

MBL DELIVERS

Membership benefits keep accumulating

It pays to belong. That's the recurring theme you'll notice as you read through this new edition of MBL News.

We are featuring six stories involving MBL initiatives designed to improve the efficiency and competitiveness of Members' businesses.

Remaining relevant to the Membership has always been the core reason why MBL has remained strong and stable as SA's oldest Co-operative.

The renewed focus of CEO Jamie Higgins and the Board is delivering extra value to Members, over and above the annual rebate and our competitive prices.

MBL initiatives to enhance your business on multiple levels are typified by the six announcements made in this MBL News. Read about how we have:

• Made our website more user-friendly, revamped for easier viewing and placement of orders, *page 2*.

• Unveiled an initial menu of 10 marinades as part of our Butcher's Banquet package for butchers to economically enter the ready meals market, *page 3*.

• Continued our steady rollout of eco-friendly packaging options with recyclable Liquid Lock trays, *pages 4-5*.

• Extended our financial support for Members sending apprentices to TAFE SA for the mid-year intake starting in July, *page 10*.

• Paved the way for BankSA offering of a special home loan cashback deal for our Members and their staff, *page 12*.

• Appointed a new head of MBL Machinery to help Members utilise the Federal Government's unprecedented tax break offer, now extended to mid-2023, *page 12*.

More initiatives are in the pipeline. Watch MBL News for ongoing announcements.



Steve reaps fruits of smokehouse tradition

Passersby often dash into Angaston's historic butcher shop to say there's a fire out the back, but they're quickly reassured it's a smokehouse at work.

Steve Gay, pictured here with his fantastic double-smoked bacon, says the smokehouse is a centrepiece of the business which prides itself on small-goods made in traditional style.

So it's hardly surprising that Steve and business partner Peter Barratt chose the name Barossa Smokehouse Butchers when they acquired the shop after working there together for almost 20 years. *Their story is on pages 8-9.*

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Easier ordering on revamped website

MBL's revamped website, designed to be more user-friendly for placing orders, has been well received by Members and other customers since opening for business in late March.

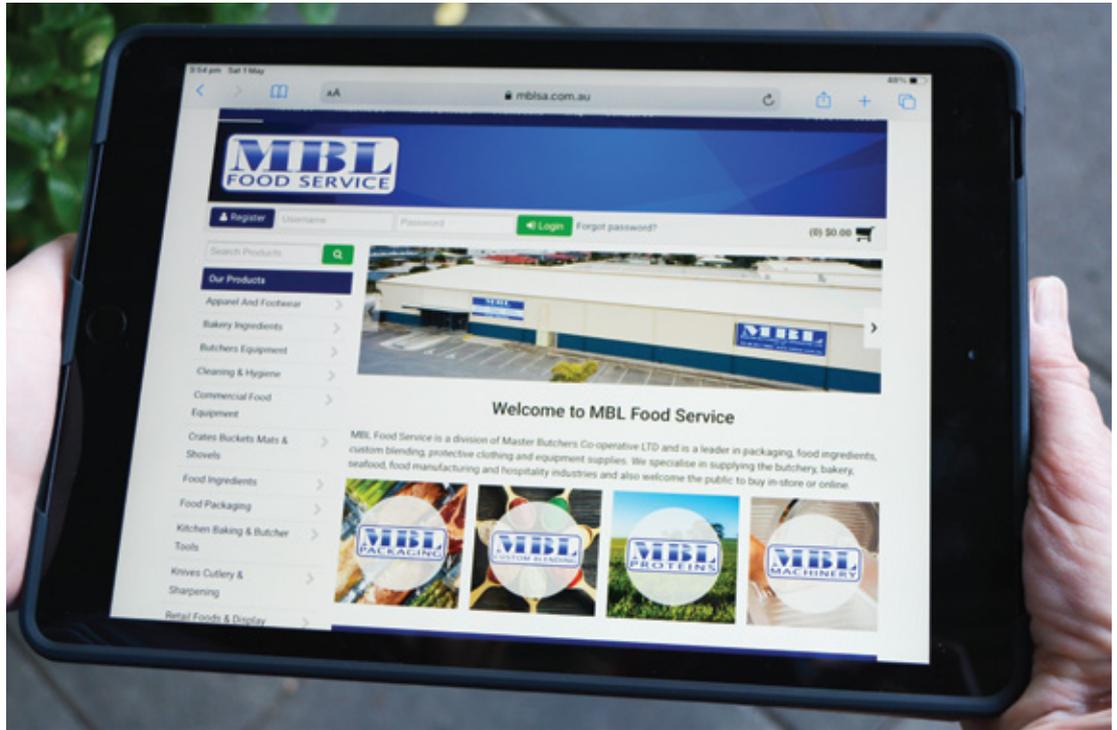
We've upgraded our website in two ways, by:

