

## AGM networking barbecue

A networking barbecue has been added to the agenda of MBL's Annual General Meeting at our Athol Park headquarters on the evening of Monday, November 1.

The post-AGM function aims to provide the co-operative's Members with an informal opportunity to mix with MBL representatives and other Members.

### **YOU'RE INVITED!**

"Come one, come all – we're putting on a barbecue and refreshments after the AGM and all Members and families are invited," says MBL CEO Jamie Higgins.

"We're a co-op owned by the

Members, so come and have a drink with us and industry colleagues. It's your co-op and it's your AGM."

The AGM will begin at 6pm on Monday, November 1, at Athol Park.

Jamie and Chairman George Ujvary will both address the meeting.

The agenda includes the performance of MBL divisions for the 2020-21 financial year, the year ahead and an opportunity to ask any questions.

The annual Members' rebate on merchandise and machinery will also be announced.



Feathers from SA's chicken producers end up in these feather batch cookers at Keith. Feather meal is used in fish feed for aquaculture.

## KEITH'S EVOLUTION

Ten years after our purchase of the property, the Keith Proteins Division continues to evolve through two new enterprising projects involving feather meal and industrial hemp.

We have recently completed the six-fold expansion of our feather receiving capacity to 250 tonnes, cementing Keith's status as one of Australia's biggest producers of feather meal.

We have also completed work to entirely enclose our feather meal operation, giving us Quality Assurance compliance for all export markets.

Keith's second new project is the trial cultivation, beginning on

November 15, of industrial hemp on 10 hectares (25 acres) of our irrigated land.

Licensed under strict State Government regulations, the growing trial will verify the suitability of our site for industrial hemp which is used for many products including seed, flour and oil.

A nutrient-hungry hemp crop is considered ideal for absorbing the nutrient-rich run off from our rendering plant, as required under environment laws.

**Full reports pages 4 and 5**

## NOTICE TO MEMBERS

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Members are advised that the date for holding the 2021 Annual General Meeting has been fixed at **6.00pm on Monday, November 1, 2021**

The venue of this year's Annual General Meeting will be at the Master Butchers Co-operative Ltd's office at **203 - 215 Hanson Rd, Athol Park.**

A barbecue for Members and families follows the AGM

**Master Butchers Co-operative Ltd:**  
**"Your other business"**

## MBL NEWS

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# JABS & JOBS

- **MBL incentivises Covid-19 vaccination**
- **We're recruiting across our three sites**

MBL is granting employees paid leave for Covid-19 vaccination appointments, with the goal of having 90% of staff fully vaccinated.

If the 90% rate is reached by December, MBL will also give all employees a \$100 gift voucher, CEO Jamie Higgins announced on August 6.

"The safety of our staff and customers has always been our priority throughout the pandemic and we are doing our bit to accelerate the national vaccination program," Jamie says.

To keep our businesses working smoothly, MBL has also begun recruiting extra staff across our sites at Athol Park, Wingfield and Keith.

"We're pedalling as fast as we can but we need extra warehouse and production staff due to our strong growth," Jamie says.

### Vaccination incentives

MBL is providing employees with up to two hours paid leave for both appointments of the two-dose Covid-19 vaccination during working hours.

Vaccination leave must be booked in advance. Preferred appointment times are early morning or late afternoon within close proximity of the work site or home address to avoid excessive down time.

As an additional incentive, a \$100 gift voucher will be issued to all MBL employees if 90% of our workforce is fully vaccinated by December.

Government modelling predicts 70% of South

Australians older than 16 will be fully vaccinated by November and 80% by December.

In a message to staff, Jamie says the vaccination rollout provides a welcome light at the end of the pandemic tunnel but we all have to do our part.

"With vaccines becoming more available, it is important for MBL to ensure that it is as convenient as possible for our employees to get vaccinated," he says.

"MBL is committed to assisting our employees to get their vaccine at any time, including during working hours."

### Recruitment

Due to continued growth, MBL has stepped up recruitment, with workers needed for a variety of roles, including storemen and production workers.

At Athol Park, we mainly need workers for our warehouses but other roles are also available, including work in our blending facility.

Production workers are needed at our Wingfield and Keith proteins plants.

"Finding suitable staff can be difficult. If anyone in our membership knows of someone looking for a job, now is the time to direct them to MBL," Jamie says.

