

# APPRENTICE BOOST

## 27 recruits to be work-ready by April

A pool of 27 young people will be presented to butchers as suitable for apprenticeships after completing government-funded basic training in butchery.

They will have been assessed as work-ready, having passed six apprentice training modules to gauge their natural skills, enthusiasm and reliability.

The government will then fund two-week work placement to allow butchers to assess them and consider offering apprenticeships.

The initiative is a first for SA, using \$135,000 of Federal and State Government funding under the Skilling South Australia program to help counter the meat industry's growing skills shortage.

"We'll have 27 recruits ready for the workplace by April and we'll try to get them jobs," says Master Butcher Wilson Lowe who will conduct the training for Career Employment Group's Adelaide Institute of Hospitality.

*Continued page 3*

*Scott Johns lures big spenders with \$500kg steak - pages 4-5*



## Jeff's upfront and personal to showcase traditional skills

Most people's image of the quintessential cheery butcher is pretty much captured in this photo of Jeff Luxton in his Port Elliot shop.

But what the photo doesn't show is that if customers got any closer as he cuts and trims, they'd just about be standing on his toes!

Jeff, 33, is an old-school butcher. He steadfastly applies traditional skills which he wants customers to appreciate, so he shifted workbenches from the rear to the front.

Customers stand barely a metre from Jeff and his butchers, enabling easy conversation while watching the skills and care that goes into preparing meat.

"Trust is important, but trust is only a word and people don't really know until they see us working, applying our skills and taking no shortcuts," Jeff says.

Customers are also drawn to a large viewing window into a dry ageing room which features beef hand-picked from a local farm.

The shop's customer numbers have trebled in Jeff's three years. The full story of his success is on pages 6 and 7.

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# MBL supports local community

MBL will be a gold sponsor of the SA Masters Games to be held in the Tatiara region of the South-East in April, in a show of support for the local community.

Over 1,000 mature-aged competitors are expected to attend, giving the region a great opportunity to showcase itself and receive a significant economic boost.

A number of the sports will be held in Keith where MBL operates an increasingly-important proteins plant, mainly staffed by locals from the region.

"We see the Masters Games as a great opportunity for MBL to support the Tatiara

region," says MBL CEO Jamie Higgins.

"We have a responsibility as an employer in the region to be involved and support the community."

Since purchasing the plant in 2010, MBL has made a point of being a "good citizen" by supporting the local community and local businesses where possible.

This has included MBL donating \$10,000 to the Keith CFS after the local brigade bravely saved our proteins plant from destruction in a fierce bushfire in 2018.

Tatiara District Council won the bid to host



the Masters Games, with the bulk of the 27 sports to be held in Keith and Bordertown.

Sports will include swimming, athletics, cricket, basketball, lawn bowls, volleyball and tennis.

It was generally a happy Christmas for independent butchers, with trade at least on par with the previous festive season or a little up.

Some butchers in MBL's annual straw poll were happier than others. Most were reasonably pleased with slightly increased trade while others were delight-

## Mixed Christmas tidings

ed at sales rises of well over 10%.

MBL's Merchandise Division reported good sales similar to the 2018 festive season, indicating that butchers generally had a good Christmas.

Ham sales, another barometer of Christmas trade, were strong, with most butchers selling out or having only a few left for later sale.

But it was a nightmare period for two Adelaide Hills butcher shops which lost all or most of their stock in a power outage during the Cudlee Creek bushfire in the crucial week before Christmas.

Onkaparinga Meats at Lobethal lost all stock and closed its doors, while Dunn's of Woodside lost 90% of stock and was only able to fill 80 Christmas orders (see full story page 9).

Chairman of AMIC's Retail Council Trevor Hill says it appeared that overall trade was roughly on par with Christmas 2018.

"Trade was alright across the industry but there wasn't much growth about. It was good but not great," Trevor says.

In Trevor's business, Bruce's Meat stores at Mitcham, Pasadena and St Agnes "traded well" while the Fairview Park shop was down a little and Mt Barker was "fairly well up."

Trevor says one surprising aspect was that trade remained solid during the four-day heatwave in the week before Christmas, with shoppers braving the heat.

