



## Our heady mix of the old and the new

In producing this edition of MBL News, we were struck by these two photos which, when placed together, powerfully illustrate the sheer diversity of our industry.

One photo could have been taken generations ago in Germany. Rather, it's of a Steiny's mettwurst smokehouse in the Barossa where old traditions proudly continue (*see story page 3*).

But ours is also very much an evolving industry, with skilled people forever being clever and creative to change with the times to meet shifting consumer demands.

Accordingly, the other photo illustrates our latest uniquely Adelaide innovation – the launch by kangaroo meat pioneer Macro Meats of designer hospitality aprons and footwear made from kangaroo hides (*see pages 6 and 7*).

Here's cheers to our industry's fascinating mix...



Keith proteins plant survives and thrives

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# Christmas mixture

Butchers reported mixed trading results over the Christmas period, ranging from slight falls in takings to being “well up.”

Most independent butchers contacted in MBL News’s annual straw poll were reasonably happy, with trading being similar to Christmas 2017.

The general mood was summed up by Steve Cimarosti, of Cimarosti Brothers’ Colonel Light Meat and Smallgoods, who described trading as “all right.”

“It was about the same as the previous Christmas which was a good one for us,” Steve says.

“We’re happy enough considering the present climate. We had a few hams left over, but there were lots left over in supermarkets.”

MBL Food Service says merchandise sales were “good overall” at about the same level as a year ago.

“We had a great back quarter for 2018 and a good start to this year,” says MBL’s Merchandise General Manager Bexley Carman.

“Sales to butchers were flat but

wider sales of new products lifted our overall results.

“Our equipment division is going pretty well, so there is some investment around.

“It’s swings and roundabouts with butchers – it seems that those butchers who are going well are really going well, but some aren’t going so well at present.”

AMIC’s Retail Council Chairman, Trevor Hill, agrees, saying, “The problem is that the number of those struggling is increasing.”

Strong Christmas sales delighted Chris Pfitzner at Stirling Variety Meats, who says, “We were well up on the previous Christmas; we smashed it.

“On the two weekends leading to Christmas on the Tuesday, we found people did a lot of entertaining and doubled up on their purchases.

“Ham and turkey sales were about the same but the big sales gain was with fresh meat, mainly pork and lamb.

“We sold lots of legs of lamb which wasn’t predicted; we got caught out and had to move quickly to get more in.

“My wife and I drove around on Christmas Eve delivering legs of lamb to people.”

Scott Johns, at Glenunga Gourmet Meats, says his Christmas trading was “good, about the same as the previous Christmas,” he says.

“There was no growth but I’m relatively happy that we were on par, given the climate we’re in.”

In Whyalla, a similar “steady as she goes” scenario was painted by Mark Azzopardi, of Azzopardi Butchers.

“Our trading was pretty good, on par with the previous year so

we’re happy,” Mark says.

“Pork sales were a little down but this was countered by ham and turkey being up a little.”

Wilson Lowe reported a second year of strong Christmas trading at his Bruce’s Meat store at Mt Barker.

He says this capped a “fantastic” first full year of trading.

Trevor Hill says ham sales “went well but overall Christmas turnover was down” across other Bruce’s Meat shops.

“At Mitcham, at least, there didn’t seem to be the normal level of energy about Christmas,” Trevor says.

“Across our shops, our overall turnover was down by 2.5% to 3% for the full month of December.

“A major contributing factor was very light trading on the Sunday two days before Christmas Day.

“Normally, turnover on the day which falls two days before Christmas equals about one week’s normal turnover but this year it was a bit over half a week.”

Trevor says a growing trend for families to share the cost of Christmas meals was another factor.

“People are bringing different parts of the meal - someone might bring the ham, someone else might bring the turkey - to take some burden off the host,” he says.

“We have loyal customers who now don’t buy it all from us; they mightn’t buy their usual ham, for instance, because someone else in the family will bring a ham, maybe from a supermarket.