Enquiries can be emailed to:  
[employment@mblsa.com.au](mailto:employment@mblsa.com.au)



**Vale Bernie Steinhoff – page 11**

# VOTE OF CONFIDENCE

## AMIC's competition entries leap by 80%

An 80% jump in entry numbers for AMIC's SA competitions is seen as a strong vote of confidence by upbeat butchers in the status and future of retail butchery.

AMIC says the total of 548 entries across SA's Sausage King and smallgoods competitions for 2021 is an increase of 244 over the last year of competitions in 2019.

The number of shops entering this year more than doubled to 54 after AMIC recorded a "significant rise" in membership.

Winners will be announced at the MBL-sponsored State awards presentation dinner at Adelaide Zoo on October 30.

AMIC State Manager Chris Kelly says, "The number of entries went ballistic. It was huge, with every region substantially up on the 2019 competitions."

With more meals being cooked at home as an effect of Covid-19, butcher shop sales remain higher than pre-Covid levels, as

reflected in strong sales of MBL merchandise.

Sustained improved turnover has given butchers a sense of optimism which contributed to the huge rise in competition entries, says AMIC SA Retail Council Chairman Trevor Hill, of Bruce's Meat.

"We're all doing well. Everyone has had a good year and is excited about the future," Trevor says.

"The large number of entries in the competitions is a sign of the positive position butchers are enjoying.

"Last year's competitions were cancelled because of Covid and butchers were raring to go this year.

"The strong response might also open an argument about holding the competitions every two years rather than annually."

Chris says, "There's good vibes among



Sausage master... Chris Kelly shows his barbecuing style at the Metro judging.

butchers. Most are still up on their pre-Covid sales and now that winter's behind us, they're ready for things to kick off with the barbecue season.

"There was an even spread of entries across the membership base, including older members who hadn't entered for a while and new members from the past 18-24 months."

Butchers strongly supported the introduction of award presentation nights after regional judging in Renmark, Port Lincoln, Port Pirie and Adelaide.

"The events attracted 40 to 60 people in each location, providing butchers with a chance to network," Chris says.

"Butchers appreciated having the competitions back in the regions after having to send entries to Adelaide for judging in recent times."

Chris says tickets for the State awards dinner at Adelaide Zoo on October 30 were \$130 per person, down from \$150 in 2019, thanks to MBL's generous sponsorship.

Meanwhile, Adelaide's scheduled staging of the national finals in February is jeopardised because competitions in NSW and Victoria have been delayed by Covid-19 outbreaks.

No date or venue has been announced for the national finals, amid speculation that the event may have to be postponed.

### AMIC SA competitions

	2019	2021	rise
<b>Metro</b>	<b>190 entries 13 shops</b>	<b>281 entries 26 shops</b>	<b>91 entries 13 shops</b>
<b>Riverland / South-East</b>	<b>94 8</b>	<b>151 12</b>	<b>57 4</b>
<b>West Coast</b>	<b>20 4</b>	<b>57 8</b>	<b>37 4</b>
<b>Mid-North*</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>59 8</b>	<b>59 8</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>304 25</b>	<b>548 54</b>	<b>244 29</b>

\*The Mid-North had no entries in 2019 when part of wider regional competitions.



Up to 250 tonnes of feathers from Adelaide chicken processors can be held in Keith's covered receiving area after its six-fold expansion.



A new loader takes feathers from the newly expanded receiving area for loading into feather batch cookers.



# Keith expands its feather meal capacity

MBL's Keith Proteins Division has become one of Australia's largest producers of feather meal, used as an ingredient in fish feed by the expanding export and local aquaculture industries.

"Keith is now one of Australia's biggest, or possibly equal biggest, single sites for feather meal production," says MBL General Manager Proteins Division Gary Deutrom.

The plant is also a significant producer of another chicken by-product, blood meal, which is exported as fertiliser and as high-protein feed for stock.

The growth of the two products – along with strong sales of duck meal and goat meal - continues the evolution of the plant which was in a fragile state when purchased by MBL 10 years ago.

The plant receives raw material for feather meal and blood meal from all of Adelaide's major chicken processors.

We recently completed the six-fold expansion of our feather receiving capacity to 250 tonnes. Two B-double trucks deliver chicken feathers to Keith daily.