Sam Burt sold out of ham and turkey at Windsor Meats, Malvern. "We're happy. It was organised chaos. We had slightly more orders than last year and we've since had great feedback," he says.

At Stirling Variety Meats, a beaming Chris Pfitzner reported another big Christmas, up on 2018. He sold out of hams four days before Christmas.

"We are only physically able to make 600 hams here. We won't

be able to cook any more next Christmas unless we buy more ovens," Chris says.

At Mathie's Meat Shoppe in Clare, Jason Mathie says, "We were up by a good 10% on 2018 so we're very happy.

"We had good sales overall. We sold lots of Spencer Gulf prawns in addition to traditional ham and turkey. Most turkey sales are now boneless; only 10% of our turkey sales are for whole birds."

In Mt Gambier, Mick Lamond described Christmas as "really good" at his Collins Court Butcher shop, with sales up by about 8%.

"We filled over 200 orders, we almost sold out of hams and we sold five times more turkey breast rolls than whole turkeys," Mick says.

In Whyalla, co-owner of Azzopardi Butchers Neil Azzopardi says, "It was quite a good Christmas for us, but maybe fractionally down on Christmas 2018."

### MBL NEWS

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John's 240,000 serves of Christmas turkey - page 11

# APPRENTICE BOOST

From page 1

“We will present young people who have shown strong interest in becoming apprentices and who have already completed the first six modules.

“I’ll be tutoring them for a day a week over eight weeks and they will have to earn their passes; I will be stringent in assessment.

“I’ll also be instilling some old-fashioned values if necessary, to toughen them up a little and make them ready for the workforce.”

As reported in MBL News in October, a Federal Government study showed that only 44% of advertised job vacancies for retail butchers were filled in 2018 after most applicants were deemed unsuitable.

The national study also found the number of butchery apprenticeships begun in the past five years had fallen by two thirds, and the number of people completing their apprenticeships had fallen by one third.

Yet despite staff shortages, the study said the number of advertised vacancies for

butchers has fallen over the past five years, indicating that many employers have given up trying to find suitable butchers.

Under the new training initiative, 40 people will undergo basic training with Wilson and the best 27 will be eligible for work placement.

“We’ll start with 40 and funding will allow 27 to be placed in work for two weeks for butchers to decide about offering apprenticeships,” Wilson says.

“We’re making it easy for butchers to find suitable apprentices; we’re making it easy for these young people to be employable.”

Training will begin at Adelaide Institute of Hospitality’s premises in Pirie St, Adelaide, in February and continue through into March before the final 27 are offered to butchers.

The six basic training modules will cover:

- Knife sharpening
- Hygiene and sanitation practices
- Safe work policies and procedures

- Trimming meat for further processing
- Preparing minced meat and minced meat products
- Basic methods of meat cookery

If an apprenticeship is taken up, completed modules can be credit transferred across into Certificate III in Meat Processing (Retail Butcher).

Apprentice Butchers SA Chairman Luke Moody says the training program will help develop the next crop of retail butchers to push the industry forward.

“It is the right toe-dip teaser into butchery, enabling people to get a feel about what it really means to be a retail butcher,” Luke says.

The initiative was welcomed by AMIC’s SA rep Chris Kelly. “It’s a step in the right direction. Offering another pathway into the industry has to be good,” he says.

“We need butchers but many people don’t give it a thought. It’s not just cutting meat. Today’s butchers are doing incredible things, including cooking.

“We need to get the message out that if you do the hard yards, you’ll get a trade and be a tradesman.”



## Sam: ‘Our win is a win for all local butchers’

*Windsor Meats’s loyal customer base came up trumps in an online popularity poll of independent local butchers, run by Adelaide’s Messenger newspapers.*

*Over 5,500 people voted online for their favourite butcher shop in the “Adelaide’s Best Butcher” promotion, with the Malvern shop drawing the most votes.*

*“We’re grateful for our customers getting online and voting for us. We have a strong online following,” says the shop’s co-owner Sam Burt, pictured.*

*“Most importantly, it was a good promotion that got people thinking about supporting their local butchers, so our win is a win for all butchers. We need all the promotion we can get.”*



# WAGYU PIZZAZZ!



This Japanese Master Kobe MB11 wagyu porterhouse was selling out quickly when MBL News visited Scott's shop. Cut on demand, fans keep returning for more, unfazed by the \$250kg price tag.

