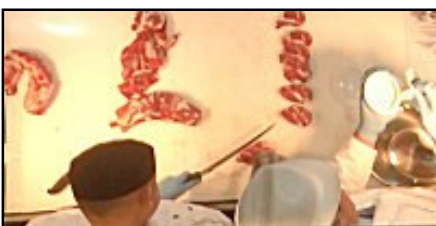


FEDERATION NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER FOR SCOTLAND'S INDEPENDENT BUTCHERS



APRIL 2004

Bones of Contention

Disposal of bones continues to be the greatest concern to the industry. There are no quick or easy solutions but the mobilisation of the membership in writing to MSPs and Councillors has raised the matter up the political agenda. The following was the written response on 23rd March from acting Minister Allan Wilson.

Alex Johnstone (North East Scotland) (Con):

To ask the Scottish Executive what its response is to concerns that have been expressed by butchers in respect of additional costs that they face as a result of the implementation of the Animal By-Products (Scotland) Regulations 2003.

Allan Wilson:

The Executive has sought to minimise the impact of these new requirements wherever possible. My officials invited local authorities to adopt a proportionate response to enforcement when this legislation was introduced. Officials have also worked with various trade organisations, including the Butchers' Federation to identify possible disposal options.

Alex Johnstone (North East Scotland) (Con):

To ask the Scottish Executive what its response is to concerns expressed by butchers in respect of sectors, for example the catering sector, that are not covered by the Animal By-Products (Scotland) Regulations 2003 and currently dispose of raw meat waste and bones by landfill.

Allan Wilson: The Executive recognises these concerns, however the EU Animal By-Products Regulation allows catering waste to go to landfill. Catering waste, most of which will have been cooked, presents a lower risk of disease transmission than raw waste.

Alex Johnstone (North East Scotland) (Con):

To ask the Scottish Executive when it intends to introduce regulations so that all sectors that currently dispose of raw meat waste and bones by landfill are covered by regulations similar to the Animal By-Products (Scotland) Regulations 2003.

Allan Wilson: The Executive has no plans to introduce further legislative measures on the disposal of raw meat waste and bones.

This Month

New Product Workshops

Make it with Meat The Winners

Poultry Industry Hits Back

Scotch Beef Awareness

Low Carb Diets

Disabled Discrimination

UK Pig Industry Problems

Food Inspectors fire warning to EU

Scotch Beef Labelling Campaign

YOUR FEDERATION IS THERE TO HELP YOU:

Telephone 01738 637472 fax 01738 441059 e mail: sfmta@sfmta.co.uk



Above - the New Product Workshop held at Inverness Caledonian Thistle Stadium on 23rd March. The event attracted visitors from as far afield as Stornoway and Wick. The attendances in Inverness and in St Boswells were very good and everyone felt the effort made to attend was well worth while.

Below:- Graham Taylor and Gary Evans of Raps celebrate the first sale of Raps Dragon Fire Marinade to Robbie Coutts, Fraserburgh at the New Products Workshop in Aberdeen. They made sure that he didn't leave without it. See report on page 5



EU Animal Waste and Bones Regulations 2003

Allan Wilson's answers that you have probably just read on the front page offer no help whatsoever to create a level playing field with these regulations. Six months after their implementation the only people complying with them is butchers. We are aware that not all local authority areas are enforcing the regulation but those in that category are shrinking fast.

The last SFMTA Executive meeting decided to resort to criticism of the politicians for allowing this crazy and illogical situation to arise. Now that the Scottish Executive have answered with no answer we will be issuing a press statement soon bemoaning the discrimination against and persecution of butchers and local government's reluctance to address re-cycling solutions.

Meat Product Regulations (Scotland) 2004

Certain Environmental Health Departments are taking friendly samples to judge whether they can analyse meat products to the new regulations. What is becoming clear is that analysis will not be quick, easy or cheap. This is going to put a considerable strain on Environmental Health budgets.

Future sampling will not involve an inspector buying product over the counter but may well require sampling of the meat going into a product and samples taken during production. In very few cases could this be done without fixing an appointment.

A guide to the new regulations will accompany the May Newsletter. As stated before these regulations will require compliance by 4th August 2004 although there is little motive and no requirement to change tickets and labels before that date.

There is no motive because meat content of sausages, burgers and pies will have new lower minima and to declare less meat than your competitor makes no sense until absolutely necessary. In order to prepare you however you should consider all your meat products that previously came under the Meat Products and Spreadable Fish Products Regulations (1984).

Re-Invigorating the Scottish Butcher

Thanks to tremendous support offered from butchers trade suppliers, plans are now being finalised to launch our promotional campaign to support local butchers. The campaign will centre on local radio with buy-into spin offs available to members to strengthen the campaign to your own benefit. Details of this will be forthcoming in the next few weeks.

The local radio stations currently included in the schedule are - Real Radio, Northsound, Radio Tay, Moray Firth, Westsound (incl. West FM), Radio Borders, Central FM, Isles FM, Argyll FM, Clan FM, River FM and QFM. More about all this very soon.

Customer Service Seminars

Thought provoking and message spelling customer service seminars aimed at improving the personal service will be held in April courtesy of Quality Meat Scotland. Personal service should be a great advantage for those shopping at independent butchers and these evenings should serve as a useful reminder to those serving on the front line just what is expected of them.

Invitations to the events to be staged in Tayside and Glasgow will come direct to you from QMS or contact June Lomax on 0131 472 4114



New Product Workshops

The New Product Workshops were introduced by Dutchman Dick Van Leeuwen who has worked for the Meat and Livestock Commission since 1987. Without exception those attending were greatly entertained and motivated by the demonstrations. Those who decided not to attend missed one of the best evenings ever for independent butchers.



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The simplest products are often the best sellers, so Dick kept his products as simple as possible. Starting with a forequarter of lamb Dick boned and trimmed it by removing the rib cage then seamed out the neck fillet.

While Dick prepared the shoulder of lamb, Danny Upson introduced the Orange and Rosemary Stuffing Mix available from Lucas. This stuffing can work equally well as an addition to a Venison Sausage made with beef seasoning. The shoulder was trimmed, shank boned but left on and spread out to allow space for the stuffing. Allow 30 - 40 %. The product was laced with elastics and then garnished with some orange and rosemary so that the customer could understand right away what the product was going to taste like. The joints so garnished would vacuum pack and still look good because of the garnishing thus allowing the product to be prepared early in the week.

Turning his attention to the lamb neck fillet, Dick asked Danny for a Yoghurt and Mint marinade. Mint, ginger, cucumber flavours in the mix plus fresh natural yoghurt. 18% mix + 41 % yoghurt + 41 % water; following the recipe one litre of sauce costs £ 2.10 to make.

Using six little 180g steaks Dick coated the steaks with the marinade and then filled more sauce into a tinfoil container. (This product can be made with any part of the shoulder)

This product Dick suggested should be sold as price per item to get away from the price per pound. The trays were then garnished with leaves of mint.



Caribbean Style Lamb Kofta was next using Jamaican Sausage seasoning.

While in a Jerk Shack in Jamaica Graham Taylor, Senior Technical Manager of Raps UK discovered this jerk recipe using onions, chilli, thyme, oregano and all spice (pimento as it is commonly known). He described it as "Christmas pudding with attitude - a real carnival in your mouth".

Mixed and played out of a Spikommat grillstick container and then garnish with peppers, red and green or even chilli.

Next up was a Topside of Beef that Dick Van Leeuwen seamed out. All the muscles run in different directions and eat in different ways. Seaming out and removing membrane without taking too much meat off. Once done Dick had two muscles that he then separated. The bullet

piece Dick destroyed the fine grain to make it a bit more tender and then cut across the flesh because he was going to coat in a marinade and this would allow greater taste penetration.

Red Pepper Salsa - red and green peppers, onions, tomatoes- 33% of dry mix + 67% water to make the marinade. Dick said that the marinade steaks should be dressed up as a meal. Display in a tinfoil tray with garnish of peppers and onion.



Taking the other muscle Dick pointed out that there would even be different eating quality within the same muscle. To make "Red Hot" Snack Steak using a Raps marinade.

Shallots, paprikas and chillies combined to make the spiced oil called Dragon Fire available from Raps through McAusland Crawford.

Garnish with red and green chilli.

Next product was a burger. Any burger seasoning would do but Dick used Gold Burger Mix. To make this different and justify a higher price than normal beef burgers coat this burger in Smoky Salsa Glaze. (roasted onions and tomato). Salsa has proven to be a popular taste so should be profitable.

Dick van Leeuwen's advice to his audience

"First sell the idea - don't even talk about the price. Make it attractive and it sells the product".

Belly Pork was used for the pork products. Removing the rind quickly Dick recalled his days as an apprentice in Holland where trainees practice their first knife skills skinning bellies. Excess fat was removed and the back criss cross scored. Belly was cut into big roasting ribs and glazed with French Mustard Glaze - the most popular in the latest Lucas range. Garnish with mustard and sold as Mustard King Rib.

