

MEATY GROWTH

Glowing report on SA's thriving meat sectors

SA's "outstanding" meat industry is achieving "extremely positive" results, says the State Government's primary industries unit.

PIRSA's Food and Wine ScoreCard for 2013-14, released at Christmas, says the SA meat industry's gross revenue increased to \$4,070 million, up 12% over 2012-13.

The report says production (or farmgate) value in SA rose by 9% to \$1,376 million, and wholesale value rose by 23% to \$2,434 million.

Retail meat sales increased by almost 3% to \$1,577 million, the report says.

A 38% rise in meat exports to \$958 million was chiefly responsible for the value of SA's total food exports rising by 15% to reverse a decline in 2012-13.

"The overall meat industry experienced extremely positive results," the report says.

It says record numbers of sheep, lambs, cattle and chickens were processed in SA in 2013-14.

SA processed some 5.6 million sheep and lambs (up by 600,000); 430,000 cattle (up by 10,000); 1.23 million pigs (up by 20,000); and 89 million chickens (up by 2.5 million).

Lamb and mutton producers experienced "excellent results", with a 33% rise in farmgate value attributed mainly to higher prices.

The pork and chicken industries had more moderate production value increases of 6% each due to larger volumes.

Beef's production value decline of 9% was attributed to slightly lower prices.

The report described as "outstanding" the growth in processed meat values at both domestic and export levels.

This was attributed to increased export demand and higher prices for lamb, coupled with continued investment and expansion of meat processing facilities.

It noted that some processors purchased extra livestock from

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Onwards and upwards!

It's all systems go at MBL's Athol Park headquarters.

MBL has operated at the larger premises for two years, with operations now well bedded down for the ultimate benefit of Members.

The expansive complex is providing the necessary infrastructure for long-term expansion of the Co-op, which began 110 years ago this month (see page 3).

A feature - Athol Park: 2 years on - is on pages 4-7.

Butchers' hams triumph

Independent butchers enjoyed strong trading over the Christmas period, being effected little by supermarkets offering cheap interstate hams for as low as \$5.99kg.

The general consensus was that butchers' trade across the board rose by a conservative 5% over the previous Christmas, although some recorded increases of about 20%.

MBL's sales reps say most butchers had strong trading. There were some exceptions but overall trading was "quite strong."

AMIC's Paul Sandercock says, "I've heard good reports of revenue being up by 4%-5% in most cases in both city and country, with some up by more."

"Ham sales are a traditional barometer but I've not heard of anyone caught with unsold hams."

Interestingly, most butchers reported strong sales of hams despite supermarkets' "loss leader" tactics.

Most butchers reportedly sold out of hams; one – at Strathalbyn – enjoyed a 25% rise in Christmas ham sales.

"We sold 300 whole hams –

that's 2.7 tonnes worth – compared with 240 for the previous Christmas," says Craig Maidment, of Maidments Meat Service, Strathalbyn.

"Our quality hams were \$12.50kg and we sold more of them despite supermarkets having cheap hams at \$5.99kg.

"Our overall turnover was up by 10% this Christmas, with hams up by 25%."

Ham sales inspired an overall 20% turnover increase at Leabrook Quality Meats, where Michael Lawrence says sales were boosted by local publicity for his second placing in the SA ham awards.

"Trading went extremely well. We took 40 more orders than for the Christmas before so we're very happy," Michael says.

Barossa Fine Foods was "not impacted" by cheap supermarket hams.

"People see value in quality and are prepared to pay the extra, especially at Christmas," says General Manager Andreas Knoll.

"We were happy with how Christmas went. Across our 14 stores (BFF and Standom), we experienced an average of 5% growth."

Bruce's Meat reported Christmas sales rises at Pasadena (12.5%), Fairview Park (4.8%) and Mitcham (4%).

"Our hams sold well – at Fairview Park, ham sales in the week before Christmas were up by 28% on the same week of 2013," says Trevor Hill.

"There was a 23% increase in

turkey sales at Poultry Options."

At Clare, Jason Mathie says trading was "similar" to the previous Christmas at Mathie's Meat Shoppe.

"There was no drop off – we sold out of turkeys a week before Christmas and we then sold out of hams," Jason says.

Meanwhile, a national retail survey for MLA found independent butchers took beef trade away from Woolworths and Coles for the last three months of 2014.

MLA says butchers now hold 21% of national beef sales, up almost 1% from last August.

This follows a challenging 12 months for independents due in part to supermarket price wars.



MEATY GROWTH

From page 1

interstate to meet growing demand and processing capacity.

PIRSA says the 23% rise in the wholesale value of meat was led by lamb and mutton (up 48%) and beef (up 25%).

Meat exports performed "exceedingly well", increasing by more than \$260 million (or 38%) to reach \$958 million.

Lamb and mutton exports rose \$158 million to \$536 million while beef exports rose \$82 million to \$329 million.

The value of SA retail meat sales rose by almost 3% although the volume sold changed little over 2012-13.

