

The food hygiene initiative is going to be expanded this year and they are going to have a presence at the BBC Good Food Show which is coming to Scotland in November at the SECC. FSAS are hosting a roadshow in Dundee and have 250 people interested in it. These roadshows get out the message cooking, healthy eating and food safety. It may be the time for meat to be involved in the roadshows because consumers are taking such a huge interest in them we can highlight the meat available from butchers. Alan Kennedy said attending these events can be seen as us supporting these initiatives.

Under Deliver FSAS are concerned about the lack of qualified EHO's and how resources are going to be short before very long. The Better Regulation agenda does look as if it is going to change all inspections undertaken and rationalised so we need to watch this carefully. FSA are unlikely to want food safety to be under any sort of threat by this agenda. David Lindsay asked where the amount over £6.4m is spent? Douglas replied staffing costs and overheads. Douglas felt they should allocate these costs to these themes.

ED BEDLINGTON, MEAT TRADES JOURNAL: he attended the regional meeting in Kilmarnock and visited our offices and had a meeting with ourselves and Alistair Donaldson with some good news under Membership and Development.

ACBI: Visit to Scotland: 15 butchers from Ireland arrived in Edinburgh on 4th March. They visited Simon Howie, Perth, Scott Brothers Dundee, Robertsons, Broughty Ferry, R T Stuart Lundin Links & Leven. The next day they visited Crombies of Edinburgh and Fergusons of Airdrie. The Chief Executive of ACBI had apologised for the inappropriate behaviour of some of the party and to convey this message to the butchers visited.

ABERTAY UNIVERSITY FACILITIES: Douglas visited their Food Innovation Unit which is an ERDF project run by Jennifer Bryson and Panos MaXXXXXXXXX. The facilities include test kitchens, food photography, nutritional analysis, QUID evaluation and product development - all free of charge to businesses in Objective 2 postcode areas. Those in these areas will already have postcards informing them. It could become very useful. SFMTA have provided Abertay with a list of potential businesses to match the postcodes and take it forward from there. They are keen for us to use this facility and they already have a tie up with SAMB.

PROMOTIONS REPORT: Mark Barnett reported.

Entry Forms went out for the Product Evaluation to be held on Friday 13th April in Perth College. The evaluation as you will have read will be for Burgers – any kind of burger – and for Haggis with a Difference. The Haggis one is to highlight the variety and innovation with our national dish. Hopefully this will attract a good size entry and we will be able to present lots of certificates at the Meat Trade Fair a month later.

Collection points will be arranged for the Thursday before the event and you are all asked to support this event, which has sponsorship from Dalziel for the Burgers and Grampian Oat Products for the Haggis with a Difference evaluation. Entry costs £10 per product.

At the recent Regional meetings members have been asked for their opinions on what they feel should be promoted. In Edinburgh, Kilmarnock and Dundee there was agreement that customers were needing instruction on basic cookery; how to cook mince and stew and how to make soup. Dundee were very keen to promote forequarter cuts.

On posters, the membership felt that there was a need for A2 sized posters to address consumers who were possibly not coming through the doors of shops. These would convey messages to passers by, bus and car borne.

Others have requested assurance point of sale material highlighting Service, Quality and Advice available at a craft butcher. These would be smaller but eye catching notices. There was also support for the Storage Advice Poster that we produced years ago in A3 size.

All this will be considered and the Cuts of Meat Poster that we discussed at the last Executive Meeting has been progressed. We expect to receive the artwork from MLC any day now.

KEURSLAGER: interested in progressing some things with us and we have a party visiting Holland shortly and we will receive some feedback from them.

Beaton Lindsay said the Q Guild have a nice framed notice which says this premises has been supplied with meat from and the butcher business. He felt we should look into something similar under the Craft Butcher logo. Douglas said the problem was the restaurant sticking to it. So many want your certificate put it up and use the named butcher 10% of the time. Alan Kennedy explained he had a problem with a restaurant in Forfar. They eventually wanted something cheap to promote and he said to them to use what he provided but not under his name. Hamish Deans said it was a plus for us. If we can get the opportunity to put our name into the restaurant we should investigate the principle as its right. Douglas said he would draft something out. Jamie Chapman asked about the restaurants in the Scotch Beef Club if they were heavily monitored. Uel Morton was not sure as he was not that close to it. He pointed out that Country of Origin labelling in the food service sector has been announced by Ross Finnie. This is basically an extension of the beef labelling regulations. QMS will not be responsible for enforcing this legislation. This is in place in Ireland and France and it is not easy to enforce.

MEMBERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT REPORT: Beaton Lindsay reported.

332 Paid to date

38 on Monthly direct debit and 20 on quarterly direct debit.

All unpaid members have been contacted. 2 had indicated they will not rejoin:-

- Castletown Meat Company because they claim the Forum of Small Business provides the information he needs.
- Dalduff Farm Shop Owner claims that he has all the knowledge he needs to run his shop.

Information packs were sent to:-

Lawrie & Symington at both Lanark Market & Forfar Market for interest in corporate membership.

REGIONAL MEETINGS: Since the last Executive met, Regional meetings have been held in Edinburgh, Kilmarnock and Dundee. Attendance was good in Kilmarnock but not particularly good at the other two. Those attending were very appreciative and positive about their evenings. The following meetings have still to take place.

Monday 26th March	Glen Mhor Hotel, Inverness
Tuesday 27th March	Redgarth Hotel, Oldmeldrum

If you wish to attend one (or more!) of these you must phone us to reserve a space. Please reserve your place as soon as possible. Telephone Bruce: 01738 637472

HANDBOOK: £3500 has been secured in advertising income this covers the cost of printing. The Publication will be distributed at the beginning of April.

TRADE FAIR 2007: The annual trade fair will be held on the 13 May 2007. The show includes Scottish Pork Sausage Master & Scottish Haggis Competition, Meat Skills Final sponsored by the Scotch Butchers Club, Refreshment area sponsored by KRH and golf simulator. 30 of the 40 stands are booked by the following:-

Dalziel, Lucas Ingredients, East of Scotland Contracts, AMKO Foods, Bell Bakers, Forest Products, Avery Weigh Tronix, Mcausland Crawford, McNaughton & Watson, AES, Chesters of St Andrews, Scotweigh, Meat Trades Journal, FMS (Scotland), Bizerba, Wm Sword, QMS, Paragon, Unitech, Celtic Food Machinery.

The Meat Trades Journal are a Media partner for the show and will have an advert in 13 April edition and preview in April/May edition of Xtra with a review in "Focus on Scotland" edition on the 8th June.

Stuart Christie asked if any of the banks were interested. Douglas said both the Royal Bank and Bank of Scotland attended before but did not think they did much business. Bruce McCall said he had followed them both up and the Bank of Scotland Merchant Services seem quite happy to advertise through our website, newsletter and annual handbook. Ian Faulds asked if any refrigeration companies were attending. Bruce McCall said that Watco secured a stand today. Stuart Christie asked if the livestock mart had been approached. Bruce McCall said that we approach wholesalers etc but these companies do not appear too interested in coming. Any help on that front from Executive members would be appreciated. David Lindsay said the Auctioneers should be encouraged to attend if they want more people to buy live. Douglas Scott said he has sent a letter of congratulations to Jim McLaren from the Federation on his appointment as NFUS President and he had been invited to attend a future meeting.

FINANCE REPORT: Douglas Scott reported.

MEMBER SERVICES: We are still waiting to see how many people will pay. There are one or two not rejoining but are still hopeful we will meet our forecasted figure of £83,000 on subscription income. We have a budget just under £100K which includes the operation of the Trade Fair.

SCOTTISH MEAT TRAINING: We are anticipating an expenditure of £320,000. The critical point is the money we get in from Scottish Enterprise which accounts for just under 50% of our income. It is reassuring to note the February claim from SE was £21000. ESF budget for Scottish Enterprise and Highlands area of £146,000. The payments for this financial year are just starting to come to us now. Expenditure has been in line with forecast. At the end of the year we are budgeting to be in surplus.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT: Sandra Lennox reported.

TRAINEE NUMBERS: Numbers overall appear to be remaining steady. We've seen a slight downturn in skillseeker numbers but an increase in the adult ESF funded training numbers. This month we have 9 completed qualifications.

Encouragingly, it appears that the trainees completing their qualifications are remaining in our industry and there is some interest in progressing further, either with the 'new' Butchers Certificates which we introduced this year or, in some cases, on to level 3.