“Sharing arrangements can mean that loyal customers aren’t spending as much as they used to at their favourite butcher shop.”



**Creative artwork converted two boring pillars into giant mettwurst in Steiny’s tasting room.**

**The near floor to ceiling artwork makes an instant impression, with visitors quick to take photographs.**

**“The artwork nicely finishes off the room; we have the biggest mettwurst in the Barossa,” says Steiny’s Tash Goldsmith.**

## MBL NEWS

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# Mettwurst tasting room an instant hit

Tash and Scott Goldsmith have been given a massive boost by the instant success of their new tasting room for traditional Barossa mettwurst at a trendy food and drinks hub.

The owners of Steiny's Traditional Mettwurst are stunned by a huge response which saw 5,000 people visit their tasting room in Nuriootpa in the first three months after opening.

This was followed by what Tash describes as "massive" visitation over the Christmas holiday season, prompting plans for extra staff over Easter.

High visitation numbers and better than expected tasting room sales have given Tash and Scott the confidence to tackle beckoning interstate markets.

"Sales and production have increased dramatically since we moved here in September last year; we've been blown away by the response," says Tash.

The tasting room is on Nuriootpa's main road at the Provenance building which was once part of the old Penfolds Wines complex.

The hub so far has six tenants featuring craft beers, boutique wines, small batch gin and artisan coffee, plus food including tapas and pizza.

The biggest tenant is Penfolds cellar door which adjoins the Steiny's tasting room.

This is proving the perfect location for Steiny's to expose its red wine-friendly mettwurst to a fresh audience of mainly interstate tourists.

"We see our mettwurst as being of exceptional quality, perfect for enjoying with premium wines, so being right next to Penfolds is ideal," Scott says.

"We are not mass producers; we use small batch artisan techniques and take pride in the excellence of our products.

"Our mettwurst has a distinctive flavour and we have the



*Tash and Scott Goldsmith... their 10-strong range of mettwurst is made the traditional way.*

Barossa Trust Mark for integrity and quality.

"All the food and drinks businesses in the Provenance hub complement each other; we all promote each other's businesses and the Barossa in different ways.

"Penfolds has our mettwurst on their tasting plates, and the brandy we use for our Barossa Brandy mettwurst comes from Tarac Technologies just 300 metres away."

Steiny's was established almost 40 years ago and has had a number of owners, with Tash, a former office administrator, and Scott, formerly a vineyard supervisor, buying the business in May 2016.

"It started just with us; we

literally did everything. Since then, we've taken on five staff," Scott says.

Tash, who had earlier worked part-time for Steiny's for nine years, says, "Previous owners set up the old tasting room at the factory in Tanunda eight or nine years ago and it was largely 'hidden' from passing trade.

"It was time to do something better and moving to be part of a prominent new food and wine hub in Nuriootpa was a no-brainer.

"We have done a lot of hard work to get where we are; it's been challenging but we're definitely very happy to be here."

Tash and Scott quickly knew they were "on a winner" when

5,000 people passed through their door in the first three months.

In that time, they sold 200 of their "signature" mettwurst and cheese toasties.

They were further chuffed when SA Governor Hieu Van Le officially opened their tasting room and shop last November.

"We were so happy for His Excellency to officiate; this further raised our profile locally - and gave us some bragging rights," Tash says.

Soon after taking over the business, Tash and Scott used a State Government food business development grant to hire a business mentor, Michael Neale of Literally Brilliant, for 12 months.

"Michael has been pivotal in the

**'It was time to do something better; moving to a new food and wine hub was a no-brainer' - Tash Goldsmith**

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# ANDREW'S TRANSITION

## The farmer wears a butcher's apron

Reinvention was forced on farmer Andrew Mills after the loss of his poll merino stud in the catastrophic Wangary bushfire on lower Eyre Peninsula in 2005.