Retail beef sales rose \$17 million (up 3%) to \$650 million; chicken rose \$5 million (up 1%) to \$526 million; lamb and mutton rose \$9 million (up 4%) to \$223 million; and pork rose by \$5 million (up 3%) to \$178 million.

The combined retail and hospitality sectors went through 54,000 tonnes of beef; 43,000 tonnes of pork; 73,000 tonnes of chicken; and 16,000 tonnes of lamb and mutton.

Seafood subdued

Lobster was the star performer of the SA seafood industry which suffered overall decline in 2013-14, says PIRSA's report.

Seafood's overall production value fell 3% to \$391 million while exports fell 11% to \$238 million.

The value of lobster rose by 25% to \$108 million due to rising export prices, mainly from Asia.

But the seafood industry's overall gross revenue dropped from \$822 million to \$818 million due to southern bluefin tuna dropping value by 22% to \$113 million.

Other segments of the industry, grouped as "other seafood," totalled \$157 million, a decline of 1%.

The volume of oysters exported increased but the value dropped, and abalone exports declined in volume and value.

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MBL's 110 big years

MBL, South Australia's oldest co-operative, is about to celebrate 110 years of service to butchers.

The Co-op was formed in Adelaide on February 8, 1905, after having its genesis seven months earlier at a meeting of 13 butchers in a Rundle St cafe.

Two trade organisations merged to become The Master Butchers Association Limited – later shortened to Master Butchers Limited – with premises in Light Square, city.

"In years gone by, every State in Australia

had a butchers' co-operative and one by one they have been corporatised. Our MBL is the last one remaining," says current CEO Warren McLean.

"The key to our longevity is continuing to remain relevant by meeting the needs of our Members and concentrating on adding value to their businesses.

"We now have more than 500 Members and are one of the most successful co-operates to operate anywhere in the world."

The 10 years since MBL's Centenary

celebrations in February 2005 have seen robust progress as the Co-op expands.

The bio-filter and new rendering plant were built at Wingfield, the Keith plant was purchased and rejuvenated, and MBL moved to larger headquarters at Athol Park after 42 years at Kilburn.

This 10-year period coincided with Warren's on-going tenure as Company Secretary, which began in February 2005.

"The future looks very promising for MBL," he says.

Blue Ribbon Smallgoods has marked 50 years as a Member of MBL by declaring its continuing support for the Co-op.

Started by the late Michael Lesiw, Blue Ribbon joined MBL on January 11, 1965, and has been run for the past 37 years by Michael's sons Bob and Mike.

Now with a staff 15, they supply Foodland and a list of butchers and delis.

"MBL has been good over the years, providing a source of supply that couldn't be matched," Bob says.

"As well, people like John Phillips and Bernie Steinhoff have provided a wealth of valuable, hands-on experience."

Mike says, "MBL has been good in other ways – in 1968, Dad went on a tour organised by MBL to the US, Europe and Japan, and he came back with lots of new ideas.

"On another trip to New Zealand, Dad bought back continuous casing – we called our new coiled product New Zealand sausage, rather than Polish sausage."

While Bob and Mike have found their niche, they say Blue Ribbon's heydays were in the 1970s when their father led a staff of 80 in the factory. A large shop was run by their mother at Central Market.

"We were a bigger supplier

50 YEARS WITH MBL Brothers praise on-going alliance



Brothers Bob (left) and Mike Lesiw...continuing the tradition at Blue Ribbon Smallgoods.

when it was all strip shopping centres – there was Tom the Cheap but it was before Woolworths and Coles," says Mike, who did an apprenticeship under his father.

Michael died in a car crash on the South East Freeway in 1978.

Mike, who had just finished his apprenticeship, took over the

business with Bob, who quit studying engineering at university.

"When our father died, we were king hit by State and federal death duties that wiped out our reserves. We've never really been able to fully recover," Mike says.

In the meantime, Bob, 57, and

Mike, 56, continue the smallgoods tradition set by their father, using his original recipes – and with a little help from MBL.

***Conroy's Smallgoods, at Bowden, is also about to mark 50 years as an MBL Member, joining on December 12, 1965. A story is earmarked for MBL News' December edition.**



ATHOL PARK: 2 years on

THE BACKGROUND

Based in the city since its formation in 1905, MBL moved into a new purpose-built base at Kilburn in 1970.

Kilburn served MBL well but we were forced to begin looking for bigger premises eight years ago.

We had outgrown cramped Kilburn just as we had outgrown two previous homes in the city since 1905.

MBL needed more warehouse space to better serve existing customers and to allow expansion into new markets.

High returns from the Wingfield rendering plant in the early 2000s had given MBL the confidence to expand the business and Members reaped healthy rebates.

But while more opportunities for growth were identified, our plans for further expansion were limited because our then sole warehouse at Kilburn was at capacity.

To ease the bottleneck, MBL began renting a much larger warehouse at Gepps Cross to supplement the Kilburn premises.

