

AUSTRALIAN **Meat** **News**

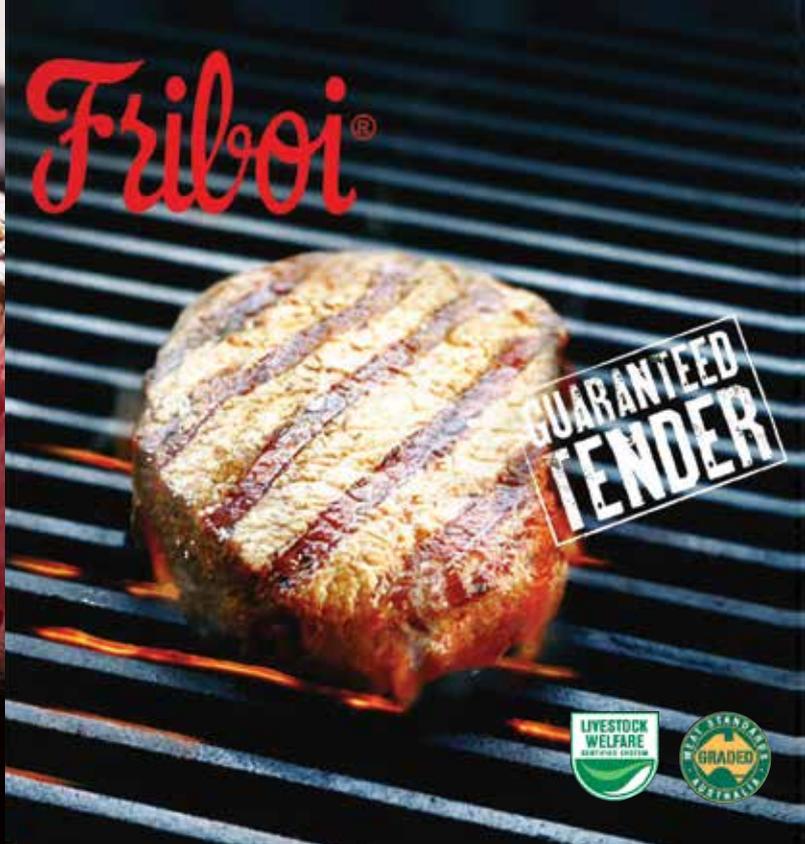
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VOLUME 15 | NUMBER 3 | JULY 2017

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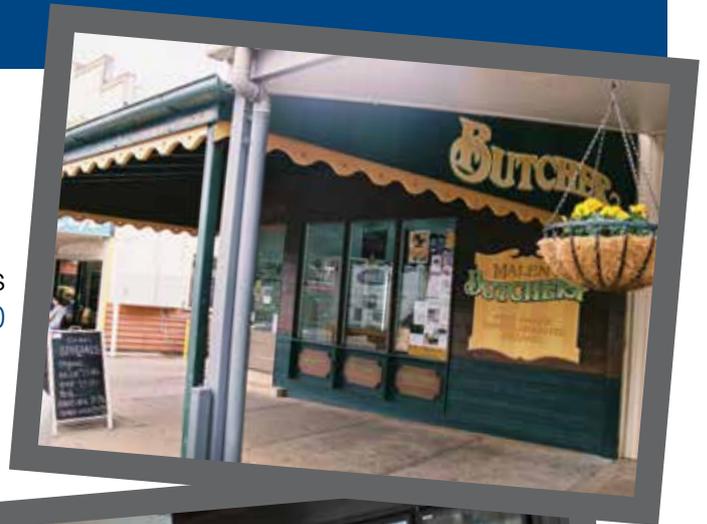
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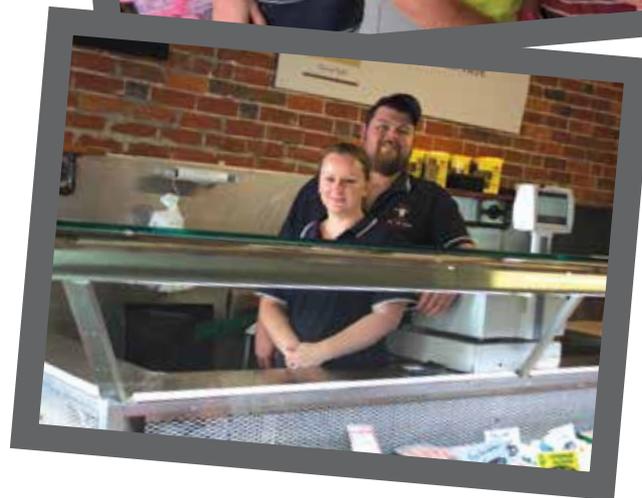
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Win a copy of *Chef's Guide to Charcuterie*. See page 7

# AUSTRALIAN MeatNews

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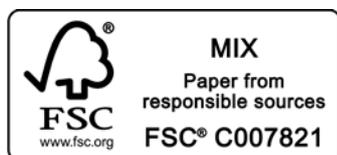
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## Enrol now – Meat Exec Program 2017

The Institute of Food and Grocery Management are once again conducting its annual Meat Executive Program at the Mt Eliza campus, Victoria in the week 22 – 27 October 2017. The program is a personal and professional development opportunity that provides a rare opportunity to access knowledge and insights across meat supply chains by networking with industry peers and through interactive discussions with industry leaders and world-class marketing academics.

Key areas of focus include leadership, innovation, collaboration, personal resilience and customer and market trends. This year's program will feature guest speakers from; Coles, JBS Australia, Milne Agrigroup, MLA, Stockyard Beef, Vic's Premium Quality Meats and Woolworths.

The faculty work with participants intensively in small groups and are available for individual discussions throughout the week to create the kind of learning experience that makes a real difference. Delegates are rotated through different syndicate groups to facilitate networking opportunities and increase exposure to the experiences, ideas and opinions of others in the meat business.

Participants will examine a range of management and industry issues from the varying perspectives across the supply chain and develop winning business strategies for today's global meat industry from the best in the industry.

The seminar format incorporates faculty lectures, in-depth case studies, a field trip, workshops on issues and opportunities, group discussions and guest presentations from industry leaders.

For more information go to <https://www.ifgm.com.au/meat-executive-program/> or call 03 8640 0947. ■

## HFC Phasedown Passes Parliament

The Federal Government has successfully passed legislation to phase-down hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), which contribute up to 2% of Australia's greenhouse gas emissions. HFCs are powerful synthetic gases used in refrigerators, air conditioners, fire extinguishers and insulating foam which can be thousands of times more potent than carbon dioxide. The phase-down of HFC imports under the Ozone Protection and Synthetic Greenhouse Gas Management Amendment Bill 2017 will begin in 2018 and reach an 85% reduction by 2036 based on a global agreement – the Montreal Protocol – to phase-down these potent gases.

It is estimated that the global phase-down will reduce emissions by up to 72 billion tonnes by 2050 or roughly one and a third times global annual emissions. According to the United Nations Environment Program, this action could avoid up to 0.5 degrees of temperature rises by 2100. This phase-down builds on the successful approach taken to phase-out gases such as CFCs and HCFCs which is already leading to a recovery of the ozone layer. Australia has a proud record of leadership in the Montreal Protocol, widely considered the world's most successful environmental protection agreement and the only one with universal acceptance. Dr Greg Picker, Executive Director of Refrigerants Australia said, "The passage of amendments to the Ozone Protection and Synthetic Greenhouse Gas Management Act guarantees improved environmental outcomes, while also giving industry long-term certainty. "As a result of working together with Governments of all types, we are on track to close the ozone hole over the next 30 years and to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases from their peak in the early 1990s by 99% in 2036," Picker said. ■

## New competitive rate for ISP insurance

The Insulated Panel Council of Australia (IPCA) and insurance brokers AB Phillips have developed a process that will lower insurance premiums for facilities with insulated sandwich panels.

To qualify to be insured facilities must comply with the IPCA industry Code of Practice.

The insurance service is available to companies wanting to insure, new and existing, insulated panel facilities. Insurable facilities must be either Code compliant or can be upgraded to conform to the Code and thus qualify to be insured.

“lower insurance premiums for facilities with insulated sandwich panels”

IPCA said insurance premiums for sandwich panel facilities have historically been artificially high due to a perception they posed a higher risk.

IPCA chief executive Mr Ron Lawson said the new insurance facility is underpinned by research by industry and independent third parties. He said the findings dispelled long-held insurance industry misconceptions regarding the risks associated with ISPs.

“It is pleasing to see progressive elements of the insurance industry taking an objective approach,” Mr Lawson said.

Insurance brokers AB Philips is working with clients to assess exiting facilities for compliance to the Code and assisting them calculate the payback period, via reduced premiums, for upgrades need to achieve compliance.

More information: [www.abphillips.com.au](http://www.abphillips.com.au) and [www.insulatedpanelcouncil.org](http://www.insulatedpanelcouncil.org) ■

## The smell of corruption in Brazil part II

It seems Brazil is still battling to retain its good name after it came to light that JBS, up until a year ago, bought cattle from a north Brazilian farm that allegedly had links to modern-day slavery.

The Brazilian government maintains a ‘blacklist’ of companies that are linked to slavery. In this instance, the farm in question was not on that list. UK supermarket chain, Waitrose, has since pulled JBS-made corned beef once the slavery allegations became known.

“JBS executive, Joesley Batista, allegedly bribed government officials”

In a list of poor choices, JBS were also in the wars with the recent Brazilian meat scandal which unearthed a corrupt export system with health inspectors signing off on meats that were not up to specification, one of which was a JBS employee. The fall-out saw one of JBS’ executives, Joesley Batista allegedly bribing government officials and Brazil’s President Michel Temer condoning the behaviour and now facing the Supreme Court.

The holding company of JBS, J&F Investments has since been fined US\$3.1bn as part of a leniency agreement into corruption allegations to BE paid over 25 years.

Rumours abound (and the truth changes daily) in the industry that JBS are selling assets around the world to pay off debts, including Irish company, Moy Park; Five Rivers Cattle Feeding in the US; stakes in a Brazilian dairy farm and a sell-off to Minerva of South American assets. There is no rumour at this point of JBS turning to Australian assets. ■

### Winners of the May 2017 Find a Word Competition

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



#### Simitar Steak Knife and Lesnie’s Steel

Ms Nicole Downer, Vic’s Premium Quality Meats, Laverton North Vic

#### Victory Narrow Curved Boning Knife

Ms Tash Goldsmith, Steinys Traditional Mettwurst, Tanunda SA

Mr David Wiseman, Cowell Meat Services, Cowell SA

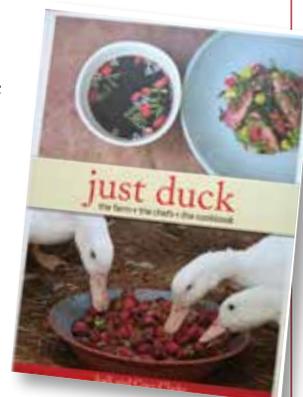
Mr Corey Pickup, Thommo’s Superior Meats, Stuarts Point NSW

Ms Emma Riley, Coolamon Butchery, Coolamon NSW

Mr Ray Merefield, Gateway Providores, Morningside QLD

## Book Comp Winners - Just Duck

Congratulation to Scott Lee of Bevan Lee’s Butchery, Launceston, Tasmania who won a copy of *Just Duck* by Jodi and Greg Clarke. Scott correctly answered the question: *What does the acronym IIoT stand for.* The answer is: *the Industrial Internet of Things.*



## Red Meat Industry gives DEXA the tick

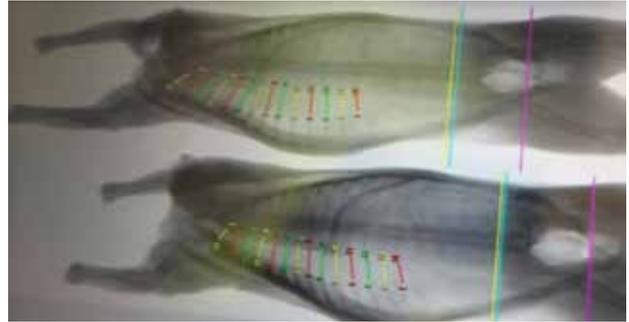
In a press release by the Cattle Council Australia, one of several meat industry organisations representing cattle and sheep producers, processors and lot feeders, the application of DEXA for objective measurement of lean meat yield, has been given approval.

