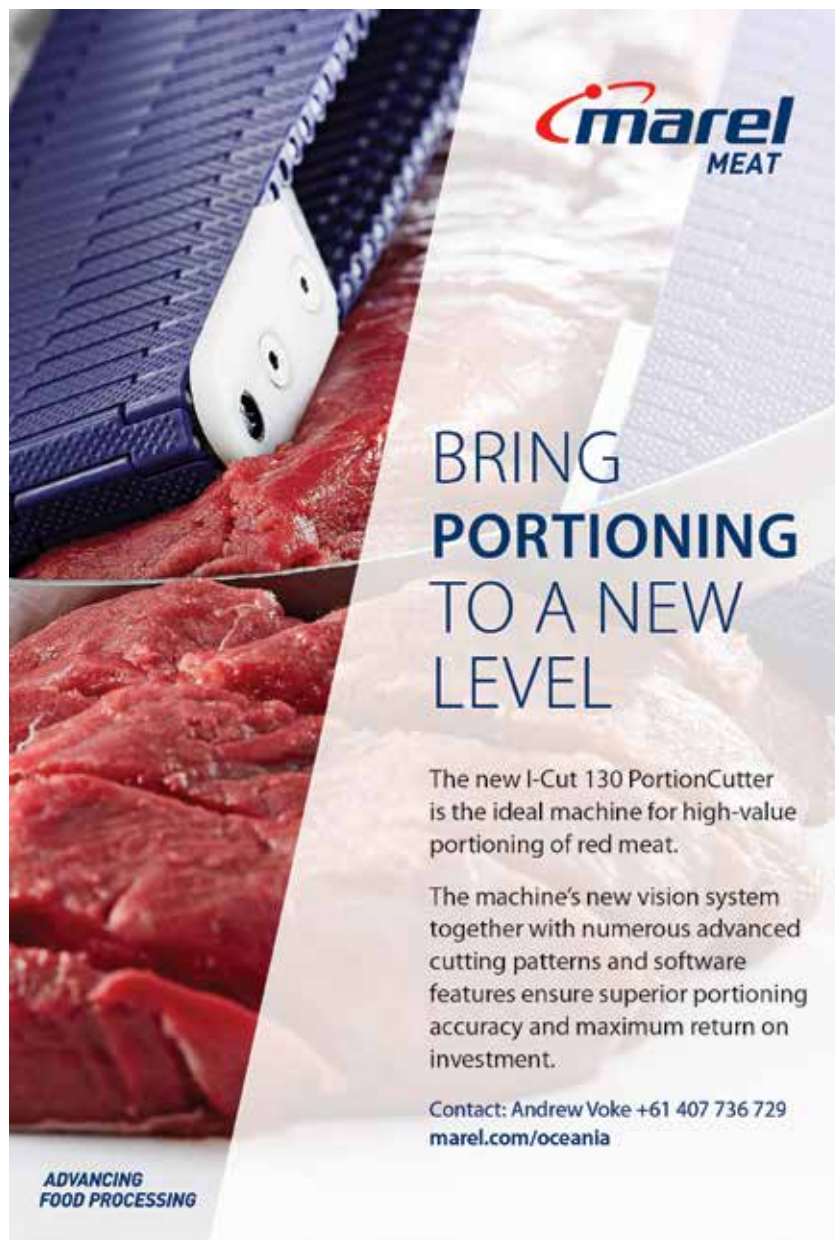
Although those at the tail end of the millennial generation may be only 10 to 15 years of age, it is a commonly held view among consumer analysts that while they may not actually control the expenditure directly, they exert strong influence over the household expenditure and how it is spent.

The third trend identified by Mr Sherrard, termed ‘alternative proteins’, now at the beginning of its growth phase, is also being driven by this generation the hallmark attribute of which is ‘curiosity’.

“Another driver of this quickly growing market for alternatives, such as insect-based or plant-based proteins, is consumers who want to reduce their meat intake for real or perceived health and personal values related reasons,” Mr Sherrard said.

“It is also being driven by companies that are working to reduce the sustainability footprint of meat production.

“Rabobank believes interest in alternative proteins will continue moving ahead with demand growing at strong rates, albeit from a small-base,” he said. ■



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Building consumer trust

By Stephanie Flynn

In what has become a 'global village' in the face of the impact of technological advances, real traceability and accountability as well as proactive communication with consumers are the key tools for the future in building and maintaining consumer trust according to leading global food industry experts.

'Consumer Trust' was one of the six key topics addressed at the bi-annual World Meat Congress held late last year in Uruguay, South America.

The session explored what has been perceived as the erosion of consumer confidence in meat production systems and products because of a range of global episodes including contamination scares, animal disease outbreaks and the release of scientific data linking red meat to human health issues.

In interviews with *Australian Meat News* following the Congress, Chairman of the Board of the Canadian Agri-food Policy Institute, Mr Ted Bilyea and Mr Rod Slater, Executive Director of Beef and Lamb New Zealand have provided their overview of the topic.