We have also completed work to entirely enclose our feather meal operation, giving us Quality Assurance compliance for extra export markets.

We are now accredited to export feather meal to countries including Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Japan and Vietnam. Indonesia is seen as having huge potential, however market access is currently closed to Australia.

MBL also produces other chicken products, such as meal and tallow, at a dedicated poultry plant which opened at Wingfield in 2017.



Views of a feather batch cooker from the front and from the side. Feather meal production is an operation big on scale and expertise.



# Industrial hemp trial begins

MBL has State Government approval to trial the cultivation of industrial hemp at Keith, with the crop to be planted on November 15 across 10 hectares (25 acres) of our irrigated land.

Hemp is considered ideal for absorbing the nutrient-rich run off from our rendering plant, as required by the Environment Protection Authority.

This nutrient-reducing role at Keith has always been filled by lucerne. MBL has

grown lucerne, and some cereal, on a 160ha (400 acre) irrigated block since we took over the plant in 2011, continuing the practice used by the previous owner.

Like lucerne, hemp is nutrient-hungry, but crop returns stand to be far more profitable, prompting the trial crop.

MBL CEO Jamie Higgins is working with government agencies and private-sector experts to ensure the trial meets strict regulations.

We have teamed with Bordertown-based hemp processor Good Country Hemp, which will supply the seeds and buy the crop, making products including seed, flour and oil.

MBL's property has water licences. Flood 4 paddock, which can be flooded, has been laser-levelled in preparation for the hemp crop.

If all goes to plan, the first harvest would be in March/April 2022.



“Do you have pets? Well, you wouldn’t want them eating food with plastic in it.”

This direct approach is sometimes used by Sam Van Kleef, of MBL Proteins, to stress the importance of raw material suppliers keeping plastic and other foreign material out of collection bins.

As Supplier Relations and Logistics Supervisor, Sam (*pictured above*) oversees Quality Assurance practices to prevent contamination of our rendered products, including pet food ingredients and feed for the poultry and aquaculture industries.

MBL has won awards for our conversion of waste material into valuable products but the process can become compromised when rubbish is added to the mix.

Rubbish as diverse as foam trays, cling wrap, bags, drink cans, foil trays, wire and steel

bolts are sometimes tossed into MBL collection bins at processing plants, supermarkets and butcher shops.

Although screening procedures are in place, weeding out contaminants takes time and money, making “education” back at the source a key preventative step.

This is where Sam comes in. “Raw material suppliers need to understand how contaminants can damage end products, including pet food,” he says.

“To get the point across, I sometimes ask if they have pets. If so, would they give them food with pieces of plastic?”

“In the case of butchers, they should treat waste like they treat their trim bins for mince, taking care to make sure nothing foreign gets in.”

Sam, 27, is based at Wingfield and also oversees QA for the Keith plant by making regular visits and maintaining “paperwork” on his laptop.

He conducts sieve tests and cook checks as part of a strict QA regime, vital for MBL’s compliance to Australian rendering standards and for the export of products to the US, Canada and Europe.

As reported in the last MBL News, Sam won a prestigious

training award from the Australian Renderers Association as best student at an ARA Accreditation Course at the University of Queensland, at Gratton near Toowoomba, in July.

The five-day course provided training for rendering staff on meeting the Australian Standard for hygienic rendering, with an emphasis on applying HACCP-based QA practices to prevent contamination of rendered products.

Major topics covered included domestic and overseas requirements for production of rendered products; growth and survival characteristics of micro-organisms; heat transfer in rendering systems; operation of presses and centrifuges; and tallow and meat meal specifications.

# Why contaminants are Sam’s pet hate

**‘Raw material suppliers need to understand how contaminants can damage end products’ – Sam Van Kleef**



➤ The course included a visit to a rendering plant.

# CAPUTO'S 70 YEARS

The ability to adapt to changing circumstances has been the key to the longevity of Spencer Gulf family seafood processor SD Caputo and Sons, which celebrated its 70th anniversary in September.

The Port Pirie business, a strong supporter of MBL, marked the milestone with in-store promotions, including a cooking demonstration by Michael Angelakis from TV's *Out Of the Blue*.

