

AUSTRALIAN MeatNews

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AMIC Sausage King returns
How Terry Nolan sees it
Microabattoirs filling a niche



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From the team at
D.R. Johnston

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APL are supporting butchers and the supply chain that pork is part of celebrations to reconnect with family and friends.

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Win a copy of *An Obsession with Ham, the Hindquarter*.
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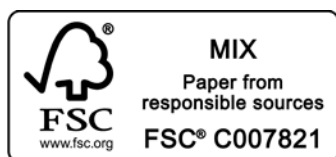
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Steelworks begin as new Thomas Foods plant takes shape

Construction of Thomas Foods International's new meat processing plant in South Australia has reached a new milestone.

The first above-ground building works have begun with a centrepiece of the new flagship facility now starting to take shape. Measuring 10-storeys high, the automated packaging building is being erected as part of more than 1700 tonnes of steelworks earmarked for the development.

As the highest structure to be located on site, the packaging building will have capacity to store 40,000 cartons of frozen and chilled meat products within the storage and retrieval system, and will feature the latest in automation and robotics technology.

It is a key component of the world-class facility being built on the once empty paddock located approximately 10km outside of the Murray Bridge town centre.

Stage One of the development will include:

- Beef processing and animal handling facilities
- Beef boning room with automated packaging technology
- Stockyards
- Employee amenities and administration facilities
- Wastewater treatment plant
- Fully automated carton chilling, freezing and storage systems
- Electrical, refrigeration and boiler systems to the highest energy efficiency standards

Subsequent stages of the development will include the addition of smallstock (sheep and lamb) processing facilities and further expansion of the beef facilities. The new facility has been designed to service the global operations of Thomas Foods International for decades to come and replaces the company's original plant which was destroyed by fire in January 2018.

Thomas Foods International Group Engineering Manager Nekta Nicolaou said the level of visible construction activity on site will rise markedly over coming months. "Up until now, much of the activity on site has been focussed on initial earthworks and the pouring of concrete footings and foundations," Mr Nicolaou said.

"Two large lagoons have also been excavated for our wastewater treatment plant. In total 180,000 cubic metres of soil is being moved around within the site as part of levelling earthworks, avoiding the need to import or export additional amounts. "Approximately 13,500 cubic metres of concrete is being laid and from this solid base the plant is beginning to emerge from the ground up. It's now when you can start to picture the full magnitude of this build and it's exciting to see. "This site will become a hive of activity over the months ahead as the build continues to progress as planned."

Thomas Foods International, Australia's largest 100% family owned meat processing company, is working closely with other family companies as part of the project. This includes BADGE, South Australia's largest private commercial contractor and one of Australia's largest privately-owned builders, which has been engaged for the design and construction of Stage One. South Australian family owned business Ahrens is also supplying steel for the project.

Construction and commissioning of Stage One is expected to be a 24-month process with the build expected to be finished late 2022. Thomas Foods International has begun recruitment for management roles for the Murray Bridge operations with processing positions is expected to begin in 2022. ■

Global Meat Alliance builds industry narrative

An initiative designed to better connect the global fragmented meat and livestock industry has taken off, with solid foundations here in Australia. The Global Meat Alliance (GMA) was founded in 2020 by Ashley Gray, who is based in Sydney, and Laura Ryan from the UK. Both young women have backgrounds in leading global programmes for the meat industry and, formed a partnership based upon shared frustrations in the lack of sharing insights when it came to international work.

“Our industry is faced with many questions about where we sit – nutritionally, environmentally, economically, culturally, sustainably. Universally, there isn’t one voice that explains where our sector fits among all these things.

“If we can build a global narrative and ensure our voice is heard, is understood and is accepted, we can each build our own local stories and our own points of differentiation underpinned by a united voice,” says Gray.

GMA was formed as a direct result of COVID, when levy boards across the globe all faced a shared challenge in uncharted territory. By linking the groups together and bringing in outside experts at pace, the organisations were able to lean on one another to test ideas, learn from one another’s mistakes and lift strategies that worked well.

It proved to be a proof of concept for ongoing pro-active collaboration to tackle the enduring and future issues affecting the global meat and livestock sector. To achieve this, GMA has developed an annual portfolio of activity centred

around sharing insight and best practice, networking and building collaborative resources. Over the last six months, GMA were also tasked with targeted work around the United Nations Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) as organisations pursued simplified information and support engaging in key conversations.

As part of this work, GMA crafted a targeted pre-competitive Activation Kit for industry to leverage and held several international sessions including a UNFSS Global Dialogue, with the discussion and solutions recorded and submitted to the United Nations.

This work has been made possible by several strategic partners including Meat & Livestock Australia and Australian Pork Ltd, both integral partners in the evolution of the Alliance. The key to all GMA activity is in the breadth of its network and therefore, the funding kindly contributed by partners enable the activity to be open to all in the global meat & livestock sector, each bringing further insight and amplification.

Joining MLA and APL as strategic partners are: British Meat Processors Association, ABP Food Group, Dunbia, Hilton Food Group, Pilgrim’s Pride UK, the National Pork Board (US), Quality Meat Scotland, AHDB, Beef + Lamb New Zealand Inc, Canadian Cattlemen’s Association, Hybu Cig Cymru – Meat Promotion Wales, the International Meat Trade Association, Livestock & Meat Commission Northern Ireland and New Zealand Pork.

For more information, please visit globalmeatalliance.org ■

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The Festive Season is Coming

Get Your Orders in Now!



With summer and the festive season around the corner, some things don't change – people visiting their favourite local butcher, and family and friends getting together to celebrate the year that has been.

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What's on Your Christmas List?

Product Category	Description
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Netting & Twine	White, Red & White
Vacuum Bags	All Sizes to Suit
Salt	Flossy, Fine, Coarse
Twine	Polyester & Cotton
Ham Shrink	Bags Printed 100um Full & Half
Nally Tubs & Crates	All Sizes & Colours
Stuffing Mix	Plain & Flavoured



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Xmas

Burger backflip sees plant-patties bomb

A recent MLA taste test has revealed that plant-based burgers scored well-below meat-based varieties. Prime beef patties, surprisingly, were also-rans.

The researchers from Polkinghorne Pty Ltd used prime beef, blended beef and plant-based burgers to compare responses from untrained taste testers.

The testers rated blended beef patties as the best-tasting, while plant-based burgers bombed; just over half of the taste-testers rating them as unsatisfactory. The 100% beef patties were rated above plant-based products and slightly below the beef blends.

Researchers Holly Cuthbertson, Rod Polkinghorne, Garth Tarr and Ray Watson suggested that the prime beef burgers might have been overcooked due to the standardised cooking times. The message for BBQ chefs could be to check burger content and avoid one-size-fits-all timing.

Overall, the study highlighted the quirky burger backflip of today's diners. Butchers traditionally use fillers and vegetables to produce a cheaper burger. However, plant-based burgers now command two to six times the price of a traditional low-end burger.

And what are the factors pushing up the price? "A claimed beef-like taste and the absence of actual meat."

The researchers found that consumers had a strong adverse reaction when shown the ingredient lists of alternative proteins.

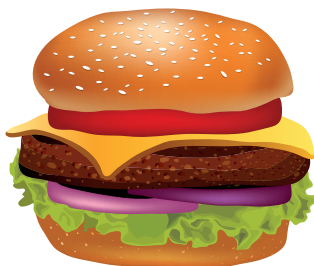
"Consumers preferred products that had the least number of ingredients listed and ones that appeared natural and could be easily understood. Consumers tended to avoid the products with long and confusing ingredient lists, which is commonly the case with plant-based products or products with a lot of fillers."

The researchers continued: "Shoppers do not understand the highly processed nature of alternative proteins. It appears that consumers currently relate vegetable-based product with natural, minimally processed and environmentally friendly claims. These are not substantiated by fact."

The report added: "Interestingly, the plant-based alternatives actually contained higher percentages of total fat than all beef burgers excluding the Coles Beef Burgers, which contained fillers."

Flavour was the most important predictor of eating quality in burger products, the research found.

One plant-based burger claimed beef-like properties such as marbling, juiciness and tenderness. "This product actually claims to be 'meatier' than ever, implying to the consumer that they can get all the benefits of a beef burger through this guilt-free plant-based alternative," the researchers reported.



"The study demonstrates that beef is currently in a favourable position being preferred by 78% of the project consumers and is consistent across the country and city regions.

At 3%, plant-based protein was the least-preferred. Nearly three-quarters of the testers indicated they were largely unlikely to purchase plant-based protein products. More than one-third (37%) said they would never buy them and 34% said it was unlikely. Only 2% of consumers said they would definitely purchase plant-based alternative proteins.

"Beef is currently very well placed as a preferred and trusted protein... Alternative protein products offer lower sensory satisfaction," the researchers reported. ■

The Trial

The taste test pitted six products against each other and included two non-meat offerings, two beef/veg blends, one high beef content and a 'benchmark' 100% beef patty with no additives. The test patties were standardised for size and weight (60gm).

The products chosen for the study were:

- Beyond Burger – (Plant-based protein), Coles
- NextGen2 Burger – (Plant-based protein), Woolworths
- Type A Mince Prototype – (Blended beef and vegetable)
- Beef BBQ Burgers – (fillers), Coles
- 85VL Mince – (no additives), similar to Coles or Woolworths mince
- Cleaver's Chuck and Brisket Burger – (seasoning and sautéed onions), Coles
- 95VL Mince, similar to Coles or Woolworths lean mince

Cleaver's burger (44%) and the 85VL mince burger (33%) were the highest-ranked. The least-chosen products were the Beyond Burger and Next Gen (each 3%) followed by the Coles beef burger (5%).

Taste testing was conducted at Deepwater, NSW representing a country demographic, and Helensburgh, NSW representing an outer urban Sydney demographic. There were 60 consumers participating in each, aged 18 to 70.

Asked about their willingness to pay, the trial found that, overall, consumers were willing to pay on average \$4.54 for 500g of unsatisfactory burger product, \$11.23 for a good everyday offering, \$16.05 for better-than-everyday and \$21.69 for a premium product.

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	Tropical Packaging	QLD/Garbutt
Complete Butchers Supplies	VIC	(03) 9775 0036 - ext. 1
Total Butchers Supplies	NSW/ACT	(02) 9557 7764
MBLSA	SA	(08) 8417 6000 - ext. 1
MBLWA	WA	(08) 9334 9634



Woolworths launches Dry Aged Pork

Today Woolworths Supermarkets announce a retailer first for pork in the Australian market. A new range of dry aged pork products will be featured in store and online across New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia.

Up until now dry ageing pork has been a method used almost exclusively in pioneering restaurants and butcheries. But now customers can tap into the unique dining experience at home with Borrowdale dry aged pork loin and scotch steaks at Woolworths.