Erosion of Trust – fact or fantasy?

Both leading experts agree that the notion that consumer confidence in the industry is in decline is a perception rather than a fact.

"I would not characterise consumer confidence as being eroded but rather the ubiquitousness of challenges, both the old and the continuing issues of fraud and food safety, as well as newer concerns of health and sustainability," Mr Bilyea said.

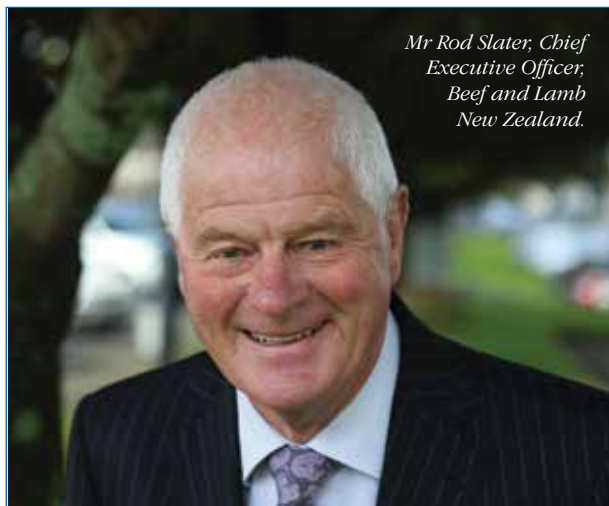
"Therefore, what some term an erosion of confidence, others may see as increasing understanding and expectations which often run ahead of industry," he said.

It is a view shared by Mr Slater who says that consumer confidence in meat production and supply is not at all lacking but is rather set of challenges that the meat industry has and will continue to face.

"Meat is facing challenges which stem from changing lifestyles combined with headline grabbing research but I believe it is our job to remind consumers of the positive benefits of meat which are strongly established facts," Mr Slater said.

But neither expert believes that the industry should deny the existence of the challenges nor to leave increasing levels of public expectations unmet.

Some of the important qualities that the industry needs to utilise and implement include transparency right through the supply chain, authenticity in its claims and communications



Mr Rod Slater, Chief Executive Officer; Beef and Lamb New Zealand.

Mr Slater has a long history in retail butchering and established New Zealand's 'Mad Butcher' chain which, since its inception in 1971, has grown to a 34-store butcher chain with retail outlets throughout that country.

He has been the Chief Executive Officer of Beef and Lamb New Zealand since 1994.

Beef and Lamb New Zealand is responsible for the promotion of beef and lamb throughout the country and is jointly funded by an alliance of farmers, processors and retailers.

as well as demonstrable provenance, ethics and health and sustainability efforts.

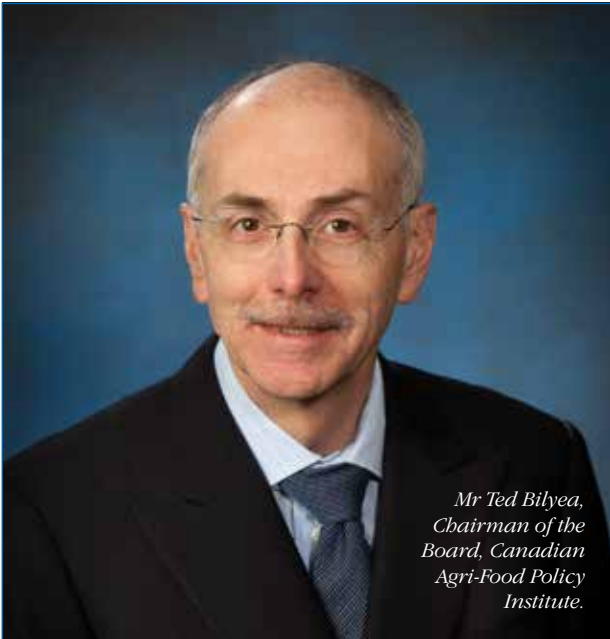
It is now a common view that countries such as Australia, New Zealand and Canada with their strict biosecurity and traceability systems fare well in consumers' minds.

Such efforts define the quantum of consumer trust and are not without their rewards according to Mr Bilyea.

"We are beginning to see premiums for specific traits and provenance combined with country of origin for all three countries – Australia, New Zealand and Canada – as well as some others even when sold in the home market of other large meat exporters," Mr Bilyea said.

"Consumer and customer surveys that I have seen conducted generally show a preference for meat from these three nations.

"Information teased from these surveys tends to suggest that preference is based more on impressions of clean, natural environments and trust in general but clearly such impressions would not form without strong biosecurity and



*Mr Ted Bilyea,
Chairman of the
Board, Canadian
Agri-Food Policy
Institute.*

Mr Bilyea took up his appointment as Chairman of the Board of the Canadian Agri-Food Policy Institute in 2012. He is an agri-food consultant specialising in innovation with both private and public sector organisations in Canada. He sits on corporate boards and was a member of Canada's Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency for many years.