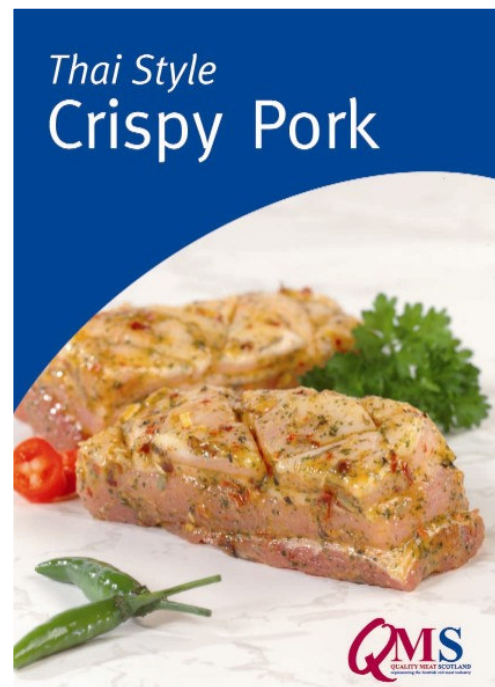
The second Belly Pork was skinned, trimmed and ribs fleeced out. Back was scored and belly cut lengthwise in half and then into chunky pieces. Once marinated the belly pork comes alive.

Thai Style Crispy Pork was made using Lemon Grass and Chilli Marinade from Raps.

"Looks good, taste good and quick and easy for the butcher to turn into profitable products"

Gary Evans, RAPS.

The four posters issued at these New Product Workshops and the recipe booklet will be sent to all members in the next month.



MEAT SKILLS SCOTLAND 2004

**UNDER 25'S AND OVER 25'S SPONSORED BY DALZIEL
UNDER 22'S SPONSORED BY LUCAS INGREDIENTS**

REGIONAL HEATS

Will commence 26th April and will continue through to 27th May

For the sake of this competition the country will be split into two regions:

South: Dumfries, Galloway, Borders, Edinburgh and Lothians, Fife, Glasgow, Ayrshire, Renfrewshire, Dunbartonshire, Lanarkshire, Central Region.
North: Perthshire, Angus, Grampian, Moray, Highlands and Islands, Caithness, Ross and Sutherland.

**Entrants are invited now for the 2004 Meat Skills Competition.
Entries must be in by Easter**

IFFA FRANKFURT

15th – 20th May 2004

Package available from Edinburgh from £389

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+ 3 nights in the Cristal hotel in central Frankfurt, total cost per person £503.00 including accommodation with breakfast and tax, based on 2 sharing a twin bedded room, return economy air ticket, all taxes and fees, and exhibition entrance ticket.

Or, for a 2 night stay, returning 18th May, flight times as above, total cost per person, based on sharing twin room, £389.00, inclusive as above.

Please note above is subject to availability at the time of booking, and that we can provide tailor-made quotes for travel to the fair.

Enquires to Pressplan Trave, either by email:
tours@pressplan-travel.com, or tel 01727 833291

Poultry industry hits back over '20-day claims'

wrote *NICHOLAS CHRISTIAN* in the Scotland on Sunday

28 March 2004

POULTRY producers hit back angrily yesterday over claims that chicken labelled fresh and on sale in supermarkets around the country could be as much as 20 days old.

The British Poultry Council fears sales will be hit as a result of allegations made by an un-named meat hygiene inspector and published in the high-profile consumers' magazine Which?. The Food Standards Agency immediately ordered an investigation into the claims which it said could be putting consumers' health at risk.

But BPC chief executive Peter Bradnock said that the organisation "strongly refutes the allegations made in the Which? article about widespread repackaging and re-dating of fresh chicken.

"Which? has simply repeated unsubstantiated comments from an anonymous meat inspector, made about one poultry processing plant. Which? has not carried out any investigation of its own into these allegations and presents no evidence to corroborate the statement in its article."

Bradnock said use-by dates of between eight and 12 days were agreed in advance for all poultry products between the packer and the customer and these are adhered to.

"Occasionally repackaging may be necessary if, for example, there is a fault with the packaging itself or if the label is incorrect for the contents of the pack, but it is not the practice to extend use-by dates," Bradnock said. "The claim that fresh chicken 20 days old may be being sold to retailers is unbelievable because it would be obviously off."

The BPC was supported by the big supermarket chains.

Sainsbury's said: "All use-by dates applied to our own brand products are set by Sainsbury's food safety experts to ensure the product is both safe and of the best quality."

A statement released by Morrisons and Safeway said: "We can confirm that no fresh chicken sold in our stores has been relabelled and repackaged to extend its use-by date."

Is a shop allowed to sell food that has passed its 'Sell by' date? – FSA advice:-

'Sell by' dates, like 'Display until' dates, are used by some shops to help staff know when they need to take food products off the shelves. It is up to the manufacturer or shop if it wants to put a 'Sell by' or 'Display until' date on packaged foods. But they must also have either a 'Use by' or 'Best before' date.

Since the 'Sell by' date is just a guide to shop staff, it isn't against the law to sell a food after it. However, shops mustn't sell foods that have passed their 'Use by' date. And you shouldn't eat foods after their 'Use by', because they might not be safe to eat. 'Use by' dates are used on foods that go off quickly, such as milk, soft cheese, ready-prepared meals and smoked fish. You will see 'Best before' dates on foods that last longer, such as frozen, dried or tinned foods. Shops are allowed to sell foods after their 'Best before' date and they will probably still be safe to eat.

But if you buy foods after their 'Best before' date, bear in mind that they might not be as good to eat as they were before. They might have started to lose their flavour or texture. The one food you shouldn't eat after its 'Best before' date is eggs. This is because eggs can contain salmonella bacteria, which could start to multiply after this date.

Young Blood

Richard H Sneddon, Training and Development Manager, Scottish Meat Training

As you will no doubt be very aware, there is a chronic shortage of young people coming in to the meat trade. Sadly it isn't just our trade but various types and this isn't just nationwide but is affecting Europe also. Your Scottish Federation and its training department has been aware of this for some time now and has listened carefully to your concerns on this matter.

We have and are continuing to work in tandem with the various employment bodies in getting our fair share of young people in to your businesses. In conjunction with Quality Meat Scotland the Make it in Scotland events were again put on through Careers Scotland. Make it in Scotland events this year visited Forfar, Perth, Dundee, Glasgow, Alness, Aberdeen and Nairn. QMS have even put together a colour booklet highlighting to youngsters the diverse careers available in the meat industry.

As stated in last month's newsletter the training department were very fortunate to employ Sandra Lennox, our new Members Development Manager who is continually out on the road visiting members and offering training to all members wishing to take up our free offer.

So far we have seen a range of new starts with a wide variation in ages with our own President elect Duncan Mackenzie putting himself forward for a Federation Diploma. As Duncan says "Why should my staff be the only ones who get the chance to learn new important skills." A credit to the industry. Then there is Derek McMahon. Derek, a Director with R T Stuarts, Butchers and Bakers in Leven wants to set an example to all of his staff by doing a Federation Diploma. Well done guys.

As you may have heard recently. The government has plans to increase the minimum rate of pay for the 16+ age group. My first thought was that this will chase away employers from starting this much needed young blood, but then I looked at it positively. This might work in our favour by making a career in our industry look more favourable. If I were employing a member of staff in this age group at this level of pay I would most certainly want them trained to Scottish Vocational Qualification level to start with so that I got full benefit of their skills. Maybe, just maybe this will work in our favour.

LOOKING FOR A TRAINEE?

Contact Scottish Meat Training

We would like to highlight all trainee vacancies within the retail meat industry to Careers Scotland in an effort to fill vacancies and attract new people to the industry.

Let us know today

Telephone 01738 637785

Food inspectors not ready for EU regulation

9 March 2004

Environmental health departments may not be geared up to implement a new EU food hygiene regulation which is likely to require hazard analysis, or HACCP, systems through-out the food chain by 2006.

Elizabeth Corbett, head of food safety with Glasgow Council, told a seminar of the European Food Law Association of the United Kingdom that rolling out HACCP could stretch local authorities to the limit and would require detailed preparation.

She said: "If there is a masterplan, I haven't seen one. Perhaps the Food Standards Agency is working on it. It must emerge soon if we are to have any chance of success. It needs to be transparent and to involve users. I hope it will be based on the concept of project management."

Glasgow, she said, had a unit solely there to educate business on hazard analysis, providing training materials and templates. But she said Scotland's statistics – 30,000 catering businesses, 8 per cent run by non-English-speaking staff – would present a major logistical problem. The target was for 80 per cent of catering premises to have a hazard analysis system in place by 2006.

