FEDERATION NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER FOR SCOTLAND'S CRAFT BUTCHERS

On behalf of the Scottish Federation of Meat Traders President Jamie Chapman wishes you all a Healthy, Happy and Successful New Year

JANUARY 2008

Happy New Year

With every New Year comes new hope and resolutions. No such thing as a post Christmas breather though since January brings the annual celebration of the birth of our National Bard, Robert Burns.

In 2008 butchers will see the trend continue towards local sourcing and purchasing from traditional and specialist outlets. This opportunity should not be missed and we will probably see more butchers alter their opening hours to reflect customer demand and in particular evening meal solutions.

January is always a time to ponder how the waistline has increased and the time of year when customers reconsider their eating habits. There is no doubt that consumers are seeking out healthier options whether it is leaner or reduced salt so we all need to take greater notice of that.

If we believe some of the pundits, things are going to be tighter in 2008. It has to be said that the commentators don't know whether they want interest rates reduced to stem off recession or raised to stop inflation running away. The only good thing about it is people still have to eat. We can accept that the cost of living is not reflected by the rates of inflation quoted but Credit Card debt and rising mortgage costs may well begin to bite.

Cabinet Minister Richard Lochhead recently looked ahead into the new year:- "We have challenges in 2008; we have the health check on the Common Agricultural Policy where we will all be paying very close attention to the future of the livestock sector and how agriculture support is linked to it. That is something we take very seriously. Also in 2008 the Scottish Government's new Food Policy being developed. Beef, lamb and pork and the rest of Scotland's fantastic produce will be at the heart of that National Food Policy.

"There is a huge opportunity here for environmentally friendly sourced food, there is also the economic and social dimension of that in promoting good quality Scottish food. There is cross party support building a National Food Policy for Scotland."

This Month

World Scotch Pie title for Buckhaven member

SFMTA member is awarded Scotland's best rural retailer

Feature on classy Charles Rennie MacIntosh Shop

FSA review Trans Fats

Sandy Crombie learns from school lesson

Scottish Market Prices

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News Release

17 December 2008

Lean Red Meat Ticks Boxes For Today's Consumer

New research from IGD, the grocery industry's think-tank, reveals that buying lean red meat is more important than ever before as far as consumers are concerned.

The independent survey into consumer attitudes has been commissioned by Quality Meat Scotland. The red meat industry body regularly looks to research to provide vital insights into changing attitudes that are the all important drivers behind what red meat a consumer buys.

The latest work from IGD* reveals:

- 50% of Scottish consumers say when buying red meat they look to check that the meat is lean – an increase of 15% in four years – and overtaking both price and sell by date for the first time

- 78% of Scottish shoppers say they buy Scotch Beef compared to 29% of English shoppers who say they buy English beef

- 74% of Scots say they buy their red meat from the supermarket – up 6% on the year before

QMS Chairman, Donald Biggar said: "Consumer attitudes to their red meat, what they look for in the shop and what they're prepared to pay a premium for, are constantly evolving. We need to know what they thinking so we can feed the right information into marketing campaigns and send out messages that can influence what people will buy.

"For example we have included information on the 40% reduction in the level of fat in red meat achieved by the Scottish industry in the last 30 years in our marketing material for the current Feel Good About Meat campaign, which highlights the positive health benefits of eating red meat as part of a balanced diet.

"Research like this is not just valuable to QMS though, it offers vital insights to individual businesses who may want to make adjustments to their own production or marketing activities that can give them a commercial advantage in the marketplace."

*IGD conducted 642 interviews in Scotland and 780 interviews in England with a sample adults aged 15+ between August and October. Findings are compared with similar research carried out over the past four years.

Vertebral Column delay might take until May

Following agreement of SCOFCAH in October it was previously reported that the regulation that would remove the need to remove vertebral column (VC) from over 24 month beef should be adopted by end January 2008. Translation into 22 languages delayed the submission of the draft to the European Parliament for scrutiny until 30th November but due to suspension of parliamentary work in November and December the notification will not be official until 21st January. Following that there is a three month period for referral through the EU Environment Committee. If the full time is taken on this procedure that will not conclude until the end of April. The regulation would not, therefore, take effect until May 2008 which is a bad ending to this whole sorry saga.

This news has been met by frustration from the meat industry with calls that FSA should act to review procedures to make the sale of over 24 month bone in beef more workable in 2008 until the requirement for of removal of vertebral column from over 24 month beef ceases.

Using FSA's own impact assessment figures the devaluation of prime cattle over 24 months in Scotland alone equates to £50m over the 2 year period, butchers costs are around £850k and wholesalers have suffered disruption to trade and financial penalties through movement and cutting restrictions and having to sell devalued boneless cuts.

The VC requirement was introduced to harmonise EU regulations after the resumption of UK beef exports. All this for no good public health reasons, negligible risk while restricting consumer choice but the cost is far greater than the value of the export market.

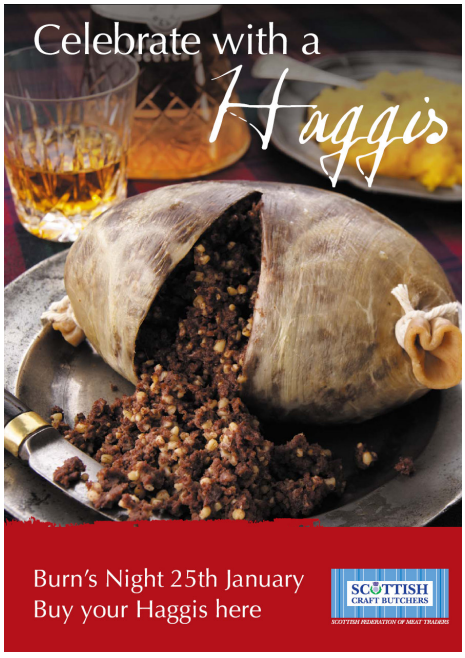
Amidst fears that all this falls on deaf ears FSA called a stakeholder meeting on 20th December where they agreed to examine a more acceptable way to handle wholesaler moves for cuts of over 24 month beef while working within the law. The crux of the matter is being able to demonstrate traceability of over 24 month beef once it is cut into wholesale cuts. A meeting will be called early in the new year but it is unlikely that trade in over 24 month beef will recover until all butchers can handle the product without fear of prosecution for using wrong knives, staining bones and paying for special disposal.

