

Standing up for **meat**

Can the industry join forces to
tackle misinformed publicity
surrounding the UK meat sector?

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The Interview: Ricardo Santin • Weighing Technology • Manufacturer Profile: Adelle Foods • New Product Development ...and more inside

The wonders of Japan

David Lishman reflects on his recent travels to Japan, where he helped promote English pork products.

We are definitely in the middle of awards season as I write this column. I was out at two different dinners last week celebrating local food and tourism.

It's nice to get a bit of recognition for your hard work, and so I was very pleased to see one of our members, Frank Parker Butchers of Nuneaton, scoop the prestigious UK Supreme Sausage Champion title during UK Sausage Week. A very well deserved award for a top class butcher's shop.

On the tourism side, the Q Guild had a quick trip to Holland recently, visiting the meat industry exhibition Slavakato in Utrecht, followed by visits to Keurslager butcher's shops in Rotterdam and Gouda. Around 10 members and managers experienced the Dutch way of retail.

Interestingly enough, many of the butchers were slaughtering cattle from young cows, which had given birth to just one or two calves. The theory is that these give a greater flavour than the younger beef cattle.

Japan

I have also been on my travels recently, enjoying a rather extended trip to Japan. I was asked to help produce and promote some English pork products for Japanese customers. For a little over two weeks, we cooked and sold many sausage rolls and English style sausages.

In Japan, it is unusual to have a savoury product in pastry. Also, their idea of a sausage is a frankfurter. Apparently, in the early 20th century, a German butcher set up a business in Kobe, making traditional German fare, and introduced the locals to the boiled sausage they are now familiar with.

It came as a surprise to them that our English sausage needed frying in a pan (the grill is only used for fish) rather than boiling.


We were part of The British Fair and, with other food producers. I was proud to be putting Britain on the map, promoting the Q Guild, and pleasantly surprised with how well received we were, with 'British' being a brand which is hugely respected and admired.

Whilst almost everyone enjoyed the food we offered them, the same was not entirely true in what I had to eat. I like to

think I'm pretty open minded and willing to try different foods, but some dishes were taking this to a new level. One evening we ate in a tempura restaurant, which I was fairly sure would consist of decent fried cuts.

There was a dish by the condiments, which my colleague informed me 'smells like fish and looks like earth worms'. The two Japanese people with us tucked into it with delight. I tried some and confirmed it was quite fishy and rubbery. I Googled the name whilst we were at the table, and found it to be 'salted and fermented cuttlefish guts'.

On many restaurant menus there were dishes we would be unlikely to see back home. I ate chicken wings – just the tips – duck gizzards, octopus balls (made into balls, of course) conger eel and skewered chargrilled beef intestines.

It might not be my cup of tea, but it at least it gives the processors and abattoirs somewhere to send the 'fifth quarter'. I slept on a futon, travelled on the bullet train, bathed in volcanic water, visited a Kobe cattle farm and ate quite a bit of marbled beef; and made contact with meat processors whilst I was there. 

- David had the opportunity to sample an array of Japanese cuisine on his trip.



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