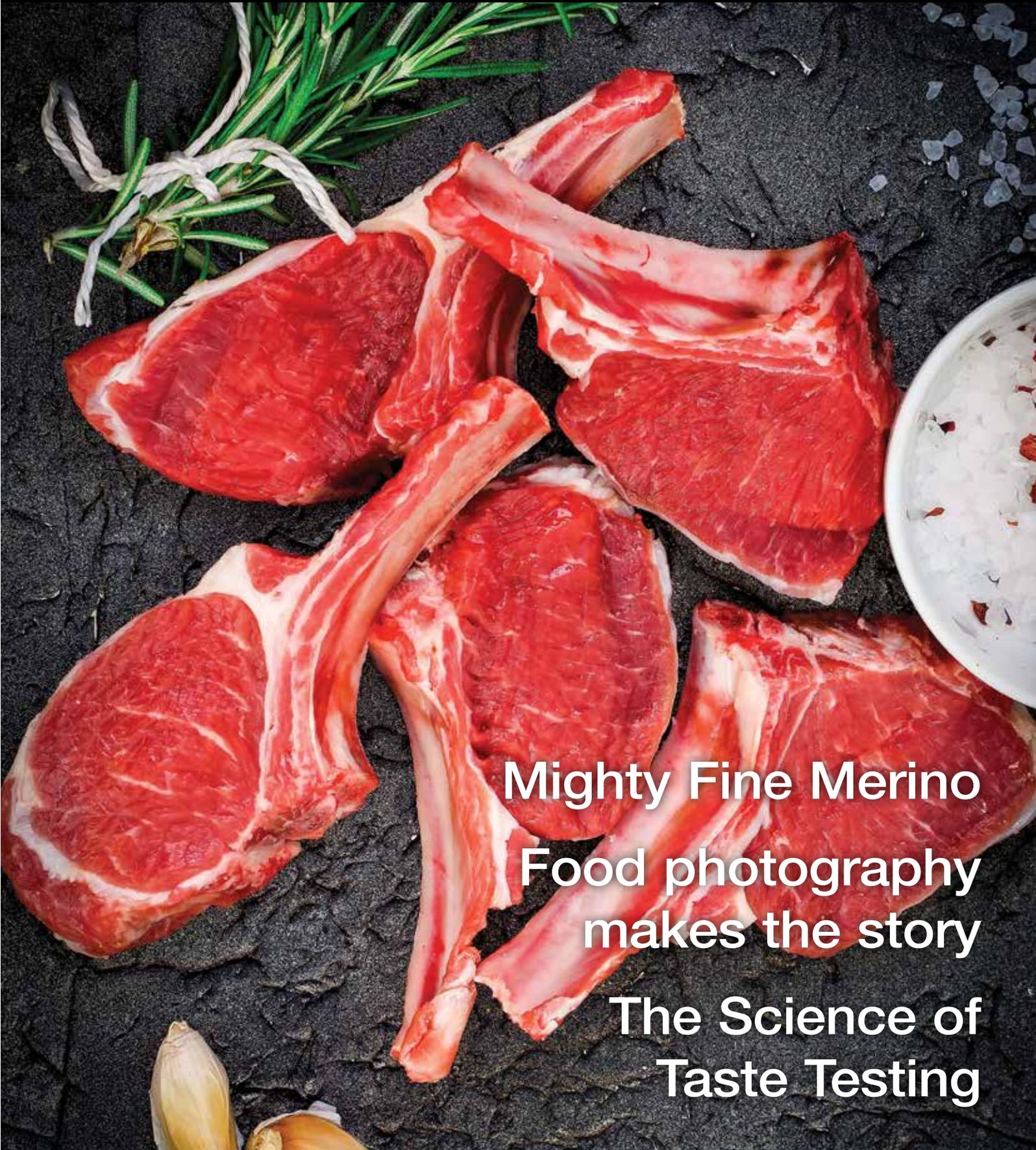


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VOLUME 17 | NUMBER 1 | MARCH 2019



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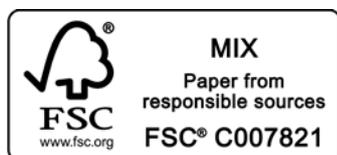
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Meat Business Women

Women in the Australian post-abattoir meat industry are being invited to join an international support group.

An Australian chapter of the UK-based Meat Business Women is being established. It is led by Stacey McKenna, Manager, Industry Research, Standards and Capability at the Australian Meat Industry Council (AMIC).

Established in 2015, Meat Business Women is a not-for-profit group run by a six-member committee to help women within the sector. It seeks to boost industry networking while attracting and nurturing female industry entrants.

The inaugural Australian event is to be held in Melbourne on April 3. The first of its kind in Australia, the event will bring together women from across the meat supply chain, including processors, wholesalers, retailers, smallgoods manufacturers, and those working in ancillary areas such as regulators and training providers.

Stacey said: "The group will allow women the opportunity to build a support system within the industry that has not previously been available. Overtime our aim is to expand the organisation to also provide mentoring opportunities and sponsorship of educational opportunities in conjunction with our biannual conferences.

"Over time, these objectives will be realised through networking events, conferences, mentoring courses and sponsorship of educational opportunities."

A Kiwi chapter was launched by Beef + Lamb New Zealand last May and, in January the UK chair, Laura Ryan, announced a global partnership with The International Meat Secretariat (IMS) organisers of the World Meat Congress.

Secretary General of IMS, Hsin Huang said, "We recognise there is huge opportunity to develop the image, culture and landscape of the meat industry making it more attractive to female talent. Working alongside Meat Business Women will help us to achieve this together and showcase the sector as a positive career choice. Many of the challenges and opportunities within our industry are global and having the very best people to come together and address them is fundamental to our future".

For further information and event tickets: <https://amic.org.au/news-events/mbw/>

For more information about Meat Business Women: www.meatbusinesswomen.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/221010988390463/>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/meat-business-women/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/meatbusinesswomen/> ■

J L Lennard buys part of Walls Machinery

J L Lennard Pty Ltd has purchased part of Walls Machinery Pty Ltd which is in liquidation. The purchase includes certain assets and spare parts. J L Lennard has also employed some of Walls' service, sales and spare parts staff who will be deployed in J L Lennard offices in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane.

As a consequence of the liquidation Fuji Flow Wrapping, Anritsu Product Inspection Equipment and Freemantle cartoning machines have appointed J L Lennard as their representative in Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific.

The additional product will be added to J L Lennard's existing range and the incorporation of the Wall's staff by the state offices will improve customer service and technical support. ■

Easter roast delivers festive flavour and flexibility

Easter is the greatest long weekend of the year, combining religious meaning with the opportunity for families and friends to gather.

Australian Pork Limited Independent Channels Manager, Jennifer Fletcher, said the Easter break was an opportunity to support customers, whether they were escaping for a camping trip or cooking up a storm as they relaxed at home.

“While Good Friday may be marked with fish for some, this holiday weekend is long and there are many meals that need to be prepared,” she said. “Find out what your customers have planned and support them with meal suggestions for their weekend.

“Roast pork is a great solution for gatherings, with crackling always a crowd pleaser and the roast a versatile cut, helping get Easter sorted. Leftovers can be transformed into banh mi, pork souvlaki wraps or a delicious stir fry as simple meal solutions for Easter Monday.”

Ms Fletcher said pork roasts were a great centrepiece, but to remember customers were potentially preparing for four days of meals and occasions.

“For customers who are planning a weekend away or a barbecue at home, ensure they have the sausages and pork steaks,” she said.

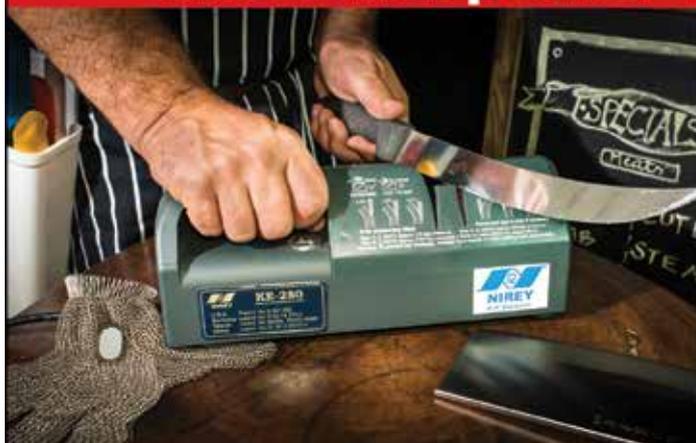
“Think about preparing some value-add recipes that also meet this brief, perhaps some lemon and oregano pork skewers. And don’t forget the Aussie bacon rashers for brunch!”

The versatility of pork roasts will also be the focus of television and radio advertising from Australian Pork in the lead up to Easter, with butchers able to amplify in store with



the support of point of sale materials and recipe inspiration for the whole Easter weekend. Butchers can sign up online at porkbutchers.com.au or by emailing porkbutchers@australianpork.com.au ■

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AMIC Sausage Kings 2019

Four butchers from around the nation have survived a sizzling showdown to claim the prestigious title of 2019 National Sausage King. After winning their way through regional and state rounds, the group snagged victory in the annual Grand Final cook off in Fremantle, WA on Saturday, 16th February.