Haggis Point of Sale Material

In the first post of the new year you should receive a postal tube containing posters (sample enclosed) and leaflets to assist your Haggis sales in January. This material is uniquely produced for SFMTA members only. Where branch shops are paid for, the main address will receive posters and leaflets for all branches. If we have omitted any such outlets please contact the Federation office immediately.

Extra Leaflets
If you require further leaflets the cost will be £30 per thousand + Vat (inc delivery).

Here's to a Happy Haggis season.



Do they know its Christmas time?

McKirdy's in Port Seton and Colin Peat's shop in Haddington certainly did on Christmas Eve!





In the Borders town of Duns all roads seemed to lead to Prentice Butchers in Golden Square. Parking was extremely difficult but Craig and his mother Moira had been busy since early morning but were calmly serving all their customers with their orders.



In East Linton there was only one shop doing all the business. The locals chatted as they waited patiently to collect their orders at Andersons Quality Butchers (top left). It was like bees around a honey pot while in St Boswells Craig Douglas and his brother had everything organised. They even had time to pose for the camera and explain to a customer the economics behind buying the Champion at the local Christmas Show.

Scotland's Best Rural Businesses Unveiled

The winners of Scotland's Best Rural Retailer Awards 2007 were unveiled in December at a ceremony at the Scottish Parliament and now go forward to the UK finals of the competition with the overall winners being announced at a ceremony in the House of Lords early in 2008.

The annual awards, organised by the Scottish Countryside Alliance, recognise the very best in Scotland's rural enterprise. The winners in the four categories were chosen out of dozens of nominations from every corner of Scotland.

The 2007 winners are:

Best Diversification: Gibb of Galston, Ayrshire
The Gibbs are a farming family that has diversified into a reclamation and landscaping business. According to the judges: "The company is an excellent example of salvaging old discarded unwanted items, reclaiming, restoring and re-using them.

"They give new life to what others would treat as waste. If they clear out a garden, they keep the soil, screen it and reuse as top soil. They salvage plants, shrubs and trees, and old tree stumps are kept and sold on as superb garden features that attract insects and birds. They also offer a landscape design service and specialise in the use of wholly reclaimed or natural products. "

Best Local Food Retailer: Knowes Farm Shop, East Linton, East Lothian
According to the judges: "Knowes is so much more than a farm shop. Anyone who has visited knows it is an experience. The farming, egg production and shop are all part of one farming partnership. It is the food chain in miniature.

"Hilary and Peter grow and produce some of the finest eggs, potatoes, vegetables and herbs. Almost 90 varieties of veg is harvested daily and brought in directly from the field. Customers say that it is the range, smell and taste of this fresh produce, together with the personal service and the amount of information available that keeps them going back time after time."

Best Traditional Business: Watt the Butcher, Montrose, Angus
According to the judges: "In today's supermarket age Neil Watt shows that exceptional quality of produce can still be achieved. The quality of the produce in his shop is always excellent, and the meat is well hung 'as it should be'. Neil knows the origin of all his meat, down to the nearest field.

"But the best bit of all is the atmosphere. Watt the Butcher is like a club or a meeting place where everybody knows each other. Service in the shop is excellent and the team are knowledgeable and friendly."

Best Village Shop or Post Office: Boat of Garten Post Office, Inverness-shire
According to the judges, Boat of Garten PO, run by Beth and David Woolsey, "offers a fantastic personal service". "Not only a post office, they also sell newspapers, fresh baked bread, excellent local vegetables and specialist foods, and offer hot coffee, internet access, book exchange, local information - the list is endless. It is a real community centre in a tiny shop run by lovely people.

"The Post Office acts as a mail hub for the Community Council and local companies. It is also the local box office selling tickets for village shows and events. Customers have been encouraged to travel with the Boat of Garten Post Office cotton shopping bag and take photos of it in all parts of the world, including Tiffany's in New York, the Space Shuttle in Houston, on a beach in Australia and by the EmpireStateBuilding."

SCA Chief Executive Tony Andrews said: "Our worthy winners, as well as all those businesses who were nominated, are the lifeblood of rural Scotland. They are innovative, they provide employment, they maintain valued traditions and they help hold our rural communities together. Thanks to them rural Scotland will remain a wonderful place to work, to live and to visit."

World Scotch Pie Championship 2008

Butchers pick up six of the top nine awards, including 1st, 2nd and 3rd in the World Scotch Pie Championships and Amos Smith is famous as Buckhaven in Fife is crowned the Scotch Pie capital of the World at the Scotch Pie Club awards ceremony.



The 2008 World Scotch Pie Champion is Amos Smith of WF Stark, 9 College Street, Buckhaven.

Laurent Vernet, Marketing Manager at Quality Meat Scotland presented Amos with the famous trophy at the presentation lunch on Thursday 29th November at Lauder College, Dunfermline.

Amos succeeds his former employer, Stuarts of Buckhaven as the holder of the top prize and is the fourth butcher to win the competition that is now in its ninth year.

Butchers picked up the top awards with Murdoch Brothers in Forres, and Boghall Butchers lifting the two runners up prizes. In the Bridie Category Stuarts of Buckhaven won the Diamond Award and in the Speciality Pastry category the runners up awards went to Bruce of the Broch for Chicken and Mealie Pie and to Grossetts of Tayside for their Lamb and Ginger Pie.