## Scott lures big spenders with \$500kg steak

**From his earliest days as an apprentice, Scott Johns has identified his niche in butchery as a purveyor of premium meat to people who aren't fazed over price.**

Now at 32, Scott, *pictured above*, has achieved his goal with pizzazz at his new shop in Adelaide's eastern suburbs, using the finest Japanese wagyu as his flagship.

The imported wagyu, which retails for up to \$500 per kilogram, isn't usually available elsewhere in Adelaide, creating an air of exclusivity at The Meat Project, Glenunga.

Scott enjoys strong success promoting each fresh batch of wagyu on his popular Facebook page, attracting loyal customers

hungry for more as well as curious first timers.

He sees blue-chip promotional value whenever he opens another box from Japan, importing spasmodically to avoid Japanese wagyu becoming a commodity.

"There's only a small market for it and it represents only a small amount of our overall sales but it draws attention to the shop as a place for quality meat," Scott says.

His Japanese wagyu



➤ quickly sells out and sometimes it's sold before it arrives.

He promoted the finest A5 wagyu tenderloin for \$500 per kilogram in the leadup to New Year's Eve and the 15kg batch sold out within days. A5 is Japan's highest rating for marbling and yield.

"This is the only place in Adelaide where you'll find an A5 fillet like this so it sells quickly. Most people buy a couple of steaks," he says.

"A5 wagyu is a top-end product and some customers keep coming back for it. Some have bought it half a dozen times and we let them know it's coming.

"Sometimes we get uneducated people, who don't understand wagyu, getting online to complain about it being 'too fatty' or whatever, but they're in the minority."

When MBL News visited, Scott was quickly selling out of Japanese Master Kobe MB11 wagyu porterhouse at \$250kg.

"Australia produces good



wagyu which I stock but the Japanese wagyu tends to get a lot of attention because of its reputation and price," he says.

The Australian range includes Mayura Station Signature Series wagyu from near Millicent in SA's South-East at \$250kg and Jack's Creek wagyu from NSW at \$128kg.

Scott runs occasional giveaway promotions on Facebook.

He ran one for a fortnight in January for a full Mayura Station Brisket.

"People simply 'invite' friends to 'like' our page, tag a friend and comment When Quality Matters. There are 500 comments so far in this first week, with the winner to be picked at random by computer generator," he says.

"Social media is just a way to get our brand out there and expand our reach. It's a version of a letterbox drop. My only cost was the \$300 cost of the brisket."

Scott ran his own shop, Glenunga Gourmet Meats, for six years

before moving nearby to open a shop within the Tony & Mark's complex on Portrush Rd, Glenunga.

The complex features a fruit and vegetable shop as well as a deli, florist, bakery, cafe, and Scott's butchery under the one roof.

"Tony & Mark's operate all the segments except my shop. It's all about convenience and making it easy for people by having a range of food together and being open when people want to shop," Scott says.

Scott has the same trading hours as Tony & Mark's – 7am to 7pm weekdays and 7am to 5pm weekends.

"I was approached to be part of the complex. I know this area from my previous shop and there is a good demographic here to suit quality food shops," he says.

"I've been here since September and it's going pretty well, although we were really starting a new business in a new location and that in itself is hard.

"The meat industry is hard now, with the highest meat prices ever and there are other big expenses but it's no use whinging about it, you just have to be proactive and positive."

Scott employs 10 staff including four butchers. "It's really a steak shop but with other things for all tastes. We make a small range of smallgoods including our own bacon, ham and sausages," he says.



**'Social media is a way to get our brand out there and expand our reach. It's a version of a letterbox drop' – Scott Johns**



# ENGAGING TRADITION

## Jeff and Anj mix old skills with fresh transparency in their ‘dream’ shop

It’s back to the future at Jeff Luxton’s thriving butchery at Port Elliot where traditional skills are openly displayed to engage ever-curious customers.

“Butchers once worked out of sight at the back but while we continue traditional methods, we’ve moved to the front so people can see exactly what we do,” says Jeff, 33, who specialises in premium local beef.

Jeff’s open workbenches are barely a metre from customers. Many watch in awe at the knife skills on display; others ask questions and some enjoy lively banter.