Newly crowned kings are:

Traditional Australian Beef: Raff Barbaro, Barbaro Brothers Quality Butchers, Perth WA

Traditional Australian Pork: Joe Di Fulvio, Crimea Quality Meats, Perth, WA

Poultry: Raff Barbaro, Barbaro Brothers Quality Butchers, Perth WA

Australian Lamb: Joe Di Fulvio, Crimea Quality Meats, Perth, WA

Continental: Nigel Rollbusch, Rollbusch Quality Meats, Waikerie, SA

Gourmet/Open: Pierre Mastromanno, Piero's Meat Merchant, Melbourne VIC

Judges scored both raw and cooked sausages, grading them for flavour and texture as well as shrinkage, splitting and crinkling. Contestants must also ensure that their sausages meet Australian Food Standards Code by containing at least 50 percent fat free meat.

Organised by the Australian Meat Industry Council (AMIC), the competition attracts huge interest from the nation's 3,200 independent butchers and is widely regarded as the meat industry's premier competition.



Winner of the Gourmet/Open class of the AMIC Sausage King awards, Piero's Meat Merchants.

"Every year we are amazed at the interest we receive from butchers across Australia from country towns to capital cities," said AMIC Chief Executive, Patrick Hutchinson.

"It's an event that just gets bigger and shows that butchers still play an important role."

And the statistics prove it: each year, Australians spend \$660 million on about 94 million kilograms of sausages and despite the growing popularity of gourmet varieties, the traditional beef banger remains the most popular. ■

Milmeq split and sold to Mercer, Wiley and Scott

New Zealand based meat processing and refrigeration company Milmeq has sold its core divisions of refrigeration, food systems design and engineering, and spares and sundries separately.

The refrigeration division has been sold to New Zealand's Mercer Group. The food design and engineering team has been sold to Wiley. Spares and sundries supply is being taken over by Scott Technology Ltd.

Mercer Group supplies equipment to the dairy and medical sectors and its H&C division provides handling and processing systems to the dairy and meat industry. Milmeq refrigeration will become part of H&C and continue to develop and construct chillers and freezers.

Milmeq's food design and engineering team will become part of Wiley who specialises in the design, engineering and delivery of food processing facilities. The Milmeq team includes specialists with both large and small stock processing and will offer a new capability for Wiley. The companies have a long history of collaboration in projects

and the purchase of Milmeq will further the Wiley expansion into the New Zealand market.

The supply and service of spares and sundries for Milmeq's meat slaughter business is being taken over Scott Technology. Scott Technology design and build product line machinery for a range of industries.

Brandon Miller of Wiley said, "Combined with our existing project delivery expertise, this move increases Wiley's ability to service existing clients, opens up new opportunities and our ability to offer innovative turn-key solutions."

Commenting on the sale, Milmeq Chairman Ralph Marshall said the sale is an excellent outcome for Milmeq customers, staff and suppliers, as the synergies created will generate a greater range of skills and capabilities.

All existing project contracts will be completed by Milmeq and new contracts will be transitioned to Mercer Group, Scott Technology or Wiley.

The sales are scheduled to come into full effect in early 2019. ■

Viscofan buys Globus

Spain based artificial casings manufacturer Viscofan Group has purchased Globus Group. The purchase for A\$13.3million includes Globus Group Pty Ltd, Jupiter Pty Ltd and Globus Group New Zealand Ltd.

Established in 1949, Globus distributes casings, films, flexible packaging and packaging equipment to the food and meat industries. Sales for FYI 2019 are projected to be A\$55million.

Viscofan said the acquisition of Globus would complement the company's manufacturing activities and global distribution network. Viscofan operates manufacturing sites in Brazil, China, Czech Republic, Germany, Mexico, Serbia, Spain, USA and Uruguay. The company has 14 sales offices and a presence in 100 countries with a workforce of about 4,550. Global sales in 2017 were EUR788.1 million and the company has a market capitalisation of EUR2.5 billion.

The Globus team, of about 100 employees, will be retained and operate under the names of Viscofan Globus Australia and Viscofan Globus New Zealand.

The product range will be enhanced to include collagen, cellulose and plastic casings along with Globus's established business in films, shrink bags and laminations. New innovative and productivity enhancing products will be launched in the near future. ■

Strong MD MLA

Jason Strong has been appointed Managing Director of sheep and beef producer funded Meat and Livestock Australia, effective April 1, 2019. MLA Chair Dr Michele Allan said the MLA Board unanimously supported the appointment.

Announcing his appointment MLA said; Mr Strong is a well-recognised and respected senior executive with extensive skills in commercial and industry business management and administration, supply chain development, meat science and grading, genetics and marketing.

Commenting on his appointment Mr Strong said, "I want to ensure MLA's current programs and projects continue to deliver value, but also identify and implement what is required for the future success of the red meat industry."

Mr Strong is currently Chair of MLA's EU and UK Red Meat Market Access Taskforce and is the past Chair of the Australian Beef Industry Foundation. He was involved with the early development of MSA and was a member of Australian Inter Collegiate Meat Judging Team. He has owned and operated several retail butcher shops.

Mr Strong was appointed CEO of AACo, Australia's biggest listed cattle business, in early 2014. During his tenure as CEO AACo constructed its \$91 million Livingston processing facility near Darwin, later closed in May 2018. Mr Strong retired as AACo CEO in August 2017. AACo announced it was closing Livingston facility in May 2018 to reduce operational losses. ■

AIRAH launches free online Flammable Refrigerant Safety Guide

AIRAH has released an online, updated version of its Flammable Refrigerants Safety Guide. The resource – developed by independent organisations and stakeholders with support from the Department of the Environment and Energy – can help refrigeration technicians, apprentices and other stakeholders understand the range of skills and knowledge required to work safely with flammable refrigerants.

The HFC phase-down, which officially began in Australia on January 2018, has seen a switch to flammable low-global-warming-potential (low-GWP) synthetic and natural refrigerants. In turn, industry professionals must be fully aware of equipment that uses them, and the risks associated.

"Many HVAC&R professionals are accustomed to working with the non-flammable refrigerants that were widely used in the past," says AIRAH CEO Tony Gleeson says.

"We need to ensure that, as the use of alternative refrigerants picks up, our industry is properly equipped to work safely, efficiently and professionally with any refrigerant they encounter. And that's where the Flammable Refrigerants Safety Guide has a crucial role to play."

The guide was originally published in 2013 in hard copy form. Over the past five years more than 700 people have received training at free seminars around Australia. Yet AIRAH also recognised the need to explore more innovative ways of delivering the information.

The online Flammable Refrigerants Safety Guide also incorporates audio and "test your knowledge" tasks.

It has been updated to refer to standards AS/NZS ISO 817 and AS/NZS 5149 series, which have superseded AS/NZS 1677. It also incorporates revisions to regulations that impact the application of flammable refrigerants.

AIRAH notes that the online resource is designed to raise awareness and refresh and complement existing knowledge. It is not a substitute for the detailed nationally endorsed technical training required to safely and productively work with flammable refrigerants.

To access the resource, go to www.pointsbuild.com.au/airah/flammable-refrigerants-safety-guide-online-resource ■

Japanese Beef – a promotion to learn what is Wagyu

There is no doubt that the Japanese Wagyu beef presented at the recent promotion in Sydney by the Japan Livestock Products Export Promotion Council, looked sensational.

Hosted by chef and Japanese product ambassador, Adam Liaw, the Export Promotion Council is going on the front foot to promote Japanese-grown Wagyu since the lifting of the Australian import ban on Japanese beef, targeting the hospitality industry.

The aim of the Promotion was to educate the audience on what makes for 'authentic' Japanese Wagyu, how to prepare the various cuts and cooking and presentation. The final portion of the evening was to taste examples of Wagyu cooked as shabu shabu or grilled.

During the welcome, Liaw admitted that Australian Wagyu beef was a good product, but added that, "Japanese Black is very different to those products. It has many distinctive characteristics once you have tried it for yourself. It has a delicate flavour that spreads through your mouth. It is hoped that today's event will give Australia's hospitality professionals an opportunity to learn about the quality of Japanese Black and utilise your skills for this wonderful product to bring out the unique flavours."

Rather than pitting Japanese against locally produced Wagyu, the Export Promotion Council sees the introduction of Japanese Wagyu beef into Australia as a means of becoming 'a tasty bridge between our two countries to foster a mutual friendship and exchange'. Likening the importation of Japanese Wagyu to imported premium French cheese – which Australia is more than capable of producing, but noted that the terre noire (the 'local' taste) is different for Australian Wagyu beef compared to Japan and across the various Prefectures.

Included in the presentation was an overview of Japanese beef consumption, indicating that beef importations from Australia reached more than 272,000 tonnes representing 32% of overall beef imports. Importations peaked in 2000 at more than 330,000 tonnes – just prior to the BSE crisis. It took until 2014 to reach similar levels.

Since the lifting of the importation ban of Japanese beef into Australia in July 2018, in six months Australia had imported 4,214kg of loin and 5,429kg of other cuts such as chuck, round and rib at around a reported \$500/kg.

The Export Council Promotion highlighted the 'authenticity' of Japanese Wagyu by focusing on pedigree and genetics – stretching back a minimum three generations for each animal, including the nose print in its registrations. The feeding regime was also touched on, citing that 'each cow is



Mr Noriaki Numamoto explains to chef and Japanese product ambassador, Adam Liaw and the audience his special cutting and preparation techniques for Japanese Wagyu.

treated with care like a family member', using a combination of corn, soy beans, wheat and high-quality rice straw amongst other ingredients.