The endorsement followed the first “all industry” briefing, which included a progress report on the roll out of DEXA (Dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry) technology, organised by Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) for processors and industry representatives in mid June.

The peak industry councils, and individual processors, endorsed further work on MLA’s proposal to rollout DEXA in all AUS-MEAT registered processing plants on a voluntary basis, including costings and installation requirements within individual facilities.

This work will allow peak industry councils and individual processors to consider the most appropriate funding model to deliver an industry-wide rollout, which may include levy funds from producers and processors, funds from individual processors, and the potential for matching Australian Government research dollars.

The meeting also endorsed the establishment of an Objective Carcass Measurement (OCM) adoption and commercialisation



taskforce. The taskforce will assist in managing the various aspects of industry OCM adoption and commercialisation – dealing initially with DEXA and then subsequent OCM solutions, including eating quality aspects.

The taskforce will be chaired by respected industry expert Gary Burrige and include a representative of each peak industry council, other processors, a representative from MLA and the Australian Meat Processing Corporation (AMPC) and Graham Gardner from Murdoch University.

This collaborative approach to deliver OCM systems, including DEXA, is consistent with recent analyses of the technology, including a report from financial services firm EY commissioned on behalf of AMPC.

The adoption of OCM systems is also a key objective within the Meat Industry Strategic Plan (MISP 2020) which notes its potential to transform the red meat industry by improving efficiency. ■

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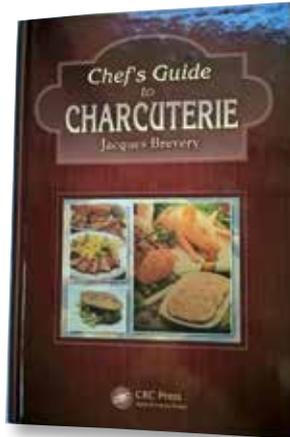


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# Technique and Execution: the key to great charcuterie

Many butchers are familiar with the art of charcuterie – transforming pork into a range of products – salami, pate, sausages and hams. Take a journey with Belgian chef, Jacques Brevery, who brings a hospitality perspective to the art.

*Chef's Guide to Charcuterie*, brings the best of Brevery's experience in world class hotel restaurants to charcuterie with classic recipes and guidelines in presentation.



The principles of charcuterie are outlined in order for the reader to understand the fundamentals – the use of salt in brine, binding agents and fillers. The recipes are a selection of Brevery's own choosing and tend to be drawn from his French Belgian background. Sausages include Toulouse, Garlic, Merguez, Alsatian and Chorizo. An extensive section on terrines and pates for rabbit, duck, turkey and duck is complemented with a chapter on foie gras. The last few chapters are given over to lesser known charcuterie recipes such as pork rillettes, pig's feet, gravalax and forcemeats.

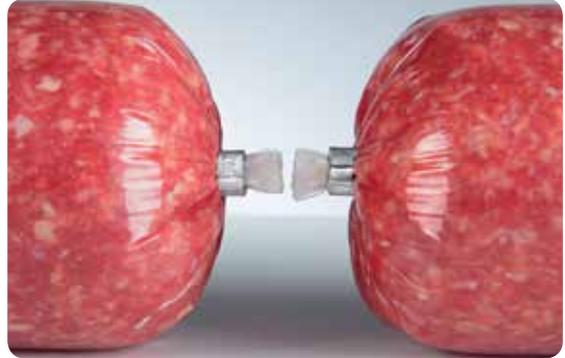
The final chapter is a photographic collection of charcuterie displays, and while the book was published in 2013, the images have a distinctly 70's appearance! A wonderful retro feel that still serves well today.

Chef Brevery says in his introduction, 'Charcuterie is an art. It demands serious attention on the part of the Chef in order to achieve the necessary aesthetics. Success depends as much on presentation (colour, texture, taste, symmetry) and decoration as it does on good execution and technique.'

For butchers looking to take charcuterie to the artisan level, the book will serve well as a foundation for perfecting the skills.

Printed by CRC Press, *Chef's Guide to Charcuterie* is hard cover text with many photographs and illustrations. RRP\$109.00 Available from: Books for Cooks, 03 8415 1415 ■

To win a copy of *Chef's Guide to Charcuterie* see quiz question on page 18.



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# Chooks beat Bovines

The type of meat consumed by Australians has changed significantly during the last 20 years. While total per-capita meat consumption has remained stable since the 1960s, the type of meat consumed has changed sharply since 1980.

The big movers have been beef and chicken. Per capita beef consumption has almost halved since 1960 while chicken consumption has increased 10 fold.

In the 1960s Australians were eating about 4.5kg of chicken per person per year (the weight measure is dressed weight – a whole chicken as you would buy it, at a butcher shop or supermarket). Today, we are eating about 47kg per person per year. (CHART 1: Per Capita Meat Consumption)

Conversely in the 1960s, per-capita consumption of beef was 48kg (this unit is carcass weight or about 34kg adjusted to a retail equivalent.) Today, per-capita annual consumption of beef is 25kg CW or about 17.5kg retail equivalent.

The chicken figure is startling. In the 1960s we were eating 4-5 chickens a year, today, we are eating almost one a week!

The consumption patterns described above are also reflected in retail price movements. Since 1980 retail beef prices have increased four fold, compared to chicken that has doubled. In real terms, allowing for inflation, beef is twice the price per kg retail it was in 1980 while chicken is about half the price it was in 1980. (CHART 2: Meat Price Index)

This data was recently highlighted in



an essay on The Conversation ([www.theconversation.com](http://www.theconversation.com)) an on-line platform for researchers and academics to express their news and views direct to the public.

Surprisingly this story on changing meat consumption patterns was researched and written by Elizabeth Taylor and Andrew Butt, who are urban planners based at RMIT and La Trobe University respectively.

Their academic interests include the study of the tensions between agriculture and ever expanding urbanisation. Issues revolve around land use – specifically intensive farming practices including chicken production and seasonal intensive feeding or the lot feeding of cattle and the impact on local residents.

The authors make the point that chicken and pork production has intensified during the last 50 years and that intensive production has lowered costs and retail pricing, leading to greater consumption. While the data does not strictly demonstrate cause and effect, it is not unreasonable to conclude that price has influenced consumption patterns over time.

Chicken farms in Australia have increased markedly in size. Farms in the 1970s housed around 10,000 chickens on average. The average chicken farm now has nearly 120,000

chickens at any one time and some run millions.

Around 70% of all chicken meat is supplied by two corporate entities. The number of piggeries has also dropped, consolidating into larger operations.

The authors contrast the increasing scale, concentration of ownership and efficiency achieved by factory farmed chicken, and to a lesser degree pork, with the more traditional dispersed and small-scale farming that accounts for most of Australia's beef and lamb production in temperate areas.

Traditional farming methods used in Australia are low-cost compared to many in other countries, a feature that makes Australian red meat exports internationally competitive.

However factory farmed chicken production has experienced huge efficiency gains, largely achieved by increases in scale that have a direct impact on their local environment.

The authors also suggest increased chicken consumption has been supported by slick marketing by companies such as KFC and Red Rooster combined with positive advertising about white meat and some negative advertising about health issues associated with some forms of red meat.

## Planning

In Victoria, most chicken farms are located within 200km of Melbourne because they need to be within one hour of the processing facility and near their feed suppliers and hatcheries. This is the pattern Australia wide.

The other side of the coin is the growing demand for peri-urban housing, on two, five or 10 hectare blocks where residents can enjoy a semi-rural lifestyle, while retaining access to the CBD. As chicken production units have grown, suitable urban fringe spaces – close enough to processing plants, but far enough from neighbours and sensitive land uses – have dwindled.

An analysis of 59 planning appeals, by Taylor and Butt, related to broiler farms in Victoria between 1969 and 2013, showed residents' obvious concerns were about odour, noise, dust, vermin, truck traffic, impacts on tourism, water use and pollution. On another level these obvious physical concerns were a practical expression of more emotionally based community concerns about factory farming - not the smell, but the fact a million chickens were being prepared for slaughter nearby.

Taylor and Butt conclude community concerns were based on these physical and emotional factors that undermined their enjoyment of the semi rural lifestyle they sort in a peri-urban community.

In Victoria, the solution has been to regulate away the noise, smell and dust of a farm, mandate separation distances and even set aside areas with clear "rights to farm" and those with rights to "the good life".

Conflicts between opponents and proponents of intensive farming will continue in rural areas. Fanning the flames is the growing demand for low-priced chicken and the popularity of the peri-urban lifestyle.

Local governments and decision-makers in Australia remain under-resourced to deal with these planning conflicts. ■

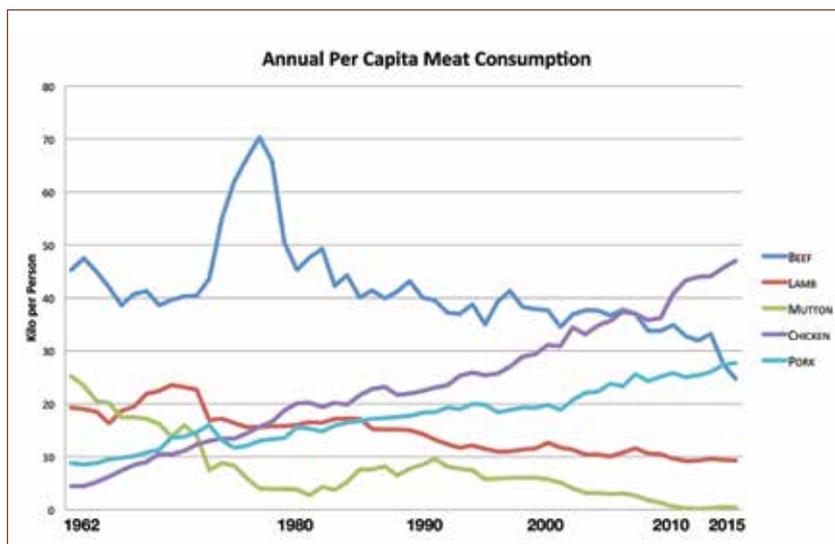


Chart 1

Annual Per Capita Meat Consumption compares consumption levels over time.

While this chart accurately reflects trends over time, adjustments have to be made to compare actual consumption between species.