She told delegates that local authorities were already "pushed from pillar to post" and that there was not wide ownership by them of the general adoption of HACCP. She said: "Local authorities are keen to improve things and to try new ideas but they get bogged down by routine inspections and preparing for audits. We need to have a vision. We need to be freed up from our current demands to take things forward."

As a way of gaining officer time, she suggested ending the sampling programme. "Would it make any difference?" asked Ms Corbett. She also suggested a moratorium on food inspections. She argued that local authorities were best placed to take on the role of educating food businesses in hazard analysis. She said that butchers' licensing had been a huge success in Scotland, despite initial scepticism, and had greatly raised standards but there were fears that the scheme would not continue.

Replying for the Food Standards Agency, Catherine Bowles, head of the FSA's microbiological safety division, said that "merely applying the new legislation is the least that we have to do". In addition, the agency was looking at providing guidance on HACCP systems and reviewing the need for new industry guidance. The FSA would discuss a masterplan for implementing the EU regulation at its next board meeting.

The hygiene regulation will replace 17 existing directives and is the first of several moves to consolidate and update EU food law. Others will cover products of animal origin and animal health. The regulation also includes the possibility of all food businesses being registered by their competent authority.

Food Safety Authority calls for more research into BSE in tongue

19 March 2004

The European Food Safety Authority scientific panel on biological hazards has called for additional research into the risk to consumers posed by the presence of BSE-linked prion proteins in beef tongues.

The panel has advised there is insufficient data to draw firm conclusions. Beef tongue from certified healthy animals is deemed safe, but there is concern about contamination from tonsils.

QMS Scotch Beef Campaign Posts Record Results for Consumer Awareness

Quality Meat Scotland's Scotch beef marketing campaign has recorded a massive 33% increase in consumer awareness of Scotch beef. Independent research* carried out for QMS for the month of



February reveals that Scotch beef is the first thing that comes to mind for 71% of Scots when meat is mentioned - this is the highest awareness figure ever recorded by the organisation.

QMS's new TV advert with Scottish rugby star Simon Taylor has been broadcast Scotland wide since the beginning of February, adding fresh impetus to the successful Glen campaign. In addition, the poster promotion featuring Simon has been prominently displayed on billboards around Scotland.

Speaking at the organisation's annual conference near Edinburgh on Tuesday 16th March QMS Chairman, Jim Walker, said: "The record consumer awareness figures mark another significant milestone for the Scottish industry and its highly

effective Scotch beef marketing campaign. The consistency of the messages going out to shoppers about the quality of Scotch beef and our industry's high production standards also means that 65% of Scots say they would pay more for Scotch beef. That's up 9% points on the same period last year."

QMS has developed integrated marketing campaigns for Scotch beef, Scotch lamb and Specially Selected pork. The Scotch lamb campaign recently beat off stiff competition to win an award in a prestigious European competition and the 'Make the Most of Your Roast' specially selected pork campaign is in the running for an award in the forthcoming Scottish Marketing Awards.

Millward Brown research for the month of February has shown:-

71% of Scots had seen, heard or read about Scotch beef recently, up 33% on the previous month;

65% of Scots agree they would pay more for Scotch beef, up 9% points on 2003;

76% of Scots agree that Scotch beef is produced to the highest standards, up 2% points on 2003.

EU law a sticky mess in Austria

22 March 2004

Marmalade must be made from citrus fruits to be sold in the European Union (EU), so says directive 2001/113/EC on fruit jams, jellies and marmalades and sweetened chestnut purée.

However, the law has caused consternation in the Austrian conserve industry, where the term 'marmalade' has long been used to describe products using other fruits, which are considered almost everywhere else as 'jam'.

In a bid to avoid banning this tradition or criminalising some Austrian jam makers, the European Commission has asked EU ministers to approve a special derogation from the directive for Austria, so that its jam can legally be called marmalade once again.

Make it with Meat Awards Spring 2004

A Product Evaluation was held for Speciality Sausages, Burgers and Chicken products on Wednesday 18th February. The evaluation took place in the James Watt College, Greenock and awards presented at the March Regional Meetings went to the following:-

Burgers

DIAMOND

Lamb Garlic & Mint Burger

Duncan Fraser & Son, Inverness

GOLD

Sunset Grill

Pork Tomato & Basil Burger

Chicken & Haggis Burger

Pork and Bacon Cheesy Melt

Steak & Mushroom Burger

Six Nations Burger

Bermuda Triangle

Atkins Chicken Burger

Breakfast Burger

Chicken Caribbean Burgers

Islay Beef Burger with Onion

Bacon Cheese & Tomato Burger

Salsa Burger

Lamb and Corriander Burger

Duncan Fraser & Son, Inverness

James Pirie & Son, Newtyle

R T Stuart Ltd, Leven and Buckhaven

Bert Fowlie, Strichen

Ian J McIntosh, Fraserburgh

Crombies of Edinburgh

John Saunderson, Edinburgh

T Johnston, Falkirk and Dunfermline

Prentice Butcher, Duns

Andrew Gillespie, Glasgow

William McFarlane, Bowmore

Mearns T McCaskie, Wemyss Bay

Morrison & Ritchie, Alexandria

Robertson Jeen, Bearsden

SILVER

Sweet Lamb Burger

Organic Sage & Apple Cutlet

Steak & Mushroom triangles

Chieftain Burger

Bacon & Cheese Melts

Sweet Tandoori Lamb Burger

Grants Butchers, Dundee

Simon Howie, Perth

Ewan Morrice, Stuartfield

T Johnston, Falkirk and Dunfermline

Halliwells Butcher, Selkirk

Andrew Gillespie, Glasgow

BRONZE

Pork & Apple Burger

Hot Turkish Delight - Gluten Free

Italian Pasta Burger

Chilli & Garlic Burger

Herb Butter Burger

Caribbean Beefburger

Thai Spice Chicken Burger

Vale Burger

Cheesy Salsa Burger

Spicy Tomato Burger

Cheese Steak & Onion Burger

Pork & Apple Burger

John Troup Butcher, Aboyne

Scott Brothers, Dundee

Forbes Raeburn & Sons, Huntly

Ian Moir Quality Butcher, Grantown on Spey

Patricks of Camelon

W Simpson & Son, Leven

Blackwood of Kilmacolm

Morrison & Ritchie, Alexandria

Morrison & Ritchie, Alexandria

Robertson Jeen, Bearsden

Ronald Mackenzie, Johnstone

William Allan & Son, Stewarton



Jim Fox of Dalziel Ltd (third from left back row) presents awards at the Invercarse Hotel - Award winners; Left to right: back: B Brymer, G Grossett, D and G Jarron (Scott Bros.), J and A Pirie; Front: G Mitchell (Grants, Dundee), B Fyfe and G Connacher (Simon Howie), A Ogston (J Troup)

Ingliston presentation, Below: J Saunderson, J Crombie (both Edinburgh), Jim Fox, Derek McMahon, Mark Barnett, and in front Keith Adam and Joseph O'Neill all from Leven





Glasgow Presentation – Left to Right: Back Row – I Jack(Stranraer), R McKenzie (Johnstone), T Meade (Gourock), Don McGovern James Watt College, D Graham (Kilmacolm), A McFarlane and A Ramage (Stewarton); Front Row: A McKinnon (Bennetts, Dunblane), W Campbell (McFarlane, Bowmore), J Clark (Stewarton), I Jeen (Bearsden), Jim Whitelock (Gillespies Glasgow) and Kenneth Ritchie (Alexandria).

Elgin Presentation: Ian McAllister (A & I Butchers Culloden), Sandy Jack (Fortrose), Duncan Fraser (Inverness), Douglas Raeburn (Huntly), Jim Fox from Dalziel Ltd., John Brown (Turriff), Ian Moir (Grantown); Front row Andrew Mowat (Fraser Bros. Dingwall), Ewan Morrice (Stuartfield) and Gavin McIntosh (Fraserburgh)