He holds a Master of Arts in International Relations from York University and is a recipient of the coveted H.R. MacMillan Laureate in Agriculture from the University of Guelph in Ontario, a university renowned for its Agricultural research and studies.

world leading traceability which has brought considerable accountability into these systems," he said.

Communicating and Listening – two sides of the same coin

In acknowledging the impact of technology as a space for issues to quickly 'go global' and its productive utilisation by consumers and interest groups alike, Mr Slater believes it is vital for the industry to communicate its activities continuously and vibrantly to further build and maintain consumer confidence.

It is not a static environment but rather a dynamic one which requires a concerted and active effort by the industry.

According to Mr Slater, the rise of social media means there is nowhere to hide making transparency an essential quality going forward.

"Those who are against what we do in the meat industry are masters of social media and as a group we need to better utilise these platforms to tell our story," Mr Slater said.

"As consumers become more communication savvy and hungry for information they have also become more unforgiving for example, recent food safety breaches are not seen as an accident but rather as negligence by the industry.

"It is important that we avoid a siege mentality and be on the front foot wherever possible with pro-active news stories about meat and the industry and own that 'space' by actively addressing negative issues as they arise," he said.

Mr Bilyea believes that more importantly, it is essential for the meat industry to listen more to consumers rather than focusing only on the one aspect of the communication process.

In his view, the global industry is not of a like mind on key issues of health, safety, animal welfare and sustainability which means consumer confidence remains continuously in jeopardy.

He says that while there have been inroads made at the country level to assuage issues of trust it is retailers and branded meat companies who have 'heard' what consumers

continued on page 28

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continued from page 27

want and made some progress in redesigning the system to reassure consumer trust.

“While social media is often seen as the industry’s worst nightmare, it is forcing transparency and change,” Mr Bilyea said.

“It actually has two sides, it exposes fraud, scandal and greenwash but rewards accountability and good efforts for example the Global Roundtable on Sustainable Beef initiative,” he said.

Real traceability – the way forward

As we head to the conclusion of the second decade of the 21st century, both experts agree that real traceability systems, accountability on important issues such as health, animal welfare and sustainability as well as transparency in its operations will be the key mechanisms by which the meat industry will be assessed by consumers well into the future.

“Traceability has been and will continue to be a vital instrument into the future in maintaining consumer trust, although I believe that most consumers don’t take full

advantage of the ability to find out where their food comes from, but simply knowing that option is available is often enough,” Mr Slater said.

Mr Bilyea is of a similar view noting that traceability was critical to industry recovery of confidence from BSE and played a role in Europe’s recovery from the horsemeat scandal.

“Real traceability, not simply paper systems, would provide accountability through the supply chain and is ultimately the key to consumer trust,” Mr Bilyea said.

“This is completely achievable and in the case of DNA traceability would offset its own costs, if done at scale, due to the production and quality opportunities. Technology has also brought us other systems including the use of isotopes and trace elements which are already delivering accountability for various supply chains.

“Technology has advanced a great deal since Maple Leaf Foods demonstrated, 16 years ago, that it could identify any piece of pork as theirs or not and give a full account of the provenance of the hog traced through DNA,” he said. ■

FoodBank Sausage Donations

One of Australia’s largest beef operations is donating a tonne of beef trim each month to the national food charity Foodbank.

The donation from MDH will become an estimated 220,000 sausages annually as fortnightly deliveries of sausages leave Primo Smallgoods, a Foodbank manufacturing partner, to distribution centres around Australia.

Family owned and operated by the McDonald family, MDH supplies premium beef into domestic and export markets. It is also a major shareholder in the Super Butcher chain, an independent meat retailer with six outlets in south-east Queensland.

MDH property interests include stations, feedlot and irrigation farms in Queensland, covering an area of 3.36 million hectares. The property acquisitions, spread over 60 years, are strategically located throughout Queensland to drought proof cattle operations.

The cattle carry a certification which guarantees that the beef has passed several meat quality assessment criteria such as: P8 fat depth, meat colour, fat colour and the animals have passed dentition and ossification assessments. The cattle are processed at Dinmore, Brisbane.

Julie McDonald of MDH said: “As a family, and a business, we are so pleased to be associated with Foodbank as a supplier of beef trimmings. Foodbank is such an inspirational

organisation and, were it not for the selfless people working within this ‘charity behind the charities’, many more Australians would be waking up to hunger each and every day.

“Playing a small part in helping others through our commitment of donations to Foodbank is a truly humbling position to be in, and we couldn’t be more grateful for the opportunity to help through such a well-structured and efficient organisation,” she said.

MDH joins meat processors Thomas Foods International and Fletcher International, also family-owned rural enterprises, as Foodbank supporters.

Foodbank is Australia’s largest food relief organisation, providing food for 166,000 meals a day to more than 2400 charities.

Foodbank Australia CEO Brianna Casey said: “The sausage program is our latest initiative that reaches back along the food chain to fill a supply gap. The success of this program reflects the willingness of our primary producers to help as much as they can.

