

FEDERATION NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER FOR SCOTLAND'S CRAFT BUTCHERS



SCOTTISH FEDERATION OF MEAT TRADERS

Check Out Time for Supermarkets

A high-profile report into the future of the high street for years could signal moves by Government to halt its decline.

MPs have declared that by 2015 - the 200th anniversary of Waterloo - the country that Napoleon called a nation of shopkeepers will have only a handful of independent retailers. Unless, that is, the Government acts to thwart the power of the supermarkets.

Once the lifeblood of Britain, the corner shop, butcher, baker and chemist were a feature of every town. But today they are battling to survive. The big four supermarkets control 75 per cent of the £80bn grocery sector. In 1945, there were 500,000 independent retailers; today the number is down to 30,000 - and more than 2,000 went out of business last year.

Jim Dowd, chairman of the all-party group of 73 MPs, said that it would seek meetings with Gerry Sutcliffe, the Competition Minister, and Yvette Cooper, parliamentary secretary in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, to discuss its suggestions on competition and planning issues.

The group said that urgent action by the Government was needed to prevent the disappearance of small independent grocery stores and newsagents in the next ten years.

Mr Dowd said: "We are going to give ministers a couple of weeks to absorb the report. Gerry Sutcliffe is keen to look at it and there is appetite in the DTI to deal with these issues, but the issue of regulation is complicated and we don't expect an early decision." The Office of Fair Trading is deciding whether to recommend a full inquiry into the grocery sector. It is expected to release a draft of its findings in about two weeks' time.

A Summary of this report starts on page 4

MARCH 2006

This Month

**All Party
Parliament Small
Shops Group**

**Secret of Success at
Stranraer Butcher**

Food Labelling

HACCP Courses

OTM Cattle Update

Shop Design

**Scotch Pie
Screening**

**Scottish Market
Prices**



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



Introducing Isobel-Anne Johnston

I am very pleased to introduce a new member of QMS staff, our Health & Education Co-ordinator, Isobel-Anne Johnston.

Isobel-Anne's role within the organisation is to develop this very important area and encourage children of all ages to make healthier choices about their diet.

One of her first tasks is to find the Quality Meat Scotland School Cook of 2006. Marlene Hunter from Bressay Primary in Shetland was School Cook in 2005 and it could be a school cook from your area in 2006!!

The challenge has begun and entry forms for this year's competition have gone out – not only to Primary schools - but also for the first time – to all secondary schools as well. This means that over 800 more schools, 3,000 altogether, will receive our material and will have the opportunity to take part.

All 32 local authorities have been contacted about the competition and are well aware of the “whole school prize” of £1000 of sports equipment offered to the winning school. We have had loyal support over the past two years from certain areas and by adopting this more direct approach we hope to attract entries from every corner of Scotland. The authority submitting the greatest number of entries will also be rewarded with 10 entry tickets to this year's Royal Highland Show.

School meals have been the subject of unprecedented attention since the launch of our first competition in 2004. Fortunately Scotland has constantly been performing well in the nationwide league and Hungry for Success is having a hugely positive effect on attitudes to nutrition and healthy eating. This year, we are supporting this initiative by challenging our school cooks to devise a fantastic dish using Specially Selected Pork. Like all red meats pork is a rich source of iron and protein, it is also very lean and offers fabulous value to health and cost conscious cooks who still have to work within a tight budget of approximately 60 pence per serving.

Specially Selected Pork is hugely versatile; any combination of products can be used as long as pork is the main ingredient. We are sure there will be a great response and that we will have difficult decisions to make at the judging stage. The judge, Stewart Cameron, formerly Executive Chef of the renowned Turnberry Hotel. will select 8 finalists and 4 merit award winners, whose recipes will be featured in a Specially Selected Pork Healthy Choices recipe book. As with previous years the recipe book will be sent out to all schools to encourage cooks to introduce more pork dishes to the menu.

Successful finalists will be asked to prepare their dishes at a Grand Cook-Off in Edinburgh on 27 April 2006. There is not only the prize of equipment for the winning school - the winning cook will also be able to choose a holiday of his/her choice up to the value of £1000.

Meat consumption continues to grow but in our schools time is tight and so is the budget. Hopefully with the School Cook of the Year Competition and other activities organised by QMS under Health and Education we are continuing to support healthy eating in Scotland by encouraging school cooks to recognise the importance of meat in a balanced diet to provide protein, vitamins and minerals, vital for healthy growing children.

SFMTA members can help too. If you would like an entry form for your local school, ring me or Isabel-Anne on 0131 472 4040. We have also enlisted the help of The Royal Highland Educational Trust Countryside Co-ordinators to distribute entry forms.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Jane Thomas'.

Butcher Development Manager
Quality Meat Scotland

Watch this space for the
School Cook of 2006!

Regional Meetings

An invite to these is enclosed with this Newsletter (the bright on). Please consider attending. **BUT** you need to tell us if you are coming by the **Friday before the event**.

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Monday 13 th March | Glen Mhor Hotel, Inverness |
| Tuesday 14 th March | Redgarth Hotel, Oldmeldrum |
| Wednesday 15 th March | Swallow Hotel, Bellahouston |
| Monday 21 st March | Buccleuch Arms Hotel, St Boswells |
| Tuesday 22 nd March | Windlestrae Hotel, Kinross |

SFMTA Golf Day

Wednesday 19th April, Queens Course Gleneagles
Forms are enclosed. Replies by 30th March.

SFMTA Bowls Day

Would any members interested in an afternoon of bowls at Wishaw in June, please let the office know. Tournament ends with dinner. Tel 01738 637472

H123 Guidelines

Guidance for the new 2006 EU Hygiene Regulations have been slow to materialize but SFMTA now has the Working Draft that although still to be agreed is likely to be the ground rules. These are likely to be of members supplying more than two tones per week to other than the ultimate consumer. We also have the European guidance for these regulations all of which is available to members on request. Telephone 01738 637472.

Meat Product Regulations 2004

Some members who have not yet produced tickets to the new regulations are being pushed by their EHOs to comply. All members are reminded that SFMTA will calculate these for you if you supply the basis of your recipe. We do not require all the secrets, contact Bruce and he will assist.

FSA Open Board Meeting comes to Glasgow

The next Open Board Meeting of the Food Standards Agency will be held at 9.15am on Thursday 9 March at The Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, 2 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, G2 3NY.

It is proposed that the agenda will include discussions on the signposting scheme and food labelling, harmonisation of SRM Controls i.e. vertebral column removal and a report from FSA Scotland. At the end of the meeting, there will be a question and answer session where members of the public are encouraged to ask questions or make comments on any of the matters discussed by the Board or, indeed, raise any other issues relating to FSA work.

You can register on-line at: www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/ourboard/boardmeetings

If you can't attend, the meeting will be webcast live on www.food.gov.uk and you can still receive Board Papers by post by requesting these for each meeting by using any of the methods listed above.

Please note, you need to register by **Thursday 2 March 2006** if you wish to receive Board Papers prior to the meeting.

All-Party Parliamentary Small Shops Group

HIGH STREET BRITAIN: 2015

SUMMARY

The All-Party Parliamentary Small Shops Group was set up by a cross party group of MPs to raise awareness among Parliamentarians of a broad range of issues of concern to small shopkeepers, including retail crime, excessive insurance premiums, planning reform, red tape and environmental legislation. The group also looks at the vital social and economic role played by independent retailers in community stores.

Wafer thin margins, combined with the constant threat of unfair competition from supermarkets, mean that small shops, once an essential part of the fabric of rural and urban life, are disappearing in their thousands each year. The group provides a forum for informed discussion of the obstacles faced by small shopkeepers. It aims to promote better and fairer laws to help preserve and foster retail diversity.

This report provides the analysis of the evidence, both written and oral, submitted to the Inquiry held by the All-Party Parliamentary Small Shops Group, entitled 'High Street Britain: 2015', concerning the long term prospects of the United Kingdom's small retail sector. Concern for the future of traditional shopping areas arose amidst recognition from many in, and associated with, the retail industry: 'traditional' local small shops or independent convenience stores are disappearing rapidly. Once a 'tipping point' is reached many small shops could be lost instantly as wholesalers no longer find it profitable to supply them, resulting in the urgent need for a review of the market.

The vast majority of contributors agreed that all small shops are important to, and influenced by, economic, social and political trends. The small retail sector is a key driver of: entrepreneurship, employment, skills, local economies, innovation, and sophisticated business networks, as well as accessibility to vital goods and services, diversity, social inclusion and community activities.

However, contributors are concerned by the intense pressure small shops face, from both market-led forces and external (macro-environmental) forces. Witnesses cite the aggression of larger competitors, distortion of the supply chain, the cost of property, crime, poor planning decisions, a lack of appropriate business support and disproportional regulatory burdens as problematic.