But this was always going to be a temporary measure for several reasons, including the burden of double handling between the two warehouses, with extra wage and transport costs.

There were other space problems at Kilburn, including a cramped showroom area for merchandise and machinery causing day-to-day service inefficiencies, and a shortage of car parking for visitors.

With assorted business opportunities beckoning, MBL began planning for a new larger home under the one roof.

MBL investigated building new premises on vacant land it owns at Wingfield but settled buying on a large property at 203-205 Hanson Rd, Athol Park, and adapting it to our needs.

The Athol Park property, with three street frontages, has two vast warehouses under



MBL NEWS
SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2012
SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S OLDEST CO-OPERATIVE ESTABLISHED 1905

Here we go!

MBL moves to secure future

Expansion into new markets and more efficient merchandise handling will flow from MBL's move from Kilburn to nearby Athol Park in early February.

Gaining a much-needed larger warehouse motivated the acquisition of premises (pictured) at 203-205 Hanson Rd, Athol Park.

The Co-op-outgrew its existing warehouse several years ago.

MBL had planned to build new premises on vacant land it owns at Wingfield but settled on the Athol Park property at a saving of about \$3.5 million.

"In making this move, we are able to vacate a leased warehouse premises at a significant saving in rent, transport and double handling," says MBL General Manager Warren McLean.

"As well, we will continue to rent out surplus property at Wingfield, which is the site we were going to build on.

"All of this has been achieved at a saving of about \$3.5 million over building a new warehouse - and we still have the vacant land at Wingfield for the future."

Settlement on the Athol Park property was on July 31 and works began immediately to adapt the premises to MBL's needs.

The new property will better accommodate the current Food Service business and allow expansion into new markets.

It will allow a streamlined and more efficient supply and delivery system for merchandise and machinery, to the benefit of all MBL customers.

The property has three street frontages. The main frontage is 117 metres along Hanson Rd, between Millicent and Lavinia Sts.

The site covers 13,890 square metres, with buildings totalling 6,856 square metres.

Warren says, "In making this purchase, we gain a perfect fit for our business needs."

How we announced the move to Athol Park.

the one roof. The site covers 13,890 square metres, with buildings totalling 6,856 square metres.

The property, surrounded by security fencing, has easy access to north and south transport corridors, and the large car parking and transport movements areas are all off street.

"In moving to Athol Park, we were able to vacate a leased warehouse at a significant saving in rent, transport and double handling," says MBL CEO Warren McLean.

"As well, we could continue to rent out surplus property at Wingfield, which is the site we were going to build on.

"All of this was achieved at a saving of about \$3.5 million over building a new warehouse - and we still have the vacant land at Wingfield for the future."

The Kilburn property was sold in mid-2013, ending MBL's 42-year tenure.



Extra room for filling orders.



ATHOL PARK: 2 years on

Onwards and upwards!

MBL's first two years at expansive Athol Park have proved resoundingly successful, enabling the Co-op to grow for the ultimate benefit of Members.

"Operations at our new home have bedded down well, pretty much as we expected," says MBL CEO Warren McLean.

Two vast warehouses and other modern facilities have enabled greater stock holding, improved buying power and a wider product range.

A streamlined and faster supply and delivery system for merchandise and machinery is benefiting all MBL Members and customers.

Athol Park allowed for an expanded retail area, with its cash 'n carry style, and a larger machinery showroom.

There is a faster, more efficient pick-up service for Members. Products sold through MBL's slick new website are also despatched from the showroom.

And, in the bigger picture, the complex is providing the necessary infrastructure to allow for long-term expansion to secure the Co-op's future.

MBL began operating at Athol Park on February 6, 2013, after outgrowing premises at Kilburn.

The official opening was on April 16, 2013,



The main warehouse, with the shop and showroom at one end.

by MBL's longest-serving Director Mike Rankin who described the complex as "a magnificent achievement."

Warren says, "We have a property that will serve MBL well into the future.

"It provides enough space to efficiently handle stock holding and allow expansion into other areas of merchandise that we were unable to service."

MBL's Operations, Business Development Manager, Bexley Carman, says the majority of Athol Park's systems have now been

bedded down and are working well.

"We've improved operating efficiencies by a most conservative 20%," he says.

He says the work environment for MBL staff is safer and more ordered than at Kilburn.

Athol Park has modern, clean and suitable offices and warehouses, along with adequate facilities for meetings, training and staff breaks.

The better work environment has improved staff morale and efficiency, resulting in increased output.

"We have a great bunch of staff – sick leave is down and the care factor is up," Bexley says.

SHOP & SHOWROOM

MBL's "cash 'n carry" shop has simplified purchasing to save time for customers and staff alike.

Customers welcomed the streamlined purchasing system, led by a larger choice of products that are better showcased and with prices displayed.

Ample off-street car parking in front of the shop is another bonus.



Athol Park had the space for our modern cash 'n carry shop.

➤ “We changed the basic operation,” says Bexley.