We do still have time before the end of this contract year to register members of staff onto our training courses, please do contact our office if you wish to either register a trainee or to discuss what we can offer.

SKILLS XTRA: The recent Seam Cutting events were successfully received and we now have 5 trainees who have completed this programme, the final certificates have been requested from the Sector Skills Council, Improve.

The remaining 11 trainees on this programme are making good progress and we expect them all to complete fairly shortly.

IMPROVE: I attended a Learning Provider Group meeting held in Stirling on 1st February. The Group has been formed with the remit of providing the Training Provider perspective on the review of qualifications to the SSC, Improve.

The new qualifications units are now with the regulatory bodies for final approval, the discussion at the meeting focused on the make up of the Modern Apprenticeship Framework in Scotland.

The new framework being proposed will consist of the revised Level 3 qualification, core skills and optional additional units. The main change in this framework is that there will no longer be a requirement to complete a level 2. This means, in essence, that a Modern Apprentice would be expected to begin a level 3 qualification at the point of registration when he might only be 16 years old. We have been invited to feedback our view as a Training Provider and also to feedback the views of our members.

The proposed framework is still in consultation stage but is expected to be finalised by end of summer 2007.

However, Scottish Executive are expected to be announcing a further change to MA frameworks with the addition of a level 2 framework in Scotland which we believe will be more suitable, more achievable to the majority of trainees in our sector. The level 2 framework is based on the SkillsXtra model which we have had success with.

NORTHERN IRELAND: Further visits have taken place and progress continues as was originally planned for the Northern Irish trainees.

The External Verifier visit passed with no surprises and no action points to be taken forward. A satisfying result for all involved.

SE and HIE CONTRACT TENDERS: There has been some communication from both HIE and SE regarding the contract tenders. Both funding agencies have asked us to profile the amounts which we hope to claim in the final weeks of the current contract, and HIE asked us to clarify age targets. We received a letter from HIE this week confirming that we will now operate with a 'Lead' contract manager instead of with individual Enterprise Company (LEC) contract managers – which leads me to be confident that we have been successful with our tender and are to be offered a contract in HIE!

There have been no requests for clarification of our tender documents for SE (which can only be a good sign) and on Tuesday (yesterday) I was informed that contract offers will be made to successful Training Providers, by next week at the latest.

COURSES: A number of courses have been held this month:

All Modern Apprentices and level 3 trainees were offered a place on a Health and Safety Awareness Day course (funded by ESF). These were held in Discovery Point, Dundee on 19 February, Holiday Inn Express, Strathclyde Park Glasgow on 26 February and in Thistle Hotel, Inverness on 13 March.

The Intermediate HACCP course was held in Edinburgh with 5 people now anxiously awaiting the results of their exams! There are 11 booked on the course to be held in Motherwell on 26th and 27th March but there is still room to squeeze in more.

A Supervisory Skills Course was held on 27th and 28th February at the Falkirk Stadium.

Feedback from each of these events has been very positive and I would urge you to contact us if you feel that any of them would be of benefit to your business.

David Lindsay said Health and Safety at Work is being raised again. It has been seven years since we have had this so everyone should be aware of it. Alan Kennedy said he has just been through his approval for the Monifeith shop. There has always been a term for Indoor and Outdoor shoes. It came back this time that it should be protective shoes even for counter staff. Beaton Lindsay said that when they come in they are there to help you rather than be on your back. He suggested a standardised form for a butcher shop done. Then it can be downloaded and altered to suit the individual shop. When he was on the course he basically has it all on his computer and charges you £1,000. Hamish Deans said it was a good point as a selling point for membership. Douglas

Scott said we have an offer given out at regional meetings which we would have John Gunster to come in and do all your risk assessments for Health & Safety, Fire Risk Assessment, COSHH and Manual handling for £450. Douglas said this offer would be included in the annual handbook and in the April Newsletter. Beaton Lindsay said the Level 3 covers risk assessment. Hamish Deans complimented Sandra on her very full report with lots of good news in it.

LEGISLATION REPORT: Douglas Scott reported.