SCOTCH PIE prizes won by SFMTA members:-

World Champion		WF Stark, 9 College Street, Buckhaven
Gold and 1st Runner Up		Murdoch Brothers, 10-12 High Street, Forres
Gold and 2nd Runner Up		Boghall Butchers, 65 Margaret Street, Boghall
Gold		S Collins & Son, 7 Lindsaybeg Road, Muirhead
Silver		Bruce of the Broch, Broad Street, Fraserburgh
Bronze		Stuarts of Buckhaven, 8-12 College St, Buckhaven

After receiving an invitation to the awards lunch, Amos Smith knew that he was in line for a prize but as a first time entrant he never expected to lift the top award:-



"I thought I was coming to collect something in the Speciality category for my Pork, Cheese and Chive Sausage Roll. I love creating new products and trying things.

"To win the big one is certainly a shock to me. I have only been a year and a half in the butcher's shop that I now own. I altered the last owner's recipe to my own taste, I think I got it right for my taste but obviously the judges thought it was good. I still can't believe it!"

Amos knew that he was the only prize-winner in the room still to collect his award after the final gold award was announced. Either his invitation was a mistake or he was there to collect the title. He addressed the audience clutching the award:-

"It is really very awkward being up here. Mr Alan (Stuart) is my old boss and I can only say thanks. I learned so much off his company and I really appreciate being here. It is such a mixture of people that I have learned from."

Speaking after all the many photographs were taken Amos paid tribute to his manager while employed at Stuarts, someone who is now in direct competition to him:-

"I have a lot of respect for my mentor Derek McMahon, he is talented and creative. He has given me healthy competition. That's what business is all about, healthy competition to move us forward and develop things. It helps to increase the standard of your product as well. The most important thing I have found in the last year and a half is listening to my customers."

They have certainly fed back the touches that have elevated Amos to be the 'Pie King of the World' but he reckons that his customers' quest for value for money has focussed his attentions:-

"It goes down to money as well. If they have two pounds in their pocket you cannot aim at two pounds 50p. You have to be creative and make the product nice and tasty, good quality and not too much fat.

"Fat is important because it gives flavour but getting the right balance is another thing because you have to think about waistlines nowadays."

Amos who is 40, served his time at RT Stuart and worked as a relief manager for a supermarket before coming back to be butchery manager at the Stuarts, Buckhaven shop just along the road from the shop he now owns trading as WF Stark.

By Amos's own description it is only a small business selling under 100 scotch pies per week. That is about to change dramatically if the performance of previous winners is followed. Two full time and two part time members of staff might find that they will need extra hands and Amos suddenly realised that he would have to get on the phone smartly to his pie shell supplier, William Sword.

"I find that they are good with the product, they are very polite and if you have a problem they are wiling to listen. They are a good company to work with."

In the pie shells Amos uses Scotch Beef matured and supplied by St Andrews Wholesale Meat Co., salt, pepper and a little rusks all mixed up with that little magic.

"I inherited the recipe; it was a similar recipe to the one I had from an old traditional butcher, Mitchells in Ceres. I served two years in there and learned a lot."

BRIDIES

Diamond		Stuarts of Buckhaven, 8-12 College St, Buckhaven
Gold		Grossetts of Tayside, Arbroath Road, Dundee
Silver		Davidson Specialist Butchers, Burn Lane, Inverurie

SPECIALITY PASTRY PRODUCTS

Alan Stuart, the principal of the Scotch Pie Club, described the tremendous variety of wonderful products in the Speciality category - everything from fish, venison, lamb, beef, pork, vegetarian pies - products that will tempt new lines and encouraged butchers and bakers to keep up the innovation.

Gold and 1st Runner Up		Bruce of the Broch, Broad Street, Fraserburgh Chicken & Mealie Pie
Gold and 2nd Runner Up		Grossetts of Tayside, Arbroath Road, Dundee Lamb & Ginger Pie
Silver		Davidson Specialist Butchers, Burn Lane, Inverurie Pork Pie with Chicken and Ham
Silver		Murdoch Brothers, 10-12 High Street, Forres Chicken and Ham Pie
Bronze		Boghall Butchers, 65 Margaret Street, Boghall Poached Sole Veronique Pie
Bronze		F Ballard, 152 King Street, Castle Douglas Chicken and Mushroom Bake
Bronze		Boghall Butchers, 65 Margaret Street, Boghall Duck, Orange and Cranberry Pie



Pictured at the awards: Gilbert Grossett (Dundee), Lauren Vernet, John Davidson (Inverurie), Paul Boyle (Boghall), Jim Craig (Castle Douglas)

No Donkeys in Portobello

Following on from a very successful Food and Drink Challenge run by Portobello High School in partnership with Crombie's of Edinburgh in May last year, the winners of the event went on to further develop their product for sale in Sandy's Broughton Street shop - this has been very successful as Sandy Crombie revealed in his letter to the school:-

It gives me great pleasure to be able to update you on some recent events regarding our collaboration on the '**Sweet Chilli Dragon Sausage'**.

As you may be aware the sausage is currently on sale in our shop and I am delighted to say that it is fast becoming a firm favourite with our customers. We have had some excellent feedback and a lot of repeat customers. I am delighted that this joint project has resulted in such a successful launch and want to again thank all the teachers and pupils who helped.

But the news gets better!



In a recent UK-wide sausage competition we entered a variety of our sausages and were extremely happy to pick up a number of awards including the UK First Prize in the **'Reduced Fat/Salt'** category.

However, I am also very pleased to tell you that the Sweet Chilli Dragon Sausage received a **Gold Award.** This is a marvellous achievement as these awards are based on extremely stringent judging criteria including appearance, texture, cooking properties, suitability for the market and last but definitely not least, the taste!

I am sure that this is something you will wish to relate to all who were involved within the school particularly when 'healthy eating' in schools is such a topical subject. This type of success can only help to focus attention on quality, healthier and locally-sourced food as part of a balanced diet.

Perhaps this news is also worthy of further circulation via the Council Communications Department as a measure of our joint success and as encouragement to others to participate in the **Scottish Food and Drink Challenge** – I'll leave it for you to decide.

When the award certificate arrives I will be sure to send you on a copy. Once again, many thanks and keep up the good work.

Sandy Crombie

Butchers fined after injury

The manager and owners of a butchers shop have been fined a total of £20,500 after a 15-year-old boy lost part of his arm in a mincing machine without a guard.