There is widespread belief therefore, that many small shops across the UK will have ceased trading by 2015 with few independent businesses taking their place. Their loss, largely the result of a heavily unbalanced trading environment, will damage the UK socially, economically and environmentally. People (as consumers and members of communities) stand to be disadvantaged the most with restricted choice, entrenched social exclusion and a vulnerable supply chain caused by consolidation.

What is required is a range of progressive policies and measures: locally, regionally and nationally over the: short, medium and long term that will redress the balance and, therefore, help to sustain a healthy and competitive market, and protect people and local economies. We therefore, believe that it is in the UK's best interest that the following recommendations are strongly considered by the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, the Director General of the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) and other relevant Ministers and officials.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **IMPLEMENT A MORATORIUM ON FURTHER MERGERS AND TAKEOVERS UNTIL THE GOVERNMENT HAS BROUGHT FORWARD PROPOSALS TO SECURE DIVERSITY AND VITALITY OF THE RETAIL SECTOR**

There should be a moratorium on any further mergers and takeovers until there has been sufficient structural change regarding the regulation of the retail sector for a market study to commence.

- **ESTABLISH A RETAIL REGULATOR**

We have found that the responsibility of maintaining a vibrant, diverse and sustainable retail sector falls outside the remit of the OFT who are principally bound to consider competition concerns to the exclusion of the other social and non commercial benefits generated by independent retailers. The new regulator would:

1. Undertake full investigation of grocer sector and non-food retail;
2. Oversee the moratorium;
3. Bring forward proposals for the maintenance of a vibrant, diverse and sustainable retail sector; and
4. Provide support to local authorities developing retail strategies.

- **REVISE THE TWO MARKET RULING**

The lines between 'top up' shopping and 'one stop' shopping have become increasingly blurred with the presence of large retailers in both markets taking advantage of central buying. The ruling in 2000 of the two market definition as such is believed to be out-dated and therefore needs to be revised.

- **INTRODUCE COMPREHENSIVE CODES OF PRACTICE ACROSS THE RETAIL SECTOR**

To address many of the natural power imbalances that exist within the retail sector, there must be revisions to existing and the implementation of new codes of practice. This includes a revised code of practice between suppliers and retailers in the grocery sector, a comprehensive code of practice encompassing retailers of all sizes across the UK regarding the supply of newspapers and magazines and a code of practice that extends to all other nonfood sectors.

The Government must provide whistleblower protection under the supermarket code for all those who highlight abuses. Evidence shows that a simple anonymity clause fails to address the concerns of those unwilling to bring forward complaints.

- **REVIEW THE TAX SYSTEM AND CLOSE THE JERSEY VAT LOOPHOLE**

The UK Government should immediately apply the lowest threshold applicable for the relief of low value consignments and permissible in the directive, which is currently 10 euros, (approximately £7) – this would eliminate the vast majority of exploiting trade almost immediately. The enforcement, by government bodies like Customs and Excise, of VAT should be reviewed to ensure a level playing field.

- **REVIEW APPLICATION OF RATE RELIEF SYSTEM AS APPLIED TO INDEPENDENTS TRADING ON THE THRESHOLD OF VIABILITY**

The Government should extend the rate relief system to support retailers, especially those operating on the high street or community locations. Consideration should be given to alternative measures of support. Small retailers operate on very tight profit margins but are recognised as being an integral part of a local economy/community. More options should be available to local authorities to achieve targets established under local retail strategy.

- **INTRODUCE NEW REQUIREMENT FOR ALL LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO ADOPT A RETAIL STRATEGY WITHIN THE UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

This include a Drive from government to achieve objectives regarding mixed use development and a better utilisation of use class orders considering the impact or prevalence of low footfall premises, such as estate agent proliferation, on viability of high street as retail destination.

- **DEVELOP REGENERATION UNITS IN ALL LOCAL AUTHORITIES WITHIN THE UK**

Regeneration units, tasked with strategically and positively managing town centre growth, should be developed. These units need to develop a long term strategy for local retailing, researching the local business environment and taking into account related trends such as housing and employment. These units should then form an important part of the consultation process, in particular providing a link between the business community and local planning decisions such as traffic flow measures, car parking, assessing the cost and benefits of Section 106 etc.

- **DEVELOP RETAIL FOCUSED REGENERATION UNITS IN ALL RDAS WITHIN THE UK**

All RDA's, similar to councils, should develop regeneration units which recognise the importance of retail. Each unit should be tasked with co-ordinating with local councils to develop regional long term retail strategies building up a picture how many of its objectives can be met through the existence of a healthy small retail sector. This should further provide knowledge on how best to direct resources for local business support.

- **DELEGATE GREATER POWER TO PEOPLE LOCALLY**

There needs to be a revision of the financial and planning powers of local authorities with more explicit consideration given to protect diversity and vitality of local retailing. There needs to be a review regarding alleged abuse of resources by large businesses. This should be compounded with greater consultation between the council and local communities regarding the developments within the area.

- **RAPIDLY IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE HAMPTON REVIEW**

More work needs to be done to promote greater synergy between planning authorities, Town Centre Managers, community workers, market officials, Environmental Health and Trading Standards Officers and national departments and agencies such as RDAs, LSCs, SSCs, Business Links, the SBS etc. The importance of training provision needs to be better promoted to the retail sector.

- **REVISIONS TO THE RETAIL PROPERTY MARKET**

Examine use of upward-only rent-review clauses and length of commercial leases. Local councils could also extend the use of Section 106 to secure affordable premises for start-ups in their area to offset the possible damage to local communities anticipated by large retailers thus creating highly competitive local markets.

- **ENCOURAGE THE TRANSFORMATION AND INNOVATION OF THE POST OFFICE NETWORK**

The Government should directly support and expand the specific services offered by the sub post office network.

- **IMPLEMENT MEASURES TO RESTRICT THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF SHIFTS IN THE RETAIL SECTOR**

Research, initiated by DEFRA, into the full impact of food miles on the retail sector needs to be extended to create a better understanding and bridge any knowledge gaps. All businesses should be made accountable for their respective damage to the environment with the clear view that, as a deterrent, they must provide some reparation to maintain the environment.

Shops Tsar

A Retail Regulator, or Shops Tsar as he would no doubt get labelled, would be a welcome start in curbing the power of the supermarkets. Where the role could be useful is in providing checks and balances - what the Small Shops Group calls "the maintenance of a vibrant, diverse and sustainable retail sector".

Here are a few questions a tsar could ask: to what degree do supermarkets raise prices where they enjoy local dominance? Have cash-strapped local authorities been hoodwinked by supermarkets' promises to build new roads, schools etc? Why has the code of practice designed to highlight suppliers' and farmers' complaints failed so miserably?

Kevin Hawkins of the British Retail Consortium, said that there were still many thousands of independent specialist butchers, bakers and other food shops alive and well throughout the UK and most of them would still be around in 2015.

"The secret of success for the smaller retailer in what is a highly competitive market, is not to try to compete head-on with larger rivals, but to offer consumers something different, something better and something targeted very precisely at a particular portion of the market."

The supermarkets' lobbyists, identified by the report as a major source of stores' power to shape their operating environment, must be odds-on to kill the idea of a shops tsar. The banks achieved the same trick when Don Cruickshank recommended a regulator for that industry in his report in 2000.

The good news is that the Cruickshank review did shame the banks into sharpening their act in a number of key areas, such as services for small businesses and the speed at which cheques and direct debit payments are cleared. If the APPSSG report succeeds only in lifting the temperature of debate, and forcing supermarkets to be open about their pricing behaviour and policies towards local authorities, it will achieve something. Just don't hold your breath.

Add your weight to the campaign, write to your Member of Parliament urging them to support the All Parties Group Report. They cannot ignore local views, look what happened in the Dunfermline and West Fife By Election. A pro forma is enclosed with this Newsletter.

135 staff lose jobs at meat plant

Lloyd Maunder announced last month it was closing its lamb operations at Willand in Devon after losing an important supermarket account.

Of the 180 staff employed in the lamb processing plant, about 45 have left or been moved to chicken processing. Hundreds of South West farmers who supplied the company are now trying to find alternative ways of selling their meat.

Lloyd Maunder had attempted to rebuild its business at the plant near Cullompton after losing the supermarket account, but managers said at the time they were not confident in the long-term viability of the market. The 135 staff to be made redundant finished work at the plant on Friday 24th February.



The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 – New Fire Safety Regime

The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 (the “Act”) deals with the law relating to fire prevention and safety by replacing old legislation and modernising the operation of the Fire and Rescue Service.

Those parts of the Act that relate to the powers and duties of the Fire and Rescue Service came into force last August, with Part 3 of the Act, which will introduce a new fire safety regime and consolidate and rationalise existing fire safety legislation, due to take effect around October of this year.