Consumption is measured in kg carcass weight. For chicken, the kg unit represents the weight of a chicken carcass as purchased at retail as a whole chicken. This weigh reflects the retail kgs purchased by consumers.

For beef, the measure is kg carcass weight. To convert this to a more meaningful retail unit, the value can be multiplied by 0.7. This adjusts for retail yield and better approximates the kgs purchased by consumers. For example, in 2009 consumption was 33.8kg CW. This would approximate to 23.7kg retail.

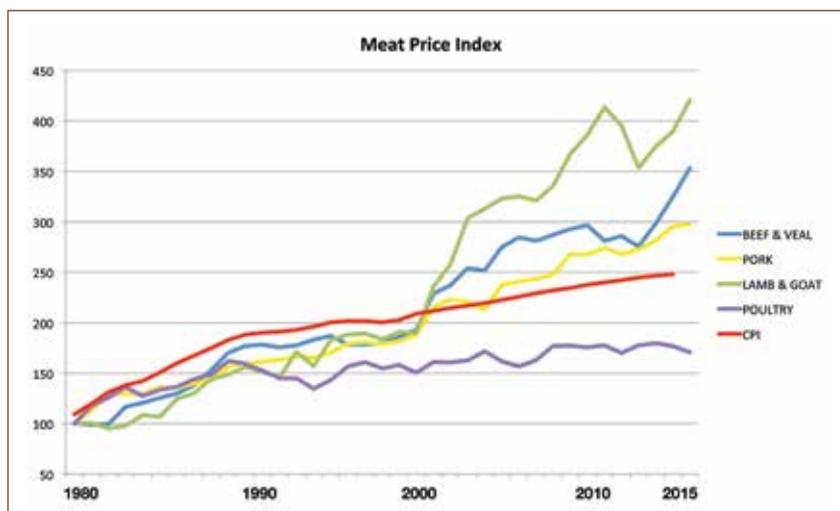


Chart 2

The Meat Price Index chart shows the relative increase in the retail price of selected meats. The chart shows, in dollar terms the price of beef has increased about 420%, pork 300% and chicken 170% since 1980. Over this same time period inflation has increased 250%. Allowing for inflation, in real-terms, beef is now a little more than double the price it was in 1980 and chicken is about 70% of the price it was in 1980.

*The Maleny Butchery has been trading for over 100 years and is the oldest store in town to be still trading for its original purpose.*



## Tree-change drives retail change

By Stephanie Flynn

The 'sea-change' and 'tree-change' are, according to the CSIRO, Australia's popular expressions for what has been termed 'amenity migration' in the United States and Europe.

In its recently released report on the effects of these social phenomena on the wet tropical areas of Queensland, the CSIRO says the terms are used to describe a move from highly urbanised areas to coastal or forested areas which were once low-key holiday destinations.

Once the province of baby-boomers, these phenomena have been recently joined by what demographic researcher, Bernard Salt, terms 'e-change' which is one of the factors fuelling a new wave of internal migration with younger people opting out of the big cities for a lifestyle change.

Bernard Salt has identified nearly 600 lifestyle towns, hosting three to four million people across Australia, typically within 150km of a major city or regional centre in his report 'Super-connected Lifestyle Locations' which was commissioned for NBN Corporation.

Earlier this year, the Australian Bureau of Statistics published data on internal regional migration for 2015/16 with Queensland's Gold and Sunshine Coasts and their hinterlands cited as the fastest growing regional areas in the country, noting that the sea and tree change phenomena are gaining pace.

These social phenomena are driving rapid development and change in small towns as populations increase bringing higher demand for the broad range of services that cities offer.

Recognising the burgeoning trend, major food retailers are expanding into regional towns, once the province of the independent supermarket IGA, creating a highly competitive trading environment.

*Australian Meat News* spoke with three butchers along the Sunshine Coast hinterland and found that these speciality retailers are finding that they need to respond by changing their product offerings to meet a more sophisticated customer demand.

A 'sea-changer' himself, butcher Greg Palmer, migrated from Western Australia to Mooloolaba on the Sunshine Coast eight years ago and shortly after bought Maleny Butchery in the scenic Blackall Ranges of south east Queensland.

A once a rural timber town, 90km from the Brisbane CBD, Maleny ticks all the right boxes on the 'tree-change' checklist.

According to Greg, Maleny Butchery is one of the oldest shops in the town still trading for the purpose for which it was built.

"Despite the current economic circumstances which small businesses face, knowing this has been a butcher shop for

more than 100 years, I want to make sure it continues on under my watch,” Greg said.

“Maleny has grown fast and is becoming a town populated more and more with middle-aged people who want to continue a bit of part-time work, but there is also plenty of young people.

“The reality is that there is not a lot of work in the whole region so those that don’t travel into the city, are prepared to work less, earn less but increase their quality of life,” he said.

Greg has noted that his customers’ preferences are for high quality free-range and grass-fed meats as well as organic and locally produced product, preferences which over-ride any notion of price.

Maleny is a typical example of the retail changes taking place with Woolworths expanding into the town a decade ago sparking a major renovation and upgrading to the local IGA supermarket in recent years.

While welcoming competition, Greg says that the upgrade of the IGA, directly across the road has had a greater effect on his business than being down the road from Woolworths.



Wombye Butchers owners James and Amanda Chapman focus on new value-added lines and commercial customers to grow their business.

“The best strategy was to open on Sundays to make up for the cashflow shortage from that impact,” Greg said.

Further north along the ranges, in its lower reaches known as the Sunshine Coast hinterland, lie Wombye and Palmwoods in which Dutch supermarket conglomerate, SPARS, is continuing its Australian expansion with the recent purchase of two formerly IGA stores.

The two towns are well serviced by train stations which carry daily commuters to the CBD and within a 30-minute drive to the major centres of the Sunshine Coastal areas.

*continued on page 12*

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*continued from page 11*

Owners of Wombye Butchery, James and Amanda Chapman, do not believe the SPARS expansion will affect their store which they bought three years ago after relocating decade ago from Brisbane.

In contrast, James says that the tree-change revolution has sparked a boom in demand for value-added product as young people, chasing affordable housing, are ditching city living while still travelling to work in either Brisbane or the local regional cities of Maroochydore and Nambour.

“Young people are fuelling the boom in the town with new housing developments bringing more and more people to the area,” James said.

“We are constantly developing new heat and serve value-added lines to meet the growing demand for meals that can be bought on the way home from work, then heated in the oven for no more than 25 minutes, our busiest time is between 3.00pm and 5.30pm,” he said.

With the population expansion throughout the region, James recognised the rise in demand for commercial meat supply and began servicing pubs, clubs and restaurants, which has now become a major part of his operations.

A living example of how ‘e-change’ is making amenity migration a viability, Amanda researches new product lines by sourcing recipes on the internet before testing it in her in-store cooking space.

Her current project is the addition to their product range of

prepared meals for slow-cooking that do not require any preparation by their customers.

The boom in value-added lines is also a trend notice by Peter Maguire who bought the Palmwoods butcher shop in 2014, renovated and opened the re-named store ‘We Meat Again’ with a very sophisticated range of speciality pies and mini-roast products.

An original ‘sea-changer’ but recent ‘tree-changer’ himself, Peter says that changing his opening times from 8.00am to 6.00pm has enabled him to grow the business on the increasing demand for heat and serve lines that can be bought on the way home from work.

The town he says is growing rapidly with a broad range of age groups, those that are older and downsizing from larger homes and with dynamic change coming from young families leaving the cities.

After managing a butcher shop down on the coastal plain for nine years, where he first met Trent Wright who now works with him at ‘We Meat Again’, Peter has seen some major changes in customer demand over that time-frame.

“The burgeoning trend among customers now is towards free-range and organic products, with an interest in the story of where their food comes from and how it is grown,” Peter said.

“That is a lot different from a decade ago when customers were more interested in value for money as opposed to provenance,” he said. ■



*Peter Maguire (left) renovated the Palmwoods butcher shop and launched with a new look and new name ‘We Meat Again’ with long-time colleague, Trent Wright.*

# Building a Market for Salumi

The hands-on approach to hand-crafted Salumi doesn't stop at the airlock.

Once smallgoods leave the Salumi Australia factory near Byron Bay NSW, the personal touch comes into its own. National Sales Manager Michael Dlask said the firm's distribution network is as carefully created as the products themselves.

"And it's an on ongoing task," he added. "The way to find whether the distribution channel is going to be right for you or not is basically to get into the car with the distributor with product and over a week see how they deal with their customers and what their facility is like because at the end of the day your reps are representing your brand within that clientele base.

"If they don't have a solid understanding of your brand philosophy, they're not portraying your message on the ground and sometimes it can be more detrimental than anything."

The six-year-old firm chose its agents carefully: there are distributors from Cairns to Hobart and Belmont in WA supplying top-end restaurants and delicatessens.

Not all things can be as carefully controlled. The April floods of the NSW northern rivers region saw Salumi Australia's office flooded. It disrupted the internet and the phones. "All that paperwork and the business disruption that was painful," said Michael. "There were no trucks coming into Billinudgel and we couldn't send out orders. We just had to be on the phone to distributors daily or twice a day to let them know what's going on."

The response was generous. "They were great. Everyone understands how delicate the product is and everyone, right down to the end consumer, understands that," Michael said.

Ironically, the other big threat to supply is drought. Salumi Australia sources free-range pig meat from selected



*Pictured (L to R) Michael Dlask, John Holt, Massimo Scalas celebrating the art of salumi.*

suppliers in Queensland and a big dry throttles-off supply.

And the other big stress time is Christmas "A lot of our products take upwards of three weeks maturation time, so I really need a crystal ball if I'm going to accurately predict production schedules," said Michael. "At Christmas everyone is buying up whole legs and the abattoirs are shut down for three weeks. So just before Christmas we try to process a little bit more; it's all hands on deck."

The 14 staff of Salumi Australia range from experienced smallgoods makers to the painstaking exactness of the packaging line and then to the distribution/administration staff. They operate under the eagle eye of Sardinian-born Massimo Scalas (Max).

Max is the one who constantly comes up with the flavour blends and the uncompromising QA that have given the business its premium-edge.

He and Michael were restaurateurs previously. They came together with shared focus on traditional techniques for cured meat and fermented smallgoods. It has served them well – the company won a gold medal with its Bottarga in the 2016 *delicious* magazine national awards.

The Bottarga sales pitch is a winner too. The salted fish roe is considered 'Viagra from the sea' according to Michael, who admits he stirred that ad campaign to coincide with St Valentine's Day!

Salumi Australia dedicates much of its sales/marketing effort to public education, seeking to enlighten the client base about the intricacies of cured and fermented meats. For example, they often have to explain the difference between salami and salumi. Salumi is the overall term for cured or fermented meats, mainly made from pork. Salami is a type of salumi.

A gathering of Australia's saluminati in Melbourne last year saw local food laws requiring makers wash off the flavour-fixing moulds.

Michael admits that the moulds are something that the Australian palate has to understand. Once he gave some samples to a wisened-up diner... or so he thought. "So I called them two days later and said, 'how did you like it, what did you think about it?' And they were like 'ah mate, I've been meaning to call you. It had mould on it, so I threw it away!'" ■



*Melinda Kent, breeder of Murray Grey cattle finds the breed to be docile, which shows in the meat with low dark meat and good carcass yield and fat cover.*

## Teaming up: Butcher, Farmer and Murray Greys

It started as a Murray Grey breeder's desire to improve carcass characteristics but evolved into a learning and supply relationship between a farmer and a butcher.