“It has long been a goal of Foodbank to have a significant and sustainable meat program because of the vital role protein plays in a balanced diet and the relative difficulty we experience in obtaining it through our traditional rescue channels. MDH’s generosity is helping us to realise this dream.” ■

Industry progresses on animal welfare reform

By Stephanie Flynn

Among the throng of voices in the international arena representing the wide spectrum of views relating to animal health and welfare and its relationship to the protein industries it can be difficult to find the 'middle road'.

In its third key session, the World Meat Congress featured a discussion by specialists and industry representatives on the topic of 'Animal Care and Health', in which Mr Mick Sloyan was a key participant.

A noted industry leader, Mr Sloyan is the Strategy Director (Pork) for the United Kingdom's Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board.

In an interview with *Australian Meat News* following the Congress Mr Sloyan said that the industry is making good progress globally on issues relating to animal care and welfare, motivated in part by absolute need to protect both human and animal health, but also as a response to growing consumer interest in the care of animals in the food chain.

But he is quick to caution that there is a plethora of views along the continuum of animal welfare issues, with extremes at each end, but that real and growing consumer demands, which influence both retail sales and global trade, fall more in the centre.

"At a global trading level, there is a basic and fundamental requirement for safe production systems that operate to provide a certain level of animal care, broadly in line with basic legislative requirements" Mr Sloyan said.

"In comparison with the volume of meat traded around the globe, specific requirements for animal welfare still represent a relatively small level, however, this is growing slowly.

"In countries like China, for example, there is a very small but growing interest in seeking assurance that animals are raised in a responsible manner, which includes recognition of welfare," he said.

But care for the wellbeing of animals is only one side of the issue with the prevention of diseases that can affect both animals and humans also being a vital concern.

Mr Sloyan believes that it is important for the industry to continue to develop global standards in animal care most notably because of the link between animal and human health when it comes to the consumption of meat and dairy products.

He cites the many decades of work the industry has done with a range of organisations such as the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) to reach agreement on common health standards and the work currently being done by that organisation which is looking to establish minimum standards for animal welfare.

Animal welfare was the subject of the OIE's most recent global conference late last year in Mexico.

Disease outbreaks in animals have far reaching ramifications both for international trade and at the food production level with recent BSE and Pathogenic Avian Influenza outbreaks resulting in bans of beef imports in export markets and the decimation of poultry production systems in some countries, respectively.

"Animal care is an important part of animal health but it is not the only aspect, endemic and exotic disease threats as well as environmental factors are also contributors," Mr Sloyan said.



Mr Mick Sloyan, Strategy Director (Pork), Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (UK).

Mr Sloyan joined the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) in the UK in 2008. An agricultural economist and policy analyst he has worked for nearly 40 years with livestock farmers and meat processors.

The AHDB is a statutory levy board, funded by farmers and industry and managed as an independent organisation. Among its key functions is the delivery of scientific research and development programs to UK farmers as well as the provision of market information to the agricultural industry.

continued on page 30

continued from page 29

“Common standards are a great start to managing diseases in animals but they are probably most useful to stop the spread of animal diseases rather than preventing them.

“We are, for example, currently seeing Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in Europe coming from wild birds and African Swine fever in Eastern Europe where the main vector is wild boar.

“There are commonly accepted methods of controlling the localised outbreaks of disease to stop the spread both at a national and an international level where trade is concerned,” he said.

Mr Sloyan is positive about the future opportunities for the meat industries to work in alliance with animal welfare organisations to address issues, citing many successful co-operative endeavours in recent times including the work with RSPCA in the UK to establish production guidelines to meet animal welfare standards.

Australia has seen similar programs implemented with the RSPCA which, in both cases, have persuaded large numbers of producers to operate to those standards and promoted at the retail point.

Mr Sloyan also cites examples of commercial consumer facing companies, such as McDonalds, which have also worked with animal welfare organisations and the meat supply chain to produce products which comply to agreed standards.

A supporter of industry driven self-regulation, Mr Sloyan says he does not believe that the industry needs to be concerned about the impost of Government regulation in respect of the welfare of animals given that private standards are becoming more influential in their impact on the market.

“I don’t think the industry has anything to worry about in this regard as they are already responding to the demands of the market,” Mr Sloyan said.

“As long as the private standards meet consumer demands, are practical, can be achieved and extra costs are covered where necessary, then it all works.

“Where it does not work is when unrealistic and impractical demands are made by Governments, welfare organisations or indeed consumers. There are several examples of this, particularly in some countries in Europe, where changes to welfare standards have resulted in a decline in production and supply has been exported to other countries that do not comply with the new standards,” he said. ■

Sausage Kings are all winners



Sausage King winner of the beef division, is Milan Matutinovich Perth, WA, second from right with MLA sponsor Gary McAlister; and placegetters, Jack Forbes, NSW and Chris Doyle, Tas.

After grueling rounds of state finals, the annual AMIC National Sausage King awards have been declared in a sizzling showdown in Hobart, in mid February.