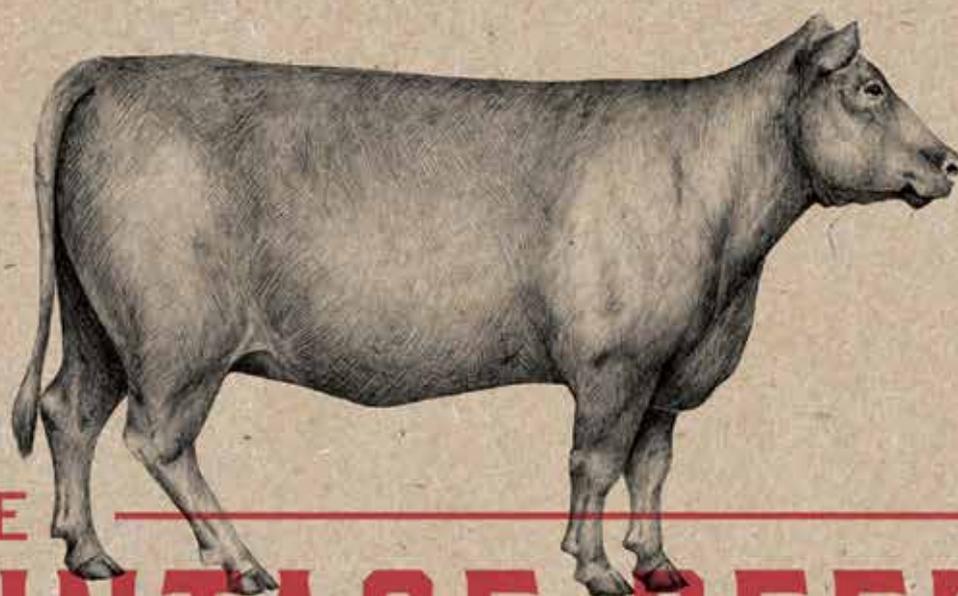
Weaned at six months, the calf is then sold at the market at around 8-10 months (280-300kg), where it is then fattened for around 20 months to reach around 750kg, with the aim to achieve a carcass weight between 400-500kg.

Delegates were then taken through the Japanese grading system, with a great deal of emphasis placed on marbling, fineness, meat and fat colour and lustre.

The highlight and main focus of the promotion was a demonstration by Wagyu meat specialist Mr Noriaki Numamoto, who has developed specialist cutting and preparation techniques for Japanese Wagyu at an international level.

Through a translator, Mr Numamoto described the process of preparing cuts of Wagyu beef including striploin, rump and round. Significant time was spent wiping down the cuts to remove the soft fats due to the lower melting point. The presentation of the cuts highlighted the extensive marbling, which was rated at BMS 10. From a butcher's point of view, the processing of the cuts has variations compared to Australian techniques but easily recognisable and learned, depending on the cooking method to be used. To learn more about Japanese style Wagyu beef cuts, you can download a cuts guide.

The tasting and networking closing session enabled delegates to meet with importers of Japanese Wagyu and to taste Wagyu cooked as shabu shabu and grilled cube. Beautifully presented, it was gone in a flash, but it is doubtful that the audience could tell the difference between Australian and Japanese Wagyu as a wine connoisseur might know regional differences, without further education. ■



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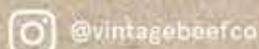
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Strong competition, strong butchers

The emergence of competitions for butchers is giving many in the industry an opportunity to improve their knowledge, network with peers and promote their business. The biggest challenge is knowing what competitions are on and where.

As we move forward with each issue, *Australian Meat News* will keep you updated on competition dates.

Have we missed a competition or has a date changed?

Let us know at optimalnews@majestic.net.au

COMPETITION	DESCRIPTION	DATES	WEBSITE	CONTACT
Meatstock Butcher Wars	A feature of Meatstock, the competitors are given 30 minutes to produce a range of retail-ready products from a half saddle of pork and half a lamb. Judging is based on technique, speed, creativity and final presentation.	Melbourne 23-24 March, 2019 Sydney 4-5 May, 2019 Auckland 16-17 February, 2019	www.meatstock.com.au	Shannon Walker shannon.walker7@tafensw.edu.au https://meatstock.com.au/
Lifeline International Young Butchers competition	Aimed at helping young butchers learn and network, competitors cut, prepare and cook as part of an awareness campaign for Lifeline WA	Perth 7 April, 2019		Robert Retallick, Robert.retallick@gourmetbob.com
AMIC Sausage King	Designed to give AMIC member butchers an opportunity to produce the very best sausages	State competitions held June and July 2019, National winners announced in February 2020	www.amic.org.au	
AMIC Apprentice of the Year	Recognises the skill and training of butcher apprentices	National winner announced February 2020. Check state AMIC reps for state competitions	www.amic.org.au	
Great Aussie Pie and Sausage Roll Competition	During Fine Foods Australia	Sydney 9-12 September 2019	www.greataussiepiecomp.com.au/	Danielle Lindsay admin@greataussiepiecomp.com.au
World Butchers Challenge	An international competition, teams of butchers compete to produce the best retail ready products	Sacramento, California, USA September 2020	www.worldbutcherschallengeaustralia.com.au	Senior Team: Trevor Saville, Savillesho1@bigpond.com Apprentices/ Young Butcher, Robert Retallick, robert.retallick@gourmetbob.com

COMPETITION	DESCRIPTION	DATES	WEBSITE	CONTACT
World Skills Australia	Designed for apprentices to compete at a regional level in butchery and potentially, internationally	2020	www.worldskills.org.au/skills/retail-butchery/	info@worldskills.org.au
Melbourne Salami Festa	Produce the best family recipe in a range of salami categories. Open to amateurs and professionals	Melbourne October 2019	www.melbournesalamifesta.com	info@melbourne-salamifesta.com
Royal Sydney Fine Foods	54 classes of smallgoods and charcuterie for butchers and manufacturers	September (Spring)	http://www.rasnw.com.au/sydney-royal-competitions/competitions/deli-meat/	Fine Food Show Coordinator dtomsen@rasnw.com.au
PorkMark Ham and Bacon Awards	The Australian PorkMark Awards for two categories of ham and bacon.	June 2019, Sydney	www.Porkmark.com.au	
Perth Royal Smallgoods Awards	Smallgoods competition for local industry to showcase and benchmark their products	June	https://www.perthroyalshow.com.au/competitions/competition-entries/perth-royal-smallgoods-awards/	John Clark Competitions and Event Coordinator smallgoods@raswa.org.au
Australian Fine Awards	Branded meats and smallgoods as part of the Royal Melbourne Show	September	https://www.rasv.com.au/australian-food-awards/	
Wagyu Branded Beef Competition	Wagyu producers showcase the premium Wagyu beef. Gourmet Sausage class is open to all butchers	March 2019	www.wagyu.org.au	Deb Andrich deb@wagyu.org.au

For information about advertising call
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Meeting the Challenge – Value Adding Cow Beef

The launch of The Vintage Beef Company range of beef by W H Greenham & Sons has created new beef experiences for consumers, an expanded product range for meat retailers and value-added cattle that were previously destined for discounted manufacturing meat markets.

The brand simply puts into practice the long known fact that, older cows, at the end of their life as breeders, properly fed and managed can make excellent beef. The European beef industry has known this and produced top-end product this way for centuries.

Vintage Beef Company cuts are derived from British, European and Wagyu beef breed cows that are at least five years of age, (average 8-9 and up to 15 years). Carcase weights average 325kg and range between 260-380 kg. Exclusively grass fed, these older cows produce a dark, rich mineral, grass-fed-flavored and marbled meat with a good creamy fat cover.

Eating Quality ≠ Age

Vintage Beef Company shows that eating quality is not exclusively related to young age/low physical maturity, light meat color and white fat. Retail butchers and processors face a challenge to re-educate consumers and food service operators that good beef does not necessarily have to display these characteristics.

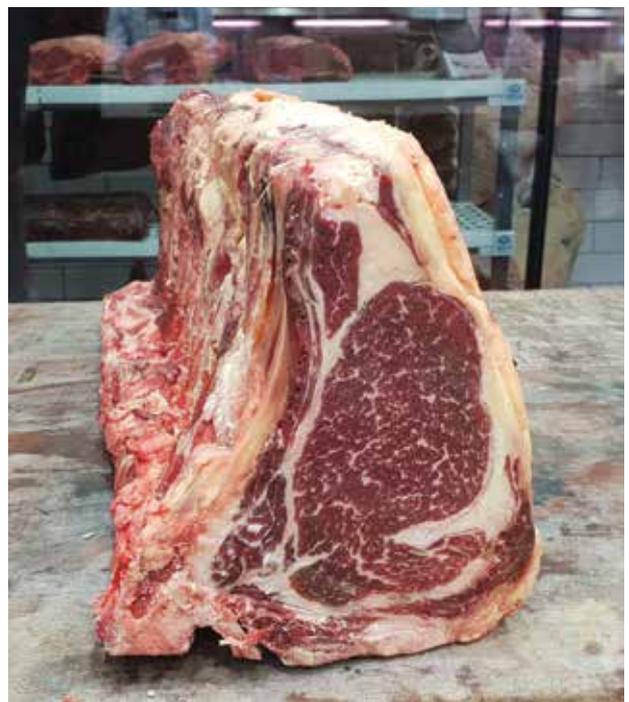
Vintage Beef Company beef is HGP free, with a Meat Colour 1B-4, Fat Colour 0-8 and is natural state hung (Tenderstretch) that improves the eating quality of the hindquarters, specifically the striploin and rump. Good fat cover protects meat quality and makes it ideal for dry ageing.