Make it with Meat Awards Spring 2004

Speciality Sausages

DIAMOND

Whisky, Hog & Wild Thyme Sausage

Crombies of Edinburgh

GOLD

McMoosie Sausages

Lamb Bhuna Sausages with Fresh Corriander

Pork & Caramelised Onion Sausage

Beef, Pork & Tomato Sausage

Cumberland Pork Sausage

Pork, Cheese & Bacon Sausages

Organic Pork Spirals

Pork & Orange Sausage

Cheese & Bacon, Pork Sausage

Rhubarb & Ginger Pork Sausage

Chilli & Garlic Sausage

Venison & Cranberry Sausages

Pork Sausage with Caramelised Onion

Pork Leek & Apple Sausages

Pheasant & Cranberry Sausages

Highland Sausage

Pork & Sage Cumberland Rings

Pork & Venison Sausages

Pork & Smoked Bacon Sausages

Pork, Red Orkney Cheese and Spicy Onion Chutney Sausages

Bruce Brymer, Brechin

Grossetts of Tayside

James Pirie & Son, Newtyle

R T Stuart Ltd Leven and Buckhaven

R T Stuart Ltd Leven and Buckhaven

R T Stuart Ltd Leven and Buckhaven

Simon Howie, Perth

A R Jack, Fortrose

Bert Fowlie, Strichen

Bert Fowlie, Strichen

Fraser Brothers, Dingwall

Ian J McIntosh, Fraserburgh

Crombies of Edinburgh

Patricks of Camelon

Halliwell's Butchers, Selkirk

David Bennett & Son, Dunblane

William Allan & Son, Stewarton

William McFarlane, Bowmore, Islay

George Donaldson & Sons, Kirkwall

Sausages

George Donaldson & Sons, Kirkwall

SILVER

Pork & Black Pudding Sausage

Pork Sausage with Smoked Bacon & Brie

Pork & Leek Sausage

Sweet Chilli Pork Sausage

Cumberland Sausage

Steak & Tomato Sausage

Pork Bacon & Tomato Sausage

Porky Bar Kids

Cumberland Sausage

Curried Pork Sausages

Sweet Pepper Sausages

Breakfast Porker

Spiced Beef Ham, and Onion Sausages

Beef & Onion Slice Sausage

Pork & Herb Sausage

Cheeseburger and Tomato Relish Sausage

Grants Butchers, Dundee

Grossetts of Tayside

R T Stuart Ltd Leven and Buckhaven

Scott Brothers, Dundee

A & I Quality Butcher, Culloden

A R Jack, Fortrose

Duncan Fraser & Son, Inverness

Ewan Morrice, Stuartfield

Food for Thought, Ullapool

Forbes Raeburn & Sons, Huntly

Fraser Brothers, Dingwall

Mearns T McCaskie, Wemyss Bay

Terry Meade, Gourrock

William Allan & Son, Stewarton

William McFarlane, Bowmore, Islay

George Donaldson & Sons, Kirkwall

BRONZE

Banquet Sausage

Pork Lemon & Ginger Sausages

Lamb & Apricot Sausages

Pork Tomato & Herb Sausages

Girders

Bruce Brymer, Brechin

James Pirie & Son, Newtyle

John Troup Butcher, Aboyne

John Troup Butcher, Aboyne

A E Brown & Son, Turriff

Jalfrezi Pork Sausage
Pork & Leek Sausage
Pork & Venison Sausage
Baked Bean Sausage
Spicy Pork Link

Oriental Sweet & Sour Slice Sausage
Pork, Cranberry and Caramelised Red Onion Sausages

A R Jack, Fortrose
A R Jack, Fortrose
Forbes Raeburn & Sons, Huntly
Prentice Butchers, Duns
Morrison & Ritchie, Alexandria
Ronald Mackenzie, Johnstone
George Donaldson & Sons, Kirkwall

The Diamond Winners:



Above left – Duncan Fraser (Inverness – Burger), right Jonathan Crombie (Edinburgh – Sausage) and left (from Simon Howies in Perth for Chicken Kitchen Ready Product) Bruce Fyfe and Gary Connachar.



Make it with Meat Awards Spring 2004: Chicken

DIAMOND

Chicken Cordon Bleu

Simon Howie, Perth

GOLD

Chicken Delight

Bruce Brymer, Brechin

Chicken & Black Pudding Parcel with Brown Mushroom Sauce

Grants Butchers, Dundee

Chicken Olive with Oatmeal and Onion Filling

Grossetts of Tayside

Fresh Angus Chicken Treats

James Pirie & Son, Newtyle

Chicken & Haggis Parcels

John Troup Butcher, Aboyne

Chicken Roast filled with Haggis

R T Stuart, Leven

Chicken Balls in Sweet & Sour Sauce

Prentice Butcher, Duns

Chicken & Coriander Burger - Gluten Free

Scott Brothers, Dundee

Mexican Chicken with Apricot Stuffing

Scott Brothers, Dundee

Ballotine of Chicken

Simon Howie, Perth

Smokey Bacon Chicken Wrap

Bert Fowlie, Strichen

Heilen Chicken

Ian J McIntosh, Fraserburgh

Ballotine of Chicken with Pancetta, sage and mushroom stuffing

Blackwood of Kilmacolm

Hebridean Chicken

William McFarlane, Bowmore, Islay

Chicken Cushion

Charles McHardy, Stonehaven

Chicken Wellington

Blackwood of Kilmacolm

SILVER

French Garlic Chicken Breast Roast

R T Stuart, Leven

Inside Out Viek

Duncan Fraser & Son, Inverness

Cheesy Chicken Rolls

Forbes Raeburn & Sons, Huntly

Stuffed Chicken Crown in Tomato and Basil Sauce

Crombies of Edinburgh

Greece Supreme

John Saunderson, Edinburgh

Baltic Chicken

Patricks of Camelon

Lemon Chicken

Patricks of Camelon

Chinese Chicken Wrap

W Simpson & Sons, Leven

Balmoral Chicken stuffed with haggis wrapped in bacon

Alex Jack (Butchers) Ltd, Stranraer

Chicken & Apricot Breast Roast

Andrew Gillespie, Glasgow

Chicken Roasties

Robertson Jeen, Bearsden

BRONZE

Chicken & Luxury Plum Olive

Ewan Morrice, Stuartfield

Serendipity

Food for Thought, Ullapool

Barbecue Chicken Kebabs

Forbes Raeburn & Sons, Huntly

Fiery Chicken Fillets

Forbes Raeburn & Sons, Huntly

Chicken Fillet Stuffed With Ham, Smoked Cheese and Asparagus

Iain Moir Quality Butcher, Grantown on Spey

Citrus Lemon & Parsley Chicken

T Johnston, Falkirk and Dunfermline

Chicken Wraps

Halliwell's Butchers, Selkirk

Mediterranean Style Chicken Roulade

Blackwood of Kilmacolm

Tasty Tuscan Chicken

Mearns T McCaskie, Wemyss Bay

Chicken Tikka Sizzlers

Robertson Jeen, Bearsden

Chicken Italianne

Charles McHardy, Stonehaven

Chicken Sporrán

Charles McHardy, Stonehaven

Silver Darling

Charles McHardy, Stonehaven

Call to assess risks of smuggling

9 March 2004

The CIEH for an assessment of the risks to human health posed by illegal meat imports. Jenny Morris, CIEH policy officer, joined representatives from the Farmer's Union of Wales, the International Fund for Animal Welfare and the Bushmeat Campaign, at a news conference at the House of Commons to highlight the potential dangers of meat smuggling.

It is believed that up to 1 million tonnes of illegal meat is smuggled into the country each year, in passengers' hand luggage and concealed in sea and air freight. As well as ordinary products, bush meat – such as grass cutter, antelope and monkey – is brought into the UK. Campaigners point out that the foot and mouth virus may have entered the county in smuggled meat.

In March 2003, DEFRA and the Food Standards Agency, were given a year to produce a "step change" in their work on imports. In April 2003, responsibility for seizing smuggled meat products was transferred to HM Customs and Excise.

Ms Morris told EHN: "Given the level of public concern on this issue, revealed by a recent Mori poll, a review urgently needs to be done on the potential threat to human health from illegal meat imports."

Ms Morris also said that assessments of the FSA and DEFRA's step change, which are due to be presented to government, should be put into the public domain and that data should be published on the effectiveness of Customs in its anti-smuggling role.

Somerfield fuels consolidation drive

18 March 2004

Somerfield has joined the battle for market share in the convenience store sector with the purchase of Abernethy, the 147-year old retail and distribution business based at Bridge of Don.

Somerfield has paid an undisclosed sum for Abernethy, which operates 36 convenience stores, has franchise arrangements with operators of five other stores, and distributes to a further 130 stores, all of which operate under the 'Mace' brand. Net assets acquired were £4.8 million as at 31 March 2003.

The move follows January's purchase by Tesco of Adminstore, which owns the Harts and Europa brands, and J Sainsbury's acquisition last month of Bells Stores, which is based in the North East.

The convenience store sector is seen as the sole area of the grocery sector which is open to consolidation after the Competition Commission, in its investigation of the takeover of Safeway by Wm Morrison, cautioned over further mergers between supermarket giants.

John von Spreckelsen, the executive chairman of Somerfield, said that Abernethy, which is based in Aberdeen, would complement the group's existing store portfolio in Scotland.

"We look forward to combining Abernethy's expertise and strengths in core convenience categories with Somerfield's strengths in grocery, fresh and chilled foods," Mr von Spreckelsen added.

The Abernethy management team will remain in place, a strategy echoing that followed by Sainsbury in its Bells acquisition.

What's The Beef?

14 March 2004

Scotch beef is regarded as the best in the world but how can we be sure we're getting the real thing? Food critic and author Joanna Blythman meets the Quality Meat Scotland kitchen hit squad for the *Sunday Herald*

A chef, resplendent in gingham trews and snowy whites, is sat on his favourite stool, sipping an espresso. He is savouring this relatively tranquil point in the day and writing the menu, on which the essential must-have dish is the ever popular sirloin or fillet of prime Scotch beef.