There is no doubt that Melinda Kent loves her Murray Greys. Based in Longwarry, in Gippsland in south eastern Victoria, Melinda is more than happy to promote the farm-based benefits of the breed that include easy handling, strong maternal instincts and good growth rates.

However, Melinda didn't know much about carcass yield and meat quality. A visit to her local butcher has resulted in a partnership that benefits both breeder and butcher and ultimately their meat buying customers.

Ben Kurrle and his wife Bec have operated The Meat Safe, the local butcher shop, in Longwarry for ten years. A butcher for the better part of 30 years, Ben has seen his fair share of carcasses, but rarely knew what carcass came for what breed or what a good carcass looked like as a live animal. Ben uses local produce wherever possible, but in a region that has a high proportion of dairy cattle and many small beef herds, the carcasses from nearby abattoirs at Sale or Warragul, can be variable. Consistent supply of any one body type or breed is difficult.

This changed when Ben met Melinda who introduced him to the cattle production side of the business.

Ben readily admits that prior to meeting Melinda, as long as the carcass had good fat cover and marbling he wasn't too fussed about what breed it came from. Getting to know local farmers and the numbers and characteristics of the cattle they breed and finish has meant that Ben better understands the quantity and quality that can be supplied. Ben now prefers to take Murray Greys first, then Murray crosses and then crosses from other breeds that meet the same standards.

Ben and Melinda have learned from each other. When Melinda first approached Ben to help assess the carcass qualities of her Murray Greys, the fat cover and marbling were nothing special. The challenge was on. Melinda then reviewed her breeding and feeding program to attain the levels that Ben wanted.

"As a breeder, I am aiming for a 400kg live weight, with 3-5mm fat cover. It can be variable based on seasonal conditions – summer will have lower fat cover, while spring can be higher," said Melinda.

"We use Radford's to process the cattle and then bring it straight back to Ben, which takes out some of the middleman costs. They look after us well and know us personally and do the small runs and it is always good work."

“I can now pick a good carcass when I look at stock in the paddock based on what Ben has taught me. And Ben too, can now relate body shape and fat cover on a live animal to a carcass outcome,” Melinda said.

Temperament is important for convenience and safety when handling livestock on the farm but it is also critical when stock are moved from paddock to the point of slaughter. Murray Greys are a naturally docile breed, a trait Melinda is keen to maintain and enhance in her herd. Ben says this trait combined with careful handling at the point of processing, is paying real dividends as Melinda’s cattle have very little stress-induced dark meat.

“The majority of our customers are not particularly interested in what animal the steak has come from as long as it is good quality. For me as a butcher, I know that it is local, good quality meat. It just happens to be Murray Grey,” Ben said.

Ben’s involvement with Murray Greys was not a deliberate move; it has evolved from Melinda’s desire to improve her herd and to see what it looked like on the hook.

To help promote the Murray Grey breed, Ben has started doing BBQs at local rural shows including Farmworld, held near Warragul. On the menu are sausages and steaks.

Ben says, the partnership has resulted in meat that rivals the best available.

“Melinda loves breeding cattle as much as I love being a butcher,” said Ben. “What we have here is a relationship that has evolved from shared knowledge.

“The butcher shop gets good quality meat, we know the animal has been well looked after and we can work with the farmers to get the possible result at the farm gate.” ■



*Ben Kurrle, Melinda Kent and Bec Kurrle have teamed up to perfect the Murray Grey carcass traits.*



*Ben’s butcher shop, The Meat Safe, Gippsland serves a loyal local customer base based mostly on Murray Grey cattle.*

# Rapid change expected on global markets

By Stephanie Flynn

It is a dynamic and rapidly changing trading environment on global protein markets with a number of key challenges likely to impact Australia's exporters over the coming financial year.

In an interview with *Australian Meat News*, Mr Angus Gidley-Baird – Australia's senior animal protein analyst for global agribusiness banking giant, Rabobank – speaks about the changes underway in the nation's key protein markets and the inter-relationships between global production and demand.

According to Mr Gidley-Baird the key factors likely to drive a change in strategy for protein exporters are recent changes to trade access and agreements in key markets, a slowing rate of growth in consumer demand for beef in China and a rise in production in other beef producing nations.

He also cautions that the dynamic between the whole range of proteins competing for consumer support is likely to add further competition to beef and sheep meat consumption globally.

## Global Outlook

"Focusing on beef and sheep meats, I think the outlook is still positive for the financial year ahead but it is important that exporters realise that we need to keep on our game to maintain market share," Mr Gidley-Baird said.

"If we look at our major markets in recent times from a beef point of view – the U.S., Korea, Japan and China – and from a sheep meat point of view China, the U.S. and Middle East and to a lesser extent Europe as well, there have been a number of things that have happened that are likely to cause major changes in the near term.

"In regard to beef, chief among the approaching challenges is the recent announcement of the fast-tracking of trade negotiations between the U.S. and China which established a deadline of July this year for direct access of US beef into China which will add even further competitive pressure in the world's largest protein market.

"The impending renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement is also likely to change the dynamics of global beef trade as is the increasing rate of growth in production, most notably, in Brazil and the U.S.



*Angus Gidley-Baird, Senior Protein Analyst for Rabobank in Australia.*

"There are a few more positives from a sheep meat point of view because there is not the same competitive intensity as there is for beef, with Australia and New Zealand being the world's leading exporters and New Zealand's production has been declining as a consequence of the strong performance of the dairy industry which has seen grazing properties converted to dairies," he said.

Mr Gidley-Baird says that the US will remain a strong market for Australia's sheep meat exports, given that country's production is continuing its long-term decline and, as long as exporters can foster a growth in consumption with US consumers, is likely to remain a positive story for our exporters over the year ahead.

Data from Meat and Livestock Australia shows that last year, the U.S. accounted for 28.6% of Australia's beef exports with Japan 23%, Korea 14.8% and China accounting for 10.9%.

2016 lamb export data shows that the Middle East accounted for 27.9% of Australia's lamb exports in 2016 with the U.S. taking 22.2% and China importing 16.5%.

## China

According to Mr Gidley-Baird, Australian protein exporters will need to play to their strengths of quality, location, market access and safety rather than engage in direct competition with lower cost producers in the Chinese market in the years ahead.

He says that Australia's unique position as the only country in the world with the capacity to export chilled product to this market is among its key strengths.

Rabobank forecasts that China will need an additional 800,000 tonnes of beef and 50,000 tonnes of sheep meat imports by 2020.

Forecast growth in China's beef consumption is expected at 1.4% and sheep meat at 1.5% per annum by 2020.

But Mr Gidley-Baird warns of challenges ahead with exporters advised to change their expectations for this key market.

"We saw in 2012/13 massive increases in export volumes for both sheep meat and beef as a result from the opening of trade, the approval of a number of plants here to export to China and that meant a large amount of product went into that market," Mr Gidley-Baird said.

"The challenge now is that the Chinese demand has levelled out, the rate of growth in consumption has declined to around two or three percent, which is still good growth given it is a massive population, but the high demand we saw in 2012 is not there anymore.

"They are still a price sensitive consumer, we have to realise that they are only eating two or three kilograms per person per year of beef, compared to 30kg for Australians, so beef is not a big part of their diet, if the price of beef becomes unattainable they will quickly switch back to proteins that are traditionally in their diet and affordable.

"The other major challenge is the increasing competition in that market now, particularly with Brazil which is a very big

supplier of beef on the world stage with very cheap but still high-quality product, as well as the impending entry of the U.S. as a direct supplier to China," he said.

Mr Gidley-Baird said that the entry of the U.S. into a Trade agreement with China, which will allow it to directly supply beef to that market, is likely to attract some protocols which may act as a limitation on the amount of product they are permitted to supply.

These protocols are likely to centre on the requirements for hormone-free product and the need for traceability systems to be established.

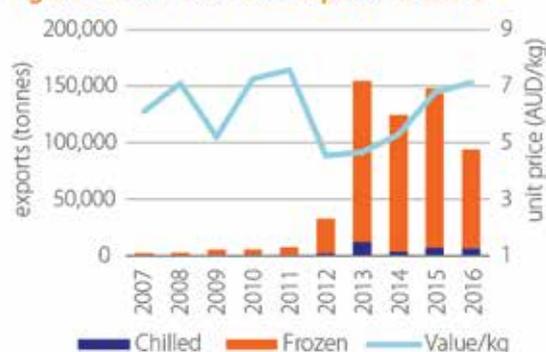
Nevertheless, U.S. product being 90% grain-fed beef, will be a similar product in terms of quality to Australian beef and, therefore, likely to target the higher-value market segment making the Chinese market a highly competitive one for our exporters.

Growth in Australia's sheep meat exports to China is likely to be highly influenced by that country's own considerable level of domestic production which will be a very big influence on its demand for imports.

Rabobank anticipates moderate growth in Australia's protein exports supported by gradual tariff reductions over the next six years under the China Australia Free Trade Agreement which was ratified in 2015 and will see our exports become Tariff-free by 2024 for beef, 2023 for sheep meat and 2019 for pork.

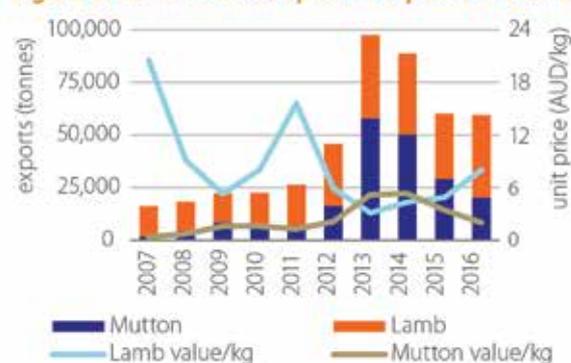
*continued on page 18*

**Figure 1: Australian beef exports to China**



Source: China Customs, Rabobank 2017

**Figure 2: Australian sheepmeat exports to China**



Source: China Customs, Rabobank 2017

continued from page 17

## The United States

The United States is a very big market for Australian exports of lean trimmings according to Mr Gidley-Baird which have acted as a complement to their own production of fatty trimmings.

But high beef production in the U.S. is anticipated to see a reduction in their demand for imported trimmings over the year ahead, making this a shrinking market for Australia's exporters.

High beef and pork production in the U.S. is also resulting in increasing exports of proteins from the U.S. to key global markets.

"U.S. exports of beef are among the highest on record and, in terms of pork, their exports are the highest on record and we can see that clearly in their rising levels of exports to both Japan and Korea," Mr Gidley-Baird said.

"In terms of their domestic supply, their slaughter weights are around 13kg lighter than at the same time last year, so there is less fat on the animals and therefore their demand for lean trimmings for blending is in decline.

"At the same time production is increasing of cows in their domestic system which means, from an Australian point of view, the market there is shrinking, but prices are still reasonably firm," he said.

According to Mr Gidley-Baird the recent announcement by President Donald Trump of the intention to renegotiate the terms of the North American Free Trade Agreement which presently facilitates a massive amount of trade between Canada, Mexico and the U.S., could hold major implications for Australian exporters.