The Act applies to “relevant premises” in Scotland. The expression “relevant premises” is defined in the Act and covers most premises apart from private homes and such other premises as are specifically exempted in the Act. This means, apart from those self-employed people with no staff who work from their own homes, all sectors of business, including the self-employed and charities, will be subject to the new regime.

The Act introduces a new fire safety regime based on risk assessment, and places a duty on employers, employees, managers, owners and others in relation to fire safety. The Act seeks to ensure the safety of persons in premises from harm caused by fire by setting out fire responsibilities. These are identified in terms of seven general requirements:

- Conducting a fire safety risk assessment of the premises
- Putting in place fire safety measures identified as necessary after a risk assessment has been carried out
- Implementing these fire safety measures through reducing risks
- Establishing arrangements for the continuing control and review of the fire safety measures
- Complying with the fire safety regulations
- Keeping the fire safety risk assessment and the result of that assessment under review
- Maintaining records

Composite sandwich panels safety issues (with mineral fibre core) -

Composite sandwich panels are used extensively for wall, roof and false ceiling construction in food factories and other large commercial structures and provide thermal/fire resistance and a hygienic cleanable surface. The panels comprise a mineral fibre core sandwiched between two thin steel sheets and have a claimed load bearing capacity of '1 man + 1 toolbox per panel for occasional access'.

HSE has investigated an incident in which maintenance personnel fell in excess of 3m through a composite sandwich panel ceiling at a food factory. The investigation revealed that the panels had been weakened prior to the collapse by previous walk-on access for maintenance and by moisture ingress.

Checks should be made where such panels are installed as a suspended ceiling or roof cladding, and where access across them to plant etc. is required. Information from manufacturers and suppliers recommends the provision of independently supported walkways (where frequent access is required) and boards to spread loading for any prolonged work activity.

A recently published European funded research report (ASPAN) identified issues with the durability of mineral fibre cored panels (not polystyrene or PIR cored panels) in terms of 'walkability' (frequency of access) and exposure to temperature/humidity. The research identified that such panels lost significant strength after approximately 200 walk-on events and were effectively in failure mode after about 2400 walk-on events.

Scotch Pies to be Screened

Filming has just been completed at Stuarts' of Buckhaven for part of a forth-coming BBC TV series

Optomen TV, makers of The F...Word, Two Fat Ladies, Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares, French Leave etc, are making a 40 part series entitled Great British Menus, which is built round a Celebration Banquet in June to mark the eightieth birthday of Her Royal Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.

The programme will be broadcast on BBC2, Monday to Friday, for eight weeks at around 6-30pm, running from mid-April to early June. Fourteen chefs from all over Britain will feature one course which they hope will be chosen for the Banquet. To broaden each programme a regional speciality will be featured and our beloved Scotch Pie has been chosen as one such speciality.



The film crew filmed the daily production of Pies at Stuarts', featuring Scotch Pie Club founder, Alan Stuart and his son Keith, the sixth generation of the family in the business, as well as several other members of staff.

They also filmed a very laid back, informal yet deadly serious "pie-off" between five World Champion Pie-makers. (It is rumoured that our original World Champion, Ian Davis of John Davis, Boness, has retired a wealthy man!).

This gathering took place at the home of Alan and Jan Stuart, round the family dining table, with a small libation to loosen tongues.

Taking part were George Wallace representing Thos Auld & Sons Ltd, Lewis MacLean of MacLean's Highland Bakery, Allan Devlin of Sugar & Spice, Paul Boyle of Boghall Butchers and reigning Champion, Robert Cowan from the Bon Bon Cake Shop. Also present as guest judge was Tom Lewis, owner of the Monachyle Mhor, Hotel in Balquhiddy, who is one of the two Scottish Chefs involved in the series.

Amidst much serious comment and opinion and a lot of good-natured teasing and banter, the five pies were discussed, digested and debated, before a vote was taken. One rule upset them all,.....You can't vote for your own pie!

After the five experts and Chef Tom had cast their vote, we had a Pie Tie, with two entries level-pegging. Who better to break the deadlock than Mr Impartiality himself, Scotland's very own Pie-man, Alan, the founder of The Scotch Pie Club?

With the room full of tension, he announced his choice from the five World Championship winning pies, and the winner was.....You'll just have to watch the series to find out.

Scheduling details will follow as they come to hand, and a full-blown Champion of Champions, open to all Gold Medal Winners since 1999 will be held later this year.

Federation New Member

Welcome to new member –
Callaghan Butchers, 31 West Princes Street, Helensburgh G84 8TF

Bird Flu Why?

Source: The Guardian

Ten years ago this month, the government first reported the possible link between the cattle disease bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) and its human equivalent Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD); five years ago, the cull began of millions of sheep and cows suspected to have foot and mouth disease; and three years ago, severe acute respiratory syndrome (Sars) threatened global health. Now poultry farmers around the world are on full alert as country after country reports the virulent H5N1 avian influenza virus in wild birds, which it is feared could cross to humans.

As dead swans are found with H5N1, and Europe locks up its poultry, a consensus is emerging among scientists, ecologists and human health experts that this strain of avian flu is emerging and crossing more easily to humans because of environmental changes taking place and the intensification of farming.

Diseases are then spread rapidly around the world with the globalisation of trade and aviation. Diseases have spread from wildlife to humans throughout history but we now interact with animals in a very different way, says Danielle Nierenberg, a researcher with the US Worldwatch Institute.

"In the last 40 years the world has gone through a livestock revolution, not unlike what happened to crops with the green revolution," she says. Since 1961, she explains, worldwide livestock has increased 38%, to about 4.3 billion today. The global poultry population has quadrupled in that time, to 17.8 billion birds, and the number of pigs has roughly trebled to 2 billion. As the numbers of animals bred for food have vastly grown in a very short period, humankind's relationship with them has changed.

"Raising animals has morphed into an industrial endeavour that bears little relation to landscape or natural tendencies of the animals. Wherever [industrial farming] is introduced it creates ecological and public health disasters," she says. Others argue that intensive confinement of animals promotes emerging viruses, stokes the development of antibiotic-resistant strains of bacteria and can transform animals into disease "factories".

Peter Daszak, director of the Consortium for Conservation Medicine, which strives to understand the link between human alterations to the environment, wildlife disease, public health and conservation, says emerging diseases such as the H5N1 strain of avian flu are causing a crisis of public health. Daszak, who helped connect Asian bats in China with Sars, says diseases such as Sars, Ebola, BSE, CJD, HIV/Aids and H5N1 bird flu are entirely driven by environmental change, which is almost always caused by humans. Because humans share so many pathogens with animals, humans' impact in driving wildlife diseases, in turn, threatens public health. The Sars virus, which killed at least 700 people, emerged from the trade in wildlife for food and was spread by air travel. It is similar situation with bird flu, Daszak says. "All these diseases are driven by human activities, like roadbuilding, agricultural changes, population movements, people moving to cities. Environmental change, linked to demography and the unprecedented speed at which environmental change is taking place, are responsible.

"The global poultry industry is clearly linked to avian influenza. It would not have happened without it. There has been an explosion in the global poultry industry. There has always been a close link between people and poultry," he says. Once an emerging disease such as H5N1 avian flu breaks out, he says, globalisation in the form of greatly increased world trade and the growth of the aviation industry can spread it fast. "We are certain to see more and more of these diseases emerging with very high impacts on health and the economy."

Bird flu fears flood market with cheap chicken

Consumer concern over bird flu has driven the price of poultry down in the continent and now the UK market is being saturated with cheap poultry imports, the Times newspaper reported.

Italy has witnessed poultry sales decline by 70% while France and Germany have both seen a 20% drop in sales. The surplus is reported as being sold to UK wholesalers who supply pubs and restaurants. There is speculation that some continental chicken may also make its way onto the shelves of discount supermarkets.

The cheap imports are expected to hit UK farmers. Retailers have reported reducing

the price of chicken nearing its sell-by-date to as little as 37 pence per pound, whereas UK farmers need to sell chicken for 54.5 pence per pound to break even, the report said.

Peter Bradnock, chief executive of the British Poultry Council, said: "It is already hard enough for people who supply chicken to the mainstream supermarkets, with buyers keeping prices down. Some farmers might just have to cut back on production."

Adjusting for better business

A campaign has been launched across Scotland to encourage small firms to make their businesses more accessible to disabled customers and staff.

Called Adjusting for Better Business, the campaign will inform small businesses about their obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act and show them how they may only need to make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of disabled people.

A jargon-free booklet aimed exclusively at small businesses is enclosed that illustrates some of the adjustments that can be made. A checklist, designed with small businesses in mind, has also been developed.