Managing Director of Arcadian Organic and Natural Meat Company Mack McGeechan, said it's all about the technique. "It was a process to find the best pork eating experience, utilising the best pork, using the best cuts, aging and processing to deliver on the plate every time," Mr McGeechan said.

Dry aged pork offers a full, rich flavour with exceptional tenderness. Borrowdale's delicate dry ageing method naturally tenderises the pork, locking in moisture and enhancing the flavour. The extraordinary combination of flavour and tenderness makes Borrowdale dry aged pork steaks ideal in a variety of dishes.

Australian Pork Limited's Chief Operating Officer Margo Andrae said it's a great example of Australia's progressive pork industry. "At Australian Pork we celebrate innovation within the pork industry, and today it is fantastic to see Borrowdale recognised by a national retailer such as Woolworths to hero a product that consumers will now have a chance to enjoy at home with loved ones," Ms Andrae said.

Borrowdale dry aged pork loin steak and dry aged pork scotch steak products will be available in selected Woolworths locations across New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia.

For recipe inspiration and handy hints and tricks for cooking pork, head to pork.com.au. ■

Work, Health and Safety wins

Three Queensland processors were honoured in October with major state awards recognising achievements in exporting and WHS.

Kilcoy Global Foods Australia was announced as the 2021 winner in the Agribusiness Food and Beverage Export award category in the state's annual Premier's Export Awards.

Toowoomba-based Mort & Co was named Queensland's regional exporter of the year.

Australian Country Choice won two categories in the Safe Work awards – honoured for the state's best response to COVID-19 and for overall WHS leadership.

Kilcoy and Mort & Co will represent their state in the National Export Awards hosted by AusTrade in Canberra in late November.

Kilcoy Global Foods Australian Division president Jiah Falcke said: "Despite the impact of COVID, we've still managed to grow our export base beyond our traditional key markets of South Korea, Japan and the US to secure emerging markets such as Indonesia, the Philippines and Taiwan ... Winning this export award is a credit to the dedication and commitment of our staff and the culture we have created."

Mort & Co chief executive Stephen O'Brien said the awards recognised the difficulties that COVID had presented to exporters. "Every exporter in the country has had to rethink the way they do business internationally, and for Mort & Co, it has meant a new level of innovation," he said.

Accepting the Work Safe awards, ACC's CEO Anthony Lee said: "It is times like this that we see the true character of corporations and ACC has set the benchmark for work health and safety while also maintaining our vital operations to supply important protein options for Australian families. This amazing effort is ongoing and we're not looking at a 'smart badge' system that will track the movement of every staff member throughout our Cannon Hill facility." ■

Winners August 2021 Find a Word



Congratulations to the winners and thank you to our sponsor BUNZL. Bunzl will contact all winners and make arrangements to deliver your prize.

Khabin 10inch Cimetar Steak Knife and 12 inch Steel
Denis Port, Marbled Meats, Bentleigh East, Vic

Khabin 6 inch Graton-edged Boning Knife
Lewis Varty, Dubbo Meat Centre, Dubbo NSW
Ken Simpson, My Butcher, Gympie Qld
Marty & Glenys McLeod, Manor Farm Meat Services, Salisbury East SA

Hasyimi Ahmad Azizan, Ikhwan Butcher Perth, Bentleigh WA
Ruan Peter, OBE Organic, Brisbane Qld

Award dinner draws crowds

By Susan Webster

The Queensland meat industry this month honoured its finest in a return to glittering pre-COVID style when 250 guests attended the Sausage King, ham and smallgoods state awards in early October.

The capacity crowd saw repeated triumphs for a multi-awarded Cairns business, a major win by a big Brisbane name and an industry veteran honoured.

The 2021 AMIC Queensland Industry Award Dinner had attracted the highest number of entries – according to AMIC state chair Michael James – totalling more than 1400 entrants across 14 categories.

“And we have to be congratulated that we survived this past year,” he added.

Clad in finery and fed free-range pork, barramundi and barley-fed Angus, the crowd rose to their feet to applaud the 2021 Industry Recognition Award recipient, Scott Glasser.

The former owner of Millmerran Meats was also a supply-chain champion with the Queensland Country Meat Processing Association, a group he chaired from 2010 to 2018.

The evening’s MC – former *Landline* reporter Peter Lewis noted that he and Scott had been boarders together at a Brisbane private secondary school. “And he’s done considerably more with his life than I!”

Responding to the award, Mr Glasser said: “AMIC is one of the greatest interest groups and you get value for money for your membership.”

Finalists and winners in this year’s awards included multiple awards to Edge Hill Meats which was also named top regional retailer, while Meat at Billy’s was crowned best metro retailer.

A dedication to training saw McAuliffe and Sons awarded the QCMPA Processor Excellence award while the Apprentice of the Year award went to Zac Kurowski, of The Paddock Queensland Pty Ltd in north Toowoomba.



Zac Kurowski (centre) Apprentice of the Year.
Photo: Rodney Green



Guests at the AMIC awards night. Photo: Rodney Green



Budd's Butchers were finalists in the regional retailer category.
Photo: Rodney Green

A job offer to become a wash-up boy at his local butcher shop led to a school-based apprenticeship and now Zac has big hopes to one day own his own butcher shop. “But in the short-term, I’d like to be manager here.” Does the current manager know of his ambitions? “Yes, he does!”

The evening’s festivities paused a moment to honour two industry champions lost during the year: Pat Nolan and Gary McPherson. Michael James announced that a major event to raise funds for brain cancer research would be held in Gary’s honour at Brisbane’s Norman Hotel in 2022. “By then we hope many of Gary’s interstate mates can come,” he added.

Two leaders of the Queensland meat industry used the AMIC industry dinner to show support for mates wrestling with tough times.

The crowded and chatty room grew still when Julian Waghorn – known as ‘Wagsy’ – shared an impromptu and personal account of his own battle with mental health.

The CEO of Australian Wholesale Meats, the evening’s major sponsor, spoke from the podium ... and from the heart.

“What I want to say is, if you’re feeling down, if you’re feeling not good, if you’re feeling like – you know – life’s tough ...

The full list of finalists and winners

Category	Gold	Silver	Bronze
Traditional Australian Beef Sausage	MBW on the Barbie – beef	Loveday's Quality Meats – Angus beef	The Butcher Shoppe – King Island grass-fed beef
Traditional Australian Pork Sausage	Edge Hill Butchery – Traditional Australian pork	Budd's Butchers – Pork sausage	Ashton's Butchery – Traditional Australian pork
Poultry	Meat at Billy's – Butter chicken	Edge Hill Butchery – Free-range chicken and pistachio	MBW on the Barbie – Chicken margarita
Lamb/open class	Budd's Butchers – Lamb, maple, mint and rosemary	Malones Butchery – Moroccan Lamb, preserved lemon and date	Peter Augustus Craft Butcher – Lamb, sweet potato and pinenut
Continental	Nelson Family Meats – Bratwurst	Pattemores Meats – Bratwurst	Jason's Quality Meats – Pork and fennel spicy Italian sausages
Gourmet/open class	Ashton's Butchery – Honey, beef and cheese	Edge Hill Butchery – Canadian maple and smoke bacon	Rode Meats – Pork, sun-dried tomato and basil with halloumi cheese.
Best butchers' beef burger	The Butchers Block Benowa – Texas 4385 beef burger	Bribie Road Butchery – Mild chilli, cheese and red pepper	Fair Dinkum Fresh Pty Ltd – Wagyu, maple and caramelised onion
Best butchers' gourmet burger	Loveday's Quality Meats – Lamb, halloumi and caramelised onion	Edge Hill Butchery – Wagyu beef and bourbon burger	MBW at Marian – Lamb, mint, rosemary and cheese
Leg on bone	Bargara Meats – Bone in Leg ham	Murrumba Downs Gourmet Meats – Leg ham	Schulte's Meat Tavern – Traditional wood-smoked leg ham
Boneless ham	Kawungan Quality Meats – Boneless leg ham	Sunvalley Fine Foods – Maple boneless leg ham	Murrumba Downs Gourmet Meats – Leg ham
Bacon rasher	Salm's Meats – Smoked bacon	Slade Point Meat Specialist – Long rasher bacon	Kuskey Country Meats – Traditional wood-smoked
Pre-cooked scalded sausage	Sunvalley Fine Foods – Cheese kransky	Paul Marsh Butcherries – Kransky	Queensland Country Meats – Chilli beerstick
Kabana	Murrumba Downs Gourmet Meats – Chickn, cheese and chilli	Queensland Country Meats – Honey and cheese	MBW wholesale and bulk – honey garlic
Jerky/biltong	Zac's Meats – Char sui pork	Ashton's Butchery – jerky	Bribie Road Butchery – Canadian maple and bacon

continued on page 12

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go and see somebody,” Wagsy said. “I was too long going to see somebody. They reckon I was undiagnosed for 20-25 years.”

Seeking help transformed him, he said. “It’s changed my life. It’s saved my marriage and, you know, I probably wouldn’t be here today... and that’s the honest truth.

“If you’ve got health insurance, you’ve got one time in your lifetime you’ve got the waiver – you don’t have the two months stand-down - you can go straight into hospital. The hardest thing is walking through the doors. The best thing is being on the other side of the doors.”

Now, he said: “I’ve never been so healthy. I’ve never felt so good. I’m energised. I’m driven and I can’t wait for the next 20 years. I’ve got a beautiful wife. I’ve got five beautiful kids, so... do it. Ask for help. It’s OK. Ask are you OK? Just go and get the help when you need it.”

Meanwhile, AMIC state chair Michael James stressed the need to keep an eye out for your mates. Mr James said.



*Finalists in the Kabana class, Queensland Country Meats – 2nd place (R), and MBW Wholesale, 3rd place (L).
Photo: Rodney Green*



*Regional Retailer of the Year, Edges Hill Butchery.
Photo: Rodney Green*



The Meat at Billy's team. Photo: Rodney Green



*Winners of the Leg on the bone Ham award 3rd place, Shulte's Meat Tavern (L) and 1st place, Bargara Meats (R).
Photo: Rodney Green*

“If there’s another butcher shop near you, drop in. Have a beer and see if they’re alright,” he said. “Together, this meat industry could be great.”

Apprentice of the Year finalists: Kasey Ward, Boodles Meats, Berserker; Lachlan Williams, Northport Meats, Toowoomba; Brett Ellis, Queensland Country Meats, Roma; Brodie Murray, Queensland Country Meats, Roma; Zac Kurowski, The Paddock Queensland, North Toowoomba; Naite Naumann, Uniplaza Meats, Toowoomba; Mitchell Hawes, Frohiles Meats, Yarraman and Kristy Daly, Arana Tender Cut Meats, Arana Hills.