The most notable potential outcome is that it may force Mexico, a growing beef producer, to seek alternative markets for its produce most likely to China for which it has access but has not exported much product there to date.

## Europe

Britain's exit from the European Union, negotiations for which commenced last month (June) and for which the deadline is early 2019, holds potential promise for Australian protein exporters but Mr Gidley-Baird says that there are three likely approaches the United Kingdom may take.

The UK could either freeze the arrangements as they are at present, it could decide to completely open its domestic market or it could follow a protectionist philosophy.

If the UK opens its domestic market to international trade the opportunities there could be large for both beef and sheep meat.

Exports to the UK are presently limited by quotas, if these are

reviewed and our negotiations are successful in having those tariffs removed, Mr Gidley-Baird believes it would provide some great opportunities for Australian exporters.

Another opportunity may be provided in Europe if it also reconsiders its current arrangements, although Mr Gidley-Baird suggests that it is more likely that the continent will simply stay with the status quo.

## Global Competition from other Proteins

Mr Gidley-Baird said it is important for Australian exporters to also consider the dynamic between other proteins generally in every market.

"This is the other thing we need to bear in mind in 12 months, particularly if the U.S. and Brazil keeps growing their beef production, we have also seen the U.S. grow its poultry production at record levels, US pork production has recovered from PED virus, and China's pork production has increased this year after a decline last year, so there is a lot of protein available globally," Mr Gidley-Baird said.

"At present we are hoping that the consumer likes to eat a lot more beef or lamb, but the dynamic between the different proteins and the price competitiveness between them is important.

"All the proteins are fighting each other for their own space, your competitor is not just the cattle producer next door, it is also the US or Chinese pork or chicken producer.

"It is vital that we start taking a broader view, that is, how do we make sure that Australian beef, lamb, pork or chicken is on the plates of consumers globally as opposed to proteins from other countries," he said. ■

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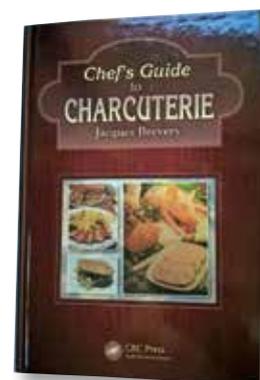
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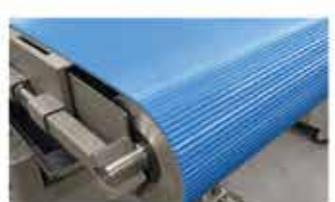
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# Greater efficiency: the only option for rising energy costs

Increasing energy prices are giving many in the industry concern with reports of enormous increases by some processors and abattoirs. *AMN* takes a closer look at the realities.

**E**arlier in the year, a number of east coast abattoirs and processors were speculating that their energy costs, by year's end, would rise significantly and indicated that the costs would need to be passed onto their customers. So fearful was the industry, that the Australian Industry Group (AiGroup) and Australian Meat Industry Council (AMIC) set about investigating exactly what is likely to happen.

Two of the most vocal in the industry, Breakout River Meats and Cowra Meat Processors have reportedly claimed that electricity costs may increase by 74% and gas by more than 50%. Junee Abattoir director Heath Newton said his new 12-month contract would increase power bills by \$15,000 - \$21,000 per month.

A report produced by AiGroup to investigate 'multiple lines of evidence that confirm that energy prices are rising fast across the National Electricity market' echoes the sentiments expressed by Junee Abattoir and Breakout River Meats and Cowra Meat Processors.

The report, "Energy Shock: No Gas, No Power, No Future?", released in February 2017 found

that wholesale electricity prices were roughly doubling since 2016 while wholesale gas had doubled and was set to increase even further.

Industries most likely to feel the pinch would be primary metals manufacturing, food manufacturing and building materials. The meat industry falls within food manufacturing.

So why the dramatic increases?

For electricity, reliability of energy supply has been a concern coupled with network costs that have driven the wholesale price up. Victoria's Hazelwood coal-fired facility is one of the cheaper sources of power. Its closure will have a big impact given that it used to export to NSW, SA and Tasmania.

These types of generators take a long time to respond to surges in demand and as a result, many look to gas supply generators to cope with fluctuations such as extreme weather.

Queensland's liquefied natural gas (LNG) projects have actually placed a lot of pressure on the east coast as export demand is high. The process of removing components such as dust, acid gases, water, helium and other hydrocarbons, plus actually compressing it for ease of transport, requires substantial energy – usually drawn from the very gas suppliers are turning into LNG.

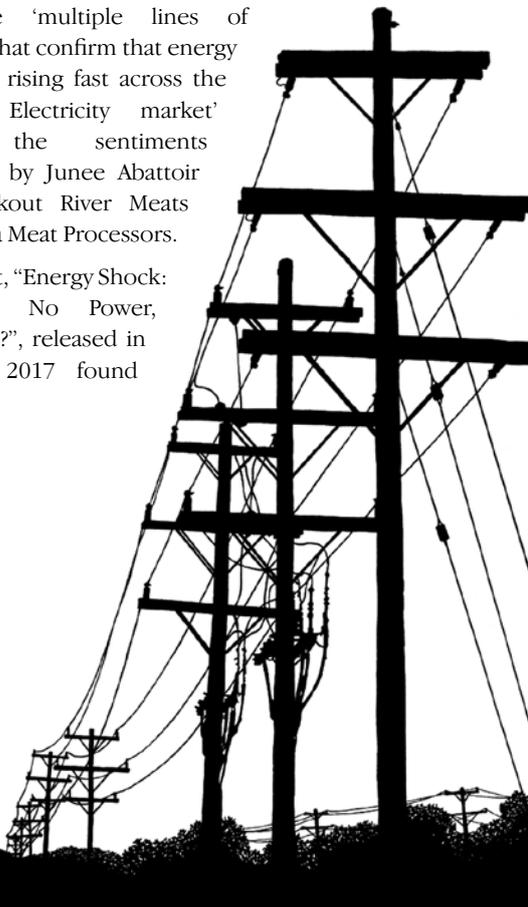
LNG exporters are bound to contracts, so any shortfalls in production are borne by the locals not international customers.

With many gas projects that involve fracking, not getting the go-ahead, the options for increased gas production are limited. The AiGroup report says the future for Australia's domestic gas market is 'grim'.

The anecdotal evidence combined with statistics such as those reported by AiGroup prompted AMIC to take a closer look at the meat processing industry.

A preliminary survey of some 27 processor members found:

- The main energy sources used are gas and electricity, but there is also significant use of diesel generation, and a growing interest and use of biogas and solar generation as conventional energy costs continue to rise.
- Energy costs account for around 5% of the total costs (results ranged from as low as 1% to as high as 25%).



- Energy costs for members had increased by an average of 30% between 2010 and 2016 and by 6% in the year 2015 to 2016.
- Members had taken measures to reduce their energy usage. These included: installation of biogas capture and reuse systems, trigeneration (using a system that produces electricity, heating and cooling in one process often through heat reclamation, often referred to as cogeneration) solar panels, energy efficient lighting, replacement of blast freezers with plate freezers, upgrading refrigeration compressors (including changing from Freon to ammonia).
- Gas is an important input for the red meat sector, both as a source of reliable energy to maintain the baseload, and as a direct input in operations on-plant. Indications that gas prices are likely to rise significantly over the next few years is causing consternation among AMIC members.

AMIC is still in the early stages of developing recommendations, but Robert Parker, sheep and goat policy manager, who is heading up the survey says that AMIC would be encouraging the Federal and State Governments and the energy market regulators to look at all options to ensure an affordable, reliable supply of energy – made up of multiple sources.

“Regarding the specific requirements of the meat industry, we are a relatively energy-intensive sector,” Parker said, “This is required to ensure the delivery of safe, clean food to consumers in Australia and around the world.

“As a major employer around Australia, especially in rural and regional areas, and as the main market for Australia’s livestock producers, it is vital that energy costs, already growing at a fast rate, do not continue to rise.

“The ability of our sector to compete on price around the world is being affected by these price increases,” Parker concluded.

In 2014, AMIC commissioned a number of reports to ascertain energy usage and opportunities for improvement. This data is now three years old but the areas of major energy consumption still remain true.

The information is held under the Energy Efficiency Information Grants Program (EEIG) Information Toolkit and shows that the key areas of consumption are to be found in steam and hot water services, refrigeration, compressed air, lighting and processing equipment.

The exact proportions vary between facilities depending on their range of processing activities. All of these energy usage

centres are opportunities to reduce energy consumption – such as more efficient refrigeration systems, installation of quality insulation, monitoring of water, temperatures and air compressors as well as heat recovery techniques.

On-site opportunities to generate energy such as anaerobic lagoons, trigeneration and perhaps renewables such as solar, along with heat recovery techniques may alleviate energy usage during peak times giving less reliance on contracted energy.

The AiGroup report users of gas and electricity, entering new contracts, to be mindful of the price per megawatt rate entered into and the small print that may read that the user pays for all agreed to volumes of energy, regardless of whether they are actually used or not.

Read the story on CO<sub>2</sub> refrigeration systems by Michael Bellstedt (page 24) and water management by Guenter Hauber-Davison (page 27) to find where your plant can save on energy bills. ■

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# Carbon Dioxide gives more than refrigeration

Carbon dioxide is the new kid on the block when it comes to refrigeration systems. It is certainly new to the meat industry, although its use is on the rise. And for good reason: a refrigeration system utilising carbon dioxide is efficient, safe, does not harm the environment like traditional and synthetic refrigerants, and, best of all, is cheaper to run than other systems of similar size and scale. Michael Bellstedt of Minus40 explains.

The unexpected cherry on the top for meat processors and butchers – CO<sub>2</sub> systems are very good at producing very hot water whilst doing their refrigeration job, so they can replace your hot water boilers at the same time saving you even more energy costs. Great news at times of spiralling electricity and fuel costs!

So let's talk refrigerants and the future outlook first...

Currently, most refrigeration systems used by smaller meat processors and butchers are running on synthetic refrigerants known as hydrofluorocarbons, or HFCs. Made popular after the environmental backlash that happened in the late 1990s against traditional refrigerants known as chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), also known as Freons, HFCs seemed like a great idea at the time.

“CO<sub>2</sub> refrigeration has now reached the turning point as a good financial decision.”

They were quite efficient, and did not ruin the ozone layer like CFCs did. However, while they may have been good for the ozone layer, it is now known that they are one of the leading greenhouse gas emissions. In response to this, leaders from 170 countries gathered in Rwanda in October 2016 to discuss a reduction in the use of HFCs in refrigeration systems. Just recently, the Australian government ratified regulations to begin a phase-down from 2018 of synthetic refrigerants, with a goal of near full elimination by 2035.

Whilst that seems like a long way away, the impact of this phase-down means that most HFCs will soon be in short supply, and what supply is left will become expensive quickly. The HFC phase-down is expected to impact most heavily on exactly those refrigerants that are most commonly used in refrigeration (as opposed to air-conditioning), such as R404A. So if someone is telling you that the phasedown is not going to impact on your business and it is OK to buy another R404A system, be warned!

Going forward, most new systems will be using one of four refrigerants or refrigerant types, ammonia, hydrocarbons (HCs), hydrofluoroolefins (HFOs), and carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>).