There are two grades, Reserva with marble score MS2+ and the premium product Galicana with marble score of 3+. About one third of cows processed grade marble score 3+.

Shelf life for boneless cuts is 90 days and 60 days for bone-in cuts.

Greenhams are currently processing about 500 cattle a week for the Vintage Beef Company range at their plants in Tasmania and Gippsland. Producers must be accredited under Greenhams' third party audited QA program.

Vintage Beef Company is modeled on traditional Galician Beef – from the northern Spanish province of Galicia – derived from older cows. Beef from well-finished older cows has been long recognised as a premium product in Spain and France.



Cuts

Vintage Beef Company offers the following range of cuts (with their Spanish name): Cube Roll (Lomo Alto), Striploin (Lomo Bajo), Tenderloin (Filete), Bone In Striploin (Lomo Bajo) (Vac and D/Age), Shortloin (Lomo Corto), OP Rib 6-Rib (Txuleton), OP Rib Dry Age Spec (Txuleton), Oyster Blade (Paleta), Rump Cap (Aguayon Superior), Tri Tip (Empuje), Chuck Eye Log (Espaldilla), Short Rib (Costillar), Flank Steak (Falda), Flap Meat (Pulpa de Aguayon), Brisket-PE Deckle-off (Pecho).

Vintage Beef Company product is currently available at Sydney's Rockpool and Stokehouse restaurants and select retailers including Borella Butchery Albury, Garys Quality Meats, Prahran Market Melbourne, Lara Quality Meats Lara Vic, The Meat Inn Place Lilydale Vic, RJ Gourmet Meats Heywood Vic, Richardson Butchery Casterton Vic, Geddes Meats Sale Vic, GA Corowa NSW, Char Char Char Parkdale Vic, Flinders & Co Saturday Market Oakleigh, Vic. ■

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General manager of Haddon Rig, Charlie Blomfield says that Merino has good intramuscular fat and fat coverage, making it ideal for dry-ageing.

Mighty fine Merino meat

In a time where value-add enables butchers to find the point of difference or a better return on product, the same is true for many farmers. Haddon Rig Merino and Poll Merino Stud is finding that Merino sheep, revered for fine quality wool, is also good quality meat.

Many consumers are familiar with lamb and may know of breeds such as dorper in much the same way they have familiarity with beef and breeds such as Angus or Wagyu. Merino however, is an increasingly popular dual-purpose wool and meat breed, with good carcass yields, intramuscular fat and fat coverage. The beef industry has paved the way with dry-ageing, and Haddon Rig is now producing a sought-after dry-aged Merino product.

The Haddon Rig Merino Stud, located near Warren in New South Wales, has been in the Falkiner family for more than 100 years, focusing primarily on genetics to improve the fertility, early maturing growth, high quality wool production and meat yield. Haddon Rig comprises 23,000 hectares of sheep grazing, dryland cropping, and irrigated cropping.

The company has now turned to marketing a specialty Merino meat brand, value-adding the final product and supplying direct to customers. Part of that exploration has been the process of dry-ageing lamb, hogget and mutton as part of a project funded by the MLA Donor Company. Research by MLA has shown dry-ageing has a positive effect on the flavour and

tenderness, and that Merino has superior eating quality traits to other breeds.

Historically, consumers have shied away from hogget and mutton, preferring the taste and texture of lamb, but with the increasing popularity of dry-aged beef in hospitality, the attention is coming around to dry-ageing sheep meat.

General manager of Haddon Rig, Charlie Blomfield said that they wanted to explore dry-ageing as a point of difference for their Merino meat product and to establish an alternative income stream to traditional sheep markets in addition to the wool income.

The response from restaurants and butchers in Sydney and Brisbane thus far has been positive, with most noting that the flavour was enhanced by the dry ageing process.

The sheep are processed in Dubbo at Fletchers International before dry-ageing as a whole carcass at the Dubbo Meat & Seafood Centre. Typically, carcasses are in the order of 24-28kgs prior to dry-ageing and there is approximately a 13% yield loss through the dry-ageing process.

Currently, Haddon Rig dry-ages 20 carcasses at a time, for 3-5 weeks in a fully sealed converted shipping container that is ideal for the task. Ironically, the biggest problem they face is that it can be too dry and humidity needs to be increased to compensate.

“The intramuscular fat and fat cover of Merino lends itself quite well to dry-ageing,” said Charlie. “By doing the whole

carcase, we are reducing the yield loss because there is a lower surface area. The secondary cuts like the neck and lamb belly take on a whole new life when dry-aged and slow cooked. Short ribs over the open fire are sensational.”

“When you eat as much sheep meat as we do, we have experimented with a lot of recipes and believe that the dry-aged hogget is far superior to lamb.”

Currently, Haddon Rig dry-aged Merino is supplied direct to restaurants and butchers in NSW and QLD, but as demand increases, the plan is to increase the number of purpose-built containers to have a weekly turnaround of dry-aged carcasses, and with more than 9,000 lambs turned off the farm every year, the potential is there for greater distribution of the product. ■



Haddon Rig dry-aged Merino meat gives a more cured flavour that lends itself well to many lamb dishes.



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New

Sydney to host Australia's Young Butchers final

Australia's best apprentice and young butchers will go head-to-head in Sydney in April as they fight for a place in the national team at next year's World Butchers Challenge.

The Sydney Royal Easter Show will host the 26 finalists from around the country as they seek one of four places for the competition in Sacramento, USA, in September 2020.

Team spokesman, Bob Retallick, said two apprentices and two young butchers would be selected for Team Australia.

"The World Butchers Challenge is the Olympics of butchery, so it's fitting that the final selection is taking place at Sydney Olympic Park and at an event that showcases the best of Australian agriculture," Bob said.

"The Apprentice and Young Butcher competitions pit individual butchers against one another in a test of skills and we look forward to finding out who our Australian representatives will be."

The final selection on Wednesday 17 April will be held at the Sydney Royal Easter Show where the butchers will be put

through their paces in the same format as the international competition.

Bob wants to see the Apprentices and Young Butchers show creativity in their presentations of pork, lamb and beef.

Apprentice competition applicants must be a signed apprentice as of 30 September 2019, while Young Butchers must be no older than 31 years, as of 1 January 2019.

The selection process this year involves state trials, where they must be judged as one of the top two apprentices or young butchers in that competition. The winner of the 2018 Australian Meat Industry Council Apprentice of the Year competition and the WorldSkills Apprentice Butcher competition will also compete in the Sydney final.

"We know there is a high level of skill and enthusiasm in this group of butchers and we look forward to shining a spotlight on it, including their skills in value-adding and creativity, at the Sydney Royal Easter Show."

The Western Australia final was held in November 2018 with apprentices Jacob Strachan (Mondo Meats) and Leo Simms (Rare Fusion); and young butchers Matthew Underwood and Sam Silvestro (both from Gregory's Meat and Poultry) now representing their state in Sydney.

More recently, the Victorian trials saw Jake Brown nominated to go through to the Grand Final as the Young Butcher, while Steven Powell and Tom Roberts will compete for the Apprentice positions on the final team.

Still to come are the finals for:

Tasmania: 21 February, TasTAFE, Royal Showgrounds, Glenorchy

South Australia: 28 February, Murray Valley Boning Rooms, Wingfield

Queensland: 7 March, Saville's Factory, Helensvale

New South Wales: 21 March, Granville TAFE Campus, Granville

The Apprentices and Young Butchers will join the senior team, the Australian Steelers, as part of Team Australia.

For updates on the competition, follow @wbcteamaustralia on Facebook. ■



Jack Stuart showed commitment to learn and improve his skills to earn his place in the 2018 World Butcher's Challenge.

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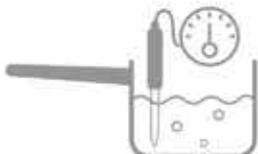


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ADVB190300	190 x 300	Pack of 100

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An image
to build a
1000 words
for your store

The business of making yourself known in the noise of social media is becoming increasingly difficult. Imagery, still continues to paint a thousand words

Southern Cross Organic Butchery lost everything in the shop to flooding in 2017 in northern NSW and found themselves with an opportunity to start afresh – new location, new look, new customers. Focusing on quality gourmet organic and free-range products, the business is keen to share their ethics with their customers in Highland Park, Gold Coast.

The staff take immense pride in the display of the shop, clean and tidy with presentation of product the priority. Heavily active on social media, the imagery portrayed needs to convey to viewers what they can expect – it is the story of the business – and the driver to bring people in.

Taking a photo of a butcher with a competition prize is one thing, taking a beautiful photo of a beautifully

glazed lamb shank is another. While a smartphone is often good enough to do the first photo, it generally misses the mark for the second.

Food photography is well known for cook books and magazines, with wonderful results. It is now reaching the local butcher shop.