Regional retailer of the year finalists: Boodles Meats, Berserker; Budd’s Butchers, Coolum Beach; Cross Custom Meats, Atherton; Edge Hill Butchery, Edge Hill; Kawungan Quality Meats, Hervey Bay; Parkhurst Quality Meats, Rockhampton and The Paddock Queensland Pty Ltd, North Toowoomba.

Metro retailer of the year finalists: Boocock’s Quality Meats, Birtinya; Meat at Billy’s, Ashgrove, Rosalie and Stafford; Rode Meats, Stafford Heights; The Butcher Shoppe, Cannon Hill and The Squealing Pig, Burpengary. ■

Stories stir the sales: expert

Small is beautiful – and could be the key to independent butchers winning more sales, according to an advocate of Australia's craft beer industry.

Keynote speaker at the AMIC dinner, Matt Kirkegaard said: "I think there are a lot of parallels between meat and beer and there's a lot that both industries can learn from each other and do to support each other."

Meat and beer and the lifestyles around them have always gone together, he said, and both industries face price-sensitive buyers – a situation that favours low-cost, large-scale corporates.

"If most lagers taste the same, so too do most steaks... at least to the average consumer," he said. "For the vast majority of consumers it's a just steak or a snag or a chop, as much as it's often just a beer," Matt said.

Matt Kirkegaard is the founder and publisher of Brews News and BeerMatt. He was named the inaugural Australian Beer Writer of the Year when he won Media Trophy at the 2014 Australian International Beer Awards.

He warned that buyer demand for highly adventurous offerings is limited. "I am certain that for every gourmand who thrills at the thought of a Sea Urchin and Yuzu sausage or wants to

take the challenge of a spicy sausage called "Eat at Your Own Risk", there are 10 who just want a sausage that tastes like a sausage that they can throw on a BBQ."

Price and convenience are two of the most powerful decision-drivers for shoppers, he said. "They are like gravity, the constant force weighing down upon any business. And in a modern economy, the consumer desire for cheap and easy rewards the biggest operators."

However, Matt suggested that small breweries (and meat retailers) have one advantage that they have only started to realise; they are small.

"And a growing pool of modern consumers wanting a deeper relationship with the products and services they buy," he added.

"I am convinced that when you walk into a small, local brewery on a weekend, less than 50 per cent of the people there are there for the beer," he said. "The successful craft breweries aren't just providing a different beer, they are providing an experience and an atmosphere." He said a growing number of consumers are showing "they want different, they want local, they want provenance and they want a genuine story".



Matt Kirkegaard

He added: "The beautiful thing about that is that the stories breweries tell about themselves are also a powerful advertisement for their local butcher, their local smallgoods maker and every other independent business trying to stand out from large, highly centralised competition.

"I think now is the time, when consumers are looking for the different, the special and the storied, that industries facing these same challenges can make a powerful statement about the value of what we do." ■

Snag-a-rama!

Romantic short stories, cheese, Rag show displays, photographs ... the things I've been asked to judge in the past now seem trivial compared to the challenge of being a judge in Queensland's Sausage King awards.

The AMIC's annual banger biff is a Very Serious Business. And you get to wear a white lab coat, which makes you an instant expert. And we got clipboards.

Roger Desailly, AMIC's state manager teamed me with sausage savants

Andrew Codd of Denco and AWM's Adam Lewis, both of whom clearly knew their sausage stuff ... and sausage stuffing.

They showed me how to look for overstuffed and understuffed offerings: the spillers and the saggy snags. We judged at mid-point cooking for colouration then after further grilling, tested for texture and flavour.



Reporter Sue Webster with Denco's Andrew Codd (centre) and AWM's Adam Lewis – both of them very snag-smart.

We sniffed, we chewed, we savoured and we filled in the scorecards. It was the most legal fun I've had in a long time. ■

AMIC hosts champions of innovation

Artificial intelligence, seaweed feed and how COVID has changed meat retailing were served up with breakfast at the inaugural Innovation Muster staged by the Queensland AMIC branch in October.

The Brisbane event attracted 140 guests including Senator Susan McDonald, suppliers and representatives of the meat industry from across the state.

Kilcoy Global Foods chief executive Dean Goode called for greater collaboration across the industry. "In this room I see no competitors," he said. "For too long the industry we've been working out have to save five cents."

He predicted a shift away from transactional to relationship-driven retailing. "The only way we are going to go forward is to create margin for our product. We've got to increase the market and take people on a journey.

"If you just want to grab their cash and shove it in your pocket, you're going to lose it," he said.

"Prices should be the last point of any consideration. It's not the cost but the relationship that matters. I can't just continue to take home a t-bone. I want to have an experience."

Meanwhile, a pioneer of artificial intelligence (AI) technology praised the meat industry involvement in regional Australia.

Country meatworks are often the high points of AI technology in the bush, according to a leading digital information expert.

Dr Sue Keay, CEO of the Queensland AI Hub told the AMIC Innovation Muster breakfast: "Meatworks are usually the leaders in AI in regional areas. They are doing a fantastic job, but there is room for improvement."



Kilcoy Global Foods chief executive Dean Goode addressing the AMIC breakfast.

She noted Australian-developed digital ID systems for livestock. "We're getting a point where these technologies are becoming smaller, lighter, more powerful, more energy-efficient and more robust, the cost-point is coming down in price and we are going to be able to put sensors just about on everything.

"We need to play to these strengths. It is an area where Australia is leading the world."

Future-gazing, she described integrated systems processing information on-site and transferring the data to a satellite, reducing the need for nodal connectivity. "This really is remarkable and our ability to minituarise all this so it can be used in smaller and smaller devices is really getting to be exceptional – it's an area where Australia is leading the world."

She also predicted "conversion of everyday equipment into smart equipment "rather than off-the-shelf standardised widgets or technologies "In terms of where I think meat industry innovation might occur, I was thinking about how a lot of these things are point solutions ... it's about how you can look at



Sen. Susan McDonald was a keynote speaker at the AMIC Innovation Muster breakfast.

optimising the whole system," she said.

Dr Keay, formerly Research Director for Cyber-Physical Systems at CSIRO's Data61, was responsible for setting up the world's first robotic vision research centre.

She was followed onto the podium by Eve Faulkner from FutureFeed, the company developed out of CSIRO research into methane-inhibiting feed derived from seaweed. The industry is projecting the national harvest of the asparagopsis seaweed will grow from 100m tonne in 2025 to 1bn over the next 20 years, she said.

"It could be worked into carbon accounting," she said, adding that early research into feedlot cattle will now be extended into open-grazing herds.

Research partner Paul Gibson, research manager at Australian Country Choice, said early results indicated no concerns over residue in the meat or edible offal.

The breakfast event was originally planned to coincide with Ekka in August, but had to be rescheduled due to COVID-19. ■

New generation, new eyes

By Stephanie Flynn

As a new generation of butchers rises through the ranks to dominate the industry, they are bringing new eyes and new approaches to traditional meat retailing and, of course, technology features in a big way.

Meet Dale Newberry, a guitar-playing, fifth generation butcher who is taking the Queensland town of Hervey Bay and its regions by storm with his new approach to marketing his butcher shop, establishing his own YouTube Channel cooking show and expanding into ready-to-go meals to rival the likes of 'Hello Fresh' and 'Marley Spoon'.

After doing his apprenticeship in Brisbane, following in the footsteps of his forefathers, Dale moved to manage shops in the regional town of Bundaberg not far from where his grandfather had once owned a butcher shop and slaughterhouse in Kin Kin.

Dale had intended his move to regional Queensland from the city to be a short term one, but he joined a band playing lead guitar and has not left since, cementing his commitment to regional life by buying his first shop, Kawungan Quality Meats, from his parents in Hervey Bay some 18 months ago.

At 42, Dale has seen the industry change dramatically since he started in 1993 and he foresees even bigger changes ahead as technology is embraced by retail butchers and customer demands change to encompass environmental concerns, the safety and provenance of the food they consume and 'buying local' is a priority not merely a trend.

"The industry, since I started out, has turned into an artisan trade, very different from the early days when I remember the response from a girl at school was 'yuk, you are going to be a butcher!', and it is as an artisan trade that we guide the growth and development of this store," Dale said.

"Meat is now an expensive product, whereas once you would load up a barbeque with steaks, sausages and burgers, today because of the price you cook one good quality steak and a couple of gourmet sausages and serve with a range of other side dishes to make up the meal.

"It is a really good quality product, people want to know where it is from, if it is locally grown, what the animals are fed and, if you do not have that information for customers, you are in trouble," he said.

Observing that Hervey Bay was a town in the phase of a growth resurgence, Dale and his wife, Fiona, saw an opportunity to expand the store's presence when they bought it, taking the glass half full rather than the glass half empty approach by immediately setting up an online website which they thought might be a success in time.

"Every now and then we would get one order and we thought we were Amazon, so it was a bit of a giggle at first," Dale said.



Fiona and Dale Newberry are using technology in a big way to take retail butchering in a whole new direction

"Then, COVID-19 hit and on one day we got 76 online orders, we ended up having to put a second delivery truck on just to keep up with the orders, now I treat it as a second butcher shop as it continues to take many orders, probably a 50/50 split between home delivery and 'click and collect' but the custom through the website continues to grow to this day," he said.

According to Dale, another boon of the COVID-19 pandemic has been the internal migration boom which has seen Hervey Bay burst forth with new housing estates being built and the influx of new residents all adding to the phenomenal growth both his physical store and his online store are experiencing.

Dale stresses the importance of knowing the segments within the market in which the business operates before gearing-up for expansion in terms of product offerings for both physical stores and online stores.

Observing that much of the population growth has come from people leaving the cities, he noted that meant higher expectations of customers around quality in terms of product and presentation, technology use and buying habits centred on meals rather than simply food.

As well, he noted that Hervey Bay has a large and growing ageing population which meant a massive market for pre-prepared meals and delivery.

"When we were planning for expansion, we discovered that it is not just an ageing population and population growth that comprised the market, there are also shift workers as well as truck drivers who pass through and have ovens in their trucks," Dale said.

"Hervey Bay also gets a lot of tourists coming through who are going to Fraser Island and the 'winter people' those with caravans heading north for the season as well as those who come to stay for the season from colder southern climates.

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Cryovac packs for tourists as well as heat and serve meals target tourists and locals alike at Kawungan Quality Meats

“Knowing all these segments exist in our market has enabled us to assess the potential for expanding into ready-to-go meals which has required considerable capital investment and it also gives us the guidance for marketing online,” he said.

Dale has now expanded his products to include salads, eggs, pasta, spices and all the ingredients required for the whole meal which he says is aimed at increasing the spend per customer both in store and online.