FSAS SATURATED FAT STRATEGY: FSAS are currently consulting organisations who may be able to help with their strategy. SFMTA were unsure about what we could do about it. The meeting dwelt on salt. We detect that salt levels are dropping generally in the food industry and it will only be a matter of time before it percolates through to butchers in how they make their sausages, pies and burgers. McAusland Crawford monitor this. They are useful in identifying what is possible and practical and what is acceptable. The subject been raised at the Regional Meetings in Dundee and Glasgow. At Dundee members accepted that salt levels will probably have to be reduced. Other members and McAusland Crawford are of the opinion that salt levels are as low as they can be at this moment in time. There is a gradual move to reduce fat, sugar and salt consumption. Sandy Crombie is keen that we are seen to be doing something positive he would like to see a sausage recipe developed that we could all promote so that we can demonstrate to FSA and consumer groups that Scottish butchers have done something positive. Douglas said we cannot do it without industry support and at this moment in time they are not fully behind it. Hamish Deans said we should not get involved unless it is for promotional activity because salt and fat goes with flavour and taste. He was of the opinion that it will be legislated against anyway. Beaton Lindsay said you would not move away from your own brand of sausage you make. David Lindsay felt that it could be put in amongst the range of sausage that are promoted and offer the customer the low salt one if they want it, he added the general sausage you will never change. Douglas asked even if the customers' taste changed towards a reduced level of salt? David Lindsay said if they want one then we will have one there but there is no way we will shift from our bulk standard recipe. Hamish Deans said that would be unless we were legislated out. Mark Barnett said if we had a common recipe given part as an option it is an opportunity to promote craft butcher that we are the people taking active steps forward to promote healthier eating it gives us another string. Hamish said it is an add on just like vegetarian haggis. David Jarron said it is case of working with ingredient manufacturers to make an edible sausage. The target could be to take sausages down from a red to an amber traffic light as determined by the FSA traffic light system. McAusland Crawford already sell a seasoning which takes it to 1.4% which is an amber traffic light. Alan Kennedy said that his customer feedback reflects that butchers have spent a lot of years promoting the sausage not just as a basic but also as a quality food item. The basic internal quality of the sausage may taste the same but the ingredients have improved over the years as there is no such thing as a very cheap sausage now. The fat content of the sausage is dropping now and a low salt sausage would have to be a main stream sausage like a pork or beef sausage. Jamie Chapman said that if it is lacking in flavour all you do is add salt. Douglas said this is a project we could work with Abertay University on to establish nutritional value of sausages currently being produced. Hamish thought if we wanted it could be a way us being seen by FSA being pro-active about it. Sausages in some sectors get a fairly bad name but butcher sausages are seen as the ones to buy so we should be at that end of the thinking on it.

Douglas was handed an email from Uel Morton about MLC Brussels that contained information on proposals for reducing hygiene records in small businesses with less than ten employees with a turnover than £1.3m. SFMTA would be concerned that these businesses would have lower standard than their competitors. We did not like being singled out for butcher licensing but we recommend as best practice that everyone should continue to do food hygiene training and maintain the practices which they did during licensing. David Lindsay said that this takes out all the small takeaways that employ 2-3 people and more or less clears Europe of legislation. Douglas said this seems strange following new legislation in 2006 to implement HACCP in all food shops. Mark Barnett said he has spoken to other businesses getting pass certificates and if you ask them about HACCP they do not know what it is about and yet it is a main criteria for getting a

pass certificate. Hamish Deans said the problem is that the local authority do not have the staff. Douglas asked for information on premises where HACCP is not implemented and we can ask under Freedom of Information for the report and ask why it is not in place. Douglas agreed to find out more about the contents of the proposal.

LIVESTOCK REPORT: Stuart Christie reported.

Hides £25

Hogg Skins £1

Hoggs still good money for butchers not for farmers. Hoggs at Ayr average £1.04 kg.

Cattle much the same good sorts still making the most money on average with poorer types cheaper store cattle selling well with prices up to £200 over kilo price. Wholesalers are desperate to sell as things are very quiet. If you can shift any quantity it's a buyers market especially for roasts. OTM boxed beef plentiful no shortages but watch quality.

Forrest increase in bone collection by £1 per bin after 1st April.

More butchers are trying to sell up in Glasgow and the West with at least three perhaps more on the market.