“We have nothing to hide. People can talk to us as we fill their orders; they can watch us trim the meat and cut it the way they want it,” Jeff says.

“Trust is important, but trust is only a word and people don’t really know until they see us working, applying our skills and taking no shortcuts.

“We averaged 30 customers a day when we

took over this shop in 2016 and we now average 100. This reflects the trust we have built.”

When remodelling the shop to make work-



benches prominent, Jeff and wife Anj, pictured above, installed a dry ageing room with a large viewing window facing into the shop.

“Although the room has the latest technology, people can see hanging meat like back in the day and they know they are in a real butcher shop,” Anj says.

“The positive response from customers has been super rewarding. People increasingly want to know where their food comes from and how it’s prepared.

“Our aim is to provide a full experience where people can get quality local meat prepared the traditional way, backed by good old-fashioned advice and service – a place where kids get a piece of fritz from a smiling butcher.”

Indulgent Meats was established in a former cafe by Ashley Diemel in 2009 and was purchased almost four years ago by Jeff and Anj, who have four sons under 10.

They took a gamble and are being

➤ rewarded, thanks to sheer hard work and determination to run their “dream” shop.

They have won loyal local support and the word has spread to holiday makers and day trippers who flock to revitalised Port Elliot with its gift, fashion and antique shops, and trendy restaurants and cafes.

“Summer is hectic here but it’s good in winter, too – we just don’t stop,” Jeff says.

“We also package and label beef for farmers markets, making sure the quality is equal to what we sell in our shop.”

Jeff learnt his craft under enterprising Shaun Watson at Naracoorte, leaving after nine years with the strong focus on one day running his own shop.

“I left Naracoorte with a five-year plan to buy a shop but first I left butchering for a different experience with former Clare butcher Gary McPhee at his fish and chip shop at Normanville,” he says.

“I learnt important things from Gary about how to run a business, including management skills and wage control.

“While there, I used to drive one day a week to Meadows where I learnt to break local beef with Shaun Harrison.

“After 18 months, I joined Todd Hutchinson at his Normanville butcher shop.

“My plan of going from shop to shop was to learn and one day bring it all together in my own shop where I could add my own ideas.”

Anj says, “We had big dreams when we left



Workbenches have been moved “up front” for customers to watch butchers at work.

Naracoorte. Our first dream was to buy a house within two years and our second was to own our own butcher shop.

“We achieved the first goal and, with a few hurdles along the way, we opened at Port Elliot in 2016. We hit the ground running with excitement, passion and a drive to succeed.

“We look back humbly to that very first week when we had a measly \$1,200 left in

the bank to purchase stock. This wasn’t enough to cover the first order.

“We had everything - and also nothing - to lose so we were all in.

“In the first six months, our only employee to help us run the shop was second-year apprentice, Nathan Griggs. We were cramped for space. At Christmas, we had to

Continued page 8



Jeff enjoys a reputation for premium beef from his dry ageing room which incorporates a large viewing window facing into the shop.

hire a cooler which we put in the backyard.

“As the business grew, staff were added and we expanded out the back and across into a clothing shop next door.”

Jeff says, “We had \$50,000 to renovate the shop so we had to keep costs down. We just got in and got it done, often working to midnight. We recycled materials, such as old timber to make shelves.

“We have so much gratitude to see our dream not only come true but also see it grow into something so amazing.”

Jeff has built a reputation for premium Hereford beef from Adelaide Hills farmer Tom Hampton.

“People are after flavour, tenderness and the backstory of the beef. They want to know that the cattle were ethically and pasture raised, without antibiotics and hormones,” Jeff says.

“They like seeing the beef hanging in our dry ageing room, after coming with low mileage straight from a local farmer.

“The room has space for 10 bodies a week. We hang the carcasses for a minimum of 14 days and we can hang ribs for up to 70-plus days for special orders.

“I like a carcass of 200kg to 250kg which is easy for me to manage, and with a minimum fat depth of 4mm.



“Customers tell us that seeing the hanging beef connects them with their childhood memories of butcher shops.

“The room has the latest technology. We have had a lot of fine tuning but we’re getting good results.

“When you get back to traditional ways, you think about doing things naturally.

