

April 2010

TASSIE NEWS

AMIC Working for You - Tasmanian Members Information Night

An information night was held on March 2nd to instruct members about the new Federal Industrial Relations system and the state Food Safety Plan requirements.

The meeting was well attended by 23 members along with several non-members. It was coordinated by Paul Sandercock AMIC (SA) with Garry Johnston, Director of Human Resources and Kevin Cottrill, CEO, both from the AMIC National Office in Sydney, giving presentations.

HR & IR Information Update



Garry Johnston provided several handouts including a copy of the Meat Industry Award 2010. He gave a full explanation on the background to these changes and the work that AMIC carried out over the past 18 months to ensure that the industry retained as much as possible from the previous awards.

Garry explained that the new Fair Work Act 2009 and the Meat Industry Award 2010 apply to all constitutional corporation (Pty Ltd) businesses across Tasmania from 1 January 2010. Businesses that are Partnerships or Sole Traders retain the conditions of the State Meat Retailing Award until 1 January 2011. At that time all meat industry businesses will be bound to the Meat Industry Award 2010.

The Fair Work Act 2009 also contains the National Employment Standards (NES), applicable to all members, which provide for a range of minimum employment standards and conditions. The Award and the National Employment Standards work in conjunction to provide all of the employment conditions for our industry.

Food Safety Plan Update

Kevin Cottrill provided an update on the Food Safety Plans for the industry. All members now have their Food Safety Plan folder and many are already completing the daily diary section with the collection of temperature data.

Kevin explained that whilst the process may seem onerous, the food safety system procedures are no different to what members have always done to ensure product safety and integrity. The legislation now requires documentation of what occurs. (See page 2)



Australian Pork Presentation

Mark Hardy from Australian Pork Ltd spoke about promotional plans for pork and the APL Australian Pork Licensing agreement.



The information was well received by those present and the AMIC staff were complimented for their efforts in producing meaningful presentations.

Kevin Cottrill and Paul Sandercock remained in Tasmania for several days following the meeting to visit members across the state to assist with the induction of the Food Safety Plans in members' own premises. (See also page 2)

AMIC Working for You - Food Safety Plans

AMIC has now completed the installation of Food Safety Plans for all Tasmanian members. During March all members who have agreed to use the AMIC Food Safety Plan were visited to ensure that the requirements of the Plan were understood and to address the many questions which arose on food safety.

The level of understanding of food safety issues with AMIC members in Tasmania is high which made the installation of the Food Safety Plans straightforward. The opportunity was also taken to discuss issues relating to premises or concerns members had on other specific issues.

Food Safety Plan Operation

The following principles apply to the operation of your Food Safety Plan:

Day Diary – supplied with the Food Safety Plan by AMIC, the Day Diary records the temperature of products on receipt and in storage and refrigeration units (including the coolroom). This is a key document and **MUST** be completed every day as evidence of the controls over temperature in your shop.

Cooking Sheets – if you cook products (ham, bacon, smallgoods) you must record the times and temperatures on the AMIC supplied Cooking Sheets. Members provided information during the installation about the temperatures which they use during cooking and this now forms a part of the control system under HACCP. Cooling of product after cooking is also critical with under 12 degrees reached in 6 hours and under 5 degrees in 24 hours.

Cleaning Schedule – the AMIC supplied Cleaning Schedule was adopted by all members. It is important to remember the sanitizer as detergent alone will not provide the cleanliness required. It is also important to now consider the quarterly cleaning requirements, particularly the refrigeration units.

Letter from DHHS

Many of you have received a letter from the Department of Health and Human Services referring to Standard 4.2.3 – Primary Production and Processing Standard for Meat. This standard is for ready to eat (RTE) meats such as ham, salami and similar smallgoods which are eaten without further cooking. Most AMIC members in Tasmania do not produce RTE and are not covered by the requirements of this standard.