He still runs sheep and cattle but these days he's just as likely to be wearing a butcher's apron as farmer's garb.

Andrew gained butchery qualifications and opened a successful farm shop to sell his own meat and his own smallgoods.

He then branched into wholesale and now has five butchers working to supply a growing list of customers around Eyre Peninsula, including nine supermarkets.

"Year after year, we're increasing our turnover," says Andrew of his thriving business, The River Farm Products, which he runs with his wife Sheree.

"I was told at the start that it wouldn't work and problems had to be overcome, but we kept going. It's been a hard slog and we've grown rapidly.

"I pride myself on producing top class stock and smallgoods, and we're building a growing reputation.

"We're only about 20 minutes from Port Lincoln but we sell just as much up north to Whyalla as down south to Port Lincoln."

Andrew's mainly pre-packed meat and smallgoods are sold elsewhere on Eyre Peninsula at towns including Streaky Bay, Elliston, Tumby Bay, Cowell, Cleve, Kimba and Wudinna.

Supply to nine independent supermarkets is complemented by growing sales to two

hotels, two retirement homes and several roadhouses.

He has stock slaughtered at a small abattoir at Cummins, and his farm and processing centre overlooks Spencer Gulf near Louth Bay, on the Lincoln Highway which links Port Augusta to Port Lincoln.

"We're in an ideal position for a farm shop. We get good passing trade especially in holiday periods when the shop can take \$1,000 a day from interstate tourists alone," Andrew says.



Andrew proudly says of this beef... "I did the lot - I grew it and I dressed it."

"We get people from all over Australia dropping in after they've heard about us from other travellers.

"We enjoy the direct contact we have with customers and getting their positive feedback."

Establishing and growing the business has been a steep learning curve requiring hard work and determination.

Andrew, originally from pastoral country in the Gawler Ranges, has been a livestock producer all his life.

In 1986, he bought The River, once part of a larger property owned by SA's first female parliamentarian Agnes Goode.

He ran a poll merino stud until January, 2005, when the Wangary bushfire struck.

The fire, known by locals as Black Tuesday, roared across lower Eyre Peninsula, killing nine people and injuring 115. About 77,000ha of land was burnt, with huge property and stock losses.

Andrew's area was severely hit, with people fleeing to beaches as the fire tore through. At one stage, Port Lincoln's outskirts were threatened.

The River homestead, built in 1907, survived the fire but Andrew lost

➤ most of his poll merino stock and much infrastructure.

"I reinvented what I was doing, switching to running crossbred merinos and Murray Grey cattle," he says.

Later in 2005, Andrew and Sheree ran a livestock trucking business while its owners were overseas.

They learnt the "inside story" of what happened to their lambs once they left their farm, and were appalled by the trauma lambs experienced between farm and slaughter.

"We knew we had to do something better with our lambs so we began marketing and personally delivering our lambs to wholesalers," Andrew says.

"It became apparent that most lambs marketed off farms were not to the specifications that buyers really wanted for the domestic market.

"I started selling my lambs directly to Holco. Our lambs were processed at Holco and were reported to be some of the best lambs they were receiving.

"The Hyatt Hotel in Adelaide was impressed with our lamb and named River Farm as the supplier on menus.

"Neighbours wanted to do the same so I taught them how to meet the specs required for premium product and I became a local buyer for Holco."

Andrew then became a buyer for Tatiara Meat Company, based at Bordertown, gaining valuable insight into the vacuum packaging of lamb for export.

"It had a longer shelf life, more durable packaging and a better presentation," he says.

"I couldn't understand why lamb wasn't marketed and retailed this way for the domestic market.

"I saw opportunities for processing our own

vacuum packed lamb and having on-farm sales."

River Farm began processing its own lamb in 2011 after Andrew attained full accreditation.

"But to be a full-on successful butchery, we needed to offer all meats so we diversified into beef production and started buying pigs and chickens," he says.