Chris Geach, of Food Frenzy Photography is now assisting butchers to make their mark with stunning imagery, and is behind the shots used by Southern Cross Organic Butchery.

A butcher by trade, Chris started food photography in 2014 after many years of focusing on landscapes – a lack of travel opportunities led to experimenting with food. Food photography for butchers has given him the opportunity to combine two of his interests – photography and butchery.

“Using a smartphone is fine for some things, but if you are serious about making a product stand out, then a decent camera and understanding the lighting, composition and elements in the photo make a massive difference to the end result,” said Chris.

Lighting

Butcher shops are notorious for poor lighting and reflections on the display cabinet glass. The overhead lights tend to give everything a yellow glow, while sunlight pouring in at the wrong time of day tends to make the room glary. Chris makes use of filters and diffusers to reduce the effects of poor lighting and harsh sunlight that minimizes shadows and retains the true colour of the product. Natural light is the best form of lighting.

“Our shop is flooded with afternoon sun,” said Christina Weiner, Southern



Cross Organic Butchery. “I had suggested to Chris that he would need to finish up by early afternoon because of it, but he simply brought out from his kit shade cloths and filters and kept going for another two hours.”

Composition and elements

Composition and elements refer to how everything sits within the frame of the photo, advises Chris. The angle the shot is taken, what is in the background, what the primary focus should be and what goes in the photo to support the main subject.

For example, a steak sitting on a plate looks pretty ordinary. If you add a textured background, a small bowl of spices and an antique knife, the steak

story starts to be told. Another approach is to add an ‘action’ element, which means capturing the butcher’s hands while he cuts the steak.

In the case of the lamb mint haloumi burgers, Chris chose to orientate the burgers so that the haloumi pieces can be seen within the burger, and rather than having a perfectly aligned stack, each burger is slightly offset to add interest. The background is deliberately blurred to keep focus on the burgers.

The lamb shanks, however are left to tell their own story, with garlic, olive oil and rosemary completing the picture.

Value-add products take on another dimension, as the glazes and sauces

can be captured. The lamb shank with red wine garlic glaze has not been edited to make it ‘shiny’ – Chris’ technique and camera have been instrumental in giving the luscious appearance.

The equipment

Smartphone cameras have improved significantly, but more often than not if the image is to be used in a brochure, or on the store’s TV monitor, it won’t have the level of detail – resolution – that is needed to give a good quality image.

If images have dripping sauce, a smartphone is likely to blur the drip, whereas a professional camera can capture it perfectly. Individual salt crystals are more defined, as are the marbling in the meat.

The props Chris uses on a regular basis include platters, wooden chopping boards, knives and garnishes, which are all part of his kit.

“When I first got the images from Chris on a USB stick, I was amazed at the clarity he was able to bring, it really had a wow factor,” said Christina.

“When those images go up on social media or on our TV monitor, the level of inquiry increases significantly. I can see the traffic through the Facebook page increase and the boys in the shop have a lot more conversation with our customers every time a new slideshow goes up.”

A professional food photography like Chris will edit the images to adjust exposure and contrast or tweak the shadows and clarity and colour balance to improve the overall appeal of the photo. Chris adds that in an age where the local butcher shop needs to compete with the likes of supermarkets, spending the extra effort to produce quality advertising for the shop goes a long way to conveying the message to the

continued on page 20



Southern Cross Organic Butchery shop.

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consumer that the shop owner takes pride in their business and product.

The overall photoshoot for Southern Cross Organic took approximately two days, which may sound a long time to be disrupted in the shop, but with Chris' knowledge of butchery meant that there was little impact on the day to day trade.

If a steak needed a slight trim or a new cut, or more sausages were needed from the link, Chris was perfectly capable of doing what was needed. Chris is more than happy to help where he can, and according to Christina, knowing that her food photographer was comfortable working in a butcher shop and handling raw products or sticky sauces, meant that she knew she would have a good result to tell the story of Southern Cross Organic Butchery. ■





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Knowledge – a valuable asset for refrigeration and spray chilling

The name Peter Gilbertson has been in the meat industry for many years, and is well respected for his knowledge of engineering design and refrigeration, from hands on experience in the family's meat processing and smallgoods business, through operations, management and consulting. Today, Peter brings his knowledge to NIRAS Australia, a leading global knowledge firm that works with its' partners from concept through to commissioning on design and upgrade of processing plants, water, energy and efficiency assessments. Peter's specialist knowledge is focused on processing, refrigeration and chilling for the food sector, employing best practice to improve product quality, maximise yield and extend shelf life. A significant aspect of his recent work has been the adoption of spray chilling and refrigeration to cool carcasses to meet those criteria.

Carcase spray chilling with ambient water has been used for some years overseas. It is only in the past 10 or so years that it has found favour in the Australian industry.

In essence, spray chilling is an intermittent spray of water in the chilled environment on a carcass to minimise weight loss through shrinkage during the chilling phase. Recent projects for beef and lamb have adopted 3°C chilled water with variable refrigeration and spray programs zoned to align with the carcasses that are being chilled.

Results have delivered an improved carcass quality, reduced carcass chill cycle and a 2% improved carcass

yield. The improved quality has extended vacuum pack product shelf life by 30%, leading to more options to process a higher percentage of vacuum-packed chilled meat in lieu of frozen.

Cooling chilled vacuum-packed meat delivers a 60% saving of electrical energy compared with freezing.

The science behind spray chilling is not as straight forward as turning on an overhead sprinkler in the chiller room. Drop size, frequency of spray per hour, length of spray, water temperature and airflow all play a part in the final equation. Further

Peter has found that the water temperature of the spray chiller system can dramatically affect the overall energy budget of a processing plant.

Typically spray chilling is achieved with potable water at an ambient temperature, but if the water is pre-chilled prior to the spray chill, the energy consumption for the overall refrigeration system of the plant can drop substantially – by as much as 20%.

“If the ambient temperature for the water is used for spray chilling, then the chiller's refrigeration system is cooling the carcass and the spray – therefore adding to the overall energy budget of the chiller room. We have found that chilling the water prior to entry to 3°C has far-reaching implications for the overall plant in terms of energy use.”

In most instances, the spray chiller system is designed to utilise the existing rail system within the chiller room.

Design of the spray chilling system needs to ensure all parts of the carcass achieve even cooling, which is facilitated with controlled water droplet size, spray location and airflow throughout the room.

Retrofit of a spray chiller system is pretty straightforward, particularly if the chiller room is compliant with current standards. Recent new chillers have adopted automated overhead rail system to improve plant capacity 15% beyond what was originally proposed. “It is a real privilege to have Peter part of the team here at NIRAS Australia, his wisdom and integrity align perfectly with our values and he has become a key part of our industry team,” said Edward Lynch, MD of NIRAS Australia.

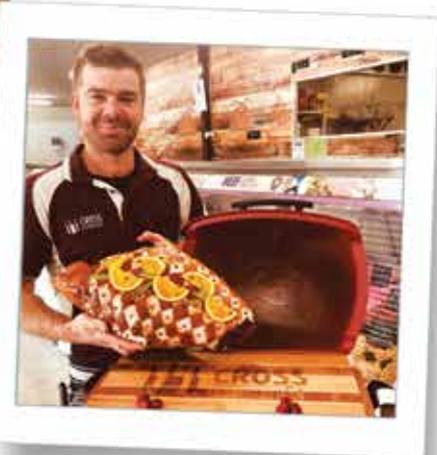
“His reputation and knowledge for refrigeration and chilling systems is second to none in the industry and we encourage processors of red meat – and other proteins – to be in touch to learn the benefits of spray chilling and improvements in refrigeration technology that can be brought to their business.”

Going to IFFA 2019 and like to know more? You can visit NIRAS at IFFA stand 9.1 in Hall D4 at the Pavilion of Denmark and speak directly with NIRAS Australia or attend one of the tours and presentations on offer.

For more information, contact NIRAS Australia:
Peter Gilbertson pgil@niras.com
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Meat your local butcher

Doug Cross,
Cross Custom Meats

What is your name and the name of your butcher shop and where are you located?

Doug Cross, Cross Custom Meats. Atherton North Queensland.

How long have you been a butcher?

17 years.

Why did you become a butcher?

At a very young age I started working as a clean-up boy at a local shop my father was a slaughterman for.

From there I went on to working at other shops cleaning up, until one day my boss at the time said "here put these knives on. You're not going back to school", and I have never looked back since.

Where did you do your training?

I completed my apprenticeship on a competency base and did my time, just shy of three years, I had no choice but to learn smart and quick as at the age of 18, I was managing the largest meat department in the town. I look back at that now and go 'wow', as over the years you never stop learning everyday and to have the opportunity then was awesome.

What are the typical products you have in your store?

In our store here at Cross Custom Meats, we sell everything, from the side of beef right down to the beef file mignon.

I built this business around being a destination for people to think of and remember rather than a standard butcher shop competing against the supermarkets. We try and bring something new into the display window each day.

Who is your typical customer?

Our customer base is mainly the people that enjoy cooking. They want to come here and have choice and by being a whole carcass butcher shop we can cater for the whole range. We also stock a large range of branded meat out of the south.

What is your favourite products?