Ammonia is the best known of these and has been in use as a refrigerant for some time now, especially for larger meat processors. While ammonia is a very good refrigerant option for large applications and is highly efficient, it is also highly toxic thus requiring

extra precautions. Ammonia plants also tend to be expensive and require a plant operator. Putting an ammonia plant in to replace a HFC plant is often just not possible due to council restrictions or safety concerns, especially in urban areas, regardless of cost.

Systems utilising hydrocarbons as a refrigerant are efficient and low cost, but because the refrigerant is highly flammable, their use is restricted to small systems such as fridges and small fluid chillers. In most cases hydrocarbons need to be used in conjunction with a secondary refrigerant (like glycol) to replace HFCs, reducing their energy efficiency and increasing overall cost.

Pure HFOs are only suitable for use in air conditioning systems, and are not suitable for refrigeration purposes, at least not in their pure form. And some HFOs are flammable too! There are already several HFO/HFC blends on the market to replace pure HFCs as an interim solution during the phase-down period, but these blends are expensive and as yet hard to come by, nor are they a long-term solution and will eventually need to be replaced themselves. So HFOs are not a serious option for the meat industry, except perhaps for the office air-conditioning.

Carbon dioxide, on the other hand, is efficient, suitable for medium-to-large applications, less expensive than an ammonia system, does not require a plant operator, and is effectively non-toxic and non-flammable. In fact, CO<sub>2</sub> refrigeration technology has now reached the turning point where it is a good financial decision regardless of whether the other refrigerants are toxic, flammable or being phased-



*Michael Bellstedt, managing director of Minus40, a leading engineering consulting firm specialising in refrigeration, process cooling, industrial HVAC and heat recovery systems.*

down. It simply makes good business sense. Therefore, there is an ever-growing number of CO<sub>2</sub> equipment suppliers in Australia, and many refrigeration contractors are now investing in the training required to work on CO<sub>2</sub> systems. Is your refrigeration contractor getting himself CO<sub>2</sub> ready, or still pushing HFCs at you?

So what CO<sub>2</sub> systems are out there and what works for the meat industry?

CO<sub>2</sub> heat pumps are a big success story and are taking the world by storm. Using a CO<sub>2</sub> heat pump to generate hot water for wash-down is a far better idea than direct electric heating and even gas fired boilers, as they are much cheaper to run, from small domestic units to very large industrial, for three main reasons.

They are super-efficient, typically 30-40% more efficient than current HFC-based heat pumps. That means a lot less power used for the same amount of hot water

They work down to very low ambient temperatures. Current HFC-based models tend to stop working when temperatures



drop to near freezing, which is when you really want them to perform. CO<sub>2</sub> heat pumps work down to -30°C, which means that they will produce hot water anywhere in Australia at any time of the year.

They can generate water at up to +90°C, which is way higher than the +60°C limit for the current HFC-based generation. This means a meat processor could run the sterilisers using a heat pump, rather than having to burn fuel, in addition to doing the wash-down water.

There are a range of CO<sub>2</sub> heat pumps already on the market, ranging from small 4kW domestic to industrial units at >100kW. They can be located close to where the hot water

*continued on page 26*



Recently the Australian Government ratified regulations to begin a phase-down of synthetic refrigerants - **starting 1 January 2018.**

In plain english that means...

## Synthetic refrigerants are getting the chop!

The HFC phase-down will be gradual but the reduced supply will push prices even higher, so now is a good time to move to Carbon Dioxide - CO<sub>2</sub>.

### Why should Meat Processors & Butchers consider a CO<sub>2</sub> system?

- CO<sub>2</sub> is future proof - it won't get phased out, hit by taxes or levies.
- It is 20-50% cheaper than equivalent ammonia systems.
- A CO<sub>2</sub> system has the lowest overall running costs, cutting your electricity and fuel bills.
- Reduce capital expenditure by replacing refrigeration AND hot water generation with one compact system.
- CO<sub>2</sub> is a safe option, non-toxic and non-flammable, saving you headaches with local councils and neighbours.

Find out more » [www.eco2technologies.com.au](http://www.eco2technologies.com.au)

**eCO<sub>2</sub>**  
technologies

*continued from page 25*

is needed, and by using multiple units there is less reliance on a single or perhaps a few central boilers to do the job. Even a small butcher would be well advised to consider upgrading to a CO<sub>2</sub> heat pump, especially at current power costs!

CO<sub>2</sub> refrigeration systems to provide freezing and chilling duty come in a range of designs to suit the site needs. Small condensing units are suitable for a butcher's cool room, freezer room and display cases while larger industrial units can handle carcass chillers, blast freezers, boning rooms and even the office air-conditioning as well, all very efficiently and from one combined unit.



*An example of a low and medium temperature rack with parallel compression (the two smaller compressors are located up high).*

In fact, CO<sub>2</sub> refrigeration systems really come into their own if they are used for multiple purposes, and that should include generating hot water. Unlike both HFC and ammonia based systems, CO<sub>2</sub> systems can convert up to 100% of the waste heat into usable hot water (>60°C), and therefore in nearly all cases CO<sub>2</sub> systems can replace the hot water boilers on meat processing and butcher sites.

In effect, this heat is for free, so the total running cost of such a combined system is typically lower than the combined cost of all refrigeration, air-conditioning and hot water generation on site. You could even add carcass spray chilling and plate freezers to the list – there is not much on the cooling side that cannot economically be served with CO<sub>2</sub>!

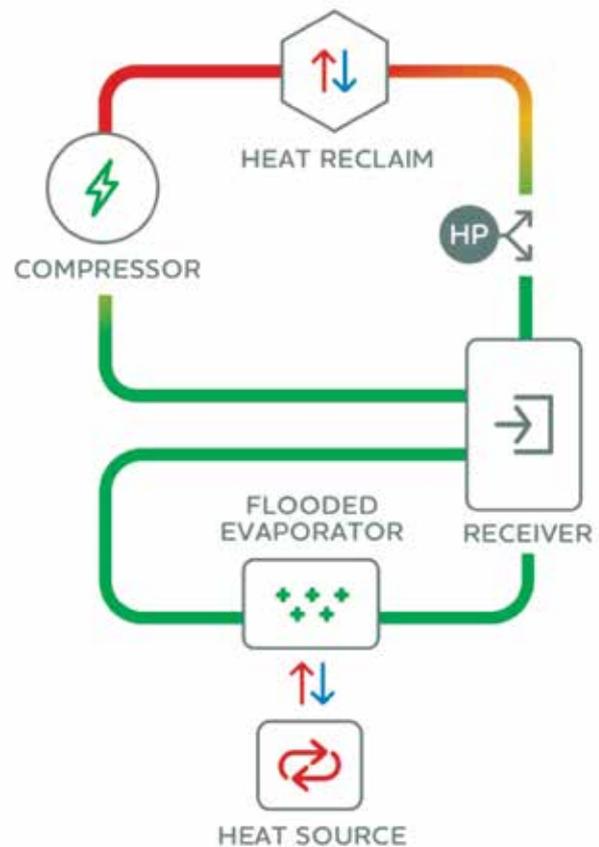
Is it easy to get hold of a CO<sub>2</sub> system?

Several experienced and big-name CO<sub>2</sub> system suppliers are already selling their equipment in the Australian market, and

competition is heating up, pun intended. Equipment from Spain, Japan, South Africa, Denmark, Italy and the USA is available and some Australian manufacturers and wholesalers are building systems locally also. However, most wholesalers are not yet able to offer CO<sub>2</sub> systems, and hence still push HFCs into the market.

The biggest challenge, however, involves the installing and servicing contractors, who need to undergo training (most local TAFEs now offer CO<sub>2</sub> training courses for refrigeration technicians) to upskill to this new generation of equipment. Most contractors would first need to do this TAFE course, then get more product training from the equipment suppliers. Most are doing this with enthusiasm as they can see the writing on the wall, but some are resisting the change, or waiting for others to lead.

So shop around, don't just listen to your local fridgie who may not yet have the skills to work on CO<sub>2</sub> systems, or contact the author who can point you in the right direction. ■



*Utilising a CO<sub>2</sub> refrigeration system can give higher efficiencies for chilled water, refrigeration and heat reclamation for hot water.*

# Water is worth saving

Water and electricity consume a substantial portion of a processor's inputs, so it is worth looking once more how and where it is used and making the most of what you have, writes Guenter Hauber-Davidson, Managing Director, WaterGroup.

**H**eating water may not be a major component of a food processor's energy bill but with the cost of energy set to increase significantly now is the time to also implement a water savings program.

Many processor managers would dismiss water savings as it "is only 10% of my electricity spend and thus it won't be enough to be really painful", they do not worry about the bill as they "just don't have the time" or "we aren't in a drought anymore".

Not so according to Guenter Hauber-Davidson, Managing Director of WaterGroup. "Now is the time to address the water and energy bill and not throw money out with the water."

"We totally understand that many facility managers are too busy to focus on reducing their energy bill, to improve water efficiency and address associated risks". However, it is an opportunity. A water savings program does not need to be so complex that takes up precious management time.

As the water spend typically is only around 10% of the electricity bill, a water savings program is far cheaper and simpler to implement – as long as this is recognised from the outset. Hauber-Davidson has five top tips to make it happen:

## 1. Make it a Priority

WaterGroup all too often hear that the water bill is not a pressing issue, but point out that it should still have a priority and your actions should reflect the effort required. Which leads to point two:

## 2. Let Others Do it

Engage somebody who understands how to make the most of your water and energy and who knows how to prevent wastage. As long as you pay them less than what it is costing you, you are onto a winner.

## 3. Think Big

Stop thinking that you can fix a \$350,000 problem with a \$20,000 monitoring project. It's not that easy. To fix a big problem, you need a sizeable program. Then deliver it with a wisely chosen partner.

## 4. Be Courageous

Don't fear getting penalised for doing the right thing. Try something that your organisation or water authority has never done before. If the old approach has not delivered in



*Guenter Hauber-Davidson, CEO of WaterGroup says consistent analysis of smart metering data by a dedicated resource is vital to get a good ROI from any monitoring program .*

spades, have the courage to do something different, like engage in a save and share program. Find a company that is willing to guarantee the savings, and profit share part of the success with them.

## 5. Believe in it!

Water efficiency and risk management can and will work – and be cost effective. Choose the right partner and you can be guaranteed that within a short period of time you will see savings. It will save precious resources, money and minimise risk of supply disruptions. But you must believe in it, and take action – otherwise it will never happen.

## Smart Metering

WaterGroup have long been an advocate for smart metering, where monitoring always has been and always will remain a key part in any water efficiency management program. With the advent of the latest IoT (Internet of Things) technology smart metering and monitoring of other related data is now far cheaper. That makes it more feasible than ever before to collect good online usage data.

As a rule of thumb, you should measure any point that supplies more than \$5,000 worth of water. That includes the energy cost for hot water. Typically, this would be any supply

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point that delivers more than 2,000 kL per year. Smart metering the main meter is a given; beyond that you may look at another 20 to 30 points to monitor. Where new meters need to be installed the advent of reliable accurate ultrasonic flow meters is a god's send. It allows you to install a sub meter without cutting the pipe and associated supply disruptions or shutdowns.