Launching the campaign, Minister for Disabled People, Anne McGuire said:

"The Adjusting for Better Business campaign is about encouraging small business entrepreneurs such as yourselves to look at what reasonable adjustments you can make to benefit both your business and disabled people.

"Making these adjustments is good for disabled people and good for business because it encourages more customers through your doors."

Personal customer service is one of the main ways that a small business can really make itself attractive to customers. And some of

the common sense adjustments being suggested are ideal for the smaller business, such as talking more slowly and clearly to a customer with learning difficulties to find out what he or she wants or providing a seat for those with mobility impairments who need to sit down. Some of those changes also make sense for parents with pushchairs.

The campaign recognises that disabled people include those with less obvious conditions such as diabetes or a mental health condition, as well as people with the more traditionally recognisable impairments such as those who use wheelchairs and blind or partially sighted people. As the information pack makes clear, it is important to consider the needs of all your disabled customers.

The campaign is not focusing on expensive changes such as lift access to upper floors as, in many cases, these will not be considered "reasonable" for many small businesses under the Disability Discrimination Act.

As part of the campaign, small employers are also being given advice on the steps they can take to enable existing staff, who may become disabled, to remain in work and how they can help disabled job applicants to fill vital roles in your business.

www.dwp.gov.uk/dda

Irish press for South American Beef Ban

Irish farmers have called for a ban on all South American beef imports into Europe in the wake of foot-and-mouth concerns.

The Irish Farmers' Association has urged the embargo after Argentina joined Brazil in declaring a disease outbreak.

Argentine authorities have already started slaughtering 3,000 livestock on the ranch which is at the centre of the disease scare. Many nations have banned beef imports from the country in which the disease has been declared.

A similar embargo still applies to the bulk of Brazil's beef exports after it declared foot and mouth in October.

John Bryan, the chairman of the IFA's livestock committee, said: "The latest foot-and-mouth outbreak in Argentina confirms a deteriorating situation in South America. The reality is without a proper and robust tagging, traceability and movement control system regionalisation cannot work effectively and the only real protection for Europe is a total ban on all South American beef imports."

Mr Bryan said the latest outbreak in Argentina proves again that border controls in South America are inadequate. The suspicion is that the disease may have been brought into the country in illegal cattle imports in much the same way as the Brazilian foot-and-mouth outbreak.

Argentina last year exported 154,000 tonnes of beef to the EU. Argentina has banned beef exports from eight counties departments in the province of Corrientes, where the outbreak has occurred.

Mr Bryan said it was essential the European Commission immediately took determined action to prevent the spread of foot and mouth and protected the EU livestock sector.

Europe's standing veterinary committee is meeting today to decide the level of restrictions to be imposed on Argentine imports into the EU. It is also expected to review the measures currently being applied to Brazil.

'The Worst Takeaway'

Doner kebabs contain more harmful fats than any other type of takeaway, new research has found. One sample of the post-pub favourite had six times more trans fats than than a Big Mac and fries. Its levels were 10 times higher than those found in a portion of chicken tikka masala. Trans fats are found in some cooking oils and manufactured food to help preserve its shelf life. They are said to have little nutritional value and have been linked to heart disease. Tests on nine fast food samples were supervised by Tom Sanders, professor of nutrition at King's College, London.

He said: "In the UK the worse thing you can probably eat is a doner because it is very high in saturated as well as trans fats." Prof Sanders said lean lamb meat was healthier than the more fatty variety used in kebabs. A doner kebab was found to contain 5.8g of trans fat per portion compared to 0.87g in a Big Mac and fries.

Sweet and sour chicken with fried rice fared the best with just 0.27g of trans fats. A chicken, bacon and mayonnaise sandwich had 0.36g.

Gourmet Beef Tasting reaches London

New glossary of tasting terms launched to help consumers differentiate by quality

Piloted in Scotland including at three SFMTA events, Gourmet Beef Tasting has been taken to London for the first time to illustrate the variety of taste and textures found in beef and ultimately educate consumers to differentiate by quality. The event forms part of the £1 million drive in England to promote the benefits of choosing Scotch when buying beef.

Laurent Vernet, the definitive Master of Meat is responsible for bringing the concept of beef tasting from France, where enjoying the nuances in taste from different breeds, cuts and maturities of beef in a similar way to wine tasting is commonplace. The idea behind the sessions is to make consumers more aware of what meat has to offer by way of an experience, from contact through the first bite, right through to the residual taste.

This event marks the launch of a unique glossary of tasting terms which guides the user through the full tasting experience and provides a range of terms to help the consumer define and identify the many tastes available when enjoying beef, from the tenderness and juiciness to texture and flavour.

The sessions mirror those held at Oranmore, Lauder College and Inverness Caley Thistle Stadium in 2005. They involve sampling beef from different breeds of cattle, ages, country of origin and lengths of maturation and all samples are cooked medium rare with no added fat, salt, pepper or spices to ensure consumers experience the real naked taste of beef.

Laurent Vernet said:

"Twenty years ago, people in the UK just bought red or white wine, but now consumers are much more discerning, choosing the product dependent on its age, origin and taste. This is the direction we want meat eating to move in, and are suggesting people should apply the same principles when choosing their beef."

Tescopoly

Anti Tesco campaigners have launched a new website Tescopoly, that helps local people organise opposition to planning applications. The site attacks Tesco's record on workers' rights, farming, the environment and local retailing.

There are signs of a popular backlash against supermarket expansion. Campaigners have taken to the internet with a website called tescopoly.org, backed by the GMB union and Friends of the Earth.

The website uses similar blue, red and white colours to Tesco's logo and changes the supermarket's slogan "Every Little Helps" to "Every Little Hurts". It says: "There is a growing movement of people who believe that Tesco and other big superstores threaten to destroy their communities."

Budget date announced

Chancellor Gordon Brown has announced that he is to deliver his Budget statement on 22 March. Mr Brown will update MPs on his latest forecasts for the UK economy and is likely to come under pressure from opposition parties over his borrowing figures.

Better By Design

By *Kathryn Thomson*, designer with Bentleys Shopfitting Ltd in Dundee

Many sectors of the retail industry have been rethinking their retail strategy and image over the last decade. Increasingly, high street shops, particularly food outlets are forced to compete with the supermarkets, who are able to access all types of customer due to their sheer size and market influence.

In order to compete, small traders may wish to offer a more personal and individual service and create an enticing retail environment. The aim of updating an existing shop must be to retain existing loyal customers whilst encouraging new.

Every shop will have its own identity and any alterations must be tailor made with an individual solution. Through the use of materials and lighting, graphics and display we can change and enhance the image of the shop. Some shop owners will wish to keep the traditional image of the shop and some may wish to explore more contemporary solutions. Mixing modern and traditional materials and fittings may appeal to a broad base of customers.

The possibility of selling additional and complementary products may appeal to some

shop owners more in line with the delicatessen's approach to retail. Both packeted and fresh produce such as vegetables, seasonings etc can be incorporated into the shop area. Subtle changes in layout with carefully placed shelving and display can encourage shoppers to view and buy other products whilst waiting to be served.

Whilst every shop has its own needs and specific requirements, any changes will need to be budget conscious. With careful design, and focusing attention on key elements relatively low cost options can have a high impact.

The end result of any refurbishment or alterations must be to increase trade and provide a better working environment.

Bentleys Shopfitting Ltd has introductory packs explaining their shopfitting service to Butchers. These are available from the Federation.

They tackle small as well as major jobs.

Please request a pack by contacting Bruce McCall on 01738 637472

Dalziel Ltd

We stock:-

Peach paper: 10 "x 12" x 2000

Cellowrap: 10" x 12" x pkt

Imitation greaseproof paper: 10" x 14" x 500

Soak pads: 4" x 4" x 3000

Soak pads: 7" x 5" x 3000

Plus a full range of packaging solutions



Port of call for Prize Pies

When there are demonstrations, regional meetings and workshops arranged for anywhere in Scotland someone that no one is surprised to see walk in is Ian Jack from Stranraer. Despite being tucked away in the South West of Scotland where the BBC local Radio with the strongest signal comes from Northern Ireland, this Guild of Q Butcher does not let his relative isolation remove him from all the best ideas in the meat trade.



Ian places great importance in talking to other butchers and maintaining a mind receptive to new ideas. The result is a bright and refreshing retail shop where customers come first and quality is paramount.

Alex Jack (Butchers) Ltd sells only Authentic Aberdeen Angus sourced from Millers of Speyside and the chicken is from Mitchells of Letham. Chicken fillet sales have doubled over the last year as the business sells more and more kitchen ready products.



The greatest success has come since winning the SFMTA Regional title for both his Traditional Steak Pie and his Steak and Kidney Pie with sausage last September.