He currently employs a staff of nine, including chefs who create the meals and recipes and has just purchased a commercial kitchen to enable all the meal preparation that is required.

“I think it is the future, if you look at Marley Spoon or Hello Fresh to you can see how demand for meals is growing rapidly,” Dale said.

“That is our aim to package products in three meals week and in that package is everything you need, the recipe cards, the ingredients, the sauce and the meat of course.

“We are redoing the whole website now, customers will be able to go to a recipe, it will have all the ingredients for that recipe, and they can click on that recipe and select the ‘All’ button and we will supply every ingredient required,” he said.

Before going headlong into expansion, Dale is keen to stress the importance of ensuring the supply side of the operations is strong and secure and that product supply is consistent both in terms of availability and quality.

In setting up his suppliers, Dale has ensured that he ‘has a story to tell’ about the quality, locality, traceability, and provenance of the entire meat supply chain as well as the environmental integrity of the production systems of his suppliers.

He predominantly uses Bass Strait Beef or Cape Grim Beef from Tasmania or John Dee grain-fed beef and Beta Pork through local processor and wholesaler, Biggenden in Queensland’s north Burnett region.

“We have been selling these products for a long time and consistently getting good results in terms of both quality and supply,” Dale said.

“The Bronson family, who own Biggenden, has ensured that it is a 100 percent carbon neutral plant, they use the waste products of pigs to run the facility and the same can be said for all the producers who are really onto the whole environmental story.

“We should be proud of the Australian industry they have been proactive and driven the change to environmentally and welfare sound practices ahead of consumer demand.

“While the carbon footprint of our supply in terms of the distance travelled is higher, the producers are really geared up to these issues, we sell the story of their practices, and it overcomes any customer concern regarding environmental and welfare issues,” he said.

According to Dale, managing and marketing the website is a major task and very important to success online.

He has ensured that the website design company trained him how to maintain it and manage it which is a major way of maintaining costs and ensuring internal capability of content renewal.

Dale established a VIP customer membership on the site who receive emails regularly with special offers, vouchers and exclusive access to premium products such as his recent acquisition of a limited supply of Japanese full-blood Wagyu fillet priced at over \$200 a kilo.

Through the website Dale also targets tourists by running specials on cryovac packed portions suitable for trips in caravans or camping as well as healthy meals for on-the-go truckies which can be cooked in their onboard ovens, and the orders come in thick and fast.

He also runs a Facebook page in association with his website through which he ensures he makes personal contact with those members, answers any questions straight away and loads video cooking shows also linked to his own YouTube channel.

He has a film crew come in once every six weeks or so to film four cooking shows which feature demonstrations of the recipes his chefs design as well as guidance on the best ways of cooking various meat cuts. The shows are also broadcast on screen within his physical store.

“It is really good when you have found your market and how to communicate effectively with them,” Dale said.

“I believe you have to get full-on into the technology and its benefits to make the most of retail butchering these days as the customers are also all into it.

“Expanding your product range into both into meals and adding grocery items is a way of getting some of the customer spend from the supermarkets through the butcher store instead, and it has been a very successful experience for us,” Dale said. ■



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First store brings lessons

By Stephanie Flynn

Although finishing his apprenticeship in 1993 in Tenant Creek in the Northern Territory and working for other retail butchers across Queensland since, Rhys Searle has only just entered the fray as the owner of his first store with partner Peta Slocombe.

The pair own and run Maryborough Gourmet Meats in the main shopping centre of the town south of Queensland's Hervey Bay and which, like other areas of the state's south east, is growing rapidly.

Rhys and Peta have found some challenges expected and unexpected, in the delicate balance of running a store within a shopping centre environment and outside the doors of a major supermarket.

Running a seven day a week business under the terms required by a major shopping centre while raising a young family and not encumbering themselves with high debt levels are among the challenges they have encountered.

The benefits they have discovered include the high foot-traffic conferred



Peta Slocombe and Rhys Searle have discovered both challenges and benefits in running a retail butcher store in a major shopping centre.

by being within a shopping centre and the opportunity to differentiate their product range, through creative value-added lines, from that offered by the supermarket opposite.

"Under the terms of our lease with the shopping centre, we can only close four days a year, which means that Peta and I need to take our days off

separately and also that we need a lot of family support to cater for our young family, given we do not get holidays," Rhys said.

"Also restricting is the inability to expand the store size within a shopping centre, something one could do in a stand-alone store.

"The rent within a shopping centre is very high and, added to that, on the supply side, the price of quality beef is very high, we use gold standard quality, so it is walking a tight rope to maintain and build a profitable business," he said.

Peta stepped out of her career in childcare when they bought the business two and a half years ago to take on the administration, store presentation and the development of value-added lines.

It is a career change made possible by the support of parents, with Rhys's mother co-located on the same property and her own parents nearby, who help with the day-to-day care of their two young daughters.

"It is a lovely change working with adults and, as young people, having our own business gives us the



Maryborough Gourmet Meats uses quality and value-added lines to differentiate their range from the major supermarket at the door and take advantage of the high foot traffic offered by their location.

opportunity to potentially get ahead in life even though it may take working long hours, seven days a week," Peta said.

"It has also allowed me to be creative by tackling the value-added lines which have come to be one of our main advantages over the meat items sold in the supermarket," she said.

Peta makes a range of pastry products, 'Tucker Bags', in which she has developed five different fillings such as chicken with cream, bacon and cheese, or chicken with garlic and mushrooms as well as beef wellingtons with a filling of rump steak, bacon, shallots in a hickory marinade.

The range is very popular especially with the older generations as heat and serve meals.

It has taken two and a half years for Rhys and Peta to see the light of increased customer numbers and turnover, to the point where they now employ a qualified butcher, Anthony Buiatti and have taken on a young female apprentice, Shanae Outhwaite, now in her third year whom they hope will stay with their business on completion of her training.

Rhys believes that a cornerstone of their success is the quality of the product they carry compared to the budget ranges available in the supermarket.

"It is important to me to focus on quality, only MSA graded-beef as well as locally produced product and to that end we source through Biggenden Meatworks who carry the Bottle Tree Beef brand which is all produced by local farmers as well as the John Dee Gold Label brand for its highly marbled beef, these high-end products sell very well," Rhys said.

"While it has taken us a while to see the light, it is important in our view not to over commit to things that you cannot afford by going into debt to build a business, we only had a small amount of capital to start out and are happy now that we can see a strong future ahead by having taking the slow-growth approach," he said. ■

Australian Country Choice – China suspension

Australia's largest vertically integrated beef company, Queensland beef processor Australian Country Choice (ACC), has been advised by the Federal Government's Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment's (DAWE) Export Meat Program team that its licence to process and export to China has been suspended, as of 18 October.

The reasons provided to DAWE from Chinese authorities was for frozen product received in China that failed a random sampling test for chloramphenicol on beef products inspected at the entry port of Ningbo.



ACC CEO Anthony Lee

Random product testing that could identify this drug is also conducted at other ports of entry to the EU, Korea and Japan, among others. DAWE has advised ACC that it has not received any recent advice of detections from import agencies in these markets. The Export Meat Program staff at DAWE have advised ACC that they will, as standard practice, make a request to China's General Administrations of Customs China for a second or confirmatory test. The detected substance is not prescribed for use in cattle in Australia. It is a drug which may be used to treat bacterial infections in dogs and, in some cases, under veterinary care for off-label use in horses. While the beef product that failed the test was not ACC'S, nor from ACC livestock or feedlots, it was toll-processed on behalf of a branded non-packer export customer, and exported under ACC's establishment 1620 licence. Given the supply chain processes were beyond ACC's control, it is clearly a huge disappointment and major disruption to its business and its customers' branded programs into China. In the absence of a China licence, the company will now focus on alternative markets.

ACC will continue to work closely with DAWE to search for the possibility of a root cause, to ensure the supply chain integrity of product and processes meets all import country requirements. ■

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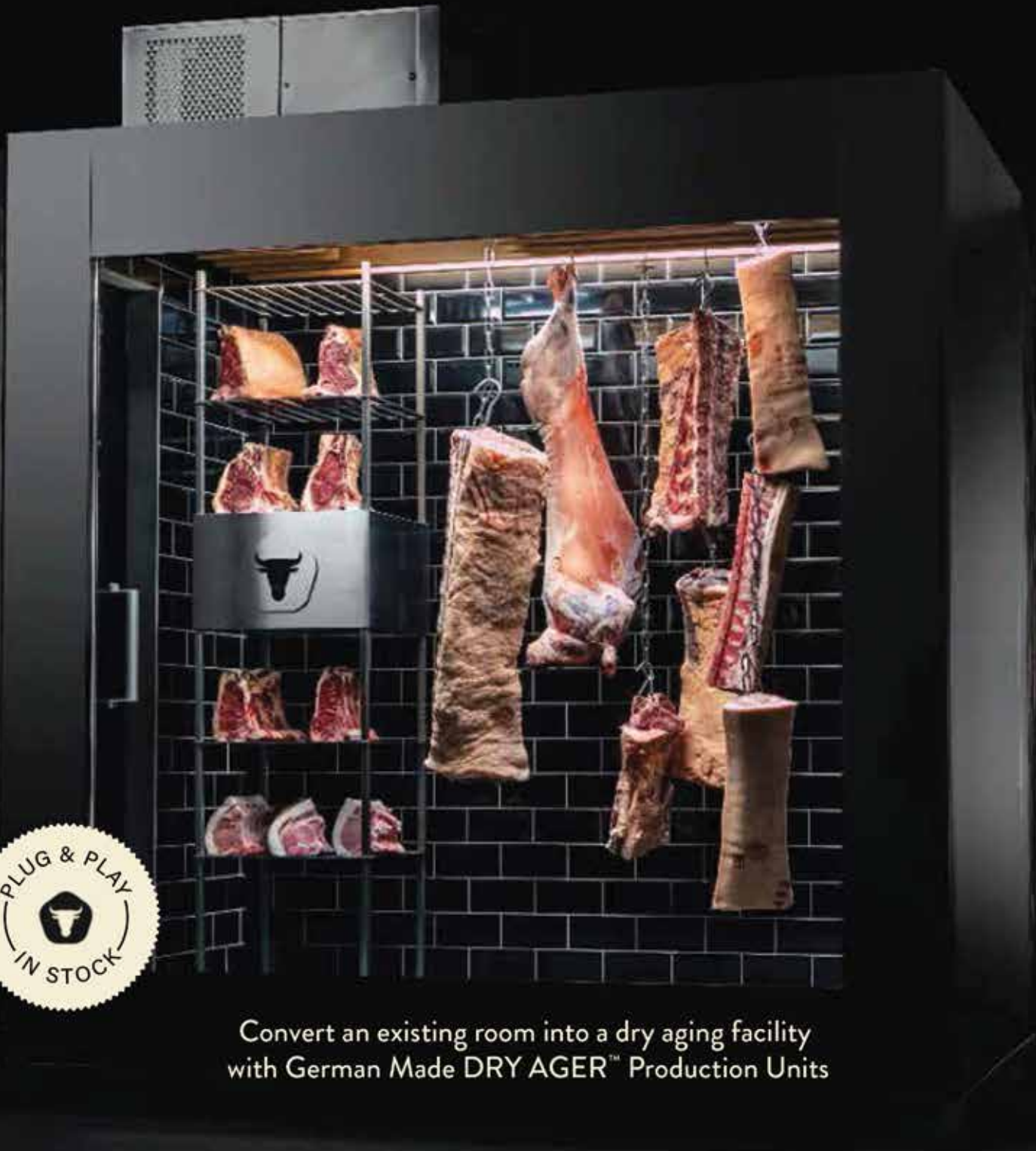




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New Zealand butchers celebrate industry

By Lauren Shamy,
Retail Meat New Zealand

August 3rd 2021 marked one of the biggest days the New Zealand butchery calendar as the country's best apprentice, young and teams of butchers gathered in the Sir Woolf Fisher Arena in Auckland for Retail Meat New Zealand's annual Butcher of the Year Grand Final.