Newly crowned kings are:

Traditional Australian – Milan Matutinovich, Perth, WA.

Traditional Australian Pork – Martin Timms, Bathurst, NSW

Poultry – Pierre Mastromanno, Melbourne, Victoria

Australian Lamb – Joe Di Fulvio, Perth, WA

Continental – Greg Fitzpatrick, Sydney, NSW

Gourmet/Open – Franz Knoll, Adelaide, SA

Franz Knoll, winner of the Gourmet/Open section has secured his place in the Sausage King “Hall of Fame” with his third King title.

Hosted by AMIC (Australian Meat Industry Council), the judges score on both raw and cooked products grading them for flavour and texture as well as shrinkage, splitting and crinkling.

“Every year we are amazed at the interest we receive from butchers across Australia from country towns to capital cities,” said AMIC Executive Director, Paul Sandercock. “It’s an event that gets bigger and better and shows that butchers still play an important role in the community.”

In conjunction with the Sausage King, the Best Butcher’s Burger contest is held and this year was taken out by Joe Di Fulvio for his wagyu beef and truffle burger. The AMIC National Apprentice of the Year went to apprentice Chris Lukatris from Mondo Butchers in Perth. ■



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Looking into the future with DEXA

The red meat industry is being introduced to 'transformational' carcase-scoring technology delivered as a surprise gift in late 2016.

Research is underway on beef applications utilising dual x-ray absorptiometer (DEXA) devices. The world-first innovation is based on scanning technology similar to that used in human medical diagnosis, but uses two X-ray beams. Having two energy levels allows the operator to customise the target measurement to determine bone density, fat and muscle distribution.

For the meat retail sector it will mean more accurate cuts, more consistent quality and boning rooms will be able to predict lean meat yields with better accuracy. Applied to sheep or beef carcasses, this scientific measurement rewards the quality or quantity of meat recovered far better than weight-based payment. By quantifying carcase meat, fat and bone (lean meat yield) it can be used to increase boning room efficiency and boost processing automation.

The technology has already been in use for about five years, in a simpler version, to define fat levels in trimmings destined for low-value meat products.

The simpler technology – a single-energy system is being used on lamb carcasses in Bordertown, South Australia where it is improving cutting accuracy. That system, handling 600 head per hour is delivering benefits of around \$6/head said MLA's research, development and innovation general manager Sean Starling.

The unit for lamb is about \$1.5 million – plus other ancillary costs. Depending on the market, it is estimated costs would be recovered within 18 months of operation. The new technology could add up to as much as \$100 million per year in efficiency savings to the lamb supply chain.

If the technology, coupled with automation, was applied to beef Mr Starling anticipates the throughput would be around 250 head/hour with a potential benefit of at least \$15/head.

"Installing DEXA technology throughout Australia's red meat industry has the potential to be transformational," he said.

On November 10, Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) announced it was borrowing \$150m to install DEXA for objective carcase measurement (OCM) in beef in up to 90 AUS-MEAT registered facilities in Australia.

The project, supported by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture Barnaby Joyce, was announced to



Sean Starling, MLA R&D general manager sees DEXA as transformational to the meat industry.

surprised industry leaders one week after the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission recommended the beef industry develop OCM grading.

Australian Beef Association executive officer David Byard responded to the news curtly by saying: "One thing is very clear: producers and processors were left in the dark till the announcement was made."

A DEXA facility is now being installed at Teys Rockhampton. It will be a full-carcase system used for grading and is expected to be fully operational by July.

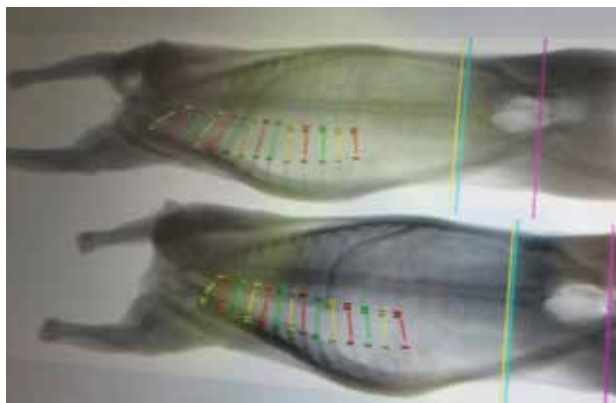
Elsewhere, the technology is already being used as part of an automated system, not for grading purposes but scanning partial carcasses, at JBS Dinmore.

JBS is the majority shareholder of Scott Technology Limited, the developer of DEXA. Mr Startling is a former employee of Scott Technology. There have been industry concerns over transparency of the project and the eventual ownership of its intellectual property (IP).

Mr Starling is upfront about the link. He explains that while DEXA is Scott Technology's IP, the delivery of the technology will be via open, international tender. "We don't care who builds the equipment, so long as it has got DEXA inside it," he said.