The Stranraer butcher followed that up by lifting a Silver Medal in the World Scotch Pie Championships in November. Not only has the business gained recognition for its pastry products; Ian's Mangoed Pork Loin was adjudged to be the best Pork product in the 2005 Make it With Meat Awards. All these followed a tradition of picking up awards for all sorts of interesting meat products.





Ian Jack (left) and his son Stuart, the fourth generation to work in the business

The Bridge Street business was started by Ian Jack's grandfather in 1914. Following in the footsteps of his father, the family business welcomed Ian at the age of 15. He recalls that the first year seemed to consist of boning sheep's and ox heads adding "I progressed on to sausages and I really regret never having had proper training."



Ian had to get to grips with the business rather quickly though when his father who was a big entertainer and magician 'died with his boots on' entertaining a company of 300 in the church hall.

That was back in 1975 but things have moved on from those days with one small fridge and eight vans.

The front shop has been opened up to turn it into a smart air conditioned retailer outlet.



Customers are presented with a vast choice of fresh meat, pastry products and own make cooked meats served out of a separate counter. The shop also has upright cabinets from which customers can make their own selections.

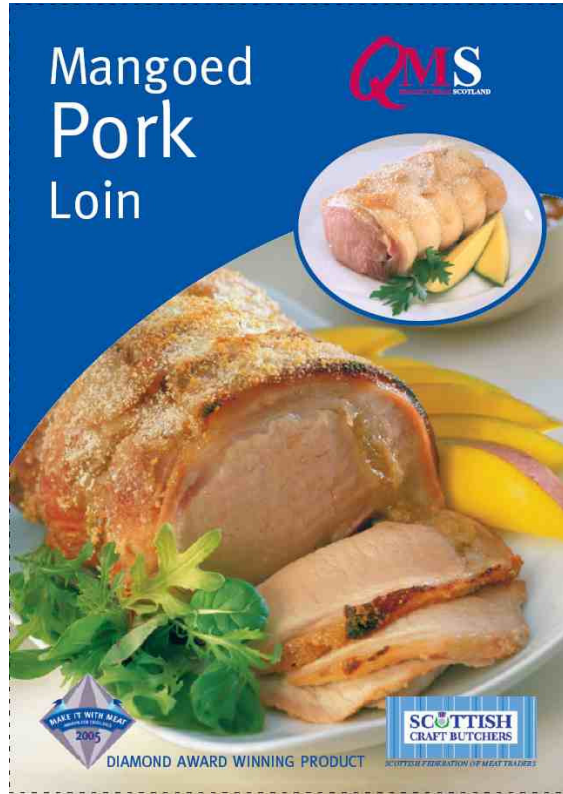


The design clearly works with sales generated from every corner of the front shop. Ian explained:-
 "Instead of going for a total refit which they wanted me to do we did it bit by bit. The shopfitter wanted me to close but I didn't want to shut because I didn't think in a small town it was the thing to do."

Supermarkets have long affected trade in the ferry terminal. William Low was first to arrive, it's now Tesco, Safeways came too and now as Morrisons do a substantial trade in meat. Ian said:-

"You just keep your head down and working away. Although things got a little quieter we still do a good business but people are drifting back from Morrisons." There are lots of good reasons that would have that kind of effect. The AAA Beef, the award winning products and the personal service from friendly, experienced butchers. Ian Jack is probably ahead of many when he acknowledges "I should possibly promote business a bit more aggressively." Certainly when you have so much to offer you don't want to keep it all a secret.





A well stocked range of Tracklements sauces inspired the Pork product that won Alex Jack Butchers Diamond in the 2005 Make it With Meat Awards. The growing popularity of mango prompted a subtle combination of Mango Chutney with Pork. Ian admits:-"I have just discovered the ease of using Verstegen Sauces. The Pork and Pineapple stir fry and Chicken Piri Piri just flies out the door."

The shop is busiest on Fridays and Saturday mornings and that is balanced with supplies to a local cash and carry, local convenience stores and a few chosen restaurants.



Behind the scenes there are both fresh meat and cooked meat and Pie production areas. Ian considers this a valuable asset:-

"We make everything ourselves that's the secret."

*Top Left: Cooked Meat Counter.
Bottom Left: Frozen Food cabinet.*

Refrigeration is by Watco

Vital Need For Sustainable Return For Sheep Sector

With lamb prices being squeezed in spite of an increase in retail prices, NFUS Scotland is telling the supply chain that if it wants quality, it must pay for it. NFUS is also urging sheep producers to be resolute in their demands for a fair price.

The latest average deadweight price for lamb was 228p/kg compared to 246p/kg for the same week last year. This seven per cent drop in farmgate prices contrasts with a 10 per cent rise in retail prices between 2004 and 2005 suggesting that retailer profits are increasing on the back of a farmgate price squeeze.

Whilst emphasising the importance of farmers meeting market specification and striving for quality, NFUS is stressing that both short-term and long-term action is required to secure a viable return for sheep producers and, in return, to secure the environmental, social and economic benefits of the hill sheep industry.

In the short-term, NFUS believes that last year's sheep price must be used both by farmers, processors and retailers as a benchmark. To get over short-term difficulties, it is vital prices rise to at least this level. That involves producers holding out for a decent price and the market delivering it. In the longer-term, price must rise to a more sustainable level, which covers costs of production and secures a viable future for the industry.

Chairman of the NFUS Livestock Committee Nigel Miller said:

"The price plunge of late is sending a brutal signal to sheep producers that the major buyers do not value domestic production after the New Year. As buyers seek to grasp market advantage, downward pressure has pushed prices way below the same period last year and, critically, way below the cost of production.

"The impact of that message not only has immediate financial implications for the sheep industry, but has serious implications for the future of hill sheep farms, which provide the foundation of economic activity in many areas of the country.

"Of course we have to make sure we are producing quality lamb to the right specification. But even when doing that, our returns are being hammered.

"The industry has to stand firm and demand a fair price – and retailers and processors have to ensure they are delivering at least last year's lamb price to get over this short-term nightmare. Longer-term we have to develop a sustainable supply chain. We are writing to all the major retailers to engage them in developing this chain – we won't sit back and watch retailer margins increase while farmgate returns head in the opposite direction. Given their oft-stated commitment to quality-assured food, with high animal welfare and environmental standards, it is in their interests to develop a year-round supply chain which doesn't just reward them."

Have your say

Quality Meat Scotland's Beef and Lamb Forum will be held on Tuesday 7th March. SFMTA has been invited to air the independent butchers' opinions on quality and supply of lamb. We are aware that it is demand that sets the price. If lamb prices could be stabilised throughout the year would lamb sales be more consistent? Do housewives struggle to feel that they are getting good value from their two bite lamb chops? If you have any comments on this or on the above article please contact Douglas Scott on 01738 637472.



Over Thirty Month Cattle – Update

The Food Standards Agency report that the BSE testing system, which had been introduced towards the end of 2005, had been running for just over three months and the systems that were put in place to manage this appeared to be functioning well. The number of abattoirs approved for testing continued to increase steadily and there were 33 in Great Britain and six in Northern Ireland by the end of the week prior to the Board meeting.

The numbers of OTM cattle being slaughtered were also continuing to build and had reached nearly 4,000 a week by the end of the first week in February.

A disposal scheme for cattle born before August 1996 was put in place on 23 January and the OTM scheme formally withdrawn on that date. This had not so far resulted in a significant increase in the demand for OTM slaughtering. All tests to date have been negative except for a relatively small number of 'no tests', which resulted from untestable samples being taken. These, however, are now occurring at the low rate of about one or two a week, so the system seems to be working very well.

The main area of concern is the number of cattle born before August 1996 that continue to be consigned to fresh meat abattoirs. Such animals are ineligible for entry into the food supply and the new law that was put in place last year made such consignments an offence. The number presented had reached 47, by 8th February, of which 42 were in Great Britain and five in Northern Ireland. The FSA believed this was an issue of awareness rather than cattle-keepers deliberately trying to get ineligible cattle into the food chain.

However, despite a number of initiatives by rural affairs departments to remind cattle-keepers of their obligation not to send such cattle for slaughter, they were still being presented. DEFRA would also be taking additional steps to publicise the legal requirements not to send pre-August 1996 animals to fresh meat abattoirs.

Local authorities have so far shown reluctance to take any prosecutions on the grounds that they considered a warning to be the correct response to a first offence. The FSA expected, however, that prosecutions would be pursued if a second offence was committed.

Separately from this, there had been three reports of seals being broken on consignments of over-30-month carcasses that had been despatched to cutting plants for the removal of vertebral column, without the MHS being present. In all cases, the official veterinary surgeon was however satisfied that the carcasses were as despatched and they were therefore allowed to be processed in the normal way.