“In the old days, people would simply salt products and hang them in a cool place.

“Things have changed, with the advent of preservatives and additives. I try to get back to the old ways and customers appreciate it.”

Jeff insists that hard work is the key to success. “If you’re not pushing your knife, you’re not making money,” he says.

“I’ve got to do things the traditional way. I can’t cut corners. Everything is made in the store from start to finish.

“I can be here until midnight making sausages – everyone is mixed and tied by hand. I have one standard.

“I love being a butcher but I’m never fully content as I need to push myself.”

With Jeff busy running the butchery side, Anj looks after management issues, including handling the bookkeeping.

She applies proven retail techniques gleaned from years at Woolworths.

“I managed a dairy foods section and had various other roles to obtain skills including wage control and purchases cost control to ensure maximum gross profit,” she says.

“I also gained a good understanding of how to arrange shelves, positioning and the use of different colours.”

Jeff says, “Our next goal is to have our own farm to supply our own beef and lamb to our own shop.”

## Meat processing facility for sale or lease

A modern food processing facility which was propose-built to meet the requirements of a medium to large scale meat production business is being offered for sale or lease.

The facility was built in 2012 at 6 Enterprise Court, Mt Barker, for Richard Gunner’s Fine Meats. The total building area is 1,844sqm.

The fitout includes chillers, freezer, boning room, smoking room, quarantine room, receipt and dispatch (including a loading dock) and showroom.

A full-page advertisement is on page 12 of this edition of MBL News.

“The owner is motivated and offers for sale or lease will be



A work scene from a section of the Mt Barker facility in 2015.

considered on a case by case basis,” says Leedwell Property agent Jamie Forwood.

“Notably, the owner has an absolute desire to see the premises utilised to its full potential and is willing to negotiate with a suitable candidate to ensure a mutually beneficial outcome is reached.

“The location in the Adelaide

Hills food region, near McLaren Vale and Fleurieu Peninsula, presents an opportunity to position a business among some of SA’s elite food producers within an established and contemporary facility.”

A major advantage to an occupier is the 100KW solar system that is currently estimated to save \$40,000 annually on electricity running costs.

All production areas are chilled and feature an overnight ventilation drying cycle.

The facility has FM approved and certified Kingspan PIR insulated wall panels which allow for a significant insurance premium saving, over the more common non-certified EPS or PUR insulation panels.

Inspections, by appointment, are encouraged to view the tremendous infrastructure available.

Text ENTERPRISE to 0421 844 181 to receive a tour direct to your phone.

For further details, including pricing, contact Leedwell Property agents Jamie Forwood 0450 959 032 or Steve Smith 0410 532 022.

# Stock loss rocks two Hills butchers

Lobethal butcher Ash Clark says it will take some time to fully recover after losing all his stock in a bushfire-related power outage.

The outage caused by the Cuddle Creek fire, which began on December 20, couldn't have happened at a worse time, wiping out his Christmas trade at Onkaparinga Meats.

"We lost all stock we had for Christmas, we couldn't fill orders and we couldn't trade. We had to close the shop and we couldn't open until December 30," Ash says.

"We've slowly got back to some sort of normality. Thoughtful Adelaide people have driven up with empty eskies and supported us, but the important time for us will be in February and March when things quieten down.

"The Hills has been hit hard and it will be at least six months or a year before it returns to normal."

Before Christmas, Ash and his wife Leanne phoned customers to explain why they couldn't fill orders and asking them to stick with them in the New Year.

In a Facebook post, Leanne wrote, "We are exhausted both physically and mentally.

"Please bear with us as it will take us a while to fully restock but we will endeavour to get back up and running as soon as possible."

At nearby Woodside, Duncan and Jo Dunn quickly shut their Dunn's of Woodside butchery on December 20 when the bushfire threatened the town.

They lost 90% of their stock due to the power outage. "This devastated not only stock but

hours of preparation and planning," they posted on Facebook.

The Dunns managed to "safely stash" their supply of Spencer Gulf prawns and were able to make up 80 Christmas orders after suppliers rallied.

They described the period as "extremely emotionally-charged" during which the CFS saved their house at Charleston.

They took time off after Christmas, opening the shop on January 5.