Furthermore, he added that the algorithm driving the technology was developed through WA's Murdoch University and is industry-owned.

The basis of the technology goes back to 2016 to an \$11 million research project led by Dr Graham Gardner, associate professor at Murdoch's School of Veterinary and Life



X-rays of carcasses enable greater identification of meat, fat and bone.

Sciences. The Australian Government's Rural Research and Development for Profit program committed \$4.8 million to the project and industry partners contributed the balance. MLA, Australian Pork Limited and Australian Meat Processor Corporation, along with meat processors and suppliers Teyes Australia, JBS and Australia Country Choice, contributed funding to the research.

"This is the first time scanning technology has been used to accurately determine meat from fat and bone," Dr Gardner said, adding that information on lean meat yield would be available to sheep farmers within two years.

Dr Gardner said there was a lack of transparency in the way animals were sold, particularly to abattoirs, particularly identifying lean meat yield and meat eating quality as largely unknown measurements, describing carcass weight as a "very crude indicator of both of those things".

"It's also removing some of the ambiguity around some of the data that is produced because machines are highly repeatable and reliable from day to day."

MLA managing director Richard Norton says DEXA pioneers scientific measurement of saleable meat yield, future value-based marketing and industry-wide productivity gains through processing automation, genetic improvement and data-based on-farm decision making.

"The most important product of objective carcass measurement is the data it will generate – and MLA's plan ensures that the data will be available to all participants across the value chain," Mr Norton said. "Producers can be transparently rewarded against objective data and value measurements. On farm, that will stimulate further advances in genetics and livestock production systems.

"Within the processing plant, the technology will reduce wastage and workforce injuries and boost productivity through the use of accurate, objective measurement and automation."

He added the technology would support the Australian red meat industry competing in global markets.

"Australia is a high-cost producer compared to some of our international competitors, so we need to constantly innovate and invest in productivity and efficiency improvements.

The MLA plan will see AUS-MEAT becoming the whole-of-value-chain independent regulator, calibrating the system, conducting audits and handling complaints resolution.

MLA is ranking DEXA as a potential stablemate to MSA and traceability and QA systems – all delivering high-leverage cost benefits annually.

Peak industry councils are due to be consulted over the roll out of the technology; MLA is discussion with the Sheepmeat Council of Australia and the Cattle Councils about a planned series of roadshows coupled with presentations to private firms. ■

DEXA concerns from processors

Both AMIC and AMPC have voiced their concerns about the Project 150 DEXA roll-out given that there has been little consultation with processors beyond the recommendations of the ACCC report to introduce objective carcass measurements (OCM).

Many in the industry are concerned about where the money – \$150m – is coming from and who will pay for it – the processors themselves or via levies.

As a consequence, AMIC and AMPC have commissioned Ernst & Young to compile a feasibility study into the project that will review strategic, technical, financial, commercial, operational, governance and implementation of Project 150.

The Chairman of AMPC, Peter Noble, said that the report had been commissioned to ensure that investments made on the processors behalf are thoroughly evaluated and will deliver commercial benefits to the industry.

"Without adequate consultation, cost-benefit analysis or due diligence there can be no level of comfort in investing substantial industry funds in DEXA technology which is yet to be sufficiently proven," he said. ■

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Question: What date is Foodpro to be held in 2017?

Entries close April 7, 2017



Multivac automated processing aids increased salami production

For the past 16 years, Antonio and Rob have been operating De Palma Salumi; a family run business located in Padstow, NSW, dedicated to consistently delivering high quality artisan salami to their customers every time. The company provides salami to some of Australia's leading stockists including: Vic's Premium Quality Meat, Andrews Meats, Gulli Foods and Deliver Foods.

Last year, De Palma made the decision to switch from the manual processing of their salami to automatic processing, purchasing a Handtmann VF608 vacuum filler to do the hard work for them. The change has seen great advantages for both Antonio and Rob, particularly in regards to increased productivity and quality of their salami. The VF608 has removed all air from the salami and created a fuller, tastier product for the family run business.

The company now produces roughly 500 to 600kg of salami per week and has the capacity to produce up to 300kg of salami an hour with only two men operating the machine. In Rob's words, the machine is 'awesome!' and the purchase is one that the small business has not looked back on. ■



Antonio and Rob of De Palma Salumi have switched to the Handtmann VF608 vacuum filler and increased salami production.

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MULTIVAC **handtmann**
SAVES FOR THE FUTURE

Quality bones for healthy broth

A new range of organic broths and sauces has been a journey to renewed health for chef, Tony Richardson, that happens to be an ideal value-add grocery item for the retail butcher.

Targeting consumers who care about the ingredients in jus and broth, Tony and his partner Felicity O'Dea's company Tonemade, have used local, organic products and given the traditional recipes a chef-twist. Ingredients such as ginger, turmeric and cinnamon are added to their broths to improve the health properties of their product.