"Pretty much all the lamb we process is from our farm and about one third of the beef is ours, with the rest from two farms in the region.

"All our chicken comes from Adelaide as does the bulk of the pork.



A sign at a Tumby Bay store.

"Since opening in 2011, we have expanded our premises three times and we now have grown to five staff as well as Sheree and me."

Andrew has obtained his meat inspector's certificate which enables him to conduct slaughtering.

"We have slaughtering done at a small abattoir at Cummins but the operator is nearing retirement age," he says.

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Some of The River Farm Products crew... (from left) are Joey, Skip, Andrew and Max.

## Fritz gets upsized

Farmers are renowned for practical innovation, a trait Andrew Mills has applied to fritz.

Andrew supplies his The River Farm Products to several Port Lincoln nursing homes, where he noticed older folk can have trouble handling fritz sandwiches.

"Traditional round fritz doesn't cover the full area of square sandwich bread. You have no fritz on the corners or you can cut corner pieces," he says.

"But older folk can have trouble with corner pieces of fritz which tend to fall out as they handle the sandwich.

"To overcome this, I make large round fritz with no casing, just dye, to better cover square bread."

The bigger fritz was so well received that Andrew now makes bigger mettwurst for sandwiches along with bigger squared sliced chicken.

Andrew makes 90kg to 100kg of fritz weekly, mainly for supermarkets. "It's the most popular fritz on Eyre Peninsula," he says.

While he prides himself on premium cuts from his own lambs and cattle, sales of his smallgoods have risen substantially in the past two years.

This was sparked by obtaining smallgoods supply contracts with regional Foodland and IGA stores after the previous supplier, Adelaide's Blue Ribbon Smallgoods, ceased trading in 2016.

Andrew says the biggest growth over the past six months has been cooked meats.

Sliced chicken and corned beef are big sellers, along with sliced ham.

"We are big on attention to detail and quality control," he says of his expanding smallgoods range.

"Our ham, bacon and mettwurst are traditionally handmade and sort after by local restaurants. We have strong demand for nitrate-free bacon."

Andrew had a happy Christmas, thanks to a doubling in sales of his hams.

"We sold 75 Christmas hams in 2017, rising to 150 last Christmas," he says.



# Ray launches kangaroo leather range

## MACRO VALUE ADDS

Prompted by kangaroo skins becoming “almost worthless,” Macro Meats is making its own range of quality kangaroo leather products for global markets.

The locally-made range is headed by aprons and footwear for the hospitality industry and extends to diverse products including dog coats, place mats, wine bags and passport covers.

Selling kangaroo skins to leather goods manufacturers has long been a profitable “sideline” for Macro, but demand has been plunging for a decade with the rise of synthetic materials.

“Prices got up to \$18.50 per skin in the lead-up to the 2006 Soccer World Cup because kangaroo leather was popular for soccer boots - thin and lightweight but also strong, waterproof and breathable,” says Macro founder Ray Borda.

“We were culling about 10,000 kangaroos a week back then, but the price of skins kept dropping, really hurting our bottom line.

“By 2015, we were getting about \$3 per skin. Now, the price is just \$1 so the skins are almost worthless.

“We could have sat and whinged or done something about it. We decided to do some-



Macro founder Ray Borda.

thing, so in 2015 we began looking into processing our kangaroo skins ourselves.

“We decided to start making our own finished leather products, in a range of colours, and selling them around the world.

“Kangaroo leather is the strongest and lightest natural leather available, making it comfortable and exceptionally durable as clothing.

“And kangaroo is a great natural resource that is unique to Australia, giving an instant point of difference.”

Almost four years of planning has come to fruition with the launch of



# KL KARMINE™ LEATHER

➤ Karmine Leather, a division of Macro Meats, named in honour of Ray's late mother, Karmine.

The brand was launched in Australia late last year, online and through selected outlets. It will be launched in Japan this month (January), with the US to follow, then Europe and China.

