

**Minutes of Q Guild Midlands Region meeting held on
Monday, 16 March 2015 commencing 11am
At The White Lion, Brinsley (courtesy of Scott Barlow)**

The meeting was held in conjunction with the Midlands Region 2015 BBQ Products Evaluation, the overall winners of each category are to compete in the **National BBQ Competition to be held on *Sunday 31 May/Monday 1 June 2015 at The Windmill Village, Coventry (*note amended date and venue)**

Present:

Gordon Newlands	Q Guild Manager
Robert Jones (Joint Chairman)	Walter Smith Fine Foods
Gaynor Richards (Minute Secretary)	Walter Smith Fine Foods
Scott Barlow	Barlow Butchers
Arthur Wright	C N Wright Butchers
Richard Taylor	Owen Taylors
Paul Swain	Owen Taylors
Nick McAndrews	Chase Farm Shop
Matt Fisher	Walter Smith Fine Foods, Lichfield
Stephen Hewitt	Walter Smith Fine Foods, Albrighton

Corporate Members:

Simon Nicholson Member)	Innovative Foods Ingredients (New
Mike Warmer, Paul Beaman	Dalziel
Andrew Williams	MRC

Prior to the meeting commencing corporate members were invited to give their product presentations:

Andrew Williams unveiled MRC's latest product launched on 30 March - "Jim Beam Bourbon Sauce". Essentially an easy application pour-over sauce (ambient) which has a visual gloss and can be used for stir-fries, oven baking, dipping sauce etc. It has a direct link to its branded name using Kentucky straight Bourbon Whiskey).

Butchers' counter declaration tickets are available. Contains no allergens. Cost: £17.00 for 2½ kg. The cost is comparable to other sauces of this nature.

Simon Nicholson, Sales Representative for Cheshire based Innovative Food Ingredients Limited introduced the family owned business who specialise in the distribution of quality food ingredients throughout the UK. Agents for Newly Weds Foods including Avo and Arthur Pipkins brand. Innovative will brand name sauces for their customers. For further information and samples contact Simon on 07837 104285 or email: simon@ifing.co.uk.

Midlands BBQ Competition

Robert Jones(RJ) explained the competition criteria process and that corporate members present would judge the product entries. All present agree to this.
Cooking and judging commenced whilst the Midlands Region meeting took place.



Q Guild
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Perth PH2 0JW
Tel: 0844 800 6560

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info@qguild.co.uk

Website:
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Honorary President:
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Midlands Region Meeting

1 Introduction and Welcome

Robert Jones (RJ) opened the meeting and gave a big thank you to Scott Barlow for hosting the meeting and organising the cooking of BBQ products.

2 Apologies

Apologies had been received from Allan Bennett and Stephen Robinson.

3 Matters Arising from previous Minutes dated 20 January 2015

a. Election of Officers for 2015

To keep the record straight it was required that Nigel Rose as Vice Chairman should be proposed and seconded (this was not undertaken at the previous meeting)

Nigel Rose was proposed by Richard Taylor and seconded by Nick McAndrews.

b. Midlands Region Trip to Northern Ireland: (Note Date Change)

Visit to the Best Butchers shops in Northern Ireland was on schedule. The visit will mirror the N East regions recent visit which was excellent. However it had become apparent that the visit clashed with the date of the National BBQ Competition which was now being held on Sunday 31 May and Monday 1 June 2015. In view of this the visit to N Ireland will now be held Tuesday 2 June to Thursday 4 June. A number of members present registered their interest in attending.

Any members interested in attending this visit then please contact Gordon Newlands as soon as possible.

(Photographs following the visit will be placed on the Q Guild members' cloaked website)

4 Introduction to Guild Manager, Gordon Newlands

RJ introduced Gordon Newlands, the new Guild Manager, who has taken over from Sandy Boyd.

Gordon(GN) explained his background within the meat industry and that he had been a member of the Q Guild in the past.

Gordon's remit is to visit as many members as possible and obtain their views and feedback. In three weeks he has covered three areas and 27 shops.

He has to establish the middle ground and find solutions to problems.

In Year 1 the retention of members and corporate members. It is necessary to consolidate what we have and grow.

GN reports back his findings to the Management Committee each Friday.

He had found the main issue of unrest seemed to be regarding Q Guild Inspections.

RJ explained that to his knowledge no Midlands Region member had left the Q Guild because of the inspections. He was quite happy with the new standards and pointed out that it is a **planned audit**.

GN concluded that the general consensus of the Midlands Region was that they had no issue with inspections and added that it is the biggest thing that sets us apart if our shops are independently audited with a product range to suit.

SB added that it was in members' own interest to be inspected since it was a check on how businesses are operating and the standard of a shop behind the scenes.



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GN explained that he would be looking at finding free marketing and radically upgrading the Q Guild website and social media opportunities for members. The necessity for more recipe sharing was discussed with GN explain that he would like to invite five butchers a month to provide a product for inclusion on the Q Guild cloaked website in order to build up a bank of recipes over a year. Shops could use these as base recipes for their own ideas.

AR thought that Smithfield Award Gold winner's recipes should be available on the website and that this was in fact a criteria of entry. GN said he would check this out.

SB expressed his concern that not all members were attending meetings which are a great networking opportunity. The Midlands Region meets only four times a year and there should be a rule in place, if there is not already one, to ensure that members attend at least one of those meetings.

GN explained that the communication channels between members and the Executive had now been opened up and that he would report back accordingly so if any members had any ideas or issues or needed any help then he would be pleased to hear from them.