My favourite product I like to work with is beef, as I buy all the cattle myself directly from the producer. I go out to their farms and look at them, hand pick which ones are ready, see which are needing a few more weeks. Having this connection and knowledge makes it enjoyable for me working with beef, to know where they come from, what they looked like, what their characteristics were, and to then see whole carcass cut up and eaten is a very enjoyable moment for me.

What has been the highlight of butchering so far?

Biggest highlight was the night before I opened the door to this brand new butcher shop.

The work I put in over the years to save my money, design it, jump through all the hoops and to stand out the front of the shop that night and look in at what I had created was the pinnacle.

What are some of the challenges you have faced?

Biggest challenge so far was opening a new shop and not knowing what is going to happen, the uncertainty of wondering if anyone will walk through the door. But people that know me know I love a challenge and thrive on working hard to prove it can happen and create new goals.

What goals do you have for the future?

My main goal is to be the best I can be, be someone that people will remember, be part of the community that people look up to.

We strive to make everything look the best it can be. My biggest moto at the shop is that people buy with their eyes. I tell the boys you want to present the meat as if the queen is going to buy it...!

What has been the best advice given to you?

If you always do what you have always done, you will only have what you have already got.

How is superannuation important to you?

It's good to know that my future is in a safe and secure super fund and AMIST Super fits the bill for our industry.

**You recently had a visit from your AMIST Super representative – how did that go?**

Very good, it was good for them to come in and talk to the staff about their options and I think I took a lot out of it.

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New life to dark-cutting bolar blade

Aged bolar blade, even in dark-cutting carcasses can retain its eating quality. And the scientists have raised the possibility that forequarter cuts might also be a candidate for similar value-add.

Researchers Dr Benjamin Holman and Dr David Hopkins, both from the NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) Centre for Red Meat and Sheep Development at Cowra and the Graham Centre for Agricultural Innovation at Wagga Wagga, have recommended tests on beef cuts other than the typical striploin marker.

Dr Hopkins said: “Grading practices may be misrepresenting the prevalence or expression of dark-cutting traits in beef cuts other than the striploin.”

The claims follow findings from tests on bolar blade, striploin and topside, showing that bolar blade retained its quality even in dark-cutting carcasses. “It could retain its value if priced independent to the entire carcass,” Dr Hopkins said.

The scientists noted earlier research suggesting that the forequarter of dark-cutting beef might also be recovered

and attract the same market value as non-dark-cutting equivalents.

In that research, the forequarter cuts did not reflect the discolouration evident in the middle and hindquarter cuts. “This supports the observations that the forequarter (including the bolar blade) does not necessarily mimic striploin characteristics and can be considered independently,” Dr Hopkins said.

“It is reasonable to conclude that at least the bolar blade and potentially the forequarter of beef carcasses classified as dark-cutting do not reflect the negative attributes of the striploin and topside – particularly carcasses classified as ‘slightly dark-cutting’.”

The study was supported by the Australian Meat Processor Corporation and NSW DPI. ■

Grandmother knows best when it comes to ham



The tried and true recipe of Grandmother Ham for Barkly Smokehouse has earned the company second place nationally for the Australian Pork awards.

Doing a Christmas ham and doing it well to a time-honoured recipe has been well rewarded for Barkly Smokehouse.

The recent Australian Porkmark Ham Awards for bone-in and boneless ham, announced in November, 2018 were an ideal for promotion of Australian Pork for the Christmas Ham.

The top honours for 2018 went to Pattermore's Meats in Alexandra Hills for their traditional bone-in ham, while the best boneless ham went to German butcher, Bexley in NSW. Coming second nationally for the boneless category was Barkly Smokehouse for their Grandmother Ham. In addition, the Grandmother Ham won the gold medal for the 2018 Royal Agriculture Show of Victoria.

Every ham producer is proud of their final product and Grandmother Ham is certainly distinctive in that it has a gentle taste, that sits well as an every day ham or spruced up for the Christmas.

Based on a recipe that stretches back to the 1950s developed by a Polish butcher in Barkly Street Footscray, it hasn't changed since. The shop in those days was principally wholesale to the local butchers and deli's and included a range of traditional Polish smallgoods such as



presswurst, kransky, and leberkase, smoked over a base of German beech.

“The Grandmother Ham has stood the test of time – once you try it you never go back,” says general manager, John Brando. “It’s hand-tied and made from Australian pork and the flavor is a lovely clean, succulent flavor and smoked only once.”

Such is the popularity of the Grandmother Ham, that orders for the full leg ham product skyrockets by 20%. The company is keen to support local pork suppliers and not go down the path of imports for products such as bacon. Brando readily admits that the price point for bacon makes imported bacon an attractive proposition, but the company is performing well and able to carry the cost of Australian produced pork.

Brando, who came onboard less than two years ago from a different industry was unaware of the extent of competition that the company could potentially enter. The company has entered many competitions for other products and taken out awards for bacon, kransky, sausages and the most recent addition to the company’s offering, smoked Mediterranean Lamb.

The business has continued to grow and now resides in two premises – manufacturing in one building and office and distribution in another. The original Polish owners sold the business in 2004 and the relocation took place in 2009.

Originally a specialist in warehousing software, Brando is now working to streamline the business to improve productivity, warehousing and delivery.

Originally orders would be loaded into a bag in a bit of a jumble. Now, we use a card box that protects the products from becoming damaged. It also makes it easier on the driver to load and unload and deliver as everything fits nicely on the trolleys and forklifts. A small change like that has increased the drivers’ productivity, improved their safety because there is less risk of making the box too heavy, and it is saving the sausages from being squashed.

Distribution of Barkly Smokehouse smallgoods is principally in Victoria through independent supermarkets and deli’s. Further afield, the products can be found in South Australia, Queensland and New South Wales.

It is hoped that in the near future, the distribution network will be improved with additional sales reps giving the company opportunities for new markets and distributors and all operations under one roof.

In the short term, the company toys with new product development such as kabanos and smoked poultry, utilizing the principles of smoking that has given Grandmother’s Ham so many accolades. ■

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MASTERING THE BASICS WITH AUSTRALIAN RED MEAT

In December 2018, Unox Australia had the privilege of working with Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) Executive Chef Sam Burke and Product Development Executive Julie Ballard, as they shared their passion for creating and cooking quality Aussie Beef and Lamb meals with a selection of short video clips titled 'Mastering the Basics with Australian Beef & Lamb'.

The series of short video clips have been created as a step by step guide for chefs, cooks and trade professionals to have success with Australian red meat on menu.

Chef Sam explains and shows the basics on how to cook the Perfect steak, perfect roast, braised dish, perfect burger, perfect wet dish and hot smoked standing rib roast

Cuts highlighted were Australian MSA

Scotch fillet, New York cut, succulent beef standing rib roast, bolar blade short ribs, brisket, lamb shoulder and D-rump.



"It's important for us to create effective and quality materials to assist and educate front line foodservice to have success with Australian Beef & Lamb on menu. This is particularly important with an increasing amount of non-trade qualified kitchen employees in commercial kitchens. If they don't have menu success with Australian Beef & Lamb there's a chance it can be substituted with other proteins on menu. The short clips focus on methods as well as maximising yield."

MEAT & LIVESTOCK AUSTRALIA, SAM BURKE

The UNOX ChefTop Mind.Maps™ Oven played a pivotal role in the success of these clips. A unique feature highlighted was how the UNOX MIND.Maps oven can cook the perfect steak by volume replicating the same result as a chargrill, BBQ, Griddle Plate or flat plate.

Through UNOX Australia's association with Meat & Livestock Australia it is evident that UNOX is becoming a strong force within the Meat & Culinary world.



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Pork CRC research has shown that two days enrichment with straw or other tools before the sow farrows enhances her welfare, improves reproduction by reducing stillbirths and improves piglet survival rates to weaning.

Campbell's CRCs see positive pork progress

By Stephanie Flynn

After 13 years at the helm of Australia's Pork Cooperative Research Centres (Pork CRC), agricultural scientist, Dr Roger Campbell, has stepped down as the nation's second pork-focussed research centre comes to its scheduled close in June this year.

Under his stewardship, Australia's research into animal welfare, pork eating quality, packaging and antibiotic resistance has become recognised as a beacon around the world.

He is also credited with leading Australia's scientific pork research out of the laboratory into the experiential

world to work collaboratively with consumers, veterinarians, producers and businesses in the pork industry.

The research outcomes have sparked a radical transformation of the Australian pork industry over the past seven years, earning it global recognition as the leader in 'world best practice'.

After completing his university Degree in Agricultural Science and a PhD in animal physiology and nutrition, Dr Campbell went on to work in the US before returning to Australia to lead the nation's pig and pork research efforts.

Dr Campbell has sat at the helm of both of Australia's Pork CRC's, the first, which ran for six years concluding in 2010, focused research efforts into efficiency in production and the second, focusing research on high integrity, which commenced in 2011 and is just concluding.

Reflecting on his past 13 years, Dr Campbell says that the highlight from this current Pork CRC has been the impact of Australian scientific research on animal welfare, most notably sow and piglet welfare, which has put the industry well ahead of the consumer trend in this area.

"It has really been an industry transformation in the pig production sector, where just seven years ago a sow in a traditional indoor piggery was confined in an individual pen for 100% of her life to now where sows are unconfined for at least 80% of their lives," Dr Campbell said.