Three competitions run concurrently on the day, the PACT Packaging Young Butcher of the Year, ANZCO Foods Butcher Apprentice of the Year and Pure South Master Butcher Teams competition, a thrilling watch for spectators.

Prior to the grand final, five qualifying regionals in major centres around the country took place for the PACT Packaging Young Butcher of the Year and ANZCO Foods Butcher Apprentice of the Year, where entrants showcased their knife skills during a practical cutting test. 21 young butchers (under 35 years old) and 30 butcher apprentices were whittled down to six finalists in each category and flown to



Cherise Redden

Auckland to go head to head in the finals. The competition has been running for over two decades and these prestigious events are well regarded by the New Zealand retail meat trade, with the titles highly sought after. The winners of both competitions in 2021 received the choice of either a significant cash prize or a study tour to Sacramento,



Isaac Webster

California to expand their horizons as well as a knife set and trophy – so it's fair to say that the stakes were high!

Once in the arena, the two-hour cutting test required competitors to complete a multiple-choice exam and a short interview before showcasing their expertise in front of a team of eight judges, comprised of industry experts. Both the PACT Packaging Young Butcher of the Year competitors and the ANZCO Foods Butcher Apprentices put their boning, trimming, slicing and dicing skills to the test as they broke down a size 20 chicken, a whole pork leg, and a beef short loin into a display of value-added products as well as a mystery cut of a lamb forequarter.

Alongside the young butchers and apprentices were five teams of well-seasoned butchers, competing in the first ever Pure South Master Butcher Teams Challenge. These teams of three qualified master butchers showcase their finely tuned craft with a one and a half hour 'sprint' breaking down a whole lamb and a beef hindquarter. Competitive spirit was



The New Zealand Butcher of the Year judges.

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Winners of the Pure South Master Butcher Team challenge, No Egos Amigos.

certainly in the air, a chance for the masters of the industry to throw around a bit of butcher banter and put their teamwork to the test, as they worked together to create the most elaborate display.

Head Judge, Peter Martin acknowledges the special feel that this competition has, "I've been to all the regionals and have seen the passion for the industry and hunger from competitors to make it to the National Butchery Awards. Once again, I saw that passion – and the skills they possess – shine through tonight. It showed in their displays and made it difficult to decide on a winner. It was a very close competition."

Ultimately, the judges came to their decisions, first crowning Cherise Redden the 2021 Pact Packaging Young Butcher of the Year. Since Cherise had previously won ANZCO Foods Butcher Apprentice title in 2019, she was already on the list to go to Sacramento, so she opted for the cash prize of \$4,000 as well as \$1,000 to go towards her workplace. Speaking to Maori Television, Cherise encourages other young women to go for their dreams "You never know what you can achieve. If you want to do well, and if you're passionate, you'll succeed."

The 2021 ANZCO Foods Butcher Apprentice of the Year title went to Isaac Webster, his second attempt at the competition after winning the Dunedin regional final in 2020 but

unable to compete at the Grand Final due to injury. He told the Otago Daily Times that the hardest part of the competition was the lead-up to it, "Once I got into it and got a knife in my hand, I felt fine but it was the sitting around and waiting for the interview and the two hours before the cutting test were the hardest bits." By the end of the competition, Isaac had created 24 different products.

The Pure South Master Butcher Teams faced an extra emotional challenge when midway through the competition Doug Kahi, member of Team Nga Kaitoki, suffered a heart attack in the arena. Once Doug was revived and

assisted by medical professionals, he urged his team to continue and teammate Riki Kerekere called upon his son, a butcher at the event as a spectator, to put on an apron and step in. Nga Kaitoki ended up taking second place on the podium with Team No Egos Amigos taking the top spot as the first ever winners of the Pure South Master Butcher Teams challenge.

Following the Grand Final, teams, supporters and the wider industry gathered at the Vodafone Events Centre for a black-tie dinner and awards ceremony where other achievements were acknowledged such as the Cabernet Foods Ltd Cleanest Bones, awarded to Corey White and Competenz Emerging Talent Award to James Beattie. Beef and Lamb New Zealand's Best Beef Product was awarded to Maria Pio's All Black Beef Stones, the New Zealand Pork product award went to Luka Young's Pistachio Pork Rump and Isaac Webster's Chicken Parmigiana was Tegel Foods Best Chicken Product.

With 2022 around the corner, team Retail Meat New Zealand are looking forward to seeing the next talented group of butchers step up to the plate but for now, the livestream of this action packed day is still available to watch on the Retail Meat New Zealand website. ■



Winners of the Pure South Master Butcher Team challenge, No Egos Amigos.



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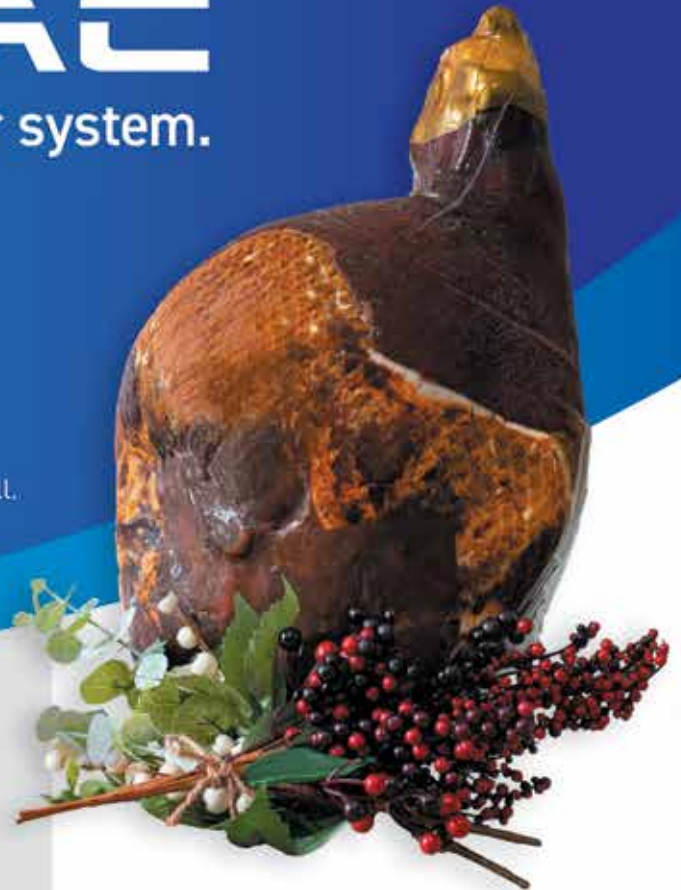
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The 'State of the Nation' in Australia's Meat Industry

By Stephanie Flynn

In what has been one of the most challenging periods in history for Australia's meat processors and exporters the sector has proven to be resilient and resourceful in rising to meet and overcome the combination of impacts from COVID-19, a dearth of staffing availability, supply constraints and the near collapse of global trading infrastructure.

The sector's answer has been to adapt and prepare for the future through encouragement of COVID-19 vaccinations in the industry, the introduction of innovative technologies and the development of a closer working relationship with Government to simplify and modernise statutory requirements as well as the diversification of global trading markets to insure the export sector against the dangers of a reliance on one major trading partner.

The Chairman of AMIC's National Processor Council, Mr Terry Nolan, spoke with Australian Meat News about the range of challenges the processing sector has faced, the innovations it has pursued in setting a solid foundation for the future of Australia's meat exports and the industry's position on the current challenge of manufactured vegan products being marketed as 'meat'.

Dealing with COVID-19

While meat retailers were riding a wave of increasing sales as consumers were plunged into lockdowns around the world, the meat processing sector globally was one of the hardest-hit industries when the COVID-19 pandemic struck early last year as outbreaks within the vital food supply service spread among workers and forced the closure of some operations.



Terry Nolan, Chairman of AMIC'S National Processor Council

According to Mr Nolan, Australia's processing sector did very well to quickly adapt to the change in circumstances and retail butchers rose to meet the rapid increase in demand with long-lasting benefits.

"From a processor perspective, like everyone else in the world, we have been inundated with issues related to COVID-19, the sector has managed that very well nationally although, in the early days last year, there were some issues in Victoria with outbreaks, they pulled though albeit with reduced staffing levels," Mr Nolan said.

"Retail butchers nationally experienced an early surge in demand as people were panic buying in March, April and May last year and I think that, for the first half of this 2020/21 fiscal year, you will find they have had solid trade, with a further contributing factor being the 'out of stock' experienced by the major supermarkets as their supply chains struggled.

"As time has progressed, the supermarkets have been improving

their supply chains and are now trading very strongly and the better retail butchers, who capitalised on the early surge in demand, have continued to maintain the new traffic and have now evolved, like everyone else, by implementing precautions around masking, cleaning and the like," he said.

Mr Nolan said that the processing sector has taken the position of promoting and encouraging COVID-19 vaccinations for its workforce and is now well into high levels of vaccination rates but stopped short of making it mandatory because of the notions around human rights and freedom of choice.

He believes that the NSW situation and the extended lockdown that state has experienced gave people a 'wake-up call' and the early hesitancy regarding the vaccines has now been overcome with more and more people voluntarily opting to avail themselves of the opportunity to protect themselves.