Stuart referred to an article in the Herald from Kim Marie Haywood that said when the single farm payment goes off in 2012 cattle will be losing £450 - £500 per headprice would have to go 200 – 260 a kilo if breeders are going to survive. She pointed out it would take a 25 –30% increase in efficiency. He said that the farmer is cutting things to the bone as they are at the moment. Jamie Chapman was of the opinion that in 5 or 6 years they will have change their mind about what they are going to do. David Jarron added we could probably sympathise with the producer at the moment as the prices have slumped since January and they did not need to. Hamish Deans said good cattle are cheap compared to what we were paying 10-15 years ago there has not been not much inflation. Jamie warned that overheads have risen a lot. David Jarron said that the last market before BSE he bought 17 cattle at Stirling and they averaged 117p per kilo unfortunately we are closer to 135p per kilo. Hamish Deans thought we are likely to have pay more or there is not going to be the quality stock. David Jarron said wholesalers cannot move beef at the moment and that is part of the reason for the slump in price. He added the modern farmer is not often fattening cattle on land now.

Stuart Christie read the letter from NFU and wholesalers on VC removal circulated to the meeting. The meeting backed the letter. David Jarron said the simple answer would have been the UK to swallow up the 24-30 month and because of the traceability of meat going to the continent nothing would slip through. Stuart Christie said that there was a rush to get the export and what he knows it is all boxed. Mark Barnett said we should be looking at the home market first and get that right. Hamish Deans had sent 100 sides to Eire at the weekend and it was cow beef, probably middle to lower end of the cow trade. He is reliable informed that will be boned out and vacuum packed returned to UK and will not be labelled cow beef. David Jarron said this is exactly the argument we have that it should be labelled cow beef or bull beef etc on the box. Hamish Deans urged the private trade to continue to buy live and keep standards up. Stuart Christie reported that Brazilian beef is coming back on the market. Hamish Deans warned you do not know the origin until you are inside the box as the box does not always indicate it. David Jarron said as businesses you should be alert to check what is being sold, is what you receive.

Hamish Deans informed the meeting that Galashiels achieved its inspection certificate that morning and thanked Douglas for his well-written letter, which helped considerably.

Jamie Chapman attended the standard setting body for the processors scheme. George Lees said one EHO in the borders insists that the beef traceability code for beef sausages should be at the

point of sale and not just the notice board. Douglas said that this is not a requirement and suggested that the butcher should get it in writing then SFMTA can take it up.

Stuart Christie was asked for a source of cow lips. Hamish Deans said this is a product that vet practices and Universities require for continued research. If the meat inspector removes the article in the presence of the OV and places it in a sealed in a glass container it can then go out the abattoir.

David Lindsay said that he has a problem getting sweet breads from Dunblane. Hamish Deans said if they are separated and inspected they are okay.

LABOUR CONDITIONS REPORT: David Jarron reported.

EMPLOYMENT LAW SEMINARS: These are not going ahead.

NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE: These rates will increase in October again as follows:

£5.35 to £5.52 – 22 and over

£4.45 to £4.60 – 18 - 21 years

£3.30 to £3.40 – 16 & 17 year olds

QUALITY MEAT SCOTLAND: Chief Executive Uel Morton addressed the meeting.

Uel congratulated the Federation on its high standards and conduct of the meeting and the meeting correspondence. It is a credit to the industry the way we are organised and the way we work to get things done for the industry.

He said his purpose today was to learn about the issues which affect the sector and concern the sector as it goes about its day to day business. He was privileged to attend the meeting and thanked Douglas and Jamie for the invite to join us today.

He said he was from a farming background from Ayrshire, sent over to Ulster as part of the plantation of that province and his family has been farming there for a few generations. He has worked in the agriculture sector for quite a few years. He graduated in 1980 from the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne with a degree in Agriculture and Food Marketing and has been mostly in the agricultural supply trade. The last nine years worked at United Farmers, which is a federative body and he recognises some of our challenges and how we work together.

At this point he suggested he had a contact to give to Douglas for supplying protective footwear.

He said that apart from his knowledge of farmers and farming production side of it he was also interested in the background market information. He is a member of the Chartered Institute of Marketing and Market Research Society and sees the challenge at QMS was to sort out the organisation and take it forward. He was quite sure it was fixable and did think that some "personalities" had got in the way of industry.