Macro, over the past 30 years, has changed kangaroo's profile from pet food to gourmet game meat. It exclusively supplies Kangaroo meat to Australian supermarkets and exports to 45 countries.

Ray says the business highlight of 2018 was expanding into Asia - particularly into Hong Kong, Singapore and Japan – where there is “serious interest” in the health benefits of kangaroo.

He is planning to launch a range of ready meals for world markets in the first half of 2019. “We’re presently working on recipes,” he says.

But his plans to develop kangaroo small-goods have been postponed due to time pressure and the launch of Karmine Leather.



*The range of hand-crafted leather skin aprons comes in a variety of colours.*

“It made sense to value-add by making kangaroo leather products from a material that I already have,” Ray says.

When investigating products and markets for kangaroo leather products, he first thought of making chef's aprons.

“We’re not the first company to make leather aprons, but our aprons are lightweight for comfort and have all the attributes that a chef would look for – heatproof, waterproof and stain resistant,” he says.

“Leather is very fashionable in the hospitality industry, making our aprons also ideal for bar and waiting staff as well as artisan food producers such as cheesemakers.

“We extended the apron plan to all hospitality fashion, including shoes. In hospitality, you are on your feet all day and we make the most comfortable shoes out of kangaroo leather.”

The move to produce kangaroo leather products is a major – and expensive – value-adding exercise. “It’s costly to set up but we’re doing it,” Ray says.

Ray says he is reversing the trend of tanning being outsourced overseas.

“There is hardly any tanning undertaken in this country because of environmental conditions and constraints on manufacturers,” he says.

“High wages are a big factor. Here, a wage can be \$1,200 a week compared to \$40 a week in Vietnam where they do a lot of leather work.

“But we want to make our products here and we’ve gathered the necessary expertise

with people who have worked in the manufacturing of motorcycling leathers and for RM Williams.

“We want to handle the product from the beginning to the end, because we want to control the story and perception of our product.”

In its marketing, Karmine Leather stresses that it uses “100% sustainably and ethically sourced” kangaroo leather.

“Kangaroos are harvested using the most stringent ethical and environmentally sustainable processes to provide superior, pure and ethical products,” its website states.

“As kangaroos are truly free roaming animals, the leather used in Karmine products has its own markings representing the life of a wild animal and making each product unique and individual.”

For years, Ray has battled the common emotional perception that kangaroos, as

*Continued page 10*



*Even man's best friend is catered for with designer leather coats.*

Butcher Tony Marschall describes himself as a shy man, yet two years ago he grew out his hair and beard before dyeing them pink and strolling down Port Pirie's main street in a pink suit.

The stunt was the talk of the town, putting him on an exhausting path to raising a stunning \$21,000 for charity.

Tony became known as the Hairy Pink Butcher in the local media and news of his fund-raising drive spread interstate.

"I'm essentially a shy person and it was an unusual feeling to suddenly be in the limelight, but it was all for a good cause," he says.

"I was almost working fulltime doing the fund raising; it grew to become ridiculous. It wouldn't have been possible without my exceptional staff."

Looking back on a hectic 2016, Tony has no regrets but he has since scaled back charity fund raising as he's busy enough advancing his TJs Gourmet Meats shop in Port Pirie's main shopping district.

While his exploits as the Hairy Pink Butcher will have long term benefits to his business, he was equally driven by community spirit and a desire to help others.

"Port Pirie is classed as a city but it's very much an over-size country town where people tend to help each other," says Tony, a butcher for 42 years, beginning as an apprentice in Bordertown.

"I've learnt in my 15 years here that you need local knowledge to run a business and you can never take anything for granted.

"As a butcher, you need to know what people want and how you can help them. We're forever diversifying, always looking for new products to try.

"This is not Magill; this is a low income area. You have to find out what works best – and the locals will surely tell you!