As he muses over whether to serve it with a red wine jus, a truffle mash or a medley of wild mushrooms, the phone rings. There's an inspector in reception. No, he doesn't want to check fire doors or first aid kits. He isn't an Environmental Health Officer either. He's here to check that the beef on the menu is what it says it is.

Every day, people in restaurants pay a premium for the privilege of eating what they trustingly believe to be Scottish beef. The word "Scotch" attached to "beef" adds a halo of provenance. Add "Aberdeen Angus" or even just "Angus" into the description and you can tap into consumers' highest expectations ... and wallets.

These days in an upscale restaurant, a price tag of £18 or thereabouts is fairly standard for a main course dish featuring a prime cut of Scotch beef. For this money, we should surely be getting the best beef that Scotland has to offer ... with knobs on.

There's just one problem. The figures for Scotch beef produced, and Scotch beef consumed, simply don't add up. At some point in the supply chain, beef from outside Scotland is being passed off as Scotch, or being labelled confusingly to imply it is Scotch.

Such is the concern among farmers that the organisation that represents the red meat industry – Quality Meat Scotland – has set up a Traceability Squad, headed up by Stewart Cameron, formerly executive chef at Turnberry Hotel in Ayrshire. He has the task of policing restaurants and making them prove that diners are "getting what they think they are getting".

Cameron began his inspections this month, restricted to members of the Scotch Beef Club – establishments signed up to serving meat that satisfies exacting conditions. Loyal to his profession and highly experienced, Cameron's instinct so far is that chefs are not the main problem. "Chefs are buying in good faith, although some of them haven't a clue about what they are buying. So I've got to educate them. But it's the other end of the supply chain that I'm worrying about," he says. It is thought that some companies in the middle of the supply chain are sourcing cheaper meat, commonly from the Republic of Ireland, and passing it off as Scotch to pubs, restaurants and hotels.

"When suppliers simply write on an invoice, 'fillet of beef', without any other documentation, what does that mean?" asks Cameron. What he intends to stress to chefs is that there are now simple methods for checking provenance. "Since BSE, every animal has had a passport. Post-slaughter, it has a kill ticket. That tells you everything you need to know about it, even its great- great-grandfather." His mission is to get chefs to check these details to ensure they are receiving the real thing.

Cameron's audits, reinforced by four other inspectors co-ordinating efforts among catering and retail butchers, are aimed at protecting the integrity of Scotch beef. Although the Scots are fond of asserting that they produce the best food ingredients in the world, when it comes to beef we are on strong ground. While the French mount a passionate case for their Charolet beef, the

Italians for their Piedmontese, the world is generally happy to acknowledge that traditional Scotch beef – Aberdeen Angus in particular – is the best available.

Our traditional Galloway, Shorthorn and Highland breeds are also highly rated by butchers in the UK but they are not known internationally. Since 1862 when Aberdeen-Angus was first officially registered, this distinctive breed of black cattle has been pre-eminent. Breed apart, Scotland has a reputation for rearing beef in a traditional manner from “beef suckler” herds.

This contrasts sharply with countries more focused on intensive “barley beef” production where high-yielding, often continental breeds of cattle are fattened up quickly on cereals. It is also quite a different production system from the cheaper beef which is produced as a by-product of the dairy industry. Scotland’s climate and landscape is well-suited to “extensive” (outdoors and natural) beef production.

In experienced hands, this uniquely Scottish combination of breeding and feeding make for beef renowned for its eating quality. In recognition of this, Scotch beef has been awarded much sought-after Protected Geographical Indication status by the European Commission.

True Scotch beef clearly deserves the premium it commands, not only in restaurants, but in shops and supermarkets. Yet Quality Meat Scotland has found numerous examples of beef inaccurately labelled in supermarkets throughout the UK. One customer at Kwiksave’s Lichfield store bought “Scotch fillet steak”; the small print read “slaughtered and cut in Namibia”. (Kwik Save’s meat service is franchised to independent butchers.)

Last month, sirloin steak was selling as “Scotch” in Safeway’s Gyle store in Edinburgh, although its identification label showed it had been slaughtered at a Bedfordshire abattoir. (Safeway says all its beef labelled “Scotch” has been reared and slaughtered in Scotland, and is investigating the matter.)

Though the consumer might believe that anything labelled as “Scotch” fulfils the spirit of that word from field to plate, this has not necessarily been the case. To qualify as “Scotch”, beef should be reared and slaughtered in Scotland, but it can be cut and packed elsewhere.

The official interpretation of “reared in Scotland” has also been looser than many might suppose. As long as cattle spent 90 days here, that counted as “reared in Scotland”. Consequently, Irish and English cattle were, in the words of one industry insider, “being sent to Scotland for their holidays” then sold, perfectly legally, as Scotch.

This loophole is about to be closed. From June, cattle will need to have lived their entire lives in Scotland. Under the old system, given that meat packing firms often have plants in Scotland, Eire, Northern Ireland and England, there was more room for manoeuvre.

“One can imagine it might be quite easy for an unscrupulous organisation to shoot meat from various countries around for packing and labelling,” says Louise Welsh of Quality Meat Scotland. Some retailers have done very little to clear up consumer confusion, even benefiting from it by using labels which, while entirely legal, allow consumers to put two and two together and come up with five. Many otherwise savvy consumers jump to the conclusion that Aberdeen Angus, or just Angus, automatically means Scottish.

Some may even believe that it comes from Aberdeen or Angus, unaware that it is a breed name not a geographical label. In fact, this breed is reared all over the world so it might just as easily be Irish or Argentinean.

The plot thickens. There is such a thing as Aberdeen Angus “cross” beef. That comes from cattle where Aberdeen Angus stock has been cross bred with higher-yielding continental breeds not generally known for their flavour, such as the Limousin. Though it isn’t pure-bred Aberdeen Angus, it is being sold under the generic Aberdeen Angus label.

Future Common Agricultural Policy reform could see a swing back to native breeds as farmers are given incentives to farm in a more environmentally friendly way. Aberdeen Angus, for example, thrives on low-quality pasture and fattens well on preserved grass (silage) and locally available cereal by-products.

It converts these more effectively than other breeds into high-quality beef with marbled fat, making it environmentally desirable. At the moment, however, your Aberdeen Angus could be only 50% the real McCoy. Such labelling is not illegal.

Last month beef sold in Asda’s “Extra Special” range was prominently labelled “Mature Aberdeen Angus Beef”. A more detailed inspection of the pack made clear that the beef was cross-bred beef, and either Irish or British. Under pressure from MSP Stuart Maxwell, who campaigned to have food produced in Scotland clearly labelled as such so consumers can support Scottish farmers, Asda has now agreed to label packs clearly as “Scottish beef” as opposed to “British” when the meat is indeed Scotch.

The Scottish beef industry is on the case too. Quality Meat Scotland has got the bit between its teeth and appears really reluctant let go until it exposes all the mysteries around Scotch beef. The organisation has embarked on a public awareness campaign that suggests it really means business. It’s time to start asking more questions about the beef on our plates, it seems. And don’t accept any old tartan fluff as the answer either.

Getting to the meat of the matter

Don’t assume that because you see the words Aberdeen Angus the beef is Scottish. In a restaurant, before you stump up for a pricey “Scotch” steak, quiz the front-of-house staff on why the chef is sure that the beef he is using is Scottish. If it is meant to be Aberdeen Angus, does that refer to pure-bred Aberdeen Angus, or just a cross ? Expect highly specific answers: the name of the farm or the herd, references to certification, kill tags and so on. Uninformative answers such as “the chef says it comes from Company X” are simply not good enough.

In butcher’s shops or at supermarket meat-counters where beef is sold loose, look for the same information. Any good Scottish butcher should be able to tell you, with some precision, where his or her beef comes from. When you are considering buying pre-packed beef in supermarkets, don’t just clock the most obvious details on the packaging, look for the small identification label. This will have a code, such as UK1598, which shows where the cattle was slaughtered. If it comes from Scotland, that number will begin with a 1. If you want to be sure it was butchered in Scotland, look for the cutting code. This should also begin with a 1. If the country of birth, rearing and slaughter is the same, the label can simply state “country of origin”.

These regulations apply only to fresh or frozen beef. Mince is not covered. Neither are beef products with added ingredients – such as peppered steak – so look for some additional information if you want to be certain you’re buying Scotch.