- Customising online ordering for Members and wholesale customers to make ordering more functional, and

- Adding pages to showcase our services, including new information about MBL Custom Blending's capabilities and MBL Packaging's new earth-friendly range.

"It's more intuitive and easier to use, but it's a work in progress. We are seeking feedback so we can look at making it even more user-friendly," says MBL General Manager Sales & Marketing, Bexley Carman.

"The more people use our website, the more control they'll have over their ordering and accounts."



MBL NEWS

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Features which have been added to improve the functionality of the ordering process for users include:

- Secure online ordering 24/7 at a time convenient to you

- Access your preferred product list and buying history

- Viewing of invoices and pay online at any time, and

- The ability to save carts for repeat orders and add products to your Favorites.

"Users can now login to order or access their account information such as invoices and previous orders," Bexley says.

"They can place orders online at any time or add to their cart any time through the week before submitting the order on their order day when their MBL rep calls."

MBL Packaging's section details our product range and provides more useful information on earth-friendly food packaging alternatives.

Our latest video about home compostable and recyclable packaging is here.

MBL Custom Blending's section provides manufacturers Australia-wide with more information about our blending capabilities, quality and safety standards.

Also outlined is our capacity to develop and supply cost-effective, high-yield blended products and ingredients to a range of food industries.

MBL Machinery's section showcases our brands and range, including machinery for butchers as well as food service retailers and manufacturers.

There is also a section on MBL

Proteins, which converts waste into assorted by-products.

Feedback can be sent to
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MBL UNVEILS 10 READY MEAL OPTIONS

Butcher's Banquet: a world of flavours

It's around the world in 10 dishes, thanks to MBL's adventurous range of marinades for ready meals under our innovative new Butcher's Banquet package.

Butchers can take their customers on a culinary trip from Italy and Greece to India and onto Japan and Korea before landing back home for good old Aussie spring lamb.

With our Butcher's Banquet packaging, tray sealer and quality marinades, butchers can enter the ready-meals market at a fraction of the normal set up costs.

MBL has worked with independent chefs to settle on an initial range of 10 marinades which offers something for everybody:

- Italian Meatballs
- Satay Chicken
- Greek Kofta
- Chicken Tandoori
- Korean BBQ Beef
- Marinated Spring Lamb
- Asian Sticky Lime Chicken
- Rogan Josh Beef
- Teriyaki Chicken
- Honey Chilli Garlic Meatballs

"Customers can have something new to try with every shop," says MBL General Manager Sales & Marketing Bexley Carman.

"We've put together the complete package to make it easy for butchers to tap into the ready meals market which will keep growing as consumers' lives get busier."

In Australia, the ready meals market was valued at \$853.61 million in 2013. In 2019 it had grown to \$1.14 billion and is projected to be worth \$1.58 billion by 2024.

Available exclusively to butchers and created to complement MBL's popular benchtop tray sealer machine, the package includes:

- Recyclable CPET trays and film for lids,
- Tray sleeves with the new Butcher's Banquet logo and cooking instructions to slip over trays of ready meals, and
- A rotating range of recipes and marinades.



Bexley says customers simply need to pierce the lid of each packaged meal and cook for 30 minutes in a pre-heated oven at 180C.

"We're introducing the Butcher's Banquet brand and the first batch of 10 ready meal recipes in June. We'll keep introducing and rotating recipes to keep it fresh," Bexley says.

"Butchers who are already doing their own ready meals say it's important to keep the menu evolving to maintain the interest of customers.