## STRONG SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS OF BUSHFIRES

People of all walks opened their hearts and their wallets to help bushfire victims in the Adelaide Hills and Kangaroo Island, with the dependable meat industry digging deep.

Among the many to rally were MBL staff who organised shipments of assorted household products and animal feed to KI, and individual butchers who collectively raised thousands of dollars from shopfront sausage sizzles.

MBL's contribution began with Customer Service and Communications Supervisor Mel Harley raising almost \$500 by passing the hat around.

"I'd heard on radio that people, horses, dogs and children were all sheltering from

the bushfires on the oval and jetty at Kingscote," Mel says.

"I then heard through the animal rescue I volunteer for, SAHARA, that KI Cartage had a list of what people immediately needed and was generously taking these donations to KI.

"I used initial donations for six 20kg bags of Laucke dog food and six bags of Equus Total for horses and wildlife, as well as some tins of baby formula."

Other donations from Mel and MBL staff included slabs of bottled water, toilet paper, nappies, pet food, and milk.

"The first load of twelve 20kg bags and assorted boxes was delivered to KI Cartage

in my little Hyundai, bottoming out my suspension," Mel says.

"Nature's Harvest, which donated \$10,000 worth of stock feed for KI and Cudlee Creek, and Laucke Mills, kindly supplied the animal feed at wholesale prices, making our donations go further."

MBL's management jumped onboard, donating a range of merchandise, mainly cleaning products, on behalf of SA butchers. Mel continued fund raising and soon another load of products was bound for KI.

In addition, hay from the farm at MBL's Keith Proteins Division was donated, and MBL donated sausage meal and Devro casing to Hills butcher Doug Costello-Smith for a shopfront barbecue outside Gumeracha Gourmet Meats.

"We raised a combined \$6,500 for six CFS brigades from the barbecue and an online auction of 20 lambs," Doug says.

"We bought the lambs and people bid over the normal price. One went for \$350. People told me how they wanted them cut and I worked through the night preparing them all."

Another barbecue at Windsor Meats, Malvern, raised \$6,700 for the CFS Foundation. "People's generosity blew us away," says butcher Sam Burt.

"After previously holding charity barbecues, we've found it best not to put a price on the food but just ask people to donate whatever they wish.

"We have some change if needed but most people don't want any, making it simple for everyone. Many donate \$10 or \$20 notes to the cause."



Bound for KI... donated goods for bushfire victims being loaded onto an MBL truck.

# Staff dismissal

The prospect of dismissing staff is never pleasant. It can cause disruption to the workplace and, in a worst-case scenario, can result in a disgruntled ex-employee and a summons for unfair dismissal.

The Small Business Fair Dismissal Code is a good starting point for any employer faced with the prospect of dismissing an employee. It can be found on the Fair Work Commission website ([www.fwc.gov.au](http://www.fwc.gov.au)).

If matters are urgent, get legal advice before taking action.

## Summary dismissals

An employer is entitled to immediately dismiss an employee without notice or warning where the employer believes on reasonable grounds that the employee's misconduct is serious and wilful.

Such misconduct may include fraud, theft, violence and/or serious breaches of health and safety procedures. The latter is obviously of vital importance in the food industry.

## Other dismissals

In other cases, such as poor performance, the law dictates that an employee must be given reasons why their employment may be terminated. The employee must be given an opportunity to respond and to rectify the issue or issues.

## Unfair dismissal claims

Claims of unfair dismissal can get complicat-

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ed, costly and time-consuming. The Fair Work Commission, in describing what is considered in such a claim, has applied a High Court decision and said a dismissal may be held unfair if it is *either* harsh, *or* unjust, *or* unreasonable:

*“It may be that the termination is harsh but not unjust or unreasonable, unjust but not harsh or unreasonable, or unreasonable but not harsh or unjust. In many cases the concepts will overlap.”*

*Thus, the one termination of employment may be unjust because the employee was not guilty of the misconduct on which the employer acted, may be unreasonable because it was decided upon inferences which could not reasonably have been drawn from the material before the employer, and may be harsh in its consequences for the personal and economic situation of the employee or because it is disproportionate to the gravity of the misconduct in respect of which the employer acted.”*

So there is plenty of possible margin for error!