The risk if the vertebral column was not removed from an over-30-month carcass was very small because the carcasses must come from cattle that have been tested negative for BSE before they were allowed to leave the abattoir. Nevertheless, it was important to maintain confidence in the Specified Risk Material controls and the MHS would therefore be writing to abattoirs and cutting plant operators reminding them of the need to ensure that seals were not broken without the MHS being present.

Tip from Danny Upton, Lucas

A butchers in the north-west have been successfully using our potato mash mix making it into corned beef hash. He puts the corned beef hash into 500g portions and pack them into ovenable trays and sells them for £1.99 each, he sold over 70 packs on a Saturday.

It only costs around 40p to make each portion!!

Please find opposite, recipes using Lucas Potato mash mix.



Cold Water Potato Mix - 19855-8205-7

This great new product from Lucas means you can now make tasty Potato Mash in a flash! All you have to do is add cold water and there you have it – a delicious mash that can be used, according to the mix, as topping for pies, a base for bangers, in fried potato cakes or even just as a plain or flavoured mash.

Don't just get mashed get smashed on the money you'll make!
1kg Potato mash only cost approx. 48p to make.
Easy to make – just add cold water!

Mix 180g mash to 820g cold water, add the ingredients below to an accepted visual to create superb mash suitable for oven or microwave:

- Cheese or Cheese red onion mash
- Spring onion mash
- Red onion mash (raw or caramelised)
- Leek mash (Dried or cooked fresh leeks)
- Bacon mash (oven bake bacon pieces)
- Cheese & Chive
- Chive mash (dried or fresh chives)
- Corned Beef hash (tinned corned beef, red onions and pies)
- Parsley mash (dried or fresh)

For potato cakes:

Mix 230g mash to 770g cold water use above recipes, (add sea salt & black pepper to taste) form the cakes using your burger press, or roll out & use a crinkle cake cutter.

For piping of ready meals or shepherds pies etc...

Mix 180g mash to 820g cold water, pipe as required. For piping to keep a specific shape – mix 230g mash to 770g cold mash.

Packing / cooking:

Pack into suitable oven / microwave packaging i.e. KS 501, micro boxes or 6861 oven lidding film boxes.

Microwave on full power for 5 to 6 minutes, stand for 2 minutes or bake in the oven for 20 minutes.

Food Standards Agency

Stakeholders Meeting



The Food Standards Agency in Scotland's (FSAS) biannual meeting with stakeholders was held on 21st February in Edinburgh.

Director George Paterson introduced the Agency's Business Plan, inviting each of his branch heads to explain their priorities. The FSA office in Aberdeen has 79 full time equivalent employees and a budget of £10.4m as opposed to the FSA UK budget of £143m.

FSA Themes and High Level Objectives:-

Food Safety

To reduce foodborne illness

To reduce the risks to consumers from chemical and radiological contamination

Eating For Health

Changing people's diets

Choice

To promote best practice in providing information to consumers

Protecting consumers from food fraud and illegal practices

How We Deliver

Deliver Sustainability

Be effective in the discharge of their responsibilities as a non Ministerial Government Department and independent regulator

As from mid 2006 every Government policy has to be backed up by Sustainable Development.

Martin Reid, Head of Business Management at FSA(S) explained how the £10.4m budget was spent. £4m goes on non programme running costs and capital budget. Of the remaining £6.4m, £2m on Food Safety, £1.2m is spent on HACCP, £1m on Delivery and £1.2 on Eating For Health. Food is a devolved topic so FSA(S) has a heavy legislative role reflected in FSA(S) contributing the largest part of Scottish Parliament regulation.

Lydia Wilkie, Assistant Director, outlined priorities in Policy and Regulation. She would be ensuring Scottish input into UK national plans for Official Food and Feed Controls; cover implementation issues including charges. (It is mandatory that existing charges such as Meat Hygiene Service charges are continued. Re-licensing of meat plants was "on going" and priority did not seem to focus on catering butchers - yet). TSE's would become a bigger issue especially if industry looked for relaxation of controls in the Post BSE period.

Policy included emergency legislation and contaminants. It was pointed out that 20 years on from Chernobyl there was still restrictions on certain Scottish farms. At UK level Diet and Nutrition attracted major attention with priority on salt, fat and sugar reduction. Signposting on labels would be progressed with the recent action of major manufacturers to introduce their own being claimed to be a reaction that would not have happened had this not been on the FSA agenda.

In Scotland we have had the Scottish Diet Action Plan since 1996. FSA(S) would continue to input this and foster holistic 'Health Promoting Schools' approach through revision of nutrients and curriculum review. The Healthy Living Award would encourage healthy menus.

As far as consumers were concerned it was felt that it was difficult to reach consumers and an engagement strategy and action was required to add consumer voices into policy development. Labelling and Choice agendas would seek better labelling, a review of existing quality assurance schemes (to ensure independence and clarity), addition of vitamins and minerals to food including the fortification with Folic Acid. Turning to the bigger picture Lydia explained that included Better Regulation, Sustainability into policy development, community planning for 'Healthy Scotland', the EU Green Paper on Health and Strengthening Partnerships.

For those unsure what sustainability meant Lydia instances promoting eating fish on health grounds against Fishing Policy that sought smaller catches.

Science and Enforcement was presented by Jim Thomson, Assistant Director. To improve compliance with Food Law in Scotland £4m, over two years, would be spent on assisting businesses with HACCP. To date 12,000 caterers had been engaged with assistance based on Cook Safe. Foreign language in training would also be addressed. Local Authority EHO's identify food hygiene issues in the voluntary sector and although FSA do not enforce they would be looking at enforcement.

Providing information to consumers was subject of a working group that SFMTA's Chief Executive was involved in. This group recommended a pilot exercise where food businesses could voluntarily take part in a scheme to inform customers, visually, of their food hygiene standards.

Eat Safe Award Scheme was gathering interest with 95 catering businesses currently in possession of awards. This scheme is being considered for all food businesses.

Seven of the 32 audits of Scottish local authorities food safety enforcement have been completed for the cycle to 2008. There would be focussed audits on imported foods. As far as research and surveillance is concerned steps would be taken to combine food sampling evidence throughout Scotland. FSA(S) will be working on a Food Access Retail map outlining what, where and how much to ensure a healthy food basket throughout Scotland.

FSA will be rolling out food based Nutritional Standards to Public Sector bodies such as schools, prisons, hospitals etc. Their work will also include input to the UK wide Illegal Meat Task Force / Food Fraud Task Force. Concerns were expressed over the low level of uptake of training towards enforcement officers.

Jim Thomson said that the above represented possibly only 35% of his time, the remaining 65% was spent on day to day incidents and enquiries. The Scottish Food Advisory Committee is now under the chairmanship of Graeme Miller and that committee has new members:- Jim Arbuckle, Amanda O'Donoghue and Cathy Benton.

FSA appoints new Board member

The Food Standards Agency has appointed Professor William Reilly to its Board. Professor Reilly, who stepped down as Chair of the Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food to take up his new Board position, is also a Consultant in Veterinary Public Health and Head of the Gastro-Intestinal and Zoonoses Section at Health Protection Scotland and a former member of the Scottish Food Advisory Committee. He is also a member of the Department for Environment and Rural Affairs' Veterinary Products Committee.

He replaces Michael Gibson who has stepped down after serving six years in the post.

LAST CALL



Certificated HACCP Courses Venues and Dates

The course including the exam takes place over two days in March.

The cost is supported by European Funding and means it is offered at **£180 per person inc certification**

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Perth | 6th and 7th March |
| St Boswells | 13th and 14th March |
| Inverness | 14th and 15th March |

All the above courses have met with a good uptake but we could squeeze another one or two in if there were candidates
TO BOOK CALL CLAIRE or BRUCE on 01738 637785

These Intermediate HACCP courses will be delivered on Scottish Meat Training's behalf by Verner Wheelock Associates. This is an English based company who have been heavily involved in assisting butchers implement HACCP systems.

The Food Standards Agency in Scotland commissioned them to evaluate the effectiveness of Butchers Licensing in a Report that Verner Wheelock presented in December 2003. You may recall that his report was very supportive of Scottish butchers actions in the wake of Licensing.

Ruth Bell is the RIPH approved trainer for the Borders and Perth courses.
Peter Clarke is the RIPH approved for the Inverness course.