"While it can be hard running a

# In the pink

## TONY FINDS HIS NICHE IN PORT PIRIE



**'As a butcher, you need to know what people want and how you can help them. We're forever diversifying, always looking for new products to try' – Tony Marschall**

business here, people showed just how generous they can be during the Hairy Pink Butcher campaign.

"We raised \$21,000. We gave \$16,000 to Breast Cancer Network Australia and \$5,000 to Port Pirie Hospital.

"It was good for our business because it got people talking about us. We were no longer seen as just the butchers at TJs; people saw that we cared about the community.

"The fund raising gave us a new image; people gained a differ-

ent perception of the business and there's no doubt there remains good on-going promotional value.

"Business has been good; we're very happy given the economic climate."

Butcher Dwayne "Nugget" Paynter, who has worked at TJs for 15 years, gave key support in fund raising as Tony's "right hand man in pink."

Both had their pink hair and beards shaved in a public event which publicised their cause and loosened the purse strings.

Other fund raising included raffles for a vast range of donated goods, social nights and galas, and the selling of Hairy Pink Butcher merchandise including caps, T-shirts and stubbie coolers.

"The regional radio station got behind us, and we got good support from places like Clare, Port Augusta and



The shop fronts a large car park in the main shopping area.

➤ Whyalla,” Tony says.

“We started off just having a bit of fun but it all just grew. We couldn’t believe how it took off; we were dumbfounded.”

The Hairy Pink Gala Night drew 200 people and raised \$10,000. About 150 people went to another gala at a footy club.

“We went to the Lions versus Port footy game and I walked around in my pink suit. In one hour, we raised \$1,500,” Tony says.

The TJs business was in two locations in Port Pirie when Tony bought it. He consolidated under one roof eight years ago and has expanded the original area to accommodate three walk-in freezers.

He began with four staff and now has seven. Food service to pubs and clubs has grown to become 25% of the business and he’s eyeing more growth.

Most of his pork, lamb and beef is sourced from farms within a 100km radius of Port Pirie.

TJs offers more than 60 lines,



The TJs crew of (top, from left) Larry, Martin, Tony and Nugget. Below: Colby, Glenda and Ray.

with a high number of crumbed and marinated products.

“This is the schnitzel capital of Australia; we make a huge number for the shop as well as the pubs and clubs,” Tony says.

“Catering for pets is also a big part our business – we say we look after the four-legged members of the family, too, with things others don’t offer including bags of bones.”

Tony says MBL continues to be “exceptionally helpful and supportive” of his business.

“We’re nearly three hours from Adelaide yet MBL gets things to us quickly. If we put in an order by late morning, it’s usually delivered next day,” he says.

Tony sees a solid future for his business, saying Port Pirie’s confidence has lifted with the spending of almost \$1 billion in

the town over the past few years, including the refurbishment of the lead smelter.

“Solar and wind renewable energy projects, including the solar greenhouse for tomatoes near Port Augusta, are good for whole region,” he says.

“I think my business will see slow growth and with that we’ll need to keep adapting to meet customer needs.”



This fabulous photo, from around 1890, shows delivery time at a long-gone “family and shipping” butcher shop in Port Pirie’s main street.

The photo surfaced at a history exhibition in Port Pirie recently, showing butchers, including two in bowler hats, sternly posing outside the shop which was built in 1864 and was run by the Sampson family for several generations.

Butchers supplied meat to local households as well as to ship crews across at the once-busy wharves by the grain silos when Port Pirie was a thriving town.

The building intriguingly features a bull, a pig and a sheep poking their heads through the facade’s circular “windows.” Now heritage listed, the building has been preserved by the National Trust which operates it as a self-contained B&B.

# MACRO VALUE ADDS

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Australia's most iconic animal, should be protected rather than eaten.

"But they are an amazingly resilient animal and put a lot of pressure on the land. There are millions of them," Ray says.

He says the widespread drought has caused major challenges for farmers and Macro.