The aim is to give consumers a gourmet quality product that is also beneficial to your health – particularly gut health. Taking several days to prepare, Tony uses locally sourced organic beef and marrow bones which are simmered for 48 hours to produce a nutrient rich broth. The jus, a gourmet red wine gravy, takes 30 hours.

"A few years ago, I became quite unwell with an auto-immune condition and sought products that would help to restore my gut health," said Tony. "Felicity and I discovered that the ancient tradition of using broth as a medicinal tonic had merit and consumption of broth everyday has made a huge difference to my health."

Good sources of protein, broths have anti-inflammatory properties, are suited to gluten and dairy free intolerances,



The Tonemade products support gut health, can be part of a paleo diet or as a sports supplement, are gluten and dairy free. Either product can be sold through the retail butcher as a complement to quality meat ingredients.



Tony Richardson and Felicity O'Dea have developed a range of jus and broths utilising organic ingredients under the brand, Tonemade.

paleo diets or as a sports supplement and can be consumed as either a warm beverage or used in cooking.

"The jus is a gourmet sauce and can be sold as the perfect accompaniment to a top quality steak at a butcher shop. The broth is the perfect way to add real flavor and nutrition to any wet dish and the dehydrated powder can also be used in crumbing or spice mixes. We tend to have it as an alternative to tea and coffee or sprinkled over our eggs and salads."

Tony says that the broth and jus could be made in house by butchers, but it does require a lot of time and space for the commercial equipment and processes. The Tonemade products are without preservatives and consequently have a shelf life of four weeks, but can be supplied as frozen. The dehydrated bone broth is more convenient, with a shelf life of six months, and is easily reconstituted with 1 tsp per cup of hot water.

As a chef for 25 years, Tony spent time in Spain as a saucier - a chef who specialises in making sauces and stocks; ran his own fine dining restaurant (with Felicity) on the South Gippsland coast and was selected by MLA to travel to Taipei as a guest chef to demonstrate Australian foods and preparation techniques to other chefs in the Grand Formosa Regent Hotel.

Available online, Tonemade products are proving a hit with consumers concerned about their health and the ingredients in their food. ■

Cool way to collect after hours orders

New to the Australian market, LockTec Cool Lockers give butchers' customers access to products all day, every day at a time and location that suits them.

The lockers are fully refrigerated for both fridge or freezer conditions and enable customers to pick up their orders on their own time and at a time they nominate.

The lockers can be located anywhere mains power is available – outside or inside a retail butcher shop, the local petrol station or a main focal point for tourist traffic.

The customer places the order with the butcher – online or by phone – and can pay at that point or via a credit card facility at the lockers. Once the order is placed into the locker by the butcher, a PIN is generated which will enable the customer to unlock the locker via a touchscreen or barcode reader at the locker user station.

According to Deborah Spring, Director of LockTec Pacific, the benefit for retail butchers is that the locker is accessible to customers without face-to-face contact, particularly for after hours service. Orders can be fulfilled in advance and delivered ahead of time to suit the shop business flow and meet the customer's pick-up requirements. This improves



The refrigerated lockers from Locktec, enable butchers to fulfil orders for collection at the customers' convenience.

customer service, extends trading hours without increasing operating costs and reduces shelf space required in the shop resulting in greater turnover for the business owner.

The lockers are supplied as individual units in a modular column so that additional columns can be easily added as demand grows. Available in four sizes ranging to suit anything from a small order such as six chops to almost a full carcase. The lockers are cooled individually for fridge (2°C to 6°C) or freezer (-12°C to -20°C). Temperature sensors send an alarm to warn of locker temperatures outside of specification and also if the door is left open. The sensors can be connected to either the shop's existing sensor alarm system or via text.

Currently, the lockers have been installed by a number of butchers in Germany and France. Phillip Klassen of German butcher, Fleischerei

Klassen Butcher Shop, said that installing the lockers enabled his business to improve customer service and convenience and increased sales, without increasing the team's working hours when a local supermarket opened nearby. More recently it has been employed by a supermarket in Chatswood, NSW who has installed the lockers at a nearby petrol station. Customers are able to order grocery, refrigerated and frozen goods and pick them up at their leisure. Grocery and fridge items are placed in one locker, while the frozen goods use a separate locker.

"Using the nearby petrol station has given the supermarket the ability to meet customer demand after hours," said Deborah. "The supermarket can stock the lockers for multiple customers who can call in to collect their order at their convenience. It can work equally as well for butchers." ■

New range of flavours for lamb

CBS Foodtech have teamed with executive chef, George Francisco to create a range of rubs and marinades for lamb under the brand, Butchers Lamb, to coincide with Australia Day.

The aim of Butchers Lamb is to give butchers a greater range of flavours for value-add products but also to reduce the amount of additives and fillers that are conventionally found in mass-produced seasonings and spices.

Selling directly to butchers, the five new flavour profiles include Moroccan Lamb Rub, Mediterranean Lamb Sausage Blend, Babylon Lamb Spice Mix, Lamb Burger Blend and Rustique Lamb Roasting Spice.