Candidates trained by Verner Wheelock Associates have been awarded the following prizes for the highest marks gained in RIPH examinations:

- * Advanced Certificate in Food Safety 2004
- *Intermediate Certificate in Applied HACCP Principles 2003



Eòrpa agus Alba
ag obair còmhla



Europe and Scotland
Making it **work together**

Lanarkshire Butchers Dance

Saturday 18th February 2006



Above from left to right: Aileen and, Vice President John Hamilton, Janice and President Jim Preston

For Sale

MERCEDES SPRINTER 311Cdi, Refrigerated; Standby LWB; High roof, side door, 98k miles. First reg Jan 02. One owner. Full years MOT & Tax. Good condition. £11,500 ono

MERCEDES 814, Refrigerated 7.5 ton lorry with GRP box; carcass rails; tail lift; G-reg, good running order. Needs tidying. Offers

TRIEF DICER (1306), Good working order. Offers Invited

POLYCLIP - SEMI AUTO DOUBLE CLIPPER, Model EZ-6022. Supplied to us new in 2002. Lightly used - as new. Offers Invited

Various Stainless and Poly top preparation tables.
Paxton plastic trays and trolleys.

All of the above surplus to our requirements.

Tel: 01698 284421(day) Mobile: 077834 498709

FSA Labelling surveys published

The FSA has published two labelling surveys that were carried out to investigate whether manufacturers are meeting the Agency's Country of Origin and Clear Labelling guidance, issued in 2002.

More than 750 products were examined and few issues were identified. The research found that many manufacturers provided information that exceeded legal requirements and met the Agency's good practice guidance:

- 69% of all meat and meat products carried country of origin information
- 89% of products carried nutrition information
- 46% of products containing allergens used specific allergy information or alert panels such as 'contains' boxes

The area where the most improvements could be made was on the font size used on packaging. The text used on many products was found to be too small, resulting in instructions, ingredient lists or date marks that were hard to read. The Agency will discuss the findings with a range of stakeholders in March 2006 to find out why some parts of the guidance are being more widely followed than others.

Food manufacturers announce labelling overhaul

A number of the UK's leading food producers are to place nutritional content informations on the front of food packaging as concerns about health and obesity rise in the market.

The move by Kraft, Danone, Kellogg, Nestlé and PepsiCo pre-empts efforts by the Food Standards Agency to introduce a "traffic light" system of green, amber and red labels to show levels of fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt.

The system being introduced independently by the collection of food companies instead favours guideline daily allowance (GDA) information - where the percentage of an individual's recommended daily amount of key nutrients contained in a portion is shown. Details on calories, sugar, fat, saturates and salt will be shown.

The move by the food groups comes as a three-month consultation period by the FSA comes to a close. Details of the recommendations from the FSA will be made public in March. Critics of the food industry have already suggested that the news is an effort to derail efforts by the FSA to introduce its traffic light system across the industry.

However, the food groups say they will look at talking to other manufacturers to see if they can get their method accepted as an industry standard.

Which? has criticised the manufacturers scheme as 'betraying' consumers. Which? argues that the five food giants are undermining the Food Standards Agency's (FSA) attempt to implement a consistent signposting scheme which would help consumers to make healthy choices.

Which? Chief Executive Peter Vicary-Smith has written to all five companies as well as the Food and Drink Federation (FDF). He wrote, "A national signposting scheme will only work if it is consistently adopted across the food industry. A medley of different labels in the shops will only increase confusion and damage any opportunity to help to reduce the incidence of diet-related disease in the UK".

Snippets from the High Street 2015 Report

Consumers are concerned about their health, a trend that will continue to rise. This concern runs parallel to a demand for more locally sourced products. Consumers believe independents are better able to meet demands for local sourcing than large retailers because they do not rely on central distribution.

Demand for healthier, locally sourced products has led to an 11% increase in demand for organic products over the last year. Sales of organic products through box schemes, farm shops and farmers markets' increased by 33% in the last year, while independent retailers saw a growth in sales, of organic goods, of 43%. The percentage of organic sales made by supermarkets fell for the third consecutive year from 81 per cent to 75%.

Nevertheless, despite the potential for smaller and more local retail organisations to satisfy this increasing demand for healthy food, consumers believe independents are dying out and the majority believe local culture and identity will die with them.

The activities of the 'Big Four' have had a number of adverse effects on small retailers. First and most notably is the growth of out of town shopping developments which competed against town centres for the consumer spend of affluent car borne consumers by offering free parking, and fewer outlets to visit in order to complete a 'total shop'. This offer has diverted consumer spend away from urban town centres and many have seen a gradual deterioration through a loss of footfall.

Fuel has a published commodity price for which the Platts assessment provides a commonly accepted index. Taking into account likely operating costs it is believed that the 'Big Four' sell fuel below cost price until local competition can no longer sustain the loss margins. This is followed by a sharp rise in price at the multiple retailers' forecourt. The Association of Convenience Stores contend that even superficial research into local markets illustrates price flexing by J Sainsburys in towns in close proximity to each other.

Table 1: Fuel Prices in Different Local Markets

| TOWN | PRICE (LITRE) USLD | FEATURES OF MARKET |
|-------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Farnham | 86.9p | Strong local competition |
| Alton | 89.9p | Limited local competition |
| Basingstoke | 86.9p | Strong local competition |

Consequently between 1991 and 2004, 8380 forecourts have gone out of business with hypermarkets now selling over 30% of fuel sold in the UK despite only operating from 10% of the sites.

The cessation of trading by many small retailers located close to national multiples seems inevitable. One such example is Cupar in Scotland.

Prior to Tesco, Cupar had 4 petrol stations – now we have only the one, at Tesco. Prior to Tesco we had 5 bakers –now we have 3. Prior to Tesco we had 3 butchers - now we have 1 Etc... Etc...

Once dominance of an area is achieved larger retailers will even close their own stores to avoid the cannibalisation of their own business and to maximise efficiency.

The terms which giant superstores extract from suppliers are the seed of the imbalance and flawed structure of the UK grocery market today.

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 18/02/06 | Previous week | Previous year |
|---------------------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------|
| Scottish Abattoirs | | | |
| Steers dwt | 202.4 p/kg | 199.0 p/kg | 200.8 p/kg |
| Heifers dwt | 202.5 p/kg | 199.1 p/kg | 201.6 p/kg |
| Young Bulls dwt | 177.6 p/kg | 175.5 p/kg | 183.4 p/kg |

Numbers

| | | | |
|-------------|------|------|------|
| Steers | 3758 | 4034 | 4450 |
| Heifers | 3476 | 2656 | 2750 |
| Young Bulls | 563 | 493 | 560 |

| BEEF PRICES | W/E 16/02/06 | Previous week | Previous year |
|--------------------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------|
| Scottish Auctions | | | |
| Steers lwt | 114.30 p/kg | 112.66 p/kg | 111.83 p/kg |
| Heifers lwt | 114.89 p/kg | 114.63 p/kg | 112.99 p/kg |
| Young bulls lwt | 83.59 p/kg | 91.00 p/kg | 97.92 p/kg |

Numbers

| | | | |
|-------------|-----|-----|-----|
| Steers | 484 | 543 | 551 |
| Heifers | 658 | 648 | 617 |
| Young bulls | 41 | 26 | 68 |

Deadweight cattle week ending 18th February 2006

| | All steers p/kg | | | All heifers p/kg | | | All Young bulls p/kg | |
|----|--------------------|-------|-------|---------------------|-------|-------|-------------------------|-------|
| | 3 | 4L | 4H | 3 | 4L | 4H | 3 | 4L |
| -U | 205.6 | 207.7 | 206.0 | 210.0 | 210.4 | 209.6 | 189.4 | 192.9 |
| R | 203.4 | 205.0 | 204.1 | 204.1 | 204.6 | 204.4 | 188.0 | 188.3 |
| O+ | 198.1 | 200.4 | 198.3 | 194.8 | 197.0 | 197.8 | 180.2 | 182.8 |
| -O | 183.8 | 184.7 | 177.4 | 170.7 | 167.3 | 172.6 | 172.7 | 175.2 |

The next Executive Meeting of the Scottish Federation of Meat Traders Associations will be held in the SFMTA Office, 8 Needless Road, Perth on Wednesday 8th March at 2.30pm. The February meeting lacked representation from Edinburgh, Forth Valley, Aberdeen and Ayrshire. If any member would like to represent their area at the next meeting you will be made very welcome.