"We are proud of our history and we were pleased Michael, who has supported us for years, was able to help us celebrate," says Caputo spokesman Sebastian Mezzino.

The business had its origins in the early 1950s when Sebastian's fisherman grandfather Salvatore Domenico (SD) Caputo, looked at ways of getting the best possible return for his catch.

Instead of selling to the local Port Pirie fish buyer or the Adelaide fish market, he cut out the middleman, buying a ute to deliver fresh garfish, King George whiting, snook, snapper, tommy ruff and squid around Port Pirie.

Salvatore then decided to value add but he needed extra labour for processing. His son Domenic and son in law Mauro Mezzino (Sebastian's father) joined the business, with SD Caputo and Sons formed in 1951.

Within a few years, 90% of Caputo's filleted fish was being sold to SAFCOL in Adelaide. Bigger premises were soon needed, and in 1953 the business moved across the road to its present waterfront location at Fisherman's Wharf.

Many fishing boats with assorted catches would unload at the wharf, drawing spectators in what Sebastian describes as "exciting times."

In 1970, the business diversified into the prawn industry. Initially, Caputo's unloaded prawn trawlers in Port Pirie, Wallaroo and Port Broughton and delivered prawns fresh in fibreglass containers to SAFCOL.

This changed in 1972 when Caputo's began



1972: Mauro Mezzino (sunglasses) unloads prawns for SACOL at Port Pirie.

processing prawns which were cooked, graded and tailed before being frozen and delivered to SAFCOL in 10kg cartons.

"We were processing between 50 and 70 tonnes of prawns a year, and then the trawlers started their own processing about 23 years ago," Sebastian says.

With Caputo's no longer processing prawns, Sebastian and his son Maurie had to reposition the business by developing wholesale and retail.

They developed Caputo's as a regional wholesaler, spreading from Port Pirie to supply Whyalla, Port Augusta, Clare and the Copper Coast towns of Kadina, Wallaroo and Moonta.

Caputo's shop, at its plant on Port Pirie's main drag, doubled in size and won an SA Seafood Retailer of the Year award. It makes the region's best takeaway fish and chips, as judged by a recent radio poll.

More than ever, Caputo's relies on MBL as its trusted supplier of a vast range of merchandise, from ingredients to packaging.

"I enjoyed the course, which went into the fine detail of the procedures we have in place at MBL. It was also good to meet people from interstate plants," Sam says.

Sam began his MBL career at Athol Park seven years ago, gaining experience in the warehouse, blending room and showroom.

He moved to Wingfield in 2018, seconded as a Logistics Supervisor to liaise with raw material suppliers.

He has thrived under the guidance of MBL General Manager Proteins Division Gary Deutrom and MBL QA Manager Michaela Rock.

Sam is the son of former MBL Director Marc Van Kleef, who served on the Board for 15 years until 2015 while running a butcher shop at Balaklava.

"We had a small slaughterhouse a few hundred metres from our home on the outskirts of town and I remember, when I was six or seven, riding my go-kart over to watch Dad slaughtering," Sam says.

"I also remember coming here (the Wingfield plant) delivering material from the shop. Dad used to bring it down in bins on a trailer.

"It must have made an impression for me to remember it. I was only a boy so it never would have occurred to me that I'd be working here one day."

After finishing school in Balaklava, Sam worked on his cousin's farm and then in a silo before coming to Adelaide to work for MBL.

"Dad told me about MBL, saying it's a good company that looks after its staff," he says.

"I had no expectations. I just wanted to get my foot in the door and learn as much as I could.

"I enjoy working in the Proteins Division and I see my future at MBL, 100%."



2008: Sebastian, Mauro and Maurie Mezzino grace the cover of the local phone book.

## TAKING A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE

# Are you CHICKEN or are you GAME?

Butcher Matt Fox and his chef wife Amanda have taken an adventurous walk on the wild side at what they initially planned as a dedicated poultry shop at Mt Gambier.

Their “wild” range has grown to include buffalo, camel, venison, crocodile, wild boar, kangaroo, emu, goat, duck and quail, plus saltbush lamb and wagyu beef.

Prominent signage puts a challenge to customers - *Are You Chicken, or Are You Game?*

Such a niche range would normally be found in a trendy capital city food hall but Fox's Chook House is in relatively conservative Mt Gambier which has under 28,000 residents.