As reported in the SFMTA Newsletter in 2006 Sam Ashworth's right hand was stuck in the machine at J&B Fitton butcher's shop in Oldham, Greater Manchester, for two hours before medics decided to amputate just above his elbow in September 2006.

An investigation by Oldham EHOs discovered the shop manager, Darrel Lees, removed the guard because he was unhappy with the way the mincer was working. They also found the company had failed to provide adequate instruction, training and supervision in its use.

Oldham magistrates fined Mr Lees £2,500 and ordered him to pay £2,140 costs and J&B Fitton £18,000 with an additional £2,140 costs, after they admitted breaching health and safety laws.

John Rice, acting director of environmental services at Oldham Council, said: 'This was an horrific and avoidable accident that could have been prevented had the machine guard not been removed.'

He said the council, working with the Health and Safety Executive, was always happy to provide advice and assistance to businesses. We want all our local businesses to thrive, but this case demonstrates that to do so, owners and managers must make sure that the safety of staff, contractors and the public is given the highest priority,' he added.

Mr Lees' solicitor said he was deeply sorry: 'This is not a man who removed the guard because he could make more money or cut corners. He has never known another way. It was a working process and he was ignorant of the risk.'

Mr Ashworth, who was aged 15 when the accident happened, went on to pass GCSEs. His parents, Wendy and Stephen Ashworth, said they did not blame the staff at the shop for the accident.

The Liberal Democrats, which used the case in a national campaign, said outdated laws were putting children at risk.

Health and Safety Checklist

Most businesses in the meat industry are operating to a high standard of Health and Safety and it is usually only when things go wrong that omissions are highlighted. Below is a list of things you should have in place.

Health and Safety Policy
Health and Safety Law Poster
Employers Liability Insurance
First Aid Box
Accident Book
Risk Assessment – General
Fire Risk Assessment
Manual Handling Risk Assessment
COSHH
Portable Appliance Testing
Fixed Appliance Testing
Record of checks revealing no Asbestos

If you need assistance with any of the above the SFMTA Health and Safety Adviser is available at the end of the phone to give you **free** advice and assistance.

Should you want to go further and call him in to work on the Health and Safety standards and documentation in your workplace, there is a package for £450 plus travelling expenses.
Tel: John Gunster 01383 728576

National Minimum Wage - First criminal prosecution

A children's nursery owner has been fined £2500 and £500 costs in the first National Minimum Wage criminal prosecution case.

Mrs Teresa Aguda, 44, proprietor of Rascals Day Nursery Ltd, Walthamstow, entered a guilty plea to the charge of obstruction, an offence under the National Minimum Wage Act. Mrs Aguda prevented HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) compliance officers from accessing staff records. Officers were attempting to establish whether nursery workers received the National Minimum Wage.

The case was prosecuted by the Revenue & Customs Prosecutions Office (RCPO). The case was heard at Waltham Forest Magistrates' Court on 28 August 2007 where Judge Gott commented that Mrs Aguda had "demonstrated a clear and deliberate intent to obstruct officers and this was a scandalous breach of the National Minimum Wage legislation."

Andy Millican, Criminal Investigation Team Leader for HM Revenue & Customs said: "This prosecution sends a clear message to employers that HMRC and RCPO will actively pursue those we suspect of flouting National Minimum Wage law. If employers obstruct us and refuse to comply with the law they could receive a fine and a criminal record."

"We have a duty to ensure workers receive their salary entitlement. The majority of employers do assist us with our investigations, but if they don't we will pursue cases through the criminal courts."

The six potential criminal offences under section 31 of the NMW Act are:
- Employer refuses or wilfully neglects to pay NMW
- Person fails to keep or preserve records
- Person knowingly causes or allows false entry in records
- Person produces or furnishes false records or information
- Person delays or obstructs compliance officer
- Person refuses or neglects to answer any questions or produce documents for compliance officer

Each criminal offence carries a maximum £5,000 fine and a criminal record.

The National Minimum Wage helpline number is 0845 6000 678.
The helpline in Northern Ireland is 0845 6500 207. As well as receiving complaints about non-payment of the minimum wage, the helpline takes calls for advice and information.

The National Minimum Wage Act 1998 has now been in force for over eight years. HM Revenue & Customs has operational responsibility for enforcing the minimum wage and has operated a helpline and network of compliance teams since 1 April 1999 to fulfill that role.

The Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform is responsible for National Minimum Wage policy.

The main rate for workers aged 22 and over increased from £5.35 an hour an hour to £5.52 on 1 October 2007.

The development rate for 18-21 year olds rose from £4.45 an hour to £4.60 an hour in October 2007.

The rate for 16-17 year old increased from £3.30 an hour to £3.40 in October 2007.

SFMTA AGM Appointments

PRESIDENT ELECT:
Stuart Christie from Hardgate, Dunbartonshire was elected as President Elect .
JUNIOR PRESIDENT ELECT:
Billy McFarlane from Bowmore, Islay was elected as Junior President Elect.
VICE PRESIDENTS:
As nominated by their Local Association:

Ayrshire	Ian Faulds	Glasgow United	Stuart Christie
Borders	George Deans	Glasgow District	Tom Dowson
Lanarkshire	Jim Preston	Dumfries	Jack Meade
Moray	Graham Murdoch	Dundee	Alan Kennedy
Paisley	Nigel Ovens	Fife & Kinross	Jim Hastie
Perth	David Lindsay	Stirling	Jonathon Honeyman

TREASURER:
Past President was elected as Duncan Mackenzie as Treasurer
SECRETARY:
Douglas Scott was re-appointed by the meeting.

SUBSCRIPTIONS:
Subscriptions for the year were set at £235 per member, a £10 increase on the 2007 sum. Member's Branch shops pay an additional £55, up to a maximum of £215.