“At Kilburn, people chose what they wanted in the small showroom, ordered and paid at the front counter, the order went out to the warehouse and the goods were collected outside at parcel pickup.

“This process, from ordering to collection, took anywhere between 10 and 40 minutes, with an average of about 20 minutes.

“At Athol Park, we have a cash ‘n carry operation with more display and marked prices so that customers can choose products and pay on the way out.

“Of course, staff are available as always to offer advice as needed.”

For larger orders, customers can telephone ahead and the order will be prepared for collection.

MBL continues to offer products for the exclusive purchase by MBL Members and industry customers.

The Co-op, however, now has the shop space to offer new products, led by everyday household items, to attract local shoppers for revenue to reduce the shop’s operating costs.

WAREHOUSING

MBL Purchasing Manager David Curtis says, “With larger warehouse space at Athol Park, we have been able to buy more products at competitive prices to be passed onto Members.

“We are more competitive, offering a lot of products that our competitors haven’t got.”



David Curtis with foam trays.



The extra space also allows distribution efficiencies, says Bexley Carman.

“At Kilburn, none of our products were slotted, so there were no bin and bay locations. The location of products was all in the heads of warehouse staff,” he says.

“We had to pack the aisles full of finished products to go out, then we had to pull them out of the aisles to go to slot locations.

“Athol Park allows us to put everything in bin and bay locations. Pickers are now picking to a spot, not a product.

“The same orders are being completed significantly faster with a higher degree of accuracy.

“We continue to fine tune our operations. We will be looking to alter our pallet stacking system to ensure maximum use of space with higher stacking.”

IKON PACK

MBL is able to offer a larger range of quality products at better prices because Athol Park’s warehouse capacity allows for high level bulk buying.

With storage space no longer a millstone, MBL’s purchasing team was instrumental in forming a strong new Australasian buying group, ikon pack.

Significant purchasing benefits are flowing to MBL members and customers across a vast range including foam trays, knives, protective clothing, plastic containers, film and bags.

As an example, butchers now pay significantly less for higher quality foam trays compared with two years ago.

Bexley says, “We wouldn’t have been able to be fully involved with ikon pack if we didn’t have the warehouse capacity of Athol Park.

“At Kilburn, we lacked warehouse capacity – we weren’t even able to properly unload containers.”

Australian and imported products which were labelled “MBL” are now under the national ikon pack brand.

“By buying in large quantities, we’re getting products at much better prices,” says David Curtis.

“However, quality will not be compromised. In some cases, we’re sourcing better quality products at cheaper prices.”

The Ikon Pack group consists of six organisations – one in each main- ➤



From the docks to the machinery showroom, Athol Park’s extra space is delivering widespread benefits.



Coming and going... it's a hive of activity around the docks zone.

land State and one in New Zealand – which are market leaders in supplying ingredients and materials for the red meat, poultry, seafood and allied industries.

MBL in SA is the only Co-op in the group which includes Complete Butchers Supplies (Victoria), Neild & Co (NSW), Vadals (Queensland), MBL (WA) and Dunninghams (NZ).

The six have collaborated to form an association under the ikon pack brand, with the aim of creating a recognisable image for a range of products throughout Australasia.

David says, “We’re individual businesses operating independently, but as a group we have better buying opportunities and greater combined purchasing power to access cheaper products worldwide.”

Bexley says involvement in the group continues the evolution of the Co-op into “more than a butchers’ supply business.”

“It has opened opportunities we would never have had for national promotions to get the ikon pack brand known to the general public,” he says.

“Butchers, other members and customers are able to on-sell ikon pack products, including knives and kitchen utensils, to their customers.

“ikon pack also gives MBL a national presence and the ability to supply some of our products on a national level.”

BLENDING

A state-of-the-art blending facility, completed last April, gave MBL the capacity to at least triple its blending room output.

A feature is a huge blender which produces one tonne of sausage meal in the one blend.

The facility allows longer and more flexible production runs while significantly improving production efficiencies.

And it opens the way for making new products for diverse new markets.



Bexley Carman (right) and Kurt Richmond at the packing machine.

For years, MBL identified strong growth potential for its assorted ingredients but was hamstrung by lack of space.

Athol Park’s space has removed the shackles, allowing room for extended blending facilities with new equipment and new production systems.

“Many things that MBL sells are commodities, like knives, boots and aprons from other companies, but products from our blending room are our intellectual property,” Bexley says.

“They are ours, they can’t be copied easily, our name is on them and there is great scope for growth.”

MBL operated with one blending room in our first 15 months at Athol Park. The second blending room began operating last April after fitout was completed.

The larger original room is now designated for the production of gluten-free products, while the separated new room is for gluten-based products.

“Gluten will never enter the gluten-free room. This segregation of allergens means we can quality assure our products to the highest standards,” Bexley says.

“About 70% of what we produce is now gluten-free, usually produced on three days of the week. Gluten products are produced on the other days.

“Having two separate rooms gives us more flexibility and increased control, helping with scheduling.