"Our range of marinades will provide new options to these butchers, as well as showing the way for butchers who are new to ready meals.

"With a wave of ready meals in supermarkets, marketing is important and Butcher's Banquet can become good marketing for independent butchers.

"Some ready meals being home delivered in Adelaide are made in Brisbane. Offering fresh meals is ripe for independent local butchers.

"We're making it easy for people to drop into their local butcher shop to buy quality ready meals for the evening's meal, cooked

in the tray in 30 minutes."

MBL has taken out a patent on the Butcher's Banquet name which may also be used by the Co-operative for future lines.

The Butcher's Banquet rollout represents the third stage of MBL's development of a ready meal solution for butchers.

The key first step was our securement of premium CPET (Crystalline Polyethylene Terephthalate) trays, made with cutting-edge technology in Israel.

Recyclable CPET trays offer supreme convenience, allowing meals to be cooked, refrigerated or frozen before being heated in microwave or conventional ovens – all in the same container.

Next, MBL secured machines to seal the CPET trays. The manual sealers suit benchtops in small work areas and have proven popular.

Now, the Butcher's Banquet package complements the CPET trays and the sealer by providing branded printed sleeves, rotating recipes and marinades.

"The whole box and dice is affordable so that all butchers can produce ready meals," Bexley says.

Our sustainable journey

The word “plastic” is becoming less and less popular in the food packaging sector.

In the background, MBL has been forging ahead with our partners in the Ikon group to provide practical, cost-effective and sustainable solutions for our customer base.

We have felt the momentum building as customers are beginning to ask their shops for eco-friendly packaging.

We understand that the new compostable lines are more expensive initially than oil-based plastic lines such as foam trays but offer long-term benefits for the environment.

Oil-based packaging has been in circulation for over 70 years and could be around in the ground for another 470 years (source: a chariotenergy.com).

By comparison, our range of compostable lines will be gone in under seven months.

Our recyclable lines will be back to you again and again in one form or another, completing the circular economy.

By **ANDY McMAHON**
MBL Key Accounts Manager Packaging

Recent surveys in Australia and overseas confirm that eco-friendly products enjoy strong support from consumers.

In one survey, 64% of customers

who experience compostable food packaging said they were likely to return to the business where the products were purchased (source: Technomic).

Another survey found 69% of

customers would be willing to pay more for products and services if they protect the environment (source: Thompson SCNAR 2018 UK, USA, Australia, France, China).

MBL is keen to work with our whole customer base to assist in the transition to sustainable food packaging. Just ask your rep for more information.



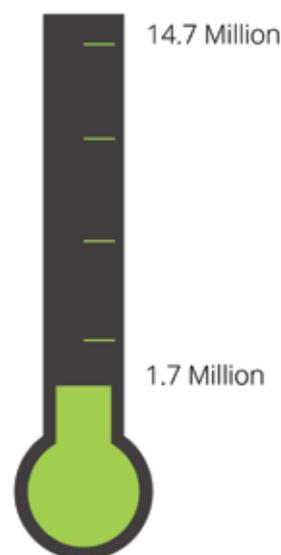
Going green... Andy McMahon, MBL's green packaging expert, shows compostable produce bags, trays and soakers to Josh Zucco at Foodland West Lakes (see story opposite).

PHASE 1 SO FAR

As of January 2021, MBL Food Service has diverted 1.7million pieces of plastic from landfill and into either fully recyclable or home compostable alternatives.

MBL's planet cooling target is to divert 14.7million pieces of plastic away from landfill by January 2022.

MBL currently has robust alternatives for 65% of our range of plastic packaging. We are working hard to provide environmentally friendly options for the entire range by June 2023.



'If you don't evolve, you dissolve'

When it comes to eco-friendly packaging, second-generation butcher Josh Zucco says, "If you don't evolve, you dissolve."

John says the words, from a song by American singer Usher, are a nifty way of summing up his switch from traditional foam and plastic packaging.

He says customers are increasingly asking about green packaging, looking for recyclable and home compostable trays and bags to lessen their footprint on the environment.

With customer sentiment mirroring his own view, Josh wasted no time in ordering fully-recyclable Ikon Pack Liquid Lock trays as soon they became available from MBL.