Andrew Gronbach - 08/11/39 – 29/11/07

Andrew Gronbach died at the end of November. He was the third generation of Gronbachs to run the butchers business in Cowdenbeath High Street. Scottish Haggis Champion in 1981, Andrew was a Past President of the Fife and Kinross Master Butchers Association. An ardent fan of Cowdenbeath Football Club, past member of Round Table, he is remembered as a kind and generous man. Andrew is survived by wife Mary and son John and his three sisters in Canada.

Marriage of Jack Meade
The Federation wish to pass on their best wishes to Executive member Jack Meade in Thornhill upon his marriage towards the end of the year to Barbara.

Grandad Murdoch
Belated congratulations to our Executive member Graham Murdoch and his wife Joyce in Forres who became grandparents on 10th June 2007 when their daughter Cheryl had a little girl, Sophie. As Business Development Manager, Cheryl was back at work during the Christmas rush **at Blacker Hall Farm Shop, Wakefield** alongside her husband, Edward.

FOR SALE:-

Rational SCC202 Self Cooking Centre
Modular Coldroom 7 feet by 7 feet.
Both Brand new, no sensible offer refused

Large Jeros Utensil Dishwasher Well maintained, Good Condition –

Offers for any of the above contact:- Colin at KRH
Tel: 01294 472755

Speciality Food Fair

SECC Glasgow 27 – 29 January 2008



The Speciality & Fine Food Fair, Scotland is moving home to the SECC, Glasgow. It is co-locating with Scotland's Food Fair which doubles the show in size compared with 2007 with a total of 150 exhibitors.



This now creates even more of a reason to visit the Glasgow Speciality & Fine Food Fair**,** part of the most admired family of exhibitions in the speciality food sector.

Sunday 27 January: 9.30am – 5.30pm
Monday 28 January: 9.30am – 5.30pm
Tuesday 29 January: 9.30am – 4.30pm

EXHIBITORS:-Anthony Rowcliffe & Son Ltd, Ashers Bakery; Atkins & Potts Ltd.; Azienda Agricola Vallecoppa Balliol; BARO Lighting (UK) Ltd; Bioforce Uk Ltd; Border Biscuits; Borderfields; Burtree House Farm; Cairn O'Mohr; Campbells Shortbread; Catherine's Country Kitchen; Celtic Confectionery Fine Foods; Chain Bridge Honey Farm; Chesters of St Andrews; Chocolatbox; Country Fare; C S Robertson; Curry Cuisine; Douglas Bell Marketing; Ecobags; Edinburgh Tea & Coffee; Edinburgh Preserves / Country House Kitchen; El Olivo Olive Oil Company; Essfoods Limited; Eureka Foods; Eurofreeze Ltd; G G Icecream; Galloway Lodge Preserves; Gardiners of Scotland; Gilchester Organics; Gillies Fine Food; Glebe Farm Organic Bread Mixes; Gordon Durward; Gurkha Fine Foods; Hardiesmill; Hebridean Liqueur Company; Iberico Foods; Isabella's Preserves; Island Bakery Organics; Island Smokery; Jenkins & Hustwit; LCCS UK/ Bizerba UK; Loopy Lisa's; Mackie's Ice cream; MacLeans Highland Bakery; McKenzie Biscuits; More than Gourmet (UK) Limited; Nicoll's of Strathmore; Northumbria Larder Limited; Octopus Dubai; Patchwork Traditional Food Company; Potts Partnership; Provence Direct; Pure Produce of the Isle of Man Ltd; Ramsay of Carluke Ltd.; Retail Computer Solutions Ltd; Ross of Edinburgh; Scottish Farmhouse; Scottish Jerky.com; Scottish Preserves; Seasoned Pioneers Ltd; Shropshire Fine Herbs; Silver and Green; Spencerfield Spirit Co Ltd; Taste of Arran; Taylor Freezer; Terra Rossa Jordan Ltd.; The Fresh Pasta Company; The Handmade Oatcake Company; The Really Sensible Trading Co Ltd; The World of Coffee; Thistle Products ; Trees Can't Dance; Tyrrells Potato Chips; Uncle Roy's; Vegware; Victor James; Walkers Shortbread; Wildon Grange; Williamson Fine Teas Limited.

Organised by:

SPECIALITY & FINE FOOD FAIR GLASGOW
SECC GLASGOW 27-29 JANUARY 2008

THE GUILD OF FINE FOOD ESTABLISHED 1995

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Gemscot Services - advertisement

“Been told not possible to get Butcher Boy Parts anymore” unquote

Then let Gemscot Services- formed in 2002 - with ex Butcher Boy staff having over 60 years accumulated experience, assist you with your needs.



Offering Spare Parts also for other North American originated Processing machinery.

Service on all types of Processing Machinery including supply of high quality cutting edges.

For info contact:- Brian Murdoch
Tel/Fax 01294 322 833 Mob 0797 180 5245

Gemscot Services ,
Unit 3, Portland Place
Irvine, Ayrshire KA12 8LW

Dates for your new diaries

Regional Meetings –	
Monday 28th January	Buccleuch Arms Hotel, St Boswells
Tuesday 29th January	Park Hotel, Kilmarnock
Monday 5th February	TBC, South Queensferry
Monday 18th February	Swallow Hotel, Bellahouston, Glasgow
Monday 25th February	Invercarse Hotel, Dundee
Monday 3rd March	Caledonian Hotel, Oban (provisional)
Monday 17th March	Glen Mhor Hotel, Inverness
Tuesday 18th March	Redgarth Hotel, Oldmeldrum
These will be around the table discussion meetings as before. Invitations will be sent out nearer the time and members will be requested to inform SFMTA that they will be attending.	

National Butchers' Week; week commencing 10th March 2008

Foodex Meatex, 6th to 9th April 2008 NEC Birmingham

foodex meatex
Where the Food Industry is Going
6-9 April 2008 NEC BIRMINGHAM

Stuttgart: Butchers Trade Fair 5th – 7th October 2008

SÜFFA 2008 - More information in next month's SFMTA Newsletter
The German butchers' trade go to SÜFFA to obtain information before purchasing.
Airfares are currently offered at www.ba.com for £181 and £195 return from Edinburgh and Glasgow respectively via Heathrow.