“This facility has given us control that wouldn’t have been possible at Kilburn.

“We have room to move in rooms that are now properly insulated, with good air flow and dust extraction.”

Bexley says MBL now has the capacity to undertake large scale blends rather than having to do a series of smaller ones.

“We do big blends where possible. We can now produce a particular product in a day to meet our requirements for a whole month,” he says.

“We’ve also included lifting aids to take some of the strain off staff and to improve safety.”

Bernie Steinhoff, 72, retired from MBL at Christmas to close the curtain on a lifetime of contribution to the meat industry.

The fourth generation German butcher, widely respected as one of nature's gentlemen, has imparted his unsurpassed technical knowledge and smallgoods expertise to scores of butchers.

Forever enthusiastic and passionate, he has always loved his work and has mixed feelings about retirement, feeling he still has much to contribute.

Bernie's enthusiasm shone through in this interview with PETER MORGAN.

Bernie's contribution has simply been... **WUNDERBAR!**

Acorns and Hungarian salami come to the fore when Bernie Steinhoff talks about attention to detail, which he says means everything in making smallgoods.

He recounts a lesson from his butcher father Hans who, in turn, had smallgoods knowledge passed onto him from his father and grandfather in Germany.

"Dad used to say that true, authentic Hungarian salami could be made only in Hungary because of a particular acorn," Bernie says.

"Authentic Hungarian salami is traditionally made from wild pigs which roam oak forests and eat fallen acorns.

"These particular acorns give the particular flavour synonymous with Hungarian salami.

"Dad's message was that you can use your knowledge to go close to making Hungarian salami outside Hungary but it could never be exactly the same because the pork wouldn't be flavoured by acorns from a Hungarian forest.

"It's all about authenticity and it showed Dad's attention to detail and deep knowledge of smallgoods."

Bernie says he learnt an enormous amount from his father. "I've always kept my eyes and ears open to learn as much as I can. You never stop learning," he says.

He started with his father at Europa in Adelaide in 1960 and later moved to his father's Westfalia Meat at Fullham Gardens.

MBL Chairman Bruce Carter recalls: "Hans ran a spotless shop and people came from all over Adelaide to buy his quality smallgoods."

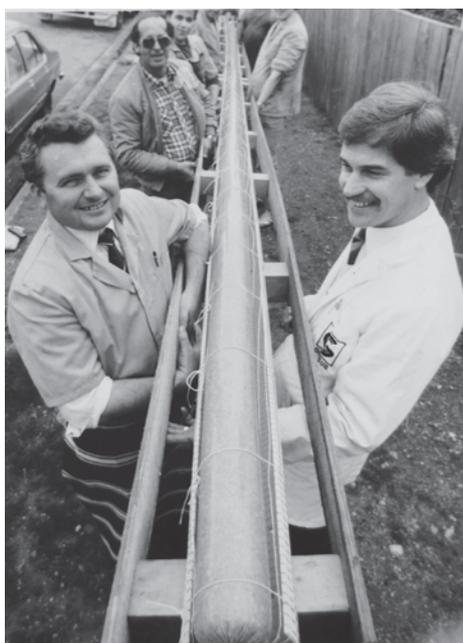
Bernie says, "At Westfalia, we were known as the Liverwurst Kings.

"On Tuesdays, Dad and I would make 1500kg of Latvian liverwurst plus up to 800kg of both fine German liverwurst and

coarse country-style liverwurst.

"With liverwurst, you had to watch the weather – if you made it during thunderstorms, it could go sour.

"I don't really know why, but it's true. It sounds like an old wife's tale but it's something the old fellas worked out generations ago. We worked a way around it – we added sulphate.



In 1987, Bernie Steinhoff (right) and Standom founder Stan Ciechanowicz (left) entered the Guinness Book of Records for making the world's longest salami.

It stretched 47 metres, suspended over the stalls at Junction Market, Kilburn.

"It was a huge exercise. The casing had to be one piece and it was made by Globus in Sydney," says Bernie, who then worked for Globus.

"It went the full width of Junction Market. Two trucks with meat to fill it ran all day between Standom and Junction Market."

"When Dad started out, there was no sulphate – they used a blood mixture, and the plasma would also help bind the meat together. Back then, Dad would work with meat when it was hot, not cold like today."

But at age 32, Bernie required a major back operation and his career took a new direction into the service side.

"I was told if I didn't stop butchering, I'd end up in a wheelchair. It was scary. For months, I didn't know what I'd do," he says.

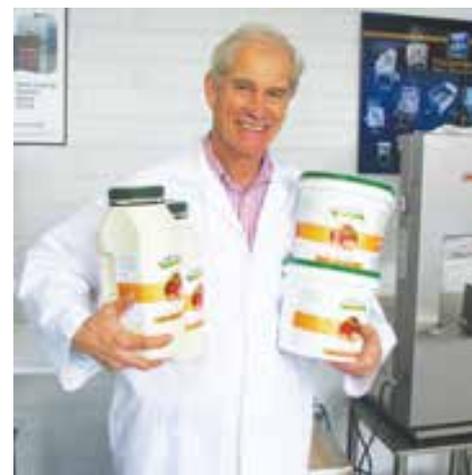
"Then Globus, which imported machinery and products, including spices, from Germany, invited me to the opening of its new warehouse.