"As an industry, we know we need to vaccinate, we need to navigate a path out of lockdowns but having said that, no one thinks that vaccination is 100 per cent bullet proof, we know vaccination effectiveness wanes, we know the virus will continue to mutate into new strains, but we take the view that vaccination will be a tool alongside other measures such as facemasks, social distancing, cleaning and washing hands well into the future," Mr Nolan said.

"We are going to have to admit that we are going to have to live with COVID-19, I do think we, as a nation, will have to open-up and the industry is supportive of doing so along the pathways proposed when we have high vaccination rates," he said.

Processors and retail butchers face worker shortages

Mr Nolan said that the most pressing issue for the processing sector at the present time is the high job vacancy rates in the industry, a situation brought about by the exodus of some 300,000 visa holders from the country due to the pandemic and butchers are also having difficulties in attracting new entrants.

He acknowledges that the industry must do more to attract local young people into the meat processor and meat retailing sectors and that the Government may need to make some policy adjustments to encourage a local workforce.

In August this year, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Hon. Barnaby Joyce, announced the introduction of an Australian Agriculture visa as a response to workforce shortages in the agriculture and primary industry sectors.

Although regulations to enable the creation of the Australian Agricultural visa will be in place by the end of this year, operation of the visa will depend on negotiations with individual partner countries through bilateral agreements.

According to Minister Joyce full conditions will be developed and implemented over the next three years as the visa is operationalised but by March next year the number of Pacific and Timorese workers is expected to double to 24,000.

"As an industry, we think the announcement of the Agricultural visa is a marvellous step forward because not only is it a three or four-year visa it is also a pathway to permanent residency but, if we only get an additional 24,000 workers by March, it will not be enough," Mr Nolan said.

"Given the exodus of some 300,000 workers, when you look across all agricultural industries it will leave a great shortfall, in any one day on the east coast Australia, in the meat processing sector alone, there are 5,000 vacancies.

"We as an industry need to educate local young people about the enormous opportunity for career development in the processing sector given the multitude of trades such as electricians through to accounting and marketing," he said.

Mr Nolan who, along with his two brothers, runs Nolan Meats a major exporting meat processing company based in Queensland said that his organisation had been focusing on employing and training young people currently in years 10, 11 and 12, with some seventy students working between 4.00pm in the afternoon and 8.00pm at night.

Each does two or three shifts, working a maximum of 12 hours a week and the programme has been highly successful not only in filling much needed staffing needs for the company but also in allowing young Australians the opportunity to gain workforce experience and broader life skills by being in a multi-generational environment.

"We see a lot of the young people who work with us go on to become very successful trades people or come back and accept a work opportunity with

our company with some becoming a work group leader at quite a young age," Mr Nolan said.

"Work is a skill, and this kind of programme teaches young people 'how to work', how to assimilate into a work culture and to learn by working with older and more experienced people as well as earning some money which offers them some personal independence from their parents.

"I would like to see the industry nationally, particularly the processing sector, look at this type of programme to develop a local workforce as long as the sector is respectful of their schooling needs, of treating young people with respect, the need to teach them a work ethic and how to work and not view them as just cheap labour after school," he said.

Supply issues continue to hamper exports

According to Mr Nolan, the major issue affecting the price of meat both for export and domestically is the current phase of herd rebuilding in Australia as producers restock their farms after a long drought.

Consequently, meat processors are struggling on the supply side limiting their production capacity and the amount of product available for export.

"Two years ago, if you had said that the price of livestock would be up around 800 cents a kilo, they would have said you were dreaming, now here we are living with 1,000 cents a kilo," Mr Nolan said.

"The cause of this situation is that we were probably processing the female herd at a rate of 47 or 49 percent so it was in decline as people shed cattle in the drought, now a lot of Australia is de-stocked and the female percentage of slaughter has dropped to around 39 or 40 percent as restockers purchase the females to build the breeding herd.

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“As processors, our production numbers, due to the lack of availability of cattle, are well down on previous years, in Queensland alone our weekly slaughter numbers were up at 90,000 head now they are sitting at around 50,000 or 60,000 head.

“The eastern seaboard was processing around 130,000 a week now it is back to around 90,000 to 100,000 head a week, so there is a dramatic decline in production because of this herd rebuilding phase.

“This situation is flowing on to domestic retail consumers, where red meat prices are exceedingly high as a result and retail butchers are reporting that demand for chicken has risen to almost 50 per cent of their trading volume whereas, some years ago, it would have sat at around 15 percent.

“It has also limited our ability as exporters to take advantage of international demand, which is evidenced by the slaughter numbers, but to be honest, because of the big staffing issue we probably would not be able to sit at full production even if supply constraints did not exist,” he said.

Exports impacted by global shipping calamity

According to Mr Nolan Australia, which exports 60 to 70 percent of its meat across beef and lamb, has also been dramatically hindered in taking advantage of strong global demand by the near collapse of shipping and trading infrastructure systems globally.

The shortage of refrigerated containers, cancellation of shipping routes, congestion at global ports and issues surrounding port clearance transport have all slowed global trade dramatically, a situation Mr Nolan believes will not improve dramatically until the end of 2022.

“One of the real sleeper issues in this whole COVID-19 issue has been refrigerated containers going to foreign ports, foreign ports not being



able to unload them because they do not have the staff or there are restrictions, the port process has slowed down and there are literally hundreds of thousands of containers at sea waiting to dock,” Mr Nolan said.

“The slow down is so extensive that people are almost arguing over container usage, we are having to book containers well ahead of time because they are so scarce, added to that we are experiencing the cancellation of shipping routes because of delays in a whole sequence of ports, with congestion in ports delaying ships docking and unloading so as exporters you virtually have to reschedule.

“Added to that, the land-based infrastructure at ports is also under challenge with reports that in the US alone there is a shortage of some 30,000 truck drivers which then means the ports cannot be cleared and in China there is an issue with backloading at the ports.

“It is something that no one could have predicted at the start of the pandemic, and I believe it will be late 2022 before we see shipping schedules revert to normal when all countries are fully vaccinated and global trade is fully open again,” he said.

Industry welcomes new trading markets as it looks ahead

Australia’s meat industry, despite this range of challenges, is using the current period wisely preparing for a burgeoning future in global trade.

According to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade there are five major Free Trade Agreements (FTA) under negotiation the most notable of which are the Australia-European

Union FTA and the Australia-United Kingdom FTA.

In June, the Prime Ministers of both Australia and the United Kingdom announced an agreement in principle on the Australia-UK FTA which will see the phasing-out of tariffs and increases in quota-free access progressively over ten years for Australian beef and lamb entering the UK from the date of entry into force.

“We have had a situation where processors with China access have been doing better than the processors without that access and that has created a bit of a ‘have and have nots’ situation in the sector,” Mr Nolan said.

“The other side of this coin is that as an exporting nation, Australia needs to diversify its markets and those exporters which have not had China access have pursued this diversification which will ensure a healthy sector into the future because at any-time, anywhere around the world, anything could happen in one market, so breadth of markets is extremely important.

“The Australia-United Kingdom FTA will offer us yet another market and we, as an industry, will see benefits of all new market access arrangements going forward,” he said.

COVID-19 has driven modernisation of systems in Australia

The industry has been diligently working with the Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment to modernise and streamline its regulatory systems and on the introduction of modern technology to bring it into the position as a global leader in meat export systems.

Mr Nolan is complimentary of the progressive and supportive approach in this endeavour that has been taken by the current Minister for Agriculture, the Hon. David Littleproud, who has spearheaded the drive to modernisation for the industry.

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“One of the ‘big events’ of the last year has been the allocation of some \$300 million by the Government to modernise the agricultural exports systems within which there are 14 projects that are now well advanced and going very well,” Mr Nolan said.

“There has been a modernisation of the post-mortem inspection and more and more companies are adopting the AMIS AIO model as well, the old AS4696 Australian Standard, covering Hygienic Production and Transportation of Meat and Meat Products, which has had submissions for 13 or 14 years to remove some of the conflicts which do not add any value is now close to becoming a reality after all this time.

“We have also seen a portal set up between AMIC and the Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment which allows market access issues and frameworks to be communicated via a single information portal.

“We have now transitioned to a risk-based audit regime, whereas plants were having a monthly audit, which allows quarterly or five monthly audits which will see massive cost savings for both Government and the companies in the meat processing sector.

“There has also been a lot of work done on new technologies and computer platforms to make better use of more innovative technologies to make them more robust and real-time including the use of ‘smart glasses’ for real time inspections,” he said.

Voice-activated ‘smart-glasses’, first noted in use with high-voltage electrical wires, were purchased by Nolan Meats from the United States, and adapted to the meat industry for remote auditing of the plant over the last 12 months, they allow an inspector in Canberra to remotely audit a plant with a staff member using the glasses to sight areas under the direction of the auditor.

The company has also now used the

glasses, combined with a Team or Zoom platform, to host trade walk-throughs with people from Korea and Indonesia.

Mr Nolan said that on the back of these trials Australian Meat Processing Corporation has now fully funded an industry trial with a Melbourne-based firm, Bondi Labs.

“COVID-19 has been a catalyst of change for our industry, you do not know what problems you have as an industry until a significant issue like this presents, then you take problem solving to a whole new level which is what has happened for us here in Australia,” Mr Nolan said.

Manufactured Vegan products marketed as ‘meat’ attracts Senate Inquiry

Australia has now joined the throng of meat industry legislative challenges globally against the use of the term ‘meat’ in the labelling and marketing of manufactured vegan products.

An Inquiry by the Australian Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee is currently underway with hearings across Australia, after receiving over two hundred written submissions by the closure date in August.

Chaired by Queensland-based Senator Susan McDonald, the Senate Committee is charged with the task of looking into the definitions of meat and other animal products, including the laws around labelling of manufactured vegan products as ‘meat’ and the current state of meat category branding in Australia.

The Inquiry is due to report its findings by the end of February, 2022.

Mr Nolan said the industry’s response has been strongly against what he terms ‘gorilla marketing’ by highly manufactured plant-based products using the term ‘meat’, effectively hijacking many years of promotion, good will and effort by the meat sector.

“Everyone is talking about cleaner eating, more wholesome foods, less

processed foods but if you put one of these manufactured proteins on a plate there would be at least fifty ingredients, a lot of which are chemicals and additives, whereas, if you put a steak on a plate, you have one ingredient and that is naturally grown meat,” Mr Nolan said.

“We disagree with these manufacturers using the term ‘meat’ because it is not meat it is highly manufactured food and it beggars belief that here we are in a highly exposed export-oriented trade sector, where we are strangled with standards, regulations and requirements and then you have a free-loader coming on board to steal what we have protected and developed over many years.

“The other point on the promotion side, pointing to environmental control, water usage, methane emissions as a way to steal the identity of products in the market and then undermine it, that is why I call it gorilla marketing, the ethical standards are not there.