Food Hygiene Information Scheme

The Fife pilot was due to be extended in December 2007 to Dunfermline, including an additional 500 establishments. The Perth and Kinross pilot will be extending to include the whole of the Perth and Kinross area by early 2008, this will be the first Authority in Scotland to have all of their food establishments included in the scheme.

The Food Standards Agency will decide at its March meeting which of the commonly known but misnamed "Scores on the Doors" schemes will be adopted on a UK wide scale.

FSA review Trans Fats

Food Industry in UK praised for its voluntary response to reduce trans fats

A review of the available evidence on the health impacts of trans fats shows that while there is consistent evidence to support a moderate impact of dietary trans fats on increasing the risk of coronary heart disease (CHD), the evidence for an association between trans fats and cancer, obesity and diabetes is insufficient and contradictory.

The Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) advice based on the available evidence of the adverse effects of trans fats on the risk of CHD is that average intakes of trans fats should not exceed a maximum of 2% of food energy. Current average dietary intakes of trans fats for UK consumers are not therefore a cause for concern, as they are half the maximum recommended level at 1% of food energy. This is an upper estimate and actual intakes are likely to be lower.

Data provided by the food and oils industries shows that comprehensive action has been taken to reduce trans fats levels in vegetable oils used in UK food production to a minimum which is under 1%. This is lower than the most restrictive legislative controls introduced by Denmark in 2003. There is no scope for further reductions in UK oil supplies. Unilateral action to introduce mandatory restrictions would formalise existing practices among the UK producers, but would be unlikely to offer an additional public health benefit.

Action in New York, where heart disease is the leading cause of death, stemmed from public health concerns about high trans fats intakes, which at around 2.6% of energy are more than 2.5 times those in the UK.

Danish average trans fats intakes are comparable to the UK. Legislative action was triggered by advice the Danish authorities received on the adverse effects of trans fats, coupled with the high levels found in some foods in 2000/01 which were popular in Denmark. The UK situation is different as our recommendation, based on SACN's further advice that average intakes should not exceed 2% of food energy, is that current intakes do not give cause for concern. In addition industry data shows that levels of artificial trans fats in UK food production have declined dramatically in recent years as levels in ingredient oils have been reduced to the minimum.

The primary concern relating to removal of partially hydrogenated vegetable oils (PHVO) from foods is the potential for increases in saturated fat levels, since dietary intakes of saturated fats (13.3%) currently exceed maximum recommended intakes of 11% of food energy. Early progress with the food industry to reduce saturated fat levels in foods, without increasing trans fat levels, should therefore be the priority.

Safer food, better business (SFBB) programme, contributes to the Food Standards Agency's Strategic Aims to provide guidance and support to help small retail and catering businesses such that by the end of 2010, all food businesses are actively working to achieve compliance with food safety management requirements with at least 75% fully compliant.

Compliance with the food safety management requirement for all food businesses has improved from 30% in 2002, to 45% in March 2006, to 48% in March 2007. These figures are based on local authority inspections. Many businesses that have been helped using SFBB have yet to be re-inspected (as the average inspection frequency of the target businesses is once every 18 months). The 48% figure for compliance in March 2007 therefore under-reports the effect of the programme moving businesses towards full compliance. In addition, many businesses are close to compliance and actively working toward it.

General Information on Fats

Fats present in foods consist of a mixture of saturated and unsaturated fats which differ according to their chemical structure. The combination of the different saturated and unsaturated fats present within a food play a part in its technological characteristics and their levels within the diet impact on health.

Saturated fats form the basis of the more stable hard fats, such as those found in butter, cheese, the fat on meat and lard. Saturated fats occur naturally in dairy and meat products, which also contribute to intakes of protein, calcium and some vitamins. Healthy eating advice discourages over-consumption of foods high in saturated fats because of the ability of saturated fat to raise blood cholesterol levels. There is a direct association between blood (low-density lipoprotein) cholesterol and coronary heart disease risk.

Unsaturated fats are found in plant and fish oils and are associated with some health benefits. Having unsaturated fat instead of saturated fat can help lower blood cholesterol. The consumption of mono- and poly-unsaturated fats can help decrease the risk of developing cardiovascular disease because:

- Mono-unsaturated fats (for example found in olive oil) are thought to lower LDL ("bad") cholesterol, they have a neutral effect on HDL ("good") cholesterol (although at high intakes they may raise HDL);
- ω-6 polyunsaturated fats (found in Sunflower oil) also lower LDL cholesterol, they have a neutral effect on HDL cholesterol (at high intakes they may raise HDL);
- ω-3 polyunsaturated fats (found in oily fish) raise HDL cholesterol levels (at practical levels of consumption they have little effect on LDL.

Current Agency policy on trans fats and EU activities

Consumer advice

1. The Agency's healthy eating advice recommends that consumption of foods that are high in saturated fat or trans fats should be reduced or that such foods should be replaced by foods that are high in unsaturated fats. The advice identifies biscuits and cakes, fast food, pastry and some margarines as foods that often contain trans fats (as well as saturated fats, sugar and salt) and recommends that consumption of these types of foods should be kept to a minimum.

Product labelling

2. Consumers can identify the presence of hydrogenated vegetable oils that contain trans fats using the ingredients list of prepacked foods. The use of HVO as an ingredient is required by law to be declared as part of the ingredients list (i.e. 'hydrogenated fat/oil' or 'partially hydrogenated fat/oil'). However consumers have no way of knowing the actual amount of trans fats present in that ingredient or in the product as a whole. Current EC legislation controlling the label declaration of the nutrient content of a food (the 'nutrition label') prohibits a voluntary indication of the trans fats level unless a claim about trans fats is made, such as 'reduced trans fats'.

Agency work with the food industry

Trans fat

3. The Agency has welcomed the voluntary initiatives undertaken by manufacturers, retailers, food service organisations and their suppliers to reduce the levels of trans fats in their products.