"One of the salesman pulled me aside and told me he was about to leave Globus, he took me to see the boss and I got the job on the spot."

Being fluent in German was a big advantage, and Globus sent Bernie to his first IFFA meat industry expo in Germany in 1983.

"Being able to speak German, I was able to pick the brains of smallgoods makers every time I went to Germany. I've been to IFFA 11 times," he says.

Over the years, Bernie has passed on his technical knowledge and smallgoods expertise to many butchers



Bernie tested new products for MBL.



➤ through his work with Quality Ingredients and MBL.

His assorted roles at MBL have included developing products, hitting the road as a sales rep and, more recently, running the machinery department.

MBL CEO Warren McLean says, “Bernie has done much to help butchers improve their smallgoods products.

“His trademark has been his enthusiasm – I have often admired the way he has always remained so enthusiastic. He will be missed.”

Many butchers routinely called on Bernie to solve smallgoods problems; his recipes and tips for Christmas hams have been of huge benefit to butchers.

Among the up-and-coming smallgoods makers Bernie has advised is Jimmy Chirgwin, 26, who keeps winning awards for Newbury and Watson, a brand of Richard Gunners’ Fine Meats (*see story page 11*).

“I cherish people recognising me for my advice and help over the years. I get great satisfaction from helping people,” he says.

“I don’t have secrets, I like to share knowledge and if I can help people, I’m very happy.

“Much of my basic advice involves lower temperatures and higher humidity which lead to faster cooking.”

Bernie’s support is unwavering for MBL SA as the last remaining butchers co-operative

‘I’ve always kept my eyes and ears open to learn as much as I can. You never stop learning.’ - Bernie Steinhoff

in Australia, and he says all butchers should totally support their Co-op.

“I’ve been telling butchers for years that the more they support MBL, the more MBL can do for them,” he says.

“MBL has good prices to start with, and only MBL gives rebates.

“And MBL picks up bones and other waste. What would butchers do without this

service? Bury it in the backyard? They’d need a backyard as big as Ayers Rock and, anyway, it can’t be used as landfill.

“MBL’s return from recycling the waste is passed back to Members; it can give them a nice sum for retirement. Nobody else does this.

“Yet despite all this logic, I still hear some butchers say they like to spread their custom around – I just can’t understand it.”

At his request, Bernie’s last three years at MBL were three days a week. “It was a compromise – my wife Vernia wanted me to retire but I wanted to keep working.

“Now that I have stopped, I have mixed feelings as I feel I can continue. Some people can’t wait to retire but I’ve always loved my work and I’ll miss it.

“Vernia is selling her hairdressing salon, we’ve just downsized into a new house and we’ll have more time for our kids and grandkids who live nearby.

“We plan several trips to Europe while we’re still fit enough. We have holiday ideas in mind, including a river cruise along the Danube and Rhine, and doing the French canals by barge.”



Curry, anyone? Bernie enjoyed trying products in the MBL kitchen.

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Steak 'reveals personal traits'

Your choice of steak can reveal a lot about you, according to a new MLA study.

Researchers surveyed 1,000 Australians' steak-eating habits to produce a list of seven "steaketypes" - a play on stereotypes - based on choice of cut.

MLA promoted the list as a fun way to help consumers choose the steak that best matches their personal traits.

Rump, MLA says, is the choice of those who have a favourite routine. You are dependable and reliable.

T-Bone is preferred by the salad dodger. You are exuberant and humble.

Porterhouse is preferred by those with healthy appetites. You are fearless and charming.

Fillet steak is preferred by those who like to keep balanced and healthy. You are suave.

Ribeye steak is preferred by the adventurer. You are adventurous and carefree.

Scotch fillet is preferred by foodies. You are independent and meticulous.

Skirt steak is preferred by discerning eaters. You are cultured and imaginative.

MLA says 89% of Australians will enjoy a barbecue this summer, with 68% most likely to cook steak.

Rump and T-bone are the most popular cuts, and most people want their steak cooked medium rare.

Most consumers look at colour (54%) and marbling (39%) when choosing steak.

Awards flow for Macro

Leading kangaroo meat processor Macro Meats, of Adelaide, has won another two major awards.