At the moment QMS are a not for profit company and about to become a non-departmental public body (NDPB) this will take place on 1st April 2008. We are responsible for a range of activities relating to the development, promotion of the red meat sector in Scotland, which are funded by levy. We were part of the Radcliffe review of levy bodies that review suggested non-departmental public body status for QMS. This is to do with state aids and how the levy gets handed to QMS. You can't give the levy i.e public money to a private company without going through a tendering process. There are a few positive opportunities to buy advertising cheaper as we are a government body and they get cheaper rates. It is not all bureaucracy and hassle - he has no plans to turn into a civil servant. The NDPB status was confirmed in January. A consultation paper will be issued which the Federation is on the list to receive. SEERAD will issue the

consultation in the next few weeks. The plan was to put an advert out for a new chairman which will be appointed on an independent process with the Office of Public Appointments involved. The Chairman will be appointed by a panel of three people one from each of SEERAD, Office of Public Appointments and an industry representative unnamed at present. That process will begin at the end of March. But will probably slip as they need to be appointed by the new minister so nothing is going to happen until June. QMS is on a traditional year from a private company until 31 March 2008 then it will become a public body after that.

The Board of Director under the consultation will say the Board will consist of not more than 12 people. Not less than 50% of the board will be levy payers. Jamie Chapman said the only people who are levy payers are the abattoir owners. Depending on how you look at it you may be better not being a levy payer to get a butcher representative. Uel said that some of the levy payers will be farmers and others processors. There will be thoughts put forward on how that is split. The farmers would say that they put the most in so they should have more say.

This process will happen probably in quarter three of this year with a view of having a board appointed to have its first meeting probably in December. The board would be a shadow board with 4 months of two boards operating. Hamish Deans asked if we put someone forward do we have to say which category they should fall into. Uel Morton said SEERAD would have a view that the levy payers are processors and farmers. Jamie Chapman said that the only legal levy payers are abattoir owners which came from MLC lawyers. Hamish Deans said that the independent side would have a whole host of people who would like to get involved. Uel Morton suggested that they would not want too many people involved who do not know about the red meat sector. Mark Barnett said that SEERAD need to be careful to get a well balanced board with every cog of the industry involved.

Uel said we need to put our views forward in the consultation process that is the opportunity to articulate our views. If we know other people who are being consulted who may not make a submission then we could encourage them to put the same view forward to the process. We want to get good responses from industry to shape QMS the way industry wants it and it is fit for purpose. Douglas Scott asked in what way will the consultation change things as the Radcliffe Report has already provided the shape for what should be there. Uel queried this with SEERAD one function was to be involved in working conditions of people in the industry. He suggested to them we do not need that. We cannot change any of it as it is set down in the Act. Douglas asked what we can change. Uel felt we can comment on the number of members on the board and proportion of levy payers and so on.

Alan Kennedy suggested the consultation should be passed round some of our members for content as there will be a diverse view. Uel said SEERAD will be sending out the consultation and SFMTA could send it to everyone and a view could go from each of them so there would be a Federation view and different members' view. This would get more responses in from the butcher. Hamish Deans said it could be put out with the newsletter. Douglas said he would look to see how big it was but it could be sent out on e-mail to our list of members and these members tend to react. Jamie Chapman asked if the consultation would talk about levy payers and non levy payers. Uel Morton said he would ask SEERAD to put a definition into the consultation. Hamish Deans said that 74 names were on the last distribution and we are looking to get one place out of that. Mark Barnett said they came very close the last time to ripping the industry apart if the auctioneers and Federation were snubbed this time there would be so much trouble. Hamish Deans said we have taken a step forward with a better relationship now with QMS. It is a case of seeing where we want to put ourselves he thought we should try under the levy payers. Jamie Chapman said the problem is they do not recognise us as levy payers. Hamish Deans suggested they will listen to us this time. At the moment MLC is empowered to collect the Levy and next year QMS will have the power to collect the Levy themselves. Hamish Deans said if you liase with the abattoirs directly a simpler system could be in place for a fraction of the cost. Uel Morton recognised that the savings could be used to do further promotion.

Uel was keen to talk about where QMS was changing. Initial observation on QMS is that people view them as a handy source of cash. QMS cannot say yes to everybody but in terms of our sector you can't have an industry body not listening hard to what independent butchers are saying to us. He said he has spoken to Douglas previously about this and has a healthy respect for him and the work he does for the sector. QMS are looking forward to getting closer to our organisation.