Matt and Amanda's shop continues to fare well after two years of operation, with game meat representing 30% of sales. They source it from all over Australia, including suppliers in Adelaide, the South-East and Clare.

“It has gone well for us. The game side holds its own against the traditional poultry products and gives us an important point of difference,” Matt says.

“We feel lucky to be in the Mount. Seven butcher shops operate here because people support us.”

The Foxs have over 30 years of combined experience in the food industry, with Matt's butchering skills perfectly complementing Amanda's cooking knowledge.

“We're passionate about using sustainable produce to help people experience new tastes,” says Amanda, who prepares a range of ready meals.

With customers often trying game meats for the first time, easy cooking tips are essential and Amanda's cheffing expertise comes to the fore.

As well as offering advice over the counter, she helped compile attractive brochures with simple tips on how to cook the different meats.

Matt, now 34, and Amanda, 38, launched



Matt Fox with 200g Mighty Buffalo Burgers which are among his biggest sellers.



The Fox's Chook House emblem.

their business in 2019 after changed circumstances saw them needing to revitalise their careers.

Born and bred in Mt Gambier, Matt began his butchering apprenticeship at the local Woolworths and completed it at now-closed James Street Meats, where he spent seven years.

He then worked for eight years as a butcher at Coles in Mt Gambier, becoming disenchanted towards the end.

“They started removing butchers and equipment from the meat department. We were left to slice steaks and help out with groceries,” Matt says.

At the same time, Amanda needed to break away from cheffing's irregular hours to spend more time with Matt and their two young children.

“I didn't want to work nights and weekends anymore. Matthew and I were passing in the night. We were looking for something new,” she says.

Seeing a gap in the local market, the couple opened a fresh chicken and game meats shop at Mount Gambier Central shopping mall, taking over space which two years earlier housed Lenard's Chicken.

They purchased machinery from MBL and continue to rely on the Co-operative for ingredients and packaging.

Their triangular-shape space is in a prominent location, featuring a long counter for the display of a vast range of products.

“Buffalo and camel are our most popular game meats, with crocodile



Matt and Amanda Fox... enjoying success with game meats like buffalo, camel and crocodile in an otherwise traditional chicken shop.

➤ a close third," Matt says.

His buffalo range includes rump, T-bone, porterhouse and schnitzel, and among the shop's biggest sellers are 200g Mighty Buffalo Burgers.

"They are big burgers and they fill the bun. People get excited about them," Matt says.

As a chef, Amanda's favourite game meat is camel which cooks up very much like lamb and beef. It is best cooked medium rare.

The camel range includes roasts, T-bones and rumps. A huge seller is camel schnitzels.

"Some people say camel works better for schnitzel than chicken, which we also sell a lot of," Matt says.

Crocodile sales are led by burgers. "I use only minute ingredients because crocodile can be easily overpowered and you might as well be using chicken," Matt says.

"Crocodile burgers are a staple item for us; people just keep coming back for them."

The biggest concern for people buying game meat is how to cook it. "I tell them you just cook it like anything else but just don't overdo it," Matt says.

Amanda says, "Because most game meat is lean, a golden rule is to cook it quickly to stop it from drying out.

"For example, crocodile is a delicate meat with a fat content as little as 1% and cooks similar to fish – searing it for two minutes

either side is usually enough, depending on the thickness."

Buffalo, camel, venison and Mixed Game with Cheese sausages were displayed when MBL News visited, but Matt also makes wild boar, kangaroo and goat sausages.

He offers goat chops, leg roasts and pieces for curries. "The Burmese and Indians love goat pieces with the bone in. Part of the bone and marrow can be eaten," he says.

SA saltbush lamb products are also available along with wagyu from Tasmania.

"I prefer mid-range Grade 5 wagyu which is nice and buttery but without the huge price of some wagyu. I sell it for about \$90/kg," Matt says.



A brochure with simple tips on how to cook game meats has been vital.

Chicken, however, dominates overall sales. The range is huge, with sales led by mignon, kiev and schnitzel.

Free range turkey, from Pooginagoric near Bordertown, has a solid following.

Matt says the only way for butchers to counter the convenience of supermarkets is to offer quality products backed by personal service and expert advice.

"We've gone more on the 'wild' side than others but game meat is our point of difference," he says.