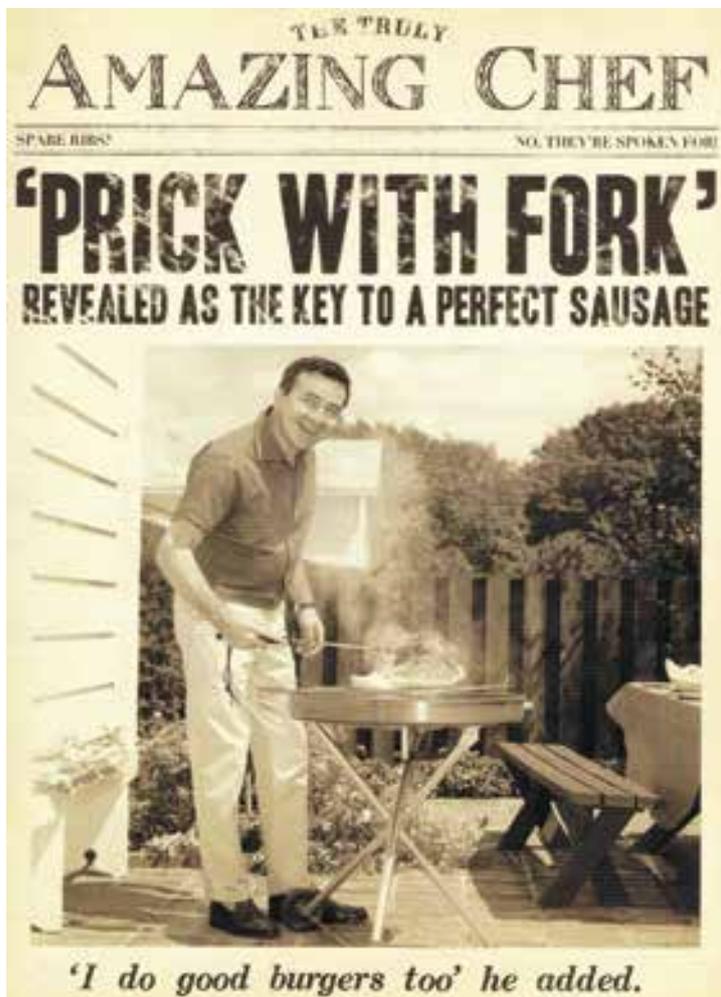
As reported in the last MBL News, Macro's Paroo Premium Kangaroo was the Outstanding Innovation winner at the national ABC Delicious Produce Awards.

More success quickly followed with two awards at the SA Food Awards.

Macro owner Ray Borda won the Entrepreneurs Award for his work in pioneering the national kangaroo meat industry, and Paroo Premium took the New Product award.

"Paroo Premium is the culmination of our commitment to broaden the kangaroo offer, and refine flavour," Ray says.

Pom bangers: If you don't laugh, you'll cry



When it comes to sausages, it's just as well that the English have a sense of humour...

MBL News editor Peter Morgan, during three weeks in England, rated pork "bangers" - which comprise about 95% of English sausage production - as "average" by Aussie standards.

He found an absence of beef sausages at hotels; lamb and chicken varieties were unheard of. Menus simply stated "sausages" as there was no need to say "pork" - it was a given.

Things were grim on the sausage front until, in Cornwall, Peter spotted the greeting card which is reproduced here.

It shows that while the English may have dulled taste buds, their bland pork "bangers" have not dulled the good old English sense of humour.

We only hope that the English actually do understand the folly of pricking sausages while cooking...

But English continue to soldier on as Europe's most prolific barbecuers, holding over 120 million a year.

This apparently translates to about one billion barbecued pork bangers - enough to go around the globe twice. Blimey!



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The instant popularity of Thai-inspired chicken pandan has taught newly-qualified butcher Ash Hann the value of introducing new ready products.

Ash, 20, makes chicken pandan which “walks out the door” at May’s Meats at Kadina on Yorke Peninsula.

Chicken pandan is made by sprinkling tenderloins with Thai Lemongrass and Coconut dry flavour, from MBL, and wrapping them in aromatic pandan leaves.

“They sell really well. All the feedback has been positive from customers who want something that’s a little different but easy to cook,” Ash says.

“All you do is put them in an oven dish sprayed with oil and cook them in a pre-heated oven for 45-60 minutes, depending on your oven.

“I serve them at home just with rice or a quick Asian noodle salad – you can have them with anything you like, really.”

Shop owner Chris May says, “You can also boil them – the pandan leaves give a nice Asian flavour. My kids love them with rice and a bit of soy sauce.

“But they’re no good on the barbecue – the leaves get a bit burnt.”

Chris sells chicken pandan for \$2.50 each, recommending two for each adult meal.

Some recipes call for chicken thighs to be used but Chris prefers tenderloins.

He decided to experiment with chicken pandan after his wife Kylie bought some at Angelakis Bros at Adelaide Central Market.

After checking recipes on the internet, they made trial batches at home before assigning Ash with the task of making them in the shop.

Ash says, “I hadn’t heard of them, let alone tasted them. But I really liked them – they’re good.

“I make them on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. They were fiddly at the start but now I breeze through them.”

Pandan leaves, used widely in South East

Young smallgoods maker Jimmy Chirgwin has further enhanced his reputation, winning one section and being runner-up in the other at the SA Bacon Awards.

Jimmy, 26, based at Mt Barker, is smallgoods maker for Newbury and Watson, a brand

TRY THIS!