The switch from foam trays has been seamless and rewarding. Josh and customers at Foodland West Lakes are delighted.

The Liquid Lock trays, with an in-built soaker, tick the green boxes and do their job well as meat trays.

Customer response has been so positive that Josh has been moved to continue the green theme by ordering compostable bags and soakers from MBL.

"We'll continue moving to sustainable alternatives because it's good for business as well as the environment," he says.

Josh, 33, is Meat Room Manager at the independent Foodland supermarket which was opened by his father Sam and uncle Charlie in 1989.

Sam, who continues working, has a butch-

Josh's humming with Liquid Lock



Josh Zucco... delighted by the response to fully-recyclable Ikon Pack Liquid Lock trays.

ery background, owning and running Sam's Meat Market at Henley Beach before opening the supermarket.

Josh says, "I did my butchery apprenticeship here and later took over the Meat Room which is an independent unit within the

supermarket. There are three others here with me – Jason, Dan and Ali."

He says the team have had strong customer feedback from the new Liquid Lock trays.

"We have had good comment. The trays look great and people appreciate that they are recycled rather than put to landfill.

"They perform really well as meat trays. The quality is very good, we're very happy with them."

The Liquid Lock trays are strong, lightweight and durable. A honeycomb design locks excess liquids in place without the use of a soaker pad.

Made from a food-grade rPET (recycled Polyethylene Terephthalate), they are 100% recyclable as part of the growing "circular economy."

Josh says, "We couldn't be happier and will keep moving forward with MBL. The service from MBL is very good and the information on products is very helpful."



TASTING SCOTLAND

Duncan smiling again as demand rises for haggis and black pudding

After surviving the trials and tribulations of a severe bushfire followed closely by COVID-19 disruptions, it's back to the comforts of haggis and black pudding for Scottish butcher Duncan Dunn.

Duncan's year of upset and uncertainty has been left behind and he's going great guns at his Adelaide Hills shop, supplementing traditional Australian products with his authentic Scottish fayre.

His reputation for quality haggis, black pudding, white pudding, lorne sausage, scotch pies and tattie scones has spread through the wider Adelaide region, resulting in Scottish products making up 30% of his expanding business.

"More folks are interested in trying new things. We offer more than the basics - our Scottish products gives us a wee point of difference," says Duncan, 46.

People with Scottish backgrounds happily drive up to Woodside for authentic tastes of their homeland after trying Duncan's haggis at traditional Robbie Burns Night and St Andrews Day events.

Growing numbers of local Aussies are intrigued by haggis, made from sheep offal, but they often need encouragement to take the first bite.

"Haggis is nothing to scared of, but it's an acquired taste. Some people don't like it but most Aussies who try it, like it," Duncan says.

Duncan met his Aussie wife Jo when both



Duncan Dunn with black pudding and haggis, the stars of his range of Scottish products.

worked at Crombie's of Edinburgh, one of Scotland's most celebrated butcher shops.

They moved to Australia and eventually set up shop at Woodside in 2017, drawing inspiration from Crombie's.

Through hard work and persistence, they

built a successful business but they were then hit, from out of the blue, by back-to-back events to test their mettle.

An unforgettable 12-month period began in December 2019 when a power outage caused by the Cudlee Creek bushfire saw the Dunns lose 90% of their stock just five days before Christmas Day.

They fled the shop within 15 minutes of an order for the mass evacuation of Woodside as the fire approached, and their home at Charleston had to be saved by the CFS.

Duncan told MBL News at the time, "The fire couldn't have come at a worse time. We're like most butchers, depending on Christmas to carry us well into the New Year.

"We managed to fill 80 Christmas orders but we missed the icing on the cake (Christmas) and it will probably take a year to get fully back."



The shop's crew (from left) of Riley Pearce, Duncan Dunn and wife Jo, and Penny Flint.



Scottish fayre (from left) loche sausage, black pudding and haggis, plus the shop's wee mascot, Nessie the monster from Lock Ness.

➤ But barely three months later in March 2020, COVID-19 struck and Duncan's expected year of steady recovery was marked by restrictions, lockdowns, panic buying in the shop and the decimation of his wholesale trade.