Our latest research shows independent retailers have the following market shares; 17% beef, 26% lamb and 12% pork in Scotland. Jamie Chapman said the % share of Scotch beef sales would be more interesting as QMS were promoting Scotch beef. He said that the % would be much higher. Hamish Deans said many independent retailers supply the catering trade and very few supermarkets supply the catering trade then that would increase by a good few % points. The market shares in England are as follows 14% beef, 19% lamb and pork 12%. The consumer profile of butchers' customers are as follows 80 – 90% of your customers are 45 years or over and 50% are ABC1 so that is upper. The demographic is older and just slightly under the demographic of Sainsburys which is encouraging.

Statistics show that cattle kill was up last year. Prime cattle kill was down 7.5%. 35,000 cows and bulls kept the numbers up slightly on 2005. 512,000 prime cattle in 2006. The average age of prime cattle continues to fall it has fallen by a week since 2003 (24 months). A higher proportion of animals are killed at a younger age in 2006 than in 2005. 24 months for steers and 22 months for heifers. In the first quarter of 2005 Scottish calf registrations were 2.5% down. This means there is a tightening of supply by 2.5%. UK figure was down by 10%. Sheep sector - £300,000 sheep strategy EBV's to help farmers develop a better product.

Uel Morton said he supported the stance the industry had on 24-30 month. He recognised that cow beef was an issue and he has a paper on his desk which he would like to bounce some ideas round with SAMW.

There are a number of promotions planned, the red meat consumption in spring time. The Scotch Butcher Club gets five sets of materials and two of them go to all butchers in Scotland. The next one will be summer outdoor eating. He said that most would recognise it as the BBQ season. There world cancer research fund report coming out this November the link between red meat and colorectal has moved into the convincing category. This an area which is unseen by most people but areas were QMS works ands are reading through the information so we can have a response to it and fight the negative publicity. It is not coming out at a good time of the year and there are issues out there which we are working on as part of our remit to monitor.

Scotch :Lamb promotion will be in September/October to up lamb consumption in Scotland and extend the promotion into October. October sausage week promotion and the final one will be Christmas promotion.

The Scotch Butcher Club website is now up and running at www.scotchbutchersclub.org . They are also having talks with Scottish Food and Drink on the campaign highlighting the benefits of eating red meat which is high in iron and zinc.

The Scottish Food and Drink new initiative born out of the desire from the processing sector to be closer to the producers. Ross Finnie has always looked at Bord Bia and how they can hold industry together and he possible is looking for a bit of a legacy which will be funded part funded by the public purse and part by industry. QMS will be a core funder paying between £10,000 and £15,000 as a contribution with the overall funding of between £600K - £700K with a business plan over three or 4 years. If you wanted to get information direct then you can pay a subscription to them.

Uel concluded by stating that he is looking forward to working closely with the SFMTA in the months and years ahead.

ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS:

Stuart Christie said that following a meeting in Glasgow on Monday night they had cancelled the use of the hotel in future. Mark Barnett said the only time you get people out is if there is a crisis. John Hamilton said the same people who were at Glasgow Regional meeting were at Lanarkshire Association meeting the following night. David Jarron said that the Dundee Association had decided to hold two meetings a year this is because they are sitting on substantial funding and that needs administered. He was more commenced with getting people to follow on and attend the executive in future years.

George Lees suggested Associations meet in conjunction with the Regional meetings. Jamie said the Regional meetings are worthwhile nights but Mark Barnett thought members were being well serviced so by the newsletter, website and answer on the phone as soon as they want it. There is a lot of members who are happy with that.

Alan Kennedy asked if other members use the facilities of the office. Douglas said a high percentage contact the office at some point during the year but we do some times wonder why some pay because you never hear from them. Douglas thought that possibly only 25% of members are interested in attending meetings however, it does cause a problem with our democratic process. We will put contact names under associations in the 2007-08 Handbook. Hamish Deans said the non attendance at meetings could be positive as there is nothing to complain about and they pay their subscription. Borders meeting attendances had included a fair proportion of younger members. Douglas said it is a trait of most organisations that people do not want to go to meetings.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Wednesday 11 April 2007.

There was no further business and the meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the chair.