Butchers share winning recipes



Ash Hann with her chicken pandan...“all customer feedback has been positive.”

Asian cooking, give a sweet, floral, enticing aroma.

They can be purchased at most Asian grocery stores; Chris sources his from Central Market.

A number of other MBL Members, including Poultry Options at Mitcham and Port Lincoln Gourmet Meats, also make chicken pandan.

*** If you’d like to share a “winning” recipe in MBL News, please contact editor Peter Morgan on 0410 633 414.**

How to make chicken pandan

Spread chicken tenderloins across a bench and sprinkle with Thai Lemongrass and Coconut dry flavour from MBL.

Fold each tenderloin in half and wrap with a pandan leaf.

Insert two toothpicks, at either end, to hold together.

Jimmy’s going great guns

of Richard Gunners’ Fine Meats.

The winner of the SA Worldskills title in 2011, Jimmy was awarded 15 medals in AMIC’s 2014 smallgoods competition, includ-

ing gold for his boneless ham.

His boneless ham won him top honours at the SA Bacon Awards, ahead of two-man Leabrook Quality Meats, and

Standom Smallgoods.

In the bone-in section, he was runner up to Barossa Fine Foods’ veteran Franz Knoll. Third was Churchill Butchery.

"Meat the Team"

Profiles on MBL staff members

Martin Arbon drives a conservative 85,000km every year as an MBL rep, visiting butchers, bakers and other customers in towns stretching from Ceduna to Mildura.

He drives at least 1,500km every week. This extends to 2,200km on his testing West Coast round.

So when weekends come along, the last thing Martin wants is to buckle into a car, right? Wrong!

"I like weekend drives, mainly in the Adelaide Hills," says Martin, 57, whose pride and joy is a 1982 Ford Fairmont which he restored himself.

"I changed the running gear from six cylinders to V8, so it's a car with old school grunt – you put your foot down and it has an effect on your smile reflexes!

"I finished restoring it a few months ago. It took me two years but I'll probably always be working on it."

Martin is a diehard Ford man. He says, "I go to the Clipsal 500 every year and barrack for the Fords – I've always been a Ford fan."

It's a good thing, then, that MBL allocated Martin a Ford Falcon station wagon for his rounds.

"Most people don't fully understand the long distances out on the road, but you get used to it," he says.

"I don't listen to music. When the radio goes out of range, all goes quiet – the peace and quiet is great!"

Martin's month is divided into four rounds, each over four days:

The Mildura round involves stops in the Riverland, two nights in Mildura and visits to Victorian towns including Robinvale and Ouyen.

The South-East round takes in Meningie, Robe, Mt Gambier and Penola before border hopping over to Horsham, Nhill, Kaniva, Hamilton and Casterton.

The northern round covers Yorke Peninsula including Ardrossan and Kadina, and extends north to Laura, Crystal Brook,



Martin with his restored Fairmont.



Boomeroo Centre and Port Pirie, then up to Port Augusta and Whyalla.

The West Coast round takes in Kimba, Wudinna, Ceduna, Streaky Bay, Port Lincoln, Cleve and Cowell.

Martin says, "I've always had an affinity with country people. Although I was raised in Adelaide, I loved family holidays on my grandparents' farm in the Mid North.

"I've found country people are good to work with. I've met some very interesting people who have become good friends."

In the towns where he stays overnight, Martin regularly shares an evening meal with butchers and their partners or families.

A few months ago, his weekend involved driving from Adelaide to Port Lincoln and return for Ceduna butcher Ashley Schriber's wedding.

"Ashley's wedding to Kristy was on the foreshore and it was magnificent – one of the best weddings I've been to. It was an honour to be there," he says.

Martin has spent almost 25 years with MBL, joining after 13 years at Coles where he was a butcher for four years and a meat manager for nine.

He worked on MBL's front counter for a few years before becoming a rep, initially in metro Adelaide and then in the country, eventually taking over from Mick Mladenovic.

Martin's years on the road have been

virtually incident free.

"My only real mishap was hitting a tree near Blanchtown two years ago. I wrote off the car, and (MBL's) Bexley Carman drove out to collect me," he says.

Martin's experience regularly benefits butchers.

"I like to ask if they are having trouble selling any particular product. If so, I work with them to make an improvement and get it selling," he says.

Q & A

Do you have a special interest or hobby? My restored 1982 Ford Fairmont is my "baby" – I enjoy driving it, mainly around the Adelaide Hills.

What would you do with a spare \$50,000? I'd spend it on home renovations including building a bigger shed where I could work on more cars and my ski boat.

If you were a car, what would you be? I'd be a 1971 GT Ford Falcon – the iconic GT; a legendary muscle car.

What food can't you live without? Good steak, cooked on the barbecue.

If you could meet anyone, living or dead, who would it be? My grandfather. He was a big influence on me in my early years.

What's the best thing about being an MBL rep? The customers really make it, along with the people at MBL – I have a lot of fun with everyone here.