Saturated fat

4. In line with the Agency's public health objectives, our Strategic Plan includes a commitment to work with stakeholders to reduce the population average intake of saturated fat to as current intake levels exceed public health recommendations. This is a priority for the Agency and we are developing a programme of initiatives to address this issue.

Getting Serious with Sirius in Ireland









Top Left: Cahillanes, Killorglin, Co Kerry; Top right and above: Dunns, Dunshaughlin, Co Meath
Below: James Whelan in Clonmel, Co Tipperary.

"Sirius" is a butchery and delicatessen cabinet with air circulated refrigeration system
"Maxxpoint" is a display unit to break long counter runs to highlight specialties
"Gourmet" is the catering and hot food counter which is part of most German butchery shops.





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www.aichinger.de offers descriptions of the various products in English.

Livestock Report to AGM

Stuart Christie reported to the Annual General Meeting on 28th November

It has been the usual hum-drum year in the livestock sector – we only had to deal with grain prices, animal feed almost doubling as a result, foot and mouth, avian flu, bluetongue disease, and the now permanent increase in supermarket numbers and power as they try to dominate and run the food industry. As if that wasn't enough we have an agriculture minister in Hillary Benn who doesn't give a damn about any of us.

Over the year there has been no dramatic increase in the price of cattle, with good sorts, usually bought at the local mart by the local butcher, making the top prices. It's a different scenario in the sheep trade with lambs and ewes at rock bottom prices. Talking with sheep farmers there appears to be no light at the end of the tunnel, nor prospect of it for some time to come. Due to the outbreak of foot and mouth the export trade for light lambs, mainly to France and Spain, was stopped and this coupled with an over supply of lambs was a near disaster.

The Government eventually stepped in with a cull programme for light lambs at £15 per head – how a farmer from the north or west coast is expected to make a living when this is his only source of income is beyond me. No wonder young people are leaving farming and it worries me about what will happen to our hills and countryside. These people managed, understood and cared for the land. Will we be left with no-one but conservationists and bird lovers to run things? God help us.

The pig sector is now mainly in the hands of a few large processors. Gone are the days of a farmer or smallholder keeping a few sows to clear up waste about the place. As I noted earlier, grain prices doubling has led to a lot of producers leaving the sector, which will only lead to more imports of pigmeat from countries whose governments subsidise feedstuffs.

The poultry industry said earlier this year that turkeys will be much dearer this Christmas because of the increase in grain prices. Then along came avian flu. Whether this will have an opposite price effect, with people avoiding poultry I do not know. The only consolation for us butchers is that they will have to eat something and we must be ready to supply them with the alternatives they may wish.

Hide prices have remained about £25-£28. Lamb skins peaked at about £1.10 and fell as low as 40p during the year.

In January I reported the problem smaller butchers were having in handling cattle between 24-30 months old due to spinal column removal and bone staining being required. Thankfully this is now going to stop, but it will be well into 2008 before the European Parliament ratifies this, and so unfortunately it won't benefit the busy Christmas and New Year trade. It is not before time that this stupid and wholly unnecessary piece of European bureaucracy was removed.

In June I attended a meeting at Ingliston hosted by the Scottish Beef Cattle Association, who were pushing for an immediate ban on the import of Brazilian beef. This was due to an undercover visit to Brazil by two Irish farming journalists who toured various establishments and documented evidence of a lack of traceability, use of hormones and cross-border traffic with Argentina and Paraguay where foot and mouth is prevalent. So far nothing has been done.

On the subject of imports it is worth noting that there is four times the volume of beef coming in to the UK from the Republic of Ireland (60%) than there is from Brazil (14%) according to figures from June this year. I repeat my oft made comment that there are not sufficient fillets from Scotch beef to supply the demand for it in this country. The public are increasingly demanding

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better quality food and this gap will have to be filled. I would rather see the gap being filled from Ireland than from South America or Africa.

August saw another foot and mouth scare due to a dreadful lack of security at a government run laboratory. Due to learning lessons from the last disastrous outbreak the outbreak was contained quickly and the impact better managed, but it raises fundamental questions as to how it ever happened in the first place. The outbreak cost the farming community millions in lost revenue and placed restrictions on animal movement. Thankfully everything is now back to normal, but this must not be allowed to happen again, and as far as I'm aware no individual or company has so far been blamed. Contrast the recriminations with those over the loss of a couple of CDs. However in the end the outbreak did not cause the meat trade too many problems with most butchers managing to get normal supplies.

Bluetongue disease, unfortunately, has arrived in Britain. It is spread by the midge, so given the numbers that we have, especially on the west coast, it is inevitable that it is going to spread here. Thankfully winter is upon us and a good cold spell with plenty of frost will help to slow its progress. The Government have said that they hope to have a vaccine developed by summer. If so then the programme may have started before it reaches us.

In April, Forrest increased their prices by £1 per bin per uplift. MHS costs are set to rise, diesel is now more than £1.08 per litre in most of the country and wholesale prices are rising almost daily, so we should not be slack about watching our prices and checking our margins on a weekly basis. Don't be afraid to put your own prices up – we all sell quality and quality costs money. Every other sector does it: why shouldn't we?

This report may seem doom-laden, but I believe that those of us who are left are professionals and fighters and that if we stick together, with the help of the Federation, we can go from strength to strength.

Wrath in the Glens but plans get go ahead

Glenrath Farms, Scotland's largest independent producer of eggs, has been granted planning permission by the Borders Regional Council to erect nine new poultry houses on its Blythbank Estate near Peebles to house 350,000 hens producing free-range eggs.

The project has met with considerable local opposition since the company decided to apply for planning permission two years ago.

John Campbell, the chairman of Glenrath who founded the business more than 30 years ago rearing a few hundred point-of-lay pullets, was clearly delighted with the decision. He said: "This is excellent news and the £8 million investment will create 60 jobs in the Borders."

Campbell added: "There is an ever-increasing demand for free-range eggs and we must respond to the market. In addition the industry faces the prospect of meeting an EU directive which will reduce the stocking density for free-range production."