In SA, kangaroos are now leaving paths of destruction as they as they travel south in search of food and water, prompting livestock industry calls for a cull and greater focus on export markets.

Ray says, "In times of drought, kangaroos spread out across the country looking for food and water, making it more difficult and costly for us to source them.

"I've suggested that farmers and station owners should be able to be trained to get

## ANDREW'S TRANSITION

From page 5

"My meat inspector's certificate is an insurance policy. Should no-one take over the abattoir, I could do my slaughtering there."

Andrew says he puts strong emphasis on smallgoods production, and he has developed his own range of sausages, burgers and patties.

"We are proud of our preservative-free range of burgers. Our mint lamb burgers are popular; we sell thousands of them a week," he says.



accreditation to shoot kangaroos – they'd get \$22 to \$24 an animal."

Of the challenges that keep surfacing as Macro expands, Ray says, "There'll always be challenges for me."

With so much happening in his business, Ray has delayed plans to more than double the size of Macro's plant at Athol Park.

"We've bought another building next door

and our expansion plans have been approved; we've even selected the builder," he says.

"I had the choice: do I put money into the plant expansion, or do I work on value-adding (by making leather products) using raw materials I already have?"

"I decided to go with value-adding. The building project isn't going away; we'll start when the drought breaks."



The only glitch to business development is regular interruption to internet access.

"If the wind's from the north, we get no internet or mobile phone," says exasperated Andrew.

"We can't take or make phone calls, there's no emailing, and our customers can't use their (banking) cards.

"It's very frustrating and unfortunately there's no solution in sight."

## Ham awards to Churchill's and Barossa

Churchill's Butchery at Marryatville and Barossa Fine Foods shared the spoils in the SA section of the Australian PorkMark Ham Awards.

Best traditional bone-in ham award was won by Churchill's with BFF second and Berri North Meat Store third.

Judges described the Churchill's ham as having "a very good external appearance,

very good tenderness and nicely balanced taste."

Best boneless ham went to BFF from stable-mate Sandom Smallgoods and Saint Meat of North Haven.

The winning BFF double smoked ham had "a good shape, with even colouring and a nice initial taste and good flavour," according to judges.

BFF Managing Director Franz Knoll, Australia's most awarded smallgoods maker, says winning ham awards helped to build trust with consumers.

"When people buy our product, they have an expectation that they're buying something special," Franz says.

BFF increased ham production to a record 14,000 in the lead-up to last Christmas.

# Mettwurst tasting room an instant hit

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whole process; he even organised the Governor's visit," Tash says.

She says "rebranding" to strongly link Steiny's mettwurst with the Barossa and premium wine was a priority.

"Our logo is Distinctively Barossa and for new labelling we adopted new colours of navy blue and white - the traditional butcher's colours - plus silver," she says.

"My brother Paul Pozzan, a chef for 33 years, moved from Broome to become our smallgoods manufacturer and is now our factory manager also," Tash says.

"With a great understanding of flavour profiles, Paul did taste tests of all our products. Some ingredients clashed. Scott and Paul knew right from the start that changes needed to be made.

Scott says, "One change was removing the garlic from various mettwurst flavours we produced. We now only use garlic in our Traditional Garlic mettwurst and our other flavoured mettwursts now taste the way they should.

"Paul's always trying new things to give us a point of difference. He got creative with chilli on our smokehouse-dried beef jerky, giving us four different flavours, and now he's making mustard bier sticks."

The Steiny's range is headed by traditional mettwurst and nine types of flavoured mettwurst. Sticks, jerky and bacon complete the range.

Scott says tourists are intrigued by kangaroo



Tash Goldsmith... proud of the Barossa Trust Mark for food integrity and quality.



mettwurst. While most are happy to try it, others fall to the "Skippy syndrome" and balk at eating such a "cute" animal.

"Our kangaroo mettwurst is made from

100% kangaroo meat from Macro Meats; there's no pork," he says.

"It's more popular for purchase here in our shop than in general retail."