"We started heat-and-eat meals this year and we're doing more gluten free options, mainly sausages, burgers and some schnitzels."

Matt describes Amanda as "his rock" and says their decision to go into business has given the flexibility to have quality family time with their children Sophie, 5, and Callum, 4.

"We've found a good work-life balance. We structure it so that Amanda and I can take turns to pick up the kids after school and take them to activities like swimming and dancing," Matt says.

They have been ably assisted in the shop in late afternoons by school-based trainee Brodie Koeng-Weallens, who has thrived under training by Trevor Eden of William Angliss Institute.

Brodie recently started as Matt's first apprentice butcher.

# HOME COMPOSTABLE hero!

MBL's Home Compostable Hero promotion is open to Members and customers who buy any two products from our Home Compostable packaging range.

They will go into the draw to win a weekend away in an Airbnb Eco Getaway of their choice to the value of \$600.

And each month until June, we will select a Hero who will be featured in MBL News and receive point-of-sale marketing displays and social media support.

## SEPTEMBER HERO: Something Wild

Something Wild is proud to be making the switch to sustainable packaging, using MBL's Home Compostable produce bags, vac bags, trays and soakers.

"We're trying our best to move forward sustainably by phasing in the home compostable options," says Something Wild's Sales and Produce Manager Alice Frazer.

"By the end of the year, we are aiming for 90% of product we send out from our retail store to be packed in something that can be chucked in the green bin instead of the trash.

"We are telling people the bags will compost in their home compost in just 16 weeks!

"If we all make these little changes, imagine how bright the future will be for our next generation!"



Alice Frazer... proud of going green.

Something Wild is a majority Indigenous-owned business that specialises in game meat and Indigenous greens.

Game meats produced in SA and sourced from around the country include kangaroo, wild pork, wild goat, wild venison, rabbit, hare, crocodile and other exotic game meats.

"We produce a range of fresh cuts and we



also stock a range of unique native Australian bush herbs, spices, sauces and marinades," Alice says.

## OCTOBER HERO: Red Gum BBQ



Victorian BBQ master Martin Goffin advocates MBL's compostable vac bags.

MBL came to the rescue when a prolonged Covid-19 lockdown forced the closure of an American-style barbecue and beer hall in rural Victoria.

To survive, Red Gum BBQ at Red Hill, an hour's drive south from Melbourne on Mornington Peninsula, began delivering heat-and-eat BBQ meals across Victoria.

They needed quality vac bags that fitted with their green, ethical practices and, after an internet search, turned to MBL for our Home Compostable vac bags.

"MBL has been fantastic to deal with and has helped us a great deal," says Red Gum

BBQ's Katrina Barrionuevo.

"We buy MBL's vac bags for meats and sauces. They tick all the boxes – the quality is good, they are fit for purpose and they compost at home.

"We're pleased we could identify vac bags to meet our ethical requirements."

Proudly green, Red Gum BBQ insists on using recycled and recyclable products, and all its meat is free range and grass fed.

An average of 250 meals daily are packed daily for delivery to homes around Victoria during lockdown.

# Bernie's enduring legacy

Bernie Steinhoff's legacy is being played out daily in butcher shops across SA, as butchers and their customers continue reaping the fruits of his unsurpassed smallgoods knowledge.

A much-loved stalwart of MBL, the technical maestro died on August 12, aged 79, after a long illness.

One of nature's gentlemen, Bernie enjoyed passing on his smallgoods expertise to butchers for many years, taking pride on being just a phone call away to solve technical issues.

Many butchers have in turn passed on the tried-and-tested practices to the next generation, ensuring the continuation of Bernie's legacy.

Bernie, a fourth generation German smallgoods maker, once said, "I don't have secrets. I share my knowledge and I get great satisfaction from helping.

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

While Bernie mastered all smallgoods, his recipes and tips for Christmas hams continue to be of huge benefit to butchers.

His close friend Stan Stern, of Newly Weds Foods, says, "We still do the original (Christmas ham) cure for MBL that we first did for Bernie.

"We were friends for many years. We went to industry events together, including to IFFA in Germany.

"He was always bright and cheerful, nothing would get him down."

MBL's General Manager Sales and Marketing Bexley Carman says, "Bernie was always upbeat and the ultimate gentleman."