"There was certainly a lot of trepidation among producers when this all started, but now there would be very few who would not say that is the best thing that has ever happened for them and the best thing for the sows.

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Dr Roger Campbell, who has sat at the helm of Australia's Pork Cooperative Research Centres for 13 years, has led Australia's pork research to international recognition.

continued from page 27

“We have worked out all the factors you need when you mix sows to reduce aggression to improve their welfare and the result has been an improvement in reproduction, so it has been a real win for the industry and Australia has taken world leadership in research in this area, achieved almost entirely through Pork CRC research support,” he said.

Retail butchers at the interface between the welfare-aware consumer and the meat industry would be interested to know the facts behind sow and piglet welfare, the latter of which, as research has now proved, need the much-maligned farrowing crate for the prevention of mortality.

According to Dr Campbell, two days enrichment with straw or other tools before the sow farrows enhances her welfare, especially for older sows, improves reproduction by reducing stillbirths and improves piglet survival rates to weaning.

He says that few consumers would realise how many piglets will die if a sow is allowed to farrow loose, as the sow is so large, they accidentally sit or roll on piglets if there is space to move around normally and mortality rates can be as high as 30 percent.

It is not only animal welfare but also pork eating quality that has been one of the great benefactors of scientific research under the current Pork CRC.

Research has now shown that interventions during carcass processing can do a great deal to improve the eating quality of various pork cuts, as can vacuum packaging as opposed to Modified Atmosphere Packaging (MAP).

And researchers have now developed an eating quality grading system, like MSA for beef, with the interactive computer model now ready for industry-wide implementation.

“When the current Pork CRC started, the initial research came as a bit of shock because some cuts like the loin and silverside scored poorly in consumer tests on eating quality, which was the first time we had done testing outside of the laboratory,” Dr Campbell said.

“Since then, we have taken meat science totally out of the laboratory and into supply chains, with research on interventions such as moisture infusion, electrical stimulation and H-bone hanging being conducted in three different supply chains on the carcass after chilling.

“We found that moisture infusion had the biggest impact, but electrical stimulation at one or two supply chains also had an effect, so the results differed between the different



One of the nation's rising young researchers, Jessica Jolley, working at the South Australian Research & Development Institute (SARDI), has developed an interactive computer model that can now be used by the pork industry to grade the eating quality of its produce.

companies, but across the board the worst cuts improved markedly from a ‘fail rate’ of 30% to a rate of only 10 to 15% with interventions,” he said.

Research by the Pork CRC has also proved that eating quality is very much affected by the packaging, with eating quality after the first three days being equal in both vacuum packaging and MAP.

According to Dr Campbell it has been found that MAP causes more oxidation, so after three days in MAP the pork becomes tougher due to the different rates of breakdown of the muscle fibres and eating quality continues to decline over time, whereas eating quality improves over time in vacuum packaging.

A good proportion of Australia's dedicated pork processors, which produce their own products, have now taken advantage of the knowledge uncovered by researchers and are changing over to vacuum packaging.

One of the nation's rising young researchers, Jessica Jolley, working at the South Australian Research & Development Institute (SARDI) has developed an interactive computer model that can now be used by the pork industry to grade the eating quality of its produce.

As robust and accurate as MSA, the interactive computer model accurately guides producers and processors through the factors, borne out in research, that affect or improve eating quality, including the gender of the pig, aging, the cut, interventions and cooking method.

“Such is the detailed level of knowledge gained from the research that we do now know that the lowest eating quality cuts are the loin and the silver-side and these will come out in the model as Average to Above Average, depending on what intervention is used, such as moisture infusion, which improves both,” Dr Campbell said.

“The best cut is the shoulder and it scores near Excellent if it is cooked as a roast or a stir-fry, but not if it is portioned and cooked as a steak.

“It was amazing to sit down and work out how a loin that may score as it is processed 65 out of 100, may achieve an eating quality rating of 80 and the model will show you the factors that make this improvement possible,” he said.

The most recent contribution by Australia’s Pork CRC has been its globally recognised research into the dilemma facing the world on antibiotic resistance, ‘Superbugs’, an issue of grave importance both to animals and humans.

Australia’s research into alternatives is now being used by the industry globally, allowing the pork industry to lead the way in the reduction of the indiscriminate use of antibiotics as a response to the human health alert.

The research has focused on diagnostics to help replace antibiotics, the effect of antibiotic use and alternatives to antibiotics on performance and health. The research also extended to what each strategy does to the gut microbiome, inflammation and intestinal development.

Research has now proved that higher Vitamin E levels in diets during weaning, while not fully preventing an E-Coli infection in pigs, markedly reduces the impact of the infection on the health and performance of the animal.

According to Dr Campbell, even the humble Aspirin has been found to have a beneficial effect in reducing the severity of the infection and maintaining performance.

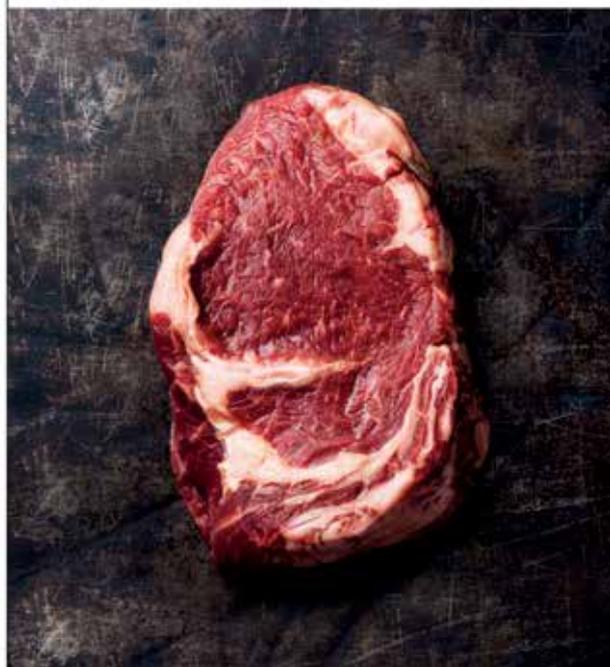
“The Pork CRC also did some very interesting work on resistance itself, if you leave an antibiotic in the diet for two weeks and then take it out for three, resistance increased while it was in there but fell back to control or no antibiotic levels in three weeks,” Dr Campbell said.

“This showed that instead of using antibiotics every day, if you reduce it by 50 percent to every second day or to every three weeks, you can really reduce antibiotic use and resistance,” he said.

As he departs the Pork CRC for industry consulting work, Dr Campbell reflected positively on the new era of co-operation between research and industry and the contribution he made to usher this era into being.

The Australasian Pork Research Institute Limited (APRIL) was set up two years ago to replace the Pork CRC when it concludes in June.

Headed by Chief Scientist and CEO, Dr John Pluske of Murdoch University in Perth, APRIL will now co-ordinate investment in future research. ■



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Taste Testing

– Removing the biases

Taste-tasting meat products can be biased by the tester's age, cultural background and even their genetic makeup, according to a University of Melbourne research review.

While consumers' testing delivers consistent scores for juiciness/tenderness/flavour and overall acceptability, consumer taste-testing can be skewed by physical and emotional factors that are sometimes hard to pinpoint, according to the research.

Factors such as age, hunger levels, the time of day, health conditions, genetics and continued exposure can all influence consumer evaluations, said research fellow Dr Damir Torrico.

He explained that some influences are emotionally-based: the tester's mood, their preference for degree of doneness, the meat's appearance and smell as well as prior meat-eating experience such as consumption frequency of tough vs. tender meat.

Other factors are physiological. "As people age, there is a decline in taste, smell and texture perceptions. Older people tend to avoid foods that are difficult to chew such as meat, and so are sometimes excluded from meat testing – which could skew the results," Dr Torrico said.

Satiety – the 'full' feeling – levels differ between people, and the ability to detect different tastes and odours also varies greatly. "For some people, the basis is genetic; people can be classified as non-tasters, medium tasters, or supertasters according to their genetic sensitivity to bitterness," he said.

Another example specific to the meat industry is that of androstenone, a pheromone found in high concentrations in the saliva or fat of male pigs that gives an odour to pork. People with two copies of a gene variant to their smell receptors are significantly more sensitive to androstenone than other people.

For other people, health conditions and some medicines affect on taste and smell perception, as can cultural background. Dr Torrico noted: "It is common for consumers to avoid using the extremes of scales and limit their answers to the middle of the scale – an effect known as 'central tendency'. Some cultures, for example Asian taste-testers, more frequently display this 'central tendency' effect."

The other major determinant is the tester's benchmark attitude. "The psychology of a person discussing food in public or in an open forum is entirely different to a consumer



Dr Damir Torrico

in a supermarket making a purchasing decision," he said. "Among consumers, there is a lack of technical knowledge around food production, leading to trust issues in how producers talk about food.

"Nowadays, consumers are not only basing their purchase decisions on the nutritional and taste factors of food products but they are also evaluating other external properties including brand, labelling, country of origin, familiarity and provenance."

In meat products, country of origin can be a significant decider, as can the country of the taster's origin. For example, nationality can affect the basis of what consumers even understand as 'meat'. Scientists in China and Ghana established that, to consumers in those countries, the term 'meat' includes any edible animal tissue. Argentineans say it is predominantly bovine muscle-meat while Germans and Americans add muscle-meat from several animals.