“The claim on the environmental concerns around land usage is simply incorrect because 80 percent of Australia’s land mass is not arable for other uses. Cattle graze on that unfarmable country and they convert some of that low quality grass into high quality protein.

“It is, in our view, misleading marketing designed to confuse the consumer to feature a picture on product packaging of a chicken and describe the product on the packaging as ‘chicken-less chook’.

“We have a lot of products like Organic beef, Wagyu beef, Angus beef and we cannot call Wagyu beef Angus beef if it is not, we cannot call beef Organic if it is not.

“We are not objecting to new innovative products in the market, but we are objecting to them stealing the names of which people associate with our product such as ‘lamb’ or ‘meat’ so I do think the Senate Inquiry will serve a useful purpose, I just hope we protect the truth in labelling as an outcome,” he said. ■

Balmattum Butchery

– growing into the Community

Taking over a business is a challenge even without the help of COVID-19.

Corey and Ebony Walker bought the existing butcher shop in the main street of Euroa in October 22, 2019.

The community of Euroa was very welcoming and the business is well supported by regular customers. But COVID-19 introduced some additional challenges within months of opening.

Corey is a qualified butcher and Ebony is a trained nurse. Corey did his apprenticeship and worked in a number of independent butchers shops and IGAs in north eastern Victoria. The family has also spent two years in Kununurra, WA where Cory worked in the local IGA and Ebony worked as a clerk at the local court house.

Corey describes his customer base in Euroa and surrounding localities, that has a population of about 3000, as 'traditional' tending to older couples and singles reflecting the demographic of the town and district.

"They tend to buy prime cuts in small portions but are not hesitant to buy value-added products such as hams, silverside, cabana, salami and smoked meats some made with game including kangaroo, venison, quail and rabbit," Corey said.

Soon after taking possession of the shop COVID-19 set in. While butchers were classed as an essential service and could stay open, the Walkers decided to limit public access because Ebony suffers from an autoimmune condition and was taking immunosuppressant medication. Cory set-up a "click and collect" system

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The Team: Qualified butcher, Kylie Mills, apprentice Ryley McDonald, Corey Walker, Ebony Walker and Corey's mother Robyn. Balmattum Butchery serves Euroa's 3000 population and provides work for the core team and clean-up casuals who include Corey and Ebony's teenage daughters.



The display features a wide range of shop prepared added-value products and traditional cuts. In addition they stock; game meats, hams, sauces and wines from local producers.



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where customers could select from a list of about 30 items and collect at specified times. At each collection customers were given a flyer with what was available for pick-up in the next cycle. The shop re-opened with normal hours when the risks associated with Ebony's condition were resolved.

The couple often found it was challenging to anticipate what customers wanted next time round. It is difficult to support a wide offering, when margins are reduced. "Understanding your customers is the key to getting your offering right. When margins are tight it is important to understand your customers preferences and needs. With small margins you need to sell all the products on offer," Corey said.

Corey said he had concentrated on expanding the range of value-added pork and chicken which offered a greater margin and accepted a



Corey and Ebony Walker took over and re branded the existing butcher shop in Euroa in October 2019, just in time to take-on the challenges of COVID-19.

smaller margin on primal beef and lamb cuts.

The Walker family is embedded in Euroa. Ebony works two shifts a fortnight at the Shepparton hospital in the emergency department. They source the products offered in the shop locally. Ethically produced

Freeland Pork comes from Kyabram. Wines are from the RPL Wines at Locksley and their range of Quincy Jones relishes come from Echuca. Local licensed shooters provide their game meats. Balmattum Butchery also supplies meat to two bakeries and three coffee shop/cafés in the town. ■

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June Prime Lamb owns and operates modern lamb processing facilities on the outskirts of Junee, occupying 182,000m² and employing nearly 300 highly trained and dedicated staff. Their state-of-the-art production line is equipped with the latest technology, maintaining strict hygiene standards and regularly review their processes to ensure they meet the highest quality standards for the industry.

When Operations Manager, Mr Scott Newton needed a wastewater pump for the facility, he sought out the best and most reliable product for the job. Scott already had quite a deal of experience with Gorman Rupp self-priming pumps at another large NSW abattoir and because of the history of reliability, ease of maintenance and proven long service life (even when operating in very harsh conditions), he opted for Gorman Rupp pumps again in the Junee upgrade.

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pump. It is capable of handling solids up to 63mm and also stringy materials because of its "self-cleaning wear plate system". The pump also has a lightweight inspection cover-plate to allow quick access for operators to inspect pump internals or remove large pieces of debris. Being self-priming, it could be located at surface level, up to 7.5 metres above the wastewater level.

The Result

Scott has been very happy with his investment and is a firm believer that buying quality equipment provides not only tangible returns in operational efficiency, but also intangible returns in peace of mind.

The Gorman-Rupp Super T Series range is available in sizes from 2" [50mm] through to 10" [250mm], with flows from 3L/s through to 200L/s. They are also available in various materials of construction to suit specific applications, like stainless steel components for corrosive wastewater and hardened components for abrasive fluids.

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Microabattoirs provide a service to community

The continued rise of the interest in paddock to plate and consumption of meat with animal welfare top of mind, particularly for small, niche producers has seen renewed interest in mobile and micro abattoir concepts.

The success of mobile abattoir operator, Provenir, has given further impetus to small abattoir operators to strive to refurbish closed sites, or develop greenfield facilities. The road to operation can be a challenging one, to meet regulatory compliance, source funding, working with neighbours and finding staff. Finding producers to support the operation is the least of the hurdles.

A key feature in the development of the abattoir at Barham, NSW and Huonville, Tasmania is the closure of a small facility, creating logistics issues for smaller producers to transport animals to another facility – if one indeed was available. For many niche producers, where animal welfare is a primary concern, travelling many hours for processing, is counter intuitive to the ethics of their business.

The greenfield site

Lauren Mathers is a rare breed pork producer and had been using the abattoir at Gunbower for years and had a good working relationship with the operator. Until a message arrived to say the facility was closed, effective immediately. The next nearest facility was Echuca, an hour's drive away. A new relationship was formed and business was going well, until a message again informed her 'don't send pigs, we're shut', forced her to travel three hours to Benalla.

The idea of starting a microabattoir came to mind with the closure of Echuca. A feasibility study revealed that a mobile abattoir was not a realistic option for the region. Lauren called a meeting for local producers to float the idea of a microabattoir – 40 people attended.

Under a cooperative model, the Murray Plains Meat Cooperative has five directors and 30 members and has been supported by local council as well as receiving funding from grant programs.

The aim, is to process multiple species – lamb, pig, poultry, beef including heavier carcasses such as Wagyu from more than 20 local producers in the district.

"The microabattoir is designed to handle up to 10 head of cattle a day, with the equivalent in pigs and lambs, and around 400 chickens and employ 5-6 people for one shift every day," explained Lauren.

"Some of our producers are paddock to plate through their own brands, while others have direct markets to local butchers, as well as the odd home kill."

The abattoir is currently in the design application phase with council and likely to be approved by the end of 2021, with construction to commence in the new year. The small footprint of the facility – it is no bigger than a small house includes an office and utility room, a small boning room for smaller runs, coolroom, slaughter and processing.

Wastewater will be handled by a septic system, and any byproducts such as the paunch will go into a GoTerra composting system. The compost can be used for gardens, while the maggots from the composting process are certified to be used as chicken feed. The waste water from the septic system can be used for watering on neighbouring landscapes. Producers are encouraged to take all the cuts, but where hides and offal are not taken, the cooperative will process as much as possible and sell it on.

Stock handling infrastructure such as the race, yards and ramps will be based around Dr Temple Grandin principles to ensure maximum animal welfare.

The refurbished site

Highland cattle producer, Bec Lynd, in Tasmania's south, faced a similar message to Lauren – 'don't send animals, we are closed', and with no alternatives, her operation stopped.

The local facility in the Derwent Valley, had been built in the 1990s, but by 2016 it had reached the point where it was no longer compliant with current regulations and would need substantial upgrades to bring it to specification. Nor did it have staff amenities or a ladies loo.

With the backing of supportive investors, Bec Lynd has created an abattoir that has animal welfare – and staff welfare as top of mind, believing that 'happy animals, happy staff make for a great product'.

The facility, operational since 2019, provides a service to around 30 premium small producers with species ranging from rabbits and alpacas to water buffalo and Bec's highland cattle. The original design of the facility catered to processing bulls, so the ability to process heavier carcasses in the 300-600k range, was already in place. Current throughput is in the order of 50 cattle per week, around 200 sheep and 50 pigs, plus an assortment of smaller species. Poultry capabilities are in the pipeline. Like Lauren, Bec has improved animal welfare design by employing the principles of Dr Temple Grandin and minimised shadows, noise and objects that can raise the stress levels of the animals.

"Tasmania is one big rural economy with many small producers who need abattoirs that will work on smaller runs

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and non-commodity animals,” said Bec. “Without a facility such as ours, the local economy would be stifled.”

There are two major challenges that Bec has highlighted – the first is coolroom capacity and the logistics to keep product moving, the other is staff.

“We have fridge capacity for around 80 bodies, which means we need to keep loading out to stay on top of the throughput. It’s really about chiller time – getting the carcase down to 7°C within 24 hours. We are fortunate that we can slaughter Thursday morning and load out to our butcher network Friday afternoon to allow for more on Monday morning.”

The Three Valleys Food Company caters to both paddock to plate operations, as well as supplying butcher shops around Hobart. The company’s own butcher shops – one in Hobart, one in the suburbs allows Bec to bone out and prepare cuts to hospitality and locals alike. Each shop has a unique customer demographic, making it ideal to move secondary and prime cuts through one or the other of the stores. In addition, the butcher shops service around 25 other businesses in and around Hobart.

What is distinctive about the Three Valley Foods Company is the attitude to staff. Bec aims to provide an environment where staff are proud to be part of the workforce and be recognised as a workplace that gives employable skills, as well as mindful of work/family balance. It is a workforce that is now regarded as a genuine career option, rather than last resort. Such is her commitment to staff, that the majority are now women – including on the slaughter floor – and family needs such as school drop off are acknowledged. Training is fully provided by the local TAFE and a registered training organisation to give staff the skills to be able to do more than one role at any one time.

“The community is starting to change its thinking about what we offer. We have six fulltime staff, who are multi-skilled, who can work across every facet of the business. People come out with real work experience. We are a flexible employer in that we don’t start at 4am, but work hours that suit the worker.

“With happy staff, happy animals, we have been able to place fantastic product with restaurants such as Rockpool in Sydney, as well as providing a genuine service to many small producers in the southern Tasmania.” ■

Automated red meat shelf-life calculator goes live

Red meat suppliers have a new tool at their fingertips to monitor in real time, shelf-life days remaining on chilled beef and lamb products moving through the global supply chain.