"It was a testing time, with swings and roundabouts. We lost our wholesale but picked up in retail. Overall, we were probably 10-15% up over six months or so, and now we're back to around pre-COVID levels," he says.

Duncan says the main two lockdowns were testing enough but the third lockdown, which ended up running for only three days in November, was off the planet.

"It was announced at lunchtime on a Thursday. People panicked and rushed into the shop. I've never seen anything like it," he says.

"We had no restrictions and people were buying anything and everything. They were buying whole trays and by 6pm we didn't have one piece of meat left.

"Having nothing to sell, we stayed closed on the Friday. More stock arrived and we opened on Saturday, which was busy, and then the lockdown ended.

"Looking back at the bushfire and COVID, it was quite a year for us. It was hard but we're pretty much back to normal now."

Duncan grew up in Kingussie, a small northern town in the Scottish Highlands. He trained in a local shop, Hamlett & Gow,

where he became experienced in making traditional Scottish products.

He then spent 11 years at Crombie's of Edinburgh, a large shop with 14 staff and a reputation for producing diverse products, including an amazing range of 100 sausages, half of which are available at any one time.

"In 2012, an Aussie girl on a working holiday got a job as a counter assistant at Crombie's. We hit it off, moving to Australia and getting married here in 2013," Duncan says.

"I worked at the Richard Gunner factory at Mt Barker and Jo worked at Something Wild before we opened our shop in Woodside.

"We're passionate about working with local suppliers and supporting ethical, sustainable practices so that we can provide the best quality meats."



Duncan does all the butchering while Jo looks after the business side, including bookkeeping.

Jo also serves in the shop, along with her mother Penny Flint and young casuals Riley Pearce and Alex Reynolds.

Three other butcher shops sell Duncan's Scottish products – Lowe's Meat Co at Mt Barker, Ellis Butchers at McLaren Vale and Meat at the Market, city.

Calling on his experience at Crombie's, Duncan makes a rotating range of interesting sausages including pork, whiskey, honey & thyme; lamb with olives, feta, sundried tomatoes & mixed herbs; beef & Guinness; and duck & deer.

"Our beef and barbecue sausages are always popular but we like to offer something extra. Folks like trying different things," he says.

Duncan says he loves living in Australia and wouldn't move back to Scotland.

"I love the weather and the work-life balance, and the people are very friendly," he says.

"It's a good local community here, as was shown during the bushfire and the pandemic when people pulled together to get through.

"Our business has gone from strength to strength and we plan to stay for as long as we can, providing we get local support and stay viable."

THEY'RE ON FIRE!



Steve and Peter buy into tradition at Angaston's famous old shop

Savvy locals start feeling hungry when they smell familiar smoke in Angaston's main street but concerned out-of-towners think of calling the fire brigade.

When told the smoke's from a smokehouse behind a famous old butcher shop, visitors are usually intrigued to learn about the centuries-old German smallgoods tradition.

"If the wind's blowing the right way, smoke can blow out onto the street and people regularly rush into the shop to tell us there's a fire out the back," says award-winning smallgoods maker Steve Gay.

"People enjoy hearing what we're doing and are fascinated by the process. A lot come out back to look at the smokehouse - we have tourists here all the time."

The more the world changes, the more the core things stay the same at Barossa Smokehouse Butchers, so named by Steve and his business partner Peter Barratt in homage to the importance of their smokehouse.



Steve Gay at work in the smokehouse where he has won national awards for traditional double-smoked bacon.

Steve, 44, and Peter, 53, bought the 1939 shop in March last year after working there together for the best part of 20 years when it was iconic Schulz Butchers. Business is as brisk as ever.

"I've always had a 'feel' for this shop. I started here when I was 15 in 1982, doing my apprenticeship when there were eight butchers," Peter says.

"I've worked here with Steve for the best part of 20 years. I know him well and trust him. We know the shop and we've always had a good relationship with customers, so we grabbed the chance to buy the business."

Steve, who runs the smokehouse and has won national awards for double-smoked bacon, will bring up 20 successive years of working there in July.

"Peter and I have been workmates for 18 years, known for having a beer after work. I've always wanted my own shop and buying this business was a 

➤ great opportunity,” says Steve, a former slaughterman.