| SHEEP PRICES | W/E 16/02/06 | Previous week | Previous year |
|----------------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------|
| Scottish Auctions | | | |
| New Season SQQ lwt | 104.07 p/kg | 103.78 p/kg | 113.19 p/kg |
| Ewes lwt | £26.52/head | £25.20/head | £24.89/head |
| Sheep numbers | | | |
| Scottish Auctions | | | |
| New Season SQQ | 15178 | 21146 | 19335 |
| Ewes | 3750 | 3809 | 5673 |

| SHEEP PRICES | W/E 18/02/06 | Previous week | Previous year |
|--------------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------|
| GB Abattoirs | | | |
| New season SQQ dwt | 226.9 p/kg | 228.0 p/kg | 248.7 p/kg |

| Deadweight sheep week ending 18 February p/kg | | | | |
|---|---|-------|-------|-------|
| | | 2 | 3L | 3H |
| | U | 238.9 | 237.2 | 219.6 |
| | R | 236.2 | 236.5 | 227.0 |
| | O | 229.8 | 229.6 | 225.5 |

| PIG PRICES | W/E 18/02/06 | Previous week | Previous year |
|---------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------|
| GB Abattoirs | | | |
| All pigs DAPP | 100.69 p/kg | 100.87 p/kg | 101.61 p/kg |

| GB deadweight pigs week ending 18 February – p/kg | | | | | |
|---|----------------|--------|----------------|----------------|--------|
| | Method 1 and 2 | Change | | Method 1 and 2 | Change |
| | p/kg dwt | | | p/kg dwt | |
| Up to 59.9 kg | 97.10 | +0.62 | 80.0 – 89.9 kg | 100.03 | -0.54 |
| 60.0 – 69.9 kg | 101.72 | +0.08 | 90 kg and over | 91.50 | -1.76 |
| 70-0 – 79.9 kg | 101.61 | -0.05 | | | |

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

DUNDEE AND DISTRICT MASTER BUTCHERS ASSOCIATION –
ANNUAL DINNER DANCE is to be held at Piperdam Golf & Leisure Resort,
Fowlis, Dundee on Saturday 4th March 2006.
Ticket prices are £26 each from Scott Jarron Tel: 01382 819417

Scottish Retail Prices

| Week ended | 5 February | | 12 February | | 19 February | | 26 February | |
|---------------------|------------|---------|-------------|---------|-------------|---------|-------------|---------|
| | Range | Average | Range | Average | Range | Average | Range | Average |
| BEEF | | | | | | | | |
| | p per kg | | p per kg | | p per kg | | p per kg | |
| Topside | 402-1098 | 833 | 402-1098 | 795 | 402-1098 | 826 | 402-1098 | 826 |
| Sirloin steak | 899-1999 | 1556 | 1022-1999 | 1584 | 1022-1999 | 1584 | 899-1999 | 1582 |
| Rump steak | 499-1399 | 1058 | 499-1399 | 1051 | 499-1399 | 1051 | 499-1399 | 1058 |
| Fillet Steak | 1679-2800 | 2175 | 1679-2800 | 2172 | 1679-2800 | 2172 | 1679-2800 | 2172 |
| Diced stewing steak | 199-798 | 646 | 199-798 | 646 | 199-798 | 646 | 199-798 | 646 |
| Braising Steak | 339-882 | 713 | 289-882 | 717 | 289-882 | 712 | 289-882 | 712 |
| Premium mince | 269-798 | 538 | 269-798 | 539 | 269-798 | 539 | 269-798 | 539 |
| Standard mince | 124-336 | 237 | 124-336 | 237 | 124-336 | 237 | 124-336 | 237 |

| Week ended | 5 February | | 12 February | | 19 February | | 26 February | |
|---------------------|------------|---------|-------------|---------|-------------|---------|-------------|---------|
| | Range | Average | Range | Average | Range | Average | Range | Average |
| LAMB | | | | | | | | |
| | p per kg | | p per kg | | p per kg | | p per kg | |
| Domestic | | | | | | | | |
| Whole leg | 409-1168 | 767 | 409-1168 | 775 | 409-1168 | 773 | 409-1168 | 773 |
| Fillet end leg | 532-1328 | 1042 | 569-1328 | 1044 | 569-1328 | 1042 | 569-1328 | 1042 |
| Shoulder (bone-in) | 220-799 | 570 | 220-799 | 570 | 220-799 | 568 | 220-799 | 568 |
| Shoulder (boneless) | 439-992 | 741 | 439-992 | 741 | 439-992 | 741 | 439-992 | 741 |
| Lamb steaks | 793-1799 | 1186 | 793-1799 | 1186 | 793-1799 | 1186 | 793-1799 | 1186 |
| Loin Chops | 705-1499 | 1129 | 705-1499 | 1141 | 705-1499 | 1141 | 705-1499 | 1141 |
| Double loin chops | 613-1499 | 1122 | 613-1499 | 1122 | 613-1499 | 1122 | 613-1499 | 1122 |
| Cutlet chops | 704-1299 | 1089 | 704-1299 | 1089 | 704-1299 | 1089 | 704-1299 | 1089 |
| Diced Lamb | 584-1139 | 771 | 584-1139 | 771 | 584-1139 | 771 | 584-1139 | 771 |
| Minced Lamb | 169-992 | 758 | 169-992 | 758 | 169-992 | 758 | 169-992 | 758 |

| Week ended | 5 February | | 12 February | | 19 February | | 26 February | |
|---------------------|------------|---------|-------------|---------|-------------|---------|-------------|---------|
| | Range | Average | Range | Average | Range | Average | Range | Average |
| PORK | | | | | | | | |
| | p per kg | | p per kg | | p per kg | | p per kg | |
| Leg (Boneless) | 340-799 | 558 | 340-799 | 540 | 339-799 | 540 | 339-799 | 545 |
| Fillet end leg | 399-799 | 633 | 399-799 | 633 | 399-799 | 632 | 399-799 | 632 |
| Shoulder (Boneless) | 248-750 | 505 | 248-750 | 468 | 278-650 | 469 | 278-650 | 469 |
| Fillet of Pork | 613-1098 | 834 | 613-1098 | 829 | 613-1098 | 829 | 613-1098 | 829 |
| Loin Steaks | 450-1012 | 699 | 450-1012 | 701 | 450-1012 | 697 | 450-1012 | 697 |
| Loin Chops | 477-799 | 587 | 477-799 | 585 | 477-799 | 585 | 477-799 | 585 |
| Diced Pork | 299-799 | 558 | 299-799 | 550 | 299-799 | 550 | 299-799 | 550 |
| Minced Pork | 98-799 | 433 | 98-799 | 437 | 98-799 | 437 | 98-799 | 437 |
| Sausages | 209-598 | 432 | 209-598 | 437 | 209-598 | 437 | 209-598 | 437 |

PGI Reform

Proposed reforms to the European Union (EU) legal system for protecting traditional geographical terms used to sell EU food - such as Roquefort cheese - have been broadly supported by the European Parliament's influential agriculture committee.

Somerfield looks for Kwik saving

The new owners of Somerfield are reportedly looking to offload the loss-making Kwik Save chain. Talks concerning the sale are underway with a number of interested parties.

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: -

| | |
|--|---|
| AES, Crossbush, Riccarton, Kilmarnock KA1 5LN | Tel 01563 551122, 07788 926925 |
| Avery Weigh Tronix Ltd, Foundry Lane, Smethwick, West Midlands B66 2LP | Contact : Gerry Doran Tel: 0774 077 2154 |
| Bizerba (UK) Ltd, Eastman Way, Hemel Hempstead, HP2 7DU | Tel: 01442 240751 |
| Dalziel Ltd, 8 Belgowan Street, Bellshill North Industrial Estate, Lanarkshire ML4 3NS | Tel: 01698 749595 |
| East of Scotland Contracts, Ferryhills Road, Inverkeithing, Fife KY11 1HD | Tel 01383 418610 |
| William Forrest & Son (Paisley) Ltd, Omoa Works, Motherwell ML1 5LY | Tel 01698 860149 |
| KRH Ltd, 1 Macgowan House, Nobel Busn Park, Stevenson, Ayrshire KA20 3LJ | Tel 01294 472755 |
| Lucas Ingredients Portbury Way, Bristol BS20 7XN | Tel 0800 138 5837 |
| Macnaughton & Watson, 423 Gallowgate, Glasgow, G40 2DY | Tel 0141 554 2757 |
| McAusland Crawford, 79-81 Abercorn Street, Paisley PA3 4AS | Tel 0141 849 7033 |
| Paragon Products, Newhailes Ind Estate, Newhailes Road, Musselburgh | Tel: 0131 653 2222 |
| Scotweigh, Unit 2, Granary Square, Bankside, Falkirk, FK2 7XJ | Tel 01324 611311 |
| Stockline Plastics, Grovepark Mills, Hopehill Road, Glasgow, G20 7NF | Tel 0800 262015 |
| Turner Vehicle Bodies, Carseview Rd, Suttieside Ind Estate Forfar, DD8 3BT | Tel: 01307 462142 |
| William Sword Ltd., Blairlinn Ind Est, Cumbernauld, G62 2TX | Tel: 01236 725094 |
| James Whannel (Wholesale) Ltd. c/o Wishaw Abattoir, Caledonian Road, Wishaw ML2 0HU | Contact : Robert Kirkhope Tel: 01698 355022 |

WANTED

**BERKEL FLAT BED
BACON SLICERS
HAND DRIVEN**

NOT GRAVITY FEED

CASH PAID

Tel Mr Hancock
01782 616 799
07766711392
ANYTIME