Look out for a blue thistle logo saying “Specially Selected Scotch Beef”. This means that the cattle has been reared and slaughtered in Scotland by farmers who have signed up to strict standards which guarantee traceability from field to plate. These standards are detailed, covering issues like animal welfare and cattle feed, and they are policed. Some farmers have already been ejected

from a parallel assurance scheme for pork because they were not adhering to standards. You can read these standards at www.speciallyselected.co.uk

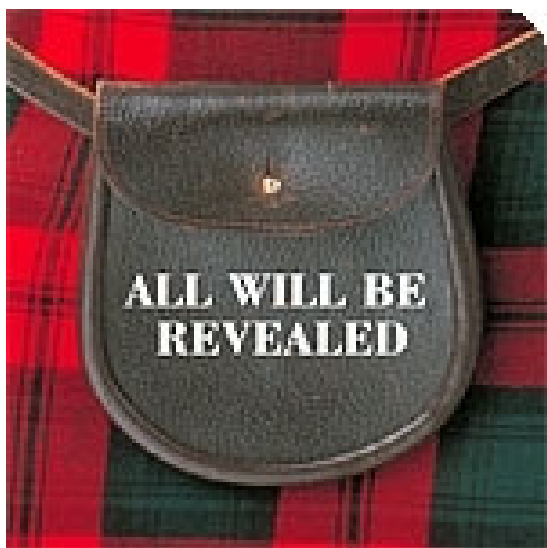
Put pressure on suppliers of school meals – whether it's the local authority or contract caterers – to guarantee the source of their beef by handing a letter to your children's headteacher which can then be passed on to the appropriate person.

It is widely thought that the lowest grade of meat makes its way into schools, hospitals and similar establishments. Say that you want the beef served to be reared, slaughtered and butchered in Scotland from a supplier who offers total traceability and maximum information about its provenance.

One Million Scottish Households Targeted by Scotch Beef Labelling Campaign

In what's the biggest public information exercise ever carried out by the red meat industry in Scotland, over one million leaflets are being sent out to consumers to advise them on how tell if the beef they're buying is Scotch.

The campaign has been developed by Quality Meat Scotland, the organisation representing the Scottish red meat industry, to help shoppers see at a glance whether or not it's Scotch beef on the shelves. The leaflets, included in editions of Scottish broadsheet and tabloid newspapers, offer practical information on the legislation governing the labelling of beef and advice on identifying Scottish codes on packs.



QMS Communications Manager, Louise Welsh, said: "The Scottish red meat industry has earned its global reputation for producing high quality beef and upholding high production standards throughout the chain from gate to plate. As a result Scotch beef is a popular choice with consumers, so much so, 57% of Scots say they're prepared to pay more for it.

"However, an increasing number of consumers also say they're concerned about the accuracy of food labelling and our campaign is aimed at making sure that as far as Scotch beef is concerned, they can be sure about what they're buying. This latest phase of our initiative will take a powerful message about the quality of our beef and the standards of our industry into more than a million Scottish homes."

The leaflets show the three compulsory codes on packs which indicate the origin of the beef. To be Scotch beef the slaughter code must begin with the number 1. In addition, the individual codes of Scottish processing companies are included on a tear out section to be held by consumers for easy reference.

Quality Meat Scotland is also tackling the issue of the provenance of Scotch beef being sold in UK restaurants. Although 71% of consumers believe they're eating beef from local producers, the reality is their supplies only account for around 40% of the food service market.

Copies of the Leaflets are available from Quality Meat Scotland. Tel: 0131 472 4112

QMS Announces Network of Industry Funded Monitor Farms

Three Monitor Farms, based on the successful New Zealand self help model, will be set up in Scotland by Quality Meat Scotland. Monitor Farms have been used in New Zealand for many years to help farmers share information and test knowledge that can improve the profitability of their businesses. The idea is also being used successfully in Wales.

QMS will invest £20,000 per year in each Farm project over the next three years and the Scottish Agricultural College has been appointed to manage the work. Within QMS, the work is an important part of a programme of technology transfer overseen by the R&D Committee.



The three Monitor Farms will be chosen to cover the range of production systems that exist in the Scottish cattle and sheep sectors and to extend the concept of Monitor Farms into the North, North East and South West of Scotland. This will compliment the two experimental Monitor Farm projects already set up by SEERAD.

Chief Executive, Jan Polley, says: "At the heart of the success of the Monitor Farms model is that farmers learn best from each other. As global markets become ever more competitive, every farmer is striving to make their business more profitable. Monitor Farms can help with this and ensure that our industry benefits from the millions of pounds of research undertaken on their behalf, often by levy bodies, over the years."

Gerry Thomson, General Manager of MeatNZ, the equivalent body to QMS in New Zealand, and a speaker at QMS's annual conference on Tuesday 16th March added: "The Monitor Farms concept has been tried and tested in New Zealand and is proven to reap financial rewards for farmers who take part. Producers in the Scottish red meat industry face similar challenges to those in New Zealand and therefore I am sure our very positive experiences can be echoed in Scotland."

QMS Research & Development Committee members are: Chris Gilbert-Wood (Chairman), Adam Muggoch, Alan Craig, Andrew Elliot, John Craig, Neil McGowan, Nick Ambrose (SEERAD), Robert McNee.

Industry Information

29 March 2004

Market Report: February 2004

Scottish cattle prices have come off their seasonal highs as would be expected during January and early February, falling 8p/kg dwt, but continue to be well ahead of year earlier levels. In contrast deadweight prices in England and Wales have increased by 1p/kg dwt over the same period. Over the same period last year Scottish deadweight prices declined 4p/kg and English and Welsh prices remained stable.

Scottish auction market prices, although back from the December highs, show unusual behaviour by increasing during February. Deadweight prices, where reporting lags the auction price by one week, have shown an element of stabilisation but do not yet show an increase.

Scottish abattoir throughputs during January, as reported to SEERAD, show an increase of 2% compared to 2003. The same data for England and Wales recorded a decrease of 3%. This variation in availability may explain some of the difference in price behaviour between Scotland and England and Wales.



Scottish Federation Golf Day

King's Course, Gleneagles

Date: Wednesday, 28. April 2004

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Coffee/tea and Bacon Rolls: 07:30-10:00

In the **Dormy Clubhouse Grill**

=====

Golf - King's 10:10-15:30

Buffet Lunch 14:00-16:30

In the **Dormy Clubhouse Grill Included**

=====

Package £75.00 per person

Package includes:

Coffee/tea and Bacon Rolls

1 basket of balls for Golf Academy

1 round of golf on the King's course

Golfers buffet lunch

VAT

Entry Form was enclosed with the March Newsletter.

Gleneagles Golf Club is former home of the Scottish Open and the King's Course is still regarded by many as the No.1 course at what has become one of the leading golf resorts in the world.

Designed by the legendary James Braid, the Kings Course was opened in 1919, since when hundreds of thousands of golfers have fallen in love with both it and the surrounding scenery.

A moorland course, it requires good course management from start to finish, with many of the holes becoming known throughout homes all over Britain in the Seventies and Eighties through the BBC's popular 'Pro-Celebrity Series'.

The 14th, for instance, is a short par-4 where an accurate tee shot can glean a rich reward while the closing hole, a par-5 where the tee shot is played towards a huge saddle in the middle of the fairway, is another gem.

EVENT NOW FULLY SUBSCRIBED

EU Food Hygiene Legislation

In the European Commission White Paper on food safety of January 2000, one of the top priorities was to consolidate and simplify existing food hygiene legislation. The aim was to achieve a high degree of public assurance in the safety of food through a system of effective and proportionate controls. The existing legislation comprises 16 commodity specific EU Directives and one Directive on general food law.

In July 2000, the Commission issued a package of five linked proposals as follows:
Proposed Regulation for food hygiene rules applicable to all food sectors (H1);
Proposed Regulation for specific hygiene rules applicable to products of animal origin (H2);
Proposed Regulation for official controls on products of animal origin (H3);
Proposed Directive to consolidate existing animal health provisions (H4) (now adopted); and
Proposed Directive to repeal existing Directives and make various savings provisions (H5).

Present state of negotiations on the proposals

On 27 October 2003 the Council of Ministers formally adopted a Common Position on First Reading of the four remaining food hygiene proposals (i.e. H1, H2, H3 and H5). H4 was adopted in the EU in December 2002 (Directive 2002/99/EC) and will come into force in January 2005.

The latest versions of the remaining 4 proposals have now returned to the European Parliament for Second Reading. There is a possibility of agreement being reached and the proposals entering into force in the first half of 2004. If the formula agreed in the Council for the date of application is adopted, the legislation will apply from 1 January 2006, or 18 months after entry into force, whichever is the later.

Although the negotiations are not concluded there is a UK-wide consultation that covers the interests of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Aim of this consultation

The three main EC Regulations that make up the package (H1, H2 and H3) will be directly applicable and therefore constitute the law in each Member State of the EU. National legislation is not required nor indeed allowed to give effect to the EU Regulations, beyond providing for their enforcement in the UK. However, there are a number of areas in the Regulations that either require or allow Member States to adopt certain provisions as appropriate in their national law.