“We were running the shop previously so we know what we are doing. All’s going well – better after the first year than we had planned for.”

Peter and Steve work with two young people – Peter’s daughter Teagan is the smiling star of the front counter, and Kyle Stanley is a qualified butcher who specialises in smallgoods.

Over the years, new products for changing tastes and lifestyles have been introduced but the shop itself has changed little in its 82 years.

The Schulz name remains synonymous with butchery in the Barossa. In the 1880s, some 30 Schulz meat cutting carts - effectively mobile butcher’s shops - travelled around the district from a base at Bethany.

Schulz’s first shop was established in 1865 at Bethany before a new shop was opened in Angaston in 1939 by A.C. Schulz, who was an advocate for the Barossa’s distinct food heritage well before it was fashionable.

In 2003, the shop was acquired by Barossa Fine Foods (BFF) which maintained traditional recipes. Schulz Smokehouse Bacon, cured using a traditional brine recipe and smoked for two days, was named Australia’s best bacon in 2011 and 2012.

In 2018, the Schulz name moved to Nuriootpa as part of a new large store which also offered BFF products and Angelakis seafood. Peter made the move, too.



Kyle Stanley (left) and his mentor Steve Gay with hams outside the smokehouse.

The Angaston shop was bought by butcher John Hill and renamed Barossa Hill Butchers. Steve remained, making smallgoods. Peter later returned in a causal role before the shop was offered for sale. Steve and

Peter pounced after due diligence.

While the two butchers take pride in their locally-sourced beef and lamb, the shop’s reputation revolves around traditional smallgoods including bacon, hams, smoked beef, mettwurst, kransky, black pudding, white pudding and lachsschinken.



“One of the main things we make is our double-smoked, middle-rasher bacon. We sell several hundred kilograms of it a week. We also do something a little different, pork rump bacon,” Steve says.

Bouyed by their early success, the butchers are planning improvements to increase output. Last Christmas, they could have sold twice as many hams.

The smokehouse, unaltered since it was built in 1967, operates day and night, Monday to Thursday, but it is far from reaching its full potential as more wholesale options appear.

Overall, it’s onwards and upwards.

“This shop has lots of loyal customers, including some we’ve had for many years, and younger ones are coming through. When you have a good name, word spreads,” Peter says.

Steve says, “This shop means a lot to locals who have been coming here for years. A lot of people around here grew up on Schulz fritz.

“We’re keeping new customers by mixing things up and offering different things, such as fish from Samtass. We have a few new things coming up...”



Like father, like daughter... Steve Barratt with Teagan who works the counter.

Second TAFE intake

Applications are open for the next bout of MBL-supported apprentice training starting at TAFE SA, Regency Park, in July.

One-day-a-week training, totalling 16 days, will begin in late July and progress until the last week of November, says TAFE Meat Studies lecturer Graeme Elliott.

“We’ve had a series of inquiries from butchers, with a number indicating their apprentices will be attending,” Graeme says.

“They include two butchers who usually opt for all in-shop training. They will now send their young people to TAFE as a result of MBL’s financial assistance.”

The year’s first batch of 11 students is currently working through the course, which exposes the apprentices to the full



range of butchery skills, including the breaking of bodies.

Apprentices will complete Certificate III in Meat Processing (Retail Butcher) with their comprehensive training including making smallgoods and sausages.

TAFE’s purpose-built training centre includes a butchery and meat processing facility. Students work alongside industry experts including recognised chefs.

As well, TAFE attendees are exposed to different butchery strategies and get to meet other young butchers for the chance to develop long-term contacts.

MBL’s financial support scheme, to alleviate apprenticeship costs for our Members, is intended for on-campus training.

Under the scheme, the Co-operative contributes up to \$930 after subsidies to the course start-up costs and covers the wages, usually borne by employers, for the days the apprentice is at TAFE SA.

Our twin offers are designed to complement a generous series of Federal and State government subsidies and payments.

For more information, email MBL at ApprenticeButcher@mblsa.com.au

Devising new twists to add variety to his booming core business keeps Dave Armstrong and his crew at Goodwood Quality Meats on top of the game.