- If you do produce RTE you will now be completing your Cooking Sheets for each batch and you are operating to your HACCP Plan in the Food Safety Manual. This is your control system.
- If you are not cryovacing your cooked product, the Regulatory Guidelines for the control of Listeria attached to the letter from DHHS does not apply to your business.
- If you are cryovacing your ready to eat cooked products AMIC will contact you in the near future to assist you in the control of listeria in these products.

If you require any further information on this or any other matter please contact Kevin Cottrill on 02 9086 2211 or 0438 100 226 for assistance.

Tasmanian Public Holidays

Full time employees and part-time employees working 15 or more hours per week who agree to work on a public holiday, where the day is one of their ordinary working days, shall be paid at the rates in the tables below, with a minimum payment for three hours' work.

PUBLIC HOLIDAY	DATE	ORDINARY RATE	PENALTY RATE	TOTAL RATE FOR HOLIDAY
Anzac Day	Sunday 25th April 2010	Ordinary time	T ½	DT & 1/2

KEY: T ½ = time and one half; DT & ½ = double time and one half

In Tasmania the provisions of the Statutory Holidays Act 2000 determine the dates of 'public holidays'. Both State wide and local holidays are prescribed in Schedule 1 of the Act, removing the necessity to appoint the holidays each year.

Important note:

An entitlement to paid holidays for employees is not derived from the *Statutory Holidays Act 2000* but is determined by relevant awards and/or industrial agreements. The legislation does, however, provide details of substitution arrangements when certain holidays fall on weekends.

In the case of AGFEST (municipal of Circular Head), it is not named or recognised in the Tasmanian Meat Awards or the Modern Meat Industry Award 2010. Even if you had provided this day in the past, (if your business was in the municipal area of Circular Head), it is not a statutory public holiday for the meat industry.

A full time/part time employee, under the National Employment Standards (NES), is entitled to have the day off, on a public holiday with payment on the basis of the ordinary daily rate the person would have received had they worked their ordinary rostered hours but for the public holiday.

NOTE: Under the National Employment Standards, gazetted Regional Public Holidays are also to be observed. These are available at <http://australia.gov.au/topics/australian-facts-and-figures/public-holidays>

A casual employee working on a public holiday would only receive the penalty rate in the PENALTY RATE column.

EXAMPLE

A full-time retail butcher is usually employed to work their 38 ordinary hours Tuesday to Saturday. If a public holiday then falls on a Monday the butcher is not entitled to any pay on the public holiday as he does not normally work that day (but would be paid public holiday penalty rates if they choose to work on the public holiday). For the same butcher, if the public holiday falls on the Saturday and the butcher does not work on that Saturday because it is a public holiday, then they would still be paid for their usual ordinary hours (but would not be paid for any overtime they would normally work on that day).

Note: The NES apply to all AMIC members in Tasmania as at 1 January 2010.

Member Profile – Thomas Beuke

Tasmanian Pure Continental Smallgoods, Game & Poultry

Tasmanian Pure Continental Smallgoods, Game & Poultry is a factory outlet in Deloraine, owned by Thomas and Susi Beuke. “We have been at this location 2½ years – before that we were in Launceston for 7½ years. The retail outlet in Launceston was sold with the old trading name of Black Forest Smallgoods but remains our main retail outlet due to the fact that it was one of our employees who bought the business.”

“We offer excellent quality at a fair price. I don’t sell what I would not eat myself,” declares Thomas. “I also like for the business to work sustainably, both for us and the farmers and suppliers. I try to educate the customers in relation to the fact that we need to sell the whole pig not just primals.”



Paul Mecurio, dancer, actor and foodie with Thomas while on the Tassie Food Trail of his TV show Mercurio’s Menu

Thomas explains that the tantalising range of high quality products makes his shop unique. “We have somewhere between 80 to 100 different products. We use meat and spices only - no fillers or premixes - just as my forefathers have done. In my opinion all our products are value added as they can be consumed without a lot of preparation or cooking, hence providing quick and nutritious meals.”