Bernie retired from MBL at the end of 2014, at age 72. At his request, he had spent the previous three years working three days a week.

In an MBL News story to mark his retirement, Bernie said he learnt an enormous amount from his butcher father Hans.

"I've always kept my eyes and ears open to learn as much as I can. You never stop learning," he said.

He started with Hans at Europa in Adelaide in 1960 and later moved to his father's



*One of nature's gentlemen... Bernie Steinhoff pictured at MBL in 2013.*

Westfalia Meat store at Fullham Gardens.

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

Bernie said, "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."

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 said.

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

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

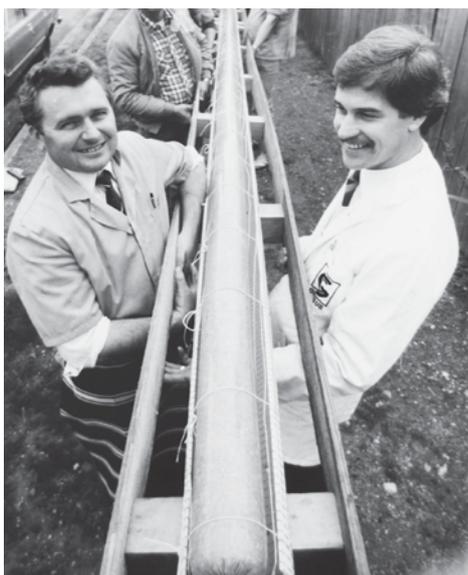
Being fluent in German was a big advantage, and Globus sent Bernie to his first IFFA meat industry expo in Germany in 1983.

"Speaking 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 said.

Bernie later worked for Quality Ingredients and MBL. He wrote a regular column called Tech Talk in the MBL newsletter.

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

Bernie was farewelled at a private service for his immediate family.



**In 1987, Bernie Steinhoff (right) and Standom founder Stan Ciechanowicz (left) entered the Guinness Book of Records for making the world's longest salami which stretched for 47 metres.**

## Rise of female butchers

Everyone knows it, now official SA Government statistics confirm that more women are becoming butchers.

In 2012, everyone who completed a butchery apprenticeship in SA was male but this 100% dominance dropped to 93.75% in 2020.

The 6.25% completion rate by females came in at number 20 in a list of the top 20 fields with the most growth in female apprenticeship completions.

In TAFE SA's first retail butcher course this year, one of 12 students was female while at the recent AMIC SA Apprentice of the Year competition, one of nine contestants was female.

# BFF and MBL share decades of growth

From humble beginnings 30 years ago, Barossa Fine Foods (BFF) has chalked up another milestone by accumulating one million shares in MBL.

"It's great to see Barossa Fine Foods achieve this significant milestone as a Member of the co-operative," says MBL Chairman George Ujvary.

"This family company's support of the co-operative has been unwavering over many years, and their success as a business has been reflected by the success of the co-operative."

George says BFF and MBL have grown together, strongly supporting each other in many ways over three decades.

BFF founder Franz Knoll has always been a fan of the co-operative, saying, "MBL is the best example of how a co-operative operates while remaining highly competitive.

"Throughout our 30 years, MBL has been the supply partner that has supported us to be

competitive and is central to most of our ingredient and packaging needs.

"MBL works collaboratively with us so we can grow, and provides the latest materials and innovations so the business is not left behind as the marketplace evolves."

Franz and his wife Barbara began the business in 1991 as a small stall in Adelaide Central Market, gradually reaching heights beyond their dreams.

The BFF group today has annual revenue of over \$60 million and staff of over 300 after acquiring Standom Smallgoods (2013) and seafood specialists Angelakis (2018).

Franz stepped down from the daily running of BFF last year but Barbara remains at the original Central Market stall on a part-time basis.

Their sons Andreas, Alex and Dieter now handle the everyday running of the businesses and another son Stephan will resume involvement after leaving State politics before the March election.



## The butcher's own ready meals solution

*Value adding has never been so easy!*

Developed by your Co-op and exclusively available from butchers, Butcher's Banquet is a local brand that people can trust, with quality and freshness at its core.

Cook in the tray convenience, with recipes and method tested by independent chefs.

With Butcher's Banquet, you can enter the ready meals market at a fraction of the normal cost.