RJ wished Gordon the best of luck in his new role and hoped it would prove to be successful for all concerned.

5 National BBQ Competition

Members please note that the date and venue of the National BBQ Competition has been changed and will now take place on Sunday 31 May and Monday 1 June 2015. The venue will be The Windmill Village, Coventry. Overnight accommodation can be booked.

GN explained that upon arrival on Sunday 31 May there will be a demonstration given by Keurslager Butchers of Belgium, 25 corporate members will have their promotional stands set up which members can visit whilst the BBQ competition is being judged. Sunday evening a BBQ Awards Dinner will take place. During the morning of Monday 1 June a Social Media expert will give a talk and presentation which should be most interesting and of benefit to members.

Each category of the BBQ competition has been sponsored by the following:-

Sausage/Speciality Sausage	Dalziel
Beef burger	Eblex
Naked Steak	Innovative Ingredients Limited
Speciality Beef burger	Lucas Ingredients
Speciality BBQ product	Dalziel

More detailed information regarding the event to follow.

6 Executive and TAC Report

RJ reported that the resignation from Sandy Boyd, General Manager, had been received and accepted. Since the meeting Gordon Newlands has been engaged to undertake the role.

The Budget for 2015 had been tabled and accepted.

RJ has resigned from his position on TAC.

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A review of "Steps to Quality" manual has been undertaken and revised versions will be circulated to members once finalised.

7 Any Other Business

Members only Q Guild website

During the meeting it became apparent that some members were not aware of the Q Guild's cloaked website. Accordingly GN would ensure an email explaining how to access the website was issued as follows:-

To gain access to the Members Only part of the website: you require to log in using your email address which you supplied to the Q Guild, and your business post code is your password.

EXAMPLE:

Business email: info@qguild.co.uk

Password: MX6 2RE

Please note that this is case sensitive, a space is required in the centre of the postcode and if you are unable to gain entry then please advise the Q Guild office.

General Open Discussion

SB asked if promotional marketing leaflets could be issued on the members' website.

GN confirmed that this was possible and also a power-point presentation could be made available for members' to show in their shops.

RJ asked how business had been for Mothering Sunday.

SB explained that they had been very successful selling hot cooked joints of beef with free gravy.

SB advised that he has an outside firm who undertake all the prepping of his stir fry veg, ratatouille veg and stew bags. This was deemed a great idea saving time and cutting back on staff time involved.

RT said he has all of his peppers prepared for kebabs.

SB explained that on his Click & Collect service he was selling a deal: a joint, mash (using Mash Direct product) and Cabbage to feed a family of four. This was proving popular with younger customers.

RJ said he was working on the concept of offering a joint of beef, brushed with olive oil, seasoned and place on a foil tray with cooking bag over, pop up timer and ready to go with cooking times given. He had also experimented with a gammon and honey joint, pork with salt & pepper. This was also aimed at younger customers.

SB believed younger customers feel intimidated when they walk into a butchers' shop since they have no idea what to ask for and the quantities required. We need to make it simple for them and remove the barrier that does currently exist.

Members asked if GN could place a Supermarket Price Comparison Check on the members' website.

SB asked if the website could also provide the Allergen tables and incorporate software for a generic Q Guild ticket for use and printing by members.



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RJ as a matter of interest asked for retail prices around the table per kilo for Pork Sausages. Prices given were: £5.95, £7.99, £6.65 and £8.99 (the latter using free range pork).

Generally the merits of Rationale ovens were discussed and the advantages of buying in meat already boned out in order to release staff for the preparation of other goods. The merits of selling boneless lamb to assist younger customers who found carving bone-in lamb difficult was discussed at length. The lack and reasons why Apprentices were not entering the trade was discussed.

SB explained that his hot counter sales were doing very well with the younger customers and he was also selling more hot pasties and sausage rolls than ever. He added that we have to "adapt our ways to cater for everyone" and this was agreed.

RJ said he was looking to fill out large casings with chopped ham and pork with a pepper coating - these would then be steam cooked.

GN explained that if any members wanted to get involved in National Butchers' Week (23-29 March 2015) there was plenty of information available on their website www.nationalbutchersweek.co.uk.

8 Date of Next Meeting

Please note that the venue and time for the pre-Christmas meeting has been changed and the meeting will now be held at The White Lion, Hall Lane, Brinsley, Notts NG16 5AH commencing at 6.30pm on Monday 12 October 2015 (courtesy of Scott Barlow).

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Meeting concluded at 1.30pm following which Mike Warner of Dalziel announced the overall winners of each six categories of the Midlands BBQ Product Evaluation 2015 as follows:-

Sausage (Free Range Plain Pork)	Walter Smith Fine Foods ALBRIGHTON
Burger (Beefburger)	Walter Smith Fine Foods ALBRIGHTON
Naked Steak	Walter Smith Fine Foods LICHFIELD
Speciality Sausage:	
Pork Sausage with Stilton & Chive	Walter Smith Fine Foods ALBRIGHTON
Speciality Burger:	
Piri Piri Chicken Burger	Walter Smith Fine Foods ALBRIGHTON
Speciality BBQ product	
Greek Lamb Rump	Owen Taylors

The above winners will now compete in the National BBQ competition.

All other product entries had been judged as "GOLD" awards.

Congratulations were extended to the overall winners and all entrants. RJ extended grateful thanks to the Chefs for expertly cooking the products and to the judges for their help and participation in the event.

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