

**Q Guild****South and East Regional Meeting****Monday 19/10/2015**

Present**Corporate members.**

Unbar Rethon, MRC, Dalesman, Scobie and Junor Group, Copas, Windsor Food Machinery, William Jones Packaging, Hawk Safety, South Coast Systems, Dalziel Ltd, Thomas Ford, Philip Regan- Kelly Turkey

Members-

Keith and Linda Mulford, Edward Byford, Andrew Edmonds, Gary Chadwick, Graham Hall, Cathie George, Keith Smith, Damon Buckingham, Peter Lambourne, Duncan and Ian Hepburn, Andrew Belcher, Robert Munt

Q Guild Manager - Gordon Newlands

Unbar Rethon Corporate Member Visit.

Several Guild members took the opportunity to double up with a visit to Unbar Rethon the specialist seasoning and blending manufacturer. Matthew Sorrell, the Key contact for the Guild members led a very informative tour of the premises. Richard Rethon the fourth generation member of the family gave an overview of the business through a slideshow.

A short video presentation was held first which detailed the firm's humble beginnings and then diversification. The tour was first class with several members being amazed at how the seasoning was actually produced.

Members left the factory with a better understanding of what it took to manufacture and blend a batch of seasoning.

Andrew Edmonds thanked Mather Sorrell very much for the very interesting tour and was sure that members would benefit from their expertise.

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Mini Trade Fair- Mountnessing Village Hall.

Andrew Edmonds opened the meeting with a warm welcome to all the Corporate members and also to the Members that have taken the time out of their businesses to attend a small Trade Fair in Mountnessing.

Andrew explained that the mini Trade Fair was a way of getting the corporate membership to meet the members in a sociable atmosphere and was down to the organisation of Edward Byford.

Andrew explained the format of the day and introduced Gordon Newlands the Guild manager who would give an update on all that is happening in the Q Guild.

Managers Report.

Keurslager.

The Keurslager system is at advanced stages of negotiations. It will be called the Q Guild Digital platform.

Keurslager are coming across next week to visit some Butchers in the Midlands and North East to allow them to create a "mood board".

Their Implementation Manager is in constant contact with myself and I have directed him to several member shop websites to give him a feel of what ALL the Guild is about. Manager will also visit the Perth office to inform him of the system that we have and he will then inform us if it is adequate to run the Digital platform.

2 levels of membership are proposed with strict pre- requisites.

1. Full membership of the digital platform and everything it has to offer.
2. Membership of the Q Guild with no platform but gains 3-4 leaflet drops per annum.

This will all be communicated fully in video format to the membership at each Regions AGMs in January. We plan to have the first 5 members onto the platform by end of March 2016 and then roll out to 40 per year after that.

Still a huge amount of work to be done with myself, management and Keurslager. Several visits to Holland have been pencilled in before Christmas 2015.

Membership fee still to be finalised although I would suspect that it would be slightly more expensive.

Members should make a huge effort to attend the AGM's in January.

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Regions.

The Regions are all meeting in this month with several having Christmas dinners. Christmas brochures are being distributed at the North East meeting tomorrow night and this is the beauty of the Guild. Sharing of ideas and recipes are crucial to the membership.

It has been noted that several regions are struggling for attendees. I would suggest that if a region is struggling to hold 4 meetings per year I would ask if they would consider holding 2 meetings and 1 major tour.

I recently attended Southern Ireland on my holidays with the Scottish Federation of Meat Traders and found the trip one of the best I have ever been on in thirty years of butchery. The shops were all first class and were very similar in style to shops in England. Germany was also a great visit to AVO and there is an open invitation to Verstegan in Holland. The Dalesman Group also have a fantastic suite.

I plan in conjunction with the chairmen and vice chairs to set the yearly agenda at the AGMs in January 2016. Makes it clear for all the Regions to see what and where everyone is going or event they are holding.

Welsh Region's first meeting takes place next Monday in Cardiff. Martin Player is the first Welsh Chairman and along with Martin we hope to build this region to be a strong one. 5 non Guild members are attending this meeting.

Smithfield Awards.

Judging took place at City of Glasgow College last Wednesday and Thursday. A record turnout of entries this year with over 500 products being entered. The judging was extremely tight and category winners were judged 3-4 times by different judges. Supreme Champion was judged by 20 different judges and came out on top each occasion.

I think we have extremely good products and showed lots of innovation from the members.

Packaging from a few left a lot to be desired and some members sent products in HD bags. As you can imagine the products were squashed on arrival.

You should have all received your judging sheets back and lunch forms.

The lunch tickets are on sale now at £80 plus VAT and Ironmongers Hall can hold 120, so if you wish to go please do not hesitate to fill in your booking form. Can I thank the membership for entering their products.

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Membership.

There are several companies contacting the office enquiring about benefits of the Q Guild. We have more Corporate Members than ever before.

I have a list of 17 potential members that I have to schedule a visit to with the view of joining the Guild.

I am on holiday Wednesday to Friday this week and I am taking in three shops in the Lake District that wish to learn more.

I would urge the corporate and the membership if they know of anyone who potentially could join the Guild and is of the right standard please let me know.

The application process has been changed and the pre-audit will be carried out by myself now and this allows me to gauge if the potential has the right attitude and will come to meetings. It also saves us a bit of money instead of HAS carrying out the duty.

IARC

Unfortunately there is a negative on today's proceedings and a very important one. International Agency on Research on Cancer is part of the World Health Organisation.

They will publish a report on Monday 26th October that potentially links red meat consumption to Bowel cancer and prostate cancer.

I have held conference calls with AHDB and FSA on this matter and although they think it will be damaging initially it will blow over.

I must stress that this is not NEW research they have conducted, this is old research and we as a nation are still within the bounds of FSA guidelines for consumption. There is no evidence of a clear link that lean red meat has any casual relationships with the initiation of cancers.

We would suggest to members that they promote red meat as part of a healthy diet and also the essential nutrients that it therein contains- iron for example.

I also would ask if any member is contacted by the media please put them in touch with myself as we are piggy backing onto the Communications team at AHDB. There will be a brief come out this week to all members however about key points.

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Pensions

It is crucial to your businesses that if you have been issued your staging date for registering your employees, please do not disregard this as we have heard that some companies are being fined up to £500 per day. Any problems please use your accountant or pensions advisors.

Summary.

The Guild is changing in a way that I think will benefit the membership. It is exciting times for us all and I would urge members to consider the Digital platform as it is a unique way of marketing your company. If not there is still a massive place in the Guild for those wishing not to take part. Together we can build the Guild into a force to be reckoned with and I like The management of the Q Guild think we can build membership to 250 by the year 2020.

I hope to see some of you at Ironmonger's Hall in November.

Thanks also to Edward for organising today's event and of course thank Copas for supplying the lunch which as usual from Copas was outstanding.

Thank you and Happy Christmas.

Corporate Member presentations.

There followed a short 5-10 minute spell of each corporate member explaining some of their products and what they are selling in the run up to Christmas.

Andrew Edmonds then explained to the attendees that they had about another hour to speak to the corporate members. Whilst on his feet he thanked Copas and all the corporate members for attending and wished them all a very successful trading Christmas and New Year. He also thanked Edward Byford for all his help.

Some brisk trade and explanation of machinery and products from the corporate members and some good links and contacts were taken from the day.

Meeting finished at 16.00pm.

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