Steiny's products are supplied to over 30 Foodland supermarkets as well as a mix of IGA supermarkets, greengrocers, hotels and service stations.

Scott has built a strong and rewarding presence at assorted farmers markets, field days and shows including the Royal Adelaide Show.

"We've added the Henty Field Days in southern NSW last year to our calendar after having great success there last year, and we'll be going to Tasmania AgFair in May," he says.

While sales are mostly in SA, Steiny's is spreading its wings with distributors in Queensland, NSW, Victoria and WA.

Scott says Victoria has great potential for strong sales, adding that he sees opportunities "from Darwin to Tasmania."

Surprisingly, a woman at a weekend market at Mackay in Queensland is Steiny's biggest single customer, ahead of individual supermarkets.

"Kathy Norman sells heaps of our products. Every Monday morning, we get a big order from her. It's crazy, but she's our biggest single customer," Tash says.



One year after miraculously surviving a raging bushfire, it's all systems go at MBL's high-performing rendering plant at Keith.

The Sherwood bushfire on January 6 last year burnt all around the plant and, to some extent, over it.

The plant could easily have been destroyed but it survived untouched thanks to the heroics of a number of MBL staff and the Keith CFS, and no production time was lost.

However, we lost extensive fencing, trees and some equipment including a truck and irrigation infrastructure.

Our losses from the fire were about \$350,000, all of which was covered by insurance.

"We dodged a massive bullet; it could easily have been a lot worse," says MBL CEO Warren McLean.

"Considering the ferocity of the fire in such catastrophic conditions, we've come out of it pretty well."

The Keith plant is very important to MBL, processing a number of single species into premium pet food ingredients, mainly for Canada and the US.

This conversion of raw material into valuable ingredients was a key factor in MBL winning the prestigious Impact Awards for exports last year for our "global impact, ambition and world-class capability."

The plant was purchased in a fragile state in 2010 and has been extensively upgraded over the years.

Our property covers 240 hectares (600 acres) of undulating land with water licences. There are treed areas and irrigated lucerne pasture.

"While the plant itself was saved from the fire, we lost a lot of fencing, tree plantings and natural bushland, irrigation infrastructure, effluent piping, a truck and almost the offices when fire broke out in the roof," Warren says.

"Fence replacement and repairs to the

# It's onwards and upwards at Keith



Flames took hold in used IBC's after destroying a truck nearby.

office were carried out pretty quickly after the fire. Burnt trees were removed, along with undergrowth near buildings, and there was extensive lawn planting to give a wide firebreak.

"Today, many trees are coming back but, driving around the property, some areas still look pretty bleak after losing 30 years of planted vegetation.

"You can never quite get back what you lose in a bushfire."

Warren says MBL continues to invest in measures to keep the plant safe from future bushfires.

"We have two extra fire fighting units and a supporting 4WD vehicle, trees have been removed near a widened entrance to the property, and we've leased a strip of neighbouring property to keep bare as a firebreak," he says.

MBL has donated \$10,000 to the local Keith CFS brigade as a mark of our gratitude for its

magnificent work to save our plant.

Keith CFS's two-truck, eight-man brigade was ordered by the CFS to "stay and defend" the MBL plant in frightening conditions.

The brigade has used the MBL donation for equipment and training, and to buy an icemaker and new drinks fridge.

MBL money has also been used to fund a vibrant mural, by local artist Julia Davis, along an outside wall of the fire station.

The idea for a mural showing firefighters in action was conceived two years ago but the brigade had lacked the necessary funds to proceed.

Keith CFS Captain Jason Wayman says the mural provides "daily eye-candy" for locals and lures tourists to stop.

"We shared the photos on our Facebook page and it went viral – other stations and brigades are thinking about doing something similar," he says.



Keith CFS's mural shows firefighters along with a skidder for dry firefighting (far left) and Keith 34 appliance. Photo: Border Chronicle.