This consultation seeks any comments you may have either in general or within your specific area of interest prior to the FSA preparing national legislation and guidance to apply the EU Regulations in the four countries of the UK. The results of this consultation will feed into the development of draft national legislation.

A summary of the main areas:

- the national rules to apply to certain categories of direct sale exempted from the EU Regulations;
- the rules to apply to the supply of food of animal origin from one retail establishment to another;
- the form that registration of food business operators should take;
- how to make lists of approved establishments available to other Member States and the public;
- whether or not to use individual approval codes in addition to an approval number and whether secondary numbers for units of wholesale markets should be used;
- whether or not food chain information could accompany animals to the slaughterhouse rather than being provided in advance, in certain circumstances;
-

Comments are also requested concerning potential areas in existing national food hygiene legislation that need to be retained because they are not contained within the scope of the new European consolidated legislation. SFMTA will be responding by the deadline of 9th June 2004.

Low carb diets appeal to over half the population

19 March 2004

Over half of all Americans have tried a low carb diet, are currently following a reduced or low carb diet or are considering trying such a diet, according to new research.

Low carb diets such as Atkins, The Zone, and The South Beach Diet have swept the US. With constant news regarding Americans' struggle with obesity, low carb diets appeal by including high fat products that before were considered taboo.

Mintel's report on low carb foods (which will be published in May 2004) finds that over 50% of Americans have tried the diet in the past, are currently on the diet or are cutting back carbs, or would try it in the future. The reach of low carb dieting affects all aspects of the food industry, from the declining sales of potatoes, refrigerated orange juice and instant rice, to the repositioning of classics such as beef jerky, to the battle in the beer cooler over whose product is lowest in carbohydrates.

A healthier way to eat?

Mintel's exclusive research on low carbohydrate diets also reveals that low carb dieters follow the strict regimen for reasons other than just weight loss. Surprisingly, of those who are on a low carb diet, 75% cut back on carbs because they believe it is a healthier way to eat. Nearly two-thirds of low carb dieters say that they follow the diet in order to lose weight. These results show that the low carb phenomenon may well be a movement in attitudes toward food and eating. In addition, three out of every five low carb dieters say that they plan to limit their carbohydrate intake for life. One of the difficulties, however, with low carb diets is that the strict eating plan is hard to maintain - 40% of low carb dieters say that it's hard to stay on a low carb diet for more than a few months at a time. There are also the special occasions where 67% of low carb dieters don't limit the carbs they consume.

Low carb dieters have the luxury of eating foods that are higher in fat, but there are certain foods that they have to omit such as pastas and breads. Over half of those on low carb diets have either totally stopped eating or are eating less bread and/or pasta. However, other foods such as meat, poultry and seafood, nuts, and meat snacks have benefited from this diet trend. One-third of these dieters report eating more meat, poultry and seafood and one-third report eating more nuts. The nuts and dried fruits market grew 7.9% from 2002 to 2003, and the meat snacks market grew a whopping 147% from 1997 to 2002.

"Americans' infatuation with low carb dieting does not mean the death of bread. The diet does allow certain carbohydrates after the initial 'Induction' phase, and this is why we are seeing sales of wheat and specialty breads increase to a degree," says Dr. Marla Commons, senior research analyst for Mintel. "This diet craze has many facets which appeal to consumers in the short term, but the real question is if they stick to it long term."

America leads the way

While experts are still debating the long-term effects of these types of diets, consumers' short-term success at losing weight has created enough of a wave of dieters that many food manufacturers and restaurants are responding to consumer demand with Atkins-acceptable meals. Low carbohydrate foods could potentially change the face of new product introductions and the entire food industry. Consumers want low carb food options and 42% of those on the diet say that they are worth paying extra for, and one out of five of those not currently on the low carb diet agree.

According to Mintel's Global New Products Database, there are 930 new products bearing low carb claims which were introduced in the last five years, with most of the growth coming in 2003 and 2004. The US has seen 375 new products with low carb claims this year. This is substantial in comparison to the 289 products in all of 2003 that were introduced with low carb claims. By far, the US leads the way in the low carb arena in terms of new product introductions. Second to the US is Canada, with 37 low carb products year to date in 2004. From a global perspective, only five countries have products in this category: US, Canada, UK, South Africa, and Israel. Of the low carb products introduced, 98% have been in North America and those outside North America have been, almost exclusively, imported from the United States.

Core livestock trade raises turnover and profit at ANM

wrote DAN BUGLASS in the Herald

26 March 2004

ANM Group, which is one of the largest farmer-owned businesses in the UK, has had another successful year. The trading profit for the year to December 31, 2003 rose from £1.43m to £1.53m, while throughput increased by £10.86m to £158.52m.

The core business of the Inverurie, Aberdeenshire-based ANM remains livestock trading, and significant increases in the value of both cattle and sheep saw the turnover rise by £3.18m to £72.88m. The auction business, which lost around £500,000 in 2001 as a result of the foot-and-mouth crisis, has recovered remarkably and recorded a profit of £453,000 compared to £244,000 in 2002.

Share capital shows a rise of £873,000 to £3.6m, with the directors recommending a dividend of 5.75%. The ANM Group is also heavily involved in the abattoir and processing sector with Scotch Premier, which operates from Inverurie, boosting its profit from £326,000 to £583,000.

However Yorkshire Premier, with plants in Sheffield and South Kirkby, experienced a more difficult year with the trading profit falling by almost £500,000 to £365,000 on a turnover of £27.4m. ANM Group has moved into the catering sector in recent years and on this front its subsidiary, Highland Cuisine, increased turnover from £961,000 to £1.65m with a profit of £34,000. Brian Pack, ANM chief executive, said: "The combined trading profit, whilst up on last year, is still short of where we would like to be, given a turnover of £73m.

"The reassuring bit for all involved with the group – members, staff and customers – is that our results have been consistent over the last few years, demonstrating the strength of our diversified business."

Expansion into a range of non-agricultural activities has been a feature of the ANM Group policy over the last decade and that will continue, according to Dennis Cowe, the chairman who has intimated his intention to stand down after five years.

He said: "It is fair to say that the future will be a continuation of the past, albeit with new opportunities being investigated and, where appropriate, adopted and annexed to the group mix. We will continue with the policy of investing in our people as this is clearly the main resource we have, while at the same time looking to improve our physical resources and grow the business."

An indication of that policy came yesterday when Pack announced the acquisition of Forres-based Highland Country Foods. This business was established in 1971 as a manufacturer and distributor to the butchery trade with a special emphasis on the production of cured pork, sausages, haggis, salamis, and other speciality meats. Current turnover is £2.2m with a staff of 20.

Act to end disabled discrimination

wrote *JIM DOW* in the *Scotland on Sunday*

28 March 2004

IT IS the most significant piece of consumer legislation for a decade. But when the third and final part of legislation arrives on October 1 this year it is still going to take a lot of people by surprise, even though there are indications the message is at last getting through.

The Disability Discrimination Act makes it unlawful for service providers, landlords and other persons to discriminate against disabled people in certain circumstances.

Since December 2 1996 it has been unlawful for service providers to treat disabled people less favourably for a reason related to their disability.

Since October 1 1999 service providers have had to make "reasonable adjustments" for disabled people such as providing extra help or making changes in the way they provide their services.

And from October 1 this year, where a physical feature makes it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of the service, a service provider will have to take reasonable steps to remove the feature, or alter it so that it no longer has an effect, or provide a reasonable means of avoiding it or provide a reasonable alternative way of making the service available.

This final phase will have substantial implications for the property industry but these regulations have been on the cards for some time so almost every commercial building constructed in the past four or five years will comply with the new legislation. However, there must be a question mark over many older ones.

Last year, Capability Scotland, the country's leading disability organisation, carried out research with support from one of the UK's leading law firms.

The research highlighted significant issues which had to be addressed including access problems, limited parking, poor staff training and practically no consideration of adjustments to business practice. The report also found a worrying gap between the progress of large national chains and independent stores, with the former coming out better overall.

Key issues were: a lack and abuse of disabled parking spaces, half of independent retailers/outlets had no disabled parking within walking distance and even when disabled parking was provided non-badge holders were wrongly using 44% of spaces; 40% of independent retailers/outlets had no disabled access (only 2% of national chains had no disabled access); in a third of all retailers/outlets which were more than one storey there was no disabled access or it was blocked by storage items; reasonable adjustments such as low counters, ticket booths, alternative formats for menus, programmes etc were uncommon across retailers/outlets; a quarter of pubs and restaurants did not have disabled toilets; overall staff were helpful - but most had not received any training on disability equality which could help them make sure the business was meeting disability law.

Michelle Hegarty, director of communications at Capability Scotland, said: "Our report clearly showed that most retailers and leisure outlets might not be able to meet disability legislation and certainly had a lot of work to do.