A 2017 survey of Australians found that we class edible tissues from a wide range of species as 'meat' with some tissues and

species being 'meatier' than others. Burgers from vegetable protein were not considered meat.

Among Italian survey respondents, 'meat' also includes processed meat products.

A 2006 study found young Norwegian females "demonstrated disgust emotions towards meat products" due to "moral concerns for animals, texture in unprocessed meat, blood in meat, satiety from meat consumption, and negative body esteem." A 2011 study demonstrated that sensory appeal, price, and convenience were the most important motivational factors in Spain. For Taiwanese and Malaysian consumers, a 2002 study found the most important factors included health, natural content, weight control and convenience.

And lastly, there's different personalities to factor-in. A 2012 study found that traits such as extraversion, neuroticism, conscientiousness, agreeableness and openness to experience were reliable predictors of what we choose

to eat. But even this isn't set in stone; food choices can change during our lifespan.

"Sensory assessment of meat and meat products varies widely in different countries and even different research groups within a country. Meat and meat products are amongst the least homogeneous foods, leading to significant variability," Dr Torricco said, adding that important sensory attributes of processed meat are different to those of fresh meat.

"The motivations and goals of consumers cannot be ignored when evaluating foods," he said.

The research review of Dr Torricco and his colleagues from the University of Melbourne can be found at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com.ezp.lib.unimelb.edu.au/science/article/pii/S0309174018302432> ■



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Taste testing ... the final frontier



You've dreamed of the product, done the production runs and developed the marketing ... but how do you know it will be popular?

Taste-testing can give good indications on acceptability and helps predict the success of your product. Here are some tips from an Australian Government-backed study funded through the Australian Research Council.

Focus groups, panels and personal interviews are commonly used for assessing colour, aroma, taste, flavour, tenderness, and juiciness. Testing typically requires 50 to 100 consumers to generate valid results.

The two most-common forms of taste-testing are 'preference testing' and 'acceptance testing'

Preference testing asks testers to select the most preferred sample or rank products. It is easy to manage. It shows what is popular, but does not show the level of acceptability. For example, the tester might dislike all the meat samples, but dislike one more than another.

Acceptance testing is more commonly used, as it provides information on the degree of acceptability. Testers can show how much they like a product by marking the degree of approval, from 'like extremely' to 'dislike extremely'. Converted to a sliding numerical scale, this system is commonly used for meat evaluations. For example, it has been used with beef strip loin steaks for tenderness, juiciness, and flavour (1 = like extremely and 9 = dislike extremely) with beef rib steaks for flavour desirability and overall palatability, with lamb for flavour and juiciness, and with pork for liking of juiciness and liking of tenderness. The system is not foolproof and can be subject to 'central tendency' error (explained earlier).

Where do you set your target? It can be useful to ask testers for their ideal taste sensation and use it to set a just-about-right (JAR) central benchmark.

Types of testing

Descriptive sensory analysis is widely used in the food industry but not regularly used with meat due to the cost and time involved.

Other techniques are the check-all-that-apply (CATA) and consumer-based temporal dominance of sensations (TDS).

CATA is a multiple-choice style question where testers are given a list of sensory attributes and asked to select all those they can detect. CATA has been used with a range of processed meat products, such as salami, mortadella,

processed turkey roll, and ham. CATA is easy, effective and time-efficient.

TDS (The most-dominant sensation) tests the whole eating experience. Most tests are judged after swallowing the sample and don't plot changes during mastication.

CATA and TDS have been tested only with processed meats, rather than with intact meat cuts, where carcass and cut add significant variability.

Planning a taste-test?

Here's 10 taste-testing tips:

1. It is critical that testers do not know the aim of the test.
2. Products must be anonymous and stripped of all labelling.
3. If there is any difference between samples, eg types of meat cut, that must not be revealed.
4. Generally, the first product served scores higher than expected. To overcome this, randomise the serving order or use a warm-up sample.
5. The 'halo effect' happens when a tester extends the rating of one attribute to another. If they rate juiciness highly, they might also rate tenderness highly if they do not understand what the difference is between the two. The halo effect can be reduced by limiting the number of attributes tested, familiarising testers about what each attribute means and randomising the serving order.
6. 'Attribute dumping' can also occur when all meat attributes are not offered for scoring; flavours and tastes can often be confused with one another. Be careful about selecting attributes to be scored.
7. The setting can influence responses. Use an area where temperature, lighting, sounds and smells can be controlled.
8. Keep testers apart, although some tests are conducted where the product is most typically eaten, at the home among family or friends. The two trial sites can deliver different results.
9. The meat samples should be uniform size and shape and lighting should be consistent.
10. Do you use volunteers or do you pay the individual or their community organisation? Volunteers might have more motivation to help, but ensure they understand the time commitment to avoid frustration and rushed answers. ■

Ethical value-adding: a challenge and opportunity

M*MEAT the Ultimate Companion* by Anthony Puharich and Libby Travers is a substantial document.

At one level this 500 page volume is the ultimate coffee-table book. It's sheer weight, lavish photos and concise information on all aspects of meat production, meat cuts and recipes make it irresistibly attractive to the casual reader.

At another level it celebrates the life of the Puharich family who from humble beginnings now own and operate wholesaler Vic's Premium Quality Meats and Victor Churchill, in Woollahra, Sydney – arguably one of the most spectacular butcher shops in Australia, if not the world.

But perhaps it's core and most important message is that we need to treat meat with "respect" if the world wants to have a sustainable meat industry. An industry that delivers a range of nutritional and engaging foods for consumers, while at the same time, is environmentally and ethically responsible and provides a decent living for all involved.

At its core the challenge is about educating consumers to understand that meat is much more than a package at the supermarket to be purchased at the lowest possible price.

MEAT has five main sections: Birds, Sheep, Pigs, Cattle and Wild. Each section covers the history, breeds or species, and farm production systems. For each species, there is a section on cuts – their derivation and appropriate cooking methods. Recipes show how to make the most of each cut. Each section is about 100 pages.

MEAT makes the point that, to survive, meat chains must focus on more than cooking convenience and price. The industry needs to create more value for itself at the consumer interface. Value-for-money nutrition

and convenience is useful, but limited.

MEAT challenges the industry to educate consumers about the real story of meat and to encourage consumers to think more deeply about this precious resource. While industry can educate through the media, butchers have a unique role and personal business opportunity to make a difference given their one-on-one contact with their customers. The author's personal story illustrates one way it can be done.

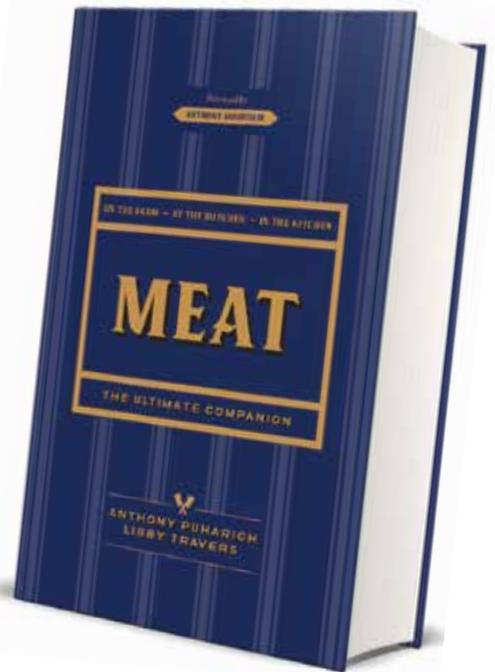
Acknowledging the power of consumers and addressing them the authors says: "Farmers are not the demons here: it is the market. It's supply and demand... Essentially it is you. Make these choices wisely and the world will be a better place."

One challenge for butchers is to teach customers that secondary-cuts can make premium meals. "All cuts are not created equal, but in the hands of a good cook, all cuts can create greatness!" This is more easily said than done. There is no question about the quality of the eating experience but the customer must be prepared to invest more time in meal planning and cooking management.

MEAT encourages consumers to invest, in slow cooked meals by appealing to their wider ethical and environmental consciences. This is where "gate-to-plate" and "nose-to-tail" education can play a part. Ethical value-adding can compliment value-adding for convenience. Ethical value-adding is an opportunity and challenge for butchers and the meat industry as a whole.

MEAT the Ultimate Companion by Anthony Puharich and Libby Travers is published by Murdoch Books.

It is available from Books for Cooks: www.booksforcooks.com.au
RRP: \$80.00. ■



WIN WIN

Win a copy of *MEAT the Ultimate Companion* by Anthony Puharich and Libby Travers

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By Post: PO Box 415, Richmond Vic 3121

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Question: *Who has recently retired, after 13 years, as the CEO of the Pork CRC?*

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Last issues winners see page 35

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Book Competition Winner



The copy of *Your MEAT MATE* by Phil Strasser was won by Daryl Muller from Mullers Meat Store, Monash, a small town in the Riverlands district of South Australia.

Daryl has committed his working life to the meat industry. He started as a butchers apprentice, spent 10 years as a slaughter man, did 12 with AQIS and has run the shop for the past 13. The business includes its own slaughter facility where Daryl kills cattle, sheep and pigs and the shop makes all its own smallgoods. (BTW the business is For Sale above right.)

Daryl correctly answered the question: *In what year was the Berkel slicer first released?* The answer: **1869.**



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