"Lamb is an Aussie favourite," says Chris Green, general manager of CBS Foodtech. "With a limited flavour repertoire available to Australian butchers, we knew it was time to step up, claim this space and create the quintessential range of ingredients."

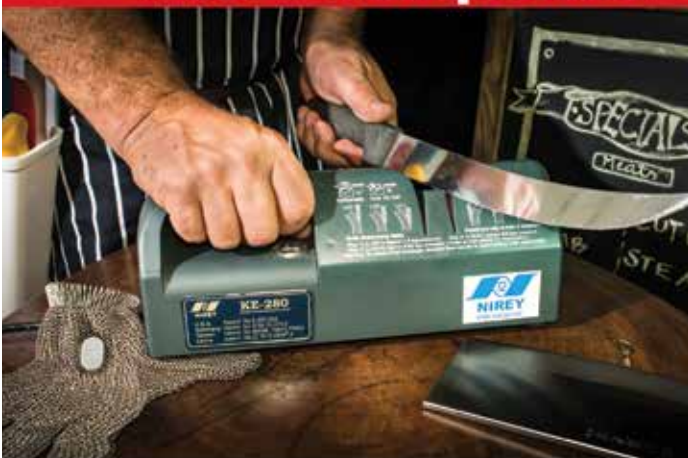
The product range will be available for retail butchers from the end of January in re-sealable zip lock bags to flavour 3 – 10kg of lamb from CBS Foodtech. ■



CBS Foodtech have created a new range of spices and rubs specifically for lamb.



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food processor supplies

The words in the list at the bottom are all hidden in the grid. They may be found in straight lines running horizontally, vertically or diagonally. Some of the letters are shared by more than one word. When you have found all the words in the list, there will be 46 letters remaining: these form the answer to the competition.

ENTRIES CLOSE: 7 APRIL 2017

First prize is a Swibo 22cm Steak Knife with a 14" Lesnie's Steel. Five Swibo Boning Knives are also up for grabs! To enter, find the words, cut out or copy the page or just send the answer with your name and address and contact details to: Find a Word, Australian Meat News, PO Box 415 Richmond Vic 3121 or or scan and email to: optimalnews@majestic.net.au

Be sure to write your name, address and phone number and ANSWER clearly.

Last issues winners see page 9

“ _____

 _____ ”

M	E	R	I	N	O	1	7	9	7	M	U	L	T	I	P	U	R	P	O	S	E	2	N	Z	2
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E	E	C	D	A	L	E	M	A	C	P	E	R	E	N	D	A	L	E	S	A	C	A	P	L	A

Find the hidden words TO WIN

one of SIX SWIBO KNIVES

AUSTRALIAN
POLLED
HARD
MERINO
MEAT LAMBS
WHITE SUFFOLK
1797
CHEVIOT
TEXEL
MULTIPURPOSE
LARGE FRAME
CARPET WOOL
CRIMPING
PRIME
RAMS
LANOLIN
HOOVES
SPINNING
ELASTICITY
BLENDS
FELTING
LOFT
ALPACA
COOPWORTH
LINCOLN
ANGORA
NZ
HORNED

CAMEL
GROMARK
LONG STAPLE
SILK
PERENDALE
ENGLISH LEICESTER
MOHAIR
CORMO
BORDER LEICESTER
BRITISH SHORT
WOOL
FINN
LUSTROUS
SOUTHDOWN
LEAN
CROSSBREED
DORSET HORN
TRIPLETS
TWINS
POLL DORSET
QUADS
GOOD MILKERS
HARDINESS
FAT TAILED
BLACK FEET
ROMNEY MARSH
FAST

YOUR NAME: _____

BUSINESS NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NO: _____

FAX NO: _____

THANK YOU to all the entrants

Don't forget to try your hand at this month's puzzle (above) and make sure you include your contact details when you send your entry to:

Find A Word, c/o Australian Meat News
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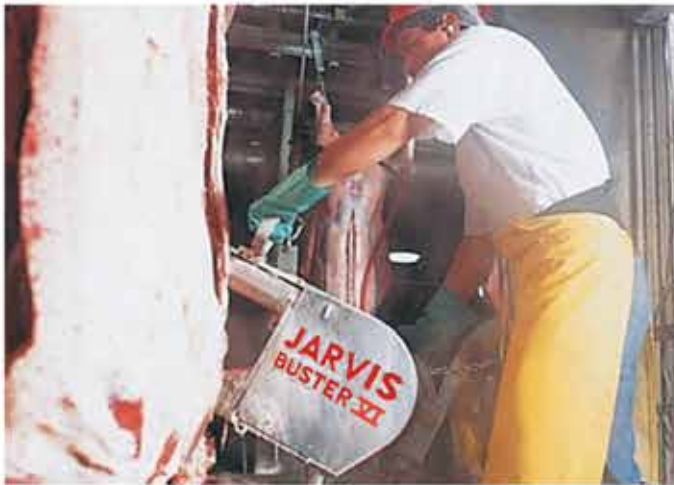
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