"It's worrying to see a gap develop between large chains and independents - many people need the access to their local corner shop or café as much as to the big grocery or DIY store. For those businesses who do invest in training and adjustments - many of which are not costly - they will be

able to attract a much wider range of customers including people with a disability, families with a disabled child and older people.

"It's unclear what is holding business back but we need to see change now. We are calling for a realistic assessment informed by business, government and the Disability Rights Commission about how the consumer rights in 2004 can be implemented - especially for smaller independent retailers who are clearly struggling with their obligations."

Capability Scotland is now carrying out further research to assess how prepared the country is six months away from October 1.

Hegarty said: "We are also organising a series of business breakfasts and, judging by the response, it is clear that businesses want to know more."

How firms can serve special needs

wrote *JIM DOW* in the Scotland on Sunday

28 March 2004

IT HAS been estimated that disabled customers in the UK spend around £50bn a year. So complying with the Disabled Discrimination Act is not just abiding by the law - it is good business sense.

Businesses in Scotland have long missed a potential commercial opportunity to expand and increase sales by making their goods and services available to an overlooked sector. There are 800,000 disabled people in Scotland - one fifth of the adult population - with spending power of £4bn.

The first step for a business is to assess how it stands in relation to the legislation. What is likely to be deemed reasonable for a large business with multiple sites would probably not be deemed reasonable adjustments for a small, independent corner shop. Margaret Blackwood Technical Consultants (MBTC), a specialist architectural design service focused on practical solutions for disabled people, has worked with many clients to carry out disability access audits of their premises

All areas of the client's business are considered, and the manner in which they provide their services to customers. This includes: access from the road/car park; movement around the building; toilet or bathing facilities; signage, lighting and marketing materials; facilities for disabled staff and staff training; fire drill, and the procedures and policies regarding disability.

Sheena Stone, marketing and commercial development manager with MBTC, says: "Businesses are often worried about the expense which might result from having their premises audited. But the audit might not result in large costs through physical adaptations at all. The legislation is as much about the service provided as the building itself.

"For some service providers it could be appropriate to make the service available to a disabled customer in a different way, rather than adapting the building." For example, a small hardware store in an old building with a narrow entrance at the top of a flight of steps could serve disabled people by bringing goods to the customer at the entrance.

The best way forward for Scottish businesses, says Stone, is to grasp this issue by the horns and to see it as a commercial opportunity with huge PR value for the organisation, rather than something which they would rather avoid.

Debt and feud spell the end for pork producer

wrote *JOHN ROBERTSON and FRANK URQUHART* in *The Scotsman*

17 March 2004

SCOTPIGS, Scotland's second largest pork producer which has been plagued for years by allegations of appalling standards of animal welfare, was finally wound up yesterday following a bitter feud between the company's leading directors.

A judge's decision to bring in provisional liquidators to take over the running of the company marked the end of the reign of Arthur Simmers, the Aberdeenshire farmer nicknamed "King Arthur", and one of the most controversial figures in Scottish agriculture.

Mr Simmers, a former chairman of the Scottish Pig Association, set up Scotpigs six years ago after his previous pig empire, A Simmers Ltd, crashed with debts of £10 million.

Last December, Scotpigs was expelled from the industry's Quality Meat Assurance Scheme after animal-welfare activists secretly filmed the squalid conditions in which pigs were being reared at a number of the company's farms.

The decision left Scotpigs without a Scottish market for the 150,000 pigs which the company produces each year, worth an estimated £6 million in sales.

Yesterday, at the Court of Session in Edinburgh, Lady Paton ordered that the company should be wound up after she was told that Scotpigs had debts of more than £2 million.

The decision was last night welcomed by Advocates for Animals, the organisation which first produced the video evidence uncovering the appalling conditions in which pigs were being kept at Scotpigs' farms.

Yvonne Taylor, the organisation's campaigns manager, said: "Whilst Advocates for Animals welcomes the news that Scotpigs is closing, it is a shocking indictment on our legislation

that Scotpigs is being closed purely on financial grounds."

Lady Paton's decision to call in provisional liquidators followed a long-standing feud between Mr Simmers, of Mains of Bogfechel, Whiterashes, Aberdeenshire, and James Innes, of Dunscoft, Huntly, his co-director at Scotpigs.

Mr Innes, who had been a customer of Mr Simmers's former company, provided significant new capital in 1998 when the business ran into financial difficulties, becoming a 50 per cent shareholder and a director of Scotpigs.

But the court was told that the business continued to suffer various problems, including outbreaks of foot-and-mouth disease and the pig equivalent of AIDS. The Simmers family tried but failed to remove Mr Innes as a director and also failed to buy him out. Mr Innes, in turn, petitioned the court to have Scotpigs wound up under the Insolvency Act 1986.

Lady Paton said: "There is a deadlock, making the proper running of the business impossible. The Simmers family, who own 50 per cent of the shares, are at complete loggerheads with [Mr Innes] who owns the other 50 per cent. The two directors have no working relationship. They cannot agree on fundamental matters. They do not have adequate communication."

Last night, the future of Scotpigs, which has a workforce of 110 and farms in Aberdeenshire, West Lothian and Tayside, remained uncertain.

A Scotpigs spokesman said: "We are very disappointed at Lady Paton's verdict. We are seeking to appeal this decision and are in consultation with our legal counsel. We believe we can continue as a company and are intent on securing the future of our workforce and our farms."

Pig industry must change to survive

wrote *DAN BUGGLASS* in *The Scotsman*

THE UK pig industry is at a cross-roads, according to Andrew Peddie, a Fife farmer who is the Scottish representative on the British Pig Industry Executive. Speaking yesterday in Edinburgh at a conference staged by Aberdeen University on pig health, Peddie's assessment was stark.

He said: "Over the last ten years our competitive status within the EU has slipped. We used to be close to the top of the league, but now we are definitely in the bottom half. In fact, the average sow is now producing little more than 16-17 pigs per year."

Since 1998, the industry has been under enormous pressure. The demand for higher welfare standards in the UK than the rest of the EU has been a factor, but disease has been the major negative. Classical Swine Fever, foot-and-mouth and a range of serious wasting conditions have seen the national herd in Scotland fall below the 50,000 mark for the first time in living memory.

Peddie added: "The infrastructure of the industry has gone downhill, and most producers are now in survival mode. There has been minimal investment in upgrading facilities as producers stick their heads in the sand hoping that things might change."

However, he paid tribute to those who have remained in pig production.

Local initiatives on disease are now being rolled out nationally in an attempt to cut losses believed to be at least £50 million each year UK-wide.

One aspect of production which the pig industry must face is the banning of the use of antibiotics as growth promoters as from 1 January, 2006. Professor Mac Johnston of the Royal Veterinary College in London, said: "Resistance to antibiotics is not just an issue for farmers, but also for human health. There is a growing realisation that there is a connection. What we have to see is that these products are used more prudently in agriculture."

A recent survey suggests that the average veterinary bill for each sow is just short of £60 per year. Jamie Robertson of Aberdeen University said: "That figure is a little misleading and reflects a huge range.

"At the very worst end of the scale some producers are spending as much as £170 per sow. That means that they are spending more on medication than feed. That is simply not sustainable."

The survey also showed that producers who are members of farm assurance schemes are more aware of consumer perceptions of use of medicines and growth promoters. But too many pig farmers have a lot of catching up to do in terms of biosecurity.

Heinz to drop 'healthy eating' claim from cans of beans

23 March 2004

The UK unit of US food giant Heinz is reportedly planning to drop its "healthy eating" logo from cans of baked beans, spaghetti and soups, over fears the products will not meet government health targets.

FEDERATION HANDBOOK 2004-2005
Will come in a separate mailshot in ten days time.

BIZERBA

Bizerba much enjoyed its annual appearance at the Federation Trade show in Perth in September. This was an excellent opportunity to launch a number of new products and services to the Federation members including:

THE BS package - a brand new BS800 label printing scale and 15,000 custom designed colour labels with the retailers own-logo for less than £ 15 per week.

CE - The PC scale - a Windows-based scale with full-colour display offering top-end features including sophisticated customer marketing tools.

Eureka - Bizerba's highly regarded Stock Control & Retail Management system.

For more information, call Liesl Mochrie on 01442 240751

For Sale

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Wanted

32 Mincer please contact Stuart Reid, Burrelton telephone 01828 670262

Wanted

Dundee Rep Theatre is looking for a replica side of beef to use as a stage prop.
If anyone can help please contact John Miller on 01382 227684

Corporate Members

Corporate membership is by invitation and the following companies have supported the Federation by accepting our offer. Members should be aware that the following are supporting them: -

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Macnaughton & Watson, 423 Gallowgate, Glasgow, G40 2DY, Tel 0141 554 2757

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Scotweigh, Unit 2, Granary Square, Bankside, Falkirk, FK2 7XJ, Tel 01324 611311

Stockline Plastics, Grovepark Mills, Hopehill Road, Glasgow, G20 7NF, Tel 0800 262015

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