Glenrath Farms currently sells a staggering 1.3 million eggs each day, mostly to major supermarkets. However, in line with all intensive sectors of the farming industry the near doubling of cereal prices has greatly added to costs.

Campbell said: "The rise in feed prices is costing us an extra £116,000 each week. But I have to say that the supermarkets have been very fair with us. We explained the situation and are being paid a price that covers this additional expenditure. This new development will help to increase opportunities for this fast-growing company."

Livestock Prices

Data collection co-ordinated by MLC Economic Services
on behalf of QMS, price updates available at **www.qmscotland.co.uk**

BEEF PRICES	**W/E 15/12/07**	**Previous week**	**Previous year**
Scottish Abattoirs			
Steers dwt	219.7 p/kg	220.7 p/kg	220.0 p/kg
Heifers dwt	220.1 p/kg	221.8 p/kg	223.2 p/kg
Young Bulls dwt	193.3 p/kg	196.4 p/kg	200.8 p/kg
Numbers Steers	3895	3996	4291
Heifers	3321	2931	3025
Young Bulls	528	530	431
BEEF PRICES	**W/E 12/12/07**	**Previous week**	**Previous year**
Scottish Auctions			
Steers lwt	128.79 p/kg	129.56 p/kg	125.10 p/kg
Heifers lwt	132.95 p/kg	129.90 p/kg	129.43 p/kg
Young bulls lwt	96.05 p/kg	97.42 p/kg	95.20 p/kg
Numbers			
Steers	437	389	531
Heifers	559	541	657
Young bulls	41	16	347

Deadweight cattle week ending 15th December 2007								
	All steers p/kg			All heifers p/kg			All Young bulls p/kg	
	3	4L	4H	3	4L	4H	3	4L
-U	223.8	224.6	225.1	226.3	228.5	227.4	209.8	208.2
R	219.8	222.9	223.0	219.9	222.3	222.5	201.2	204.0
O+	214.2	219.0	212.7	214.2	217.4	214.3	195.5	199.2
-O	196.5	198.2	-	183.1	189.3	176.1	186.2	187.9

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SHEEP PRICES	**W/E 12/12/07**	Previous week	Previous year
Scottish Auctions			
New Season SQQ lwt	83.27 p/kg	83.60 p/kg	100.88 p/kg
Ewes lwt	£21.32/head	£22.73/head	£24.48/head
Sheep numbers			
Scottish Auctions			
New Season SQQ	16134	12555	19347
Ewes	6072	4814	4163

SHEEP PRICES	**W/E 15/12/07**	Previous week	Previous year
GB Abattoirs			
New season SQQ dwt	198.8 p/kg	197.0 p/kg	227.5 p/kg

Deadweight sheep week ending **15th December** p/kg				
		2	3L	3H
	U	217.2	217.2	208.6
	R	202.5	204.2	197.0
	O	183.4	188.6	185.3

PIG PRICES	**W/E 15/12/07**	Previous week	Previous year
GB Abattoirs			
All pigs DAPP	109.81 p/kg	109.94 p/kg	107.86 p/kg

GB deadweight pigs ending **15th December** – p/kg					
	Method 1 and 2 p/kg dwt	Change		Method 1 and 2 p/kg dwt	Change
Up to 59.9 kg	102.33	+1.20	80.0 – 89.9 kg	109.94	-0.39
60.0 – 69.9 kg	110.47	-0.53	90 kg and over	99.20	-0.52
70-0 – 79.9 kg	111.20	-0.22			

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Waitrose calls for Tesco investigation

Mark Price, Managing Director of **Waitrose**, feels it is unfair that Waitrose is perceived as far more expensive than the likes of Tesco and Asda, which, he argues, regularly announce multi-million-pound price cuts that turn out to be anything but. "For the past ten years we have had huge price cuts every January and yet every year the margins end up higher. You'd have to ask them, but can the major supermarkets afford to reduce their margins by 1 or 2 per cent? I don't think someone like Sainsbury's could.

Two months ago, Mr Price spoke out about "Tescoland" and the growing dominance of the big four supermarkets in the UK. He called on the Competition Commission to do something to break the stranglehold and open up the market, prompting a sharp, public rebuke from Tesco. Mr Price does not expect forced disposals when the present Competition Commission investigation is completed early next year. However, he advocates that the regulator stick to the proposals that could force rivals to sell off land, as well as ending the practice of forcing councils into exclusivity agreements in an attempt to block out the competition.

He adds: "In 1986 the top four supermarkets had 35 per cent of the market. In 2007 it's 75 per cent. I've already said if things are left unchecked it could one day get to 95 per cent. You have to sit back and ask yourself: 'Is that a good situation for the UK to find itself in?"

Suspicion of Foul Play

Poultry meat sold in supermarkets and catering outlets is reportedly months old - the thousands of tonnes are being sold as 'fresh' poultry in Britain.

Amongst the concerns that consumers are purchasing meat that is much older than in reality, an official definition of the term 'fresh,' as used on food labels, is being drawn up.

Many of the basted turkey and chicken joints, fillets in sauce or breadcrumbs and packs of chicken sandwiches in shops appear to be fresh. However, with the increasing amount of poultry being imported from Brazil and Thailand, more of it ends up weeks or even months old. When the poultry reaches Britain, importers can keep cooked meat, uncooked birds and poultry pieces in cold store.

Meat in ready meals could be many months old, which may have been thawed and frozen several times – the meat is safe to eat but the information on labels about it's origin is often unclear. Food and Farming Minister, Lord Rooker, is supporting the campaign to clarify labelling rules so that consumers do not buy a sandwich made from thawed meat when they think it is fresh.

Lord Rooker has asked supermarkets to support home-produced poultry. He was told by a delegation from the meat production workers' union, Unite, of the growth of imports. 80% of chicken sandwiches sold by supermarkets were made from imported meat and Britain was the biggest buyer of Thai poultry in Europe – which can only be imported cooked because of measures to prevent avian flu, according to the delegation.

Last year, Britain imported 83,000 tonnes of Thai chicken meat

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