Here's a quick guide for small business operators on some steps that you can take to legally end employment without increasing the risk of a messy unfair dismissal claim:

- If a business has fewer than 15 employees (not true casuals) at the time of the dismissal (including the employee(s) being dismissed), it is a “small business.”
- If an employee, at the time of dismissal by a small business employer, has worked in the employment for under 12 months, they can't make an unfair dismissal claim.
- Ensure you have a valid reason to dismiss, tell them and give them an opportunity to demonstrate that you are wrong on the point.
- Let them have a support person during that process (for moral support and/or to take notes but not to advocate).
- If it is a poor performance issue, give them clear written warnings that lack of improvement may result in them “hitting the bricks.”
- Offer additional training and/or counselling if appropriate.
- Consider alternatives before finally deciding to dismiss.
- Follow the steps in the Small Business Fair Dismissal Code.
- Consult an employment lawyer before taking the final step.

*Disclaimer: This article aims to present a general guide to applicable SA law as at date of publication and so it should not be relied upon in any specific situation.*

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**What's your beef?**

# BAROSSA ENTERS HALL OF FAME

Barossa Fine Foods has been inducted into the Hall of Fame of the SA Premier's Food and Beverage Industry Awards, run by Food SA.

The prestigious award recognises the Knoll family's ongoing, high-level success in making significant and sustainable contributions to the SA food industry.

BFF is the third MBL Member to enter the Hall of Fame, following the inductions of Drakes Supermarkets in 2008 and T & R Pastoral, now Thomas Foods International, in 2011.

Other businesses to previously be awarded Hall of Fame status include Balfours, Nippy's, Golden North, Robern Menz, Haigh's, San Remo and Coopers.

"It is incredibly humbling to be put in the same league as these businesses," says BFF's Chief Executive Andreas Knoll.

"We cannot thank enough our customers, staff, suppliers and anyone that has been involved in this journey for the past 28 years. Without your support, we wouldn't



Barbara Knoll with the trophy, flanked by (from left) Andreas, Franz, Alex and Dieter.

have received such a prestigious award."

Franz Knoll and wife Barbara began at Adelaide Central Market in 1991. Barbara continues to manage the original shop.

Their sons Andreas, Alex and Dieter now

handle the everyday running of BFF and Sandom Smallgoods, while Franz primarily runs another acquisition, Angelakis Seafoods.

The group, with staff of more than 300, has annual revenue of about \$700 million.

## John's 240,000 serves of Christmas turkey

John Watson has calculated that 240,000 serves of his Pooginagoric free range turkey were enjoyed during the recent festive season.

"The number of people who eat our turkey leading up to Christmas and on the big day itself would have twice filled the Melbourne Cricket Ground," he says.

"That's a lot of people for a small, family-owned growing and processing facility to supply."

John has seen 28 Christmases as a turkey producer near Bordertown but it's the first time he has broken down his festive supply into total serves.

He reached the estimate by adding the combined weights of his whole fresh and frozen turkeys, minus bones, plus turkey breast rolls and frozen products.

He divided the total by an average serve of 200g to reach a "pretty accurate" total of 240,000 serves.

His calculation follows a feature story in last



October's MBL News on how he supplies the Christmas market, beginning at the end of August with weekly deliveries of day-old

poults from Ingham's hatchery in Sydney.

Turkeys grow by about 1kg weekly so growing is staggered to raise 2,000 turkeys at seven different weights for slaughter in the 10 days immediately before Christmas.

When contacting MBL News to tell of his serve calculation, John added a second footnote to our last story.

He says his planning for Christmas 2020 has already started as he must order the day-old poults from Ingham's one full year in advance.

He needed to calculate not only the total number of turkeys he'll process but specify the number of males (toms) and females (hens) he'll want for each weekly delivery, depending on his projected use of the birds at different times.

All of Pooginagoric's whole turkeys are female as they have far superior breast formation to males, which are cut up for portions and value-added products.

The hens and toms are separated at the hatchery and are delivered to John in separate marked boxes, with about 80 in each box.

"The toms are grown out to 16 weeks for processing and the hens are slaughtered between nine and 14 weeks for whole birds," John says.



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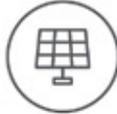
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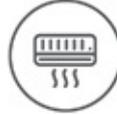
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