A critically important, yet often overlooked aspect is the management of that data. Who looks at it, analyses it and takes action? History has shown that without a properly embedded active water analysis and risk efficiency program, within 6-18 months few people still look at the data. As a result, typically less than 20% of the efficiency and risk reduction opportunities embedded in the data are realised.

We suggest that any smart metering must be accompanied with a commitment for a dedicated resource who turns this data into meaningful insights that drive actions towards results on a continuous and consistent basis. If you cannot guarantee long term availability of that resource in-house, contract a third party to provide that service. It will have some of the best ROI of any expense commitment you will ever make.

With monitoring and management of water usage, even in today's climate, you will find – and be able to realise – very worthwhile water savings at a payback of less than 3-5 years. Best of all, you will not have to spend a disproportionate amount of your time to achieve these savings. And it will allow you to embed better management systems that will continue to drive efficiencies and reduce risks while you save water and money on an ongoing basis making bill shocks and other nasty surprises a thing of the past.

## Internet of Things (IoT)

Connecting smart metering into the overall functionality and reporting systems via IoT alongside gas meters, sensors, gauges and status indicators has the potential to give a complete picture of a facility's energy usage – and waste points.

We recommend that water metering points in meat processing plants be implemented into wash-down facilities, incoming mains, slaughter and viscera, rendering, building amenities and plant cleaning.

Given that the Internet of Things (IoT) enables an interconnection of devices within a plant, connecting smart water meters allows for real-time measurement and response to out of the ordinary events. For example, if a wastewater system is not performing correctly, it may become a health and safety issue – a connected meter with an alert system can make the difference between preventative action and an EPA disaster.



Equally, a small leak in the hot water system for plant cleaning would not only add to the water bill, but also the energy bill used to heat wasted water. If the smart meters are monitoring key points of water flow around the plant, a leak can be localised and repaired within a minimum amount of time.

As meat processing becomes more automated with advanced robotics, imaging systems and the like, the use of IoT is likely to become more common place. Incorporated into that will be a number of monitoring technologies, for example data loggers for temperature, energy, animal identification – and water. With energy prices set to increase in the next few months, monitoring water and energy usage is a prudent undertaking. ■

# Home-brewed biogas to power Southern Meats abattoir

ReNu Energy has finalised funding for the Goulburn Bioenergy Project which will see Southern Meats sheep abattoir in Goulburn, NSW kitted out with an anaerobic lagoon, biogas processing and power generation facility.

According to ReNu Energy the project will operate under a Build Own Operate Maintain (BoOM) model, where ReNu Energy will own the digester, gas conditioning and generation equipment to provide Southern Meats with on-site renewable energy on a power purchase agreement, without the upfront costs.

The project has been possible with funding from the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) and is set to provide 1.6MWe and supply 4,000MWh of energy, annually, utilizing the waste water from the abattoir for anaerobic digestion. The project is a dual fuel model, with additional gas sourced from natural gas from the grid and biogas designed to minimize the usage of the natural gas.

ReNu Energy Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, Mr Chris

Murray said, “We are pleased to have finalised the Funding Agreement with ARENA, and look forward to commencing construction of the project in the coming weeks.

“We wish to acknowledge the support and collaboration from ARENA over

the past months whilst we finalised the Agreement and also the ongoing support of Southern Meats. With ever rising energy prices increasing the cost of production for the agricultural sector we continue to see strong interest in biogas systems.” ■

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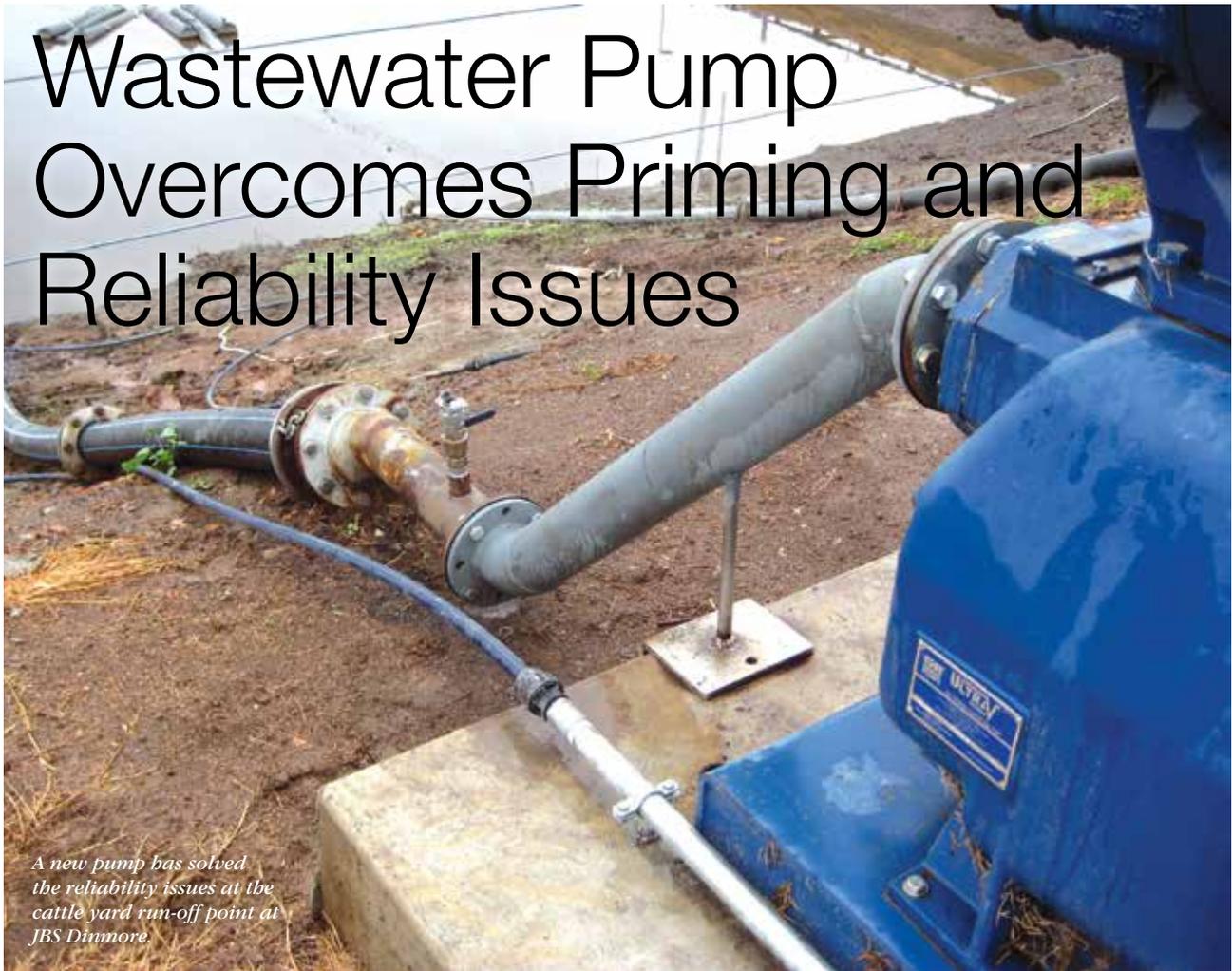
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# Wastewater Pump Overcomes Priming and Reliability Issues



*A new pump has solved the reliability issues at the cattle yard run-off point at JBS Dinmore.*

The JBS Australian Dinmore operation is the largest beef processing plant in the southern hemisphere, and the plant is the largest employer in Ipswich.

They naturally use a large amount of many and varied pumps around the plant, but some time ago, it was having reliability problems with their end suction centrifugal pump on a cattle yard run-off application.

Because of large suspended solids in the fluid, the pump struggled with choking and also, because it relied on a foot valve to keep the suction line primed, was prone to losing prime if a solid got caught in that foot valve. It was not an easy application as the pump was delivering 20 litres per second (L/S) at a pressure of 800kPa (because of the long discharge line it was pumping through), and not only that, was on a suction lift in excess of 5 metres.

After a site inspection and a hydraulic analysis of the system, Hydro Innovations suggested the plant look at a Gorman-Rupp VS3A60-B which is the only two stage self priming solids handling centrifugal pump on the market. The pump is of cast iron construction with a large inspection cover to allow access to pump internals for inspection and/

or service. It is capable of handling spherical solids up to 63mm in diameter, and internal clearance adjustments can be done in minutes, allowing operators to keep the pump at peak operating efficiency for the life of the asset. The pump is also an excellent primer, and re-primer, which means that it cannot lose its prime even if solids get caught in the system.

The VS360-B is part of a “family” of Gorman-Rupp high performance, high head self priming wastewater pumps that can deliver flows from 10 l/s through to 120 l/s, and heads to 95 metres. The pumps all have replaceable “self cleaning” wear plates to assist in handling stringy materials such as rags and gloves, and they can operate on suction lifts up to 7.6 metres. Being self priming pumps, they are much safer to maintain than submersible pumps because operators do not have to work over water or work with cranes or heavy swinging weights.

The pump was duly installed and has operated with minimal operator intervention for the past 6 years. The large solids handling capacity solved the choking issues, and because the pump does not need a foot valve or any other “add-on” priming device, it is an extremely reliable self primer. ■

# Point of difference pays dividends

It's a marriage made in culinary heaven. Matt is a butcher and Bronwen is a chef. Together the Nagles have overcome the challenges of opening a new butcher shop at Yarrowonga, Victoria.

By Tamara Whitsed

**N**agle's Off the Hook Butchery was barely 12 months old when it won a regional award for its hamburgers in 2015.

Owners Matt and Bronwen Nagle proudly displayed the Australian Meat Industry Council (AMIC) Sausage King North East Victoria Gold Medal Hamburger award in their new shop in Belmore Street, Yarrowonga.

Customers admiring the trophy probably thought the young couple was off to a great start in their new business. But they weren't seeing the hardship and tension behind the scenes.

"The first year we probably could've shut a hundred times," Bronwen confessed when *AMN* visited the shop recently.

The dream was for Matt, a qualified butcher, to specialise in quality, fresh, off-the-hook meat products while Bronwen, a qualified chef, prepared ready-made meals. And through their rose-coloured glasses they imagined the business would soon provide a comfortable lifestyle for their family. Their daughters were aged seven months and two years when they opened the shop in 2014.

Matt had fond memories of his apprenticeship which was completed with a butcher operating from the same Belmore Street building in the early 2000s. But the premises has seen



Soon Nagles will sell lamb grown on a local farm owned by Matt's family.



Bronwen and Matt Nagle combine their talents at Nagle's Off the Hook Butchery.

mixed fortunes since then. The previous tenant specialised in fresh fish, and the building was vacant for several months before Matt and Bronwen signed the lease. It still had a cool room and meat rails. What it didn't have was customers.

Looking back they acknowledge their biggest mistake was underestimating the demands of compliance. "I worked in the abattoirs for 10 years," Matt said. "To come back into a butcher shop after not working at one for a long time was very hard. I had no idea about compliance."

Cooking ready-made meals at the premises added to their compliance burden. Matt said they struggled to find the guidance they needed to fulfil the paperwork requirements.

Bronwen admits tears were shed during those first few months, and there were lots of sleepless nights. "Why the hell did we think this was a good idea?"

Cash flow problems added to the stress. One of their first big customers was a slow payer. "That nearly sunk us," Matt said.

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Bronwen said they have learned to be “soft enough to sell the meat but hard enough to say ‘That’s it! You’ve got to pay something.’”