Their Valentine’s Day introduction of stylish gift boxes featuring premium steak supplemented by whiskey, chocolates and edible bunches of plants has proved a hit, prompting an expansion of the idea for Father’s Day.

And good results await their looming Christmas In July promotion, judging from increasing returns each year since being introduced five years ago.

“We’re pleased with both promotions and expect them to grow,” says Dave, who has assembled a highly-talented crew headed by Paul Suleyman and Luke Leyson.

Helped by florist Lill Elder from two doors away, Dave this year introduced Valentine’s Day gift boxes for women, with different meat cuts supplemented by condiments, sauces and flowers.

“We charged about \$35 and had to stop when we ran out of boxes,” Dave says.

“Lill has a gift for presentation, firstly helping us with ribbons for our Christmas hams before we called on her to show us how to put gift boxes together,” Dave says.

“She does her own floral gift boxes, and we source our boxes and ribbons from her.”

Dave will now up the ante by promoting gift boxes, for between \$150 and \$250, for Father’s Day in September.

Dave’s thinking outside the box



Dave Armstrong with a sample Father’s Day gift box including premium steak, whiskey, chocolates and an ‘floral’ edible bunch of rosemary, banana leaves and asparagus.

“We’ve picked up that women often don’t know what to buy men for occasions like Father’s Day,” he says.

“We’re also expecting a big Christmas In July, offering turkey and ham plus produce,

including chestnuts, from the local fruit and veg shop.

“Our sales of ham and turkey keep doubling each July. We promote it as a practice run for traditional Christmas in December.”

Max Noske, legend of Hahndorf

Old-school butcher Max Noske was working in his Hahndorf shop until two weeks before his death in April, aged 85.

Max handed over the reins of Max Noske & Son Butchery to his son, Tim, years ago but was never far from the shop, pleased to lend a hand and keep contact with loyal customers who became friends.

Butchery was in Max's blood. His Lutheran grandfather escaped Prussia in the 1840s to set up a butchery in Lobethal, bringing with him old family recipes for smallgoods.

Max used these handed-down recipes for products such as mettwurst, black pudding and white pudding in his Hahndorf shop, which

opened in 1968. He later built a smokehouse.

He became a local institution, witnessing the growth of Hahndorf from a village-like community into a busy town with a tourism focus.

He once said, "I can remember way back when a gentleman used to run the Savings Bank and he used to milk a few cows.

"He'd take them out of the town during the day and then bring them back at night for milking and they would walk down the main street on their own. You couldn't do that now!"

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, Max was farewelled at a private funeral service which was streamed live for those who could not attend.

Chicken rules the roost



Australians will eat an incredible 46.4kg of chicken per person this year, according to a Federal Government agency.

The Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics (ABARES) says this represents nearly half of all meat consumed and compares to pork's 27kg, beef's 19.8kg and sheepmeat's 5.5kg.

The rise of chicken and pork is expected to continue, viewed by consumers as cheaper alternatives to ever-rising prices for traditional beef and lamb.

In 1960, Australia's chicken consumption was just 4.4kg per person and pork consumption

was a modest 8.3kg.

Beef and lamb had their consumption heyday in the 1970s. Beef had a consumption high of 69.4kg per person in 1977 and lamb consumption peaked at 44kg in 1971.

Chicken production has grown each year since the mid-1960s when just 57,000 tonnes was produced. Back then, 52 million chickens were grown compared to today's 678 million.

Australia is expected to produce 1.29 million tonnes of chicken this financial year, making us the world's third largest consumer of chicken after Malaysia and Jamaica.

Australian Chicken Meat Foundation executive director Vivien Kite says projections had indicated chicken's dominant consumption position would be consolidated over the next five years.

She says the popularity of chicken is broadly thanks to a combination of quality, versatility, broad appeal, nutritional value, affordability and environmental sustainability.

This is despite recent research which found many people are holding onto some long-held myths and misconceptions, such as the conditions in which chickens are raised, and the use of antibiotics and hormones.

Sausage King's sizzling

The return of Sausage King competitions to SA's regions has resulted in massive increases in entries for the first two regional events of 2021.

AMIC State Manager Chris Kelly says entries were well up for competitions in Renmark and Port Lincoln, and 30-40 people attended network evenings in both centres.