The new automated function, based on the MLA shelf-life calculator, has been released by Australian supply chain intelligence provider Escavox to help red meat suppliers make improvements to their supply chains empowered by real-time data.

Escavox Chief Operations Officer, Nici Sanderson, said the Escavox shelf-life calculator provided customers with insights to improve supply chain performance, extend product shelf-life, protect brand integrity and strengthen quality assurance.

"The Escavox shelf-life calculator predicts the length of time available for the product to be safely consumed, allowing suppliers to make decisions about their supply chain arrangements at any point in the journey," Ms Sanderson said.

"It makes supply chain issues tangible and instantly actionable. As well as seeing the temperature spike, we can now demonstrate the impact of that temperature spike on the product's edible shelf life.

"Red meat suppliers can then have the confidence to consign their products over a longer time frame, potentially providing access to more export markets via more efficient and sustainable shipping methods, such as sea freight instead of airfreight."

Carbon-cutting innovation

Ms Sanderson said that to her knowledge, Escavox was the first company in the world to convert captured supply chain data into an operational function to give food suppliers direct control over maximising product quality improvement in-chain, while achieving measurable business efficiencies.

Utilising the Escavox shelf-life calculator, she said, would give food suppliers the opportunity to retain more value through reduced product loss and spoilage, resulting in lower volumes of waste and a decreased carbon footprint.

"Our customers across all food categories already understand and manage their product's experience in the supply chain from their desktop computer or smart device," she said.

"They do this by having access to Escavox dashboards showing in real-time what their product is experiencing in the supply chain.

"For red meat customers, our dashboards now deliver the added enhancement of an automated shelf-life calculator



integrated with Escavox supply chain tracking, predicting how much life their product will have once it reaches its destination."

Australian ingenuity

The Escavox shelf-life calculator was automated by Escavox's technical team in North Sydney from the shelf-life calculator developed by Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) and the University of Tasmania (UTAS), released under a creative commons licence.

The calculator's automation within the Escavox dashboard follows a nine-month trial the company conducted with MLA to validate new shelf-life algorithms for chilled beef and lamb in vacuum packaging.

The culmination of three years' work by MLA and UTAS researchers, the shelf-life algorithms were 'road tested' by Escavox in thousands of cartons of red meat in export tracks via air and sea using Escavox smart trackers to monitor time, temperature, location, light and humidity.

Announced in April, the trial results showed that moving and storing vacuum packed chilled red meat consistently at or below -0.5C resulted in a rate of shelf-life loss per day of less than one day.

Conversely, moving or storing red meat consistently above -0.5C means shelf life is lost at a faster rate than one day per day of journey time.

The trial also confirmed that continuous monitoring of location and temperature across the supply chain from processor to destination could extend beef shelf-life by up to 50 days, and up to 30 days for lamb, provided crucial data

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from tracking, such as the technology deployed by Escavox, is used to improve cool chain operations.

MLA's Project Manager of Market Access and Science, Long Huynh, said it was important for supply chain managers to understand the impact of temperature.

"There is \$60 million worth of unforeseen shelf life lost due to insufficient cold chain control within the Australian red meat supply chain alone, spanning from processors to customers," he said.

"The implementation of the shelf-life calculator into the Escavox dashboard is a major shift from temperature data to useful and actionable information.

"Escavox is the first, real time supply chain data company to be able to implement and visualise the impact of shelf life based on temperature."

Return on investment "substantial"

Ms Sanderson said that following the trial, participating red meat suppliers were able to prove that even on significantly delayed shipments, the remaining shelf life on the product after arrival still met import requirements.

The shelf-life calculator, she said, would now give suppliers a sharper tool, offering faster and more accessible forecasting capability to take supply chain management to another level of sophistication.

"This is a particularly relevant result considering the current disruptions to global shipping due to the pandemic," Ms Sanderson said.

"For the exporter moving significant volumes of beef or lamb that represents substantial savings and potentially increased profit."

Ms Sanderson said the shelf-life calculator represented a significant evolution in Escavox's offering to the fresh food industry.

"As a result of the trial work we did with MLA, red meat suppliers are now able to monitor their supply chains in real time and, if required, make adjustments to extend product life to avoid spoilage and wastage at journey's end," she said.

"For suppliers who subscribe to the feature, that's money flowing back to their bottom line, while improving quality for the customer and reducing food waste."

Financial assistance

Supply chain solutions provided by Escavox to help red meat suppliers address gaps in their cold chain are eligible for industry financial assistance, with up to 50 per cent of implementation costs available to support technical upgrades.

For more information on the calculator or accessing industry assistance for cold chain improvement projects phone Escavox on (02) 7209 3858 or email info@escavox.com ■

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Prioritising your ongoing need for quality, yield and hygiene, Twistas, the automatic dicing machine from prestigious German manufacturer, Treif puts automation at the forefront. The unit has 2 side press blocks allowing the opening of the chamber in the automatic loading phase enabling processing of large meat primals. This side press function also gives a more consistent cube and automation in the loading and chamber closing phase meaning the dicer no longer requires an operator standing full time at the machine. Not only, does it dice and cube at speed to raise your output across a variety of meat products, it has an open and accessible interior, making hygienic clean up vastly easier. Specifically developed for this machine is a patented Hygiene Cylinder to mitigate oil contamination in the cutting chamber. Twistas is of course, fitted with German blades (renowned for superiority) to ensure consistent and precise trim free slicing and dicing.

Treif – Twistas easily reduces your processing times for all types of meat cutting. It allows you to dice product for goulash, doner kebab strips, beef, bacon, chicken and pork. These are only a few of the product cutting capabilities standard to the Twistas. Tempered, fresh or precooked meats can all be diced with the Twistas. Cutting options are numerous and can all be prestored in the program to operate the cutting equipment.

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Obsessing about ham

As Christmas rolls into view, thoughts for many butchers turn to the traditional Christmas Ham, with many customers asking for tips on how to prepare it for the big day.

However, *"An Obsession with Ham, the Hindquarter"* is not about whether to use maple syrup and orange juice compared to pomegranate and juniper for the glaze, but more about what can be done with the hindquarter cut, that we associate with ham.

Written by Mark Scarborough and Bruce Weinstein, the hardcover book is divided into four key sections: fresh ham (not cured); European curing; southern America styled ham and, wet cured ham. Within each topic, the authors give an overview of the ham itself in each context and ways to use the cut. Fresh ham recipes include the traditional glaze and slow roasting both on the bone and boned out as well as homage to traditional Spanish fresh ham through to a take on Asian-based flavours.

An exploration of Europe's take on hams, includes conversation around the different types of Spanish jamon, prosciutto and speck. For the butcher, this chapter has useful ideas on how customers can use a European style ham from cocktail party recipes through to pasta. Very handy in the lead up to Christmas and what to do with the leftovers.

The third chapter is a nostalgic look at traditional southern American ham – Virginian ham is probably the most well known. The kind of ham that is cured in butchers' paper in a shed in full force of the weather, where natural processes are allowed to run their course. Typical recipes include ham steaks, ham-based soups, or diced into potato gratin.

Wet hams, those injected with brine or soaked in it, round out the book – likened by the authors as akin to corned silverside. The recipes are eclectic mix of the best ham sandwich through to ham stuffed cabbage rolls.



Published by Abrams, *An Obsession with Ham, the Hindquarter* is a great bedside table read, as well as an informative recipe book. It retails from Stoneman's Bookroom, Castlemaine for \$49.95

See page 39 for details on how to win a copy. ■



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The words in the list below are all hidden in the grid. They may be found in straight lines running horizontally, vertically or diagonally. Some of the letters are shared by more than one word. When you have found all the words in the list, there will be 26 letters remaining: these form the answer to the competition.

When complete, send your copy by mail or email. Include your name, address and phone number to go in the draw for another great prize from **BUNZL**. Results will be published in next issue of Australian Meat News. **Entries close 10 February 2022**

Last issues winners and answers, see page 9



DAYLIGHT
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CATTLE FEED
LEGAL
CHALLENGES
LITHIUM
QUARANTINE
STAY
ELECTIONS
CONTAMINATED
DELTA
AIR
OXO
CONTRACT
GUEST
WORKERS
RUST
GLOBAL
CLIMATE TALKS
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EROSION
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MOVES
RAIN
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COFFEE PRICES
KING
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SKIES ABOVE
GREEN
HYDROGEN
PLAY
EARTH QUAKES
AVOID SCAMS
INTRA PLATE
QUAKES
QUEEN BEE
MAY 6 # 10
YEARS
SUVA
VACCINATE
WETTER
THAN AVE

N	E	G	O	R	D	Y	H	N	E	E	R	G	A	D
C	O	N	T	A	M	I	N	A	T	E	D	L	I	A
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R	E	A	F	R	T	K	J	A	W	E	E	M	E	V
S	U	E	U	K	R	I	E	H	A	A	T	A	S	L
Q	E	S	D	I	A	E	L	T	S	R	A	T	T	E
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I	C	G	T	V	G	B	F	T	Y	A	A	A	R	E
N	L	S	A	O	I	O	I	T	A	V	R	L	K	C
G	O	X	O	M	C	V	S	E	L	U	T	K	E	I
P	R	A	W	N	O	E	H	W	P	S	N	S	R	W
E	A	R	T	H	Q	U	A	K	E	S	I	N	S	S

“

”

Post: Australian Meat News. PO Box 415 Richmond VIC 3121 Email: athol@ausmeatnews.com.au

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BUSINESS NAME:

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BOOK COMPETITION WINNER

Congratulations to Dominic van Dyk, Wimmera Meat Market who won the copy of: *The Bowler's Meatball Cookbook* by Jez Felwick,

Dominic submitted a correct entry to the question: *How many tonnes of insect protein, does Rabobank estimate, will be used as a pet and animal food ingredient by 2030?*

Answer: 500,000 tonnes.

Dominic owns and operates Wimmera Super Meat Market based in Horsham in northern Victoria. The business retails and wholesales fresh and dry-aged meats, ready-to-cook value-added meals and specialises in the production of a wide range of smallgoods made on the premises. Thanks for entering our competition Dominic, and enjoy the book. ■



WIN WIN

To enter our competition to win: *An Obsession with Ham, the Hindquarter* by Mark Scarborough and Bruce Weinstein (RRP \$49.95)

Answer the question below.

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

Australian Meat News Book Competition

Email: athol@ausmeatnews.com.au (preferred)

or By post: PO Box 415, Richmond Vic 3121

Question: *Who won the gold medal for the boneless ham category in the AMIC awards?*

Entries close: 10 February 2022



AUSTRALIAN MeatNews



Advertising bookings close 10 February 2022

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