Fast forward to 2017 and it is obvious those hard times are behind them. Their quality produce and friendly service have won them enough loyal customers to justify employing a mature age apprentice, Matt Lowry, and junior apprentice, Cory Phillips.

“Everything comes in carcass form. When I did my apprenticeship I didn’t really know any other way.”

It has taken determination and team work, but their original dream of providing off-the-hook products and ready-made meals has been the cornerstone of their success.



Matt buys beef from a local farm.

### Off the hook

“Everything comes in carcass form,” Matt said. “When I did my apprenticeship I didn’t really know any other way.”

“We buy local beef. That’s been a point of difference.”

The beef is grown by the Inchbold family on a farm near Yarrowonga and processed at Gathercole’s Wangaratta Abattoir. Matt and his apprentices break the carcasses down at the shop.

Soon they will begin selling lamb grown locally on a farm operated by Matt’s father and uncle, and slaughtered at Gathercoles.

“We get a lot of repeat tourists because we do a lot of local produce,” Matt said. “We get people that want to come here and taste the region.” Matt is proud of the bacon, ham, cabana and pressed meat he makes at the shop.



### Starting from scratch

Matt and Bronwen Nagle learned the hard way that it’s not easy to start a butcher shop. They are pleased with how far they have come in three years and happily shared these tips:

- Do thorough research about compliance and seek advice from as many butchers as you can.
- Ask other butchers to recommend which industry associations you should join.
- Establish your point of difference. (They chose two – off-the-hook meats and ready-made meals.)
- If your display cabinet is visible from the front window, display products likely to entice customers through the door, and regularly add new products to the cabinet.
- Focus on customer service. Get to know them on a first-name basis as soon as possible.
- Use Facebook to increase exposure, connect with customers and communicate with them.
- Join a Facebook group where fellow-butchers are willing to share information and answer questions.

Because they break down their own meat, it is usually easy to rustle up whichever cut has been made popular by the most recent episode of *MasterChef*.

Convenience meats are also big sellers: sausages with natural skin, stir-fries with crisp fresh vegetables; and their award-winning hamburgers.

Wellingtons, pinwheels and pastry parcels with various fillings are displayed prominently in the cabinet, ready to catch the eye of customers who are rushing at the end of a busy day.

A simple philosophy influences their product range. “The things that sell, you’ve got to have more of,” Matt said. “We



*Bacon, ham and pressed meat made on the premises.*

just rotate through a few different other options and see which ones start to take off.”

## Ready-made

Cooked, ready-made meals account for about 30 percent of retail sales, so Matt and Bronwen believe it is worth the extra paperwork and compliance procedures, including the four annual audits. “It’s not so bad for us now,” said Matt who has grown confident about compliance. “We know what to expect.”

For customers, buying the ready-made meals isn’t always just about saving time. They also like Bronwen’s home-style cooking which includes large portions of vegetables.

Bronwen loves having access to quality fresh meat for her ready-made meals. And Matt finds it helpful that Bronwen can cook up products from the display cabinet that are selling too slowly.

The menu changes from day-to-day. The most popular ready-made meals are the chicken pies, beef lasagnes, lamb shanks, lambs fry and bacon, and parmigianas – all cooked, packaged and ready to be reheated at the customers’ homes.

Other meals include vegetable pies, beef pies, sausage rolls, curried sausages, a range of pasta dishes, vol au vents, salmon patties, scalloped potatoes, roast packs and quiches.

Bronwen’s vegetable packs contain potatoes, pumpkin, carrots, peas and corn.

Occasionally Bronwen promotes a ‘roast day’ on Facebook. She invite customers to pick out a roast from their display cabinet. “We will charge them for that roast and then we’ll cook it for free.” The meat is roasted and ready for them to collect after work. “And they can get roast vegies for an extra \$3 and a tub of gravy for \$3 as well.”



*Busy customers buy wellingtons, pastry parcels and pinwheels on their way home from work.*



*Bronwen’s home-style ready-made meals offer take-home convenience without fast-food guilt.*

Bronwen also provides catering from the shop. A typical catering client wants meat roasted and sliced, ready to reheat; with salads and perhaps scalloped potatoes.

Rush hour at Nagle’s Off the Hook is from 3pm until they close at 6pm. Matt knows many butchers who open by 6am, but he waits until 7am. “You serve more customers between five and six in the afternoon than what you will between six and seven in the morning.

“Our main competition, like any butcher, would be the supermarket,” Matt said. He predicts supermarkets will continue a trend towards pre-packaged meats, and said this will present proactive butchers with an opportunity to win back customers who prefer fresh local meat. ■

# Argus business expansion puts customers first

For more than 20 years, Argus has been cementing its reputation as a premier provider of high quality, specialist hand tools for the meat and food processing industry in Australia. Now, Argus is looking to the future and expanding its presence to better meet the needs of its customers.

Australian country manager Glen Bramley knows the value of personalised service.

It's about knowing your customers, knowing your industry and having a genuine commitment to finding solutions.

"We're not here to just sell stuff," he said.

"We try to be as solution-based as we can; our philosophy is that you can't have a one size fits all approach, because the queries and needs of our customers are so varied."

For more than 10 years, Glen has been a key player for Argus, a company that provides specialist hand tools and equipment for a variety of tasks in the meat and food processing industry.

Knives, sharpening tools, food processing equipment, contamination solutions, thermometers and even data loggers are some of the many offerings Argus provides, and the company has been a top player in the New Zealand industry for decades.

While it has always had a presence in Australia, the recent appointment of general manager Mark Prenter has come with some fresh vision for the company and the past 12 months have been busy with several staff appointments, as Argus raises its profile in the Australian market.

"Argus was always strong and reputable in New Zealand, but there was no reason we couldn't have the same level of presence in Australia," Mark said. "Personal responsibility for

making sure our service is specially catered to every one of our clients will always be a part of the Argus promise."

Since then, staff numbers in Australia have doubled and Glen was appointed to the position of country manager.

"I'm privileged to meet and work with such a wide and varied range of people who all have an interesting story to tell and issues to solve," Glen said.

That philosophy is not just something unique to Glen's working style, it's something every person at Argus believes in.

"When we come to work in the mornings, it's not just because we're here to do a job. I would say everyone realises the importance of company culture, and it's something we're all on board with," Glen said.

"They're all pretty committed – no one turns off their phone at 5pm."

Glen was a butcher for several years, before he trained as a meat inspector, and then moved into a sales role. For the other Australian team members, it's a similar story.

Sales managers Glynn Meehan and Geoff Stone both started out as butchers, before eventually making their way to Argus, and Australasian technical sales manager Shane Sumpter has many years' experience as a service technician in the meat processing industry, before he moved into a sales role.

*Glen Bramley,  
Australia country  
manager and  
regional sales  
manager for New  
South Wales.*



*Glynn Meehan,  
regional sales  
manager,  
Queensland.*



*Geoff Stone,  
regional sales  
manager, Victoria,  
Tasmania,  
Southern and  
Western Australia.*



Geoff has 15 years specialist experience in fresh red meat packaging in the meat and food processing industry, Shane has worked in both automotive and meat processing technical areas and Glynn has been a butcher for more than 20 years.

The team is also supported by Silvia Reeves, who was recently appointed as category manager. Armed with more than 10 years' buying and product management experience behind her, Silvia is a key player in Argus' expansion into the Australian market.

Though the team may seem small, there is might in their numbers and between the five of them, their

*Shane  
Sumpter,  
Australasian  
technical sales  
manager.*



experience allows them to cover all bases of their customers' needs.

A mix of New Zealand-made hand tools and distribution of a myriad of local and international brands make Argus the first port of call for industry needs.

Joining the ranks of its own specialist hand tools are exclusive brands such as Nock, Reich, Injectstar and Cambrian. Argus' offerings ensure customer choice remains paramount.

Continually striving to meet customer needs, Argus is in the process of introducing new technology from international suppliers. A new range of premium knife sharpening equipment is currently in development. ■



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## Keeping the workplace drug free

When a Melbourne Abattoir decided to implement a program of Workplace drug and alcohol testing, they approached Pathtech because of its ability to support an in-house testing program. They soon realised that Pathtech's full end-to-end approach offered much more. Pathtech subsequently provided the company with assistance in the development of a comprehensive drug and alcohol testing policy, guidance on achieving independent accreditation, training in the proper use of testing devices, as well as the testing units themselves – Breathalysers and DrugWipe devices for saliva based drug testing.

From a family-owned butchery to a full-scale meat processing enterprise, this large abattoir located in Melbourne's west handles every aspect in the chain – from slaughter to transport of the 10,000 finished units handled per day. The company employs between 350-400 staff operating a single shift, which commences around 4:00am and runs until production is complete.

Meat processing involves a number of high-risk duties and hazardous equipment, so safety is paramount in this

environment. With a focus on continual improvement, the company reviews procedures and processes regularly to ensure the highest possible production and safety standards are met.

It was recently decided to implement a formalised workplace drug and alcohol testing regime and the OH&S and Risk Manager was charged with determining the best path for the development and execution of both policy and program.

Outsourcing the process to a specialist service provider was initially considered but, once it was discovered that it was possible to undergo training and attain the necessary accreditation to conduct the process in-house, it became the obvious choice.

"Bringing the process in-house was logical," says the company's representative, "We operate as a lean business, so we aim to maximise efficiencies where and when possible. "Besides the obvious cost-benefits, undertaking our own testing gives us much more control over the process. It's also more responsive – in the event of a safety incident or if there

is suspicion that an employee may under the influence, we can act immediately. The fact that testing is carried out by a trusted and familiar face also makes it less daunting,” he says.

Pathtech was selected to assist with the process from the development stage.

“We did have a general policy in place and staff were always aware that this was the case, but we never really put it into practice. Pathtech provided a lot of guidance in this area and helped us develop a fully-fledged policy, which incorporates everything from the testing procedures through to next steps in the event of a positive result. Everything is very clearly defined, there are no grey areas and everybody knows where they stand as a result,” says the representative.

Testing will be conducted on a random basis across the entire staff, with the aim to test at least once a month. “It’s our intention to make it truly random,” says the representative, “so it may occur on two consecutive days, or weeks apart. We’ll also obviously test the event of a safety incident, a near miss or suspicion of use.”

The company opted for saliva testing as the preferred method after considering other options. “There are so many

reasons for choosing saliva testing,” explains the company’s rep, “not the least of which is the fluid handling aspect.”

There are also privacy issues – we wanted to avoid making it uncomfortable for our team. Using the saliva devices is quick and simple and there are no additional requirements, such as taking temperature readings or matching results to pH cards.

“The other important factor is detection times. My understanding is that the window using urine testing is much wider. I only need to ensure everyone on the team is fit for work at any given time. I’m not interested in delving into the private lives of our employees and what they do on the weekend, I just want to provide a safe workplace and meet the company’s obligations,” he says.

“Pathtech guided us from beginning to end; they help us develop the policy, provided substantial training in the use of the devices and referred us to the Drug & Alcohol Institute for accreditation. The whole process was extremely simple. The upshot is a program that not only ensures the safety of our workers and helps minimise avoidable workplace accidents, but also guarantees that there will be no issues from a legal defensibility point of view. We couldn’t be happier with the outcome,” he says. ■

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

Last issues winners see page 5

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