In Renmark, the Riverland and South-East competition on March 20 attracted 151 entries across all categories, with representation from 12 shops. This was an increase of 57 entries and four shops over the last competition in 2019.

In Port Lincoln, the West Coast competition on April 17 drew 57 entries from eight shops – an increase of 37 entries and four shops over 2019.

The strong numbers follow the cancellation of all AMIC competitions across Australia last year due to COVID-19.

"The main reason for the increase is that we have taken the competitions back to the regions," Chris says.

"In recent times, people had to send their products to Adelaide for judging at TAFE but this year's numbers show it's best to hold these events in the regions.

"For the first time this year, we held presentation and networking evenings which were well attended."

The Mid-North competition was scheduled for May 29 at Port Pirie and the Metro event will be on August 27.

State winners will be announced at the annual AMIC awards night on November 6, with the national finals in Adelaide in February.

BankSA home loan cashback

In another benefit of Membership, MBL Members and their staff have been offered a home loan cashback deal by BankSA – but they must act quickly.

Until the end of June, Members and their staff may be offered a 0.3% cashback when settling a new home loan. For example, eligible borrowers could get \$1,500 on a \$500,000 loan.

The offer is available to those who take out a new BankSA home loan or “switch” their existing home loan to BankSA from another banking institution.

This is on top of a separate \$4,000 cashback offer for eligible borrowers who “switch” their home loan to BankSA.

When both offers are combined, MBL Members and their staff who start or “switch” a \$500,000 loan stand to receive a total of \$5,500.

Both offers end on June 30, 2021 for loans settled by September 30.

Terms and conditions apply to both offers. For full details, go to: www.workplacebanking.banksa.com.au

MBL staff have also been offered the deal, with a BankSA rep visiting our three sites at Athol Park, Wingfield and Keith to explain the details and answer questions.

The two cashback offers do not apply to existing Westpac Group borrowers with existing home loans at BankSA, Westpac, St George, Bank of Melbourne or RAMS.

However, BankSA urges their existing borrowers to discuss refinancing options.

Contact David Brownie at BankSA on 0466 404 074 or david.brownie@banksa.com.au

Busy times for Machinery head

The extension by another year of the Federal Government’s unprecedented tax break for machinery is great news for butchers and other customers, says the new manager of MBL Machinery.

Darrel O’Sullivan, a butcher, says there will probably never be a better time for butchers and other customers to upgrade machinery.

Following the recent Federal Budget, businesses now have until June 30, 2023, to claim immediate tax deductions for any number of machinery items purchased at any cost.

Under COVID-19 stimulus incentives announced last October, businesses had until the end of June next year to claim the tax break but this was extended by a year in the recent Budget.

MBL offers a full range of Australian-made and imported machines to satisfy the requirements of every Member, from the smallest butcher to the largest processor.

Darrel, 48, a butcher with diverse experience across the meat industry, says he leapt at the chance to join MBL.

“I couldn’t say No to the opportunity. I’m excited by this role which is more than just selling machines but sourcing the right machines,” he says.



With a butchery background, Darrel O’Sullivan has taken over as manager of MBL Machinery.



“I’ve repaired and maintained machinery for years, so I know my way around machines. My strength is my organising skills.

“A lot of Members will know me, particularly the older ones. I’ve been around for years. I have a fair whack of experience.”

Darrel started his apprenticeship with Des Edward at North Park Meats, Regency Plaza,

before working at Woolworths for 10 years.

Wanting a change, he worked on the Holden assembly line for a few years. He returned to Woolworths as Meat Manager at the Tree Tea Plaza and Golden Grove supermarkets for 10 years.

He then worked at several food ingredients and dry goods

companies, including Medani Foods, which was run by Shane Harrison, now of MBL.

Darrel joins MBL as Key Account Manager Machinery from Woodward Foods where he was Operations Manager, in charge of assorted George Weston Foods products for Aldi and independent supermarkets.

Married with a son aged 14, Darrel tries to visit a shack he built at Coobowie, on Yorke Peninsula, twice a month.

“I have much to do at MBL as I settle in, so Coobowie might have to wait,” he says.