



Q Guild
8 Needless Road
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Q GUILD BUTCHERS

Eastern Christmas Regional Meeting

Minutes of the meeting of the Eastern Region of the Q Guild held on 27th October 2014 at 11:30 at Mountnessing Village Hall, Roman Road, Mountnessing, Essex. CM15 0UG

PRESENT

Chi Johnson (Chair)
Edward Byford (Sec)
Sandy Boyd (Q Guild)

Members:

Graham Hall, Ian Hepburn

Corporate members:

David Smith, Dalziel; Eric Dodd, Windsor Food Machinery; Robert Sproat, WJ packaging; Philip Regan, Kelly Bronze; Emma wharfe, Copas Turkeys; Matthew Sorell and Fiona Prelorentzos, Unbar Rowthon

Apologies

Julie Henshaw, , Howell Jenkins, Duncan Hepburn, Andrew Belcher, Gary Simpson, Anna Longthorpe, Verstegen (new rep Rob Perkins), Gordon Hepburn, Keith & Linda Mulford
Andrew Edmunds (had an accident on his way to meeting, he has broken his collar bone but is fine otherwise!)

Lunch

The first Christmas lunch of the year was prepared by Liz in the village hall kitchen, using ingredients supplied by corporate members, with roast turkey and turkey sausages from Kelly's and stuffed turkey breast and chicken from Copas. Dalziel provided the gluten-free stuffing balls and Unbar Rowthon cooked off some pork sausages.

Regional Meeting

- Chi Johnson chaired the meeting after the excellent lunch, starting with a presentation from the corporate members

Corporate Members

- South Coast Systems - Chantal talked about the new Avery XT 400 scale which now has a bigger 13 ½ inch screen and incorporates the ability to use chip and pin directly through the scale, which should eliminate input errors on the card machines. She was also asked to talk about their clocking in system called Dimension On-Time, which is based on staff using their fingerprints to log in and out thus prevent staff logging on behalf of other staff members. Dennis of Bexley have already installed the system in both of their shops and the latest purchaser has been Windsor Farm Shop.
- WJ Packaging- spoke of the dramatic changes caused by the changes in law over the use of plastic bags, (a reduction of 78% in Wales) but felt that there would always be a need for a good quality bag, including plastic ones. Robert suggested that the law in England is likely to be watered down from the Welsh and Scottish versions with the supermarkets allowed to donate a certain percentage of the bag charge to environmental charities and small businesses employing less than 250 people are likely to be exempt from making a bag charge.

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- Kelly Bronze and Copas Turkeys - were both very happy to let the quality of their samples speak for themselves (which they did admirably). They were both keen to encourage Q Guild members to talk to them about ideas for maintaining the mutual relationship of innovation and quality that will keep us all one step ahead of the supermarkets into the future.
- Unbar Rowthorn- Matthew spoke about the 35 gold medals that they had won in the various sausage competitions this year using the butchers pride seasoning mixes. He went through details of the newly expanded range of seasonings and stuffing's that they are now producing. He has also produced a chart showing how to personalise sausages using basic seasoning mixes but then adding fresh ingredients to make them unique to your own business. Finally, as a teaser for 2015 he talked of a brand-new easy Hot-dog seasoning , complete with a smoke flavouring that allowed you to make a Hot-dog as you would a normal sausage (it's available now should you wish to try it out)

Members

- Chi - talked about the difficulties of handling stock within such a small shop and that now he had the new Chadwell Heath shop he was hoping that the extra space and experience of last year was going to make things much easier this Christmas. He is however, looking to offer his customers a delivery service to reduce the pressure even more on collection days in the shop. He is working with taxi drivers to help deliver the goods and they are already planning delivery routes using Google maps and postcodes. Mixed meat hampers were by far the most successful Christmas products they sold last year, he offers a range of hampers between £35 and £250.
- There was a general discussion about forthcoming new EU rules for turkey sales, which looks as if they are going to insist on a clear country of origin declaration. There was a general feeling that UK butchers were in danger of getting caught out over dubious sourcing methods, especially as the majority of UK supermarkets are now buying UK sourced turkeys at Christmas. The catering trade is sourcing largely from Italy and Poland.
- Edward - gave a brief rundown on his judging experience at the Smithfield awards and talked about how all, despite a mix of consumer food writer and experts that when products were re-scrutinised that the comments were broadly similar, whatever the experience of the judges. He also mentioned the importance of packaging the products carefully so that they do not get damaged in transit, because that can potentially affect the marks that can be given.
- Sandy - mentioned the recipe template going out to members for their gold products, and encouraged members to return them as soon as possible. He also mentioned the next Guildsman, to be published in the new year and asked Corporate members to send in articles and information/ adverts by the end of November. Finally he spoke about the mystery shopper programme which was now part of the quality audit. He said that whilst the physical aspects of the business were generally very good, members were failing to achieve good scores on customer information and suggested that we all need to improve the information we provide for our customers and make sure that our staff are familiar with the information and keep it topped up.

Date & Venue of Next Meetings

- Monday, 26th January - AGM & Business Meeting, Venue to be confirmed

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