On the success of the business, Thomas says, “The shop is staffed by either me or my wife, both having been in the food industry for an extensive time. We have been trained in customer service and have full product knowledge. This gives us an advantage so we are able to assist customers when they have special requests. Whilst the shop is somewhat off the beaten track (in the back of Deloraine), we do have many customers who travel from up the coast or down from Hobart just to shop with us.”

“We would love to expand our business (mainly wholesale though) and break into the mainland market,” continues Thomas. “However, this is hindered by the fact that qualified staff are very hard to come by, restricting me to stay in the production area rather than being able to concentrate on the

marketing and customer follow up with possible stockists on the mainland. I could invent many more products, but there is no point if I do not have the customer base that is looking for new and innovative products. However, any prospective customer is more than welcome to talk to me and I can tailor make products for them.”

The shop has a very broad customer base made up of locals, tourists, some retail outlets and other food businesses. “Many tourists want to buy our products on the mainland, so we offer them mail delivery where possible,” says Susi. “For our Tasmanian customers we offer home delivery at a very low cost through our contracted logistics company.”

Susi is responsible for the shop, orders, packaging and some of the bookwork. “She is very committed towards the business and has been in the food industry for many years,” says Thomas. “She is an extrovert and has the gift of the gab with customers but she also keeps me on the straight and narrow.” Then there is David the apprentice who is in his 3rd year. “He is very committed and I feel that with the right guidance, he is on the road to being a good butcher and smallgoods maker.”

Thomas himself is a third generation smallgoods manufacturer. “I have gained most of my knowledge and experience through my father, who is a master butcher with more than 50 years experience. I also finished a chef’s apprenticeship which has given me some lateral thinking towards product development.” Other experience was gained through working in different smallgoods businesses around Australia. “This has provided me with a good understanding on how to merge the German and Australian Standards to produce quality products.”

Thomas has entered the Sausage King Competition a few times and won several awards at the state and national levels. “I feel nowadays that my knowledge is more valuable as a judge than as an entrant,” says Thomas. “I am still convinced that Australia is not putting its best foot forward in relation to what sausages could be. Personally I don’t like the idea of premixes and fillers; however, this could be my cultural background. The honour of winning an award did have an impact on my business, but only in some cases as the media did not always give me much support.”

Thomas talks about his other awards. “My most prized possessions are the two gold medals that I won for my game products in

Germany. My wife convinced me to enter and see how we would measure up in comparison to the rest of the world. To compete at an international level and win this kind of accolade proves to me that my products meet a very high standard. Products in this competition have to meet very strict standards with 70 different criteria points needing to be addressed and met at a certain level.”



“I have also won many awards through the National Fine Food Show and the Sydney Food Show. Many of my trophies are still kept in the Launceston shop as they were won whilst we worked from there. I am not going to list them all (lest some people might think that I like to brag),” - Thomas laughs about this - “But I can tell you there is very little wall space left in the shop in Launceston.”

Tasmanian Pure Continental Smallgoods supports many community events such as the Meander Primary School fundraisers, Paws Walk at Mole Creek, The Deloraine Wood Choppers, Deloraine Footy Club, Badminton Club events, Special Kids Christmas Party and many more.

On days off Thomas enjoys doing all sorts of things like riding his motorbike, looking after the Belted Galloways, running around with the dogs, watching a movie, catching up with friends, reading, cooking or just tinkering about in the shed.

When asked about business in the future, Thomas replies, “Hopefully still going. With the way the big companies are pushing, it seems to get harder and harder to compete as a small business.” He has some wise words for anyone considering working in the meat industry. “Consider it well; you do the same length apprenticeship as a plumber or electrician, but it is more rewarding on a personal level. The meat industry has, in my opinion, a lot to offer with a wide variety in tasks and products and the possibility to be inventive.”